Circular Economy Plan – Implementation Document

Introduction

This is the Implementation Document (CEP-ID) for GCU's Circular Economy Plan (approved by Executive Board on 8 Feb 2022). The CEP-ID is a working document and will be updated as and when required. Changes will be documented in the Change Log included after the table with the proposed measures. GCU's Head of Operational Sustainability has ownership of this document and all enquiries should be sent to, in the first instance to sustainability@gcu.ac.uk .

For ease of location, updates since the last progress report are highlighted grey.

Ref.:	Objective	Measures	Delivery/Rationale	Targets & Outputs	Delivery Partners	Additional Resources	Progress Status
CEP 01	Improve waste data (on sources, quantities, composition and treatment routes).	Improve accuracy of waste data for GCU London and Caledonian Court.	Waste arisings for GCU London and Caledonian Court are based on historic estimates. It is unclear to what extent the methodology used or the estimates it yields (they do not change year on year) accurately reflect current arisings. It would therefore be beneficial to develop a methodology that provided greater certainty in the estimate of waste arising from these locations.	By summer 2022 more accurate data/methodology for estimating/quantifying waste from: 1. C. Court 2. GCU London	Estates	TBC	No progress due to operational constraints sourcing data.
CEP 02		Annual waste composition analysis (WCA) – Glasgow. GCU understands the impact of the DRS on the University's recycling services.	WCA analysis provide an insight into the effectiveness of internal waste and recycling systems. WCA can instigate improvements through operational improvements and awareness campaigns. WCA will be particularly important with the introduction of Scotland's new Deposit Return Scheme (DRS) which will highlight whether signage will need to be updated (after it's been changed to reflect the introduction of the DRS). WCA can also help identify new circular economy opportunities.	3. Annual WCA for Glasgow from 2023 onwards. 4. Operational impact assessment (risks and opportunities) from the introduction of Scotland's DRS completed by summer 2023.	Sustainability SCEBE Estates	None	[3] WCA conducted February 2024. [4] DRS postponed until Oct 2025.
CEP 03		Understand where waste streams are sent for treatment/processing	The University has a preference for domestic routes for processing its' waste streams, but recognises that the global nature of industry means that inevitably materials collected from its operations may be exported to international outlets. It is therefore essential that the University understands where different waste streams are sent for processing/further treatment.	5. Location of waste treatment/processing routes is documented (summers of 2022 and 2025). 6. Review opportunities for treating wastes closer to source at contract renewal.	Sustainability Waste contractors	None	[5] Not started. [6] White goods from residencies sent for repair with a re-use organisation in Glasgow.
CEP 04	Harness waste and non-waste data to identify circular economy opportunities.	Review bulk waste risings and collection arrangements to identify opportunities enhanced recycling and circular economy interventions.	Waste minimisation, recycling and circular economy interventions of bulky items represent a potential opportunity for improving the University's environmental performance by reducing the amount of waste that is directed to waste treatment options low down the waste hierarchy. Potential opportunities exist for:	7. Circular economy - Improve take-up of furniture re-use at the University through Warp-It. 8. Circular economy – explore opportunity for repairing/extending the use of (a) furniture, (b) white goods	Campus Services. Estates. Procurement.	None. Potential savings.	[7] Warp-it well established for sourcing furniture.

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			• Furniture: minimisation, recycling, circular economy. • Metal: recycling. • Wood: recydling. • White goods: circular economy.	and (c) other large electrical equipment. 9. Develop (bulk) recycling options for (a) wood and (b) metal arising from bulk items.			[8] On-going. Successful pilot for white goods at C. Court (Summer 2023). Additional outlet for furniture re-use identified and used. [9] Metal and wood skips for recycling established.
CEP 05		Review purchasing records to identify opportunities for substitution and/or circular economy interventions.	Whilst waste data can reveal opportunities for reducing waste arising and improving recycling, other data sources (such as procurement records) may reveal opportunities for incorporating aspects of the circular economy into the University's operations.	10. Identify potential data sources that could be used to identify and develop circular economy interventions by summer 2023. 11. Review above data sources to identify opportunities and develop 2-4 circular economy interventions by 2026.	School of Professional Services (TBC). Procurement. Estates. Campus services.	TBC	[10-11] Not started.
CEP 06	Understand stakeholders' expectations for resource use at the University.	Identify or establish feedback mechanisms to gauge stakeholder expectation of resource use at the University.	User buy-in is essential for the successful adoption of recycling and circular economy intervention. Identify and/or establish a mechanism for understanding stakeholder expectations about how resources are used and wastes managed at the University. Non-exclusive examples: feedback/suggestion form on website; GCU Students' Association ideas page; direct feedback and potentially surveys.	12. Documented process (EMS) for collecting stakeholder feedback (by Spring 2022). 13. Annual report of opportunities identified and any actions taken.	Sustainability GCU Students Association	TBC	[12-13] Not started.

			Use feedback to refine, improve existing and develop new recycling and circular economy interventions.				
CEP 07	Build capacity to align purchasing decisions with environmental commitments.	Develop procurement function's capacity (knowledge) to help buyers identify and develop circular economy opportunities.	Ensure that the procurement team have the knowledge and skills to help explore circular economy opportunities in new procurement opportunities.	Procurement team to complete the following eLearning Modules on the Scottish Government's Sustainable Procurement portal: 14. Introduction to Sustainable Public Procurement 15. Climate	Finance (procurement) Sustainability	None	In progress (11/5/2022).
CEP 08		Develop buyer capacity (knowledge) to identify and develop circular economy opportunities.	Ensure that everyone in roles with procurement responsibilities has the skills and capacity to identify and explore opportunities to align their procurement projects with circular economy consumption models and the University's environmental commitments.	16. Identify resources/process changes with potential build knowledge of the circular economy. 17. Develop capacity building programme, resources and processes.	Finance (procurement) Sustainability	TBC	[16-17] Under development (content identified for GCU Learn).
CEP 09	Implement easy to use recycling and circular economy initiatives, processes and systems.	Enhance recycling systems within the University.	The University has mature systems for recycling at the Glasgow campus which will need to be aligned with the DRS that is being introduced in Scotland. There are also opportunities for improving recycling in C. Court and London, which currently have very limited, if any, recycling services.	18. Understand operational implications of the introduction of DRS by winter 2022. 19. Implement operational changes to support introduction of DRS and accommodate changes in material availability. 20. Develop a recycling system for residents at Caledonian Court. 21. Develop a recycling system for GCU London.	Sustainability Campus Services Estates	TBC	[18] Complete. [19] On hold. [20] In progress. [21] GCU London advise that systems exist and are effective.
CEP 10		Implement new circular economy initiatives at GCU	Whilst a number of circular economy projects have been successfully implemented across the University, there is still significant scope for further aligning University operations with the circular economy model. Use waste and non-waste data to identify new opportunities and work with relevant stakeholders to develop them. Potential opportunities include: White goods and appliances at C. Court and in Campus Services; welcome and bedding packs at C. Court; lab consumables.	22. Review operations in GCU's three main locations to identify opportunities for enhanced recycling and new circular economy interventions. 23. Implement 2-3 transformational, self-sustaining circular economy initiatives.	TBC Sustainability	TBC	[22] In progress. [23] (a) White goods' reuse at C. Court; (b) additional re-use outlet for surplus furniture.

CEP 11	Develop resources to help students and staff maximise the benefit of using recycling systems and circular economy interventions.	Develop resources to support effective use or recycling/circular economy interventions.	Recycling and circular economy interventions will only be successful if target users understand how to use them. Information about how to use them should be made available in a variety of locations that reflect user journey at GCU (prospective students/staff, new students/staff, existing students/staff, at point of use etc).	24. Refresh recycling signage (to align with DRS). 25. Develop a Sharepoint page with recycling/circular economy information (summer 2022). 26. Update student pages on recycling (summer 2022 or after website refresh) 27. Recycling information (video) online (start of tri A 2022-23) 28. Environmental induction with quiz for Induction/GCU Learn.	Sustainability People Services (TBC) Student Services (TBC)	£1,000 for video production (existing budgets).	[24] DRS postponed until Oct 2025. [25] Not started. [26] Complete. [27] Not started. No meaningful change. [28] In progress.
CEP 12	Waste management and recycling arrangements and circular economy initiatives support and contribute to teaching, learning and research activity.	Develop student projects across various disciplines that provide practical experience for students and enhance the performance of University systems and processes.	Student projects provide an opportunity for improving existing initiatives and developing new ones. Historically there a number of initiatives that have benefited from direct student input. Opportunities will continue to be sought to explore opportunities for students to support the enhancement of existing, and development of new, recycling/circular economy interventions at GCU.	29. Create a register of projects that students could contribute to. 30. Identify academics that lead on programmes with high potential to collaborate. 31. Create an internal webpage (SharePoint) to highlight projects with specific academics (to encourage others to come forward with project proposals of their own).	Sustainability	TBC	[29] Under development. [30] Complete [31] In progress.
CEP 13	Monitor and publish progress implementing this plan	Use existing data to monitor performance of recycling systems and circular economy initiatives.		32. Waste & recycling performance indicators in place and up-to-date. 33. Incorporate waste and recycling data into annual GHG inventory.	Sustainability	N/A	[32-33] In place (11/5/2022)
CEP 14		Report performance of waste, recycling and circular economy initiatives.		34. Publish performance of waste and recycling systems. 35. Publish list of live circular economy interventions.	Sustainability	N/A	[34] In progress. [35] Under development.

Change Log

Date	Changes & Updates
21/5/2024	Progress update. Changes highlighted.

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10/5/2023	Progress update.
5/1/2023	Progress update.
11/5/2022	Progress update.