

# ***University of Edinburgh Sustainable Food Systems Policy***

## ***Purpose***

The University's Strategic Vision 2025 states that "*as a truly global university, rooted in Scotland, we seek to benefit society as a whole*". The Strategic Plan describes the University's vision to "*make a significant, sustainable and socially responsible contribution to Scotland, the UK and the world*".

Accepting that many modern food systems contribute significantly to global environmental, social and economic challenges, this policy supports the University's aim to benefit society. It sets out a whole-institution approach that will contribute to a sustainable food system within the University and more widely. It builds on significant previous achievements by the Accommodation Services department and by individual schools.

## ***What is a sustainable food system?***

A sustainable food system is one where food is produced, purchased, transported, consumed and disposed of in ways which are;

1. *Environmentally sustainable* by conserving or regenerating the natural resources upon which it relies; operating within planetary boundaries; avoiding pollution, including emissions that cause climate change; maintaining biodiversity; and preventing unnecessary animal suffering.
2. *Socially sustainable* by fulfilling every person's right to adequate, healthy, safe, nutritious, good quality and culturally appropriate food; giving people opportunities to learn about and engage with food issues; and fostering a rich food culture.
3. *Economically sustainable* by delivering viable livelihoods for the people employed within its supply chains through living incomes, labor rights, fair trade and decent working conditions; supporting thriving local economies; and ensuring good food is accessible and affordable to all.

## ***Our commitments***

The University will contribute to the creation of sustainable food systems by taking action within five key areas: Sourcing; Provision; Practices; Research, Learning and Teaching; and Governance and Culture.

1. *Sourcing: Within its own catering operations the University seeks to source food and drink that is produced to highest environmental, social and economic standards by;*
  - a. Serving a range of sustainable, seasonal fish and seafood.
  - b. Using traceable products from farming systems that minimize harm to the environment and uphold the highest standards of animal welfare.
  - c. Following the University's Fair Trade Policy by sourcing from fair and ethical supply chains.

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- d. Championing Scottish food and drink by serving food that is produced and manufactured locally. Supporting local SMEs to become University suppliers within national framework agreements, in line the University's Sustainability Procurement Strategy and its commitment to collaborative procurement.
  - e. Making use of and highlighting seasonal ingredients on our menus.
2. *Provision: Within its own catering operations the University seeks to enhance the wellbeing of staff and students by providing good value, high quality, healthy and sustainable food that meets the cultural and dietary preferences of our community by;*
- a. Serving nutritionally balanced, freshly prepared food free from harmful additives.
  - b. Encouraging a shift from meat to plant-based diets by offering a range of attractive vegetarian and vegan options that vary regularly.
  - c. Raising awareness of sustainable options and helping people make informed choices by highlighting the providence, seasonality and other sustainability and health aspects of food at the point of sale.
  - d. Assisting those with allergies and special dietary requirements by displaying ingredients at the point of sale.
  - e. Following the University's Drinking Water Policy by avoiding the sale of bottled water and providing drinking water in all outlets and in delivered catering.
3. *Practices: Within its own catering operations the University seeks to act responsibly in the management of catering facilities and in the way we engage with our suppliers, catering staff and the wider community by;*
- a. Working with suppliers to reduce the negative impacts of doing business, including emissions from deliveries and waste from packaging.
  - b. Following all University HR Policies, which include paying the living wage, and training our staff in sustainable catering practices.
  - c. Taking action to minimise the amount of food and packaging waste generated across the business.
  - d. Conserving energy and water by efficiently managing catering facilities.
  - e. Achieving **XXX** by establishing partnerships with civil society organizations.
4. *Learning, Teaching & Research: The University seeks to facilitate a deeper understanding of, action around and collaboration on sustainable food systems, and to cultivate a community of educated and active food citizens by;*
- a. Encouraging opportunities for staff and students to learn about sustainable food and gain practical skills and knowledge.
  - b. Identifying opportunities and supporting where practical initiatives that will enhance food culture and increase access to good food on campus, such as growing.
  - c. Supporting research and teaching into issues that increase understanding of sustainable food systems and have the potential to improve University practice.

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5. *Governance and Culture: The University seeks to be a leader in the field and create a transparent and inclusive food system that reflects the values of our staff and student body;*
  - a. Establishing systems that enable staff and students to have an active voice, share their views and influence University practice.
  - b. Reporting and communicating on our commitments and performance annually.
  - c. Demonstrating our leadership and maintaining best practice through Awards and catering marks.

### ***Responsibility and scope***

This policy applies to commercial internal and external University providers, including variations of food supply such as vending and other automated food provision. All staff and students engaged in University activities have a duty to uphold the policy where relevant.

Locally managed non-University approved suppliers and suppliers used when travelling / in restaurants are outside the scope of this policy's mandate, unless Schools and Units choose to enforce it.

Personal food purchases by staff and students fall outside the scope of this policy, as do the activities of the Edinburgh University Student's Association (EUSA).

### ***Implementation and review***

The policy will be reviewed regularly to respond to new developments and meet evolving best practice in the sector. The Department for Social Responsibility and Sustainability will coordinate a multi-stakeholder review of the Policy every 3 years.

The commitments in this policy will be delivered by an Implementation Plan that sets standards and targets for the Procurement Office, Accommodation Services and the Department for Social Responsibility and Sustainability. The Implementation Plan will be updated annually and a report on progress and activities submitted to SRS Committee and made available online.

### ***Equality and diversity***

TBD

### ***Support systems***

The Department for Social Responsibility and Sustainability can provide contacts and advice regarding this policy.

### ***Approval and review***

**Draft document for consultation**

<i>Date policy approved</i>	To add
<i>Final approval by</i>	To add
<i>Consultations held</i>	To add
<i>Date of commencement of policy</i>	To add
<i>Dates for review of policy</i>	To add
<i>How policy will be reviewed</i>	To add
<i>Policies superseded by this policy</i>	To add

**Contact**

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