



Fair Trade Policy

1. Purpose

Following a student vote in favour in 2003, the University of Edinburgh first made a commitment to fair trade in 2004 by becoming a Fairtrade University. The University released its most recent Fair Trade policy in 2020, with a review of the policy due every three years. This document is an update to this policy, undertaken in 2023.

2. Background

Fair Trade is a trading partnership based on dialogue, transparency and respect, which seeks greater equity in international trade. It contributes to sustainable development by offering better trading conditions to, and securing the rights of, marginalized producers and workers¹. Fair trade aims to support sustainable livelihoods by paying fair prices that reflect costs of production and enable a decent standard of living. Fair trade models also emphasise fair trading practices and additional benefits such as the payment of Premiums (in the Fairtrade certification system), capacity building support, long-term contracts, transparency and access to pre-financing. Good working conditions and environmental sustainability are also promoted. Well-known approaches to fair trade include Fairtrade certification and the World Fair Trade Organisation verification system, while schemes such as the Rainforest Alliance and Global Organic Textile Standard (GOTS) support fair trade alongside environmental considerations.

The University's commitment to fair trade is part of a wider commitment to social responsibility and sustainability. Fair trade is specifically mentioned in our Sustainability (and Social Responsibility) Policy.

3. Scope

This policy views fair trade in a holistic manner, relating to the University's procurement, catering, communication and engagement, research and teaching and wider collaboration. Our commitment is not focused on a particular scheme, but is about supporting approaches that uphold the principles and values of fair trade.

4. The Policy

The University of Edinburgh aims to contribute to meeting the global poverty and inequality challenge by:

1. Offering fairly and ethically traded products in our catering outlets and visitor centre, expanding the range of fairly and ethically traded products procured by

¹Globally recognised definition from the [International Fair Trade Charter](#) and agreed by the main international Fair Trade networks (World Fair Trade Organisation, Fairtrade International and European Fair Trade Association).

the University and available at campus shops, cafés and other outlets, as well as in and meeting rooms.

2. Ensuring fairly traded tea and coffee is used at all meetings where catering is provided by the University, and encouraging consumption of fairly trade products in offices.
3. Raising awareness on issues of fairness in global trade through sharing of events and online content.
4. Disseminating research on fairness in trade from within the University and externally, and encouraging associated teaching.
5. Collaborating with the Edinburgh Fair Trade City Group and the Scottish Fair Trade Forum on what it means for Scotland to be a Fair Trade Nation, and with other relevant groups such as public procurement consortia and networks.

5. Procedure and responsibility

The Department for Social Responsibility and Sustainability, Department for Accommodation, Catering and Events and the Procurement Department are jointly responsible for implementing this policy. We work in partnership with the Edinburgh University Students' Association to support fair trade across the whole campus.

6. Equality and diversity

An Equalities Impact Assessment has been carried out in relation to this policy. A copy of this EqIA can be found on the [University's published Equality Impact Assessments list](#).

7. Support systems

The Department for Social Responsibility and Sustainability can provide advice to staff and students regarding the different aspects of this policy.

8. Approval and review

Date policy approved	Updated policy approved by Directors of Social Responsibility and Sustainability, Procurement and Catering in February 2024
Final approval by	2013 version approved by University Court, 2024 update approved by University Executive on 12 March 2024.
Consultations held	This policy was shared with the Fair Trade Working Group for comment, which includes staff from a range of University departments, the Students Association, including the Vice President Community
Date of commencement of policy	2004
Dates for review of policy	March 2029
How policy will be reviewed	Department of Social Responsibility and Sustainability to lead review
Policies superseded by this policy	Fair Trade Policies 2020, 2017, 2013, 2010 and 2004

9. Contact

For further information, or if this policy is required in an alternative format, please contact the Department for Social Responsibility and Sustainability on 0131 651 3000 or email SRS.Department@ed.ac.uk.