

# Modern Slavery Statement

## 1 Introduction

This Statement is made by Open Universities Australia Pty Ltd (ACN 053 431 888) (**OUA**) pursuant to the *Modern Slavery Act 2018* (Cth) for the financial year ending 31 December 2020 (**Reporting Period**). The Statement outlines OUA's commitment to identifying and mitigating modern slavery risk in our operations and supply chains.

Our values, set out below, are in line with the commitments espoused in this Statement.



act for customer



care for each other



continuously improve

We are pleased to submit our first Statement with the Australian Border Force and to provide insight into our journey to better understand our modern slavery risks, the steps we have taken and our plans going forward. Our aim is to improve the way in which we assess and address modern slavery risks year-on-year.

## 2 Our structure, operations and supply chains

### 2.1 Our structure

OUA is a registered charity based in Melbourne at 700 Collins Street, Docklands VIC 3008, and is owned by 7 Australian universities: Curtin University, Griffith University, Macquarie University, Monash University, RMIT University, Swinburne University and University of South Australia. Our Board of Directors comprises nominee directors from each of the aforementioned universities.

Our organisation has a number of core functions, including Product, Engineering, Marketing and Corporate Services with cross-functional teams aligned to delivering on Partner Experience, Student Experience and OUA employee experience. OUA owns 3 dormant shelf companies that do not trade and have never traded.

### 2.2 Operations

OUA is the leading national provider of access to online tertiary education. OUA's objectives are to further tertiary education by providing access to online tertiary education which is open to all students.

As a not-for profit, we are about the impact of our marketplace for our customers. We deliver value by helping learners' access and confidently choose education that is right for them, and by partnering with universities to help them discover opportunities and drive demand for their product.

We offer over 2,000 subjects and over 400 degrees through our 23 Australian university partners across a range of disciplines. The portfolio is dynamic and changes annually. We have approximately 240 staff who are involved in enrolling over 40,000 students. 84% of our staff are full-time workers, 15% are part-time and 1% are casual workers. In the 27 years since OUA commenced operations, we have supported over 430,000 students.

Our current university partners are La Trobe University, Flinders University, RMIT University, Australian National University, Deakin, The University of Adelaide, James Cook University, University of Tasmania, University of South Australia, Curtin University, Murdoch University, Edith Cowan University, University of New South Wales, Australian Catholic University, Charles Sturt University, The University of Newcastle, University of Technology Sydney, Griffith University, Macquarie University, Southern Cross University, University of New England, Swinburne University and Bond University.

OUA is a member of the Elite Athlete Friendly University program. Our university partners' degree offerings suit the unique needs of elite student athletes. The degrees are designed for distance education and are accessible online. Professional athletes studying through OUA come from a range of sports including all football codes, tennis, athletics, diving and more. OUA also has corporate partnerships with over 50 business and industry leaders, including National Australia Bank, Westpac Group, Commonwealth Bank, Australian Defence Force, Coca-Cola Amatil and others, giving these organisations a competitive edge through their employees' continuing professional development.

## 2.3 Supply chain

During the Reporting Period, we had approximately 124 suppliers. We procure goods and services across the following areas (in alphabetical order):

- Accounting software
- Audit services
- Beverage supplies
- Book supplies
- Clothing supplies
- Computer hardware
- Consulting services
- Courier services
- Disability support services
- EAP services
- Education services
- Electricity supplies
- Food supplies
- Higher education services
- ID verification services
- Indoor plant supply and service
- Industry body membership subscription
- Insurance services
- IT services
- Legal services

- Market research services
- Marketing services
- Office cleaning services
- Office equipment
- Office fit out services
- Office supplies
- Payroll services
- Postal and courier services
- Premises lease
- Records management services
- Software services
- Transport services

Our higher education providers are Australian, and most of our other suppliers are too, although some may supply goods and services that originate from other jurisdictions. We utilise the services of some global software companies which are American, although some of these companies use foreign subsidiaries including those located in Singapore, the UK and parts of Europe.

### **3 Modern slavery risks in our operations and supply chains**

#### **3.1 In our operations**

In seeking to identify the modern slavery risks in our operations and supply chain, we considered the potential for our business to cause, contribute to, or be directly linked to modern slavery. Given the fact that our operations are based in Australia, we assess our risk of modern slavery in our operations as low. Furthermore, the risk of modern slavery in our direct employment of workers is also considered low having regard to the fact that all of our 240 staff are employed directly by OUA and work primarily in office-based roles. Our staff are also protected by, and are afforded rights under the Commonwealth Fair Work legislation.

#### **3.2 In our supply chain**

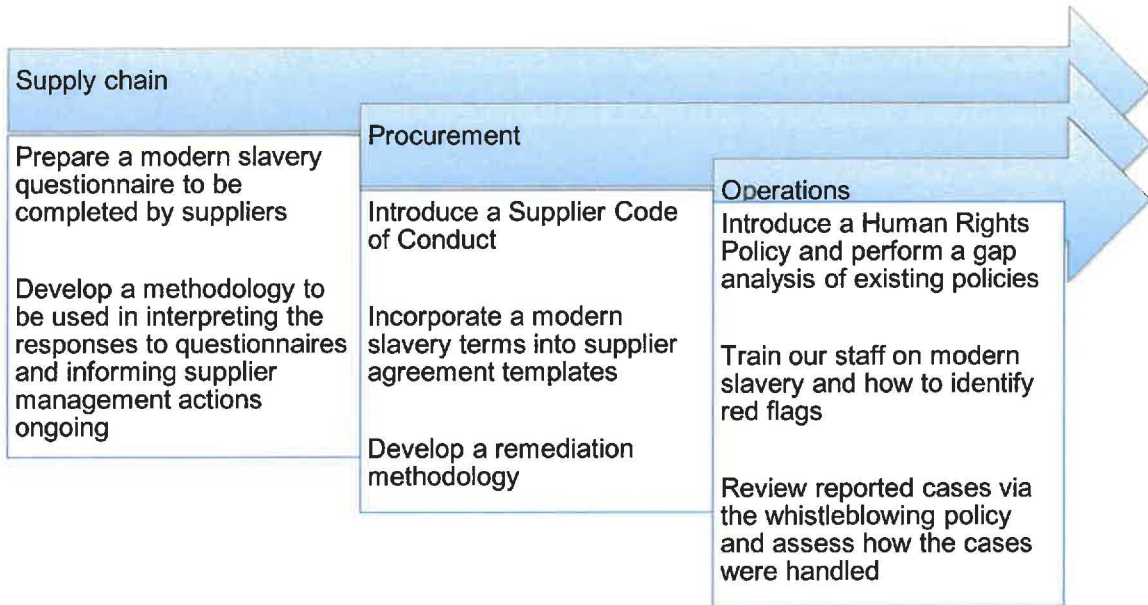
As noted in section 2.3 above, the bulk of our direct suppliers are based in Australia. Accordingly, the modern slavery risk within the first tier of our supply chain is likely to be low overall. However, we are mindful that modern slavery risks are inherent in the supply chain behind the uniforms and corporate merchandise we purchase, the lithium in our laptops and smartphones, the food and beverages we serve on our premises and hospitality services we purchase.

During the Reporting Period, over 60% of our annual procurement spend was directed to Australian higher education services. We consider that the risk of modern slavery practices occurring within the operations of these institutions is likely to be low given that they are required to comply with the legal framework regulating employment practices in Australia. Like us, their reliance on technology will mean that a particular risk in their supply chains is in IT and telecommunications. However, we rely on, and defer to, the descriptions of modern slavery risks in the modern slavery statements submitted by the universities (for those required to report) listed in section 2.2 above.

### **4 Actions taken to assess and address modern slavery risks**

#### **4.1 In our operations**





## 6 Consultation and approval

As OUA's shelf companies remain dormant, it was not necessary for us to address the mandatory reporting criteria requiring every statement to "describe the process of consultation with any entities the reporting entity owns or controls".

This statement was approved by the Board of Directors on 20 May 2021.

Signed,

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Professor S. Bruce Dowton

Chairman

Dated this 24<sup>th</sup> day of May 2021

