

# Sustainability Sharing Series

## REDUCING PAPER WASTE

Paper is very useful, ubiquitous at colleges and universities, and versatile comprising sheets, towels, cups, and more. Paper consumption is a large contributor to the environmental footprint of an institution, with associated environmental impacts including deforestation, water and air pollution, and waste. However, there are many opportunities for institutions to reduce paper waste. Encouraging staff and students to think about their own paper consumption, to change their behaviour when it comes to printing, and making institutional-wide changes, saves money, saves trees, and improves efficiency.



Reducing paper waste requires changes across the institution — from procurement, to IT, to academic procedures, to recruitment and admissions, and most importantly staff and student behaviour

### Ways to reduce paper at your institution

- **Double-sided, black & white printing** — set as default for all staff and students with print/queue/hold release
- **Get rid of personal printers** — institutions see rapid paper reductions when swapping from personal printers to larger, multi-use printers
- **Go digital** — identify major uses of paper and see what can be done digitally or online (paperless billing, digital agendas, electronic documentation, admissions, etc)
- **Think about the prospectus** — many colleges and universities now host their prospectus online saving trees and money
- **Engage academics and students** — encourage digital lecture notes and electronic submissions
- **Set a staff-wide challenge** — host a competition across departments to see how much paper they use each month (spread awareness) and then who can reduce the most
- **Purchase sustainable paper options** — think about paper and paper-product procurement at your institution (FSC-certified, recycled, unbleached, chlorine-free, etc.)
- **Ditch the junk mail** — unsubscribe from mailings and magazines and encourage digital downloads

### Resources and Guides

- [SUSTE-TECH Project — Printing and Paper Use](#)
- [EAUC Insight Guide on Printing and Paper Use](#)
- [Case Study: Reducing Junk Mail at Glasgow Caledonian University](#)
- [Presentation: Influencing recycling behaviour - the War on Waste](#)
- [Glasgow School of Art: Paper that is Greener Project](#)

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