



1. Do you need to buy?

Think carefully about whether a purchase is really necessary.

It might be possible to borrow or reuse a piece of kit from a colleague. We know it is not always straightforward but it is worth asking the question!

2. Use University Stores.

For some products using the [central University stores](#) might be the best and easiest solution.

Stores are able to buy in bulk on behalf of the University, not only to ensure good prices but also using contracted suppliers whose credentials have fully checked.

3. Make purchases based on the 'whole life' cost not just lowest price.

There can be hidden costs associated with some products, especially equipment which uses energy or other resources when it is in operation or standby.

Try to choose the most efficient models which are likely to have lower running costs, even if they are more expensive up front.

<http://www.procurement.manchester.ac.uk/procurementexcellence/responsible-procurement/responsibleprocurementbuyersguide/wholelifecosting/>

4. Consider the packaging.

Where possible choose products with minimal packaging. Remember that we also pay for the packaging at some stage!

Make sure that the supplier removes packaging after delivery and that they either re-use it, or dispose of it responsibly – see Tip Number 8.

Products with less packaging help reduce the amount of waste we produce and the associated cost of its disposal. They can also be more efficiently transported which also reduces emissions and creates less noise and disruption on campus.

5. Consider end-of-life *before* you buy.

Many of the things we buy will end up as waste.

How easy will it be to dispose of the product you are buying responsibly? Considering whether a product (and its packaging) can be reused or recycled before buying it helps us to be mindful of the waste we create as a University.

6. Buy recycled where you can.

This is far from an exact science; some recycled items have different, and bigger, impacts than virgin products but understanding this is important. Helping to create a market for products with recycled content is as important as recycling the waste we create.

The University uses tonnes of paper every month and this is a good example of a product that has a high quality recycled version easily available. You can look for recycled content in other products too and help us use our spending power more responsibly.

7. Understand the labels

It is easier than ever to find responsibly sourced products but it can be confusing.

As more products become accredited for their social or environmental credentials there are more labels to help the consumers identify them. We understand that this can be a little confusing so we have created a [simple guide](#) to help you identify some of the main labels to help make it easier to make responsible choices.

8. Check your supplier's credentials.

Do the suppliers you want to use (or already use) have high environmental or social standards? Contracted suppliers are vetted across a range of credentials and should be used where practicable –see Tip Number 9.

We are working with all of our suppliers to monitor and improve their social, economic and environmental impacts and have a tool for this purpose - for further information contact [the Central Procurement Office](#).

9. Avoid disposable products.

Look for products that are biodegradable or can be recycled. Detailed product information is available for items on the eMarketplace for example and often also on supplier website.

Disposables add to the accumulation of waste to landfill so should only be used where there are no alternatives.

10. Talk to us about innovation

We are open to supporting new ways of purchasing responsibly and also supporting local and small producers/organisations where we are able to do so.

Our work with Manchester Veg People demonstrates that we don't always take the easiest route when buying products for use on campus. By buying products or services locally supports Manchester, keeping money in our local community as well as reducing carbon emissions through reduced transportation. Supporting Social Enterprises or Community Interest Companies may require a little more thought but may still be possible. [Speak to us if you have an idea](#).