



STUDENTS
ORGANISING FOR
SUSTAINABILITY
UNITED KINGDOM



FAIRTRADE UNIVERSITY & COLLEGE AWARD

Image: Fairtrade campaigners from Cardiff Metropolitan University, 2024

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Oxford Brookes University holding a Fairtrade and sustainability stall, 2024

UNIVERSITY OF WORCESTER

Congratulations on your achievements, and thank you for your hard work on the Fairtrade University and College Award programme, on behalf of the Fairtrade Foundation and SOS-UK.

This programme supports institutions to embed ethical and sustainable practices through their curriculums, procurement, research and campaigns. We are immensely proud of the impact that participating universities and colleges are having in these areas, and we hope you are too.

Fairtrade's vision, of a world in which all producers can enjoy secure and sustainable livelihoods, can only be achieved by creating widespread

understanding of the issues in global supply chains, and a sense of agency in every single coffee drinker, chocolate eater and banana fan in the UK.

Embedding this work with your student and staff communities is invaluable in helping us achieve the world we want, where producers can have secure futures. Your students are at a crucial stage in their lives.

The skills, habits and values they develop during their time at your institution may well last a lifetime and will contribute to a more just, sustainable global society.

This document outlines your achievements this year and lets you know about the combined impact of the award.



Fairtrade staff and volunteers at Middlesex University Quad stall, 2022.

THE FAIRTRADE UNIVERSITY & COLLEGE AWARD

The Fairtrade University & College Award has been awarded to UK universities and colleges championing Fairtrade since 2003.

In recent years, feedback from the sector showed a clear demand for innovation in the award, so the Fairtrade Foundation partnered with the National Union of Students (NUS) to develop a new award structure, using the successful model of other sustainability programmes then delivered by NUS across the country. Since October 2019, SOS-UK has been delivering the programmes on behalf of NUS as a new, independent sustainability charity created in light of the climate and ecological crises.

Following a pilot in 2017-18 with twelve institutions, this 2023-2025 cohort is the seventh to participate in the award in its current format. The award has celebrated how even more people, including students, are helping to support farmers

and workers on Fairtrade farms across the world.

Growing awareness of Fairtrade will help build the market for the people who produce our products, ensuring they receive a fair wage and income in order to improve the futures of their families and communities.

The award structure encourages partnership between sustainability, catering and academic staff in the institution, plus the students' union and students, to cover procurement, awareness raising and campaigning activities. There are also opportunities to engage through teaching and the flexibility to receive points for trying out new and innovative ways to engage.

This award recognises the achievements of the institution and its partners from September 2023 to May 2025. The FE/HE sector during this time has been challenged by the new ways of working post- pandemic, existing in a world of multiple global crises and additional pressures such as the cost of living crisis effecting students and staff alike. Completing the Fairtrade University and College Award during this period has shown great commitment and creativity from those involved in delivery.

In past years, many aspects of university life have been significantly impacted by the cost of living crisis and student and staff communities have had to adapt work practices to include the wider university community within its social and climate justice work. It is, therefore, particularly commendable that this institution has maintained its commitment to Fairtrade and ensured that activity to further the goals of this award has continued.

The potential reach of this award is significant. At a time that young people are forming their values and shaping their future careers, it is essential that

they are presented with a wide range of narratives and opportunities to think differently about the world.

We are part of one global community. Our decisions have far-reaching consequences, and only together can we tackle the biggest challenges facing our planet and its inhabitants. As students prepare to develop their careers and take on leadership roles of the future, a commitment to reducing the impact of our consumption, and a sense of what each of us can do to create change, has never been more crucial.



Image: Coventry University Fairtrade and Environment stall, 2024

A MESSAGE FROM FAIRTRADE

Sarah Brazier, Head of Campaigns from the Fairtrade Foundation, said regarding this year's cohort.

After celebrating 30 years of Fairtrade in the UK last year, we have kicked off our 31st year with the launch of our tea-focused campaign 'Brew It Fair.' This campaign aims to shine a light on the systemic issues that drive the mounting challenges for the people behind our daily cup of tea and asks the UK government to play a role in ensuring responsible business, human rights and climate support for those most impacted. We know that this is something that future generations care deeply about.

Universities continue to play a vital role in the Fairtrade movement. The passion and energy of students are central to our vision for a fairer world. Sales of Fairtrade products on campuses, speaking up for farmers and workers across the globe, and student-led initiatives have all contributed to strengthening our impact.

This year we have also introduced a new approach to auditing this award, which has proved to be a major success. This innovation not only improves our processes but has set a new standard that we can build on in future years for our committed Fairtrade Universities.



As we approach the end of the 2025 academic year, I want to extend a heartfelt thank you and congratulations to all of you – the university staff and students who have gone above and beyond in their support of the Fairtrade movement through your award submissions. Your commitment and creativity continue to drive change.

Looking ahead, the Fairtrade Foundation is more committed than ever to putting young people at the heart of our movement. Together, we can continue to grow a fairer, more sustainable future for everyone.

FAIRTRADE IN NUMBERS

- **Fairtrade remains the most visible and trusted label in the UK.**
- **Fairtrade continues to be recognised for its strong social impact, especially on workers' rights, working conditions, and tackling poverty**
- **78 percent of people questioned that recognised the Fairtrade Mark believe the Mark has a positive impact on brands**
- **48 percent of people questioned have lots of trust in Fairtrade**
- **62 percent of people questioned strongly agree/agree that they are willing to pay slightly more for a product to ensure producers are paid a fair price.**

**Fairtrade Consumer Insights 2025
UK Market Report
GlobeScan**

FAIRTRADE IN NUMBERS

The Fairtrade and SOS-UK partnership currently supports over 40 further and higher education establishments participating in the Fairtrade University and College Award. The following institutions have taken part in the 2023-2025 cohort:

Bangor University
De Montfort University
Royal Holloway, University of London
Swansea University
University of Bristol
University of Chichester
University of Liverpool
University of Manchester
University of Reading
University of Worcester
Queens University Belfast
Newman University
King's College London
University of Dundee
London Metropolitan University
University of Sussex

YOUR ACHIEVEMENTS



Following your audit and the moderation process, your auditors were delighted to award you Fairtrade University Award status. Congratulations!

Following your audit and the moderation process, your auditors were delighted to award you Fairtrade University Two Star status. Congratulations!



AUDIT BREAK DOWN

Your final score was set at 412 points from 46 criteria completed.
Here's how you performed within each category:

Theme	Criteria Completed	Points Awarded
Mandatory	11	100
Leadership and Strategy	5	50
Campaigning and Influencing	12	110
Procurement, Retail and Catering	7	47
Research and Curriculum	6	35
Outcomes	1	10
Innovative Interventions	4	60
Total	46	412

REF	Action	Decision	Points	Auditor comments
MN001	The Partnership has a working or coordinating group that meets regularly and formally leads on efforts to attain, or retain, Fairtrade University and College Award status.	Done	5	NA
MN002	The partnership has a SMART action plan on Fairtrade and has published it. It should include operational considerations such as procurement and catering, campaigning and influencing, engagement and communications, and a strong focus on the monitoring and evaluation of all activities.	Done	10	The Smart system keeps a thorough check on all the resources.
MN003	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.	Done	10	Comprehensive and exhaustive. Especially the Procurement of Electronic goods pact, and quoted here, Verbatim "The University procures all its ICT equipment through a purchasing consortium which has signed up to Electronics Watch NWUPC Ltd." This is a very important step.

REF	Action	Decision	Points	Auditor comments
MN004	The partnership has held a series of events/promotions/engagement activities during one of the key Fairtrade dates (e.g. during World Fairtrade Day, Fairtrade Fortnight, International Coffee Day or any other associated Fairtrade date), or has scheduled its own dates to hold Fairtrade events/promotions/engagement activities (e.g. during welcome week or their own chosen Fairtrade week) and has measured impact across the events.	Done	10	Detailed list of evidence submitted is again very comprehensive and as per what is required.
MN005	The partnership has devised and successfully delivered one or more innovative campaigns on Fairtrade, trade justice or ethical consumption in the last year, which have been run in partnership with students. The campaign/s must demonstrate some measures of impact.	Done	15	NA

REF	Action	Decision	Points	Auditor comments
MN006	<p>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:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tea • Coffee • Sugar • Hot chocolate and cocoa • Chocolate, confectionary or snacks • Cotton clothing 	Done	10	NA
MN007	<p>Any retail, catering or other commercial outlets owned or operated by the partnership stock at least one Fairtrade-certified line in at least two of the following categories (where the category is stocked):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Soft drinks • Wine or beer • Health & beauty • Savoury snacks & nuts • Cut flowers • Fruit • Cotton face masks 	Done	10	Yes the criteria is met.

REF	Action	Decision	Points	Auditor comments
MN008	There is 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 material should be clearly displayed next to the relevant products to avoid confusion, and it should be refreshed periodically.	Done	10	NA
MN009	Within the last two years, the partnership has successfully carried 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 has made the findings publicly available.	Done	5	NA
MN010	The partnership provides and publicises opportunities for students to investigate Fairtrade, trade justice or ethical consumption issues on or off-campus within their course work or dissertations.	Done	5	NA

REF	Action	Decision	Points	Auditor comments
MN011	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. This report can be part of a wider sustainability or similar report.	Done	10	NA
LD001	The students' union has one or more active policies which support Fairtrade passed within the last three years, and has published them online.	Done	10	NA
LD002	The university or college has at least one or more active policy which supports Fairtrade passed within the last three years, and has published them online.	Done	10	NA

REF	Action	Decision	Points	Auditor comments
LD003	Within the last two years, the partnership has analysed the inclusion of Fairtrade, trade justice and ethical consumption within other cross-cutting institutional and union plans (e.g. procurement plan, sustainability plan, marketing plan) and made suggestions to the relevant stakeholders of how it could be integrated.	Done	10	NA
LD004	All internal student group/society purchasing policies, award and funding applications require a commitment to Fairtrade, trade justice and ethical procurement considerations where applicable. If there are preferred clothing suppliers listed for clubs & societies to purchase from, these should all stock Fairtrade-certified cotton as standard.	In Progress	5	NA
LD005	There is active leadership on Fairtrade, trade justice and ethical consumption issues from one or more senior members of staff or sabbatical officers in the union and institution	Done	15	This event creates an encouraging ecosystem.

REF	Action	Decision	Points	Auditor comments
Clo01	The partnership has included Fairtrade and ethical consumption in staff and student inductions. These inductions should state the organisation's commitment to Fairtrade, provide some information on why Fairtrade is important, and state some tangible actions staff and students can take to fit in with the organisation's values.	Done	10	NA
Clo02	The partnership has supported one or more student groups to campaign on Fairtrade, ethical consumption or trade justice.	Done	5	NA
Clo03	Within the last two years, the partnership has partnered with a local school or college and worked together on at least one project or campaign over the year.	Done	10	NA
Clo04	Within the last two years, the partnership has partnered with a local off-campus Fairtrade group, and worked together on at least one project or campaign over the year.	In Progress	5	NA
Clo05	Within the last two years, the partnership has facilitated the creation of a local off-campus or school Fairtrade group, where one doesn't already exist.	Done	15	NA

REF	Action	Decision	Points	Auditor comments
C1006	Within the last two years, the partnership has proactively collaborated with another aspiring Fairtrade University or College in achieving Fairtrade status and can demonstrate how their involvement has enabled the attainment of the award. This could include encouraging a previously uninvolved university or college to sign up for the next programme cohort.	Done	15	NA
C1007	The partnership's work and support of Fairtrade has an effective and up-to-date web presence, which is easily found and well-used.	Done	5	NA
C1008	The partnership has utilised social media and other communication channels to communicate Fairtrade campaigns widely and successfully.	Done	5	The evidence is in place and showcases the progress.

REF	Action	Decision	Points	Auditor comments
Cl009	In the last two years, the partnership has proactively shared one or more learning or best practice examples from their Fairtrade activities with the wider sector.	Done	10	NA
Cl010	The partnership ensures there is a strong Fairtrade presence at Freshers' Fairs (or equivalent) and/or recruitment days.	Done	10	NA
Cl011	Fairtrade, trade justice and ethical procurement considerations are taken into account in checklists or guidance for events. This should include the requirement of all exhibitors that any relevant giveaways (e.g. cotton tote bags, chocolates, biscuits) are Fairtrade-certified, and that any cotton uniforms are Fairtrade-certified.	Done	10	NA
Cl012	The partnership has supported student groups or RAG groups to fundraise for the Fairtrade Foundation.	Done	10	NA

REF	Action	Decision	Points	Auditor comments
PL001	The partnership has proactively engaged staff and publicised Fairtrade widely as an option for communal tea, coffee, hot chocolate and sugar in staff areas and offices.	Done	5	NA
PL002	The partnership's catering providers and licensed premises (internal and/or contracted) offer Fairtrade-certified products as standard in all the following categories (where stocked): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fruit • Juice • Tea • Coffee • Sugar • Chocolate • Wine 	In Progress	5	NA
PL003	The partnership has captured Fairtrade sales data for the previous two academic years and reported back to the Fairtrade Foundation.	Not Done	0	NA
PL004	The partnership has included terms in tender documentation that reference Fairtrade requirements for relevant categories, or states that Fairtrade suppliers will be preferred.	Not Done	0	NA

REF	Action	Decision	Points	Auditor comments
PL005	There is a procedure and support in place to ensure any new food service tenants or retail/catering outlets provide Fairtrade products wherever possible.	Done	5	NA
PL006	Either Fairtrade is served as standard in hospitality (e.g. conferences, vacation hotel rooms etc.) across all products which have a Fairtrade option available (tea, coffee, sugar etc.), or within the last two years, demonstrable progress has been made to put this into practice.	Done	10	NA
PL007	<p>In the last two years, the partnership has engaged with at least one of the following stakeholders to adopt or increase Fairtrade commitments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A relevant purchasing consortium • An existing supplier • An external brand or retailer 	Done	5	NA

REF	Action	Decision	Points	Auditor comments
PL008	In the last two years, the partnership has increased the proportion of staff uniforms made from Fairtrade-certified cotton or other materials (where available).	Not Done	0	NA
PL009	The partnership ensures that all promotional T-shirts for events are made from Fairtrade-certified cotton.	Not Done	0	NA
PL010	Sales promotions (such as discounts, competitions, loyalty cards etc.) are run on Fairtrade-certified products periodically throughout the year, across relevant retail outlets.	In Progress	2	NA
PL011	The partnership can demonstrate an increase in the number of Fairtrade-certified items and/or lines bought for sale in campus commercial outlets over the last two years.	Done	15	NA

REF	Action	Decision	Points	Auditor comments
RC001	The partnership has successfully encouraged one or more teaching staff to take part in the SDG Teach-In, which takes place annually in March, by including Fairtrade issues within their teaching, learning or assessment.	Done	10	NA
RC002	Within the last two years, the partnership has successfully carried out a relevant follow-up research/scoping exercise amongst a broad range of its students and staff to inform its Fairtrade work, and has made the findings publicly available. This should link back to the baseline research conducted as part of the mandatory criteria.	Done	5	NA
RC003	Within the last two years, the partnership has supported two or more students to complete an investigation of Fairtrade, trade justice or ethical consumption issues on or off campus within their course work or dissertation, and has shared any key findings publicly.	Done	5	NA

REF	Action	Decision	Points	Auditor comments
RC004	Within the last year, the partnership has peer-reviewed another Fairtrade University or College partnership.	Done	5	NA
RC005	Within the last two years, the partnership has carried out a thorough baseline curriculum review or audit for Fairtrade, trade justice or ethical consumption themes and made the findings publicly available.	Not Done	0	NA
RC006	Within the last two years, the partnership has commenced or completed its own piece of research into Fairtrade, trade justice or ethical consumption issues and plans to make the findings public and utilise them for future activities.	Not Dne	0	NA
RC007	Within the last two years, the partnership has encouraged at least one member of teaching staff to join the Fairtrade Directory of Supporting Academics.	Done	5	NA

REF	Action	Decision	Points	Auditor comments
RC008	The partnership has connected its work on Fairtrade with decolonising its curriculum by providing students with more opportunities to learn through the lens of producers.	Done	5	NA
RC009	Within the last two years, the partnership has commenced or completed the process of validating a module specialising in the topic of Fairtrade, ethical consumption and trade justice.	Not Dne	0	NA
OT001	The partnership has identified positive outcomes for students through its Fairtrade work.	Done	10	NA
OT002	The partnership has identified positive outcomes for the students' union through its Fairtrade work.	Not Done	0	NA
OT003	The partnership has identified positive outcomes for the institution through its Fairtrade work.	Not Done	0	NA

REF	Action	Decision	Points	Auditor comments
OT004	The partnership has identified positive outcomes for the wider community through its Fairtrade work.	Not Done	0	NA
II001	Use this section to tell us about innovative actions or initiatives that you have done within your Fairtrade, ethical consumption or trade justice work which you think are worthy of recognition. You should only write about actions or initiatives that you feel are not adequately covered elsewhere in your submission.	Done	15	NA
II002	(Same as one above)	Done	15	There is enough evidence in the discussion carried out with the Team that there are successful interventions and campaigns. Same goes for the queries raised forthwith. The team is showing evidence of Continuous achievements and improvements Y-O-Y.

REF	Action	Decision	Points	Auditor comments
II003	(Same as one above)	Done	15	NA
II004	(Same as one above)	Done	15	NA

FEEDBACK

We are continually looking at ways to improve the impact and experience of the programme. Thank you for providing your student auditors with feedback on the programme. If you have additional comments or suggestions regarding the Fairtrade University and College Award programme, please do let us know via email.

Feedback from student auditors of the award this year has been positive, and their input into the Award has been a fantastic opportunity for partnerships to increase student-staff collaboration on issues such as Fairtrade. We believe student auditors are a key part of the process, and we hope you enjoyed working with them throughout the audit. Copied below is a selection of quotes from this year's student auditors, demonstrating how this opportunity allowed them to develop key skills for life and work.

2025 student auditor feedback

"The experience is very informative, fulfilling adding to an experience of 'a real world feel and involvement.'"

Rakesh, University of Worcester & SU

"It was interesting to see how an audit is carried out. We learned a lot and gained valuable experience in the auditing process."

Doyinmola, Queen's University Belfast & SU

"This was a valuable experience that gave me insight into how ethical practices can be promoted on campus."

Hope Walker, University of Liverpool

NEXT STEPS

Once again, on behalf of the Fairtrade Foundation and SOS-UK, many thanks for taking part in the Fairtrade University & College Award.

We hope you look forward to taking part next year and continuing to engage with and promote Fairtrade on your campuses. Congratulations on all your achievements and before you get cracking on next year, make sure you take a good rest, reward your team, and reflect on everything you've achieved this year!

Your Award is valid for 2 years, but to prevent any gaps in your Award following expiry, we recommend you renew your membership of the programme as soon as possible, so you have the full 2 years to work through the criteria before being re-audited in Spring 2027.

To sign up to the next year's cohort, please visit:

<https://www.sos-uk.org/project/fairtrade-university-college>

For more information, news, case studies and information about the award, please visit the website:

<https://www.fairtrade.org.uk/get-involved/get-involved-in-your-community/universities-and-colleges/>

To contact our team, please email:

Universities@fairtrade.org.uk

THANK YOU

We're so grateful to the Fairtrade campaigners who keep the movement going and continue to advocate for a fairer trade system. We couldn't do it without you. You help to make sure that the future is fair.

Thank you from our Fairtrade and SOS-UK partnership team.



Sarah
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