

Fairtrade report 25/26

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on behalf of UWE Bristol and The Student Union at UWE**

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Introduction

This report represents the commitment and ongoing work of UWE Bristol and The Student Union at UWE working in partnership to deliver Fairtrade at the University. It covers all aspects of our work - campaigning, leadership and strategy, research and curriculum, retail and hospitality, and procurement and innovation.

It has 11 sections which reflect the headings of our SMART action plan used in support of our Fairtrade award. It is to be read in conjunction with the action plan, which details how our impact is to be measured and is accessible from this webpage

<https://www.uwe.ac.uk/about/values-vision-strategy/sustainability/fairtrade-facts-and-benefits/fairtrade-progress> under the heading 'The Supporters' network'.

The publication of this report on our public facing website is a measure of our commitment to public accountability for actions taken in support of Fairtrade, Trade Justice and Ethical consumption here at the university.

MN001 Leadership and Strategy

'Meeting of Fairtrade coordinating group on a regular basis to oversee our progress in general and in particular to achieve FT university status.'

Our coordinating partnership group (known as 'the supporters' network') is made up of members from the University and The Student Union at UWE located in key roles and areas of activity: an elected representative from the Student Union, an elected Vice President, the Head of UWE Procurement, the SU Retail manager and the shop manager, UWE General manager Hospitality, UWE staff and student engagement lead (includes Teaching and Learning), SU Student engagement coordinator, plus any interested students and staff. Combined they have a wide range of contact and Influence across different areas of the university which enables them to deliver the Fairtrade agenda. The SU elected representative plays a particularly important role in terms of driving the commitment to getting the Fairtrade message across to students through social media and other channels. For membership of the coordinating group see list on our [Fairtrade progress](#) page under section 'Supporters network'. The group reports to the Sustainability Executive committee which has oversight of the delivery of the [Sustainability agenda](#) of the university as a whole.

Working together, the group meets termly (and more often as needed), and ensures that that progress is being made throughout the year and that the criteria outlined in our SMART plan (details below) are being met, with actions and activities being divided up between group members as appropriate.

MN002 Leadership and Strategy

'To develop and work to a SMART action plan.'

The partnership has a SMART action plan on how it will progress Fairtrade within the University as a whole. The different areas of the plan are developed and used for reference

by the people who attend the stakeholder group listed under 'Supporters' Network' as detailed above. The SMART plan is reported on an ongoing operational basis at the regular Teams meetings and on an ongoing basis by the UWE sustainability engagement coordinator to UWE Head of Environment and Sustainability.

The SMART plan includes all operations as advised by the Fairtrade award mandatory criteria such as leadership and strategy, procurement and catering, campaigning and influencing, engagement and communications, as well as research and curriculum – all with a strong focus on clear monitoring and evaluation of activities. The plan is made publicly available on the [Fairtrade progress](#) page under the heading 'Supporters Network'.

Fairtrade is also referenced in other [institutional plans](#) – namely our Responsible Procurement ESG policy on page 3 under 'Social', our Sustainable Food plan pages 4 and 10, and our Sustainability Engagement Framework on page 7.

MN003 Leadership and Strategy

'The partnership has published a public commitment of intent to support and champion Fairtrade and its values within the last two years signed by senior management across the organisations and their retail and catering outlets.'

The partnership has comprehensively embedded Fairtrade into the Sustainability section of the University's external facing website both in terms of general policies, a specific Fairtrade statement and designated webpages which illustrate the partnership's ongoing commitment to Fairtrade, namely;

- Our joint Statement on Fairtrade dated March 2024 which contains our public commitment of intent to support and champion Fairtrade and its values, available on our [policy and strategy documents](#) page under the heading 'Sustainability statements'. It is endorsed by the Sustainability executive committee membership made up of [senior management representatives](#) and the SU President and key staff members.
- Our detailed statements on our adoption of Fairtrade and our practices and procedures available on the [sustainability](#) page, linking to an explanation of [Fairtrade](#) and UWE Bristol [practices and procedures](#).

MN004 Campaigning and Influencing

'The partnership has held a series of events/promotions/engagement activities during Fairtrade Fortnight (February/March every year) and has measured impact across the events.'

The University and Student Union partnership held a series of retail promotions, events and activities during its Fairtrade Fortnight 2025 and measured its impact in terms of sales, attendance at events and social media views (for a detailed report including data figures email sustainability@uwe.ac.uk).

When planning the fortnight, we aimed to team up with different groups across the university to widen the impact of our activities and to reach audiences we wouldn't normally reach with focussed stand-alone events. We also designed some of the events to have wide appeal, such as bake sales and free Fairtrade cafes.

During the 2026 Fortnight, we ran a series of events related to Fairtrade, including a stall by a Fairtrade clothing company, promotions and discounts in our shops and cafes to encourage students look for Fairtrade labels when buying products and groceries, bake sales and bulb planting sessions with Fairtrade discussion, a film night, tea afternoon and a charity event from the RSPB, which encompassed SU areas and more commercial parts of each campus to widen the appeal. The idea behind putting on the ever popular bake sales and bulb planting sessions was that we would attract a wide audience and not only those interested in Fairtrade. In the event our strategy worked and we had many discussions with people who we wouldn't have reached in a stand alone Fairtrade event.

To promote Fairtrade and the activities to students and staff we used articles, blogs and particularly social media posts.


MN005 Campaigning and Influencing

'To devise and successfully delivered one or more innovative campaigns on Fairtrade, trade justice or ethical consumption in the last year.'

UWE has long focused on reduction, reuse and recycling, with recent work emphasising repair and reuse. A multidisciplinary team helped UWE become the first UK university to adopt the Repair and Reuse Declaration. Repair activity is led through two main strands in the School of Engineering: the Repair Café and the Bristol Repair Coalition. The MAKERS initiative promotes repair skills, waste reduction and community engagement. It works with the Bristol Repair Coalition, established in 2024, and has helped secure UWE's institutional commitment to repair. The project has influenced regional policy through engagement with the West of England Combined Authority and showcased its work nationally at the Parliamentary Repair Café. Public support for repair is strong, with 80% of the UK favouring government-backed repair schemes. UWE has promoted its repair initiatives through local media and social channels. Students have applied their skills by volunteering with Bristol's Library of Things, gaining experience and supporting community access to shared tools and equipment.

Measuring Impact is central to these projects so the group achievements and environmental impacts are regularly updated in the 'Fixometer'

Group achievements



23
events



596
participants




1,745
hours volunteered

Environmental impact ⓘ



686 kg
waste prevented



5,046 kg
estimated CO₂e emissions prevented

that's like growing **84** tree seedlings for 10 years ⓘ

[Share this](#)

Not counting toward this group's environmental impact are 92 items to be recycled and 150 items to be repaired.

MN006 Procurement Retail and Catering

‘Any retail or catering outlets owned or operated by the partnership stock Fairtrade certified products in all of the following categories, and are working to increase either the number of lines OR number of items sold year on year: Tea, Coffee, Sugar, Hot chocolate and cocoa, Chocolate, confectionary or snacks, Cotton clothing.’

During the last year despite supply issues, our student union and university Retail and Hospitality teams maintained stocks in all the categories listed. Standard certified products were offered for sale - tea, coffee, sugar, chocolate and confectionary and snacks, with new products taken on by the SU shop: T shirts from a clothing manufacturer [Neutral](#) and Fairtrade shampoo and conditioner bars.

MN007 Procurement Retail and Catering

‘Any retail, catering or other commercial outlets owned or operated by the partnership to stock at least one Fairtrade certified line in at least two of the following categories (where the category is stocked): Soft drinks, Wine or beer, Health & beauty, Savoury snacks and nuts, Cut flowers, Fruit, Cotton face masks: Review current ranges of FT and look to increase items for sale where possible.’

The SU Retail outlets and UWE Hospitality maintained stocks in three of the listed categories – namely fruit, health and beauty and snacks. This year we did not include the category of ‘Wine and beer’ due to problems with supply and lack of a suitable outlet. For sales figures email sustainability@uwe.ac.uk.

MN008 Procurement Retail and Catering

‘To provide up to date and effective Point of Sale (POS) material in all relevant outlets, highlighting Fairtrade products and providing information on the benefits of Fairtrade to growing communities. This POS should be clearly displayed next to the relevant products to avoid confusion and refreshed periodically.’

SU We promote Fairtrade through our digital screens in and around our Students' Union buildings. We have four digital POS screens on our bar tills and two digital screens behind the bar. We also have four other digital screens, two in the customer area of the bar and two in the reception area of our main building. We promote on-shelf edges in our three shops across the campuses. The shelf edges sit alongside Fairtrade stock on the shelves. In addition to this, we use posters around our various outlets. We use a mixture of POS provided by Fairtrade themselves, as well as content we have created ourselves. We have also used a homepage banner on our website during Fairtrade promotional periods. This POS material is reviewed and refreshed in the lead-up to Fairtrade Fortnight each year and over the summer ahead of a new academic year to ensure it is fit for purpose and up to date.

In our commercial outlets, we continue to promote positive Fairtrade Facts alongside our Fairtrade products to raise awareness of the positive impact of Fairtrade and encourage our student community to purchase Fairtrade products. These facts cover how Fairtrade enables those in the Global South to earn a living wage and understand the climate crisis.

In Hospitality we celebrated Fairtrade fortnight by offering 15% off all coffee across 4 of our units (Atrium, Glenside Coffee Pod, Glenside Hub & OneZone). We also did 15% off selected fairtrade items, applying stickers to fairtrade items. During the fortnight we sold over 9000 Fairtrade products. We had positive feedback from customers and staff, who thought it was a great way to build awareness. As we do not have traditional shelving or shelf edge labels, it is harder to promote individual items, however we do have stickers and clip-on promotional signs on items where possible.

MN009 Research and Curriculum

‘Within the last two years the partnership to successfully carry out relevant scoping activities amongst a broad range of its students and/or staff (not just those already engaged in the campaigns) to inform its Fairtrade work, and to make the findings publicly available.’

We usually carry out a Fairtrade survey each year which aims to find out about student and staff awareness of Fairtrade, whether they buy Fairtrade products and if so, their motivations, and whether there are any barriers which might prevent them from doing so. In carrying out the survey, we aim to raise awareness of the benefits of Fairtrade, why it is important and where you can buy products on and off campus.

We draft our own survey to make it UWE-specific and to limit the number of questions to 6 in order to get a good response (rather than use the longer one provided by SOS-UK). We use a team of students to do the surveying face to face, (rather than on-line), so that we can maximise engagement and awareness raising through that personal contact, as well as gain additional qualitative data through discussion and comments made by respondents. In order to get a broad demographic of people we always sample from different locations that are frequented by staff, students and visitors. In addition to the survey, we did a snapshot short poll of staff attitudes through our UWE wide weekly e news in 2025.

As much as possible, we time the surveying to take place during UWE Fairtrade Fortnight. The reason we do the annual surveys to coincide with our Fairtrade fortnight is that our communication channels, shops and cafes all have Fairtrade content and promotions and so it is an ideal time to point people to them with a view to them purchasing Fairtrade and /or attending an event.

On the basis of the surveys we can then make operational decisions; a publicity strategy will become an agenda item for the working group for the rest of 2026.

MN010 Research and curriculum

‘The partnership to provide and publicise opportunities for students to investigate Fairtrade, trade justice or ethical consumption issues on or off-campus within their course work or dissertations.’

Each year the Sustainability team offers 20-25 days’ work-based learning experience to students to give them real-life research experience focussing on Fairtrade. As part of the project we ask them to prepare practical tools we can use in the following year to raise awareness of and to promote Fairtrade such as powerpoints, blogs, e and paper posters, pricing data and web sources.

The project briefs are circulated to key members of staff and draw interest from students on different courses. In 2024/25 we ran two projects, we have taken on a Masters student from our Environmental Management and Sustainable Development in Practice courses. This year their focus is on Fairtrade tea and working with a Fairtrade clothing company on their strategy for marketing and social media.

For examples of the briefs and work created by students on placement, please email sustainability@uwe.ac.uk.

Originating in CATE, the Living lab has now widened to include a working group made up of members of central services and other colleges. This approach, which will be developed by the working group through 2026, seeks to link students to projects that address the operational aims of UWE and those of external collaborators.

As well as approaching academics we flag up our offer for [Fairtrade study projects](#) and we respond to any requests for information or support from students.

MN011 Outcomes

‘The partnership publishes an annual progress or impact report on its action on Fairtrade, trade justice and ethical consumption. This should refer to the tasks and progress made through the SMART action plan and should be publicly available.’

The partnership is committed to publishing an annual progress report on its action on Fairtrade, trade justice and ethical consumption, as witnessed by this report. We cover all aspects of our work - campaigning, leadership and strategy, research and curriculum, innovation, our impact on the student and staff body through interventions and refer to the tasks and progress made through the SMART action plan. We commit to make the report publicly available on the [Fairtrade progress](#) page under the heading ‘Supporters’ network’.

Its publication provides evidence of our commitment to public accountability and awareness raising of effective actions taken in support of Fairtrade Trade Justice and Ethical consumption at UWE Bristol by the partnership between the University and The Student Union at UWE.