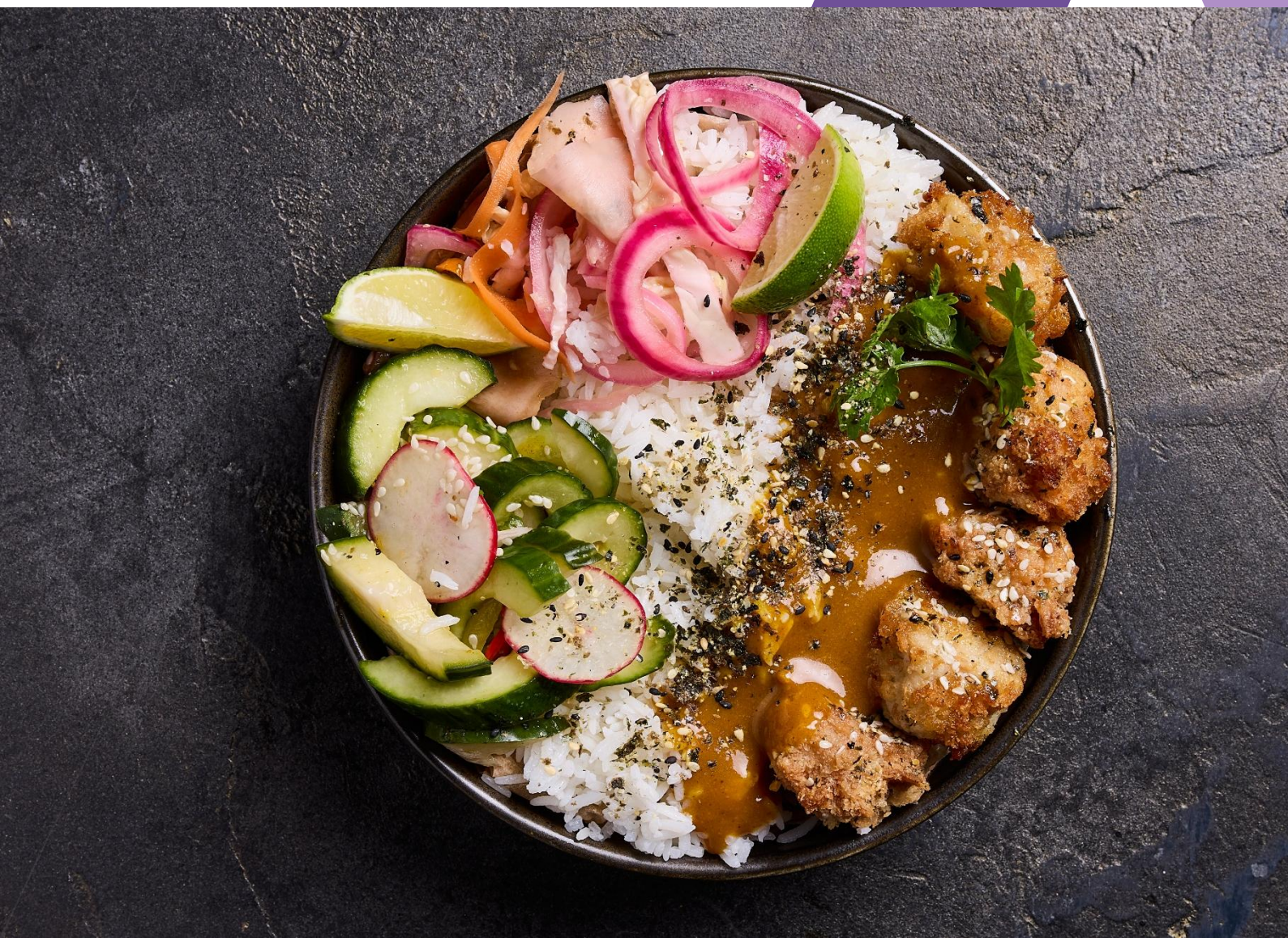
WE STAND FOR AMBITION.

University of Kent

University of Kent Sustainable Food Standard and Action Plan

2026-28



Introduction

Purpose

The University of Kent is committed to providing healthy, affordable and sustainable food that supports the wellbeing of our students, staff and visitors while contributing to our environmental, social and economic sustainability objectives.

This standard establishes the University's principles and expectations for the provision of food across all University-managed catering operations.

Whilst catering services are delivered by Chartwells Universities, this document has been developed and approved by the University of Kent and reflects the University's own sustainability ambitions. It sets the standards and expectations that underpin our catering contract and guides the continual development of sustainable food across our campuses.

Scope

This standard applies to:

- All University-owned catering outlets and vending run by our catering provider
- External event and conference catering
- Food served at university internal events and meetings

The following is currently excluded:.

- Kent Union operated food outlets although we will engage with Kent Union on delivery.
- Independent third-party catering providers
- Externally managed vending machines

Target

By **the end of 2027/28**, the University of Kent, working in partnership with Chartwells Universities, will achieve **Food Made Good Standard certification** across all University-managed catering operations within scope, including retail outlets, internal events, meetings, conferences and external event catering. Progress will be reviewed annually by the University, Chartwells and the Sustainability Team, with actions and evidence recorded through the Sustainable Food Action Plan.

Document Title	University of Kent Sustainable Food Standard and Action Plan 2026-28		
Document History			
Revision	**Document reference**	**Approved by**	**Date**
Issue of document	1.0	Hayley Deville (Commercial Contract Manager)	22/10/2026
		Gary Law (Assistant Director of Campus Services)	22/10/2026

Vision

To work in partnership with our catering provider, Chartwells Universities, to create a healthy, affordable and low-carbon campus food system that supports local producers, reduces waste and makes sustainable food the easiest choice for students, staff and visitors.

Background

The University recognises the important role food plays in supporting health, reducing environmental impacts and contributing to a positive campus experience.

Chartwells Universities has extensive experience supporting higher education institutions to deliver food services that align with institutional sustainability goals whilst providing healthy, affordable and appealing food for students and staff. Their approach focuses on responsible sourcing, waste reduction, healthier menus and collaboration with university communities.

The University will work collaboratively with Chartwells to continually improve sustainable food provision while ensuring that the University's own sustainability objectives remain at the centre of decision making.

This sustainable food standard and action plan are a core part of the Chartwells and University of Kent Social Value Action Plan which outlines the meaningful impact that the partnership will deliver to our students, teams, communities and our planet.

A Right to Food University

This standard supports the University of Kent's commitments to being a Right to Food university, recognising access to nutritious, affordable, culturally appropriate and sustainable food as central to the wellbeing, dignity and participation of its students, staff and wider community. This commitment is embedded throughout the Sustainable Food Standard and Action Plan and together these priorities will help create a fairer campus food system in which everyone can access good food and have a voice in shaping how it is provided.

Sustainable Procurement

As part of the University's catering contract, all suppliers used by Chartwells are required to sign and adhere to the Compass Group Global Supplier Code of Conduct, which demands strict adherence to five core principles:

- Business Integrity
- Human Rights & labour
- Health & Safety
- Sustainability
- Speaking Up

The University will work with Chartwells to ensure continual improvement in responsible sourcing, ethical procurement and transparency throughout the supply chain.

Our Priorities

The University has identified five strategic priorities that will guide the development of sustainable food provision.

Strategic Priority 1 – Local & Ethical Procurement

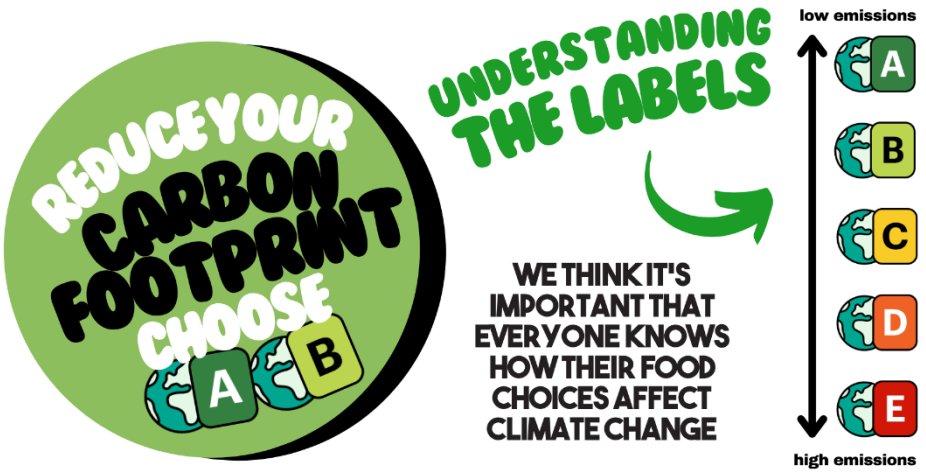
We will strengthen responsible, transparent and local sourcing, supporting ethical suppliers, campus-grown produce and higher-welfare food standards.

Strategic Priority 2 – Healthy & Affordable Food

We will provide nutritious, accessible and affordable meals while improving nutritional information and reducing excess salt, sugar, saturated fat and ultra-processed foods.

Strategic Priority 3 – Plant-Forward & Lower Carbon Menus

We will expand appealing, affordable plant-forward and lower-carbon choices while reducing reliance on high-impact foods such as beef.



Strategic Priority 4 – Food Waste & Circular Economy

We will reduce food waste and single-use packaging, maximise reuse and recycling, and redistribute surplus food wherever possible.

Strategic Priority 5 – Engagement & Food Culture

We will work with students, staff and communities to build a positive food culture through education, consultation, events and shared sustainable dining experiences.

Action Plan

Strategic Priority 1 – Local & Ethical Procurement

What we are already doing
• Sustainability requirements are embedded within our catering contracts. • Working with the Kent Community Oasis Garden (COG) to identify opportunities to use campus-grown produce within University catering. • As part of the University's catering contract, all suppliers used by Chartwells are required to sign and adhere to the Compass Group Global Supplier Code of Conduct.
How we can improve
• The University will work with Chartwells to ensure continual improvement in responsible sourcing, ethical procurement and transparency throughout the supply chain. • Develop a minimum ethical procurement standard for high-risk categories such as coffee, palm oil, bananas, tea and chocolate. • Explore opportunities to expand the use of Kent COG produce within Chartwells menus. • Investigate opportunities to develop dedicated growing space on campus for food supplied into University catering. • Celebrate local producers through seasonal menus and promotional campaigns. • Explore sourcing better standards of meat, fish, dairy and eggs.

Strategic Priority 2 – Healthy & Affordable Food

What we are already doing
• Introduced the £3.50 Savour Range, ensuring students and staff have access to affordable, freshly prepared meals. • Free drinking water is available across all outlets
How we can improve
• Explore the feasibility of introducing a complimentary unlimited vegetable side with Savour Range meals. • Look to improve nutritional information available to customers, including protein and fibre content. • Monitor UPF, high saturated fat, sugar and salt within meals and set targets to reduce.

Strategic Priority 3 – Plant-Forward & Lower Carbon Menus

What we are already doing
• Carbon labelling has been introduced on selected menus. • Targets have been established to increase the proportion of lower-carbon (A & B rated) meals. • Plant-based meals are available in every outlet at the same or lower price than meat-based alternatives. • Plant-based milk alternatives are available across campus.
How we can improve
• Expand carbon labelling to all catering outlets and the Time2Eat app. • Explore opportunities for a dedicated plant-based food outlet or pop-up. • Look to reduce reliance on ultra-processed meat alternatives by increasing whole-food plant-based options. • Explore feasibility of achieving price parity between dairy and plant-based milk alternatives. • Continue increasing the proportion of lower-carbon menu choices. • Reduce the amount of beef served year-on-year and explore opportunities to introduce lower-carbon meat options such as venison.

Strategic Priority 4 – Food Waste & Circular Economy

What we are already doing
• Using the Chartwells Planet Promise Toolkit, catering teams are trained in resource-efficient operations. • Food waste is monitored across catering operations. • Food waste from central kitchens is segregated and made available for use in Kent COGs on site aerobic digestor • Working to reduce food waste across all outlets from purchasing and preparation through to service and disposal. • Customers receive discounts for using reusable cups.
How we can improve

• Introduce clearer recycling and waste signage across catering outlets.
• Explore opportunities to develop a reusable cup take-back scheme.
• Explore opportunities to redistribute surplus edible food from internal catering events.
• Continue identifying opportunities to reduce single-use packaging. Including removing
  ○ Sauce packets
  ○ Disposable cups for drinking water
• Reusable crockery and cups as default when eating and drinking in outlets, internal catering and event catering.
• Jugs of water should be promoted on internal catering and conferencing menus ahead of bottled water.
• Explore introducing a loyalty points scheme within the app to promote lower carbon and plant-based choices.

Strategic Priority 5 – Engagement & Food Culture

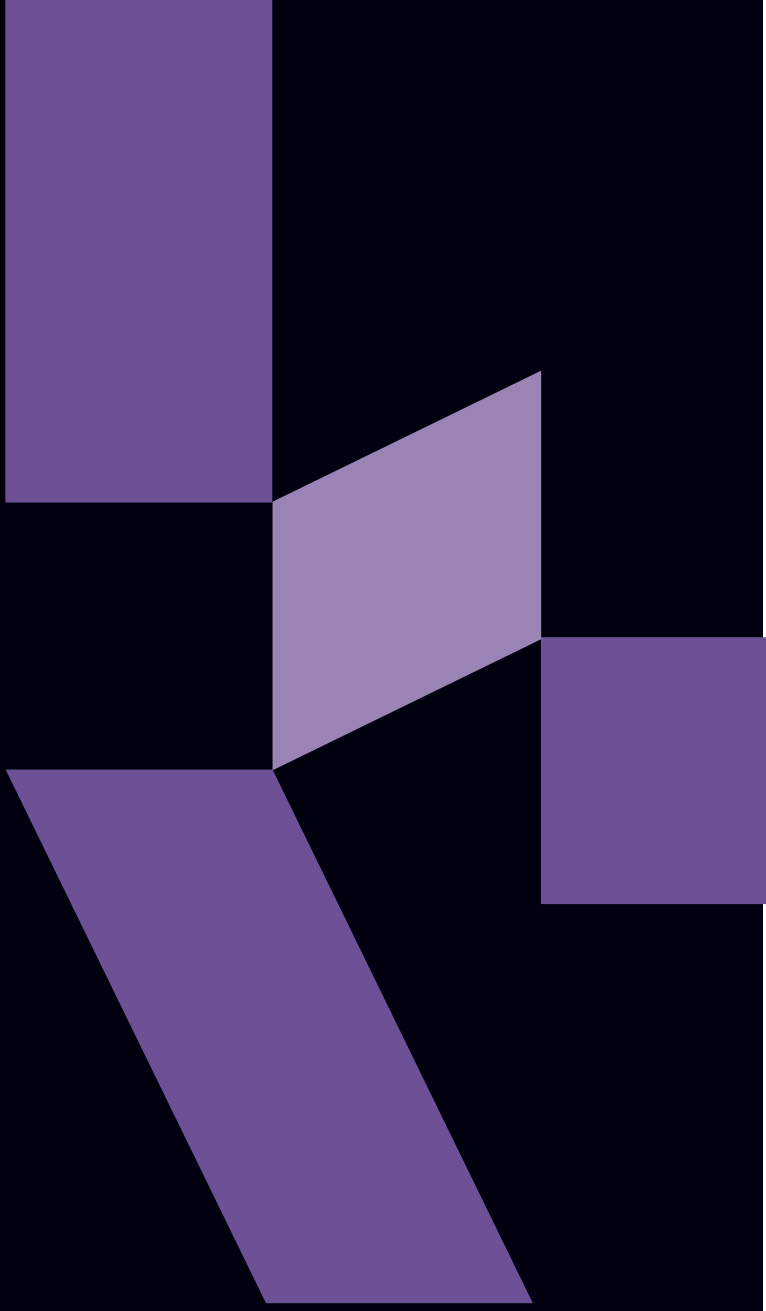
What we are already doing
• Delivering activities through the University's Social Value Action Plan. • Working collaboratively with students and staff to shape future food provision. • Provide cooking masterclasses for students to support food education and reduce food waste in student kitchens
How we can improve
• Explore opportunities for shared dining experiences and community meals. • Promote seasonal and locally produced food through campaigns and events. • Increase awareness of sustainable food choices using the Time2Eat app and social media. • Celebrate food grown on campus through COG and other community initiatives. • Continue engaging students and staff through regular consultation and feedback

Monitoring and Review

Progress against this Action Plan will be reviewed annually by the University's Sustainability Team, Campus Services and Chartwells Universities.

The policy and action plan will be reviewed annually and updated to reflect progress, emerging best practice and the University's sustainability objectives.





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