

Sustainable Catering Policy

1. INTRODUCTION

The University of Northampton's (UON) Sustainable Catering Policy outlines our commitment to providing a high-quality catering and hospitality service; meeting the objectives of the Environment & Sustainability Policy, Ethical & Sustainable Procurement Policy and Waste Policy and reflects UON's core sustainability goals in response to global challenges.

The UON recognises their responsibility to offer healthy food and drink options, that are affordable, sustainable, and ethically sourced to our university community. UON trusts that by implementing this policy and associated action plan, it will ensure that our actions and activities deliver positive change by enhancing consumer awareness on the importance of healthy and sustainable food choices while supporting positive society, environmental and economic impacts surrounding food systems.

2. OWNERSHIP

The Estates & Campus Services Directorate own this policy on behalf of The University of Northampton. The delivery and refinement of the policy sit under the Catering and Commercial Services Team.

3. ORGANISATIONAL SCOPE

This Sustainable Catering policy is a corporate policy and applies to all employees (and workers, as applicable) of The UON including any wholly owned subsidiaries, unless an alternative policy exists, subject to any qualifying conditions. All staff, students and contractors of the University must adhere to this policy.

The objectives and targets outlined in the policy apply to all our catering outlets across our estate and our hospitality team when catering for both internal outlets and for events and conferences. This policy will be reflected in any catering tenders and contracts (if applicable).

4. POLICY STATEMENT

This policy document will be published alongside the Sustainable Catering Action Plan, offering further guidance and clarity on the steps needed to be taken to reach catering service targets on minimising environmental and socio-economic impacts.

The UON recognises the importance of continued sustainable development and understands the scale of the mission ahead. UON are confident that through staff

training, clear communication, quantifiable targets and setting higher standards across the UON estate we can achieve our vision to provide healthy, affordable, sustainable, and ethically sourced food and drinks.

Our Goals:

- Raise awareness on both the environment and health benefits of plant-based diets (vegetarian/vegan) through transparent product information, education, and campaigns.
- Work with our suppliers to ensure our sustainability targets and goals are implemented at all levels of the supply chain.
- Set, monitor, and communicate clear, quantifiable, sustainable food targets and objectives.
- To deliver a culturally inclusive, healthy, affordable, and sustainable food offering a high standard across our estate.
- To purchase local and seasonal food where possible to support local economy and environmental protection.

5. KEY PRINCIPLES

We are committed to:

- Reduce the consumption of meat and other animal produce and promote the value of vegetarian and vegan foods.
- Offer a plant based only menu for events.
- Ensure both social and environmental factors are included in catering provisions and contracts where possible
- Actively source local produce and promote seasonal foods to reduce environmental impacts and support the local economy where possible.
- Provide nutritional and balanced food options throughout our outlets to embed health and wellbeing principles.
- Use Fairtrade products where applicable.
- Ensure that animal welfare standards are adhered to for any animal produce purchased or served through standard certifications such as: Marine Stewardship Council and Red Tractor Assured.
- Reduce the volume of food wasted and the number of single use items used in UON outlets.
- Communicate to consumers and suppliers our commitment to serving sustainable food.
- Provide catering staff with training on the importance in this Policy, sustainable food objectives and targets.
- Set and communicate clear quantifiable objectives and targets and ensure those targets are met and continual improvement is made.
- Include sustainable targets and measures in any tender process.
- Remove all single use plastic in the catering outlets and events.

- Ensure where possible that manufacturers agricultural and production methods conserve and protect ecosystems, habitats and species.

6. ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS

The University of Northampton's associated documents:

- Environment & Sustainability Policy
- Avoidable Waste Policy Single Use Plastics and Disposable Items Policy
- Ethical and Sustainable Procurement Policy

7. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

An Equality Impact Assessment must accompany this document. (Appendix A)

8. VERSION CONTROL

Version Control: V1.0

Author: Environment & Sustainability team and Catering Team

Approval: Sustainability Board, ULT

Date Written: May 2025

Current Status: Approved

Changes

Date

Version Number

Details of Changes

Approval

9. APPENDIX

Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

1. Policy/ Practice (name and brief description) Sustainable Catering Policy
2. Reason for the EIA <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Proposed new policy/practice <input type="checkbox"/> Proposed change to an existing policy/practice <input type="checkbox"/> Undertaking a review of an existing policy/practice <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please state):
3. Person responsible for the policy/ practice Name: Hollie Darby Job title: Environment & Sustainability Department/ Faculty: Estates & Campus Services
4. Groups the policy, practice applies to: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Staff <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Student <input type="checkbox"/> Parents <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Visitors/Public
5. Data and evidence used to facilitate the screening of this policy/ practice including internal and external metrics and qualitative and anecdotal evidence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Benchmarking via: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sustainability Leadership Scorecard sustainable catering section People & Planet league sustainable food section Continued Vegan Society Approved accreditation Guardian of Grub; measuring food waste initiative Investors in the Environment Accreditation; action plan sustainable catering and waste action plans. Internal hospitality; default provision is for crockery,
6. Gaps in information/ evidence to allow proper assessment of the policy/ practice and how this will be addressed
7. Groups who have been consulted with in the development / review of this the policy/ practice: <input type="checkbox"/> Unions <input type="checkbox"/> Staff networks <input type="checkbox"/> HR <input type="checkbox"/> ULT <input type="checkbox"/> Internal experts <input type="checkbox"/> External experts <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Focus groups <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please state):

8. Potential/actual impacts of the policy/ practice on the following characteristics				
Reviewed characteristic	Positive impact A positive impact is one in which a person or people will experience an advantage or benefit.	Negative impact A negative impact is one in which a person or people will experience a disadvantage.	Detail of impact <i>If there is no impact – you do not need to fill in this section</i> Explain how the proposal will disproportionately impact people who share the characteristic and/or what the effect of that impact will be on those people. This section should be completed whether the impact is positive or negative. With positive impact, detail the actions you will take to promote the positive impact to the university in the next column.	How will you mitigate or remove any identified negative impacts and/or promote any positive impacts? Can any identified impact be justified for business reasons? If yes, please explain why. <i>If an identified negative impact cannot be removed or mitigated, explain why this can be justified for business reasons. Where you identify negative impact which cannot be justified for business reasons, you should identify any changes you can make to your proposal which will mitigate or eliminate this.</i>
Age			No impact	
Disability			No impact	
Gender reassignment			No impact	
Marriage and civil partnership			No impact	
Pregnancy and maternity			No impact	
Race			No impact	
Religion or belief	X		Offering Hala	Important for all staff, student & visitors of that religion.
Sex			No impact	
Sexual orientation			No impact	