

**Kingston
University**
London

Fairtrade report summary of progress 2020–2022





1.0 Introduction

Kingston University (KU) was the third university in London to achieve a 'Fairtrade University' status. Since 2006 the University has proudly sold Fairtrade products and annually supported Fairtrade Fortnight. KU re-joined the Fairtrade University award in 2020 as part of the 2020-2022 cohort of Universities and Colleges and is currently 'Working Towards' its Fairtrade Award and Fairtrade University status.

2. Governance, Leadership and Strategy

The University has an active Fairtrade Award Team which comprises a mix of academic and supporting staff, students, Union of Kingston Students (UKS) staff and sabbatical officers, Kingston University Service Company Ltd (KUSCO) staff and our current catering contractor Elior. There is an agreed terms of reference and the group meets regularly with the

collective objective and responsibility to embed Fairtrade within the curriculum, procurement, research and campaigns. The diverse group of Fairtrade Award Team attendees also include senior members of staff including the Head of Department for Geography, Geology and Environment and the Operational Sustainability Manager.

The University has formally committed to achieving and maintaining University Fairtrade status as detailed in its five-year Institutional Sustainability Plan (2021-2026). The Sustainability Plan has been approved by the Senior Leadership Team and progress against the Sustainability Plan will be reported annually in a separate Sustainability Report (due to be published in summer 2022). It is anticipated that progress against the Fairtrade University Award will be included within this annual Institutional Sustainability Report. In addition, KU has communicated its Fairtrade commitments on our external and internal websites, in our annual financial statements and prospectus.

In October 2021, the Fairtrade Award Team recently reviewed the University Fairtrade Policy

which has been signed by the University Vice-Chancellor and Chief Financial Officer and made publicly accessible on the University website. Our Fairtrade Action Plan is also publicly accessible and supports KU in meeting its Fairtrade Policy objectives. The action plan includes SMART targets agreed by the Fairtrade Award Team and progress against the Action Plan is reviewed at each Fairtrade Award team meeting.

3. Campaigning and Influencing

3.1 Fairtrade Fortnight

Fairtrade Fortnight provides an opportunity for the University to campaign and share the stories of the people who grow our food and drinks and the cotton in our clothing, people who are very often underpaid and exploited. KU has proudly and actively supported Fairtrade Fortnight since we first gained Fairtrade University status in 2006. Whilst KU’s catering contractor Elior support Fairtrade throughout the year (see section 4), Fairtrade Fortnight provides an additional opportunity for Elior to create eye catching displays and run promotional campaigns on Fairtrade products. For example,

during Fairtrade Fortnight 2020, Elior ran a 35p discount off a Fairtrade flapjack or brownie when buying a hot drink.

In 2021, the University ran a webinar open to the public titled “The Challenge of Fairtrade: Climate Change and Social Justice”. The webinar was chaired by the Vice President for Activities in UKS and the Fairtrade Foundation joined the panel discussion to provide an overview on the merits of Fairtrade in relation to social justice and climate change. In total 27 individuals attended the webinar.

In 2022, as part of Fairtrade Fortnight, KU ran a Fairtrade Baking competition and asked staff and students to bake a Fairtrade banana bread using a recipe recommended by Dr Hilda Mulrooney – KU’s associate professor in Nutrition. The campaign was shared internally and externally and received two submissions. Followers via the UKS Instagram page were asked to vote for the best-looking banana bread and the winner received a Divine Fairtrade Baking Hamper. As part of the campaign, we asked students ‘did you know that KU is working towards it’s Fairtrade University status?’, 62% of respondents voted ‘no’ which suggests further campaigning is needed to raise the profile of KU’s Fairtrade activity in the coming year.

Fig. 1. Results of our 2022 Fairtrade Baking Competition.

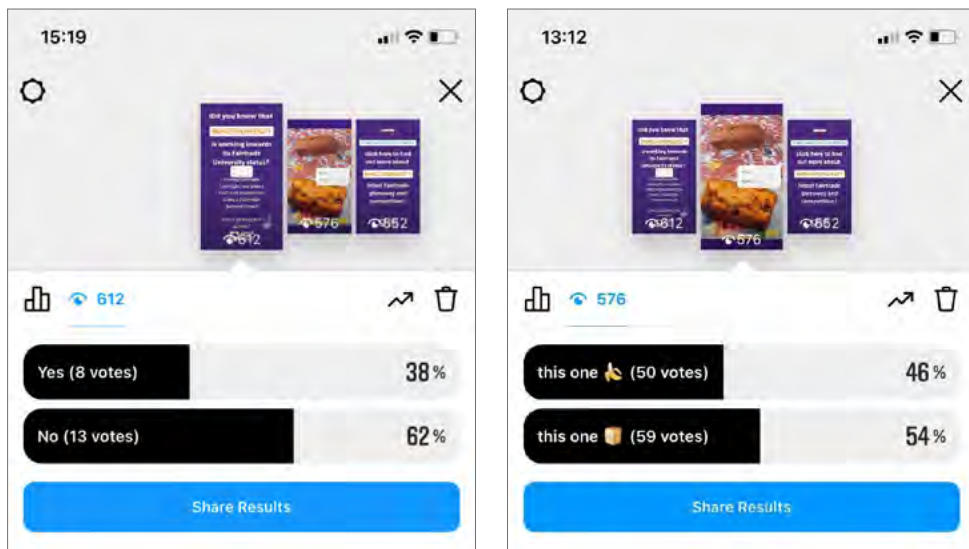




Fig. 2. Fairtrade display in Marketplace Canteen Penrhyn Road. 356 Fairtrade confectionery products were sold during Fairtrade fortnight.

3.2 Additional Events

KU has run events in addition to Fairtrade Fortnight.

In March 2021, the Environmental Science Society streamed the documentary *El Cacao* – which exposes the dark side of chocolate. In total 10 KU staff/students attended, and the event formed part of the societies Sustainability festival. The event was run in partnership with the Department of Geography, Geology and the Environment and the Director of the documentary Michelle Aguilar attended for a Q&A session following the screening.

In March 2022, we asked staff and students to join our online Fairtrade event by taking pictures of Fairtrade items and sharing Fairtrade recipes throughout the month of March. In total, 50 individuals (47 students and 3 staff) entered the competition. Prizes included three Fairtrade Divine Chocolate Gift Sets which were awarded to the a.) most innovative Fairtrade product pictured, b.) greatest number of Fairtrade products and c.) most creative food recipe.

We have extended the reach of our impact by including Fairtrade actions within our Green Impact Sustainability Champion programme. Green Impact is a United Nations award-winning programme designed to support environmentally and socially sustainable practices and behaviours and breaks down the often-complex

world of sustainability into simple, meaningful, and manageable actions. Within the 2022 toolkit, Green Impact teams can obtain up to nine points towards their Green Impact award for completing Fairtrade related actions.

4. Catering

Our catering contractor Elior sells a wide range of Fairtrade certified products and Elior play a key role in increasing the visibility and availability of Fairtrade products (**fig 2**). A summary of such products include: Clipper tea, Starbucks coffee beans, sugar, Cadbury's dairy milk and Sunmagic orange juice. Fairtrade tea and coffee is served as standard on the events and hospitality ordering portal.

Unfortunately, due to the COVID-19 pandemic and closure of our campus sites, from 2020 there was a significant reduction in both the number of Fairtrade products sold (**fig 3**) and the product range (**fig 4**). In 2021 we switched from Starbucks to Costa Coffee. Unfortunately, Costa Coffee is not Fairtrade certified but does serve Rainforest Alliance certified coffee.

The Rainforest Alliance certificate aims to improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the planet while helping farmers and their forest communities. KU has a sole contract for catering provision at all its sites,

Fig. 3. Quantity of Fairtrade Products Sold

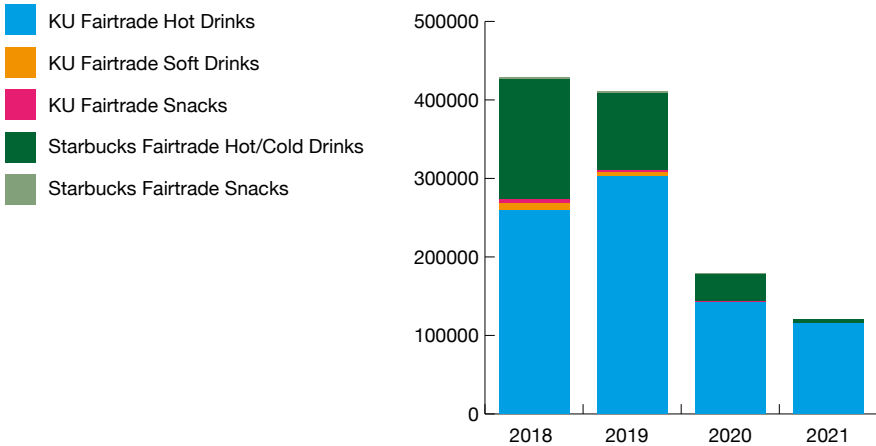
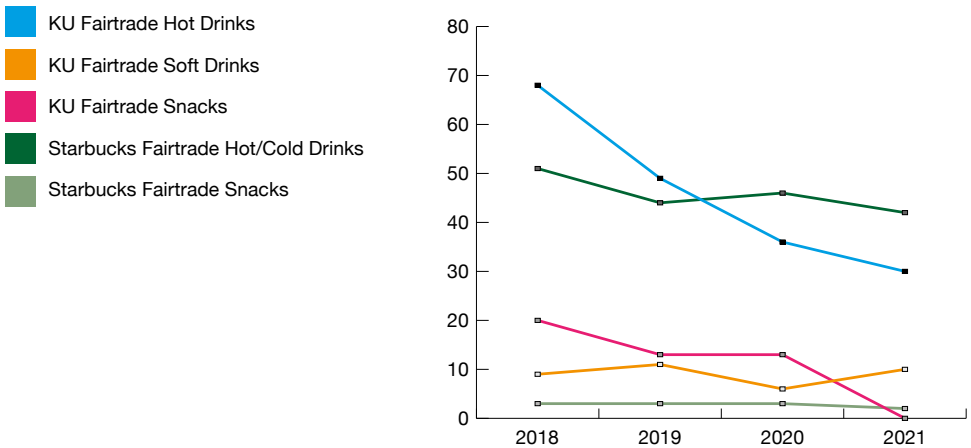


Fig. 4. Fairtrade Product Offering



which is due for re-tender in 2023. Adherence to KU’s Fairtrade Policy will be compulsory as part of the tender process. As we emerge from the pandemic and return to business as usual, KU look forward to growing the Fairtrade product range.

5. Procurement

As part of our 2021 Green Impact Awards, teams that achieved a Bronze award or above received

a goody bag containing a Divine chocolate bar and a Pukka Fairtrade tea bag. The Special Awards prize for ‘Innovation for Engagement’ and ‘Community Action’ included a Divine Chocolate Bar Gift Set.

We have taken action to increase the awareness and importance of Fairtrade by contacting our suppliers. In 2022, KUSCO contacted their uniform and clothing supplier for branded clothes encouraging them to switch to providing Fairtrade Cotton. In addition, the Access, Participation and Inclusion Team have switched

from purchasing standard cotton tote bags to now purchasing organic and Fairtrade cotton tote bags. Approximately 5,000 tote bags are expected to be ordered each year to welcome freshers. Both actions occurred as a direct result of our Fairtrade Award and Policy.

6. Research and Curriculum

Since 2019, Dr Smirti Kutaula, Associate Professor in Human Resource Management has been a registered on the [Fairtrade Directory of Supporting Academics](#). She is the Principles for Responsible Management Education (PRME) Lead for Kingston Business School and has served as a Staff Sustainability Champion since 2016. Her recent research was featured on the University website during [Fairtrade Fortnight 2021](#) and [Fairtrade Fortnight 2022](#). Dr Smirti Kutaula has been an active research scholar in the area of Fairtrade, specifically, in context of developing and developed economies. Her work related to Fairtrade has been published in leading journals such as the Journal of Business Ethics and Journal of Business Research and Management Decision. She has successfully



led staff and student campaigns around Fairtrade within the university for which she has been awarded both internally (Staff Social Entrepreneur Award) and externally (Green Gown Award Finalist). She secured external funding and led the EU-funded Designscares project where she developed a business feasibility report for FairFinder, the first mobile app to provide consolidated information regarding fair trade (FT) products to consumers and to help businesses, volunteers and Cardiff council in achieving Cardiff city's goals to become a sustainable city. The impact of this project was manifold. She was invited by the National Coordinator, FT Wales, to present the findings at the 13th International Fair Trade Towns Conference in Cardiff.

