

## Case Study – Institution Based Procurement Shared Service

Due to the much increased confidence the sector now recognised in the quality and professionalism of delivery of APUC's services, and the increased level of institutionally experienced senior management it had assembled, institutions began in early 2011 to ask APUC to manage their institutional level procurement, embedding locally all the attributes of the Reform Programme.

This activity is funded directly by the institutions that wish to utilise this activity but benefit from the professional support and development infrastructure and governance arrangements already in place for the core delivery of APUC's Reform Programme activities. It also enables institutions that may not be able to justify the expense of the appropriately high level of procurement expertise or where a combination of skill levels are required across several FTEs, to tap into exactly the level (less than and / or several FTE) of appropriate resource they need on an actual employment cost basis whereas they would otherwise need to compromise on service delivery and / or resort to costly consultancy to meet such needs.

APUC due to its reputation across the procurement profession, and its ability to offer varied careers, can recruit and retain staff more easily than small teams can, bringing additional sustainability / resilience to professional procurement delivery.

As of September 2016, institutional procurement expertise is provided at varying levels to 6 HEIs and 18 Colleges across Scotland. Each service is unique and tailored to the particular needs of the institutions involved in order that the most effective solution is in place. For some institutions this can mean several full time resources dedicated to one institution, for others, it is about sharing resources across several institutions within a region such as the Highlands & Islands, the Glasgow College Region or in Edinburgh / West Lothian with a joint HE/FE team.

APUC bases these institutional shared services staff where they can most effectively deliver the services required, this means that APUC has staff based in institutions across all regions of Scotland.

All of the above, apart from the obvious benefits identified above, allows for vertical integration of Procurement Reform Programme aligned service delivery, and facilitates local and regional / sub-regional collaboration of contracting requirements that otherwise can be difficult to effectively deliver with single institution focussed resources. This brings enhanced savings and increased leverage for the sector across the relevant supply markets.

*The sector also has a long history of shared services / resources management between institutions on an institution to institution basis - this has also been applied to procurement – outside of APUC this model has also been delivered for example between Queen Margaret*

*University and the University of Edinburgh who have successfully operated a procurement shared service arrangement for a number of years.*