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## **UBS ETHICAL & ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY**

### **UBS ETHICAL & ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT**

*The Union of Brunel Students is committed to the creation of a sustainable and carbon neutral community. We will demonstrate this through an awareness of the Unions detrimental effects on the environment and a commitment to reducing these in the short term, and continue to improve its sustainability in the future.*

**Approved by:**

Student Assembly

**Date:**

27<sup>th</sup> October 2011

**Signed:**

Environmental Working Group Chair

VP Community Welfare

**Review date (by):** October 2014

**Manager responsible for review and implementation:**

Director of Operations

**Trustee responsible for review and implementation:** President

**Trustee responsible for interpretation:** President

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1. The UBS wishes to lead by example to both staff and students in reducing its impact on the environment. As such the UBS requires an Ethical & Environmental Policy in order to measure these improvements and set out its aims for limiting its detrimental effect on the environment and society.
- 1.2. The UBS also understands that it should use its position as an influential stakeholder to promote and apply pressure on the University, in order to take significant steps that affect both the UBS and the University in terms of their environmental impact.
- 1.3. The following Ethical and Environmental Policy aims to officially declare the Union's commitment to negating its detrimental impact on the environment and its continuing role as a lobbying force to convince the University to do the same.
- 1.4. This Policy exists to:
  - 1.4.1. Encourage the adoption of ethical and environmental best practices within the Union
  - 1.4.2. Ensure the Union is proactive in promoting ethical environmental issues to students, staff and the University
  - 1.4.3. Commit the Union to delivering an implementation strategy which embodies the beliefs stated herein, monitors the impact of such implementation and constantly evaluates its effectiveness

## **2. OBJECTIVES**

- 2.1. The Union is a student led organisation which exists to represent the needs of its members. As such, the Union recognises the need for an Ethical & Environmental Strategy to promote sustainability at Brunel and in the wider community. In recognising this, the Union has the following objectives:
  - 2.1.1 To create and sustain an ethically and environmentally aware organisation
  - 2.1.2 To lead by example to both staff and students in reducing its impact on the environment
  - 2.1.3 To publicly commit to reducing negative impact on the environment thereby ensuring that our members, Officers and staff are aware of the Union's environmental commitment.
  - 2.1.4 To educate students, staff and the local community as to the importance and benefits of environmental best practices
  - 2.1.5 To evaluate and monitor the Union's impact on the environment
  - 2.1.6 To commit to a reduction in this impact and set specific targets

- 2.1.7 To ensure that the Union meets where practicable, legislative requirements
- 2.1.8 To source and provide Fairtrade products as an ethical and environmental choice in our product range wherever possible.
- 2.1.9 To encourage modes of transport by staff and students which minimise the environmental impact
- 2.1.10 To promote a purchasing policy which will, as far as practicable and cost effective, consider and give preference to the use of products and services which cause the least harm to the environment

### **3. ENVIRONMENTAL WORKING GROUP**

#### **3.1. FREQUENCY**

- 3.1.1. The Working Group shall meet formally at least once a month.
- 3.1.2. The Working Group may meet at any time outside of the Groups formal meeting times.

#### **3.2. MEMBERSHIP**

- 3.2.1. The Working Group shall consist of the Environmental Working Group Chair, President and any other full member of the Union.
- 3.2.2. Union Staff may attend if required
- 3.2.3. The Chair of the Working Group shall be elected in a secret ballot of all Full Members of the Union. If the position of Chair is not filled in the Spring or Autumn Elections, it is the responsibility of the President to convene the meetings of the Working Group.

#### **3.3. RESPONSIBILITIES**

- 3.3.1. To create and implement strategy to improve the Union's environmental performance
- 3.3.2. To find innovative ways to campaign and raise awareness of issues connected with the environment across the Membership.
- 3.3.3. Liaise with the University to improve its Environmental Strategy.
- 3.3.4. Work with relevant external organisations to raise awareness of environmental issues across the Membership.

#### **4. TRAINING AND COMMUNICATION**

- 4.1. In order to implement this policy and to promote continuous improvement in ethical and environmental practices, UBS will organise regular training and development activity on E & E issues. The focus of such training will be empowering staff to take decisions themselves in their day-to-day work and lives that encourage E & E best practice.
- 4.2. All new staff will receive training, briefing and guidance on E & E issues as part of their induction.
- 4.3. Staff Development Days and Management Development Days will be used to promote this policy and to offer training and development in E & E issues.
- 4.4. This policy will be circulated to all staff via electronic format. Ongoing communication of E & E issues will also be provided via the staff newsletters.
- 4.5. The Union has also established a Staff Environmental Working Group whose membership will include at least one student officer, one member of the SMT and a variety of staff from across the Union. The group shall be responsible for the implementation of environmental initiatives within the Union and shall report to Union Cabinet through the Chair.

#### **5. GENERAL PROCUREMENT**

The Union of Brunel Students is a not for profit organisation, therefore conscious of effective budget management.

Our general principles will be to purchase products or services as ethically or environmentally friendly as possible within the agreed and practical budget constraints.

Prior to purchasing environmental or ethically sourced products or services not specifically highlighted in this policy, where the cost of purchasing will exceed our expected budget, appropriate authorisation will need to be sought from and approved by UBS Cabinet.

- 5.1. To procure environmentally friendly and ethical products, such as Fairtrade and biodegradable packaging, in all areas of the UBS where practicable
- 5.2. To develop a culture within the UBS that encourages all staff and students to consider their personal energy, water and resource consumption levels, including personally generated waste, and associated carbon emissions.
- 5.3. To provide environmental services to both staff and students, such as mobile phone and battery recycling facilities, in order to reduce the environmental impact of the UBS and to involve staff and students in these environmental practices

- 5.4. To procure energy efficient electronic equipment where possible
- 5.5. To continually improve on the Environmental Policy through yearly reviews

## **6. PURCHASING**

- 6.1. Where possible, UBS will purchase from suppliers who have achieved the highest ratings in NUSSL's E&E screening process.
- 6.2. The Union will engage with its service suppliers to improve their ethical and environmental practices, for example encouraging cleaning contractors to use environmentally friendly cleaning products.
- 6.3. When purchasing electrical equipment, such as fridges, freezers, etc. account must be taken of the energy efficiency of the equipment and, where possible, the highest rated energy efficient equipment should be purchased.
- 6.4. In the purchasing of all other goods and services, decision-makers should take ethical and environmental issues into consideration and ensure that sustainability criteria is included in specifications to suppliers and where possible, in the award of contracts
- 6.5. In the purchasing of all other goods and services, decision-makers should ensure that suppliers' environmental credentials are considered in the Supplier Appraisal process
- 6.6. When purchasing white A4 and A3 size paper, UBS will always purchase FSC approved or equivalent paper made from at least 75% renewable sources?
- 6.7. In the purchasing of all other goods and services, decision-makers should consider products that are Fairtrade accredited
- 6.8. In the purchasing of all other goods and services, decision-makers should exploring opportunities for reuse and recycling of materials as appropriate by questioning:

What you buy:

Is there a less environmentally damaging alternative?

Is there a more energy efficient product available?

Does it need to be bought at all – could you borrow or use a similar piece of equipment from elsewhere in the Union?

How you buy it:

Is delivery of the product needed every week?

Is the product necessary or could it be replaced by a service?

Who you buy it from:

Are there any local suppliers of this product?  
Has the supplier any environmental convictions?

Challenge repeat purchases of the same product:  
Are there more sustainable options?  
Is the product value for money?

## **7. FAIRTRADE**

- 7.1. UBS assigns great importance to its role within the wider world and hence acknowledges its commitment to supporting, using and promoting Fairtrade products.
- 7.2. The Union and University have achieved Fairtrade University status through collaboration and partnership working.
- 7.3. The Union is committed to maintaining Fairtrade status and to promoting Fairtrade products wherever possible.
- 7.4. The Union will promote Fairtrade produce in its retail outlets and will stock as wide a range of Fairtrade products as possible.
- 7.5. Where this is not possible, the Union is committed to being selling Fairtrade as soon as it becomes feasible.
- 7.6. The Union will ensure that union officers T-shirts, staff uniform T-shirts and where possible, other clothing items used by the Union, are made from Fairtrade cotton or are WRAP (Worldwide Responsible Apparel Production) certified or similar.
- 7.7. The Union will seek to promote the Fairtrade concept to its members and staff, to the University and to the wider community, via campaigns and events such as One World Week.

## **8. WATER**

- 8.1. Where possible The Union will apply water saving measures
- 8.2. The Union will apply water saving technology where possible; this will apply mostly when replacing equipment and refurbishing buildings
- 8.3. The Union will install water saving devices on all urinals as and when toilets are refurbished or new toilet facilities are installed.

## 9. TRANSPORT

- 9.1. The Union owns and leases a number of vehicles that are used to transport people and products, on and of campus. When considering the replacement of these vehicles, the Union will attempt to purchase or lease the most environmentally friendly vehicles available.
- 9.2. During the day-to-day operation of owned and leased vehicles, The Union will ensure that vehicles are regularly serviced, emission levels are checked annually and that the vehicle is regularly inspected.
- 9.3. The Union will encourage drivers to drive responsibly in order to minimise fuel consumption.
- 9.4. Brunel University and the UBS have implemented a Travel Plan.
- 9.5. The travel plan's over-riding objective is:

*'To encourage staff and students to use more sustainable ways of travelling to campus, through improvements in the quality and more effective promotion of the alternatives to the car and by engaging more with students to develop potential improvements to travel opportunities both on and off campus.'*

### 9.6. Objectives:

- 9.6.1. To encourage the reduction in single occupancy car borne trips to the University
- 9.6.2. To introduce and promote measures to encourage staff and students to walk and cycle to the University
- 9.6.3. To introduce and promote measures to encourage staff and students to motorcycle to the University
- 9.6.4. To introduce and promote measures to encourage staff and students to use public transport to travel to the University for longer distance journeys, where cycling and walking is not feasible.
- 9.6.5. To introduce and promote measures to encourage staff and students to car share when travelling to the University
- 9.6.6. To reduce the need for students to travel to campus.
- 9.6.7. To raise awareness amongst staff and students of the impacts of their travel choices on their health, the local environment etc
- 9.6.8. To introduce information measures that enable staff and students to make informed travel choices

## **10. ENERGY**

- 10.1 The Union will choose energy saving devices (light-bulbs, industrial equipment) when ordering new items or replacing old.
- 10.2 The Union will ensure that staff and officers turn off computers and their monitors, photocopiers, lights and all other relevant electrical equipment at the end of each working day.
- 10.3 Publicity to remind staff of the importance of this in reducing energy consumption will be prominently displayed.
- 10.4 To lobby the University to have the Union or at least the building individually metered so that progress can be measured and incentivised.
- 10.5 To ensure that all electronic equipment is switched off when not in use i.e. computers, lights and venue television screens.
- 10.6 To acquire control over the heating and lighting of offices and venues in order to reduce the energy used.
- 10.7 Where possible to change light switches in all Union toilets to motion sensors.

## **11 RECYCLING**

- 11.1 To reduce the amount of waste generated daily in all areas of the UBS and limiting the use of non-recyclable materials used, whilst considering the slogan: "Reduce, Reuse *then* Recycle".
- 11.2 To improve the recycling services already installed in the UBS to include other reclaimable materials when facilities become available.
- 11.3 To recycle all old computer and office equipment, including toner and ink cartridges where facilities are available.
- 11.4 To reuse non confidential paper
- 11.5 To aim to print all documents double-sided as standard
- 11.6 The Union will endeavour to, ideally, Reduce the amount of waste produced; secondly, Reuse products, rather than dispose of them; thirdly, Recycle waste that is left over.
- 11.7 The Union will measure the volume of solid waste produced each year, the cost of disposal of such waste and the proportion that is recycled.

## **12 THE UNIVERSITY**

- 12.1 To support the University as far as possible in any decisions they make to install environmentally friendly facilities and products, such as composting, the green travel plan and Fairtrade, and relay that support to the student population; the UBS may also at any time suggest improvements to the University and campaign for those suggestions to be installed.
- 12.2 To apply continual pressure on the University in order to roll out comprehensive recycling facilities, for all staff and students, in all areas of the University
- 12.3 To publicly call on the University to maintain a steady rise of sustainability on campus, to ensure that environmentally friendly services and products remain in place, only replacing such services and products as and when improvements are made.
- 12.4 To lobby for all new buildings to be environmentally friendly (eg. with motion sensors in kitchens and corridors)

## **13 POLICY IMPLEMENTATION**

### **13.1 RESPONSIBILITY**

- 13.1.1 The Union recognises that this Ethical & Environmental Policy can only succeed with the support of all members.
- 13.1.2 All members are responsible for their own actions and should abide by this policy.
- 13.1.3 The operation and implementation of this policy is the overall responsibility of the Union Cabinet
- 13.1.4 The President will regularly review and make recommendations to Cabinet to update and evaluate the implementation of this policy.
- 13.1.5 The Environmental Strategy Working group will meet once a month to direct and assess the activities and developments within the Union against this policy, its resultant operational plans and relevant documentation.

### **13.2 PUBLICITY OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY**

- 13.2.1 A copy of this Ethical & Environmental Policy should be accessible to any individual, at any time, via the UBS website and promoted through UBS media.

13.2.2 A concise statement must be written, to be permanently displayed in the Union building and on the Union website.