



THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH

## *News Release*

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### **Edinburgh is first UK university to adopt conflict mineral policy**

The University of Edinburgh is taking steps to ensure that the goods it buys do not contain so-called conflict minerals

The move – a first for a UK university – will seek to put pressure on suppliers to eradicate minerals associated with financing wars in Africa from their supply chains

Extracting these materials – for use in cars, mobile phones and other consumer electronics – has perpetuated the region's wars.

By striving to use alternatives, the conflict minerals policy will show support for vulnerable communities ravaged by violence.

The policy, formalised by the University's Central Management group, also applies a much broader definition to include any minerals that have been used to fund conflict in any part of the world.

The University will work collaboratively with procurement consortia and the wider public sector to meet its commitment. Complex international supply chains mean that many electronics purchased could knowingly or unknowingly contain conflict minerals.

Suppliers will be asked to report on their supply chains, the risks of conflict minerals being present in the goods they sell and strategies they are taking to eradicate conflict minerals. Every effort will be made to use responsibly sourced natural minerals.

The University will also link with research on conflict minerals, promote student engagement through learning and teaching, and raise awareness among staff and students.

The new policy builds on the University's sustainable procurement strategy that seeks to create socially responsible supply chains. Edinburgh is a founding member of Electronics Watch, an EU-wide initiative which supports public buyers in calling for fair working conditions in electronics manufacturing.

The University is currently running Fairtrade Fortnight, a series of events raising awareness of fair trade and sustainable procurement.

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Director of Social Responsibility and Sustainability Dave Gorman said: “The University is committed to sustainable procurement, from the electronics that we buy in large amounts such as computers, down to individual purchases made by staff.

“This new policy gives us a framework within which to work with our suppliers to encourage transparency in supply chains, take action where conflict minerals exist, and advise on more suitable alternatives to support companies with good working practices and ultimately improve the lives of vulnerable communities.”

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