



BE SUSTAINABLE Guide

SECOND EDITION, AUGUST 2015



THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH



Social Responsibility
and Sustainability

About us

The Department for Social Responsibility and Sustainability works to enable the University to understand, explain and deliver on its ambition to be a leading socially responsible and sustainable university.

The University of Edinburgh is committed to being a world leader in addressing global challenges including poverty, climate change and the growing demand for energy, food and water.

The Department was created in 2014 to understand how the University can work to respond to these challenges.

We aim to do this by:

- Supporting a culture of change
- Pursuing excellence and innovation
- Working collaboratively as part of the local and global community

Our work cuts across the following areas:

- Scanning, Evidence & Strategic Development
- Inspiration and Communications
- Operational Responsibility and Sustainability
- Links with Research, Learning and Teaching
- Social Responsibility and Sustainability Governance Planning and Reporting

About this guide

The Be Sustainable Guide is one of the many ways in which the University of Edinburgh is working to create a world leading socially responsible and sustainable university.

It offers information and tools to guide the University community to act more sustainably within University structures.

Who's it for?

Everyone in the University community: Academic and support staff, students and other people who work, study, live in or otherwise occupy the University.

Why do we have it?

The guide is here to offer guidance by sharing best practice across the University.

The Department for Social Responsibility and Sustainability is working to change the policies, processes and infrastructure of the University, but we need your help to kick start the cultural and behavioural change necessary to become a truly sustainable university.

What could you use it for?

All of the information in this guide is available on our website at www.ed.ac.uk/sustainability

After feedback from staff, we wanted to make a copy of that information that you could save or print out.

Each individual page can be used as a poster, or the whole guide can be given to new staff and students at induction sessions.

If you want to have a physical copy of any part of the guide, please request one by emailing SRS.Department@ed.ac.uk

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“ Reducing energy waste means that less fossil fuels are burned and less greenhouse gases emitted. It is important that we all try to save energy where we can. ”



More information about saving energy at the University is available at:

www.ed.ac.uk/sustainability/energy

The Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 requires all public bodies to contribute to a low carbon Scotland. Along with other universities & colleges, we have committed to achieve substantial carbon savings by 2020.

The University spent £18 million last year on energy, and most of our emissions come from electricity and gas used in our buildings.

Whether you work in an office or a laboratory, or live in student accommodation, there are lots of things you can do to help to address this challenge.

First steps

- 1 Switch off your unused electronics.** Think about what you do and don't need to leave switched on. Modern electronic items use a small amount of energy when left on standby, but room lights, older devices and laboratory equipment can use much more.
- 2 Spread the word.** Since everyone needs to take responsibility to save energy, we can provide materials to help you tell others.
- 3 Reduce personal appliance use.** Sharing equipment with others is the best way to reduce energy waste. Prioritise the most intensive things - we can help you to measure the energy consumption of your equipment. Just get in touch at www.edin.ac/1yZKvKu

- 4 Reporting faults** with lighting, heating, water, and other facilities issues will help to save energy, so find out who your EBIS rep is for your area, and be sure to report anything that seems amiss. This could include noticing faulty motion sensor lighting, dripping taps, and draughty windows.



The University sets **temperature standards** for room heating and cooling. During the colder seasons (September-May) we aim for a room temperature of 21 - 22°C. In the summer, cooling is usually only considered if temperatures frequently rise above 28°C.

Taking things further

- 1 Become or elect an energy coordinator.** Training and support is available - learn more at www.ed.ac.uk/sustainability/energy
- 2 Regular Energy Walkarounds** and reviews of responsibility for devices can help everybody save energy. Just get in touch at www.edin.ac/1Ftgwtu

- 3 Create an Energy Responsibility Plan** with your colleagues covering all the main areas, and key equipment. It should include a rota for switching things off at the end of the day.
- 4 Make further savings in computing and labs.** See the laboratories and computing sections in this guide for more information.



Practically all modes of travel apart from walking and cycling depend on fossil fuels, meaning that the way we choose to travel can have a big impact on the environment.

In the Strategic Plan 2012–16, the University committed itself to “facilitating sustainable and active travel between the different parts of our dispersed estate and promoting more sustainable modes of business travel”.



More information about sustainable and active travel is available at www.ed.ac.uk/sustainability/travel

First steps

- 1 Cycling is a cheap, quick, and healthy way to get around.** The University provides lots of support, including training, free showers, tool kits, Dr. Bike maintenance, secure stores and a Cycle to Work scheme for staff. Learn more at www.edin.ac/1dvhdHu
- 2 Regular walking can improve your health, save you money and reduce your impact on the environment.** The Transport Office can help with advice and discounts - see www.edin.ac/1EhQMCL
- 3 Travelling by bus and train** is by far the most sustainable way to attend meetings and conferences. It’s always a good idea to check online route planning tools before you book your travel to see what options are available.
- 4 The University operates a private Tripshare scheme** to match individuals with others wanting to travel in the same direction so they can share the journey and the costs. Sign up at www.edin.ac/1CcnWoa
- 5 If you need to drive, the City Car Club offers a convenient car pool for University staff.** You can also sign up for personal use at a specially discounted rate for staff and students. More information is at www.edin.ac/1EhWpRi
- 6 Electric vehicles are an exciting new form of transportation.** If you are eligible for a parking permit and drive an electric vehicle, the permit will be free. You can charge your vehicle for free at a number of dedicated fast-charging points.

Taking things further

- 1 Become an active travel champion** and help your friends and colleagues to be more active by walking, cycling, or taking public transport more often. Training and support is available at www.edin.ac/1KMs3Mg
- 2 Video conferencing has made it easier to share ideas with people based elsewhere.** Using online meeting tools such as Skype can also significantly reduce your travel needs.
- 3 Business travel is one of the biggest contributors to our carbon footprint.** Flights make up the majority of those emissions - so work with your colleagues to minimise the number of domestic and short-haul flights you need to take.



“ In 2013-14, the University diverted 85% of its waste from academic and support buildings away from landfill. That’s about 2,500 tonnes. ”

More information about recycling and resource efficiency at the University is available at www.ed.ac.uk/recycling

The University’s current targets are to increase the proportion of waste recycled by 3% annually, to reduce waste to landfill by 3% annually, and to send zero biodegradable waste to landfill by 2020.

It is best to follow the waste hierarchy:

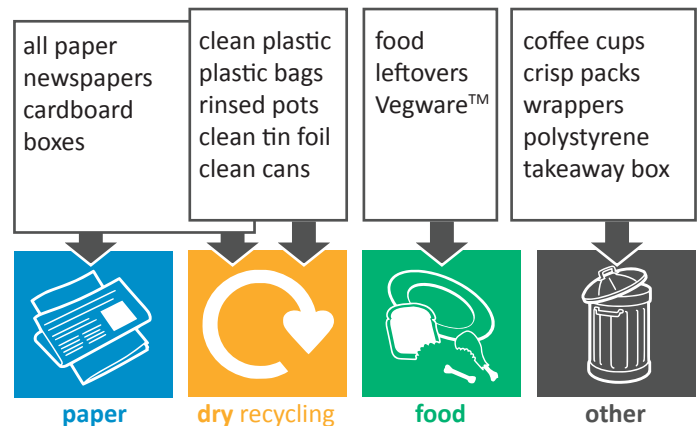
1. Prevent waste
2. Prepare for reuse
3. Recycle
4. Recover

Only if none of the above are possible should an item be disposed of. Here are some ways to help you stick to these guidelines.

First steps

- 1 **Ordering and consuming less** is the easiest way to cut down on waste. If you are ordering items then try and consolidate ordering so you use less packaging. You can do this by ordering less frequently, or ordering for the whole building, school or department.
- 2 **You can consolidate your materials.** Making an inventory or having a stationery amnesty, can make sure you don’t order excess, getting the most out of your current things.
- 3 **Cut down on single use items.** Try crockery, Bags for Life or Keep Cups (available at Accommodation Services catering outlets and University shops) to avoid using wasteful disposable cups and packaging.

Our bins



? **What about...?** If you’re not sure where to put something, visit www.recycle.ac to find out quickly.

Taking things further

- 1 **Sign up to our online portal called WARPIT** where you can advertise and claim items that still have a life. www.edin.ac/1GidiJX
- 2 **Become or elect a waste and recycling coordinator.** Training and support is available - learn more at www.ed.ac.uk/recycling
- 3 **Work with your friends and colleagues to reduce food waste.** You can organise fridge checks, share food and order less catering. Discuss your options for food waste recycling by email: waste@ed.ac.uk



When purchasing, think about the whole life of the product: what it is made from and how it was made, how it will be used, what will happen to it at the end of its life?

What you buy and how you buy can influence the environment, working and living conditions of those involved in the manufacturing of the product and the cost to you and the University.



More information about the University's procurement process is available at

www.ed.ac.uk/procurement

First steps

- 1 Do not buy** unless you need to. Check if your department already has the item in question, use WARP-IT, or contact the Furniture Office. More information is available at www.edin.ac/1yyUQuw
- 2 Use existing contracts and services.** Our agreements with suppliers are getting more and more sustainable. Look for the item you want to buy on e-Procurement systems (Sci-Quest and PECOS) or on the procurement website at www.edin.ac/1yyJMxm
- 3** To help maintain our status as a Fair Trade University, try to **use Fair Trade products**, especially when organising meetings.
- 4** If your item isn't covered by an existing contract, **consider its impact and obtain quotes from at least 3 suppliers.** Get in touch with Procurement if you need advice at www.edin.ac/1yyPdfN.
- 5 If it's worth £50k or more, you must contact Procurement for advice** on tendering and improving the sustainability of your tender. Get in touch at www.edin.ac/1yyPdfN
- 6** Cut the number of deliveries you need by **ordering "lean" and in bulk.** Try to do a single order once a month for each supplier, and email colleagues to make sure you haven't missed anything.

Taking things further

- 1 Become or elect a Procurement Coordinator.** This should be the person responsible for purchasing within your office/area/flat.
- 2** When buying for yourself, think about the following questions:
 - 1. Do I need it?** (Can I repair/reuse instead?)
 - 2. What is it made from?**
 - 3. How energy efficient is it?**
 - 4. How long will it last?**
 - 5. How will I dispose of it?**
- 3** When buying for yourself, try to **buy reusable rather than disposable** items. You can also avoid products with too much packaging.
- 4 Don't be afraid to make suggestions.** Many great initiatives were introduced as a direct result of community ideas - including becoming a Fair Trade University, and signing up to the Worker Rights Consortium. Get in touch at www.edin.ac/1yyPdfN



“ Labs often use 3-5x more energy than other academic buildings, and yet we rarely address how that energy is consumed. ”

Peter James
Director, S-Labs



More information is available at
www.ed.ac.uk/sustainability/labs

Lab work has a significant impact on our planet, ranging from energy and resource consumption to chemical and equipment use and disposal.

As a laboratory user, you have a unique opportunity to influence students and colleagues on the best way to keep our laboratories safe, secure and sustainable.

Knowing how and where energy is consumed can empower concerned lab users to optimise their methods, and to reduce wastage and inefficiencies wherever possible - saving more money for science.

First steps

- 1 Close your fume hood sash when not in use.** Often they're the largest consumers of energy!
- 2 Manage your chemicals.** Use/order appropriate quantities, and check:
 1. The availability of the chemical in neighbouring labs
 2. That chemical waste is disposed of correctly
- 3 Manage your freezers.** Ensure the contents of freezers are well managed, and the freezers are well maintained and defrosted. Don't leave the freezer door open longer than necessary, and consider running -80°C freezers warmer at -70°C (25-30% energy savings).
- 4 Purchase energy and water efficient equipment.**
- 5 Power down wherever possible,** particularly on weekends and at night. This is especially important for equipment which heats or cools, such as drying cabinets or heater blocks.
- 6 Be conscious of what you use and why.** Plan experiments to avoid repeats, use appropriate amounts, and avoid unnecessary usage of disposable items.
- 7 Recycle/re-use wherever possible.** This can be through sharing, appropriate disposal, and even resale.

Taking things further

- 1 Join the laboratory Sustainability Awards.** Using the S-labs framework - also in use in dozens of UK and international universities - labs can gain recognition for their efforts to improve efficiency and sustainability. Learn more at www.ed.ac.uk/sustainability/awards
- 2 Follow our key principals for a safer, more sustainable lab.** Visit our website at www.ed.ac.uk/sustainability/labs for more advice and case studies.



The environmental and social impact of making, running and disposing of electronic equipment is significant.

It is characterised by complex supply chains which in past have been troubled by labour rights issues and sourcing minerals from conflict zones.

There are a number of ways to help reduce the environmental impact of your computer.

First steps

- 1 Switch your computer to its best energy saving mode.** On Windows supported desktop, this is called "Power saver" and can be found by searching for "Power options".
- 2 Do not buy new devices** unless you need to. See if you can reuse a second hand item from within your department. Check your old device's warranty to see if it can be repaired by the manufacturer - most University computers have a 3 year warranty period.
- 3 Make sure you're printing double sided.** It only takes a couple of minutes to set your computer to print double sided, and it's the default for University SelectPrint printers.
- 4 Can someone else use your old computer?** Check whether anyone else in your area can use your old machine, but be careful with sensitive data.
- 5 Check the procurement website for the latest recommended computers.** Procurement and Information Services work together with other public sector organisations to find the best option according to a number of factors, including its sustainability.
- 6 Printing in black and white is about ten times cheaper** than printing in colour and more sustainable as well.

Taking things further

- 1 Work together to reduce the amount of paper you use** - scan documents rather than sending photocopies, put PDF documents on the web and send meeting notes and agenda electronically.
- 2 Encourage others** to adapt sustainable computing practices. Think about how you can make your day-to-day work more efficient.
- 3 When buying for yourself, consider the following questions:**
 - 1. Life of the product?** (When will you want to replace it and what is the warranty?)
 - 2. What is its energy efficiency?** (Does it have an Energy Star label?)
 - 3. Is it repairable?** (Is the battery removable and can software be easily updated?)

“The University was the first University in Europe to join Electronics Watch, who monitor labour standards in the electronics industry.”



More information about sustainable computing is available at www.ed.ac.uk/sustainability/computing



Producing, transporting, processing, packaging and disposing of food emits greenhouse gases, which contribute to climate change. How much depends on a number of factors.

Our food choices also have economic, social and ethical consequences because they impact farmer livelihoods, local communities, and animal welfare.

Our 'first steps' highlight opportunities and best practice at the University. The 'taking things further' section gives tips for shopping and eating more sustainably in your personal life.

“Our catering has been rated 2 stars by the Sustainable Restaurant Association.”

★ Academics staff and students interested in food related research can join the FRIED network at: www.edin.ac/1JCqKu2

 www.ed.ac.uk/sustainability/food

First steps

- 1 **If you organise an event at the University** you should use either Edinburgh First or Honours Catering. Speak to your caterer about sustainability prior to your event.
- 2 **Don't waste.** We each throw away an average 78kg of food every year. If we all stopped, it would be like taking 1 in 4 cars off the road! Order the correct amount of food for catered events, share excess food with colleagues, and regularly clear-out your office fridge. Learn more at www.edin.ac/1O7QrXa
- 3 Why not **organise a bring and share lunch or recipe swap** with colleagues?
- 4 **Ditch the disposables.** Save resources by using re-usable containers instead of wasteful disposables. KeepCups are available to buy at Accommodation Services catering outlets and the University shop.
- 5 **Get involved** in one of the University's food societies, or join a local project. Learn more at www.edin.ac/1CY7dp
- 6 **Support fair trade.** We were Scotland's first Fairtrade University. Fair trade products are available at all shops and cafés on campus.

Taking things further

- 1 Experiment with eating less, higher-welfare, meat and dairy and **more fruit, veg, grains and pulses.** Plant-based diets have a lower carbon footprint and can be healthier.
- 2 **Purchase environmentally and animal friendly food.** Organic standards are the highest, followed by schemes like LEAF and RSPCA Assured. Don't eat fish classed as 'fish to avoid' by the Marine Conservation Society.
- 3 **Buy local and seasonal where possible.** Purchasing local food when it is in season can minimise the energy it takes to produce, transport and store products. It also supports the local economy.
- 4 **Cut down on pre-prepared foods and try cooking from scratch.** Its healthier, and better for the environment. The Hearty Squirrel sells local veg on campus. www.edin.ac/1CY7p45



The University has a legal obligation to tackle discrimination and is committed to embedding equality and diversity across all its work. In short, this means ensuring staff and students are treated fairly and equally, and recognising, respecting and valuing differences.

Departments like Occupational Health, Health and Safety, and Health and Wellbeing are just some of the areas doing their bit to help people at the University of Edinburgh.

The University wants people to feel supported during their time here. Thankfully there are numerous initiatives that can help and in this section we explore some of them as well as looking at ideas to help foster community within the University.

First steps

- 1 Occupational Health** staff will be pleased to discuss, in confidence, any concerns about your health and your workplace.
- You can complete an **e-Diversity in the Workplace** online training module. Plus staff, particularly managers, have been encouraged to attend Developing an Understanding of Equality, Diversity and Internationalisation training, which can be booked through MyEd.
- 3 A healthy and well balanced diet** can have many benefits for your health and wellbeing. www.edin.ac/1qESpqW
- There are many health benefits associated with keeping **physically active**. www.edin.ac/12Wsv6N

Taking things further

- 1** All users of display screen equipment should undertake a **risk assessment** of their workstation to ensure it is set up correctly to reduce the likelihood of any adverse effects from using the equipment. Learn more at www.edin.ac/1qEUUd5
- 2** Why not try having a **Bring and Share lunch** or support a charity initiative to get people in your area together?

See what the Chancellors Building team did to foster togetherness and highlight welfare and wellbeing at www.edin.ac/12Wtrbs

“ The University is a signatory of the ‘See Me’ pledge, and is committed to challenging stigma and discrimination around mental health issues. ”



More information about the University's commitments is available at

www.ed.ac.uk/sustainability/welfare

This publication is available online
at www.ed.ac.uk/sustainability.

It can also be made available in
alternative formats on request.

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