

Waste Minimisation Policy

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Approval Authority Mana Whakaae	Pro Vice-Chancellor Sustainability
Contact Officer Āpiha Whakapā	Sustainability Manager

Introduction | Kupu Whakataki

The University is committed to minimising waste to landfill, and maximising resource efficiency as part of its commitment to embedding sustainability principles throughout its operations. This is in line with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, especially Goal 12: Sustainable Production and Consumption. This Policy also establishes the principles that support the actions specified in the University's Waste Plan.

Definitions | Tautuhinga

Circular Economy – The circular economy enshrines three principles: designing out waste and pollution, keeping products and materials in use and regenerating natural systems.¹

Sustainable Development Goals – The Sustainable Development Goals were developed by the United Nations and adopted in 2015. They are an urgent call for action by all countries – developed and developing – in a global partnership. They recognise that ending poverty and other deprivations must go hand-in-hand with strategies that improve health and education, reduce inequality and spur economic growth – all while tackling climate change and working to preserve our oceans and forests.²

Waste Minimisation Hierarchy – The waste minimisation hierarchy is a framework for establishing the order of preference for different waste management options. It is based on the cradle-to-grave principle where the product is followed from its production to its 'grave' or final disposal.³

¹ Ministry for the Environment, [Ōhanga āmiomio - Circular economy | Ministry for the Environment](#)

² United Nations, [THE 17 GOALS | Sustainable Development \(un.org\)](#)

³ The Zero Waste Network, [The Waste Hierarchy \(zerowaste.co.nz\)](#)

Policy Statement | Kaupapa

Reducing waste to landfill and improving resource efficiency is the responsibility of all Staff, Students and third-party providers to the University. The University is committed to following the principles of Waste Minimisation Hierarchy, where we first avoid creating waste, or if waste must be created, it can be diverted from landfill. Landfill-only options are to be avoided wherever possible.

The following must therefore be considered by Staff, Students and third-party providers to the University:

Purchasing, Procurement and the Circular Economy

The University is committed to considering environmental factors when procuring goods and services. This includes purchasing products made from recycled materials, using local suppliers and considering the environmental impacts of the production process. Staff should look to buy from our preferred supplier directory, where some preferred suppliers meet the requirements at tender to ensure that they provide a sustainable solution to the University. Buying from outside of this directory is considered a breach of policy.

Where it is essential to purchase items, first priority should be given to options that can be easily composted or otherwise safely returned to the soil. Second priority should be given to items which are re-usable, easily recyclable within New Zealand and for which the University's waste services provider can offer a viable waste diversion solution.⁴ Items which can only be sent to landfill after use should not be purchased unless there is no viable alternative.

This Policy enshrines the concept of the circular economy. It signals a move away from single use plastics and other single use items that have a short usable life but will remain in the environment as pollution for decades or even centuries.

Waste Diversion

The University is committed to diverting as much of its residual waste from landfill or other linear disposal options (such as incineration) as possible. Targets and strategies for waste diversion will be set through University Waste Plans.

The University will measure and report on the amount of waste that is recycled or otherwise diverted from landfill.

Waste Disposal

Compostable Packaging

The University believes that compostable packaging could be part of the solution regarding waste and resource cycling, and will follow Government advice on this matter.⁵

⁴ For information about what can be recycled through the University's provider, staff should contact the Sustainability Office.

⁵ The Ministry for the Environment's position on compostable packaging is that it 'may be suitable in bespoke closed-loop systems, for example events, festivals, and some hospitality settings. In these settings, ideally all

Paper and Cardboard

The University will continue to recycle paper and cardboard, and provide appropriate systems and infrastructure to support this.

Plastics

The University is committed to steadily reducing the use of plastics wherever possible. It is particularly focused on the removal of single use plastics from the waste stream. The University will develop and resource plans with clear targets to support this intention.

Landfill

The University will accurately measure and report on the amount of waste sent to landfill.

Construction Waste

The University will set clear expectations for Staff and contractors regarding reducing construction waste. Recycling and reusing materials from demolished or renovated buildings can help reduce waste and lower the environmental impact of the construction industry. Salvageable materials, such as bricks and timber, can be reused in new construction projects. A waste management plan can help identify the types and quantities of waste generated during construction and outline strategies to reduce, reuse and recycle waste.

Hazardous Waste

The University will abide by all regulations related to the disposal of hazardous waste. It also commits to accurately monitoring and reporting this.

Education

The University will continually educate Staff and Students about correct disposal options for waste.

Leadership

The University will remain a thought leader in the area of waste minimisation. It will do this by remaining an exemplar in waste minimisation efforts regionally and nationally, by continuing to provide a variety of waste diversion options to the University community, both publicly facing and internally.

Related Documents and Information | He kōrero anō

Legislation | Whakaturetanga

- [Waste Minimisation Act \(2008\)](#)
- [Waste Minimisation \(Plastic and Related Products\) Regulations 2022](#)

service ware used is third party certified compostable and if not, there are people or processes to remove any contamination before the waste is sent to a composting facility.’ Ministry for the Environment, [compostables-packaging-position-statement.pdf \(environment.govt.nz\)](#)

UC Policy Library | Te Pātaka Kaupapa Here

- [Procurement Policy](#)
- [Sustainability Policy](#)

UC Website and Intranet | Te Pae Tukutuku me te Ipurangiroto o UC

- [Sustainability Plan](#)
- [Waste Plan](#)
- [Sustainable Food and Drink Plan](#)

External | Mōwaho

- New Zealand Government Procurement – [Government Procurement Rules 4th Edition 2019](#)
- Ministry for the Environment, [Ōhanga āmiomio - Circular economy](#)
- Ministry for the Environment, [Compostable Packaging Position Statement](#)

Document History and Version Control Table			
Version	Action	Approval Authority	Action Date
1.00	Creation and addition of new Policy to Policy Library	Pro-Vice-Chancellor Sustainability	Aug 2023