

Public Bodies Climate Change Reporting – Waste Reporting by Education Institutions

These notes have been produced by SSN following a reporting discussion at the July 2017 EAUC Waste Topic Support Network. They are intended to address queries raised by the group and provide guidance for education institutions more broadly in completing their 2016-17 Public Bodies Climate Change Duties Reports.

Note: Scope 3 emissions are known to be complex and subject to uncertainty. Actual data may be incomplete or unavailable and often there is not a one size fits all approach. Organisations should consider their individual circumstances when defining their approach to reporting for scope 3 emissions, and balance the need for completeness with that of accuracy. Use the comments sections to explain your approach and draw attention to any areas of uncertainty.

1. Waste from student residences

SSN is aware that some education institutions may be reporting waste from student residences in their waste data whilst others may not be. Waste generated in student accommodation may be inside or outside the estate boundary depending on how the boundary has been defined. If you do include it, please use the comments sections to clearly explain your data. We would particularly encourage reporting this information if you can link this to wider influence activities in section 7.

Where waste from residences is collected by the council there is a risk of double counting if that local authority is also accounting for that same waste in their climate change report. We would encourage any institutions who think this may be an issue to engage with their local authority to ensure waste is being correctly apportioned and not double counted. Reporting bodies should use the comments fields in the reporting template to clearly state their data coverage and explain any arrangements in place to avoid double counting of waste data. This will also ensure SSN use accurate information in our analysis of the reports.

2. Contractor data

Some institutions are not currently receiving accurate reports from their waste contractors and we appreciate this can be limiting in terms of climate change reporting. In particular, there was concern around the accuracy of figures for recycling whereby contaminated waste may be sent

to landfill or to an RDF facility but is being reported by contractors as 100% recycled. We recommend that you engage with your waste contractor to understand how they treat contaminated waste. SSN understands that some contractors may still uplift a contaminated load and separate all recyclable materials from it. Therefore, a reported 100% recycling rate may still be relatively accurate even for contaminated loads.

If you are not confident in the accuracy of your waste contractor data there is also the option to use estimated data, provided this is based on sound information and assumptions. Public bodies should choose the approach they think will deliver the most accurate waste data for their particular circumstances. Please use the comments sections to clearly explain your approach and draw our attention to any remaining concerns over data accuracy.

It has been suggested that APUC may have a role to play in improving the standard of reporting from waste contractors. EAUC and SSN will explore this and come back to you with an update in due course. In the meantime we would encourage you to work with your contractor to optimise your waste data arrangements or alternatively consider using estimated data.

3. Coverage of waste streams

SSN are seeing a broad range of coverage of waste stream sources reported by the education sector. In the 2015-16 submitted reports, education institutions reported data against 17 of the 20 available waste stream sources.

The following table summarises how many institutions reported against each source:

Waste stream	Number of institutions
Mixed recycling	35
Refuse Municipal to Landfill	18
Refuse Municipal /Commercial /Industrial to Combustion	17
Glass Recycling	15
Organic Food & Drink AD	15
Refuse Commercial & Industrial to Landfill	13
Paper & Board (Mixed) Recycling	13
Construction (Average) Recycling	12
WEEE (Mixed) Recycling	11
Metal Cans (Mixed) & Metal Scrap Recycling	9
Plastics (Average) Recycling	9
Organic Food & Drink Composting	8
Organic Garden Waste Composting	7
Paper and Board (Mixed) Manufacture	2
Clothing (Closed loop recycling)	2

Clinical Waste - Other	1
Organic Food and Drink waste - Combustion	1
Batteries Recycling	0
Clothing (Combustion)	0
Clothing (To Landfill)	0

This year there are 23¹ waste sources which can be reported against, which will have varying degrees of relevance for each institution. SSN encourage reporting to the greatest level of detail possible, whilst still ensuring a reasonably accurate data set. Data may be based on assumptions, however if this is the case it is important to indicate in the comments sections the methodology used and assumptions made.

If you cannot obtain actual waste composition data and would like to use an estimate, we would recommend the Resource Efficient Scotland Raw Materials and Waste Tracking Spreadsheet – Waste Composition Analysis Tool, which is available [here](#).

4. Waste categories

Some delegates requested further guidance on the definitions of the various waste streams that can be reported on. Further descriptors on the waste stream types are not available, however the complete list of factors for waste (above) should hopefully help reporters to determine which sources are most relevant for their activities.

If you are still unclear which factors to use or for any other reporting queries you can contact the SSN team and we will be happy to discuss this with you - ssn@keepsotlandbeautiful.org or 01786 471333.

¹ 3 new clinical waste emission factors have been added for 2016-17 reports.