

Imperial College Union

ENVIRONMENTAL OPERATIONAL POLICY

Proposed by the President and the Deputy President (Welfare)

Background

An update to the previous Environmental Policy was made this year and passed by Council on the 14th March. It is thought appropriate at this juncture due to the increasingly specific and far reaching nature of the policy that an accompanying operational policy be drawn up.

WASTE REDUCTION:

1. The Union shall establish what quantity of waste ICU produces annually and estimate what proportion is disposed in landfill sites.
2. The Union shall work towards reducing waste sent to landfill to 70% of 2012 levels by 2014.
3. The methods employed by the Union to reduce its waste shall include but not be limited to:
 - a) Catering suppliers tasked to only deliver in minimal packaging (eg without lids).
 - b) Using reusable packaging (eg crates) where appropriate.
 - c) Using reusable crockery and cutlery instead of disposable crockery and cutlery in all of our catering outlets at all times. For the purpose of maintaining the take-away option only, biodegradable disposable alternatives may be used.
 - d) Using reusable glasses, for example made from hard plastic except for high capacity events where this is impracticable where biodegradable skiffs are to be used. Staffing levels should be sufficient to facilitate cleaning of glasses at all non-high capacity events.
 - e) Providing segregated recycling bins wherever a bin is required in all Union buildings.
 - f) Ensuring that the Union's food waste continues to be included in the College's composting scheme.
 - g) Where the equivalent product exists with a higher recycled and / or manufactured content, this should be procured preferentially.
 - h) We will endeavour to print all documents on 100% recycled paper using vegetable based inks at a printer holding an ISO 14001 accreditation.

WATER USE:

1. The Union will reduce water consumption by installing simple devices in all existing appliances that use water. This shall include but not be limited to:
 - a. Low volume flushes (twin flush buttons).
 - b. Low flow, aerated showerheads (flow level <9litres/minute)

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- c. Percussion taps
 - d. Tap Inserts
 - e. Waterless urinals using a new valved system
2. When replacing appliances, The Union will choose water efficient models. The “DEFRA and HM Revenue & Customs Enhanced Capital Allowance Scheme for Water Technologies” shall be used to set a minimum benchmark for water efficiency in appliances (www.eca-water.gov.uk).
 3. Ensure that water efficiency is incorporated into all staff training.

CARBON EMISSIONS:

1. The Union will work towards reducing its carbon emissions by 20% of the July 2010 baseline by August 2014, in line with the College’s target.
2. Specific methods to be employed by the Union to reduce its carbon emissions shall include but not be limited to:

Energy:

- a. Publicise the Union’s carbon emissions from heat and electricity to its students by linking to the Union’s Carbon Desktop page from the Union website
- b. Reducing energy use through maximising building energy performance, both through building design and efficient end use. Any future building work shall incorporate energy efficiency initiatives including secondary glazing, low-energy lighting (including motion-sensor controls), draft reduction and services insulation.
- c. Turning off all electronic equipment when not in use, including overnight in the SAC and Union Offices. Plug sockets should also be switched off when not in use.
- d. Avoid use of patio heaters and similar appliances and discourage the use of personal heaters.
- e. Set double sided printing as standard in the SAC and Union Office.
- f. Training all staff in energy efficiency practices.
- g. Minimise energy use in food production, transportation and storage via:
 - i. Usage of energy efficient equipment
 - ii. Reduction of suppliers / multi-temperature vehicles via liaison with College Commercial services

Transport:

- h. The Union will continue to send all waste cooking oil (estimated at 40L/week) to be made into Biodiesel in line with College’s policy.

PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT

SUSTAINABLE PURCHASING POLICY

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The Union aims to offer sustainable catering and retail products that are produced, processed and traded in ways that respect the environment.

To achieve this, the Union aims to:

- Ensure that the products it buys for catering and retail are of the highest environmental certification, and are sourced as locally as possible.
- Only source meat which is reared according to sustainable farming methods and locally sourced.
- Work with Assured Food Standards to procure “Red Tractor” products where appropriate
- Use organic eggs in any on site food preparation involving eggs
- Provide more vegetarian and vegan meal and beverage options and identify them on the menu clearly
- Consider the embedded water (the water used in the production of any item) when choosing products, ingredients and services.
- Include the Part Time Carnivore affiliation logo on menus to encourage students to choose vegetarian options
- Only use fish from sustainable sources (those accredited by the Marine Stewardship Council), and achieve MSC accreditation.
- Maintain Fairtrade Accreditation as laid out in the Fairtrade Policy and commit to buy Fairtrade produce where possible.
- Conduct a termly review of the menu to reflect seasonal produce
- Research the feasibility of providing organic meal options
- Review the list of suppliers and ingredients used with the Environmental Officers on a yearly basis

Bottled water

The Union recognises the negative environmental impact of bottled water consumption and so resolves to:

Only sell brands of ethically sourced bottled water in any Union outlet where bottled water is sold as determined by Executive Committee.

Lobby College to invest in more water fountains and look into making more available in the Union building, as well as raising awareness of pre-existing water fountains

Make reusable drinking bottles available in the Union shop and newsagent at a price our students consider reasonable