

Fairtrade University & College Award

Queen's University Belfast



STUDENTS
ORGANISING FOR
SUSTAINABILITY
UNITED KINGDOM

Queen's University Belfast

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 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 for the 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 to 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:



14 partnerships completed the programme and submitted evidence



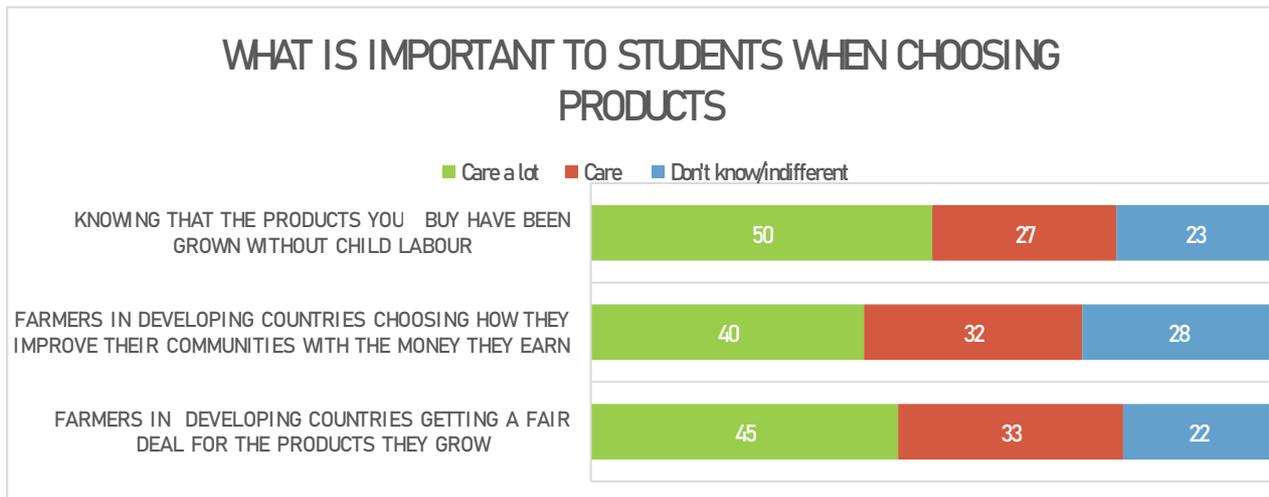
750 staff and students actively worked on the award



41 students completed training and carried out audits

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](#) 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.



ISSUES STUDENTS ARE CONCERNED ABOUT

Very concerned Concerned Don't know/not concerned



Your achievements

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



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:

Ref	Action	Auditor decision	Points	Auditor comments <i>N.B. Some comments may have been edited by the project team for clarity and brevity.</i>
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.	Yes	5	Evidence of regular Steering Group meetings throughout the year (minutes taken for each meeting). Primarily staff-led, not a lot of involvement from students, although invites were sent out. Acknowledgement of need to enhance advertising/communications surrounding SG. There will be an effort made to encourage student involvement in the following years.
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.	Yes	10	Effective action plan which will be reviewed annually, planning to grow SMART action plan with the additional criteria with the new year.
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.	Yes	10	Sufficiently detailed and university commitment to a Fairtrade Policy. Sufficient commitment on university website pages.



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.	Yes	10	Sufficient evidence for staff and student Fairtrade Fortnight events on website link provided.
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.	Yes	15	I am satisfied with the explanation of the events through the impact report, and the reach of the aforementioned campaigns.
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: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tea • Coffee • Sugar • Hot chocolate and cocoa • Chocolate, confectionary or snacks • Cotton clothing 	Yes	10	Appropriate university public statement is viewable online regarding Fairtrade hot drink provisions. Further evidence requested upon audit meeting, to be uploaded in due course. During meeting, I was satisfied with the evidence provided of Fairtrade hot drinks (tea, coffee, hot chocolate). Unsure if cotton clothing sold within university/SU shop is Fairtrade or otherwise ethically sourced.

MN007	<p>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):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Soft drinks • Wine or beer • Health & beauty • Savoury snacks & nuts • Cut flowers • Fruit • Cotton face masks 	Yes	10	<p>Additional evidence to be uploaded of the Fairtrade stock/products within the SU shop and the wine list. There is an existing Fairtrade stand in the SU shop with tea, coffee, hot chocolate, sweets, and chocolate bars available for students and staff to buy (this has been viewed in-person). There is encouragement of Fairtrade-sourced hot drinks for staff meetings.</p>
MN008	<p>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.</p>	Yes	10	<p>We were shown the wine list during the meeting and can confirm that they provide Fairtrade wine on their online ordering system at events. Another sheet regarding sustainability requirements stated that "All coffee and tea provided by the preferred supplier must be Fairtrade".</p>
MN009	<p>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.</p>	Yes	5	<p>We were shown the wine list during the meeting and can confirm that they provide Fairtrade wine on their online ordering system at events. Another sheet regarding sustainability requirements stated that "All coffee and tea provided by the preferred supplier must be Fairtrade".</p>

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.	Yes	5	A number of events were made available throughout the year for students to attend (e.g., Panel Discussion, Cookery Sessions, Gardening Workshops). Evidence for fairtrade inclusion within modules/research opportunities (requested during meeting). There is a review by the Pro-Vice Chancellor of Strategic, Project and Sustainability, into courses across QUB to determine where the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) can be embedded. Opportunities and events were advertised via social media channels (Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn), in newsletters (monthly Round Up and Green at Queen's), Sustainability Forum (monthly meeting), Team Brief sent out every month (every department includes something) and displayed on screens in SU.
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.	Yes	10	Report is sufficient in demonstrating impact and reach of Fairtrade on justice and ethical consumption. Further explanation was given during meeting, which consolidated the report.

What others have said about your work

Your **student auditors** had the following to say about your work:

“The team has a solid foundation in all the mandatory categories to develop upon their investment in Fairtrade work. They are fully invested in promoting the ethical consumption of products both on and off-campus. They are active in promoting a change in behavioural consumerism within the student and staff populace”.

Thank you for being so welcoming and giving them this opportunity to develop their skills.

The **project team** has said the following about your work on the award, *“The project team are delighted to see how Fairtrade work is carried out; issues of sustainability and consumption are high on the agenda and have become integrated into the life of the institution. Queen’s University Belfast has submitted a strong application, The University’s positive commitment to progressing its work on Fairtrade is clear.”*

Elena Fernandez Lee, School 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 rising 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.”

