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.
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 will review 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 will turn off equipment, heating, lighting and water when not needed and use auto-timers where possible.
- We will use natural ventilation where feasible.
- We will take environmental impact and energy saving features into consideration when purchasing new equipment. All new equipment purchased will be A rated wherever possible.
- We will regularly service equipment to increase the energy efficiency of appliances.
- We will reuse equipment where practical to do so and dispose of obsolete equipment in the most environmentally friendly way possible.
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 into 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.
- 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 packaging which is returned for re-use. We will actively look at other ways to reduce the amount of waste material we generate by engaging with all of our suppliers regarding packaging and encourage suppliers to adopt re-usable crates.
- We are introducing cup specific recycling bins into outlets. We will be reviewing the feasibility of other waste streams, including turning coffee grounds into coffee logs
- We have reduced our food waste by introducing food production planners. This control allows us to forecast production figures based on historical data, ensuring we do not over purchase ingredients
- We have introduced controlled cooking of large amount of food throughout the duration of a service enabling us to return any uncooked ingredients
- We have introduced Food Waste control sheets for use by the head chef to ensure leftover ingredients can be used in other dishes

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. We offer our customers their first drink free with the initial sale of the cup in order to reduce the amount of disposable cup waste.
- 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 have removed disposable containers from our catered halls.
We manage leftover packaged food items, by moving them to outlets with longer opening hours.

- In April 2018, all plastic straws were replaced with bio-degradable straws in our catering outlets.
- In October 2019, we removed single use plastic cups from our catering outlets.
- We will introduce coffee cup recycling in all outlets by April 2020.
- In November 2019 we introduced china cups into Crosslands and the Boilerhouse Café.
- We have removed plastic cups from our hospitality menus and 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.

### 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.

### Sustainable procurement

- We are active members of TURO (The Universities Caterers Organisation) and use TURO Purchasing Framework Agreements. Through this suppliers are nominated and regulated and environmental and sustainability issues are embedded into tendering specifications, see: TURO 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 provenance, nutrition and welfare of their products to assist us in making more informed choice and make our supply chain aware of our increasing desire to source ethically and sustainable products.
- We are engaging with smaller local niche suppliers who source seasonal local produce whenever possible.
- We provide meat, poultry, dairy and eggs from sources using practices that conform to high environmental, social and animal welfare standards, as budgets allow.
- We use fish from sustainable stocks.
- We provide local and seasonal fruit and vegetables and promote these to customers.
- We promote Fairtrade products and increase the provision of Fairtrade fruit and vegetables.

**Fruit and vegetables**

- Menus in our restaurants are changed regularly so that we can offer seasonable produce where possible.
- We ensure hospitality dinner menus have seasonable produce as a matter of course.
- We encourage healthy eating in all catered restaurants by providing salad bars with daily freshly prepared ingredients.
- In 2018 we 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 promote 2 seasonal fruit and vegetables of the month each month and make these available to view on the intranet.
- 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 will aim to hold regular Eat Well Food Days 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 limit the serving of fried potatoes in catered halls to 3 times a week.
Meat, poultry and dairy

- We are committed to ensuring we will increase higher welfare meat and dairy, where possible using Red Tractor Assured produce.
- We provide 100% free range chickens on all hospitality dinners. All meat served in halls is Red Tractor 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.

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 in 2020.

Fish

- All of our fish has 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

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.

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 actively support Fairtrade Fortnight in all 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 are building responsibility for sustainable issues into the roles of all catering staff and supporting this with appropriate training.
- We have sustainability as a standard item on agendas for catering management and Catering Steering Group meetings.
- We will 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 will raise awareness of sustainable foods by promotions and events including Eat Well Food Days, Fairtrade Fortnight, Vegetarian Week and World Vegan day.
- We will enhance staff, customer and supplier awareness of relevant environmental and social effects of a sustainable diet via promotional guidance, product information and awareness campaigns. We will utilise our catering van at our pop up 'food festival' events to promote a range of Royal Holloway Catering sustainability topics and achievements to students and staff.
- We will display notices at 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.
- In 2018 we achieved a one star rating with the Sustainable Restaurant Association (SRA) and we aim to achieve a two star rating in 2019.
- We will recognise our responsibility as an employer by educating catering staff in food sustainability. Staff will be aware of the various certification systems and their relevance for food production and food products that we use.
- We will have sustainability information available in all our outlets to inform staff and customers of environmental and sustainability matters.
- We will seek appropriate training for all levels of staff to encourage awareness of sustainable and healthy eating issues.