

# **WASTE MANAGEMENT POLICY**

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

The University of Northampton is one of the youngest Universities in the UK, but we are already leading the way in adding value to society, which we call social impact. The University recognises our activities can have a negative impact on the environment, both locally and globally and we are committed to making sustainable development part of its operations, research and curriculum.

This policy will be reviewed by the Environment & Sustainability Team on a 3-year basis or amended in response to changes in future legislation and/or case law.

## **2.0 OWNERSHIP**

The Environment & Sustainability Team owns and manages this policy on behalf of The University of Northampton.

## **3.0 ORGANISATIONAL SCOPE**

This Waste Management Policy is a corporate policy and applies to all staff members, students and visitors of The University of Northampton including any wholly owned subsidiaries, unless an alternative policy exists, subject to any qualifying conditions.

## **4.0 POLICY STATEMENT**

The University's waste system is managed according to the principles of the waste hierarchy concept (DEFRA 2011) and is committed to supporting a circular economy approach.

All waste emits Green House Gas (GHG) emissions making the deployment of an effective waste management policy that focuses on the reduction and prevention of waste at source, crucial for achieving carbon reduction goals and ultimately reaching Net Zero emissions targets.



Waste Management Hierarchy (DEFRA 2011)

Our approach to engaging staff and students in the effective management of waste at the University is to embed the principles in conjunction with the four UON core values:

**Inclusivity** – ensuring all waste messaging is universal and accessible across all university buildings and accounts for our international student cohort where waste management principles may differ from country to country.

**Sustainability** – constant evaluation of waste management best practice will ensure the UON process of avoidance and prevention of waste materials is firmly established. Sustainable Procurement Practices play a key role in ensuring packaging materials are kept to a bare minimum and where materials are unavoidable that they are compatible with the future of resource recovery.

**Aspiration** – We will challenge the status quo of current waste practices, embrace smart technological solutions, and encourage our staff and students to aspire to adopt the principle of avoiding waste throughout their daily activities by considering alternatives to specific products and encouraging the re-use of items. This ensures they are empowered to be impactful through interaction at all stages of the waste journey.

**Trust** - Waste is a multi-disciplinary, long-term problem, affected largely by the ingrained culture of an organisation. UON encourages relationships based on respect, reliability and transparency which will support the embedding of behaviours at individual and group level through behavioural change campaigns which result in a university wide culture of social responsibility.

This policy forms part of and should be read in conjunction with the University’s Environment Policy and Carbon Management Plan.

## 5.0 DEFINITIONS

5.1 Avoidable Waste at the University of Northampton is defined as waste that can be prevented through procurement, consumption, or re-use.

5.2 Un-avoidable Waste at the University is defined as material that is not technologically, environmentally, or economically practicable to source an alternative.

5.3 Hazardous waste is defined as any waste with the potential to cause harm to either human health or the environment be it in the immediate term or over a period. This includes disposal sharps.

5.4 Offensive waste is classified as non-clinical waste that is non-infectious and does not contain pharmaceutical or chemical substances but may be unpleasant to anyone who encounters it.

Healthcare Offensive Waste is defined as outer dressings and protective clothing such as masks, gowns, and gloves that are not contaminated with body fluids, and sterilised laboratory waste.

Municipal Offensive Waste is defined as hygiene waste and sanitary protection such as nappies and sanitary hygiene products.

5.5 Clinical Waste is defined as potentially infectious waste containing human or animal tissue, blood or other body fluids, excretions, drugs or other pharmaceutical / laboratory products, swabs, dressings, syringes, needles or other sharp instruments, and any waste as a result of medical intervention.

5.6 Trade Effluent is defined in the Water Industry Act (1991) as "*any liquid, either with or without particles of matter in suspension in the liquid, which is wholly or partly produced in the course of any trade or industry carried out at a trade premises.*"

## 6.0 PRINCIPLES OF WASTE MANAGEMENT

### 6.1 PREVENTION

The prevention of waste is considered before all other options and spans across all waste streams, University Professional Services and Faculties. Alternatives should always be sought where practically possible. Each department must audit their single use items following the SUI Audit Methodology and using the Single Use Item Audit template to identify where alternatives are feasible.

Resources should be consumed responsibly across all areas of the University by only purchasing / selecting what is needed and making choices to use minimal resource i.e., paper through encouraging essential printing only, reducing food waste through sufficient portion sizes, efficient food preparation and voiding food spoilage. Procurement and engagement with our suppliers will ensure packaging materials are kept to a minimum.

Through effective procurement, operational procedures and raising awareness amongst staff and students i.e., keeping products for longer, smarter purchasing of more durable products where possible, the volume of waste generated can be reduced.

### 6.2 RE-USE

Re-using items and preventing things from being disposed of unnecessarily is a critical principle of achieving avoidable waste targets. Examples include unwanted items of furniture, clothing, replacements for single use plastics i.e., re-useable drinks bottles, travel cutlery etc.

Selling and donating items no longer wanted are encouraged across UON through the various campaigns and portals:

- Onsite charity clothing donation banks
- Internal and external asset sharing / donation portals
- Charity furniture donations for use by projects in underdeveloped countries

Faculties are required to contact the UON Resource Centre ahead of making a purchase to check if the item they are looking for is in storage to prevent a purchase.

By encouraging staff and students to maintain, repair, refurbish or donate items the lifetime of such items can be maximised, resulting in a reduced output of waste across the Institution.

### 6.3 RECYCLE

The effective segregation and management of waste streams enables materials to be recycled back into useful products, reducing the exploitation of raw materials. The University aims to optimise its ability to manage waste streams of recyclable material through education and awareness campaigns and events throughout the academic year.

### 6.4 OTHER RECOVERY

Where waste streams are not compatible with the above options, recovery of stored energy or useful gases will be prioritised. This includes anaerobic digestion of food, incineration with energy recovery and composting green waste.

The university will continually work with waste management contractors and partners to evaluate and source the most sustainable methods of waste disposal.

### 6.5 DISPOSAL

As a last resort, under the waste management hierarchy, waste is sent to landfill or incineration. The University endeavours to send zero waste to landfill, under current management processes the bio-ash produced by the biomass boiler is used as capping for landfill. The university is committed to finding a sustainable alternative route for the biproduct, the volume produced, and alternative methods of use are continually under investigation.

#### 6.5.1 HAZARDOUS WASTE

The principles applied to the management of hazardous waste by the University as a producer / holder of hazardous waste are as detailed in [gov.uk/dispose-hazardous-waste](https://www.gov.uk/dispose-hazardous-waste):

- Classification of waste, checking if it is hazardous and applying the relevant code
- Separation and Storage ensure secure storage using the correct containers with clear labelling indicating the type of waste contained whilst ensuring adequate coverage to protect the waste from the elements i.e., from being blown away or rain causing 'contaminated run off'
- Use of an authorized business to collect, recycle, or dispose of hazardous wastes
- Completion of consignment note sections applicable to the University
- Keep a register of hazardous waste

### 6.5.2 HEALTHCARE AND MUNICIPAL OFFENSIVE WASTE

The principles applied to the management of Healthcare and Municipal Offensive of waste by the University is detailed in <https://www.gov.uk/how-to-classify-different-types-of-waste> as listed below:

If more than 7kg of municipal offensive waste is produced, or more than one bag is produced in a collection period (appendices 1), it is to be segregated from any mixed municipal waste.

If less than 7kg is produced, it is disposed of in the universities mixed municipal waste ('black bag') using the classification code 20-03-01.

### 6.5.3 DISPOSAL OF CLINICAL WASTE

The principle applied to the management of Clinical Waste by the University is the 'yellow bag' procedure of waste management this ensures that items of waste that are potentially infectious and / or chemically contaminated are placed in yellow waste bags as detailed in the [Government Business Waste and Environmental Impact Guidance for Bagged Clinical Waste](#).

### 6.5.4 DISPOSAL OF WASTEWATER / TRADE EFFLUENT

Trade effluent released into the sewer system is done so under the permission of the Sewage Undertaker by means of Trade Effluent Consent Licence requirements (section 118, Water Industry Act 1991).

## 7.0 ASSOCIATED LEGISLATION

UON has a legal duty to ensure compliance with all relevant waste legislation and to follow all available measures to ensure the waste hierarchy is applied when managing waste.

Direct Legislation is listed below:

- [The Hazardous Waste \(England and Wales\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2016](#)
- [Environmental Protection Regulations 1991 \(2839\) section 34 \(Duty of Care\)](#)
- [Waste \(England and Wales\) Regulations SI \(2011/988\)](#)
- [Control of pollution \(amendment\) Act 1989](#)
- [The Landfill Tax \(Amendment\) Regulations 2012](#)
- [The Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment Regulations 2013](#)
- [Collection and Disposal of Waste Regulations 1988](#)
- [The Waste Batteries and Accumulators Regulations 2009](#)
- [The Environment Act 2021](#)
- [The Environmental Permitting \(England & Wales\) Regulations 2016](#)

- [The Persistent Organic Pollutants \(Amendment\) Regulations 2023](#)
- [Water Industry Act 1991](#)

The impact of each piece of legislation on UON and all Indirect regulations are in the UON Environmental Legal Register. Details of the ownership and management of the register are to be included within the Waste Management Plan.

## **8.0 ASSOCIATED PROCEDURES**

- [Waste Management Operating Procedure](#)
- [Hazardous Waste Operating Procedure](#)
- [Offensive Waste Operating Procedure](#)

## **9.0 ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS**

The University of Northampton's associated documents:

- [Environment Policy](#)
- [Single Use Plastic and Disposable Item Policy](#)
- [Carbon Management Plan](#)
- [Ethical and Sustainable Procurement Policy](#)
- [University Strategic Plan](#)
- [Catering Policy](#)
- [Waste Management Plan \(currently under construction\)](#)
- [Biological Agents and Genetically Modified Organisms Policy 2023](#)
- [Hazardous Substances Policy 2024](#)[Environmental Legal Register](#)

## 10.0 Appendix

### 10.1 Appendices 1 – Healthcare and Municipal Offensive Waste Disposal Schedule

- Sanitary Unit 4 weeks
- Nappy Units 4 weeks
- 1Ltr Sharps 6 weeks
- 5 Ltr Sharps 13 weeks
- Dual Vends 4 weeks
- 770 Ltr Wheelie Bin 2 weeks
- 240 Ltr Wheelie Bin 4 weeks
- Clinical Units 4 weeks
- Oxygen Air Fresh Units 6 visits PA



- **EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

Before carrying out EIA, you should familiarise yourself with the University's EIA Guidance and Notes. Additional training is available through staff development.

EIA forms part of the University's Impact Assessment procedure and covers policies, provisions, criteria, practices and activities, including the delivery of services and decisions, but will be referred to as policy/ practice hereafter.

An EIA should be completed prior decisions to implement new or change any existing policy/ practice and reviewed throughout the decision making or review process:

**1. Policy/ Practice (name and brief description)**

**Waste Management Policy**

The Waste Management Policy describes how the University's waste system is managed according to the principles of the waste hierarchy concept (DEFRA 2011) and the commitment to supporting a circular economy approach. Prevention is key to eliminating waste that can be avoided across the University, this policy focuses on avoiding waste produced by University Operations to include Catering, Academic Delivery and Facilities. All waste emits GHG emissions, by reducing waste we are supporting our carbon management goals.

**2. Reason for the EIA**

- Proposed new policy/practice
- Proposed change to an existing policy/practice
- Undertaking a review of an existing policy/practice
- Other (please state):

**3. Person responsible for the policy/ practice**

Name: Emma Stone  
Job title: Environment Advisor  
Department/ Faculty: Estates and Campus Services

**4. Groups the policy, practice applies to:**

- Staff
- Student
- Parents
- Visitors/Public

**5. Data and evidence used to facilitate the screening of this policy/ practice including internal and external metrics and qualitative and anecdotal evidence**

None available

**6. Gaps in information/ evidence to allow proper assessment of the policy/ practice and how this will be addressed**

There currently no gaps we are aware of relating to the implementation of the policy, however this will be monitored through contractor reporting and internal audits. Any gaps identified will be addressed appropriately.

**7. Groups who have been consulted with in the development / review of this the policy/ practice:**

- Unions
- Staff networks
- HR
- UMT
- Internal experts
- External experts
- Focus groups
- Other (please state):

**8. Potential/actual impacts of the policy/ practice on the following characteristics**

- Age – no impact
- Disability – no impact
- Gender reassignment – no impact
- Marriage and civil partnership - no impact
- Pregnancy and maternity – no impact
- Race – no impact
- Religion or belief – no impact
- Sex – no impact
- Sexual orientation – no impact

**9. Does the policy/ practice eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation in relation to any of the protected characteristics?**

Yes

**10. Does the policy/ practice have a positive or negative impact on advancing equality of opportunity in relation to any of the protected characteristics?**

No

**11. Does the policy/ practice fostering good relations and address prejudice in relation to any of the protected characteristics?**

Yes, through the conducting of audits to ensure all groups are catered for.

**12. Adjustments made to the policy/ practice to counteract potential or actual negative impact.**

These will be identified through the audit; changes will not be made where one group maybe disproportionately impacted i.e. by the removal of single use plastics.

**13. Approval**

Signed by policy/ practice owner

*Emma Stone*

Date: 21/11/24

Signed by the Faculty Dean/ Department Director



Date: 21/11/24

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