

University of Reading Fairtrade Student & Staff Survey

28

Responses

11:48

Average time to complete

Closed

Status

INTRODUCTION

As part of the Fairtrade University & Colleges Award, the University of Reading carried out a survey of staff and students in April 2023 to gather more information about current issues and purchasing behaviour. The survey included 25 questions and took respondents around 10 minutes to complete.

There were no right or wrong answers, we were just keen to hear their thoughts. The information that they provided was anonymous and was not used for any other purpose than our Fairtrade award submission and planning on how we can improve our efforts around Fairtrade and ethical consumption in the future.

THEMES & ANALYSIS

Theme	Analysis
Engagement in Ethical Consumption	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Highest level of worry about the environment.- Respondents not very worried about unemployment.- Few are volunteering with an organisation working on these issues but many would like to.- 53% of staff and students feel that the effort they are making will make a difference to address the issues listed in question 1.
Buying Patterns	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Majority of staff and students are already buying products with ethical credentials.- 33% felt that their buying decision that was specifically influenced by the ethical standards of a retailer or producer.- 50% felt that the ethical standards of the products that they buy, and the companies that sell them, is an issue that matters to them.- The product itself is the biggest motivator to purchase ethically followed by animal, ethical, environmental issues.- The biggest factor making someone less likely to buy ethically was price and brand followed by lack of information that the product is ethical and how.- Other valuable feedback preventing people included brand greenwashing, brand reputation and financial benefit to me.- 60% of staff and students felt that companies need to be more responsible and ethical than they are at the moment.- 50% try to buy products from companies that act in an ethical way, even if it means spending more.-
Trust in suppliers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- The respondents trusted products with accreditation marks e.g. Rainforest Alliance, Fairtrade or those from charities and campaign organisations over retailers' own statements and news reports in the media. 75% care that products are independently verified.

Fairtrade knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 86% of respondents recognised the Fairtrade logo and associated it with fair production, pay and workers. - In terms of products purchased, 35% always buy Fairtrade tea/coffee, 43% bananas and respondents rarely buy Fairtrade clothing. - Over 60% care whether Farmers are getting fair pay and that they can choose how they improve the communities in which they work.
UoR Activity & Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 75% of respondents feel that the University of Reading sees the use and promotion of Fairtrade as important or very important. - Staff and students see the most Fairtrade products in Co-op and University cafés and shops but not in vending machines. And, posters and displays in cafes are being noticed. - 47% of respondents did not see any advertising for Fairtrade Fortnight events so we need to do much more visible advertising about events and publicise our performance in this area in the coming year. - Many students have either never been taught about Fairtrade or ethical purchasing – perhaps we can provide more education to our students at this stage of their education.

ACTIONS & NEXT STEPS

This word cloud below generated from the survey give us some good indications of how we can improve in the coming year.



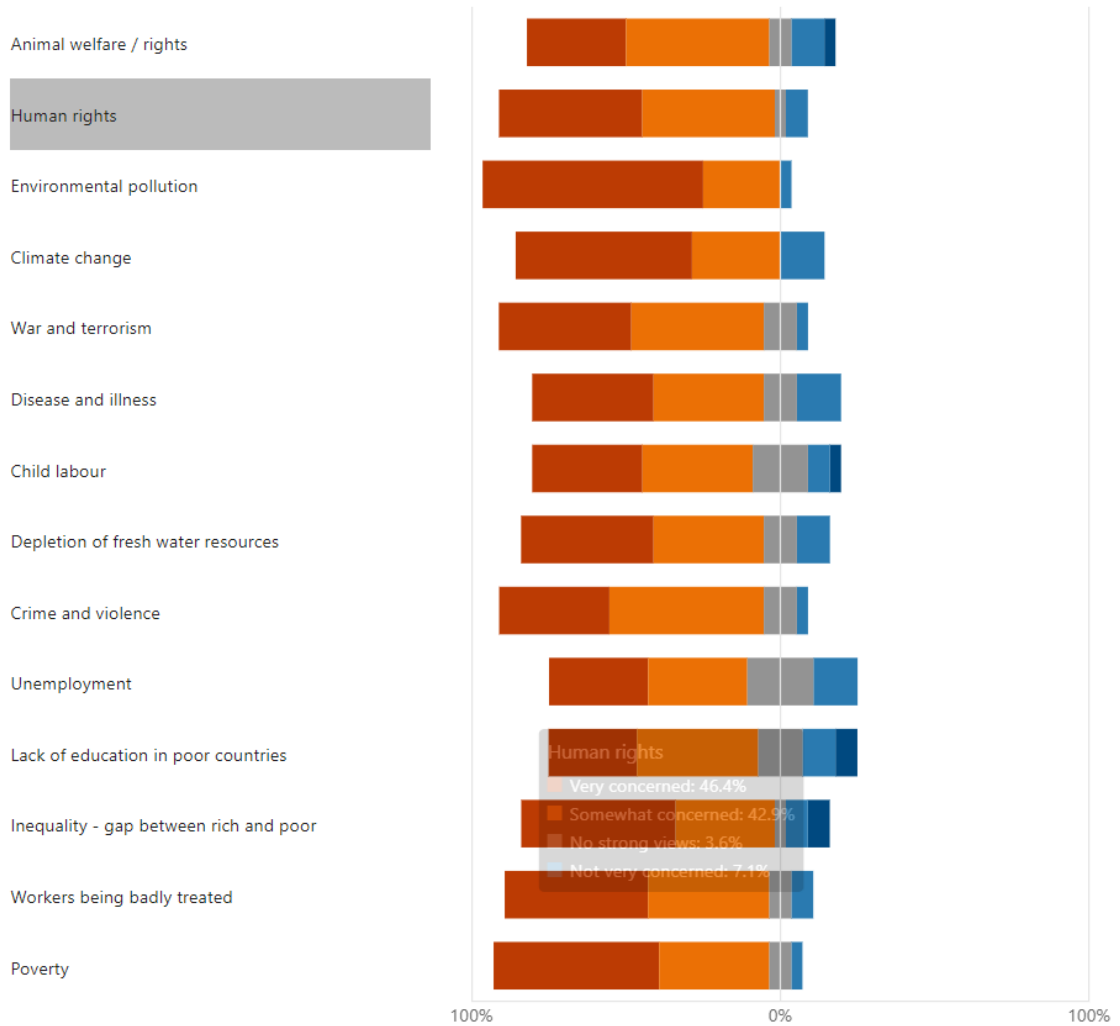
1. **Survey-** For our next award submission, we will circulate this survey much earlier in the process so as to collect more responses.
2. **Publicity & Education-** To increase awareness of the University’s commitment and activities around Fairtrade, we will work with the Sustainability Team Green Festival, Internal Communications team, RUSU and the Careers team to provide additional information to students and staff about progress we are making, what we are doing and how they can get involved. International students may be a particularly useful group to engage with based on comments provided in the survey responses.
3. **Sustainability Overall** – A number of the comments stated that respondents would like to be involved in wider sustainability efforts overall at the University mentioning further reduction in plastics on campus including packaging, plastic drink bottles, prizes and reusable containers.
4. **Economic Climate** – One respondent very accurately pointed out that ‘There's a cost of living crisis, no student is going to spend more so that produce is ethical’. This is a very valid point and we will be mindful of how the economic climate and cost pressures are affecting staff and students in future efforts.

SURVEY QUESTIONS AND RESULTS

1. How concerned are you, if at all, about the following issues affecting the world today? *Please select one for each area.* (0 point)

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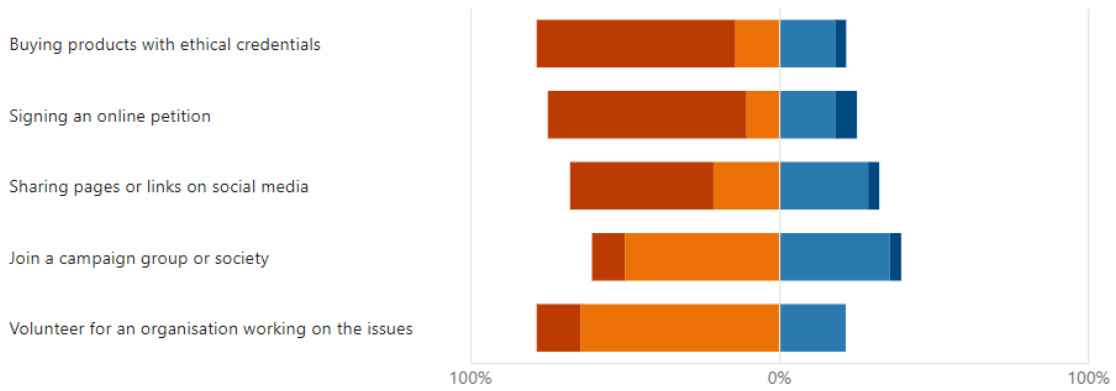
■ Very concerned
 ■ Somewhat concerned
 ■ No strong views
 ■ Not very concerned
 ■ Don't know



2. Which of the actions below do you take to make a difference to areas that concern you? (0 point)

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■ I already do this ■ I don't currently do this, but would be willing to ■ I don't currently do this, and would not be willing to
■ Don't know

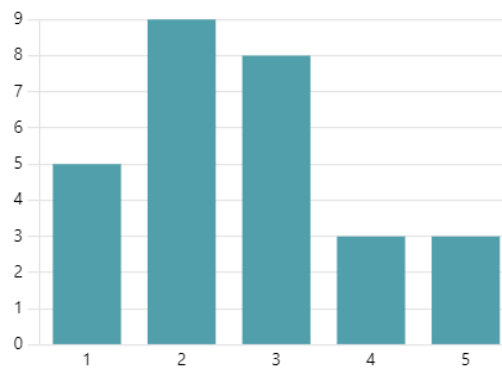


3. How confident are you that the actions you personally take will make a real difference to addressing the issues that concern you? (1 star - not confident, 5 stars - very confident) (0 point)

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2.64
Average Rating



4. Now we'd like to find out a bit more about what you think about the things you buy...

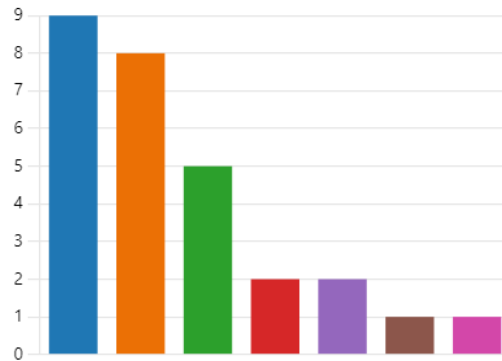
(0 point)

When, if at all, did you last make a buying decision that was specifically influenced by the ethical standards of a retailer or producer? *Please select only one*

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● In the last week	9
● Over 1 week, up to 1 month ago	8
● over 1 month, up to 3 months a...	5
● Over 3 months, up to 6 months ...	2
● More than 1 year ago	2
● Never	1
● Don't know	1



5. To what extent are the ethical standards of the products that you buy, and the companies that sell them, an issue that matters to you? *Please select only one*

(0 point)

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[Insights](#)

● Matters a great deal	7
● Matters a fair amount	14
● Matters just a little	6
● Does not matter at all	1
● Don't know	0



6. What motivates you to buy products that are produced in an ethical way? *Please write your answer in the box below.* (0 point)

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Latest Responses

"The idea that if everyone bought ethical products, unethical products and ...

"Hope to make a difference"

"Quality. Concern for the environment. Concern for animal welfare. "

 Update

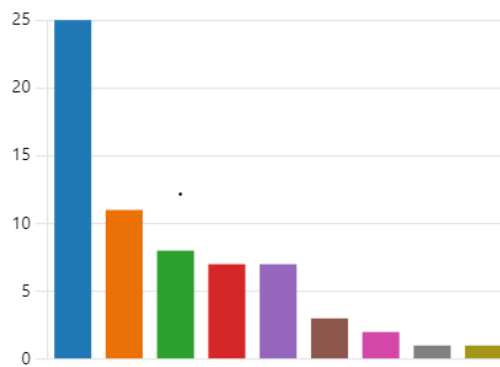
4 respondents (14%) answered **product** for this question.



7. Which of the following reasons, if any, makes you less likely to buy products that are produced in an ethical way? *Please select all that apply* (0 point)

[More Details](#)

- Ethical products tend to have hi... 25
- Information about the ethical cr... 11
- Information about the ethical pr... 8
- Ethical options aren't well adver... 7
- The brands I prefer don't offer e... 7
- Ethical products tend to be lowe... 3
- I'm not concerned about wheth... 2
- Other 1
- None of the above 1



8. Please tell us what else makes you LESS likely to buy products that are produced in an ethical way. (0 point)

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Insights

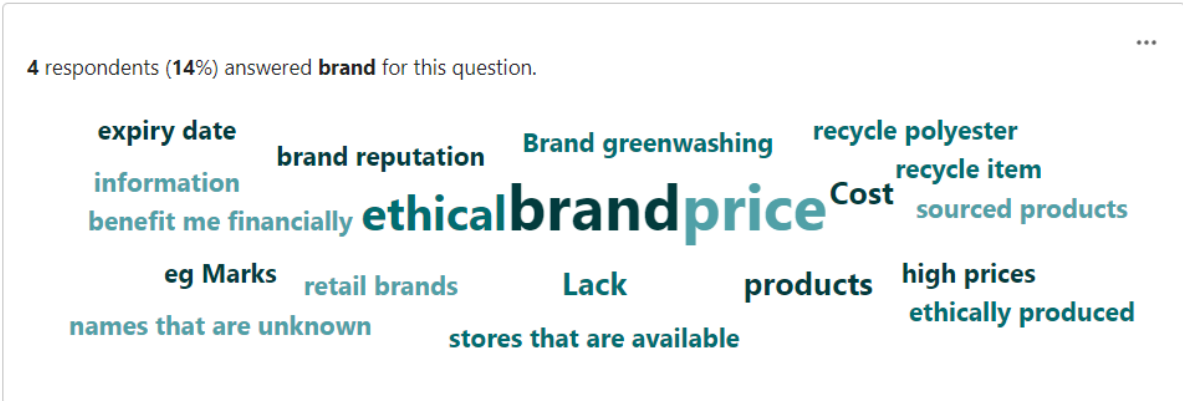
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"Companies that claim to be ethical, but you have no way of tracing it, for e..."

"Not applicable"

"Price"

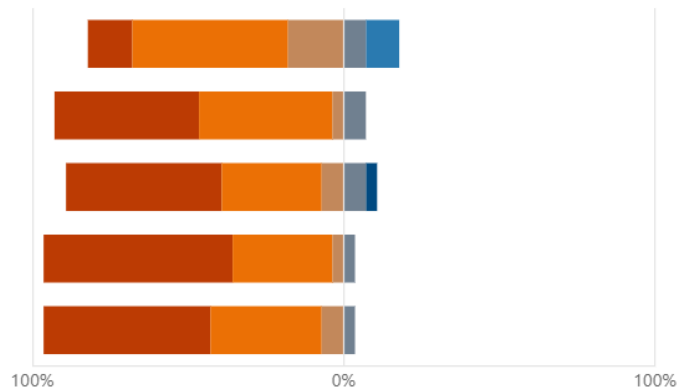


9. To what extent, if at all, do you agree with the following statements? (0 point)

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■ Strongly Agree
 ■ Agree
 ■ No strong opinion
 ■ Disagree
 ■ Strongly disagree
 ■ Don't know

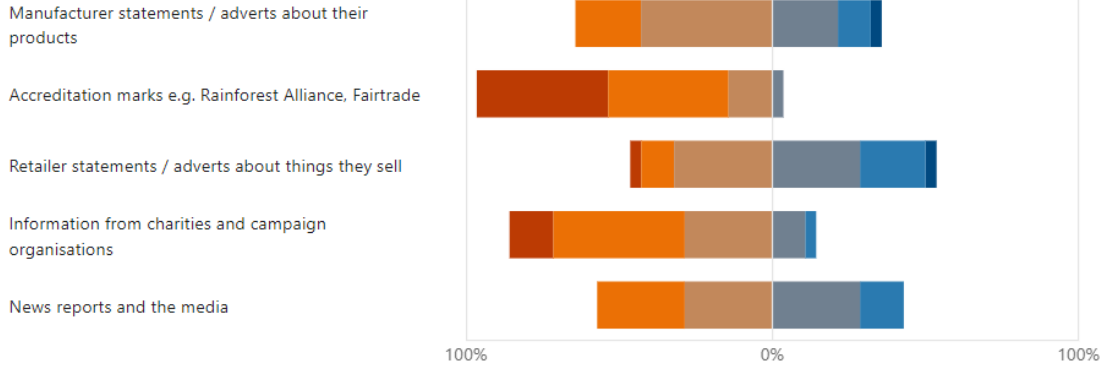
- I try to buy products from companies that act in an ethical way, even if it means spending more
- I don't think its enough for companies to say that they are ethical, they need to prove it to me
- It is important to me that companies are clear about where they source their raw materials, components...
- Companies need to be more responsible and ethical than they are at the moment
- I want to buy and use more products that don't harm the people who produce them



10. How much do you trust the information that is available on the ethical credentials of products, please rank them. *Please select one for each option, where 1 is the most trusted, and 5 is the least trusted* (0 point)

[More Details](#)

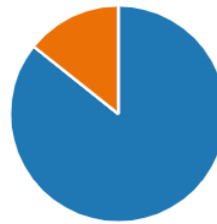
■ 1 Most Trusted
 ■ 2
 ■ 3
 ■ 4
 ■ 5 Least Trusted
 ■ None of these



11. Have you ever seen this logo? *Please select only one.* (0 point)

[More Details](#)

● Yes	24
● No	4
● Not sure	0



12. What do you think Fairtrade means? *Please write your answer in the box below.* (0 point)

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"Fairtrade is an agreement to create or source products from ethical backgro..."
 "Fair deal for producers"
 "It's an accreditation that companies can attain to show that their workers a..."

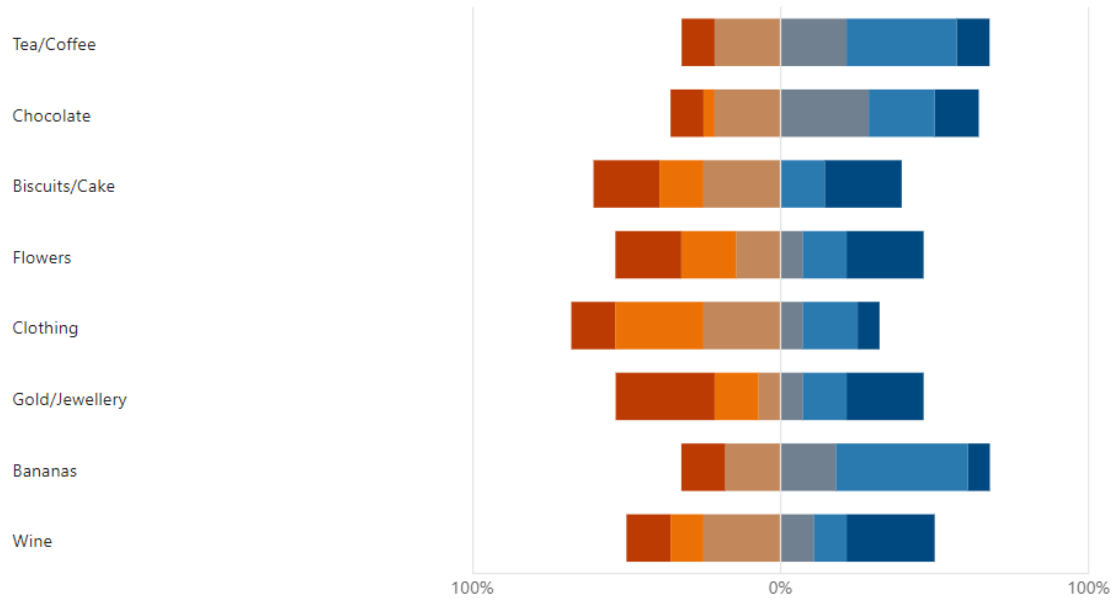
11 respondents (39%) answered **fair** for this question.



13. Please think about the categories of products listed below. When you have the choice, how often do you buy a product with the Fairtrade label over a product without the Fairtrade label? *Please select only one.* (0 point)

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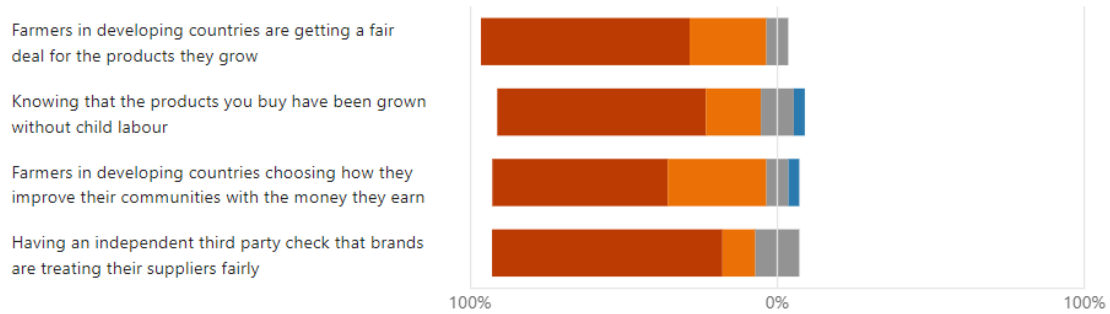
Never Rarely Sometimes Often Always Don't know



14. How much do you care about the following issues? *Please select one option for each statement.* (0 point)

[More Details](#)

■ I care a lot ■ A bit ■ I am indifferent ■ I don't care ■ Don't know



15. Now we'd like to know what you've seen or heard about Fairtrade at the University of Reading. (0 point)

How important, if at all, do you think it is that your University takes action to use and promote Fairtrade? *Please select only one.*

[More Details](#)

- Very important 13
- Important 8
- Neither important or unimportant 5
- Not important at all 1
- Don't know 1

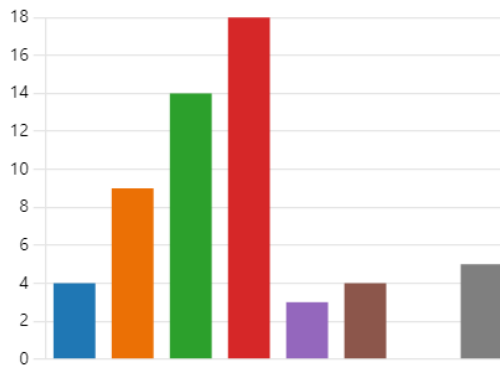


16. Thinking about your university, which of the following places do you recall seeing Fairtrade products available on campus? *Please select all that apply*

(0 point)

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● Students' Union	4
● University shops	9
● University Cafe / Restaurant	14
● Co-op Supermarket	18
● Vending machines on campus	3
● Market on campus	4
● Other	0
● None of these	5

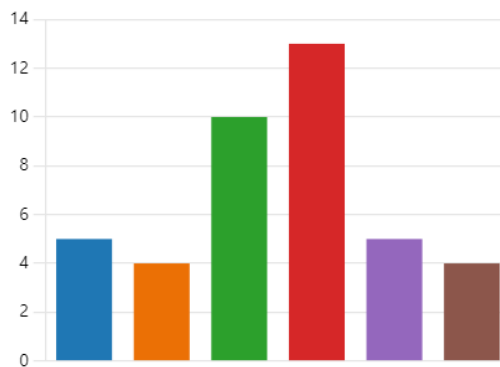


17. Other than on the products themselves, where else have you seen the Fairtrade logo at your university? *Please select all that apply*

(0 point)

[More Details](#)

● University website	5
● Students' Union website	4
● Posters	10
● Displays in shops or cafes	13
● Product tastings	5
● Events and meetings	4



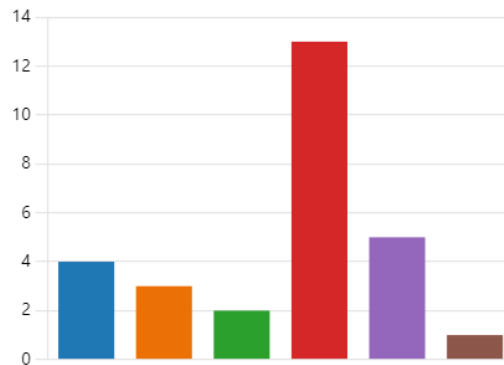
18. Fairtrade Fortnight is an action-packed two weeks of events and activities taking place across the UK. (0 point)

Do you remember seeing any of the following activities, campaigns or events taking place to promote Fairtrade Fortnight at your university? *Please select one only*

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 Insights

- Yes, discounts on Fairtrade hot ... 4
- Yes, raffle to win a Fairtrade ha... 3
- Yes, student Fairtrade quiz at M... 2
- No, I didn't see any events durin... 13
- Don't know 5
- Other 1



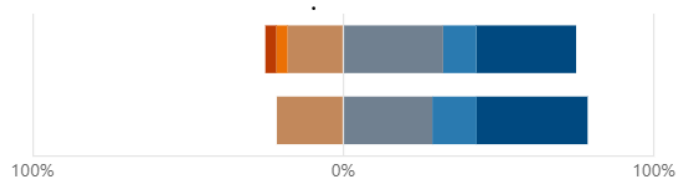
19. On a scale of 1 to 5, how would you rate your university's performance in relation to purchasing... (0 point)
Please select one only where 1 is very poor and 5 is very good

[More Details](#)

- 1 Very poor
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5 Very good
- Don't know

Products with positive ethical credentials

Fairtrade products



20. What else do you think your University could be doing to support Fairtrade? *Please write your answer in the box below.* (0 point)

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"Stocking only fairtrade products in university owned shops."

"Not sure"

" "

[Update](#)

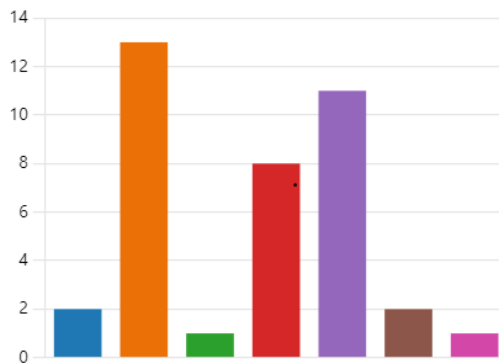
5 respondents (18%) answered **fair trade** for this question.



21. Thinking about your time in education so far, at which point when you were studying were topics such as corporate social responsibility, climate change, social justice, consumerism, global and ethical trade (including Fairtrade) covered in teaching? *Please select all that apply.* (0 point)

[More Details](#)

Primary school	2
Secondary school	13
College	1
University	8
I have never been taught these t...	11
Never been taught about these ...	2
Don't know	1



22. We're also interested in finding out what you know about Fairtrade in the local community where you study... (0 point)

Thinking about your time at Reading so far, which of the following have you seen or heard about in the local community? *Please select all that apply*

[More Details](#)

- Fairtrade Fortnight events 6
- Fairtrade town or city status 1
- Fairtrade campaign group 3
- Don't know 5
- None of these 14



23. Finally, we'd like to know a bit more about you... (0 point)

Which of the following statements best describes you? *Please pick one*

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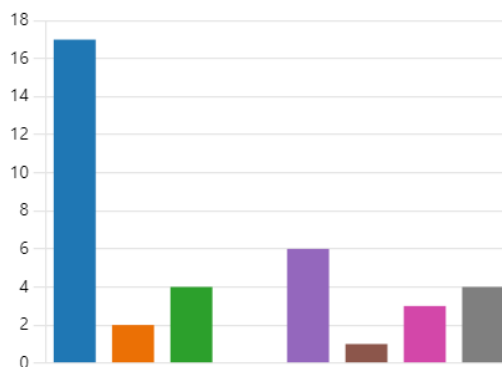
- I am a UK citizen studying in the... 17
- I am an international student fro... 2
- I am an international student fro... 2
- I would prefer not to say 7



24. Please tell us about your studies. *Please select all that apply.* (0 point)

[More Details](#)

- Full-time study 17
- Part-time study 2
- I would prefer not to say 4
- Apprenticeship (Intermediate / ... 0
- BA / BSc / BEd / Foundation De... 6
- MA / MRes / MSc / MEd / MPhil... 1
- PHD / D.Phil / professional doct... 3
- Other qualification 4



25. Thank you for completing our survey, we really appreciate you taking the time!

(0 point)

Your responses are completely confidential and will not be used for any purpose other than for this research. If there is anything else you'd like to tell us, please do so in the box below.

[More Details](#)

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"Reword question 17 - I don't recall seeing the fairtrade logo anywhere, but I..."

"Nothing further"

..

 Update

2 respondents (7%) answered **questions** for this question.

