

The Open University Fairtrade Policy in Northern Ireland



The Open University (OU) is committed in Northern Ireland to being socially responsible and supporting Fairtrade initiatives. The Open University aims to promote and contribute to fair trading conditions throughout the world. It endeavours to achieve and maintain Fairtrade University status as defined by the Fairtrade Foundation.

1. Purpose and background

This policy is a statement of commitment by The Open University to work towards and maintain Fairtrade University status in Northern Ireland. It sets out how OU staff hopes to realise the Five Goals required by the Fairtrade Foundation (below) for achieving and maintaining Fairtrade University status.

- 1.1 Install a formal Fairtrade policy.
- 1.2 Fairtrade products, including food and cotton are made available for sale in all campus shops.
- 1.3 Fairtrade products are served at all meetings and events hosted by the University and the Students' Union (or equivalent), including internal management meetings. Tea, coffee and sugar will be served as standard with other Fairtrade products introduced where possible (e.g. biscuits, juice and fruit).
- 1.4 Campaigns are run on campus to increase the understanding of Fairtrade and consumption of Fairtrade products, including Fairtrade Fortnight.
- 1.5 A Fairtrade Steering Group is established, with representatives from the student body, University and catering or procurement department.

The Open University, is different from a 'traditional' university. It does not have a Students' Union, shop or campus. However, through this policy we aim to fulfil our commitment to achieving Fairtrade University status by sourcing Fairtrade products for the Belfast office and raising awareness of the power behind supporting Fairtrade initiatives.

2. Goals:

The Open University aims meet the requirements in Northern Ireland of the Fairtrade Foundation, above, by the following means:

- 2.1 To work with the Fairtrade Foundation to implement a Fairtrade policy and become a Fairtrade University.
- 2.2 To ensure Fairtrade products are available to staff and visitors to the University. As a distance learning university, we do not have a student campus or shop. Therefore, we do not sell any food or products. However, we endeavour to use, whenever possible, Fairtrade-certified products in our coffee machine for visitors and in the staff room. Wherever this is not

- possible, due to procurement policies and/or existing contracts, we will make a commitment to start sourcing Fairtrade products as soon as possible.
- 2.3 To serve Fairtrade products at all meetings and events hosted by The Open University, in Northern Ireland, including internal meetings and those with external guests. We will continue to source Fairtrade products until this is wholly possible.
 - 2.4 To run campaigns to raise awareness among students and staff of this policy. Campaigns will focus on the importance of Fairtrade consumption and Fairtrade products. While we do not have students on site, we will achieve awareness among students through social media campaigns and reach staff through in-house events such as Fairtrade coffee mornings.
 - 2.5 To establish a Fairtrade Steering Group with representatives from the Open University Students Association (OUSA), staff, and members of Finance/HR and the External Engagement (Communications) teams.
 - 2.6 The Steering Group will have responsibility for the implementation of this policy.
 - 2.7 The Steering Group will meet every quarter.
 - 2.8 The Steering Group will discuss the procurement of goods to ensure the goals set out in this policy are achieved.
 - 2.9 The Steering Group will be responsible for running Fairtrade awareness campaigns, including Fairtrade Fortnight.
 - 2.10 The Steering Group will assist with attaining the Fairtrade University Status and renewal, by providing monitoring information relating to policy implementation and review to support the application.

3. Promotion of this policy:

The Open University will promote its commitment to Fairtrade University status in Northern Ireland through the following channels:

- 3.1 The Fairtrade Mark will be displayed anywhere Fairtrade products are available.
- 3.2 Fairtrade Foundation materials will be on display anywhere Fairtrade products are served/available.
- 3.3 News and updates regarding the implementation of this policy will be communicated to staff via the intranet site *OULife*. Staff will be encouraged to join the Steering Group and support Fairtrade initiatives.
- 3.4 A social media plan will be drawn up to promote and raise awareness of Fairtrade initiatives.
- 3.5 Campaigns and events, such as Fairtrade Fortnight, will be planned throughout the year.
- 3.6 A policy statement will be available on the University website and the Fairtrade logo will be displayed on it (see below).

The Open University is committed to being socially responsible and supporting Fairtrade initiatives in Northern Ireland. It aims to promote and contribute to fair trading conditions throughout the world by ensuring Fairtrade products are available to all staff in, and visitors to, our Belfast office.