



**APUC**

Advanced Procurement  
for Universities & Colleges

# Annual Report

**2024/25**





***“To maximise the value of Scotland’s investment in further and higher education by working in partnership with institutions to support and enable sustainable innovation in procurement and shared service optimisation”***

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# Introduction from the Chair of APUC

Welcome to the 2024/25 APUC Annual Report.

The 2024/25 academic year marked a period of resilience and progress for APUC as we continued to deliver ethical, sustainable, and value-driven procurement services for Scotland's universities and colleges. Despite ongoing supply chain volatility and financial pressures across the sector, APUC maintained its commitment to supporting institutions through innovative strategic sourcing, responsible procurement, systems support and professional development.

We successfully embedded throughout 2024/25 the new Strategic Sourcing model introduced in Spring 2024, enhancing flexibility and responsiveness to market challenges, while our Hunter platform continued to evolve, now serving both Scottish HE/FE and rUK HE sectors. System development priorities included improved contract management, GHG emissions reporting, and enhanced supplier due diligence.

APUC played an active role in sector-wide efficiency and transformation initiatives, including the UUK E&T Taskforce and Universities Scotland workshops. As the year drew to a close, we were preparing proposals for a Shared Service Catalyst to unlock further collaborative opportunities beyond procurement. The well established and well regarded Institutional Procurement Services unit within APUC supported 28 institutions, with circa 60 staff embedded across university and college campuses, throughout the year.

Our commitment to sustainability remains strong. The Responsible Procurement team advanced the Supply Chain Climate and Ecological Emergency Strategy and expanded EcoVadis assessments, now covering nearly 300 suppliers. We continue to provide GHG emissions reporting for all member institutions and integrate low GHG options into framework agreements wherever feasible.

Fair Work principles are embedded across all relevant frameworks and internal operations. APUC remains a champion of equality and human rights, actively engaging with Electronics Watch and the International Working Group on Ethical Public Procurement. Our Modern Slavery Statement was updated at the end of July 2025 and provided to the APUC Board for endorsement for the 2025/26 year at our forthcoming Board meeting.

Strategic Sourcing delivered significant savings, with early indications suggesting targets will be exceeded for 2024/25. The proportion of collaborative spend continues to deliver positive results at circa 37% of recurrent spend validated for the previous year during 2024/25, reinforcing the value of shared procurement models.

No health and safety incidents occurred within APUC during the year in question and data protection compliance remains robust.

As we approach the end of our current strategy period, work will begin on a new corporate strategy for 2026–2031. This will build on our achievements and address emerging challenges, including talent retention, climate action, and digital transformation.

On behalf of the Board, I would like to thank all APUC staff, member institutions, and partners for their continued support and collaboration. Together, we remain committed to delivering procurement excellence that drives economic, social, and environmental benefits for Scotland's tertiary education sectors.

Veronica Strachan,  
Chair of the APUC Board



# Collaboration Benefits & Savings



## IPS

The Institutional Procurement Services team now consists of circa 60 staff providing a procurement shared service to 28 institutions across Scotland. A series of continuous reviews of procurement operations in each client institution has been offered (where it has not been recently done) to ensure that the correct resource mix is deployed in light of current demands on time/staff.

## Hunter

Further development of the new web-enabled version of Hunter continues in liaison with the client community with more (originally) separate functions being integrated into the Hunter tool including the Buyers Portal from Summer 2024.

Development of new functionality is now prioritised via the eSolutions Systems Prioritisation and Development Advisory Group (ESPDAG).

## Market Insights

*APUC undertakes annual resilience reviews within the Strategic Sourcing Team.*

*Due to increasing volatility, Market Insights reporting to the sector by category has been increased in frequency to quarterly throughout the entirety of the 2024/25 AY.*

New "Strategic Sourcing" model implemented from March 2024 to provide a more flexible category fluid approach which brings enhanced resilience and flexibility in meeting dynamic needs and impacts. A fine-tuning review of the model commenced at the end of the 2024/25 year.

## Collaborative Agreements

Over 170 collaborative Framework Agreements were available to the sector throughout the year with high levels of utilisation across active categories

*Savings\* - During the 2024/25 year, savings for the 2023/24 AY were confirmed as:*

- *BT1: £13.4m (using a benchmark that generally means against previous price paid)*
- *BT2: £37.2m (using a benchmark that is generally against open market pricing)*

*Collaborative spend across the sector in Scotland as a percentage of recurrent spend for that period was 37% - significantly higher than elsewhere in the UK.*

\*These are reported against the Scottish Publicly Funded Sectors Benefits Reporting Methodology. Figures for the 2024/25 AY will be available mid-way through the 2025/26 AY when institutions and collaborative partners have finalised their financial data and validated relevant spend reports. Newly adopted savings type "BT7" is now being used to gather further savings data.

# Climate & Ecological Emergency and Responsible Supply Chains

## Environmental and Ethical Supplier Assessments

### Electronics Watch

APUC continued its membership of Electronics Watch throughout 2024/25 and actively engaged with them in the promotion of human rights and equality in our electronic supply chains recently expanding the scope to include electric vehicles

Over 294 (EcoVadis) deep dive assessment reports are now available as of end July 2025, with 108 in-progress. Outcomes and actions have been incorporated into the contract management process. A report to be published in Q4/2025 has been developed to report on progress over recent years until the end of the 2024/25 year.

## GHG Reporting & Net Zero

Reporting functionality has been enhanced which allows the capture of GHG data at contract value so that data from specific improvements (versus the DEFRA "averages" based data) can be reported where appropriate. It is hoped that this functionality will be utilised more from the 2025/26 AY onwards. APUC is also involved in a UK wide HE sector working group (commenced early 2025) to work collectively to improve accuracy and consistency of GHG reporting across UK HE. (and FE).

*The APUC Responsible Procurement team will, if invited, visit institutions to run GHG reduction workshops with procurement managers and wider stakeholders to assist them in developing GHG actions plans etc. These workshops can also include the wider aspects of responsible procurement.*



## Fair Treatment & Economic Wellbeing

APUC operates as a major champion and promoter of equality, with the three aims of the 'Equality Duty' embedded as part of the process of decision-making and in business process design. Fair Work is embedded in how the organisation manages its activities and this has a significant relevance on several Framework Agreements.

APUC continues to utilise approaches to ensure that potential business is available and accessible to SMEs wherever there are appropriate supply chains. This includes tailored regional and technical lotting strategies and consideration of flexible specifications in tenders, all assisting in sustainable local economic development across Scotland.

### Fair Work

Fair Work principles are integrated into relevant templates etc. and considered wherever relevant in tendering and contract management activity.

# Capability and Continuous Improvement

## Procurement Capability Assessments – Procurement & Commercial Improvement Programme (PCIP)

The last round of PCIP assessments were undertaken during early to mid 2024 with an outcomes workshop taking place with sector procurement leaders in October 2024. Results were positive indicating a continuation of improvement of procurement practice across the sector. The cross-sector PCIP project team met in December 2024 to review the 2024 PCIP, looking at emerging themes and identifying strengths and development areas. It is not expected there will be another wave of national assessments for 2-3 years. The focus now will be developing improvement approaches for the key areas of development identified.



## Corporate Services



APUC Corporate Services supports all of APUC's client facing functions as well as delivering some services directly to member institutions. It encompasses People & Operations, Governance, and Finance. It provides its services not just for APUC but also for fellow HE/FE sector shared service HEFESTIS Ltd (also co-owned by Scotland's HE/FE sector institutions).

## Construction Procurement Development Programme

**Early in 2025,** APUC, the institutional Heads of Procurement and a representative from the sector's Estates Directors, jointly formed a steering group to establish a Construction Procurement Development Programme – this is a comprehensive programme to fully equip procurement staff with a high level of capability in managing construction procurement (which was identified as a significant gap in the sector's procurement skills) – delivery of this programme is due to commence in the 2025/26 AY.

*The APUC People & Operations Team delivered the sector's face to face procurement training programme for the 2024/25 AY maintaining the high volume of offerings of the previous year with a mix of in person and virtual events. As well as the comprehensive face to face sector training programme organised by APUC, APUC also provide access to eight eLearning modules available 24/7/365 to provide highly flexible learning opportunities.*

- ✓ The highly effective Finance Team provide support to the business, for staff and external stakeholders, with clean Audits received for APUC Group (APUC and UCSS) and HEFESTIS during the year. The 2024-25 Financial Statements and associated reports are available on request from APUC.
- ✓ The APUC Governance Manager ensured that all APUC's governance arrangements operated smoothly throughout the year and that all statutory reporting was completed in line with relevant requirements.

## Fig 1a - Collaborative Framework Agreements available with Buyers' Guides

<b>ESTATES</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilities Services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Road Surfacing &amp; Minor Civil Engineering Works</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Water Quality Management</li> <li>• Floor Coverings</li> <li>• Plumbing Consumables and Commercial Heating Products</li> <li>• Franking Machines</li> <li>• Construction Professional Services RM6165</li> <li>• Lift Maintenance, Installation &amp; Refurbishment Services</li> <li>• Fresh Dairy Products</li> <li>• Fresh Fish &amp; Seafood</li> <li>• Fresh Fruit &amp; Vegetables</li> <li>• Fresh Butcher Meat</li> <li>• Cleaning &amp; Janitorial Products</li> <li>• Sustainable Furniture</li> <li>• Water &amp; Wastewater Billing Services</li> <li>• Fire Safety Products (Supply &amp; Service)</li> <li>• Estates Management Services (RM6168)</li> <li>• Fleet Solutions - Sustainable</li> <li>• Delivery App</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Catering Innovation and Concept Solutions (CICS)</li> <li>• Office, Paper, EOS &amp; Library Supplies (OPELS)</li> <li>• Promotional Merchandise</li> <li>• Residential Textiles, Student Starter Packs and Window Coverings</li> <li>• Washroom Services &amp; Associated Products &amp; Services</li> <li>• White Goods &amp; Associated Products &amp; Services</li> <li>• Building &amp; Construction Consultancy SXL0920</li> <li>• EV Charging Infrastructure (SXL 2119)</li> <li>• Fresh Bakery Products</li> <li>• Waste Management</li> <li>• Construction Materials (SXL 1422)</li> <li>• Timber Products and Materials</li> <li>• Asbestos related Works &amp; Services (SXL 0722)</li> <li>• Automatic Doors and Roller Shutters</li> <li>• Electrical Sundries</li> <li>• Vehicle Purchase (CCS Ref RM6244)</li> <li>• Vehicle Lease (CCS REF RM6268)</li> </ul>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fitness &amp; Sports Equipment</li> <li>• Sandwiches and Associated Products (Supply and Distribution of)</li> <li>• Water Coolers (20-21)</li> <li>• Design and Installation for the Customer Experience (Catering and Social Spaces)</li> <li>• National Electricity Framework</li> <li>• Catering Light and Heavy Equipment</li> <li>• Alcohol</li> <li>• Convenience Retail 2024</li> <li>• Disposables and Kitchen Chemicals 2024</li> <li>• EPOS Systems</li> <li>• Grocery, Frozen and Chilled</li> <li>• Hot Beverage</li> <li>• Vending Machine Services, Concepts &amp; Innovation DPS</li> <li>• Catering Outsourced Services</li> <li>• Washroom Solutions and Sanitary Products (0122)</li> <li>• Natural Gas</li> <li>• Liquid Fuels</li> </ul>

## Fig 1b - Collaborative Framework Agreements available with Buyers' Guides (continued)

ESTATES CONTINUED	ICT	
• Water & Wastewater Billing Services	• Shared Data Centre, Jisc	• Finance, HR/Payroll Systems and Associated Services
• Cleaning Equipment (SXL 0523)	• Professional Buying Tools - PCS Tender	• Broadcasting Equipment and Integration Services
• Security Services and Cash Collection (SXL 2322)	• Online Streaming and Online Training Services	• Alumni & Fundraising CRM
• Courier Services	• Internet of Things (IoT) - Dynamic Procurement System (DPS)	• Apple Equipment and Services Framework Agreement - Individual
• Facilities Supplies	• Mobile Client Devices (National Framework for)	• Library Management Systems and Associated Services
• Scottish Minor Building Works	• Apple Equipment and Services Framework Agreement - National	• Innovative, Value-Adding VLE System(s) and Associated Services
• Energy Efficiency Contractors Framework	• Telephony Purchasing Services, Jisc	• Jisc Text Short Message Service (SMS)
• Signs and Wayfinding Solutions	• Student Information Management Systems and Associated Services	• Networking - HE, Supply & Services (HENSS2)
• Supported Businesses DPS	• Academic Integrity and Assessment Management Systems	• Telephony and Communication Services Dynamic Purchasing System
• Catering Sundries (Scotland Excel)	• Software Licence Resellers Agreement (SLRA)	• Engagement (Business to Business) CRM Systems
• Removals and Relocations Services (PCR2015)	• Servers, Storage and Solutions National Agreement (SSSNA)	• The Supply and Installation of Audio-Visual Equipment & Associated Services
• Property Maintenance and Refurbishment	• eMarketplace for Tail End Spend	• Desktop Client Devices (National Framework for)
• Domestic Furniture and Furnishings (SXL)	• General Office Supplies	• Digital Technology and Cyber Services Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS)
	• Student Accommodation, Conference/Event, Delivered Catering & Hotel Management	• Software Value Added Re-seller (SVAR)
	• Managed Print Solutions	• Data Centre Equipment & Infrastructure 2024
	• Technology Peripherals and Infrastructure	• Mobile Phones - Ethically Sourced
	• Desktop & Notebook (NDNA)	• CCS Network Services 3
		• Technology Products and Associated Services 2

## Fig 1c - Collaborative Framework Agreements available with Buyers' Guides (continued)

<b>ICT CONTINUED</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Healthcare Student Uniforms</li> <li>• Life Sciences Equipment, Materials &amp; Services</li> <li>• Lasers and Associated Equipment, Supply of</li> <li>• Multi-Modality Imaging Equipment and Maintenance</li> <li>• General Laboratory Equipment - Supply and Maintenance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Insurance Services</li> <li>• Hair &amp; Beauty</li> <li>• Publishing Print Design &amp; Associated Services</li> </ul>
		<b>PROFESSIONAL SERVICES - GENERAL</b>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intellectual Property Services</li> </ul>
	<b>LIBRARIES</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Publishing Print Design &amp; Associated Services</li> </ul>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Global Workforce Mobility Services</li> </ul>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Audit and Tax Services</li> </ul>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Legal Services</li> </ul>
<b>LABORATORIES</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supply and Delivery of Library Books and Textbooks</li> <li>• Digital Publications and Services (Supply of)</li> <li>• Library Equipment, Software &amp; Maintenance</li> <li>• SHEDL eBook Collections - Springer Nature</li> <li>• SHEDL eBook Collections - Elsevier</li> <li>• SHEDL eBook Collections - Oxford University Press (OUP)</li> <li>• Digital Preservation DPS</li> <li>• Karger SHEDL 2023-2025</li> <li>• Springer Nature Read and Publish 2023-2025 (SHEDL)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Media Services Framework</li> <li>• Debt Recovery Services</li> <li>• Banking Services</li> <li>• Graduation and Ceremonial Gowns, Photography and Event Services</li> <li>• Management Consultancy Framework 3</li> <li>• Student Assistance and Support Services</li> <li>• Hair &amp; Beauty</li> <li>• Teaching Qualification Further Education</li> <li>• Marketing Services</li> </ul>

## Fig 1d - Collaborative Framework Agreements available with Buyers' Guides (continued)

### PROFESSIONAL SERVICES - GENERAL - CONTINUED

- Interpreting, Translation and Transcription Services
- Travel Management Services
- Print & Associated Services Framework 2023
- Media Planning, Buying & Associated Services
- Payment Solutions 2
- Procurement Cards
- Payment Acceptance 2
- Vertical Application Solutions (Electoral Services)
- Pension Scheme (Defined Contribution) and Employee Benefits
- Travel Services Contract (Available to Named in Call Off Only)

### PROFESSIONAL SERVICES - HR

- Staff Engagement Surveys
- Temporary & Permanent Staff
- Occupational Health Services
- Temp Interim Professional – National
- Executive and Senior Specialist Search and Associated Recruitment Services
- Temp Interim IT – National
- Temp Admin, Catering & Manual - South
- Temp Admin, Catering & Manual - North
- Education Recruitment Advertising and Resourcing Services (National) NERARS 2022
- Employee Benefits and Services
- Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) and Welfare Services
- Recruitment Advertising and PINs

### CORPORATE

- Insurance, Brokerage and Associated Risk Management Services
- SPS: Occupational Health Collaborative Framework

## Annex A

### Full members - HE Institutions and Other

#### Full Member Bodies (20)

Abertay University  
Edinburgh Napier University  
Glasgow Caledonian University  
Glasgow School of Art  
Heriot-Watt University  
Queen Margaret University  
Robert Gordon University  
Royal Conservatoire of Scotland  
Scottish Association for Marine Science (SAMS)  
Scotland's Rural College (SRUC)  
The Scottish Funding Council  
University of Aberdeen  
University of Dundee  
University of Edinburgh  
University of Glasgow  
University of St Andrews  
University of Stirling  
University of Strathclyde  
University of the Highlands and Islands  
University of the West of Scotland

### Full members – FE Institutions (21)

Ayrshire College  
Borders College  
City of Glasgow College  
Dumfries and Galloway College  
Dundee and Angus College  
Edinburgh College  
Fife College  
Forth Valley College  
Glasgow Clyde College  
Glasgow Kelvin College  
UHI Inverness  
UHI Moray  
New College Lanarkshire  
Newbattle Abbey College  
North East Scotland College  
UHI North, West and Hebrides  
UHI Perth  
Sabhal Mor Ostaig  
South Lanarkshire College  
West College Scotland  
West Lothian College

### Associate members (7)

UHI Argyll  
Fraunhöfer UK Research Ltd  
UHI Orkney  
UHI Shetland (including NAFC Marine The  
James Hutton Institute  
The Highland Theological College  
University of Sussex

### Associated bodies (19)

College Development Network  
Colleges Scotland  
David MacBrayne Ltd / Group  
East Lothian Council  
Glasgow City Council  
Glasgow Life  
HEFESTIS Limited  
Orkney Council  
Royal Botanical Gardens Edinburgh  
Scottish Environmental Protection Agency  
Scottish Police Authority  
Scottish Prison Service  
The Scottish Government  
Universities Scotland  
Visit Scotland  
National Library of Scotland  
NHS Highland  
NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde  
Crown Estates Scotland

## Annex B

### Directors at year end / 31 July 2025

Andy Goor, *Chief Financial Officer, The University of St Andrews*<sup>1</sup>  
Nicky Anderson, *Director of Finance, Dundee and Angus College*<sup>2</sup>  
Pete Smith, *Principal, Borders College*  
Gemma Lines, *non-sector director*  
Phil McNaull, *non-sector director*  
Harpreet Paul, *non-sector director*  
Veronica Strachan, *University Secretary and Vice Principal Corporate Services, Robert Gordon University*  
Angus Warren, *Chief Executive, APUC Ltd*

1. Andy Goor joined the Board in February 2025 replacing Lee Hamill who resigned in December 2024.

2. Nicky Anderson joined the Board in February 2025 replacing Tracy Elliott who resigned in December 2024.

3. Jim McGeorge resigned in March 2025.

4. Margaret Cook resigned in May 2025.

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