**Catering Services Sustainable Food Policy**



**Property & Facilities Services**

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**Sustainable Food**

The quality, nutritional value and sustainability of food has an increasingly high public profile and will become one of the factors by which students and staff exercise choice when selecting their food providers. Healthier, more sustainable food at Edinburgh Napier University may help to encourage positive lifestyle changes outside the University for both students and staff, leading to a positive impact on health and well-being, as well as on our environment.

**Why is sustainable food important?**

Sustainable development can be defined as ‘development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs’, Sustainable Development Commission (SDC).

The economy, the environment and society are inextricably linked: activity in one area will cause an impact in another, either positively or negatively. The impact of greenhouse gases on the climate shows that there are environmental limits to economic growth, and economic activity that exceeds these limits is clearly unsustainable.

By paying attention to sustainable development, we can begin to balance the impacts of economic activity with its effect upon society and the environment. The provision of food has a complex relationship with health and the environment, and universities have a significant opportunity to create benefits for their patients and staff.

There is no single agreed definition of sustainable food, but the following details the key areas of concern which the University wants to address as part of a sustainable food strategy: Sustain defines sustainable food as food that should be produced, processed and traded in ways that:

* contribute to thriving local economies and sustainable livelihoods – both in the UK and in producer countries
* protect the diversity of both plants and animals (and the welfare of farmed and wild species)
* avoid damaging natural resources and avoid contributing to climate change
* provide social benefits, such as good quality food, safe and healthy products, and educational opportunities.

The SDC describes sustainable food as food and drink that:

* is safe, healthy and nutritious, for consumers in shops, restaurants, schools, Universities etc
* provides a viable livelihood for farmers, processors and retailers, whose employees enjoy a safe and hygienic working environment whether in the UK or overseas
* respects biophysical and environmental limits in its production and processing, while reducing energy consumption and improving the wider environment
* respects the highest standards of animal health and welfare, compatible with the production of affordable food for all sectors of society
* supports rural economies and the diversity of rural culture, in particular through an emphasis on local products that keep food miles to a minimum

**What the University is doing**

Our menus are prepared daily using fresh ingredients by our chefs on site at each campus. We do not source cook chill products or ready meals. Our suppliers are nominated and regulated through our membership of TUCO (The University Caterer’s organisation) and APUC (Advanced procurement for Universities & Colleges)

Our menus meet healthy living guidelines, and we hold healthy living awards at all our campuses. All our soups are homemade on a daily basis using fresh local ingredients. Unless otherwise stated they are vegetarian, low salt, dairy & gluten free.

In our procurement we:

* Make decisions based on a balance between economic, social and environmental factors to achieve best value for money.
* Encourage procurement to take account of whole life costs where applicable to ensure sustainability and minimise impact on the environment.
* Set specifications for products and services which include sustainable, renewable and recycled resources and processes and consider the end of life options to ensure minimal impact on the environment.
* Comply with legislation relating to sustainability and the environment.
* Encourage best practise in procurement.
* Work with suppliers to encourage better processes and improvements to the supply chain and the products and services supplied.
* Develop the use of Fair Trade and other ethically traded products and services.
* Seasonally available ingredients will be used where possible, to minimise energy used in food production, transport and storage as per Appendix 1.
* There is a commitment and target to prepare all offering 75% freshly on site
* Encourage Small and Medium Enterprises (SME`s), local and regional suppliers to bid for supply agreements.
* Exclude fish species identified as most at risk by the Marine Conservation Society, and only choose fish from sustainable sources, such as those accredited by the Marine Stewardship Council
* Communicate this policy to the University staff and students.
* Making a significant investment in mains drinking water fountains throughout campuses to move away from bottled water provision to minimise transport and packaging waste
* Review this policy on a regular basis to ensure continual improvement.

**Training**

To achieve improvements in the sustainability of food at the University, training is provided involving caterers, managers, procurement staff, and front-of-house staff. For caterers and managers, training focuses on how high-quality fresh food can be prepared, served and ultimately disposed of, to maximise health and sustainability benefits. For procurement staff, training covers environmental and nutritional principles, and how these can be supported through contracts. For front-of house staff, training covers the information that students, staff, and visitors may need to choose high quality, sustainable food.

**Appendix 1 - Seasonal Food Tables**



