

Food waste

Food Waste Management

All of the University's main catering facilities (including the Students' Union building & Nursery) have segregated food waste collection points for front-of-house and kitchen/preparation areas. The food waste is then moved to external wheelie bins so that it can be collected by the University's waste contractor and sent to an 'Anaerobic Digestion' plant. The University's cafés record their food waste through the till system and restaurants report wastage back to the Executive Chef.

The University has one in-vessel composter that turns some food waste into compost for use on our herb garden at Greenlands campus.

There are no segregated food waste collections in offices and academic areas across the University, so food waste in these areas may be put into the general waste collections – general waste is sent to an 'Energy from Waste' (EfW) plant, where the energy is recovered and electricity is generated. No food waste gets sent to landfill from the University.

Measures to prevent food waste

The University's catering team follows the 'Menus of Change' framework, providing the basis of continual improvement and 24 principles to work towards:

<https://www.hospitalityuor.co.uk/sustainability/food-policy/>;

<https://www.menusofchange.org/principles-resources/moc-principles/>).

Moderating portion size is one of the biggest steps they are taking towards reducing food waste. They are also considering menu concepts that change the value proposition for customers from an overemphasis on quantity to a focus on flavour, nutrient quality, culinary adventure, and new menu formats. Initiatives to further reduce food waste by changing cooking processes and the use of leftover items are being developed.

Food Waste Data

Since 2015 the University has collated weight data for food waste that is segregated, collected and sent for Anaerobic Digestion from across the University's campuses. This data includes collections from the University's catering facilities, the Students' Union main building & Nursery. Overall annual data listed below is for each of the last six academic years (1st August to 31st July).

2015/16: 84,196kg

2016/17: 91,289kg

2017/18: 84,488kg

2018/19: 63,176kg

2019/20: 38,990kg

2020/21: 24,362kg

2021/22: 68,245kg