



Nottingham Trent
University

Catering Services

Sustainable Food and Beverage Policy

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1. Introduction

The Sustainable Food Policy has been designed as a main driver in our commitment to deliver healthy and sustainable food and beverage products to our staff, students and visitors. We work in partnership with our university Sustainability and Procurement teams to ensure that we consider ethical, social and environmental factors when making decisions on the products and services we provide throughout Nottingham Trent University. We form strong relationships with all our suppliers to ensure that through open, constructive dialogue both new and existing parties consider the social, ethical and environmental impacts of their services and activities and address how to reduce them. We actively encourage local SME's to participate in tendering for university contracts and provide support to assist this process.

The NTU catering team aim to deliver the following strategies across all campuses as part of our on-going commitment to providing a sustainable product and service by considering the following factors in our decision making:

1.1 Fruit and vegetables

- Ensure that our contracted fruit and vegetable supplier maximises the use of locally grown produce by working closely and forming relationships with local farms and suppliers to ensure that the fruit and vegetable products used in our recipes and menus reflect, where possible, the current season.
- Fruit, vegetables, herbs, and edible flowers grown on campuses to be used in the menu wherever possible.

1.2 Fresh meat and poultry

- All meat products used in our freshly prepared dishes must be certified as Red Tractor standard or equivalent as minimum and it is our aim that these products are all supplied from farms within the East Midlands.
- All fresh poultry is certified Red Tractor, supplied from UK farms only and is halal certified.
- Animal welfare is a major factor in our procurement processes.
- Continued use of beef and lamb sourced from the Brackenhurst Campus for graduation dinners where possible.

1.3 Oil

- We only use cold-pressed rapeseed oil that is produced in the UK for frying and olive oil or rapeseed oil for dressings as it has less unhealthy saturated fat than all other cooking oils and fats and is high in mono-unsaturated and poly-unsaturated fats omega 3, 6 and 9.
- All our used rapeseed oil is returned to the supplier and recycled for use as biodiesel for the fuelling of tractors and delivery vehicles.
- We will only use palm oil for cooking if it is guaranteed to be from a sustainable source.

1.4 Fish

- All the fish we use is from a sustainable source and is always listed on the Marine Conservation Society's 'Fish to Eat' publication.
- We are MSC certified which means that we can ensure that the fish we purchase is sourced responsibly.

- Where possible MSC certification will be a primary consideration in all our fish and seafood procurement. We will only serve tinned tuna that is certified dolphin friendly and is listed on the Marine Conservation Society's 'Fish to Eat' publication.
- We explore the use of alternative, more sustainable fish and seafood in order to contribute to the protection of over fished 'at risk' species.

1.5 Eggs

- Where possible the eggs that we use in our freshly prepared dishes including scrambled egg for breakfast are free range.

1.6 Water

- We replace where practically possible the use of bottled water on hospitality and conference catering with an alternative self-bottling system that reflects a more sustainable approach to our water provision.
- We recognise water as a natural product that should be readily available to all our customers in all our outlets at zero cost.
- We actively support the drinking of tap water by students and staff and thereby provide such water in all our outlets in either jug, water fountains or tap dispensers as an alternative option to bottled water.

1.7 Fair-trade options

- NTU has held Fairtrade status since 2008 and we strive to maintain making Fairtrade products available as widely as practicable in our cafés and restaurants. If for reasons of price, quality, supply availability or contractual obligations we are unable to provide these products, then the University is committed to offering them at a time when these issues are no longer a barrier.
- The University will offer Fairtrade coffee and sugar at all internal meetings and hospitality events.
- NTU commits to increasing the variety of Fairtrade products for events as it becomes possible to do so.

1.8 Nutrition and healthy options

It is an on-going commitment that we regularly review our menus and cooking practices to ensure that we retain the maximum nutritional content of our ingredients and products and ensure that a selection of healthy options is available throughout our catering provision. We do this by:

- Limiting the use of salt in cooking.
- Providing salt in our restaurants from one central point.
- Only using healthy oils for cooking and dressing and limiting deep frying to a minimum.
- Always ensuring meals served are balanced and include all food groups.
- Actively promoting healthy options on our menus.
- Ensuring that where possible the nutritional values and guideline daily amounts are available.
- Ensuring cooking methods reflect the aim to maximise nutritional value of our products.
- Increasing the range of vegan plant-based options.

1.9 Waste and food excess supply

- All our used rapeseed oil is returned to the supplier and recycled for use as bio diesel for the fuelling of tractors and delivery vehicles.
- All our food waste is removed by NTU's nominated waste management contractor and recycled for use in the production of electricity through anaerobic digestion.
- We monitor plate waste as a matter of course in our restaurants and event catering with a view to taking corrective action on portion size, product popularity and quality.
- Unsold products going out of date are made available to charities at the end of the day.
- Our recipes are designed to ensure that as much of a product is used in food production as possible, such as bones and vegetable stalks and leaves, therefore minimising food waste.
- We have systems in place to monitor and reduce food excess supply in all our outlets and from our hospitality provision.
- All our staff are trained and refreshed on waste segmentation and the correct waste disposal routes.
- When catering events, wherever possible food remains in the kitchen until the last minute so any excess can be safely stored and regenerated in line with best practice hygiene standards and legislation.
- Unavoidable food waste (such as vegetable peelings, egg shells, plate waste etc.) is removed by NTU's nominated waste management contractor and sent to an anaerobic digestion energy plant. Waste from that plant is then utilised as fertiliser.

1.10 Packaging and disposable products

- We actively encourage our suppliers to use alternative packing to ensure where possible a sustainable, recyclable product. The use of excessive cardboard packing in deliveries is to be discouraged.
- Use of crockery and metal cutlery wherever possible and is the default service level expectation.
- When unavoidable, disposables used in our restaurants, cafes, delivered service and production kitchens are recyclable as a minimum, and compostable where possible.
- Replacing where possible all single use plastic products with more environmentally friendly alternatives in support of the 'Plastic Planet' campaign supported by the university. Examples include:
 - Encouraging customers to bring with them a re-usable cup for hot drinks in our retail outlets by offering a discount as an incentive
 - Exchanging individually wrapped sauce sachets for sauce dispensers in outlets
 - Plastic straws are replaced with a compostable alternative
 - Single use cutlery is replaced with a compostable alternative.

1.11 Energy

- Catering work closely with the Sustainability Team to explore new and alternative energy reduction methods in order to contribute to a reduction in the University's carbon footprint.
- Energy rating of appliances is a major consideration when purchasing new catering equipment.
- Staff are trained to utilise timers on catering equipment in order to reduce energy consumption.
- During university closure periods it is policy to ensure that the absolute minimum and only essential catering appliances such as fridges and freezers are left in operation.

3.Sustainable food and beverage action plan

Objective	Target date	Action	Progress
1 - Embracing sustainability To reduce the amount of food waste and food excess supply produced by Catering and Hospitality	Throughout the policy period and outcome assessed August 2027	Continue to utilise the plate waste monitoring system in all restaurants and adjust as necessary production methods and portion sizes.	Reviewed regularly. Menu adjusted based on feedback, see separate evidence.
		Continue to engage with 'Your Business is Food' campaign designed by WRAP (Waste and Resources Action Program) by recording waste for all areas of the department.	System implemented. Records to be monitored and reviewed at regular meetings with action points raised as required.
		Implement system where unsold products in retail outlets close to their 'use-by' date are reduced in price to encourage quick sale.	Pre-packaged items are given away at the end of the day – this continues.
		Work with NTU Sustainability Team in developing relationships with local charities to use unsold produce to distribute to and benefit those less fortunate in society.	Contract in place with charity 'Matthew 25:40' to provide unsold prepacked sandwiches and salads – this continues.
		To reduce food excess supply caused through over-ordering via hospitality customers.	Message added onto hospitality ordering site stating 'We are committed to keeping food waste to a minimum, as such ask you to consider quantities when ordering. Our team are more than happy to offer advice and guidance on both portions size and quantities'.

			Portion sizes are indicated on the menu to help guide buyers. Where possible, food is held back in the kitchen until ready to serve so any unused food can be stored and regenerated at a later date in line with best practice hygiene standards and legislation.
		To ensure all waste is disposed of in the most environmentally friendly way.	Refresher training delivered in November 25, focus on waste disposal. Clarification for specific items obtained including glass waste, broken crockery and coffee filters. Catering – specific guidance produced. See separate evidence.
2 - Embracing sustainability and Enriching Society To contribute towards protection of overfishing and depletion of ‘at risk’ species	All new staff when they arrive and annual refreshers. Monitored monthly.	To continue to source sustainable fish and maintain the MSC certification.	MSC certification achieved at all campuses. All colleagues undertake training and refresher training in what the MSC mark means to NTU and customers. This is repeated annually. This is continuing, annual audit completed July 26.
3 - Embracing sustainability Retain the highest accolade of 3 stars from the Sustainable	Audit 2026	Ensure all documentation and procedures meet the requirement of the award and that	Records are reviewed and compliance is monitored on a regular basis. Completion due end of August 2026.

Restaurant Award in the 2025 audit.		records are maintained to show continuous compliance.	
4 - Embracing sustainability To replace current cleaning products and chemicals with more environmentally friendly options that are plant based, biodegradable and less hazardous	August 2026	To carry out cost benchmarking exercises, look at dispenser-controlled systems and consult with other university users	Task to be given to the sustainability sub-group to create actions and progress with at least one product identified and changed by August 2026. This is on hold currently.
5 - Embracing sustainability, Valuing Ideas and Encouraging collaboration within NTU To utilise green space at City and Clifton campuses to grow fresh herbs and thus reduce cost and food miles associated with these products	August 2024	Liaise with the University Landscaping team to explore options for a wider variety of herbs to be grown at the two relevant campuses and look to use these within NTU kitchens as opposed to purchasing.	Items grown and used in meals. Further herbs to be used in refectory meals by August 2026.
6 - Embracing sustainability To reduce the number of disposable cups used with hot drinks	August 2026	To maintain additional cost which is added to customer's orders when using the disposable cups. All Catering staff to cease using disposable cups and use own reusable alternative. To monitor effectiveness of intervention by comparing sales of disposable cups monthly.	Reusable takeaway cups introduced at all outlets, 25p levy to apply to all customers using takeaway disposable cups- Reduction of 25p for using re - usable cup or NTU branded keep-cup. All staff are now using their own mugs instead of disposable cups when taking free drinks. Staff to be reminded and thanked to ensure this practice is

			ingrained as standard practice within the team. 'Own mug discount' has been increased.
8 - Embracing sustainability To maximise utilisation of local suppliers and seasonal produce in support of the local economy	August 2026	To continue to use and expand on the use of local suppliers. Explore options for alternative local provision of eggs and milk.	Owen Taylor, Start Fresh, Campbells Environmental Oils to continue as main suppliers. Ongoing work taking place with procurement team to help local suppliers through the tender process and to get added on to frameworks. Currently in the process of appointing a vending supplier with sustainability given a 15% weighting.
9 - Embracing sustainability and Connecting globally Explore ways to support local, national and International charitable initiatives through our procurement agenda and supplier relationships	December 2022	Use of 'One Water' which is the most sustainable bottled water on the market.	Continue the use of One water.
10 - Embracing sustainability and Valuing ideas Increase partnerships with Sustainable Development colleagues to deliver actions	June 2026	To support NTU's Green weeks by providing a 'Lo-carbon' menu in all catering outlets. The menu will focus on three main elements; Using 100% locally grown and sourced ingredients; 100% vegan; maximum ingredients in season.	Meetings to be scheduled with Sustainability team to review menu and confirm arrangements for Green Week 2027.

and support NTU wide sustainability projects	December 2026	Support University Christmas and Easter energy reduction 'switch offs'	At both vacation periods fridge/freezer stock is consolidated between units to reduce the amount of equipment running and reduce energy consumption.
11 - Embracing sustainability and Valuing ideas To increase the sustainability credentials within catered events	August 2026	To collaborate with the events team in maximising the sustainability credentials of our catered events provision to internal and external stakeholders.	Hospitality team to liaise with events and provide regular progress updates. The events team have a nominated sustainability champion to work in conjunction with the catering team. The aim is to investigate best practice within events and identify key actions to be implemented.
12 - Embracing sustainability Through innovative menu design and effective marketing target a 5% increase in the availability of plant-based meal options available at catering outlets in year one rising to 20% in year 5	August 2024	Kitchen to investigate further options for adjusting more recipes to be plant based. To liaise with the NTU vegetarian/vegan society in order to communicate this action to the student body.	27 recipes to date converted to vegan friendly dishes. Vegan sandwich offers extended and improved signage installed. Specialist plant-based only events catered. Plant-based items ingrained in the menu as standard, alongside vegetarian, halal items, and other dietary requirements.
13 - Embracing sustainability and Enriching society To ensure no products containing non-sustainable palm oil is purchased by the department	December 2022	To continually review all products and procurement practices to ensure no non-sustainable palm oil is present in food products and cleaning materials.	Catering team Managers aware of procedure for checking suitability. Any products containing non sustainable palm oil to be removed.

14 - Embracing sustainability To contribute to the university's aim to reduce plastic waste and introduce more environmentally friendly options	May 2023	Reintroduction of all sustainable disposable products following supply chain issues due to covid resulting in removal of certain items	Paper straws introduced in place of plastic versions. All plastic bottled soft drinks replaced with canned alternatives at all retail units. 20,000 Plastic pots and cutlery used during graduation replaced with card pots and wooden cutlery. Plastic cutlery replaced with corn starch alternative. All plastic water cups replaced with compostable alternative.
15 - Embracing sustainability, Valuing ideas and Encouraging collaboration within NTU To increase policy adherence through procurement	July 2023	To continue to collaborate with the NTU procurement team to ensure supplier compliance with regards to sustainability elements of agreed contracts and framework agreements.	Regular meetings with procurement personnel taking place.
16 - Enriching society To support disadvantaged children within the local area	August 2026	To support the Racquets Cubed project providing disadvantaged children with meals at Clifton Campus	Actions agree with NTU Sport, project resumes annually. This is continuing.
17 - Enriching society To support underrepresented groups within the local community	July 2023	To support underrepresented groups with relationship with Watch Café 2 in providing adult trainees with learning difficulties with placements at NTU Catering outlets	One 6-week placement has taken place, planning in progress for a second and discussions taking place to explore possibilities around trainees gaining NTU employment either through zero-hour bank or part-time routes.

