



Green Gown
Awards 2016



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Kingston University Facilities and Services KU Reuse Revolution

About the project

Summary

'Reuse Revolution' projects at Kingston University have one common goal: to prevent waste through reuse. Initiatives range from innovative inter-faculty aluminium recycling, charitable donations of textiles and furniture, sharing of leftover food, and the classic end-of-term reuse scheme. As a result, reuse rates have increased from 0% to 5% since 2014, whilst recycling rates have also increased by around 10%.

Project partners

Everyone at KU – staff and students alike – are part of the Reuse Revolution! Projects are not limited to a specific directorate or faculty, for example, there are 254 staff members of WARPit and 17 staff sit on the steering group responsible for re-letting the University's waste contract. We are also working with external partners such as London Reuse Limited to redistribute furniture to local good causes, where items cannot be reused internally.

The results

The problem: Waste

KU produces around 80 tonnes of mixed waste and recycling each month, which is equivalent in weight to around seven double decker buses. Typically, recycling rates have been low, and reuse rates have been even lower.

The approach: Educating and encouraging

The KU Reuse Revolution aims to educate staff and students around the benefits of reuse, whilst also promoting recycling for any items that cannot be reused. The Sustainability Hub has strategic responsibility for waste management; it is responsible for providing guidance and training, and it also supports creative and collaborative initiatives at a local level that can demonstrate reuse in action. This approach allows directorates and faculties the flexibility to be innovative and establish projects in a way that is appropriate to them, whilst also providing the sense of being involved in something at an institutional level that is bigger than the sum of its parts.

Our goals: Strategic overview combined with grassroots solutions

Our waste policy is underpinned by the vision that "by 2030 Kingston University will be known in the sector, and beyond, for best practice in waste management". In 2016/17 we will be rolling out a new waste contract, and will be working closely with our contractors to finalise our draft Waste Strategy and set targets. Our draft goal is to reduce the amount of waste produced, through smart procurement and by maximising opportunities for reuse, with a view to reducing the amount of waste produced by 20% by 2030, based on a 2015/16 baseline.

Kingston
University
London

Profile*

Higher Education

- Approx. 17,000 full and part time students
- Approx. 2,000 staff FTE
- Five urban campus sites, plus residences

* Figures correct October 2016



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Obstacles, solutions and lessons learned

Challenges	Solutions & lessons learned
Establishing systems to measure reuse - e.g. tonnage, carbon savings, and disposal costs -can be challenging, but is essential to allow for monitoring and to spot new opportunities	Identifying all stakeholders that can provide data; benchmarking with other HEIs; researching commonly used conversion factors to ensure a consistent approach internally and externally; documenting methodologies and assumptions; feeding back quantified achievements to key stakeholders and senior management
Building the capacity and confidence of local teams to develop and implement their own grassroots initiatives, that sit under the wider KU strategic approach to waste	Clearly communicate the KU strategic approach in an engaging way; involve representatives from a range of faculties and directorates, and students, in setting strategy and targets; training and awareness raising to encourage individuals to take ownership of the issue; provide guidance and support when needed; make resources available to stimulate grassroots activity; identify and encourage staff and student reuse champions
One faculty's trash, is another faculty's treasure (but how do they know that?)	Strategic oversight by the Sustainability Hub allows to identify inter- and intra- institutional opportunities and facilitate connections; foster sustainability networking opportunities, e.g. at events; involve wide range of representatives on waste steering group

Performance and results

An exciting collaboration between the Faculty of Art, Design and Architecture (FADA) and the School of Science, Engineering and Computing (SEC) sees art students melting down and reusing aluminium previously used in science experiments. Dedicated reuse areas in FADA workshops encourage students to reuse wood, foam and scrap sheet materials, and a formal partnership has been established to donate used furniture to local good causes. Projects also include a successful end of term Halls reuse scheme, textile bins, WARPit – an online portal for internal reuse by staff, and food sharing through the mobile phone app Olio. As a result, measured reuse rates have increased from 0% to 5% since 2014, whilst recycling rates have also increased by around 10%. Carbon savings result from more sustainable disposal methods and a reduced use of natural resources, and financial savings are generated from avoided disposal, and a reduced need to buy new - WARPit alone has saved nearly £50,000 since its introduction in January 2014, and furniture disposal costs have fallen by around 25% since the launch of the Reuse Revolution.

The future

What has it meant to your institution to be a Green Gown Award finalist?

The KU Reuse Revolution already encompasses many great initiatives, but we don't want to stop here! We want reuse initiatives to become an active part of our interventions to facilitate pro-environmental behaviours, where reuse and circular economy models become the new normal. We hope that recognition as Green Gown finalists empowers and inspires even more staff and students from across the institution to get involved.



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Further information

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