

Uniform Total Cost of Ownership (TCO) Checklist

Use this checklist to assess uniform proposals beyond unit price — focusing on lifecycle cost, risk, operational impact and long-term value.

1. Garment Cost vs Lifecycle Value

- Unit cost per garment documented
- Expected garment lifespan under real working conditions
- Replacement frequency based on wear, laundering and role demands
- Cost impact of early failure, shrinkage, fading or damage
- Evidence of fabric and construction testing for durability

Approval lens: **Lowest price ≠ lowest cost over time.**

2. Replacement & Churn Cost

- Annual replacement volume forecasted
- Impact of staff turnover on uniform issuance
- Ability to reuse, reallocate or manage returns
- Controls to prevent over-ordering or ad-hoc replacements

Approval lens: **Poor uniform acceptance increases churn, complaints and re-issue costs.**

3. Administration & Internal Time Cost

- Ordering process clearly defined
- Allocation controls in place by role or staff member
- Reporting available for spend, usage and back orders
- Time spent managing exceptions, complaints and manual workarounds assessed

Approval lens: **Admin burden is a real cost — reduce it.**

4. Supplier Capability & Supply Chain Risk

- Proven ability to service all locations and roles
- Stock availability and contingency planning
- Scalability for growth, rebrands or seasonal demand
- Delivery reliability and lead times confirmed

Approval lens: **Supply disruption creates operational and reputational risk.**

5. Brand Consistency & Compliance Risk

- Uniform aligns with current brand guidelines
- Consistency across sites, roles and regions
- Clear process for future brand updates or refreshes
- Controls to prevent non-compliant alternatives being worn

Approval lens: **Inconsistency weakens brand and increases long-term rework cost.**

6. Employee Acceptance & Fit

- Inclusive size range and fit options available
- Garments designed for role-specific conditions
- Comfort, mobility and safety requirements addressed
- Evidence of wearer feedback or trials

Approval lens: **Acceptance reduces complaints, exceptions and replacement spend.**

7. Retention & Productivity Impact

- Uniform supports professional identity and pride
- Risk of dissatisfaction contributing to disengagement assessed
- Link between uniform quality and retention considered

Approval lens: **Turnover is significantly more expensive than quality garments.**

8. Sustainability & Ethical Sourcing

- Supplier ethical certifications and audits confirmed
- Transparency across supply chain tiers
- Sustainable fabric options evaluated
- End-of-life, reuse or circularity options considered

Approval lens: **Ethical risk is commercial risk.**

9. Technology & Spend Control

- Centralised ordering platform in place
- Role-based allocations or approval controls
- Visibility of spend, usage and back orders
- Ability to manage new starters and leavers efficiently

Approval lens: **Control prevents budget leakage.**

10. Long-Term Value Assessment

- Total cost over 3–5 years calculated
- Cost avoided through reduced replacements and admin
- Risk mitigation value identified
- Supplier partnership stability assessed

Approval lens: **Approval should be based on **net value**, not line-item cost.**