

PROCUREMENT POLICY

1. Introduction

Procurement is the process of acquiring goods and services, including those for capital and construction works. These goods and services form a significant element of College expenditure and it is therefore vital to achieve value for money in their acquisition.

In addition, public procurement in Scotland is subject to stringent legislative obligations, together with specific requirements of the Scottish Government and Scottish Funding Council.

Legislation requires us to:

- maintain public contracts register on our website
- increase the scope of our regulated procurements; and
- meet the sustainable procurement duty.

This policy sets out the College's approach to procurement and identifies the key principles which the College will apply to ensure both compliance with regulatory frameworks and the achievement of value for money in support of the College's mission and values.

The College in conducting its procurements will seek to fulfil the sustainable procurement duty, a key element of the Procurement (Scotland) Reform Act 2014, through considering where appropriate, how it can improve the social, environmental and economic wellbeing of the area in which it operates and particularly its procurement processes can facilitate the involvement of SMEs, third sector bodies and supported business.

Advance Procurement for Universities and Colleges (APUC) Limited, the procurement centre of expertise for Scotland's further education and higher education sector, provides client management services, including tender project management for high value (above GPA threshold) requirements, procurement process, development support and assistance in implementation of Framework Agreements. As a member of APUC, the College strives to bring about positive impacts on supply chain sustainability, reaching into its supply chain as reasonably as possible, utilising a several sector wide policies and tools to support this, e.g., the sector wide collaborative Supply Chain Code of Conduct, that sets minimum standards and provides a platform for supply chain performance.

Our regulated spend is below £5m per annum, so we do not have to comply with all legislative requirements, however through effective procurement processes, we will secure value for money and contribute to financial sustainability, whilst meeting statutory obligations, with particular regard to procurement regulations, equalities and environmental legislation.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all aspects of procurement carried out on behalf of the College regardless of the source of funding and should be read in conjunction with the College's Equality & Diversity Policy.

3. Procurement Framework

3.1 Key Principles

The key principles that the College will use in approaching procurement activities are as follows:

Value For Money	Efficient and Effective
• Collaborative procurement • Competitive tendering • Environmental responsibility and sustainability • Corporate social responsibility • Community benefits • Fair and ethical trading • Food standards • Living wage	• Procedures • Promoting H&S and equalities • Without discrimination • Transparent and proportionate • Consulting and engaging • eProcurement • Contracts register • Active supplier management • Terms and conditions
Appropriate skills and expertise	Performance and practice review

3.1.1 Delivering Value for Money

The overarching principle to be employed is the achievement of value for money. This will be supported in a number of ways:

a) Collaborative Procurement

The College will, wherever possible, use collaborative procurement in the sourcing of goods and services to achieve value for money. This may involve the use of framework agreements negotiated nationally, for the sector, or locally with other partners.

b) Competitive Tendering

Competitive tendering will be used wherever appropriate, in accordance with this policy. This will include tendering within framework agreements, the use of competitive quotes from suppliers, and the use of sealed tender exercises.

c) Environmental Responsibility and Sustainability

The College recognises that procurement of goods and services has an environmental impact in addition to the direct contribution of the actual goods and services themselves. This may include the impact of transportation or manufacturing of those goods and services. It will therefore consider such impacts when appraising procurement options.

Particularly in large projects or procurement exercises, the College will consider the sustainability of solutions, taking into account the source of materials, use of natural resources, and stability of economic growth.

d) Corporate Social Responsibility

The College recognises its position in the community as a partner to businesses and voluntary organisations throughout wider Edinburgh area and further afield. Its relationships are not simply as an education and training provider, but also as a supplier and consumer of goods and services. To develop and maintain such relationships, the College will also consider the local economy when appraising procurement options.

e) Community Benefits

For procurements over £4m we will consider how to improve economic social or environmental wellbeing through community benefit clauses aligned with our strategic ambition and/or Scottish Government's National Outcomes. Where possible and proportionate, such clauses may also be included in procurements below £4m.

Examples of community benefits include training or subcontracting opportunities. We will engage with internal stakeholders including students where relevant and the supplier community to ensure suppliers understand the concept and how to respond to these criteria.

The College will ensure that conditions in accordance with the College's Equality Outcomes and Action Plan are included in contracts with external providers, where appropriate.

f) Procurement of fairly and ethically traded goods/services

We support sourcing goods which are fairly and ethically traded. Where relevant we will use appropriate standards and labels in our procurements to take account of fair and ethical trading. We will consider offerings from suppliers that can demonstrate they meet the specified criteria without having certification.

g) Food standards, improving health, wellbeing and education, promotion of the animal welfare

We will find practical ways to supply healthy, fresh, seasonal, and sustainably grown food which improves the health, wellbeing and education of our communities, and provides the highest standards of animal welfare, whilst still representing value for money. We will put in place affordable contracts, which meet nutritional requirements for users of our catering services and use good practice guidance such as “Catering for Change – Buying food sustainably in the public sector”.

h) The Real Living Wage

We recognise the value of a well-motivated and dedicated workforce both in the College and in our suppliers. Newbattle Abbey College is a real living wage employer. We will consider, before undertaking a procurement, whether it is relevant and proportionate to include a question on fair work practices, whilst still ensuring a balance of quality and cost.

3.1.2 Efficient and Effective

a) Procedures

The College will ensure that it has clear, concise procurement procedures, as part of its Financial Regulations. These detail roles and responsibilities, including authorisation levels and appropriate procurement route for types and levels of procurement. A matrix of current approval levels is shown at Appendix A.

Purchase orders must be placed for the purchase of all goods and services, except those made using petty cash.

Delegated budget holders must comply with the College's tendering procedures as set out in Appendix B.

b) Compliance with Health & Safety at Work and Equality legislation

We are committed to contracting only with suppliers that comply with all relevant legislation, including Health & Safety and Equalities. Where appropriate we will identify legislation applicable to a procurement and take steps to ensure bidders comply with such legislation. Where proportionate, we assess the compliance of subcontractors.

c) Treating economic operators without discrimination

All regulated procurements will comply with the principles of equal treatment, non-discrimination, transparency, proportional and mutual recognition.

If relevant we will engage with the supply market before posting a contract notice. We separate lots where appropriate, to ensure the procurement is open to as many bidders as possible.

d) Transparent and proportionate

We will engage with the supply market and use clear and precise language in specifications and evaluation criteria. Contracts will be awarded using quality, risk and sustainability factors alongside cost, using weightings specific to each contract.

We will make it easier for smaller and local businesses to bid:

- use of Public Contracts Scotland and Quick Quotes;
- publish a contracts register to highlight contracts that local suppliers may be interested in bidding for.

m) Consulting and engaging with those affected by its procurements

We will consider each procurement, the community affected by the resultant contract, and ensure any affected organisations/persons are consulted. Such consultation will always be on a scale and approach relevant to the procurement in question.

n) eProcurement

We recognise the benefits of e-Procurement solutions in terms of efficiency and cost reduction. PECOS is our primary ordering solution and concerted efforts will be made to reduce manual orders.

3.1.3 Payment terms

We recognise the importance of paying suppliers promptly once a service has been performed or goods delivered and that late payment is particularly detrimental to SMEs, third sector bodies and supported businesses. We will comply with the Late Payment legislation and will review on a contract by contract basis whether such obligations should be enforced and monitored further down its supply chain.

3.1.4 Analysis of third party spend

We will analyse third party expenditure, classify spend in bandings which reflect the relevant procurement thresholds locally and nationally.

We will sort regulated procurements into categories and consult with budget holders.

4. Responsibilities

- The Board of Directors has overall responsibility for the Policy.
- The Audit & Risk Committee is responsible for approving any changes to the Policy.
- The Principal and SMT are responsible for implementing; and Director of Operations for reviewing the Policy.
- All staff and other person(s) acting on behalf of the College are required at all times to act ethically¹ and conduct all business relationships with respect, honesty and integrity, and treat all suppliers fairly and impartially, without discrimination or favour.
- The Finance Team is responsible for the day-to-day management of all records associated with the purchasing process.
- The Finance Team is responsible for receipting invoices, by matching valid invoice(s) to purchase order(s) and goods received note(s) and arranging payment of suppliers.
- Failure to adhere to this policy may result in disciplinary action.

5. Review

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years or whenever statutory regulations adjustment.

6. Related Policies

- Financial Regulations

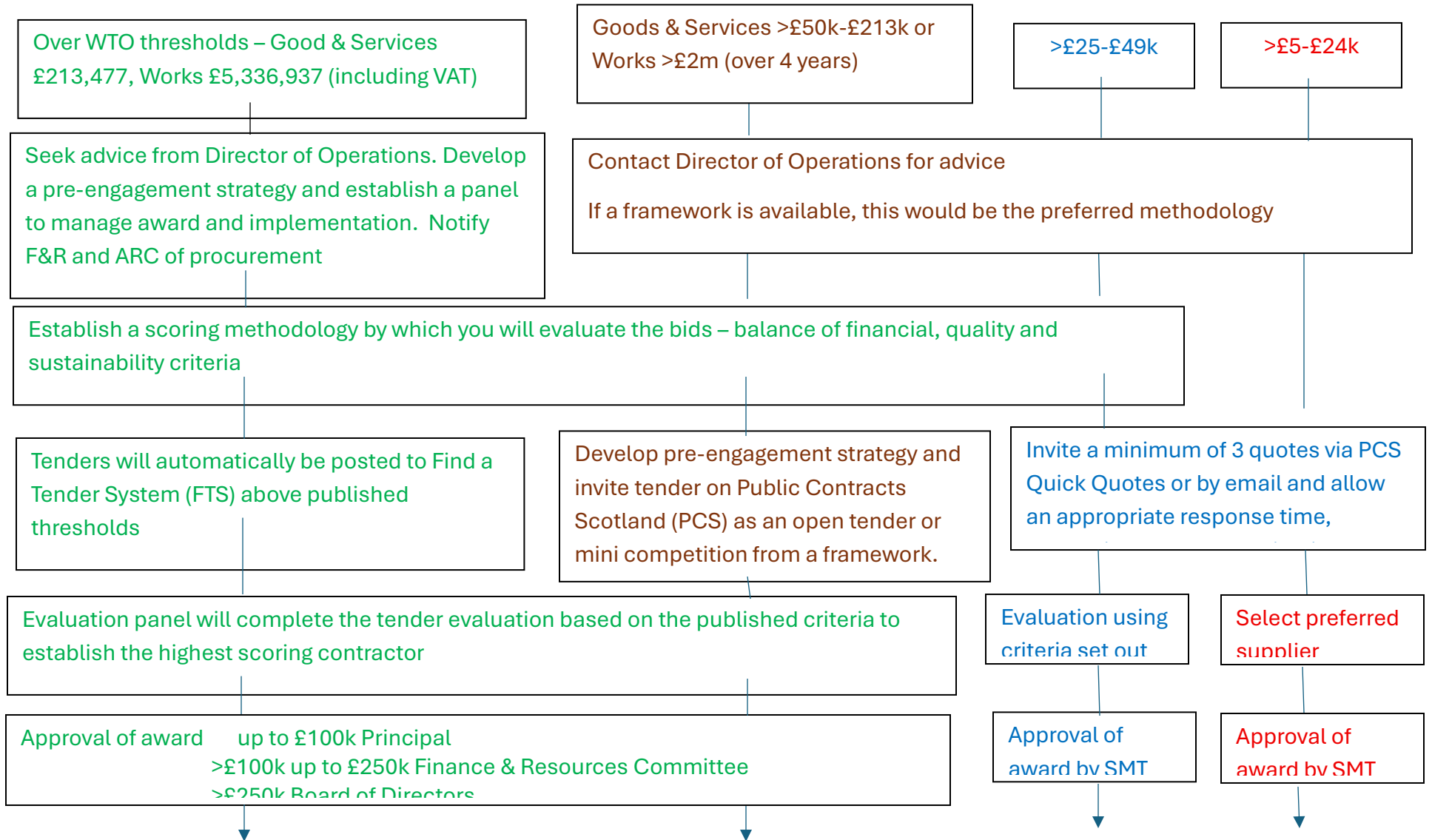
7. Useful Links

- Current GPA procurement thresholds
<https://www.procurementjourney.scot/additional-resources/thresholds>
- Procurement Reform (Scotland) Act 2014 - thresholds

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2014/12/part/1/crossheading/regulated-contracts>

- APUC Ltd – Advanced Procurement for Universities and Colleges which is the Scottish Government centre of expertise for procurement for the sector.
<http://www.apuc-scot.ac.uk/>
- PCS – Public Contracts Scotland – The Scottish Government’s official national portal for advertising public sector contract opportunities.
<http://www.publiccontractsscotland.gov.uk/>
- Scottish Government Procurement Journey – Guidance and Templates issued to assist Procurement/Tendering processes -
<https://www.procurementjourney.scot/procurement-journey>
- Find a Tender Service - <https://www.gov.uk/find-tender>

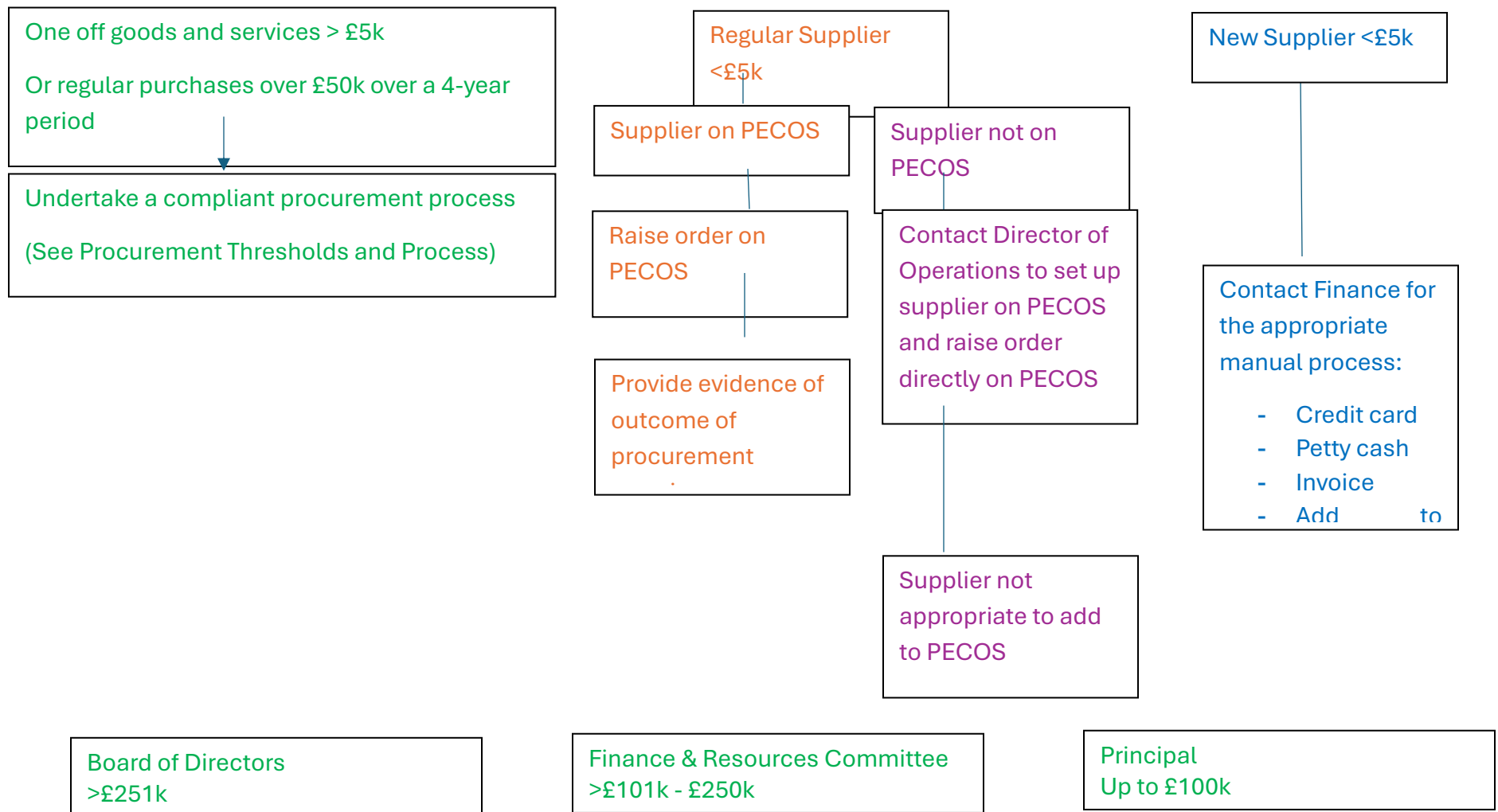
Approval Routes – Procurement Thresholds & Process – Goods & Services



Post Award Notice on Public Contracts Scotland to inform bidders of the outcome, within the published timescales, and give feedback to the unsuccessful bidders

Issue award notice on PCS Quick Quotes or via email to notify the successful supplier

Payment Thresholds & Process



Tendering Procedures

- Duty to comply by the College's staff.
- Directives to be complied with.
- Competitive tendering procedures, which will:
 - o Ensure fairness of competition
 - o Ensure the companies invited to tender are financially and technically able to meet the Colleges requirements
 - o Indicate the terms of the contract
 - o Outline the appropriate UK and Scottish standards to be complied with.
- Quotations procedures, which will indicate:
 - o The minimum number of firms that should be expected to provide quotations
 - o List of available firms in existence which have been approved by the college that might undertake the work specified
 - o The terms by which the contractors will be paid.
 - o The national requirements concerning good practice that should be followed.
- Submission of tenders (e.g. time, date, etc).
- Receipt of safe custody of tenders and records.
- Admissibility and acceptance of tenders.
- Acceptance of tenders/quotations.
- Justification of acceptance of tenders not at best value

This Policy should be read in conjunction with other relevant College policies, procedures and guidance documents, whether specifically listed above or subsequently published or amended.

The College reserves the right to update, introduce, or revise policies and procedures from time to time.

Compliance with the most current versions of applicable policies and procedures, as published, is expected.

Title:	Procurement Policy
Lead Officer:	Director of Operations
Date last reviewed	March 2026
Next Review date:	March 2029
Approved By:	Board
Date first approved:	2019