University of Liverpool
SUSTAINABLE FOOD & DRINK POLICY

Version Number	2.0		
Document Status	Revised existing policy		
Effective Date	13/07/2026		
Review Period	July 2027 (annual) for currency, with formal review every three years (next would be July 2029).		
Responsible Department	PCS: Head of Catering and Hospitality Services / Head of Environmental Sustainability and Energy Services		
Policy Author	Head of Catering and Hospitality Services		
Approval Route	**Committee**	**Submission Date**	**Approved?**
	Sustainability Committee	01.07.26	Endorsed
	SLT	06.07.26 14.07.26 (Chair's action)	Subject to minor updates Approved
Linked Documents	n/a		
Does this replace any previous policies?	Yes – the 2023 Sustainable Food and Drink Policy		
Consultation	The policy has been consulted on within PCS and PCS SMT, Sustainable Campus and Operations Implementation Group (SCOIG), Sustainability Committee, and sustainability colleagues.		
Equality Impact Assessment	The EQIA screening form has determined that a full EQIA is not required.		
Regulatory/ Compliance	The policy prioritises suppliers who demonstrate responsible environmental practices, ethical trading and compliance with relevant legislation. It also supports delivery of and alignment with associated plans, such as the Waste and Resources Management Plan, where there are regulatory imperatives such as implementation of the waste hierarchy.		

	In addition to considering the points above, please also answer the following compulsory questions (expanding on your answer rather than stating 'yes' or 'no'): *1. Does this Policy/Procedure/Code continue to uphold the OfS Public Interest Governance Principles?* yes *2. How does this Policy/Procedure/Code relate to freedom of speech and academic freedom? (Including, where relevant, how the document upholds this requirement)* no
Data Protection	n/a
Communication	The policy will be uploaded onto the website. Comms will include internal PCS news/team brief, an internal all staff comms story or bulletin, and external comms on social media.

Sustainable Food & Drink Policy

1. Purpose

The University of Liverpool is committed to delivering a sustainable, inclusive and responsible food and drink offer that supports wellbeing, minimises environmental impact and contributes to the achievement of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

This Sustainable Food & Drink Policy sets out the principles and expectations that guide how food and drink are procured, prepared, promoted and consumed across the University estate. It aligns with the University's Sustainability Strategy 2031, Climate Plan, Responsible Procurement Policy and Waste and Resource Management Plan priorities and supports transparent reporting against recognised sector benchmarks and rankings, including the People & Planet University League, the Times Higher Education Impact Rankings and the QS Sustainability Rankings.

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All University-operated catering, retail and hospitality services
- Food and drink provision delivered through suppliers operating under University-managed contracts
- Food and drink provided as part of University-run meetings, events and conferences

This policy is authored by the University and applies irrespective of whether catering services are delivered in-house or through external providers.

The policy does not apply to independent third-party traders, vendors or external operators operating on University premises where the University does not exercise direct contractual or operational control. Such parties may operate under their own policies and standards; however, the University may encourage alignment with the principles of this policy where practicable.

3. Policy Context and Strategic Alignment

This policy contributes to delivery of the University's Sustainability Strategy 2031, and specifically the Sustainable Campus and Operations pillar of the Strategy, supporting:

- **Responsible consumption and production (SDG 12)**

- **Climate action through Scope 3 emissions management (SDG 13)**
- **Health, wellbeing and inclusive food access (SDG 2 & SDG 3)**

4. Principles and Commitments

4.1. Sustainable and Responsible Sourcing

The University will seek to ensure that food and drink procurement:

- Achieves value for money alongside environmental, social and ethical considerations in food and drink procurement decisions.
- Prioritises suppliers who demonstrate responsible environmental practices, ethical trading and compliance with relevant legislation
- Encourages seasonal and lower-impact supply chains where practicable
- Supports fair working conditions and responsible production standards
- Aligns with the University's Responsible Procurement Policy and wider sustainability objectives

Where appropriate, support opportunities to engage with local and regional suppliers, recognising the potential environmental, social and economic benefits of local sourcing. Sustainability requirements set out in this policy will be embedded, where relevant, within food and drink tenders, contracts and contract management processes, including those delivered by external providers.

This approach will align with and support delivery of the University's Responsible and Sustainable Procurement Policy, ensuring that food and drink procurement contributes to wider institutional sustainability and social value objectives.

4.2. Climate-Conscious Food Provision

Recognising the contribution of food systems to environmental impacts, the University will seek to balance sustainability objectives with affordability, nutritional value, customer choice and value for money, by:

- Promoting a balanced and climate-conscious food offer, which considers impact on biodiversity, water, soil, etc. where possible
- Promoting a diverse range of food choices that support health, wellbeing, affordability, cultural preferences and sustainability objectives, including the provision of vegetarian and plant-based options.
- Encouraging menus that consider environmental impact alongside nutrition, affordability and cultural diversity

- Ensuring provision of drinking water across our estate that is accessible to students, staff and visitors.

This supports organisational climate commitments while maintaining choice and inclusivity.

The University will seek to improve understanding of the carbon impact associated with food and drink provision and explore opportunities to measure and monitor this over time, in line with wider Scope 3 emissions reporting and organisational sustainability objectives

4.3. Food Waste Prevention and Resource Efficiency

The University is committed to reducing food waste and improving resource efficiency through:

- Preventing food waste wherever possible
- Engaging in the redistribution of unsold food, as appropriate
- Measuring food waste where practicable to inform improvement
- Promote recycling of food waste and the extraction of energy and resources where practical (e.g. anaerobic digestion, recycling of waste oil into biodiesel)
- Managing unavoidable food waste in line with the waste hierarchy and the University's Waste and Resources Management Plan.

4.4. Packaging and Single-Use Items

The University will work to reduce the environmental impact of food and drink packaging by:

- Minimising unnecessary single-use items
- Promoting and facilitating reuse wherever possible
- Prioritising renewable and/or recyclable materials where feasible, aligned with the University's waste infrastructure
- Supporting responsible consumption behaviours among customers.

4.5. Information, Transparency and Engagement

To support informed decision-making and engagement, the University will:

- Provide clear and proportionate information about food and drink options, including sustainability messaging where appropriate

- Use campaigns and promotions to raise awareness of sustainable food choices
- Work collaboratively with staff, students and sustainability teams to support participation and feedback
- Review opportunities to engage with relevant sustainable food frameworks where appropriate, in line with operational feasibility and strategic priorities.

5. Governance, Monitoring and Review

Implementation of this policy will be led by Catering and Event Services, working with Procurement, Sustainability Teams and other relevant stakeholders.

The policy will be monitored on an ongoing basis, with progress reported periodically to the Sustainable Campus Operations Implementation Group (SCOIG) and Sustainability Committee. It will also contribute evidence for external benchmarking and rankings where appropriate.

An annual review will be undertaken to ensure the policy remains current and aligned with operational practice and strategic priorities. A formal review of the policy will take place at least every three years, or earlier where there are significant changes to University strategy, legislation or operational context.

6. Continuous Improvement

The University recognises that sustainable food systems continue to evolve. This policy provides a framework for continuous improvement and may be supported by guidance, pilots or action plans reflecting emerging evidence, innovation and stakeholder expectations.

Implementation and development of this policy will align with the University's ISO 14001 Environmental Management System, supporting a structured approach to monitoring, review and continual improvement.