



University of Essex



Sustainability Sub-Strategy Bitesize

Priority 7: Waste and Recycling

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Introduction

Our Sustainability Sub-Strategy outlines our commitment to acting in response to the climate and ecological emergency, while supporting the University's mission of excellence in education and research, for the benefit of individuals and communities.

Priority 7: Waste and Recycling

Waste produced on our campuses comes from a wide range of sources, due to the diverse nature of our activities. Progress has been made in providing recycling facilities in our main campus and accommodation buildings, working alongside our waste contractor to ensure materials removed from campus are processed correctly. Average recycling rates in 2019 reached 37% per month, ranging month-on-month between 22% and 44%.

Objective: To increase the proportion of recyclable material collected on campus, alongside an overall decline in waste production, delivered through improved facilities and behaviour change.

- Through education and providing new and innovative ways of recycling both in academic and accommodation areas, our community will find it easier and simpler to recycle, creating opportunities to cut waste, reduce admin and reduce the cost of general waste being processed.
- Our procurement of goods and services and acknowledgment of full product life cycles will be considered and will significantly contribute to the reduction of waste and the appropriate use of resource in the delivery of excellence in education and research.
- In meeting our communities' expectations, the use of plastics will be reduced and single use plastics eliminated wherever possible, introducing reusable or recyclable alternatives.
- We will continue to meet and exceed the requirements of the waste Duty of Care code of practice.

Key Performance Indicators

KPI 19: By 2026 total waste reduced by 5% (measured in tonnes) year-on-year from a 2019 baseline

KPI 20: General food waste audit across all areas and food waste trial undertaken in accommodation areas by 2023

KPI 21: By 2025 single use plastics will not be used by events or marketing materials

KPI 22: Average annual recycling reaches 50% by 2026

Action Plan

Type	Year	ID	Objectives and deliverables	Objective Owner
Priority 7		Waste and Recycling		
Aim			To increase the proportion of recyclable material collected on campus, alongside an overall decline in waste production, delivered through improved facilities and behaviour change	
Objective		SSS29	To reduce the amount and impact of waste produced on our campuses, in accordance with the waste hierarchy	
Deliverable	2021/22	SSS29.1	Development of a central point for the collation of waste data from all sources across our campuses	Circular Economy Manager
Deliverable	2022/23	SSS29.2	Review opportunities for internal reuse of items and introduce mechanism to facilitate this	Circular Economy Manager
Deliverable	2021/22	SSS29.3	Maintain continuity of compliance with national guidance and legislation on waste management, working with suppliers to monitor progress.	Contracts Manager (Soft FM)
Objective		SSS30	To increase the proportion of on-site recycling, including food	
Deliverable	2026/27	SSS30.1	Review existing provision and develop waste and recycling infrastructure across academic and accommodation areas where necessary	Circular Economy Manager
Deliverable	2022/23	SSS30.2	Assess opportunity to introduce food waste collection for accommodation areas and develop a trial to test feasibility	Soft FM
Deliverable	2023/24	SSS30.3	Develop and implement a plan to increase food recycling across our campuses, including food outlets and communal areas	Soft FM, Sustainability Team
Objective		SSS31	Increase education and information to improve waste reduction and recycling	
Deliverable	2021/22	SSS31.1	Develop an online tool to be embedded on the website/student and staff directories	Circular Economy Manager
Deliverable	2021/22	SSS31.2	Develop and implement waste and recycling communication campaign	Circular Economy Manager
Objective		SSS32	Utilise our procurement processes to limit unnecessary use of resources	

Type	Year	ID	Objectives and deliverables	Objective Owner
Deliverable	2022/23	SSS32.1	Take-back requirements are set out in tenders and data is recorded throughout the contract (where applicable)	CPU
Deliverable	2023/24	SSS32.2	Guidance is set out to support contract managers in expectations for resource efficiency	Circular Economy Manager
Deliverable	2023/24	SSS32.3	Where relevant, new equipment should favour eco operating options to make this the default	Circular Economy Manager
Objective		SSS33	To eliminate single use plastics, in preference for reusable or recyclable alternatives	
Deliverable	2021/22	SSS33.1	Review of existing single plastics use to identify opportunities	Circular Economy Manager
Deliverable	2023/24	SSS33.2	Develop and implement a 'Plastics Policy' to define parameters, setting out approach to plastics and single use plastics for all outlets and external catering and events	Circular Economy Manager
Deliverable	2022/23	SSS33.3	Develop and implement systems and associated campaigns to reduce use of: a) single use plastic water bottles b) coffee cups	Circular Economy Manager
Objective		SSS34	Continue to meet and exceed the requirements of the waste Duty of Care code of practice	
Deliverable	2021/22	SSS34.1	Serviceable WEEE items from accommodation are donated via the BHF Pack for Good campaign	Soft FM
Deliverable	2021/22	SSS34.2	Include monitoring of WEEE data in line with wider waste data	Circular Economy Manager
Deliverable	2021/22	SSS34.3	Track waste treatment types for all waste collected from campuses across all contractors	Circular Economy Manager