

Appendix 7 – Food Waste

Food Waste Management

All of the University's main catering facilities (plus 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' facility, where it is treated to generate electricity and digestate fertiliser. The University's catering facilities record their food waste through the till system and report wastage back to the Executive Chef.

More meals are now prepared from scratch on campus, which has resulted in larger quantities of vegetable peelings and off-cuts being put into the food waste stream. The University is serving more meals than ever, with Catered Student numbers virtually doubling compared to 2019. Three additional locations have started collecting food waste since 2022 and the Catering Teams have segregated more food waste out of the General Waste stream than in previous years, leading to an increase in food waste collected.

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 (see <https://www.hospitalityuor.co.uk/sustainability/food-policy/> and <https://www.menusofchange.org/principles-of-healthy-sustainable-menus>). 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 have been developed.

Food Waste Data

Since 2015 the University has collated weight data for food waste that is segregated, collected and sent for Anaerobic Digestion (AD) 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 nine academic years (1st August to 31st July), including those affected by COVID-19 shutdowns:

Year	Total Weight of Food Waste Sent for AD (kg)	Staff & Student numbers (FTE)	Weight of Food Waste per Person (kg per FTE Staff & Student)
2015/16	84,196	16,772	5.0
2016/17	91,289	17,714	5.2
2017/18	84,488	19,024	4.4
2018/19	63,176	19,300	3.3
2019/20	38,990	19,424	2.0
2020/21	24,362	19,466	1.3
2021/22	68,245	19,145	3.6
2022/23	90,953	18,812	4.8
2023/24	114,773	19,770	5.8