



Fair Trade Steering Group (FTSG)
Monday 15 December 2014, 2.30pm
Ochil Room, Charles Stewart House

AGENDA

1 **Minute** A
To approve the minute of the previous meeting on 30 September 2014

2 **Matters Arising**
To raise any matters arising not covered in post-meeting notes

SUBSTANTIVE ITEMS

3 **Good Food Nation Consultation – SFTF Response** B
To note a paper from the Research and Policy Manager

4 **Freshers' Week 2015 – Fair Trade Themed Food Festival** Verbal
To receive an update from the SRS Communications Manager

5 **SRS Strategy Review Update** C
To consider a paper from the Head of SRS Futures

ROUTINE ITEMS

6 **Workers' Rights Consortium – Update on UoE/WRC Skype call** D
To note a paper from the Research and Policy Manager

7 **EUSA Fair Trade Update** Verbal
To receive an update from the EUSA Vice President Services

8 **Electronics Watch Update** Verbal
To receive an update from the Convener

9 **Fair Trade Events Update (including Trade Advocacy Event)** Verbal
To receive an update from the Research and Policy Manager

10 **Fair Trade Communications Update** Verbal
To receive an update from the SRS Communications Manager

11 **Any Other Business** Verbal
To consider any other matters from Group members including:
Celebrating renewal of FT status with a fair trade tasting

ITEMS FOR FORMAL APPROVAL/NOTING

12 **Cross Party Group on Fair Trade / Bala Sport Presentation** Verbal
To receive an update from the Sports Union President

13 **APUC SUSTAIN Update** Verbal
To receive a post-launch update from the Convener

14 **Scottish Fair Trade Forum Awards Ceremony & Exhibition Launch** Verbal
To receive an update from the Research and Policy Manager

15 **Use of Fair Trade Cleaning products** Verbal
To receive an update from the E&B representative

If you require this agenda or any of the papers in an alternative format e.g. large print please contact Jane Rooney on 0131 650 4375 or email jane.rooney@ed.ac.uk

The University of Edinburgh

MINUTE OF A MEETING of the Fair Trade Steering Group held in the Cuillin Room, Charles Stewart House on Tuesday 30 September 2014.

Members: Karen Bowman (in chair), Director of Procurement
Kenneth Amaeshi, Lead, Corporate Responsibility & Governance Network
Evelyn Bain, Procurement Manager
Tasha Boardman, EUSA Vice President Services
Conor Bond, Sports Union President
Michelle Brown, Head of SRS Programmes
Jill Bruce, Development and Alumni
Liz Cooper, SRS Research and Policy Manager
Joe Farthing, SRS Communications Manager
Hannah Genders Boyd, People and Planet representative
Moira Gibson, External Affairs Manager, Communications and Marketing
Dave Gorman, Director of SRS
Davy Gray, EUSA Environmental Officer
Stephannie Hay, Technology Enhanced Learning Services
Tim Hayward, Director of the Just World Institute
Corrina Henderson, Careers Service
Matthew Lawson, SRS Programme Manager
Ian Macaulay, Asst. Director of Accommodation Services, Catering
Ali Newell, Associate Chaplain
Briana Pegado, EUSA President
Vikki Stewart, Estates and Buildings Representative

Apologies: Kenneth Amaeshi; Evelyn Bain; Tasha Boardman; Conor Bond;
Jill Bruce; Dave Gorman; Davy Gray; Stephannie Hay; Tim Hayward;
Corrina Henderson; Matthew Lawson; Ian Macaulay; Briana Pegado;
David Somervell

1 The minute of the meeting held on 27 May 2014 was approved as a correct **Paper A** record.

FTSG welcomed Vikki Stewart, a new member representing Estates and Buildings.

2 All matters arising covered in the agenda or post-meeting notes to Paper A.

SUBSTANTIVE ITEMS

3 Good Food Nation Consultation

Paper B

FTSG noted a paper from the Head of SRS Futures reporting on the outcomes of the Good Food Nation Consultation event co-hosted by Nourish Scotland and Edible Edinburgh on 4 September. More information at: www.nourishscotland.org/events/good-food-nation-consultation-events/.

Action – LC to find out if the Scottish Fair Trade Forum were involved in this consultation.

Post-meeting note: SFTF submitted a recommendation that probity and trade justice issues be considered in foodstuffs procured from majority world countries. To be discussed at December's meeting.

Action – MB to follow up with DS to clarify how these groups related to each other and where they diverged.

Post-meeting note: The University's main contact in this matter has been the Edinburgh Food for Life partnership – with NHS Lothian, City of Edinburgh Council – and supported by Soil Association Scotland.

Nourish Scotland is the civil society body promoting the holistic agenda in Scotland. SFTF focusses on international trade justice issues.

The Convener emphasised the need to take sustainable food issues to SRS Committee in order to investigate how UoE Food Policy related to wider food procurement strategy and initiatives, and to address the challenge of opening up and engaging new students and staff with these issues.

FTSG noted that Nourish Scotland would compile a co-ordinated consultation response, that the Head of SRS Futures would lead on the UoE response, and that EUSA may respond separately.

Post-meeting note: UoE consultation response submitted on 13 October.

4 Coffee Conscience Update

Paper C

FTSG noted this paper, comprising an update from UoE supplier Coffee Conscience on the planting of their 1,000th fruit tree as part of a wider programme of support for local community projects. The Group recognised the vital role played by the Assistant Director, Catering Services in these initiatives.

As of 5 September 2014, the University was responsible for contributing 336 fruit trees to the scheme. Pop-up stands and promotional materials from Coffee Conscience would be displayed in UoE catering outlets.

Action – MB to follow up on promotion and include the details in SRS reporting.

Post-meeting note: Confirming action closed off on 5 December.

Action – VS to follow up with the Director of E&B regarding the possibility of using UoE space for a community orchard (potentially linking in to the KB apiary).

Post-meeting note: update to be provided at December's meeting.

Action – HGB to investigate interest within the student community for an orchard and liaise with E&B.

Post-meeting note: update to be provided at December's meeting.

Noted Apple Orchard Day on 21 October & efforts to co-ordinate publicity.

The Assistant Director, Catering Services had previously noted that from a waste stream perspective, coffee grounds were a concern as no outlet had yet been found for their reuse.

Action – JR to check if there had been any subsequent update on this issue.

Post-meeting note: IM contacted Peter Ritchie at Nourish Scotland who is a horticultural specialist for an organic food grower/ organic supplier outside Edinburgh at Whitmuir - The Organic Place (<http://www.whitmuirtheorganicplace.co.uk/>). JR liaising with Assistant Director, Catering Services & Trades Team Leader at Pollock on transporting coffee grounds to community garden / project.

FTSG discussed a 2012 pilot scheme working with the café at Easter Bush to offer coffee grounds to staff and students for free for use as a fertiliser (similar to the Council grass clippings scheme).

Action – MB to follow up and update the Group.

Post-meeting note: Confirming action closed off on 5 December.

5 Feedback From Freshers' Week 2014

Freshers' Week events and engagement activities had been very successful: over four days more than one thousand students came along to learn about SRS issues. The SRS marquee at the Societies Fair allowed sufficient space to accommodate partners including the Chaplaincy, TEDx, and EUSA Global.

Fair trade issues were featured at the [Freshers Food Festival](#) which focused this year on food waste. There were two stalls on fair trade food including the Fairtrade Café. Over 600 people attended this event alone, the vast majority of whom were freshers. Most had attended based on word of mouth. Feedback collected on the event had been positive. One provider of fair trade cleaning products had been identified as a potential partner. It was proposed that the Festival could focus on fair trade in a future year (and that this could go beyond food to encompass art, gold, conflict minerals etc.)

Action – JF to take the proposal for a fair trade themed Food Festival forward and liaise with the Group on any support needs.

Action – JR to add as an agenda item for the next meeting.

Post-meeting note: update to be provided at December's meeting under agenda item 4.

6 SRS Strategy Review Update

The Head of SRS Programmes updated the Group on the ongoing review and refresh of the University Social Responsibility & Sustainability Strategy 2010- 2020. Updating the SRS Strategy required a proactive and systematic process of engaging with internal and external stakeholders. Engagement events so far included: the Edinburgh Sustainability Awards Workshop on 22 April; the SEAG Operations Away Day on 23 May; an Academic Workshop on 20 August; and a Student and Staff Academic Forum planned for 21 November. SRS Programme Facilitator Lucy Miu was working the EUSA VPS on a SRS Student Forum that would feed in to review of the Strategy.

Early engagement activities had focused on operational sustainability. Work was currently focusing on embedding SRS in learning and teaching and on engagement with critical stakeholders. The next key milestone would be working with departments to establish what goals they already had in place and what their vision was for the future.

The Head of SRS Programmes asked members where they saw fair trade going. Noted the [‘What next for fair trade?’ consultation results document](#) as a clear summary of FTSG’s vision for the future. For People and Planet, focusing on a different campaign each year, the issue was more complex and more fragmented.

Action – MB to arrange for HGB to meet with members of the SRS team to engage in the review process.

Action – JR to add as an agenda item for the next meeting.

Post-meeting note: update to be provided at December’s meeting under agenda item 5.

ROUTINE ITEMS

7 Worker Rights Consortium

Paper D

The Research and Policy Manager introduced the paper which comprised the final draft of a letter sent to the Workers’ Rights Consortium on 5 September raising various points on how UoE could take its affiliation further, as part of its broader commitment to social responsibility.

WRC responded quickly and a follow up telephone conversation including the Procurement Manager was planned. Issues for discussion included: the possibility of WRC offering overseas experience for UoE students; views on prison labour in supply chains; engagement strategies for non-compliance; and WRC sharing their research.

Action – VS to ask if Estates would like a member of their staff included in the call with WRC.

Post-meeting note: update to be provided at December’s meeting under agenda item 6.

It was clarified that, in the event of a UoE supplier having a supplier in their chain that used indentured labour, UoE would either refer the issue to APUC or take it to the supplier directly and ask what they planned to do to address it. It was clarified that the policy calls for a commitment to engage with the supply chain, not termination, and under public procurement law UoE could not legally cancel the contract. If such an issue arose, the power of the consortium and People and Planet Global would be brought to bear to influence the company involved.

While ILO did not police these standards, the Ethical Trading Initiative did with regard to its members. It was suggested that an event exploring these issues could be held with UoE supplier ARCO.

8 Electronics Watch Update

Electronics Watch, which was funded by a multi-million pound European grant, had a growing number of members across Europe. It was similar to the WRC but focused on the electronics industry, which was smaller than the garment trade with a narrower supply chain and fewer factories. These were generally located in China, which could raise other issues for NGOs working on the ground. It would be difficult to say more until the standards were in place, though ILO principles still applied. Jim Cranshaw of People and Planet was noted as the main contact.

EW was currently engaged in building up a set of legal terms to incorporate into contracts. While conflict free minerals were not as yet under consideration, they would be looked at in due course. Once the standards were available UoE would communicate them on to its suppliers. It was anticipated that there would be a large-scale launch event once the standards were released. These were expected to be in place by 2015, when monitoring would begin.

FTSG noted the recent formation of a Sustainable ICT Group. IS had been informed that UoE had joined Electronics Watch and had been asked for their support.

9 Fair Trade Events Update

The SRS Research and Policy Manager outlined the Fair Trade Events Plan for 2014, including an invitation to researchers and practitioners to discuss the question of trade justice. This was planned for around 24-26 February and would be followed by a public event in the evening, questions to be submitted in advance. The Research and Policy Manager would be attending a trade advocacy event in Brussels on 6-7 October.

Action – LC to report back on the event at the next meeting.

Action – JR to add as an agenda item.

Post-meeting note: To be covered under agenda item 8 of December's FTSG.

Noted that the Scottish Fair Trade Forum had asked UoE to host the 2014 Fair Trade Awards and Fairtrade Foundation Photography exhibition. The SRS Programme Facilitator was looking at dates in November.

Post-meeting note: The Awards would be held on 14 November. Deadline for nominations 31 October.

The theme for Fairtrade Fortnight 2015 (23 February - 8 March) would be the impact of fair trade. The Fair Trade City Group were to support SFTF in bringing in producers from Mauritius involved in the manufacture of garments, textiles, and protective clothing, for a 4 day visit to Edinburgh during FT14. FTSG would need to identify early the days and events it wanted producers to attend. Noted potential linkages to ECA on garments.

Action – VS to bring samples to the attention of PPE purchasers in E&B.

FTSG discussed partnership opportunities with [Bala Sport](#), a new social enterprise based in Glasgow supplying Fairtrade footballs and sports balls made in Pakistan. Noted that their footballs were all to international standards.

Post-meeting note: Members were invited to attend a meeting of the Cross Party Group on Fair Trade featuring a presentation by Bala Sport on Tuesday 28 October at 1pm at Holyrood. (Those wishing to attend to notify Martin Rhodes by midday on Tuesday 21 October).

Action – EB to follow up with the Centre for Sport and Exercise.

On 28 February the City of Edinburgh Council planned to hold a public family event. Possible venues included Out of the Blue in Leith and Summerhall.

10 Fair Trade Communications Update

FTSG noted that work was now complete integrating fair trade communications into the SRS stream, including the website and social media channels.

The Edinburgh Sustainability Awards 2014-15 and new programme of Be Sustainable Workshops (over 40 across the University) had now been launched. It was anticipated that these would have a significant impact. The Awards helped to integrate and embed SRS into individual departments. The Be Sustainable guide was currently being updated and SRS would work with Procurement to ensure clear and consistent guidance on purchasing.

Fair trade would feature in the first substantive SRS Report in December which would include a good deal of the information submitted as part of the University's fairtrade status renewal application in July.

11 Any Other Business

Student Research Placements

The SRS Department were organising placements for Masters students and the Research and Policy Manager was currently liaising with Just Trading Scotland and their partners in Malawi.

Action – All to share any other ideas for student placements or suggestions for pieces of work.

One option was to approach APUC on social auditing training. SSPS and the Business School had existing arrangements for placements to fall back on. Noted potential linkages to the Student Experience Project. FTSG discussed safety concerns and the need to focus on pursuing organisations such as Malawi Rice that already had people on the ground. These placements should be at the invitation of the company and would need to be co-ordinated carefully.

Just World Shop

FTSG noted that the Just World Shop needed help in finding new premises for the next two years (approx. 1,000sqm). Possibilities suggested included the empty space left by the Russian Institute on South College Street and the Streetwork space on the Bridges.

Action – KB to liaise with Christine Harper regarding possible UoE tenancies.

Post-meeting note: No progress as yet on securing a suitable venue.

ITEMS FOR FORMAL APPROVAL/NOTING

12 Sustain Demo

The Convener gave a presentation on [Sustain](#), the APUC web-based tool to assess what suppliers were doing in the areas of social, ethical, economic and environmental sustainability. Free for suppliers, it enhanced understanding of the supply chain. Rather than a pass/fail exercise, it assessed achievements against standards set by the sector (APUC Code of Conduct) and put them into 13 requirements for suppliers to assess themselves against, deciding which categories applied to them. It required

only one submission per supplier, even if they were on more than one agreement or contract.

The purpose was:

- to deliver on APUC & client institutions' desire to buy in a ethically, socially, and environmentally responsible manner
- to facilitate risk mitigation and safeguard institutions' reputations
- to address gaps in understanding of the supply chain
- to respond to pressure from student groups.

The Convener outlined where Sustain sat within existing pre-award and post-award structures and talked the group through the process. The contract manager would invite the supplier to register and APUC staff would check and subsequently publish their information. It would then cascade down to sub-contractors, taking some time to fully complete. So far six suppliers were on board for early testing. Next steps included:

- Website T&Cs to be refined and launched
- Longer term, category specific issues to be developed
- Feeding in Marrakech prioritisation
- Formal launch and contract managers to start issuing invites
- Training of first university / college or consortia users.

13 Update on Scottish Fair Trade Forum AGM & Conference

The SRS Research and Policy Manager updated the Group on the event, held on 6 September, which highlighted collaboration with other nations on the Fair Trade Nation campaign. The aspiration was to build producer visits into longer term relations (e.g. with Bala Sport). The event had also explored the FT14 2015 theme of impact, including various illustrative posters and slogans. Bandi Mbubi of Congo Calling gave a talk on fair trade minerals. FTSG noted that UoE did not as yet have a ratified policy on this issue. Work was ongoing on this as one of many policies arising as investigations into the supply chain went deeper.

Noted discussion of the possibility of adding Bala Sport as a UoE supplier. Initial impressions were that they did produce sufficient volume and, while they just made footballs at present, there were plans to branch out. FTSG would monitor developments.

14 Use of Fair Trade Cleaning Products

Estates Operations had trialled the fair trade palm oil floor cleaner and found it to be no better or no worse than the products currently in use. However, concerns had been raised that it would not hold up as well to winter use as it was a domestic product and not designed for the purpose. There had also been a tendency for the trialled bottles of washing up liquid and hand wash to go missing partly due to their size, though it was noted that these would be available in larger 5 litre sizes in four weeks' time. The Convener clarified that the purpose of the trial was purely to establish if the products did the job and if they did that UoE should try to migrate to the fair trade alternatives.

FTSG encouraged EUSA to stock these products in their outlets and Accommodation Services to consider adding them to the items provided for holiday lets. FTSG recognised that the items included in the AS

baskets needed to meet the requirements for a prestige display as well as being locally sourced and organic.

Action – HGB to speak to the EUSA VPS regarding getting these items into EUSA shops.

The E&B representative noted that the items for domestic use would be trialled in their Infirmary Street office.

Action – VS to request that Estates Operations trial the floor cleaner over the winter and feed back to the Group on the outcomes of this and the local Infirmary Street trial.

Post-meeting note: To be covered under agenda item 15 of December's FTSG.

Following testing, the issue would come back to the Group, Procurement, and Estates for a decision. Issues of quantity and scale would be addressed at the second stage.

FTSG noted a study comparing paper towel dispensers with hand dryers which had found the latter to be much more energy efficient and sustainable over their lifetime. The SRS Communications team would be working on a campaign promoting these findings included stickers affixed to hand dryers thanking users for not contributing to landfill, and could design a similar campaign around the use of fair trade cleaning products.

Noted discussions as to whether fair trade cleaning products were also eco-friendly (i.e. biodegradable and easily absorbed back into the environment), and the potential for a student project on this issue.

Action – VS to investigate who in E&B would be best placed to assess the eco-friendliness of these products.

Post-meeting note: To be covered under agenda item 15 of December's FTSG.



FAIR TRADE STEERING GROUP

15 December 2014

Good Food Nation Consultation – SFTF Response

Description of paper

1. This paper provides an update to FTSG on the Scottish Government's Good Food Nation consultation and stakeholder responses.

Action requested

2. FTSG is invited to note the paper.

Background and context

3. In June 2014 the Scottish Government launched a consultation document reaffirming its commitment to promoting the sustainable economic growth of the food and drink industry and inviting people in all walks of life to give their views and reflect on their contribution to Scotland's journey towards becoming a Good Food Nation.

4. In response to an enquiry from the Research and Policy Manager regarding links between the Scottish Fair Trade Forum and the Good Food Nation Consultation in terms of ensuring that fair trade is considered alongside local food, SFTF's Director Martin Rhodes shared the following.

Discussion



Scottish
Fair Trade
Forum

17 October 2014

Becoming a Good Food Nation Consultation: Response from the Scottish Fair Trade Forum

5. The Scottish Fair Trade Forum welcomes the desire for Scotland to become a Good Food Nation and in particular the emphasis on the importance of sustainability and transparency in food supply chains. We also welcome the commitment to ensure that public sector procurement is used proactively to ensure that such principles are put into practice when using public money.

6. However, the Forum is disappointed that the consultation document makes no reference to Scotland's achievement of Fair Trade Nation status as declared by the Scottish Government's Minister for External Affairs and International Development in February 2013. Scotland is a global leader in its commitment to Fair Trade and the importance of justice in international trade. Food and drink accounts for a significant proportion of Fair Trade products. The nature of these products does not undermine the place of locally produced

food and drink. The commitment to Fair Trade can be a significant part of ensuring food and drink imports are environmentally sustainable and bringing transparency in their supply chains.

7. The Forum understands the focus of the consultation document on locally produced and consumed food and drink and we also understand the desire to promote the export of Scottish food and drink. However, we believe that becoming a Good Food Nation also needs to include a focus on the provenance, transparency and sustainability of imported products. Scotland as a Fair Trade Nation is already showing its commitment to being a global leader in ensuring social justice in trade. The Forum believes that this commitment should be included in any Good Food Nation aspiration.

8. On the practical issues of defining and achieving Good Food Nation status, we would offer some comments based on our experience of Fair Trade Nation status. One of the lessons learnt from the process of working towards Fair Trade Nation status is that having set criteria that must be achieved can partly inhibit innovation and can lead to a restricted approach. Published criteria to achieve a particular status effectively limited the ability of the Forum to change priorities based on a changing political, social or economic environment. We would agree that there needs to be some numerical targets because of perceptions of credibility and the ability of targets to focus and motivate. However, there has needs to be an acknowledgement that the food and drink industry and its social and economic environment is dynamic and setting criteria can prove not to be flexible enough to reflect that dynamism.

9. The Forum would be happy to offer advice and assistance from our involvement in the Fair Trade Nation campaign to those leading the Good Food Nation programme.

Regards,



Martin Rhodes, Director

Resource implications

10. No direct resource implications. Indirect implications will be addressed and reported in due course.

Equality & Diversity

11. Due consideration has been given to equality and diversity as a key element of the SRS agenda, in line with the University's Equality and Diversity Plan.

Further information

12. Author and Presenter
Liz Cooper, Research and Policy Manager
5 December 2014

Freedom of Information

13. This is an open paper.

The University of Edinburgh
 Fair Trade Steering Group
 Monday 15 December 2014

SRS Strategy Review Update

Description of paper The paper updates the Steering Group on the Review activities to date, including work defining contested key definitions and plans for widening engagement.

Action requested

The Group is invited to *note* and *comment* on the paper – especially Appendix 1: Definitions of Social Responsibility and Sustainability, and Appendix 2: Proposed Key Themes – highlighting other relevant strategic or operational issues to consider.

Background and context

Review of the University's Social Responsibility and Sustainability (SRS) Strategy – first adopted in 2010 – began in March 2014.

The Review aims to assess current progress and identify gaps in order to develop a refreshed set of ambitions and actions up to 2025. It has three key objectives:

1. Clarify conceptual issues and terminology and the relationship between key terms such as Social Responsibility, Sustainability, Responsible Investment and Fair Trade
2. Update the Strategy to reflect progress and developments since 2010, including the views of key staff, students and stakeholders
3. Sharpen the actions, metrics and gap analysis associated with the Strategy.

Informed by the [Appreciative Inquiry](#) approach, the review aims to establish what currently works and build upon this, fostering relationships and increasing overall capacity for collaboration and change. It is now moving into its second phase:

Define and Discover: Spring – Summer 2014

- **Defining** the scope of the review; including clarifying conceptual issues and terminology and the relationships between key terms such as social responsibility, sustainability, responsible investment and fair trade in context of the University
- **Discovering**, and understanding the features of success of, progress and developments since 2010, including those that have occurred organically outside of the Social Responsibility and Sustainability Implementation Plans. Through mapping against the agreed scope, identify potential gaps.

Dream, Design and Deploy: Autumn 2014 – Spring 2015

- **Dream:** Building on the successes discovered, and informed by definitions of scope, re-visit and refresh the ambitions and objectives of the University's Social Responsibility and Sustainability strategy.
- **Design:** Agreeing the high level actions required to deliver those ambitions and objectives, and identify appropriate metrics and monitoring.
- **Deploy:** Detailed planning and formation of action groups.

Discussion

1. Initial discussions with a range of stakeholders have identified an emerging consensus on how to define the scope of the review. These are summarised in Appendix 1.
2. Some key themes which inform the direction of travel for the coming revised Strategy 2015-25 are outlined at Appendix 2.
3. The importance of sharing emerging thinking with the many stakeholders around the University is recognised in the stakeholder engagement plan in Appendix 3.

Resource implications

No direct resource implications. Indirect implications will be agreed in due course.

Risk Management

Key risks include:

- poor process control leading to duplication, delay
- lack of coordination or poor quality outputs
- lack of capacity to deliver within the SRS department
- lack of buy-in from colleagues
- lack of alignment with core strategic processes and
- review fails to be agreed / targets fail to be agreed.

Equality & Diversity

Due consideration has been given to equality and diversity as a key element of the SRS agenda.

Next steps/implications

The Head of SRS Futures will oversee delivery of the SRS Strategy Review and update SRS Committee and its sub-groups on progress.

Consultation

An earlier version of this paper was discussed at the SRS Committee 22 October 2014.

Further information

Author and Presenter
David Somervell, Head of SRS Futures
4 December 2014

Freedom of Information

This is an open paper.

Appendix 1: Definitions of Social Responsibility and Sustainability

Can you help us define “Social Responsibility” and “Sustainability”?

- a blog post by Osbert Lancaster in November 2014 [comments still welcomed!]

The University is reviewing its Social Responsibility and Sustainability Strategy.

Feedback has shown that people would like the strategy to set out more explicit definitions of the terms, and make it clearer how they relate to the University.

We'd like to know what you think of our draft – below. Whether you agree or disagree, the overall approach or with specific aspects, it will be really helpful if you could leave us your comments.

*“A **Socially Responsible** University holds itself accountable for the effect of its activities and influence on its immediate community of students and staff, wider society both near and far, and on the rest of the natural world. It recognises actions often have multiple effects, for good or ill, on different groups and different aspects of the environment.*

It takes account of these in planning and decision making and engages with those affected to inform its analysis. It is transparent about how different needs and impacts are balanced and how decisions are made.

Sustainability is a central consideration for **Social Responsibility**.

In this context it is a desired state where all people throughout the world can flourish without compromising the potential of future generations to do so too.

Many people across the world are unable to enjoy a good quality of life due to poverty, ill health, inequality and injustice while the natural environment on which we all depend continues to be significantly changed by human activity.

The way things are is the result of a complex interplay of centuries, perhaps millennia, of cultural, political, intellectual and technological developments often with unforeseen and unforeseeable consequences. Any path to sustainability will likely involve similarly significant changes. A Socially Responsible University takes account of its potential to help understand the current state of the world and inform developments.

How each of us understands social responsibility and sustainability, and the decisions we make in addressing them, depends on many factors such our values, beliefs and assumptions. For these reasons, social responsibility and sustainability – like democracy, equality and even love and art – are essentially contested concepts: while we may agree on working definitions, these definitions are always open to critique, challenge and revision.

A Socially Responsible University welcomes this process, recognising this helps ensure it reflect fully on what it does and how it engages with others to inform its decisions.

In the revised Social Responsibility and Sustainability Strategy, the agreed definitions will be followed by sections setting out goals and activities relevant to different aspects of the University.

Please let us know what you think – positive or negative – in the blog comments section by 28th November 2014 or email Osbert.Lancaster@ed.ac.uk

Extracted from www.ed.ac.uk/about/sustainability/blog/blog?cw_xml=2014/define-social-responsibility-sustainability/

Appendix 2: Proposed Key Themes

The following is a series of themes that characterise the SRS Strategic Review to date, envisaged as discussion points to shape engagement processes with key stakeholders.

Further consideration will be given to: whether these themes will ultimately be included in the refreshed SRS Strategy document; exploring what these themes mean in practice; and to the resources and planning procedures needed to progress the actions.

- **'Framing' of the SRS Strategy** as less 'instrumental' – not just about benefitting the University but benefitting society ... including local, regional and global community
- **Climate Change Strategy** – identifying the way the University invests and manages its estate and activities to contribute to a low carbon Scotland
- **Aligned to the Estates Strategy** – targets for energy, waste and recycling, and transport as well as consideration for open space and biodiversity
- **Procurement and supply chains** – reflecting our progress and involvement with trade justice champions Electronics Watch and the Worker Rights Consortium and how the University ensures relationships with suppliers and contractors is socially responsible and sustainable (Marrakech model and APUC framework)
- **Socially Responsible Investment of the University's Endowment Funds** aligning with our role as a signatory of the UN PRI
- **Equality and diversity** – name checking this important University priority, and how this relates to the University as socially responsible and sustainable
- **Healthy University / Working Lives / Well-Being** – flagging these initiatives and what the University does, and partnership opportunities and again linking to how this supports the University to be socially responsible and sustainable
- **Food** – the University response to the Scottish Government's vision for sustainable food systems ... including research opportunities
- **Learning and Teaching** – embedding SRS issues and new pedagogy into the curriculum along the lines of the recent paper to Learning & Teaching Committee
- **SRS and Research** – supporting colleagues and working with the Global Academies to ensure we apply research strengths to global problems and identify prospects for undertaking research in emerging areas: Circular Economy, responsible finance, etc.
- **The University as Living Laboratory** – opening up the concept for students, operational staff, and academics, and including the city region within its scope
- **Volunteering** opportunities for staff and students involving engagement with local organisations and how this links to the Community Engagement Strategy
- More explicit recognition of our **Widening Participation** efforts including student admissions policy and targeted bursary support
- **Careers and employability** – evolving our Graduate Attributes
- **Communities and Public Engagement** – reflecting what we do as a University and also taking this opportunity to clarify our role with civil society
- **Goals and metrics** – the need for clear long-term goals as the Review progresses.



FAIR TRADE STEERING GROUP

15 December 2014

Workers' Rights Consortium – Update on UoE / WRC Skype call

Description of paper

1. This paper provides an update to FTSG on ongoing discussions with WRC on how UoE could take its affiliation further, as part of its broader commitment to social responsibility.

Action requested

2. FTSG is invited to note the paper.

Background and context

3. The Research and Policy Manager initiated discussion via a letter sent to the Workers' Rights Consortium on 5 September 2014, presented as Paper D at September's meeting of FTSG. WRC responded quickly and a follow up telephone conversation took place on 20 October. Issues for discussion included: the possibility of WRC offering overseas experience for UoE students; views on prison labour in supply chains; engagement strategies for non-compliance; and WRC sharing their research.

Discussion

Notes from Skype call between University of Edinburgh and Worker Rights Consortium, 20th October 2014

4. Present:

Worker Rights Consortium (WRC):

- Scott Nova, Executive Director
- Theresa Haas, Director of Communications

University of Edinburgh:

- Dave Gorman, Director of Social Responsibility and Sustainability (SRS)
- Michelle Brown, Head of SRS Programmes
- Evelyn Bain, Procurement Manager
- Liz Cooper, Research and Policy Manager, SRS

5. Points raised:

- In the US, WRC works on University branded apparel/licensed, not on work wear/PPE
- WRC recognise that the UK context is quite different (not as much focus on university sports leagues and branded garments associated with this), and want to find ways to work more effectively for the UK universities/colleges sector

- WRC has close relations with NUSSL (NUS Services Ltd.). Currently investigating a factory (in Bangladesh, also looking at one in India?) that produces garments for Epona, the company that supplies NUS with a lot of garments and is now owned by NUSSL. But recognise that less than 0.5% of the factory's sales are from Epona, so difficult to leverage. WRC will let NUSSL know, and in turn student unions, if it reaches a stage where unions should engage directly with the factory.
- WRC in communication with ETI (UoE's current supplier of PPE Arco is a member) but reminded that ETI do not monitor conditions in factories
- Prison labour – recognise that issues are different whether talking about domestic prison labour (in UK or US) or forced prison labour in other parts of the world where garments produced. Issues of transparency – buyers do not always know when prison labour has been used. WRC would in general advise against the use of prison labour, including domestic, but recognise there are differing views on the matter, and are open to engaging in more dialogue about this
- WRC would like to do more investigative work in factories supplying UK universities/colleges with garments, but lack capacity (costs £10,000 - £15,000 to do an investigation, including interviews away from factories). But, if UK universities have concerns about a particular factory, they can ask WRC to investigate

6. Actions to take:

- UoE to send details of APUCs sustainability work and SUSTAIN project – producing a factory/supplier database and scoring system, code of conduct. (see <http://www.apuc-scot.ac.uk/#!/Sustain> and <http://www.apuc-scot.ac.uk/#!/susproject.php>)
- UoE (Liz) and WRC to talk further about possibility of helping organise student placements in production countries – WRC have large network of contacts e.g. NGOs on the ground
- WRC to send UoE further resources - on issue of prison labour, and more broadly (an event/stakeholder discussion on the theme of working with prisons will be held at UoE on 4th December)
- UoE should try again to get names of factories producing garments, at least with next PPE contract (tender process beginning in 2015 through NAWPC)
- WRC will provide suggested content for tender wording for upcoming PPE tender, related to workers' rights
- To consider (as a sector in UK/Europe?) whether possibility to get EU funds, pool procurement, to work across Europe together (as is intended for Electronics Watch)

Resource implications

7. No direct resource implications. Indirect implications will be addressed and reported in due course.

Equality & Diversity

8. Due consideration has been given to equality and diversity as a key element of the SRS agenda, in line with the University's Equality and Diversity Plan.

Further information

9. Author and Presenter
Liz Cooper, Research and Policy Manager
5 December 2014

Freedom of Information

10. This is an open paper.