

Birmingham City University

Sustainable Catering Policy and Targets

2020-23

Introduction

As part of its [Environmental Plan 2020-25](#), Birmingham City University (BCU) is committed to embedding sustainability across institutional frameworks, processes and activities. We are also committed to improving our environmental performance annually as part of our ISO 14001:2015 accredited Environmental Management System (EMS).

Sustainable Catering

Providing sustainable, healthy, ethically sourced, seasonal and local food for students, staff, and visitors is an important aspect of the University's drive to manage its environmental impacts and be a more responsible institution. Our catering outlets, services and products must reflect the University's sustainability values.

Food has the potential to engage individuals and groups from all areas of the University, regardless of background and interests, and help translate 'sustainability' into a meaningful and practical concept.

This policy applies to the University restaurants, coffee shops, hospitality operation and vending machines.

Commitments

The policy establishes clear goals and aspirations for progress in this area for the period 2020-2023 as well as targets that can assist in monitoring its implementation.

The aim is to create a framework where all catering decisions are based on strong ethical, social and environmental responsibility principals and delivers progress against the following key commitments:

- Ensure that all University catering offerings meet current best practice benchmarks, standards and certification
- Promote social justice and equity through widespread availability and use of ethically sourced products
- Enhance the welfare of animals and sustainable agricultural environment through the use of free range and organic products
- Minimise environmental impact and resource use by reducing waste, rationalising transport and reducing energy and water consumption
- Promote equality and diversity by expanding the range and cultural variety of all University menus

- Create an ethos of healthy eating and optimum nutrition by promoting healthy foods and avoiding the promotion of unhealthy options
- Provide and promote plant-based and reduced meat options
- Support the local economy, strengthen community links and reduce food miles by using local and seasonal products
- Enhance student and staff engagement with regular and appealing communication on sustainable food issues

Responsibility

The Sustainable Catering Policy has been developed in collaboration with BCU and the University caterers, BaxterStorey.

Timeframe

This Sustainable Catering Policy has been updated from the previous policy which spanned 2017-2020. This policy will cover the final period of the current catering contract. This will be reviewed and refreshed in time for the new catering contract which will start in August 2023.

Monitoring, reporting and governance

Updates on progress of the Sustainable Catering Policy and Targets are reported through the Environmental Committee. Progress is also included and tracked in the annual Environmental Report, which is presented to the Board of Governors every autumn. Regular communications also take place between the University Caterer and BCU Environmental Team to monitor progress against the targets and actions, with progress against targets being updated at least annually.



Sustainable Catering Targets

Area	Target	Date	Evidence
Certification	University caterers to maintain Bronze Food for Life catering accreditation	Aug 2021	Annual audit – accreditation awarded and certificate displayed July 2023 – Bronze maintained; have not achieved silver.
	University caterers to review Silver Food for Life catering accreditation for 2021-22 and implement actions where feasible	During 2021-22	
	University caterers maintain ISO 14001 accreditation and apply ways of working to the BCU contract	Continuous	Certificate supplied to BCU July 2023 – Certificate viewed.
	All fish to be purchased from Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) certified suppliers ensuring that no seafood featured on the MSC red list is included within menus in line with MSC Chain of Custody	Continuous	Audited by way of the Food for Life, Soil Association accreditation July 2023 – This is BaxterStorey policy - reviewed.
	All tuna used to be pole or line caught only	Continuous	Controlled via company supply chain. July 2023 – This is BaxterStorey policy - reviewed.
	Use of rapeseed oil only in frying and food production due to its nutritional benefits and its UK production.	Continuous	Delivery notes held on file for inspection when and if required July 2023 - R-oil from Cotswolds still used. Seen during internal audit.



	Join Red Tractor assurance or compassion in world farming schemes and hold licence for use of logo internally as a result of all chicken, beef and pork products being Red Tractor assured.	Continuous	Licence on file and delivery notes/supply chain cross reference to ensure compliance July 2023 – This is BaxterStorey policy - reviewed. Have dedicated Red Tractor bacon and sausage supplier.
Fairtrade, fairly traded and ethically sourced products	Ensure that a good and varied range of Fairtrade and ethically sourced goods are available at all University outlets	Continuous	Compare product mix against prior periods and ensure that range is built upon as a result July 2023 - Divine chocolate bars, all coffee is Rainforest alliance or Fairtrade.
	Use palm oil certified to the RSPO (Roundtable of Sustainable Palm Oil) accreditation standard or Greenpalm certified oil	Continuous	RSPO certification or other certification evidence July 2023 – this is BaxterStorey policy - reviewed.
	Reduce the catering contract soya consumption and impact through increasing plant-based and vegetarian offerings (see 'Diversity and Choice')	Continuous	Reported by catering contractor July 2023 - Food EQ programme, Humane Society training and coaching and pop-up events.



Free range and organic	Provision of free range eggs in all University catering	Continuous	Measured by way of annual Food for Life audit which requires that these be adhered to. By retaining and improving on our level of accreditation from Bronze up to Gold caterer will be demonstrating increases in the use of these. July 2023 - Issue with free range eggs previously due to avian flu but resolved now.
	Specify free range, freedom foods and Defra certified eggs from our main supplier in products containing eggs as a main ingredient such as mayonnaise, quiche, flans, cakes etc.		
	Increase year on year use of free range and organic items such as vegetables, meat, fruit and juices.		



Local, seasonal and fresh	Reduce the food miles associated with food transport and support the local economy by ensuring that local produce accounts for a significant percentage of ingredients in all menus	Update annually	List of local suppliers updated every three months July 2023 – supplier list viewed. Use a lot of local suppliers. Local Birmingham supplier for sandwiches in place. Using Sysco for veg, fresh meat, fish and milk to reduce deliveries.
	Ensure that at least two items of seasonal produce are available on all menus throughout each academic year	Continuous	Picked up through Soil Association accreditation July 2023 – evident in menus.
	Install herb planters in the main restaurant areas of Curzon and Seacole Buildings to be used in the kitchens and promote grow your own	By July 2022	Herb planters in place July 2023 – indoor herb station installed at Curzon June 2022. Location will be reviewed with the refurbishment of the catering area.
Healthy food	Include the positive promotion of healthy food, healthy eating options and benefits at least once a week during term time – including reduction in red meat, high fat, high sugar and processed foods in line with Dept. of Health guidelines	Continuous	Healthy ME roadshows to feature every quarter plus highlights visible on counters in restaurants. July 2023 - EQ pop-up in September.
	No promotion of non-healthy foods including soft drinks, high sugar foods, high salt foods, high fat foods and highly processed food.	Continuous	Evidence of these not featuring on any promotional materials or as part of any 'deals' July 2023 – still done.



Diversity and Choice	Ensure that 60% of offerings at catering outlets are vegetarian, vegan, gluten free or halal	Continuous	Measured by way of annual Food for Life audit. July 2023 – high levels of these options viewed on menus. To encourage people to reduce meat intake, promote things as plant-based rather than vegan and reduce amount of meat in other dishes, increasing quantity of vegetables.
	Increase plant-based and vegetarian offering at restaurants and outlets year-on-year	Annually	Reported by catering contractor July 2023 – good offerings available. Make a lot of things plant-based with option of adding different types of protein.



Waste	Reduction year on year in disposables or plastic utensils for use in events, forums and conferences	Annually	Purchasing to be recorded, comparisons provided for review every year. July 2023 – Plastic disposable cutlery replaced with wooden, single use sauce sachets not used.
	Non-disposable options available and clearly advertised for all takeaway food at University outlets	Continuous	Evidence provided and fed back in Client Review July 2023 - Reusable coffee cups promoted again. Water bottles promoted. Customers asked if they're eating in to reduce disposable packaging. Eco-to-go boxes promoted. Took part in Waste Awareness Week and promoted the reusable boxes and cups.
	All waste/used oil to be collected and used in the production of bio fuel	Ongoing	R-Oils collection certificates retained for reference. July 2023 – Waste transfer notes viewed during internal audit.
	Reduction year on year of disposable cups used day to day at BCU Catering contractor own brand disposable cups move to single wall	Annually	No of 15p discounts for non-use recorded and reviewed plus purchase levels of disposable cups. July 2023 – Data to be reviewed at end of academic year compared to year and compare to pre-Covid.



Used coffee grounds to be made readily available at all coffee outlets for customers to use in their gardens.	Continuous	Can be viewed at all coffee outlets. Weights measured July 2023 – Viewed during internal audit.
Bottled drinks/water not to be used or provided to meetings and events unless they are supplied in re-usable containers.	Continuous	Reflected in offer by way of the hospitality brochure and adhered to July 2023 – Have water machines at Curzon but using large Kilner jars for events where necessary.
Volume and cost of food wastage to be recorded weekly, monitored and reduced year on year	Annual reduction	Detailed in annual progress report. Reported monthly. July 2023 - Monitoring checked in BCU ISO14001 external audit. Food waste recycling being introduced into the MP restaurant.
Review the waste produced through the catering contract and any opportunities to reduce this further	Continuous	Review packaging from deliveries and purchasing of disposables July 2023 - All wooden disposable cutlery. Trial of Simply Cups underway in JP building. Recycled napkins. Waste Knot initiative using surplus veg that would normally go to landfill is being implemented late July 2023 including courgettes, marrow, beetroot, brassica, carrots and apples.



Energy and water consumption	Catering outlets responsible for consumption of electricity, water and gas. Point of contact provided for each concession to report on utilities consumption to the Energy Manager.	Ongoing	Ability to report on energy and water consumption July 2023 – Energy Manager has list of outlets/contacts.
	Implement submetering in any outlets currently unmetered by July 2022	September 2022	Submetering installed July 2023 – Will be installed as part of the upcoming BMS project.
	Always purchase a minimum of A+ rated, high efficiency appliances and equipment for catering purposes	Continuous	Evidence through purchasing and labelled on equipment July 2023 - Supply chain issues for new oven meant lower rating was purchased due to long wait time.
Communication	Clear labelling and regular promotion of sustainability offerings with a focused and positive message. Communicate sustainable catering highlights as and when achieved.	Continuous	Communications such as Tiger Today. Messages to be reflected at least once a week in menus July 2023 – Promote vegan options as plant-based and highlight the ingredients. Worked with Env Team on articles and social media campaigns. A new screen has been added to JP building that advertises sustainability information.
	Catering staff fully briefed on the food being served and background to sustainability issues. Training and toolbox talks delivered to catering staff on reducing the environmental impacts of catering including: reducing food waste, correct waste management, reducing energy	Annual/ Continuous	Training to be initiated and will be audited as part of the Food for Life Soil Association application. July 2023 – all staff undertake Green Flash training - Training



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consumption through cooking.

records checked
during ISO 14001
external audit.



	Ensure high level of catering involvement in initiatives such as Fairtrade fortnight, Go Green Week and any other relevant events in order to promote sustainable catering	Continuous	Proposals submitted in support of initiatives and results reviewed at client reviews July 2023 – Worked with Env Team on Fairtrade Fortnight and active participant in BCU's first Waste Awareness Week.
Cleaning products	Continue to ensure that only environmentally friendly cleaning products are used in the catering facilities	Continuous	All cleaning products sourced via Zenith - ISO 9001:2008 standard. With accreditations including ISO 9001 and ISO 14001 July 2023 – Products still used.
Procurement and suppliers	Ensure that local and smaller suppliers are not discriminated against in the procurement process and in specifications.	Continuous	Evidence of local/smaller suppliers submitted and then tracked against. Evidence to be provided when required. July 2023 - New catering contract tender included sustainability requirements.
	Always include sustainability specifications in new supply contracts and tenders in line with this policy and action plan	Continuous	
Events and corporate catering	Reintroduce a sustainable menu for catering offerings	October 2022	Evidence of this being promoted by hospitality team. July 2023 – This is being reintroduced as part of the Hospitality Offer remodelling commencing 1 August 2023.



	5% of meeting and event catering requests choosing sustainable menu	Continuous	Sales recorded and reviewed annually Reviewed and measured annually July 2023 – See above.
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