



Sustainable Food Policy			
Brief Description & Purpose:	This Policy sets out the University's commitments to ensure the food on campus is healthy for people and the planet. The policy is overseen by the University Sustainability Management Group. It is reviewed on an annual basis and reported on via the Sustainability Annual Report.		
Applicable to (list cohorts):	Staff: All staff	Students: All students	Third Parties: Suppliers
Effective From:	17 June 2014	Last Review Date:	24 June 2025
Approval Authority:	University Sustainability Management Group	Approved:	24 June 2025
Executive Owner:	Prof John Woodward	Business Owner:	Dr Paul Steadman
Next Review Date:	24 June 2026	Publication External Y/N	Yes

1. Introduction

Northumbria University recognises its responsibility to provide healthy and sustainable food to staff, students, and visitors. The purpose of this policy is to set out the University's intentions to minimise the environmental impact of its catering operations by ensuring that food is sustainably farmed and to promote sustainable practices and consumption.

This policy applies to all catering, retail, and hospitality services operated by Chartwells on behalf of Commercial Operations (Finance) at Northumbria University. It excludes franchised areas with branded offers over which the University has limited control.

2. Policy Commitments

We recognise our responsibility to ensure all procurement activities are undertaken in an environmentally and socially responsible manner.

Our aim is to embed sustainability within our food offer and operations whilst also informing our students, staff and visitors about the impact of the choices they make when buying food and drink.

We have Sustainable Food commitments relating to three key areas: Operations and Suppliers; Our Products and Education.

Operations and Suppliers

Our suppliers and contractors shall:

- minimise negative environmental and social effects associated with their products and services via rigorous selection processes, training, auditing and careful contract management.
- support and promote opportunities directly and indirectly to SMEs where possible.
- support the waste hierarchy when buying, producing, selling and disposing of food, catering products and materials.

- reduce the amount of energy consumed in preparing and providing catering goods and services.

Our Products

- To reduce the negative, and increase the positive, environmental and social impacts of the products used:
 - All coffee served holds Fairtrade or Rainforest Alliance certification.
 - All meat used is Red Tractor assured, which ensures high welfare of the animals.
 - Our outlets incorporate seasonal and local produce.
 - All eggs used on Campus are free-range Lion Marked British eggs.
 - All fish is supplied from a Marine Stewardship Council Certified supplier and is not on the Marine Conservation Society's 'Fish to avoid' list.
 - Free drinking water is provided from refill stations across the Campus to refill reusable bottles.
 - Bottled water available in all outlets supports the drop4drop initiative to provide clean drinking water to communities around the world.
- To provide a wide range of Fairtrade products across the University.
- To regularly monitor the consumption of goods and materials to ensure continued use of environmentally and socially sustainable products.
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Education

- To enhance employee awareness of relevant environmental and social impacts through appropriate training, induction programmes and continuing professional development.
- To provide guidance and relevant product information to students and staff members, allowing them to select sustainable products and services.
- To promote healthy eating through staff and student communications and regular campaigns and events.

Sustainable Food Strategies

The following Sustainable Food strategies have been adopted across the campus:

- Reduce food waste by 5% from a 2018/9 baseline, through waste food monitoring and planning, and utilisation of schemes such as Too Good To Go and OLIO.
- Attain Sustainable Restaurants Association certification for all catering outlets (non-franchised).
- Offer for sale reusable cups and offer incentives/discounts to customers to use reusable cups.
- Water fountains are available throughout the campus to encourage bottle refills and reduce use of single-use plastic bottles. Locations can be found on the Refill App.
- To support our Single Use Plastics Policy, by removing plastics straws, stirrers and cutlery.
- Baseline of use of disposable items e.g. number of paper cups issued and other single-use items.



- Periodic audits to identify good practice and areas for improvement.
- Separate storage and collection of used cooking oil for recycling into biodiesel.

Our Products

- Promote fresh fruit by keeping fruit cheaper than desserts.
- Ensure all products supplied to the University meet the 2012 Government salt targets.
- Support reduced-sugar diets through a suitable product offering in all outlets.
- Vegan, vegetarian and flexitarian diets are encouraged through publicity and a comprehensive and appealing product offering.
- comprehensive Fairtrade product range across the University and raise awareness of Fairtrade through campaigns and promotions.
- Coeliac Society award certifications.

Education

- Increase the messaging of sustainable food throughout various communication channels such as menus, social media and point of sale.
- Used coffee grounds applied to landscaped areas on the University estate.
- Environmental training provided within the core training requirements of all Chartwells staff, to cover topics including waste management and spill management in support of the University's Environmental Management System.

3. Key Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Responsibility
Chartwells (service provider)	Implementation of sustainable food commitments, monitoring and reporting
University Sustainability Management Group	Policy review, evaluation and approval
Staff, Students, Visitors	Engaging with and supporting sustainable food choices and practices

4. Definitions

- **Sustainable Food** – Food that is produced, processed, and distributed in ways that minimise negative environmental and social impacts while supporting health and wellbeing.
- **Red Tractor Assured** – Certification that food meets responsible production standards for animal welfare, food safety and environmental protection.
- **Waste Hierarchy** – A framework prioritising waste prevention, reuse, recycling and recovery before disposal.



5. Related Policies, Procedures and Other Resources

- Environmental Sustainability Policy
- Single Use Plastics Policy
- Procurement Policy
- Refill App (water fountain locations)

6. Document Control

Version No.	Reviewer	Date	Changes
1.0		17.06.2014	Created
1.1	Dr Paul Steadman	20.06.24	Strategy Update
1.2	Dr Paul Steadman	24.06.2025	Targets, Policy Format