

RE-USE POLICY

Purpose

Environmental sustainability is at the heart of the University of Reading's organisational identity; positioning it as one of its 4 key principles in its latest Strategic Plan 2020-26, with a commitment to:

"...work together to make the best use of our resources to ensure the sustainability of the University [and] ...play our part in tackling climate change and be recognised as a University that leads on global environmental sustainability."

This Policy expands on the University's Environmental & Energy Policy to address the issue of waste minimisation through the re-use of resources; and supports the University's Waste and Resource Use Strategy 2021-30 which can be viewed at www.reading.ac.uk/sustainability/policies-and-strategies.

Policy commitments

1) Increase re-use

The University will make it easier to appropriately reuse items which are still fit for purpose, whilst maintaining compliance with relevant waste management legislation and other applicable requirements. This will help minimise the impact on the environment and reduce costs by ensuring resources are in use for longer.

2) Change culture

The University will embed an environmentally and socially responsible culture of considering re-use rather than disposal, whilst recognising that disposal may sometimes be the lowest impact option. The University will demonstrate that increasing re-use provides opportunities to save finite natural resources, save money and improve public relations.

3) Create benefit

The University will investigate the benefits of offering items for re-use to both the University and the wider community, ensuring that in addition to environmental and economic benefits, the social benefits are explored. This will boost the University's reputation of being a good and responsible employer, as well as working with the local community.

Applying a re-use hierarchy

The University will promote re-use of items that are still fit for purpose and in good condition. This includes re-use of components of an item where appropriate and safe to do so. This is as a preferred alternative to disposal/recycling, and as an environmentally friendly alternative to buying new. The following re-use hierarchy should be applied, whilst recognising that disposal may sometimes be the option with the lowest environmental impact.

When arranging removal of unwanted items, sufficient time must be given by Schools and Functions to apply this hierarchy. Storage and transport resources are limited, and therefore Schools and Functions are encouraged to plan ahead where possible. Early advertisement of items known to be unwanted in the near future (e.g. as the result of an office move) can in some cases help to manage storage and transport requirements. For example, items can be moved directly to the recipient at a mutually agreed date rather than needing to find storage space.

1) Internal re-use within the University has priority

Staff should in the first instance make reasonable efforts to offer unwanted items for re-use within their own School or Function, and then advertise items on the University's Warp-it portal (not for electrical equipment). If this is not possible or practical, staff should investigate internal re-use by other routes (e.g. direct contact with relevant staff in other Schools or Functions, email distribution lists). As a guide, items should typically be advertised for a minimum of one month.

2) Re-use within the local community

If items are not claimed internally, staff should consider if it is practical to release assets in good condition to schools, charities, or other organisations for re-use, and can contact Sustainability Services for more information. Ideally these charities and organisations should be in the local community. Where items are not of interest to the first charity or organisation contacted, they should be offered to other groups (typically three in total) before moving on to the third stage in the hierarchy (personal use by staff and students). Charities and organisations should be given a reasonable length of time to respond (typically 2 weeks).

The Procurement Team's procedure for release of assets **must** be followed; for more information on this contact procurement@reading.ac.uk. Note that items must not be hazardous to health nor the environment, and that all data-holding items are expressly excluded from being offered to third parties.

3) Re-use by staff or students for personal use

Staff may express an interest in re-using items for personal use, or believe that items may be of use to other staff or students in their School or Function. If items cannot be re-used within the University, or by the local community in line with points 1 and 2 above, then assets can be released for personal use. In this case, the School or Function should advertise the surplus items appropriately.

The Procurement Team's procedure for release of assets **must** be followed; for more information on this contact procurement@reading.ac.uk. Note that items must not be hazardous to health nor the environment, and that all data-holding items are expressly excluded from being offered for personal use.

4) Final disposal

If reasonable efforts in line with the steps above have been made to re-use items without success, staff must follow disposal procedures as outlined on the Sustainability Services website.

All data-holding items must go for secure disposal to comply with the University's information compliance policies, in particular the IT Equipment Disposal Policy, which states that University-owned IT equipment must only be disposed of via the University's contracted company for the disposal of IT equipment. This ensures that data holding components are securely destroyed to limit the risk of unauthorized access to data.

The University's information compliance policies and procedures are available on the Information Management & Policy Services webpage at www.reading.ac.uk/imps/information-compliance-policies. Information about the disposal of IT and data-holding equipment is available on the Sustainability Services website at <https://sites.reading.ac.uk/sustainability/recycling/dispose/>

Second chances

When staff dispose of items and Portering Services are asked to collect them, at Portering's discretion furniture that is still in good condition may be stored in partnership with Sustainability Services and re-advertised on Warp-it. This gives items a second chance to be re-used. Retention times and management of stored furniture is controlled through internal Portering and Sustainability Services operational procedures in compliance with the re-use hierarchy above.

Version control

VERSION	KEEPER	REVIEW FREQUENCY	APPROVED BY	APPROVAL DATE
1.0	Sustainability Services	Every four years or as necessary	ESC	04/12/17
2.0	Sustainability Services	Every four years or as necessary	Estates Committee	24/02/22