



# HISA Ethical Policy

## Mission Statement

The Highlands and Islands Students' Association (HISA) is committed to ethical and sustainable trading and operations. We will champion ethical organisations and suppliers and will regularly review our suppliers and practices. We will ensure that our members' ethical concerns and priorities are reflected in HISA's investment and purchasing decisions. Additionally, we will seek out businesses, partners, and individuals whose ethical values align with our own, and those of our members, and complement our Strategic Plan. We will make every effort to check suppliers against these standards, and welcome comments about anyone with whom we do business, via emailing [hisa@uhi.ac.uk](mailto:hisa@uhi.ac.uk).

## Responsibility

The Chief Executive and President are responsible for the principals of this policy. The Communication and Commercial Manager and Director of Operations are responsible for implementing the ethical policy and ensuring purchase decisions are made within this framework. However, all employees are responsible for ensuring that the policy's aims and objectives are met within their areas of influence.

Any queries regarding ethical investments or purchases will be referred to HISA's Compliance, Governance and Risk Committee for assessment.

## Objectives

- We will maintain honesty and transparency in our business practices and external engagements.
- We aim to minimise the negative ethical impact of our activities and promote higher ethical standards.
- We will be socially responsible on local, national, and international levels.
- We support the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the core values of the International Labour Organisation and ensure our suppliers and partners do the same.
- We strive to be a leading union in ethical action and campaigning, known for exceptional innovations in the sector.

## Ethical Issues for Consideration:

### Drugs and Alcohol

We will never engage directly with companies who make it their primary business to sell alcohol because of the number of our members who are under the legal age of alcohol consumption.

We will partner with licensed bars and clubs; however, this is to ensure the health and safety of our students in licensed spaces and to aid harm reduction, for example bars and clubs who offer free drink spiking kits and safe spaces. These bars and clubs must ensure that they follow all relevant licensing laws, and we may retract partnerships where we are concerned about the reputation of said bars and clubs.

We will never engage with any organisation that deals in illegal substances.

### Human Trafficking and Exploitation of Workers

We have a zero-tolerance to all forms of slavery and human trafficking. We are taking reasonable actions to understand all potential modern slavery risks related to our business and supply chain. We expect all our suppliers to adhere to the core values of the International Labour Organisation. Exploitation of workers is unacceptable.



## Health and Wellbeing

The association will not knowingly invest in companies whose activities harm health, including those related to alcohol, tobacco, arms manufacturers, or violations of international law.

## Human Rights

Organisations we work with must uphold basic human rights. We will not work with businesses linked to oppressive regimes, as identified by [www.ethicalconsumer.org](http://www.ethicalconsumer.org). We support companies that promote fair trade, humane working conditions, and international human rights standards.

## Ethical Standards

Suppliers must conduct business ethically and must not seek competitive advantage through unethical practices such as bribery, corruption, or kickbacks.

## Finance and Student Debt

We will only work with financial services that seek to minimise student debt and support ethical financial behaviours amongst their customers. We will also specifically will not work with companies who operate “Buy Now, Pay Later” (BNPL) schemes that operate as a point-of-sale instalment loan as these are not currently regulated by Section 75 Protection.

We do not work with companies that promote or operate gambling, other than lotteries created to raise money for charities and community causes.

## Environmental Issues

We avoid ties with organisations whose core activities contribute to global climate change, persistent environmental chemicals, or unsustainable resource harvesting.

We support companies involved in recycling, sustainable waste management, food waste reduction, renewable energy, energy efficiency, and ecological sustainability.

## Summary

The purpose of this document is to outline the following:

- The Highlands and Islands Students' Association is dedicated to ethical and sustainable practices. It prioritises ethical concerns in its decisions and seeks partnerships with entities that align with its values and Strategic Plan.
- The Chief Executive and President ensure the framework of the ethical policy, supported by all employees within their respective roles.

We will engage or choose not to engage with the following:

- Avoid direct partnerships with businesses primarily directly selling alcohol.
- Only collaborate with bars and clubs that have policies which reduce harm, promote low/no-alcohol options, and ensure compliance with licensing laws and relevant safety measures.
- Require suppliers to adhere to International Labour Organisation values and recognise Union membership.
- Avoid investments in companies that harm health, including those related to alcohol, tobacco, arms, and international law violations.
- Work with organisations that uphold human rights and avoid those linked to oppressive regimes, as identified by [www.ethicalconsumer.org](http://www.ethicalconsumer.org).
- Support fair trade and humane working conditions.
- Ensure suppliers conduct business ethically, avoiding practices like bribery and corruption.



- Partner with financial services that minimise student debt and avoid companies with "Buy Now, Pay Later" schemes or those promoting gambling, other than lotteries created to raise money for charities and community causes.
- Avoid ties with organisations contributing to climate change, persistent environmental damage, or unsustainable resource harvesting.
- Support recycling, sustainable waste management, food waste reduction, renewable energy, energy efficiency, and ecological sustainability.