

# ETHICAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

## 1. Policy Statement

Beds SU is a non-profitable organisation. We are committed to considering the environmental and ethical implications of all our actions, and reducing the negative and increasing the positive impact our organisation has on the environment. Beds SU endeavours to continually improve our ethical and environmental performance, go beyond simple compliance and engage all of our stakeholders in ethical and environmental concerns of interest to our students.

## 2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide information to staff and Members on the organisations’ arrangements for environmental management for reducing negative environmental impacts as much as possible.

## 3. Enacting the Policy

Beds SU will enact this Policy in the following ways:

1. By establishing and implementing policies, procedures and plans; and complying with all current environmental legislation, identifying and minimising impacts from significant environmental aspects and aiming to meet environmental best practice wherever possible.
2. By encouraging and enabling staff, officers, students and volunteers; our suppliers, contractors and relevant external stakeholders, to reduce their negative - and increase their positive - impact on the environment.
3. By supporting and empowering students to change and affect society and the world around them through student-led environmental and ethical campaigns, societies and elected representatives, in line with our policies and values. This will include working within and towards student ethical and environmental campaigning policies as is practicable.
4. In monitoring and recording our environmental impact so that Beds SU can ensure we are following this policy and so that areas of improvement can be identified and acted upon.

The SU will have a staff champion for sustainability and environmental matters, who will champion much of the work and development of the policy.

Beds SU will ensure the charity’s senior leadership provides visible leadership in ethical and environmental matters. As far as practicable, employees will work with its suppliers and sub-contractors in delivering this policy and encouraging continued efforts towards its aims. Suppliers’ credentials as an ethical and/or environmentally sound source should be considered in any business decision. Such may extend to the assessment and monitoring of subcontractor/suppliers’ capability and competence in ethical and environmental matters in our tendering processes.

## 3. Policy Activities

Periodic or regular activities or projects by Beds SU may include:

* ethical & environmental educational events
* initiatives to minimise littering, graffiti and avoidable wastage by its membership through the provision of necessary amenities and solutions
* activities to minimise the negative impact of noise pollution emanating from union events
* supporting students to develop environmental and ethical initiatives
* partnering with the University of Bedfordshire and other partners as appropriate to develop ethical and environmental initiatives
* events or activities to raise awareness, educate or take action
* lobbying the University of Bedfordshire on ethical or environmental issues

## 4. Policy Commitments

Beds SU aims to play an important role in ensuring that the local environment is fully protected where possible, ensuring that internal protocols are in place for responsible actions surrounding Waste Management, Conservation of natural environment, Energy Use and Use of resources (e.g. Paper and other materials).

Beds SU also cares about the social environment and, as such, makes commitments to act ethically and be socially responsible in its activities wherever reasonable.

### 4.1 Fairtrade

Beds SU endeavours to support, promote and use Fairtrade products where possible. There have been no major changed to the policy , as we understand it is a major part of our contribution within the global community; such is subject to the continued democratic endorsement of students..

### 4.2 Energy and Natural Resource Consumption

* Beds SU is committed to reducing its utility consumption and aims to:
* Promote energy conservation to all staff and students.
* Work with the University to strive for optimum efficiency.
* Target procurement of energy efficient products.
* Use paper efficiently.
* Promote energy awareness in different ways that can lead to better understanding and outcomes e.g. use of posters and stickers.
* Shutdown and turn off (or ‘sleep’ where appropriate) electrical items in SU spaces or offices if not needed for constant use out of hours.
* Not use inefficient electrical equipment.
* Seek guidance from the University’s environmental staff on equipment or sustainability issues.
* Staff to report dripping taps/energy wastage to the University maintenance team.
* Monitor utilities where possible with a view to setting reduction targets.

### 4.3 Transport

Beds SU aims to ensure that transportation to and from its buildings cause minimum detriment to the environment and its membership by:

* Actively promoting alternative ‘greener’ modes of transport.
* Encouraging transport sharing where possible.
* Proactively promoting lower polluting transport methods such as cycling and walking – including paying travel expenses for cycling.
* Monitoring and reviewing business travel CO2 emissions regularly with a view to setting reduction targets.
* Promoting health and environmental benefits of walking and cycling.
* Prohibiting staff use of domestic air travel for union business with the exception of air travel over 400 miles one way.

### 4.4 Waste Generation and Management

Beds SU is dedicated to a ‘reduce, reuse and recycle’ culture. Beds SU uses the University of Bedfordshire waste service, thus complies with all University of Bedfordshire waste systems and procedures.

Beds SU endeavours to:

* Ensure legal compliance on all waste disposal, and adhere to all relevant duties of care.
* Increasingly use recyclable and recycled materials throughout, as far as is commercially viable.
* Minimise waste generation.
* Adopt and fully support charitable reuse schemes where possible.
* Introduce reusable products where possible.
* Run awareness campaigns involving staff, students and partners to participate and help in reducing the negative impacts on the environment by reducing waste generation, reusing and recycling.
* Not use plastic bags in its retail outlets.
* Actively discourage exhibitors from giving away plastic bags at Fresher’s Fayres and other events.
* Monitor printing and photocopying to ensure low, ‘necessary-only’ usage.

### 4.5 Sustainable Purchasing and Procurement

Beds SU is aware of its influence as a commercial organisation, and of its responsibilities to the ‘global’ community. Beds SU strives to improve the way we procure materials and equipment by good labour and environmental standards in supply chains of Beds SU and has a responsibility to protect Beds SU’s reputation.

Due to NUS Services Ltd.’s Ethical & Environmental Assessment of their products and services, all products and services from this supplier shall be accepted for purchase and sale without additional questioning.

Beds SU aims to:

* Support the purchase of sustainable, Fairtrade, recyclable and recycled products where possible.
* For internal use products staff will consider if the purchase is necessary.
* When purchasing electrical appliances/equipment/vehicles, purchases should be made with consideration of the item’s energy efficiency. Ideally the most energy efficient option should be chosen, but this must be balanced against price. Where appropriate, use a recent minimum efficiency specification list for guidance.
* Where possible products with the least negative or most positive impact will be purchased, e.g. give preference to products and services that can give value and can be manufactured, used, and disposed of in an environmentally and socially responsible way wherever possible.
* Enhance employee awareness of relevant environmental and ethical effects of purchases through appropriate training (where possible), providing guidance and support to employees to allow them to select sustainable products and services.
* Work with existing and potential suppliers to investigate and introduce responsible processes and products.

### 4.6 Building and Development

Beds SU aims to ensure that any new building or refurbishment takes the widest possible consideration of environmental impacts through:

* Considering the environmental aspects in any such work (carrying out as thorough an assessment as is practicable).
* Carrying out development as close to the current site as possible, and preferably on it.
* Where possible, use environmentally friendly raw materials for building, refurbishment and development purpose.
* Ensuring the cleanliness and maintenance after construction and developments.

## 5. Implementation

Beds SU is dedicated to the maintenance of this policy and thus the following will be done:

* The Ethical & Environmental Policy will be reviewed at least every two years by the SLT, following consultations with Staff.
* Ethical and Environmental issues will be taken into account in the Beds SU Strategic Plan.
* An environmental evaluations will be completed at least once every strategic planning cycle.
* Where there is alignment with organisational priorities, participate in external benchmarks such as NUS Green Impact and support the University of Bedfordshire in similar, such as the People and Planet Green League.

## 6. Communication

The policy will be promoted to students, all staff and stakeholders via the Beds SU website. The staff and student staff handbook will include an ethical & environmental statement; and all new employees, staff and volunteers will be made aware of the Ethical & Environmental Policy and their role within it during induction.

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| Policy number  | Approving body  | Date Ratified  | Renewal date  |
| 7.v1  | SLT  | October 2016  | October 2018  |
| 7.v2  | SLT  | July 2020  | July 2022  |
| 7.v3 | SLT | October 2022 | October 2023 |