**Aberdeen University Students’ Association Environmental Policy Statement**

Dec 2013

Council

Due to lapse in 2017

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**Council notes**:

1. There are over 16,000 students at Aberdeen University, each with their own ethical and environmental concerns and resolutions.
2. The environmental practices utilised at AUSA influence the wider student body.
3. There is an AUSA Environmental Policy statement dated 2009 which is due for renewal.
4. The University of Aberdeen does have an Environmental Policy in place.
5. Students’ Associations throughout Scotland and the rest of the UK have up to date environmental policy in place including RGU, GCUSA (Glasgow) and Hallam Union (Sheffield).
6. Since 2009 AUSA has been signed up to the NUS Green Impact environmental accreditation scheme. An

up-to-date environmental policy is a mandatory requirement for a Bronze award.

1. For 2012/13, AUSA received a Green Impact Bronze Award. For this year AUSA hopes to attain a Gold award.
2. The financial cost of energy consumption and waste management is met by the University.

**Council believes**:

1. The Association has a responsibility to promote and implement environmentally sound policies on and around campus.
2. The renewal of an AUSA Environmental Policy would frame the aims and objectives of AUSA in a

comprehensive way.

1. The renewal of an AUSA Environmental Policy would aid in making AUSA ‘greener’, thereby both protecting the environment we live in and saving resources.
2. Launching a staff ‘Sustainability Champion Scheme’ (endorsed by NUS Green Impact) will help embed this policy into daily practice.

**Council resolves:**

**Energy**

1. To regularly monitor gas and electricity consumption and set realistic annual targets for reduction as stipulated in the action plan.

1. To optimise heating settings by liaising with the University heating controller and advising staff of correct local settings.
2. To promote energy saving measures to staff and invite staff to feed in their energy saving ideas once a year at an annual sustainability training session.
3. To keep the ‘lighting and responsibility plan’ and ‘vacation shutdown procedure’ up to date and familiarise building users with their role in switching off lights and appliances.
4. To harness a positive working relationship with the University Energy Manager and to lobby the University to install energy saving features.

**Waste**

1. Duty of Care

Under the Environmental Protection (Duty of Care) Regulations 1991 and the Special waste Amendment (Scotland) Amendment Regulations 2004, AUSA has a ‘duty of care’ to ensure that all wastes are correctly identified, are stored safely, are transferred by a registered waste carrier and end up at a suitable licensed waste disposal reprocessing site. In line with this AUSA commits to the following:

* 1. To keep external bins locked.
  2. To communicate recycling procedures to staff and students who use the building and clearly label bins.
  3. To use only registered waste carriers and obtain waste transfer notes. Guidance can be sought from the University Waste Manager regarding this.
  4. To take part in the University biannual WEEE collection and chemical uplift.
  5. To lobby the University to improve recycling facilities at AUSA.

1. Minimising waste
   1. To prevent waste by giving consideration before purchasing items to ensure the item is durable, can be reused or recycled and failing that, disposed of safely. Quantity should also be carefully considered especially when ordering leaflets/ posters.
   2. To take practical measures to reduce waste including (for unofficial purposes) reusing paper that has been printed on one side, only ordering the number of leaflets that are required and increasing online promotion alternatives where possible.
   3. To find ways of reducing food waste at AUSA.
   4. To reduce the amount of waste from commercial operations and events by moving towards reusable crockery and cutlery.
   5. To consider waste from packaging when catering for events.

**Travel**

* + 1. To monitor staff travel and calculate the carbon footprint from travel on a yearly basis.
    2. To encourage Skype and videoconferencing instead of long distance travel to meetings.
    3. To ban flights under 400 miles.
    4. International travel to be approved by a Senior Manager with consideration given to the necessity of the journey.
    5. To encourage walking, cycling and public transport where possible for any AUSA business.

**Procurement**

1. In the first instance to evaluate the durability, effectiveness and need for the item before purchasing.
2. That increased energy-efficiency is a requirement in all refits.
3. To consider energy efficiency before purchasing electrical items. Where viable A / AA rating or other EU label should be opted for.
4. Take preference for items which can be reused or recycled.
5. To give preference, as far as practicable, to products and services which minimise human and physical impact in their manufacture, use and disposal, including adhering to AUSA Fairtrade Policy.

**Food**

1. To increase the number of seasonal, local and vegetarian food options available at AUSA and lobby the University to improve its food offering.
2. To work with Estates to provide and maintain outdoor space for students to grow food on campus.
3. To seek ways to reduce the amount of food waste at AUSA and at the University.

**Biodiversity**

1. To increase biodiversity on campus by maintaining and developing a student wildlife garden.

**Communication and engagement**

1. To deliver at least one pro-environmental student behaviour change programme per year.
2. To deliver a host of positive environmental communications to students to coincide with European Week for Waste Reduction, Go Green Week, Climate Week and Fairtrade Fortnight.
3. To work with the University to promote the End of Year Halls Clearance.

**Representing, influencing and campaigning**

1. To lobby the University to improve recycling facilities on campus.
2. To support national campaigns on environmental and ethical issues in collaboration with the People & Planet student network.
3. To take an active part in the management of the university’s impact on the environment through student representation on environmental steering groups and maintaining close working relationships with the university.

**Implementation**

1. That responsibility for the implementation of the Environmental Policy rests with the Executive Committee, while day-to-day delegation is to be decided by AUSA.
2. That an annual sustainability training session will be held to embed this policy in staff roles.
3. To utilise the staff ‘Sustainability Champion Scheme’ to fulfil the monitoring requirements of this policy.
4. That AUSA will coordinate the implementation of this policy in collaboration with the President for Environment & Ethics and the support of the Environment & Ethics committee.
5. That to this end a yearly action plan is to be developed.
6. To review the above Environmental Policy Statement every 4 years at a minimum.