



Fair Trade Policy

1. Purpose

The University of Edinburgh first made a commitment to fair trade in 2004 by becoming a Fairtrade University, following a student vote in favour in 2003. The Fairtrade University and College scheme, now administered by the Fairtrade Foundation and SOS-UK, requires affiliated institutions to have a public commitment of intent to support and champion fair trade.

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.

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) Policy² and Procurement Strategy³.

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.

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).

² www.ed.ac.uk/sustainability/governance-publications-reports

³ www.ed.ac.uk/procurement/policies-procedures/university-procurement-strategy-annual-procurement

4. The Policy

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

1. Offering fairly traded products in our catering outlets and gift shop, and expanding the range of fair trade products procured by the University and available at campus shops, cafés and meeting rooms.
2. Ensuring fair trade tea and coffee is used at all meetings and encouraging consumption of fair trade products in offices.
3. Raising awareness on issues of fairness in global trade through events and online content.
4. Carrying out and disseminating research on fairness in trade, 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.

The SRS Department will regularly review and make recommendations to revise the University's approach to fair trade and awareness raising, taking into account the latest developments in fair trade and fair work practices in procurement and academia.

5. Procedure and responsibility

The Department for Social Responsibility and Sustainability, Department for Accommodation, Catering and Events and Procurement Office are jointly responsible for implementing this policy. We work in partnership with the Edinburgh University Students Association to participate in the Fairtrade University and College Award scheme.

6. Equality and diversity

No Equalities Impact Assessment has been carried out in relation to this policy, as equality and diversity issues are embedded in the principles of fair trade.

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	Minor amendments to 2017 version approved by Directors of Social Responsibility and Sustainability, Procurement and Catering in October 2020
Final approval by	2013 version approved by University Court
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 and the Vice President Community
Date of commencement of policy	2004
Dates for review of policy	November 2023
How policy will be reviewed	SRS Department to lead review
Policies superseded by this policy	Fair Trade Policies 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 650 4065 or email SRS.Department@ed.ac.uk.