



22 March 2021

RECORDS MANAGEMENT SECTION

File ref: T3/43/182

Lucinda Turquand-Young

Sent by email: request-700213-3f2ec859@whatdotheyknow.com

The University of Edinburgh
Old College
South Bridge
Edinburgh EH8 9YL

Direct Dial 0131 651 4099
Switchboard 0131 650 1000

Email recordsmanagement@ed.ac.uk

Dear Ms. Turquand-Young

Freedom of information request

Thank you for your email of 18 October 2020. We apologise for the delay in responding to your request. This is due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the University's normal operations.

The University of Edinburgh is a global university, rooted in Scotland. We are globally recognised for our research, development and innovation and we have provided world-class teaching to our students for more than 430 years. We are the largest university in Scotland and in 2019/20 our annual revenue was £1.12 billion, of which £296 million was research income. We have over 44,000 students and over 15,000 staff. We are a founding member of the UK's Russell Group of leading research universities and a member of the League of European Research Universities.

Accommodation, Catering and Events ("ACE")

Accommodation, Catering and Events delivers first rate student accommodation, catering and support to the University's students. We provide residential accommodation for around 9,500 students at over 40 different locations. We aim to provide students the best possible standards, range of options and value for money. Details of the [accommodation available](#) to new and current undergraduate and postgraduate students are published on our website.

Department for Social Responsibility and Sustainability (SRS)

The department for Social Responsibility and Sustainability (SRS), part of the Corporate Services Group, works to enable the University to understand, explain and deliver on its ambition to be a leading socially responsible and sustainable university. The University has promised to improve people's lives and always protect our planet. We do this with our neighbours, partners, teachers, researchers, professional staff, technicians and students. That means that the University will work to fight climate change, uphold human rights, and improve access to education and jobs.

SRS works with staff and students across the University, for example through the Sustainability Awards, which offer an opportunity for staff to make a difference and

contribute towards the University becoming more socially responsible and sustainable. [Information about the Sustainability Awards for staff](#) is available online.

The [SRS website](#) provides more information on how the University takes action on a range of social responsibility and sustainability issues, such as waste reduction, social investment, human rights, modern slavery and community engagement. This includes a [section on good food](#). You may also be interested in a [blog post about the approach to waste at Pollock Halls of Residence](#), and [information about what happens to waste at the University](#).

Your request

Handling of food wastage

You asked a number of questions about food wastage at the University. In all kitchens in the University there are caddies in place to separate out foodstuffs and the food waste is placed in dedicated food waste bins. In addition there are dedicated food waste bins placed front of house.

All University food waste goes to anaerobic digestion as there is insufficient scale of infrastructure for compost in Scotland.

Please note that coffee grounds are dealt with separately. [Information about the collection and recycling of coffee ground waste](#), and [information about the reuse of coffee grounds from University cafes as soil conditioner](#), is available on the University website.

In University cafes we operate the ["Too Good To Go" app](#) so that products nearing the end of their "use by" date can be sold on the day as a mystery bag with a reduced price in an effort to minimise wastage.

Amount of cooked food disposed of this year (Question 1)

You asked how much cooked food has been disposed of this year.

I have interpreted "this year" as 2020 and provided information from 1 January 2020 to 31 October 2020 (October being the month in which your request was made).

Your question does not specify if you require information pertaining to weight or volume. As there are differences in the weight of food items, we have provided details of the actual portions of food. Between the dates described, 34,000 portions of cooked food have been disposed of.

Please note this represents portions that students have not eaten and have therefore wasted in halls and does not include food waste from kitchens. The University batch cooks and cooks as required.

There is some food wastage from cafes but the "Too Good To Go" app now sells this on when the food is a wrapped product.

Food disposal (Question 2)

You asked how wasted food is disposed. [Information about what happens to the University's waste](#), including food waste, is available on the University website.

Avoidance of food wastage (Question 3)

You asked if the University has any measures to avoid food wastage.

In catered University accommodation ACE operates a "Love Food Hate Waste" educational initiative on a monthly basis. Working with [Residence Life](#) and as a self-serve facility, students are asked to ask themselves if they should be taking large amounts of food and if they expect to consume all of the food they take. This programme looks to bring about behaviour change and to encourage students to only take and consume what is required. In cafes there is the "Too Good To Go" app.

University waste and sustainability policies (Question 4)

You asked for a copy of any policies the University have that relate to waste or sustainability. The University's [Good Food Policy](#) and [Waste Strategy](#) are available on the University website.

Technical exemption

Please note that as some of this information is available to you through the University website, it is technically exempt from the University's obligation to answer requests for information under the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002. The information is exempt under section 25 of this Act, because it is available to you by another route. This exemption is a technical matter only and does not affect your ability to obtain the information on-line.

If you do not have access to the Internet or would prefer to receive information in hard copy please let me know and I will arrange for printouts from the appropriate web pages to be sent to you.

Right to review

If you are dissatisfied with this response, you may ask the University to conduct a review of this decision by contacting the University's Records Management Section in writing (e.g. by letter or email) or in some other recorded form (e.g. audio or video tape). You should describe the original request, explain your grounds for dissatisfaction, and include an address for correspondence. You have 40 working days from receipt of this letter to submit a review request. The contact details for the Records Management Section are at the top of this letter. When the review process has been completed, if you are still dissatisfied, you may use the [Scottish Information Commissioner's guidance on making an appeal](#) to make an appeal to the Commissioner. If you do not have access to the Internet, please let me know and I will provide a copy of the relevant web pages.

Privacy notice for information request applicants

[The University of Edinburgh's request privacy notice](#), which describes how we use the information you have supplied about yourself and your request, is published on the University website.

Yours sincerely

Records Management Section

If you require this letter in an alternative format, such as large print or a coloured background, please contact the Records Management Section on 0131 651 4099 or email recordsmanagement@ed.ac.uk