



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.

December 2020

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.

Our aims

Energy and carbon reduction

- We are committed to reducing carbon emissions as detailed in the Carbon Management Plan 2010-2020. We aim to minimise energy and water consumption through efficient administration, equipment selection, usage and disposal, food storage, preparation and cooking.
 - We have reviewed the methods we use in our preparation, cooking and storage to ensure they are the most efficient and effective means to reduce energy whilst maintaining quality and freshness.
 - 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.
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Waste reduction

- 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 Crosslands. We will roll this initiative out to the remaining outlets when they re-open in 2021 (temporary closure is due to COVID-19)
- We are currently investigating the introduction of food waste bins into outlets and will install these in all outlets by December 2021.
- 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 will introduce cup specific recycling bins into outlets by April 2021. We are reviewing the feasibility of other waste streams, such as turning coffee grounds into coffee logs.
- We have introduced controlled cooking of large amount of food throughout the duration of a service enabling us to return any uncooked ingredients.

Disposables

- We encourage the use of refillable water bottles. Cold water bottles are stocked and promoted for customer use in our catering outlets.
 - 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. (This initiative is currently suspended due to COVID-19 restrictions)
 - In August 2018 we introduced a 20p levy, which was increased to 25p in September 2019, to users of disposable cups in our outlets. In the year 1st August 2018 – 31st July 2019, 75% of all hot beverages purchased on campus were in a re-usable cup
 - We removed disposable containers from our catered halls in January 2020, however this is now temporarily suspended due to COVID-19 restrictions
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- We have introduced Costa cup recycling in Little Café on the Square with separate bins for the cups and any left-over fluids
 - We manage leftover packaged food items, by moving them to outlets with longer opening hours
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- In April 2018, plastic straws were replaced with bio-degradable straws in all of our catering outlets where possible
 - In October 2019, we removed single use plastic cups from our catering outlets
 - We have introduced china cups into Crosslands and the Boilerhouse Café
 - 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

- In October 2019, we joined the [#Refill initiative](#), aimed at actively encouraging students and staff to drink tap water and make full use of drinking fountains by identifying all of their locations on campus. We will work with the College to encourage an increase in the number of drinking fountains on campus to help reduce bottled water sales. The main campus now has [27 drinking water fountains](#), designed for filling both cups and bottles.
 - All new catering facilities will provide a drinking water facility.
 - We stock Life Water on campus. Purchases of Life Water fund clean water projects across the globe, to help alleviate the World Water Crisis.
 - We promote the use of re-usable water bottles to reduce the dependence on bottled mineral water
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Sustainable procurement

- 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 aim to liaise with our suppliers to gain information 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.
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- 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 and will review by April 2021
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- 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

- 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 salad bars with daily freshly prepared ingredients.
 - We have introduced a fresh fruit and vegetable juice bar in The Hub. The juices are changed daily and the 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 The Hub and Founder's Dining Hall and offer vegetarian alternatives in all of our other catering outlets. We support Vegetarian Week and International Vegan day.
 - 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 limited the serving of fried potatoes in catered halls to 3 times a week
 - We have increased the choice of vegetables from 2 to 3 per day
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Meat, poultry and dairy

- 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.
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Eggs

- 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 April 2021.
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Fish

- All of our cod, salmon, tuna, prawns, pollock, mackerel, mussels, anchovy and crab dishes have the Marine Conservation Society's (MCS) accreditation
 - We will promote sustainable fish and seafood to customers, 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

- 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 Filtafry and goes to green energy.
 - We aim to achieve sustainable Palm Oil certification by April 2021.
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Fairtrade

- 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 support Fairtrade Fortnight in our catering outlets.

Education, communication and community

- 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 Eat Well Food Days, Fairtrade Fortnight, Vegetarian Week and World Vegan day
 - We have a presence at the University's annual Sustainability Discovery session aimed at raising awareness of how the catering department is tackling sustainability
 - We display notices at the point of sale of bottled water stating "As part of our Environmental Policy, Royal Holloway wishes to discourage bottled water sales and encourage use of tap-water fountains and refillable water bottles.
 - We currently hold a one-star rating with the Sustainable Restaurant Association (SRA) and we aim to achieve a two star rating in 2021
 - We have sustainability information displayed in our outlets and available online to inform staff and customers of environmental and sustainability matters.
 - 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.
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