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| Fairtrade University & College AwardUniversity of reading |
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| 2021 - 2023 programme |

University of reading

**Congratulations on your achievements and thank you for your hard work on the Fairtrade University and College Award programme, on behalf of the Fairtrade Foundation and SOS-UK.**

This programme supports institutions to embed ethical and sustainable practices through their curriculums, procurement, research and campaigns. We are immensely proud of the impact that participating universities and colleges are having in these areas, and we hope you are too.

Fairtrade’s vision, of a world in which all producers can enjoy secure and sustainable livelihoods, can only be achieved by creating widespread understanding of the issues in global supply chains, and a sense of agency in every single coffee drinker, chocolate eater and banana fan in the UK. Embedding this work with your student and staff communities is invaluable in helping us achieve the world we want, where producers can have secure futures. Your students are at a crucial stage in their lives. The skills, habits, and values they develop during their time at your institution may well last a lifetime and will contribute to a more just, sustainable global society.

This document outlines your achievements this year and lets you know about the combined impact of the award.

The Fairtrade University & College Award

The Fairtrade University & College Award has been awarded to UK universities and colleges championing Fairtrade since 2003.

In recent years, feedback from the sector showed a clear demand for innovation in the award, so the Fairtrade Foundation partnered with the National Union of Students (NUS) to develop a new award structure, using the successful model of other sustainability programmes then delivered by NUS across the country. Since October 2019, [SOS-UK](https://www.sos-uk.org/) has been delivering the programmes on behalf of NUS as a new, independent sustainability charity created in light of the climate and ecological crises.

Following a pilot in 2017-18 with **twelve** institutions, this **2021-2023** cohort is the **fifth** to participate in the award **in its current format**. The award has celebrated how even more people, including students, are helping to support farmers and workers on Fairtrade farms across the world. Growing awareness of Fairtrade will help build the market forthe people who produce our products, ensuring they receive a fair wage and income in order to improve the futures of their families and communities. The award structure encourages partnership between sustainability, catering and academic staff in the institution plus the students’ union and students to cover procurement, awareness raising and campaigning activities. There are also opportunities to engage through teaching and the flexibility to receive points for trying out new and innovative ways to engage.

In order to confirm the achievements of the participants, students were recruited as volunteer auditors and trained by SOS-UK and the Fairtrade Foundation, equipping them with transferrable skills and experience in conducting an audit.

This award recognises the achievements of the institution and its partners from September 2021 to April 2023. The FE/HE sector during this time has been challenged by the ongoing demands of the global pandemic, closures and additional pressures. Completing the Fairtrade University and College Award during this period has shown great commitment and creativity from those involved in delivery. All aspects of university life have been significantly impacted by the global pandemic and student and staff communities have had adapt to different ways of working. It is, therefore, particularly commendable that this institution has maintained its commitment to Fairtrade and ensured that activity to further the goals of this award has continued.

The potential reach of this award is significant. At a time that young people are forming their values and shaping their future careers, it is essential that they are presented with a wide range of narratives and opportunities to think differently about the world. This pandemic has clearly demonstrated that we are part of one global community. Our decisions have far-reaching consequences, and only together can we tackle the biggest challenges facing our planet and its inhabitants. As students prepare to develop their careers and take on leadership roles of the future, a commitment to reducing the impact of our consumption, and a sense of what each of us can do to create change, has never been more crucial.

The year in numbers:



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41 students completed training and carried out audits

750 staff and students actively worked on the award

14 partnerships completed the programme and submitted evidence

Student attitudes:

Taking part in this programme is also important as it responds to the issues which students are concerned with, informing them and demonstrating how to take action. Our [Fairtrade student survey](https://online1.snapsurveys.com/FTUC_StudentSurvey) over the last two years showed that 78% students said they care that farmers in developing countries are getting a fair deal for the products they grow. 70% are concerned about child labour, and 77% want products that have been produced without child labour.

Your achievements

Following your audit and the moderation process, your auditors were delighted to award you **Fairtrade University two-star** status. Congratulations!

Your final score was set at **385** points from **44** criteria completed. Here’s how you performed within each category:

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Theme** | **Criteria Completed** | **Points Awarded** |
| Mandatory | 11/11 | 100/100 |
| Leadership and Strategy | 5/5 | 55/55 |
| Campaigning and Influencing | 6/12 | 30/115 |
| Procurement, Retail and Catering | 10/11 | 75/95 |
| Research and Curriculum | 5/9 | 55/70 |
| Outcomes | 4/4 | 40/80 |
| Innovative Interventions | 3/4 | 30/60 |
| **Total**  | **44/56** | **385/585** |

Your Award will be valid for two years, expiring on 30th June 2025.

Here’s how you were scored against each criterion that you completed, along with auditor notes:

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Ref | Action | Auditor decision | Points | Auditor comments *N.B. Some comments may have been edited by the project team for clarity and brevity.*   |
| MN001 | The Partnership has a working or coordinating group that meets regularly and formally leads on efforts to attain, or retain, Fairtrade University and College Award status. |  Y | 5 | There is evidence of an active group that consists of both the students' union and the institution. It did not seem to be student led but there were students contributing so that could be an improvement. |
| MN002 | The partnership has a SMART action plan on Fairtrade and has published it. It should include operational considerations such as procurement and catering, campaigning and influencing, engagement and communications and a strong focus on the monitoring and evaluation of all activities. |  Y | 10 | They have a SMART action plan, and they have published it, it includes all themes and they have evaluated all activities. |
| MN003 | The partnership has published a public commitment of intent to support and champion Fairtrade and its values within the last two years signed by senior management across the organisations and their retail and catering outlets. |  Y | 10 | They have published a statement which outlines what they intend to do for the following sections: Steering the group, the sale of Fairtrade products, hospitality, promotion, curriculum and research and monitoring and review. This is signed and they also have their ones for 2020 and 2021 signed too. |
| MN004 | The partnership has held a series of events/promotions/engagement activities during Fairtrade Fortnight (February/March every year) and has measured impact across the events. |  Y | 10 | They had a variety of events such as a quiz, raffles, lecture, social media posts, newsletters, articles and 20% of hot drinks were Fairtrade during fortnight.  |
| MN005 | The partnership has devised and successfully delivered one or more innovative campaigns on Fairtrade, trade justice or ethical consumption in the last year, which have been run in partnership with students. The campaign/s must have taken place in addition to Fairtrade Fortnight and can demonstrate some measures of impact. |  Y | 15 | They ran 3 events outside Fairtrade Fortnight including a 3-day residential. |
| MN006 | Any retail or catering outlets owned or operated by the partnership stock Fairtrade certified products in all of the following categories, and are working to increase either the number of lines OR number of items sold year on year: • Tea • Coffee • Sugar • Hot chocolate and cocoa • Chocolate, confectionary or snacks • Cotton clothing |  Y | 10 | All Fairtrade products apart from Fairtrade clothing/cotton. UoR are currently supplying organic, not FT cotton, but have stated this is something they may change in the future. Must be noted that they have climate stripes merchandise which is a step in the right direction, and all other items are included with many locations provided by invoice. |
| MN007 | Any retail, catering or other commercial outlets owned or operated by the partnership stock at least one Fairtrade certified line in at least two of the following categories (where the category is stocked): • Soft drinks • Wine or beer • Health & beauty • Savoury snacks & nuts • Cut flowers • Fruit • Cotton face masks |  Y | 10 | Coop sells Fairtrade products in several categories. |
| MN008 | There is up to date and effective Point of Sale (POS) material in all relevant outlets, highlighting Fairtrade products and providing information on the benefits of Fairtrade to growing communities. This POS should be clearly displayed next to the relevant products to avoid confusion, and it should be refreshed periodically. |   | 10 | In coop, IMCA cafe and catering, they could be improved if they said more about the benefits of Fairtrade.FT comment- no evidence of poster or other information about Fairtrade in POS provided. |
| MN009 | Within the last two years the partnership has successfully carried out relevant scoping activities amongst a broad range of its students and/or staff (not just those already engaged in the campaigns) to inform its Fairtrade work, and has made the findings publicly available. |  Y | 5 | Survey evidence was supplied after a catch-up meeting with UoR representative- there was an issue with the link provided. Now there is sufficient evidence of their survey, and it is posted publicly on their Fairtrade website. This includes results and analytics. |
| MN010 | The partnership provides and publicises opportunities for students to investigate Fairtrade, trade justice or ethical consumption issues on or off-campus within their course work or dissertations. |  Y | 5 | A few courses incorporate Fairtrade in their curriculum. |
| MN011 | The partnership publishes an annual progress or impact report on its action on Fairtrade, trade justice and ethical consumption. This should refer to the tasks and progress made through the SMART action plan and should be publicly available. This report can be part of a wider sustainability or similar report. |  Y | 10 | They have a public report which shows what they've done in the last year and what they want to do in the next year. |
| LD001 | The union has one or more active policies which support Fairtrade passed within the last three years, and has published them online. |  Y | 10 | They have an active sustainability policy which includes aiming to get Fairtrade uniforms and merch. Proving fairtrade food. |
| LD002 | The university or college has at least one or more active policy which supports Fairtrade passed within the last three years, and has published them online. |  Y | 10 | They have a Fairtrade policy that was written in 2021 but they also have other policies that support fairtrade principles. |
| LD003 | Within the last two years the partnership has analysed the inclusion of Fairtrade, trade justice and ethical consumption within other cross-cutting institutional and union plans (e.g. procurement plan, sustainability plan, marketing plan) and made suggestions to the relevant stakeholders of how it could be integrated. |  Y | 10 | They have provided a University Supplier Code of conduct and an environmental sustainability report and a sustainable food policy, where they have analysed inclusion of Fairtrade, trade justice and ethical in other institutional and union plans. |
| LD004 | All internal student group/society purchasing policies, award and funding applications require a commitment to Fairtrade, trade justice and ethical procurement considerations where applicable. If there are preferred clothing suppliers listed for clubs & societies to purchase from, these should all stock Fairtrade-certified cotton as standard. |  Y | 10 | All the internal student group/society purchasing policies, award and funding applications are evidently all in inclusion of Fairtrade, trade justice and ethical procurement considerations. RUSU's (student group) use of cotton clothing plays a major role in sustainability as it can be recycled and made into yarn or new garments. |
| LD005 | There is active leadership on Fairtrade, trade justice and ethical consumption issues from one or more senior members of staff or sabbatical officers in the union and institution. |  Y | 15 | I can confirm evidence includes examples of positive things that have happened as a result of the senior member of staff's leadership on Fairtrade, trade justice and ethical consumption. The organising of activities to support the Fairtrade fortnight campaign and the hosting of international festivals. |
| CI001 | The partnership has included Fairtrade and ethical consumption in staff and student inductions. These inductions should state the organisation's commitment to Fairtrade, provide some information on why Fairtrade is important, and state some tangible actions staff and students can take to fit in with the organisation's values. |  N | 10 | FT comment -Some evidence for a small group of staff but not for students/ whole staff. |
| CI002 | The partnership has supported one or more student groups to campaign on Fairtrade, ethical consumption or trade justice. |  Y | 5 | Based on my knowledge, the 'Plant-based University Campaign' has achieved several objectives. The campaign regularly holding stalls on campus to inform others of what the cause is for, increases awareness to several amounts of students around the campus. The meetings arranged to discuss menu changes show they are actively trying to find new ways to improve the catering they produce. The training they attend, to speak with other universities about what they are doing will encourage other universities to also act. Their use of social media to maintain the momentum of their drive, increases the consciousness of individuals regarding the campaign. |
| CI003 | Within the last two years the partnership has partnered with a local school or college and worked together on at least one project or campaign over the year. |  Y | 10 | Attendance: Scenario - 18 in person plus 4 online. SSCP - 15 in person plus 4 online. (Fairtrade Event) Erin Cooper provided details from Wendy Neale at SMPCS about an additional Sustainability residential workshop event called 'A joint workshop for Scenario and Science and Solutions for a Changing Planet DTP Students'. |
| CI004 | Within the last two years the partnership has partnered with a local off-campus Fairtrade group, and worked together on at least one project or campaign over the year. |  Y | 10 |  A project they have worked on is organising an event that took place on Thursday 1 Dec 2022 from 5-7pm. They hosted a stall with RISC selling fairtrade goods from the RISC world shop as part of a Christmas Market. |
| CI005 | Within the last two years the partnership has facilitated the creation of a local off-campus or school Fairtrade group, where one doesn't already exist. |  N | 15 |  No evidence |
| CI006 | Within the last two years the partnership has proactively collaborated with another aspiring Fairtrade University or College in achieving Fairtrade status and can demonstrate how their involvement has enabled the attainment of the award. This could include encouraging a previously uninvolved university or college to sign up for the next programme cohort. |  N | 15 |  No evidence |
| CI007 | The partnership's work and support of Fairtrade has an effective and up to date web presence, which is easily found and well-used. |  Y | 5 |  After viewing the web page, I can confirm it is very well presented. The content is up to date with the most recent Fairtrade SMART Action Plan and Annual progress report. |
| CI008 | The partnership has utilised social media and other communication channels to communicate Fairtrade campaigns widely and successfully |  N | 5 |  After viewing the Instagram page of University of Reading Chaplaincy and the twitter pages of the Sustainability team and University of Reading Chaplaincy. I can confirm neither of the pages are maintaining an active and consistent number of post likes, shares and video views, with most posts averaging 4-7 likes and 2-4 reposts (on twitter). |
| CI009 | In the last two years, the partnership has proactively shared one or more learning or best practice examples from their Fairtrade activities with the wider sector. |  N | 10 | During UoR Fairtrade Fortnight Raffle a raffle was held by the Steering Group to win one of two hampers of Fairtrade products donated by University departments and Co-op retail partner. There were 240 entrants (165 staff and 73 students), and 1 student & 1 staff member were drawn as winners. Co-op also ran a Fairtrade Raffle during Fairtrade – There were 32 entrants and it raised £54 for the Syrian DEC appeal. On the 12 Dec 2022, Mark Laynesmith (Anglican Chaplain and then co-chair of the steering group) attended Universities Fairtrade Networking group (comprising 55 academics/staff at other Universities) and shared details about an excellent speaker we had hosted here from Tony's Chocolonely company (who offer free chocolate tasting and guest lectures during welcome weeks and other times of the year). We had hosted a speaker from them in 2022 for Fairtrade Fortnight. Mark also shared details about the Fairtrade phone (Fairphone) which our procurement department offers to staff - I passed on details for those interested in knowing more about it. FT comment -not sure this evidence matches the criteria for CI009 |
| CI010 | The partnership ensures there is a strong Fairtrade presence at Fresher's Fairs (or equivalent) and/or recruitment days. |  N | 10 |  No evidence |
| CI011 | Fairtrade, trade justice and ethical procurement considerations are taken into account in checklists or guidance for events. This should include the requirement of all exhibitors that any relevant giveaways (e.g. cotton tote bags, chocolates, biscuits) are Fairtrade-certified, and that any cotton uniforms are Fairtrade-certified. |  N | 10 |  There is sufficient evidence of climate stripes merchandise being used and sold at events/giveaways. There is merchandise listed on their online store of different t-shirts, hoodies, tote bags, mugs etc. I am assuming they regularly make sales from these products listed.FT comment -not sure this evidence matches criteria for CI011 |
| CI012 | The partnership has supported student groups or RAG groups to fundraise for the Fairtrade Foundation. | N | 10 |  No evidence |
| PL001 | The partnership has proactively engaged staff and publicised Fairtrade widely as an option for communal tea, coffee, hot chocolate and sugar in staff areas and offices. |  Y | 5 | The University only provides Fairtrade tea and coffee for staff meetings, purchased from Cafeology and Brakes. Therefore, ALL of the Hospitality bookings for tea/coffee for staff meetings on our Hospitality booking system would consist of Fairtrade ingredients. Since August 1 2022 we have supplied 57,706 Fairtrade teas and coffees for staff meetings and events across the Whiteknights and London Road Campuses in a selection of classrooms and meeting rooms.  |
| PL002 | The partnership's catering providers and licensed premises (internal and/or contracted) offer Fairtrade-certified products as standard in all the following categories (where stocked): • Fruit • Juice • Tea • Coffee • Sugar • Chocolate • Wine |  Y | 10 | The stated products on the universities/unions catering menu such as the cake, instore bakeries, frozen goods etc, are all Fairtrade certified. Although, the Dairy products are not Fairtrade certified and do not come from companies that prioritise Fairtrade practices.  |
| PL003 | The partnership has captured Fairtrade sales data for the previous two academic years and reported back to the Fairtrade Foundation. |  Y | 15 |  I can verify the sales data provided has been sent to the Fairtrade Foundation for viewing. |
| PL004 | The partnership has included terms in tender documentation that reference Fairtrade requirements for relevant categories, or states that Fairtrade suppliers will be preferred. |  Y | 5 |  The tender documents are well organised with a contents page that includes numbers assigned to each headline that is discussed. The vital statistics are well presented and seem to be accurate. All links to relevant websites are working and accessible. The cover sheet and checklist need to be signed, and the personal details need to be filled in from the person who will sign it.  |
| PL005 | There is a procedure and support in place to ensure any new food service tenants or retail/catering outlets provide Fairtrade products wherever possible. |  Y | 5 | Based on my understanding, catering do not allow trading onsite if their ethos isn't complied with. Their minimum standards summary is clearly presented and arranged well with relevant statistics/information on each product area. |
| PL006 | Either Fairtrade is served as standard in hospitality (e.g. conferences, vacation hotel rooms etc.) across all products which have a Fairtrade option available - tea, coffee, sugar etc., or within the last two years’ demonstrable progress has been made to put this into practice. |  Y | 10 | The hospitality is great with the flexibility and discount provided to students to purchase a range of Fairtrade drinks. The tap water system at specific locations on campus is a key step in ensuring sustainability. However, paper cups should be provided at the taps to increase accessibility for students. |
| PL007 | In the last two years, the partnership has engaged with at least one of the following stakeholders to adopt or increase Fairtrade commitments: a. A relevant purchasing consortium b. An existing supplier c. An external brand or retailer |  Y | 5 |  The hospitality is great with the flexibility and discount provided to students to purchase a range of Fairtrade drinks. The tap water system at specific locations on campus is a key step in ensuring sustainability. However, paper cups should be provided at the taps to increase accessibility for students.FT comment -evidence for PL004 shows this |
| PL008 | In the last two years, the partnership has increased the proportion of staff uniforms made from Fairtrade certified-cotton or other materials (where available). |  N | 10 |  No evidence |
| PL009 | The partnership ensures that all promotional T-shirts for events are made from Fairtrade-certified cotton. |  N | 10 |  No evidence |
| PL010 | Sales promotions (such as discounts, competitions, loyalty cards etc.) are run on Fairtrade-certified products periodically throughout the year, across relevant retail outlets. |  Y | 5 | This is well evidenced in the document provided. |
| PL011 | The partnership can demonstrate an increase in the number of Fairtrade-certified items and/or lines bought for sale in campus commercial outlets over the last two years. |  Y | 15 |  The data on sales was adequately provided in the evidence over the period, September 2021 to March 2023. |
| RC001 | The partnership has successfully encouraged one or more teaching staff to take part in the Global Goals Teach-In, by including Fairtrade issues within their teaching, learning or assessment during the annual teach-in week in February. |  N | 10 |  No evidence |
| RC002 | Within the last two years the partnership has successfully carried out a relevant follow-up research/scoping exercise amongst a broad range of its students and staff to inform its Fairtrade work, and has made the findings publicly available. This should link back to the baseline research conducted as part of the mandatory criteria. |  N | 5 |  The relevant evidence was provided for the survey that was conducted. However, students' accessibility to the required publications is not well evidenced.FT comment -the number of answers can’t be considered a broad range |
| RC003 | Within the last two years the partnership has supported two or more students to complete an investigation of Fairtrade, trade justice or ethical consumption issues on or off campus within their course work or dissertation, and has shared any key findings publicly. | Y | 5 | Students embarked on a variety of sustainability projects since 2018 to date, with pending projects to take place this summer. This is well evidenced by the university. |
| RC004 | Within the last year the partnership has peer-reviewed another Fairtrade University or College partnership. |  N | 5 |  No evidence |
| RC005 | Within the last two years the partnership has carried out a thorough baseline curriculum review or audit for Fairtrade, trade justice or ethical consumption themes and made the findings publicly available. |  Y | 15 |  A good step towards Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) is to help raise awareness about sustainability in our environment. |
| RC006 | Within the last two years the partnership has commenced or completed its own piece of research into Fairtrade, trade justice or ethical consumption issues and plans to make the findings public and utilise for future activities. |  Y | 15 |  The published paper titled "combined carbon and health taxes outperform single-purpose information or fiscal measures in designing sustainable food policy" has been a significant project by the partnership. |
| RC007 | Within the last two years the partnership has encouraged at least one member of teaching staff to join the Fairtrade Directory of Supporting Academics.  |  N | 5 |  No evidence |
| RC008 | The partnership has connected its work on Fairtrade with decolonising its curriculum, by providing students with more opportunities to learn through the lens of producers. |  Y | 5 |  Inclusive teaching and learning approach is well evidenced. |
| RC009 | Within the last two years the partnership has commenced or completed the process of validating a module specialising in the topic of Fairtrade, ethical consumption, and trade justice.  |  Y | 15 | FT comment - this module looks at sustainable food provision from a climate change and growing population perspective, but I think these issues are inseparable to Fairtrade issues and so relevant to the award |
| OT001 | The partnership has identified positive outcomes for students through its Fairtrade work. |  Y | 20 |  There is enough evidence to show this.  |
| OT002 | The partnership has identified positive outcomes for the students' union through its Fairtrade work. |  N | 20 | No evidence |
| OT003 | The partnership has identified positive outcomes for the institution through its Fairtrade work. |  N | 20 | No evidence |
| OT004 | The partnership has identified positive outcomes for the wider community through its Fairtrade work. |  Y | 20 |  The university has raised a great sum for the Chaplaincy which positively impacts the wider community, with evidence of their continued support throughout the year. They further work with the Co-Op which shows that they have covered multiple initiatives to reach as many people as possible.  |
| II001 | Use this section to tell us about innovative actions or initiatives that you have done within your Fairtrade or related ethical consumption work which you think are worthy of recognition. You should only write about actions or initiatives that you feel are not adequately covered elsewhere in your submission. |  Y | 15 |  Decolonisation of food is a great initiative which shows that The University have actively sought to improve each food group which has a fair-trade alternative. What’s more, the have turned the negative impact of COVID-19 which limited use of the catering into a positive, by overhauling the system and creating new meals and plant based options. This is a brilliant and adaptive change to a negative circumstance of COVID.  |
| II002 | (Same as 1 above) Use this section to tell us about innovative actions or initiatives that you have done within your Fairtrade or related ethical consumption work which you think are worthy of recognition. You should only write about actions or initiatives that you feel are not adequately covered elsewhere in your submission. |  N | 15 | Great to use local brewers, cuts on transmissions and promotes UK-brewed beer which is more sustainable for the UK economy. FT comment- doesn’t match criteria. |
| II003 | (Same as 1 above) Use this section to tell us about innovative actions or initiatives that you have done within your Fairtrade or related ethical consumption work which you think are worthy of recognition. You should only write about actions or initiatives that you feel are not adequately covered elsewhere in your submission. |  Y | 15 | A great initiative for The University to have an on-site quarantine centre which protects research and the breeding of cocoa from pests and disease, positively and personally impacting farmers and researchers.  |
| II004 | Use this section to tell us about innovative actions or initiatives that you have taken or developed within your Fairtrade or related ethical consumption work which have a sector-wide impact, or potential to reach wider than just your institution and union. You should only write about actions or initiatives that you feel are not adequately covered elsewhere in your submission. |  N | 15 | This University have sourced a great policy guideline to implement which impacts every area of the food industry. With its 24 policies, The University can have a massive impact in what they provide and the knowledge they supply about The Culinary Institute which positively impacts the culture of food around Reading. More universities are joining this Institute, Reading being the first in the whole of the UK and Bristol newly joining. It is fair to say this is an innovative partnership which will likely set an example for universities across the country.FT comment - I have looked into this in detail and although I think it’s a great idea, I don’t think it has enough sustainable or social justice credentials to be used as evidence for the FT Award. |

What others have said about your work

The project team has said the following about your work on the award. “*The project team are delighted to see how Fairtrade has become integrated into the life of the institution including in areas of procurement, retail, research and curriculum.*

*The strength of this application lies in the commitment and vision of the steering group in areas of social justice and sustainability. It is also exemplary that this group is so broad with representation from different stakeholders in the University.*

*We are particularly impressed by the sheer volume of Fairtrade products offered and consumed in catering outlets and meetings as well as the wide range of Fairtrade products available in campus’ shops”.*

Elena Fernandez Lee, Education Campaigning Manager from the **Fairtrade Foundation**, said regarding this year’s cohort, *“The current cost of living crisis is affecting all; University students are battling to keep up with rinsing bills and rent. Universities are working hard to offer support to help reduce the impact of the cost-of living crisis on students, whilst also dealing with financial pressures themselves. Despite this, institutions have remained keen to make their work on ethical and sustainable consumption prominent. We recognise the challenges of keeping staff and students engaged. But we have also seen the devastating impacts of the cost of living crisis on those who are marginalised around the world, compounded by extreme climate events. There is no time to lose in striving for climate and trade justice.*

*“We are one interconnected global society, and equipping students with the skills to understand the nature of our global connections and global community has never been more urgent. Thank you for continuing with the work, and recognising that the need for raising awareness and reflecting on our actions does not stop.”*

Feedback

We are continually looking at ways to improve the impact and experience of the programme. Thank you for providing your student auditors with feedback on the programme. If you have additional comments or suggestions regarding the Fairtrade University and College Award programme, please do let us know via email.

Feedback from student auditors of the award this year has been positive, and their input into the Award has been a fantastic opportunity for partnerships to increase student-staff collaboration on issues such as Fairtrade. We believe student auditors are a key part of the process, and we hope you enjoyed working with them throughout the audit. Copied below are a selection of quotes from this year’s student auditors, demonstrating how this opportunity allowed them to develop key skills for life and work.

*“A key takeaway from the audit was the importance of communication and collaboration. Throughout the process, our team had to work closely together, exchanging information and insights to ensure that everyone was on the same page. This collaboration was critical in ensuring that the audit went smoothly and that we were successful in identifying areas where we could do better”* - Aaron Akomolede, student audit team for Reading University.

*“Fairtrade auditing has been a unique experience, providing new perspective on the importance of the implementation of sustainable practices at educational institutions. Evaluating my university has helped me understand what and how to better support sustainability campaigns” -* Emma Lawrence, student audit team from Bath University.

Next steps

Once again, on behalf of the Fairtrade Foundation, SOS-UK, many thanks for taking part in the Fairtrade University & College Award. We hope you look forward to taking part next year and continuing to engage with and promote Fairtrade on your campuses. Congratulations on all your achievements and before you get cracking on next year, make sure you take a good rest, reward your team, and reflect on everything you’ve achieved this year!

Your Award is valid for 2 years, but to prevent any gaps in your Award following expiry, we recommend you renew your membership of the programme as soon as possible, so you have the full 2 years to work through the criteria before being re-audited in Spring 2025. You can find more information and [sign-up using the form here](https://www.sos-uk.org/programme-sign-up).

For more information, news, case studies and information about the award, please [visit the website here](https://www.fairtrade.org.uk/get%20involved/In-your-community/Universities) or contact volunteer.university@fairtrade.org.uk.