



# Environmental, sustainable and healthy food policy

Our catering doesn't need to cost the earth

Environmental Policy is any action deliberately taken to manage human activities with a view to reduce, prevent or mitigate harmful effects on natural resource and ensure that man made changes to the environment do not have harmful effects on man or the environment.

January 2023

## Introduction

As university caterers we understand that catering operations can have a significant impact on the environment and we therefore strive to ensure that every aspect of our operations complies with environmental regulations.

We understand that we play a significant role in the food chain both as the procurers and providers of food. We recognise our responsibility to provide healthy and sustainable food to our customers and endeavour to promote healthy and sustainable practices in all aspects of our food sourcing, production and service, in line with the NHS Eat Well Guide.

This policy covers all of Royal Holloway's catering outlets and is reviewed annually by the Head of Catering and Conference Services.

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## Our aims

### Energy and carbon reduction

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- We are committed to reducing carbon emissions. We aim to minimise energy and water consumption through efficient administration, equipment selection, usage and disposal, food storage, preparation and cooking.
  - We have reviewed all of our deliveries and reduced the number of deliveries by over 40% since January 2021
  - We turn off equipment, heating, lighting and water when not needed and use auto-timers where possible.
  - We use natural ventilation where feasible.
  - We take environmental impact and energy saving features into consideration when purchasing new equipment. All new equipment purchased will be A rated wherever possible.
  - We regularly service equipment to increase the energy efficiency of appliances.
  - We reuse equipment where practical to do so and dispose of obsolete equipment in the most environmentally friendly way possible.
  - We communicate the carbon impact of the main ingredient of each dish on the menus in our dining halls and Crosslands by means of a carbon impact logo
  - We aim to purchase the most sustainable catering vehicles.
  - We have been ranked as a platinum top tier university by Uswitch, having met the criteria for green electricity tariff, green gas tariff, renewable installations, electric vehicles and eco-friendly initiatives.
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## Waste reduction

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- We provide and encourage the use of facilities for recycling
- We are committed to implementing sustainable waste management practices. Our waste disposal contract with Grundon ensures that all of the waste produced on campus is recycled, reused or converted into energy so that none of our waste is sent to landfill.
- Our dry mixed recyclables (paper, card, plastic and cans) are collected in one container. After segregation in to their individual product streams by Grundon, they are transported within the UK and abroad to be recycled into new products.
- All glass collected from campus is sent to a glass re-processor where the glass is re-melted into new glass products.
- We have installed glass waste bins in our catering outlets.
- We have introduced food waste bins into our dining halls where appropriate.
- We are committed to educating our customers in food waste with information posters on display and staff stationed at our food waste stations
- All non-recyclable residual waste collected from campus is disposed of via an Energy from Waste Facility. The steam produced from the Energy from Waste facility is used to drive a turbine that produces 66MW of electricity, enough for 66,000 homes each year.
- Daily food waste is tracked and monitored in all of our catering outlets. All food waste is sent for reprocessing at an Anaerobic Digestion (AD) plant. The methane gas, which is produced as a by-product is captured and used to drive generators, which produce electricity for export to the national grid. The remaining waste is rich in nutrients for crops and is used as an alternative to inorganic fertilisers.
- Our butcher delivers all meat in re-usable crates which are returned for re-use.
- We have introduced cup specific recycling bins into outlets. We are reviewing the feasibility of other waste streams, such as composting coffee grounds.
- We have introduced controlled cooking of large amount of food throughout the duration of a service to avoid unnecessary food waste.
- We aim to reduce food plate waste by 10% in our dining halls by March 2021

## Disposables

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- We have removed all single use plastic water bottles from our catering outlets. We only stock water in recyclable cans or sugar cane bottles
- By removing single use plastic water bottles, we prevented over 30,000 500ml plastic bottles from being discarded
- We aim to remove plastic bottles for all other drinks by December 2023
- All disposable cups, takeaway boxes, cake boxes, cutlery and straws are recyclable or biodegradable.
- All of our disposable cups (excluding Starbucks), cake boxes and takeaway boxes are manufactured in the UK
- In October 2019, we joined the [Refill initiative](#) and actively promote the locations of the [water refilling stations](#) across campus
- We encourage the use of reusable cups and we stock KeepCups in all of our catering outlets. We charge a 25p levy, to users of disposable cups in our outlets.
- We have introduced a 25p levy to users of disposable containers in our dining halls

- We manage leftover packaged food items, by moving them to outlets with longer opening hours
  - We have removed single use plastic cups from our catering outlets and have introduced china cups into all outlets where possible
  - We have removed plastic cups from our hospitality menus and have introduced the option for our customers to bring their own cups
  - We are investigating the manufacturing cycle of each disposable item to check the greenest process
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## Water

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- In October 2019, we joined the [#Refill initiative](#), aimed at actively encouraging students, staff and visitors to drink tap water and make full use of drinking fountains by identifying all of their locations on campus. The main campus now has 27 drinking water fountains, designed for filling both cups and bottles.
  - All catering facilities provide a free drinking water facility.
  - We stock sugar cane bottles, or cans of Life Water, an infinitely recyclable alternative to plastic bottles, which also fund clean water projects across the globe to help alleviate the World Water Crisis.
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## Sustainable procurement

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- We are active members of [TUCO](#) (The Universities Caterers Organisation) and use TUCO Purchasing Framework Agreements. Through this suppliers are nominated and regulated and environmental and sustainability issues are embedded into tendering specifications, see: [TUCO sustainable procurement](#).
  - We make procurement decisions that take into account social and environmental factors whilst achieving best value for money, by selecting and engaging with suppliers - both **directly and via our purchasing partners**
  - We gain information from our suppliers regarding the provenance, nutrition and welfare of their meat, fish, fruit, vegetables and eggs to assist us in making more informed choices and make our supply chain aware of our increasing desire to source ethically and sustainable products.
  - We are currently tendering for the provision of meat, poultry, dairy and eggs from sources using practices that conform to the highest environmental, social and animal welfare standards
  - We have achieved Marine Steward Council Accreditation and only use fish from [sustainable stocks](#)
  - We provide local and seasonal fruit and vegetables and promote these to customers via our intranet
  - We promote Fairtrade products
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## Fruit and vegetables

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- We state the provenance of the vegetables on the menus in our dining halls
  - The menus in our restaurants are changed regularly so that we can offer seasonable produce where possible
  - We encourage healthy eating in all catered restaurants by providing salads with daily freshly prepared ingredients.
  - We have introduced a fresh fruit and vegetable juice bar in The Hub. The juice recipes are available to view on [the intranet](#).
  - We provide a selection of fresh fruit in all catering outlets.
  - We engage with suppliers to ensure we procure seasonal produce from the local area whenever possible
  - We have a dedicated vegetarian and vegan counter in our dining halls and offer vegetarian alternatives in all of our other catering outlets. We support Vegetarian Week and International Vegan day and actively promote Veganuary.
  - We have a dedicated vegetarian and vegan street food van open daily for lunch, which is accredited by the Vegetarian Society
  - We hold monthly "Eat Well Wednesdays" where 70% of the menu is suitable for vegetarians and reduce the meat in the other dishes that are served, replacing where necessary with pulses, beans and other sources of protein that are not of animal origin and that our selections in other outlets is heavily meat free
  - We have increased the choice of vegetables from 2 to 3 per day
  - In December 2021, we were awarded Food for the Brain accreditation, recognising our high standards of nutritional excellence, our commitment to providing nutritionally balanced food, and the culture we have developed around nutrition awareness.
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## Meat, poultry and dairy

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- We are committed to ensuring the welfare of our meat and dairy, where possible using Red Tractor Assured produce.
  - We provide 100% free range chickens on all hospitality dinners and our halal chicken meat is Red Tractor standard across all outlets.
  - All of our milk and cream as well as the majority of our cheese is certified Red Tractor Assured.
  - We have adopted the Better Chicken Commitment (BCC) meaning that we will require our suppliers to meet the BCC requirements for 100% of the fresh, frozen and processed chicken in our supply chain by 2026
  - All of our meat is Red Tractor certified as a minimum standard
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## Eggs

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- We ensure that all whole/liquid/dried eggs purchased in all our catering outlets are 100% from a free-range production system.
  - We aim to achieve a Good Egg Award by September 2023.
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## Fish

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- All of our cod, salmon, tuna, prawns, pollock, mackerel, mussels, anchovy and crab dishes have the Marine Conservation Society's (MCS) accreditation
  - We promote sustainable fish and seafood to customers on our menus and in our dining rooms, ensuring we endorse fish that is in the Marine Conservation Society's Good Fish Guide.
  - We will monitor our suppliers to ensure they are certified Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) approved
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## Oil

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- We will ensure that 100% of the oil used in Royal Holloway Catering is vegetable, rapeseed oil or olive oil. No trans fats will be used.
  - We will ensure that our waste oil is collected by KFF and goes to green energy.
  - We only purchase from suppliers who use sustainable Palm Oil.
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## Fairtrade

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- All our catering outlets serve tea and coffee that is ethically traded. Fairtrade refreshments are also served at all conferences, meetings and events.
- A wide range of Fairtrade products are also used in other catering outlets.
- We will endeavour to increase our ethically traded offer, adding more ethically traded products per year, where available.
- We actively promote Fairtrade Fortnight in our catering outlets.

## Education, communication and community

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- We actively promote the benefits of a diet that is healthy and environmentally and socially sustainable, by enhancing customer awareness through guidance, product information and awareness campaigns
  - We have sustainability as a standard item on agendas for catering management and Catering Steering Group meetings.
  - We communicate our environmental and food policy and specific information regarding sustainability initiatives of our food to our service users, visitors and staff via the staff and student newsletters, social media and intranets
  - We raise awareness of sustainable foods by promotions and events including annual COP food events, Eat Well Food Days, Fairtrade Fortnight, Vegetarian Week, World Vegan day and Veganuary
  - We hold a three-star rating with the Sustainable Restaurant Association (SRA)
  - We have sustainability information displayed in our outlets and available online to inform staff and customers of environmental and sustainability matters.
  - We have posters displayed in all outlets with a QR code to take customers to our Sustainability policy
  - Training for all levels of staff to encourage awareness of sustainable and healthy eating issues is part of our staff induction and Performance Development Review processes.
  - We are developing the language on our menus to include words such as “grilling” and “steaming” where possible.
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