

Buckinghamshire New University

ORGANISATION SIZE / Large business (251+ employees)

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BRIEF SYNOPSIS OF YOUR CSR APPLICATION

Buckinghamshire New University has a proud 126-year history of transforming the lives of its students through employment-focused and skills-based teaching which enables students from a wide range of backgrounds to achieve their ambitions. We create the conditions for success, and strive to be a catalyst in making a positive impact on the environment, in our communities, and as an anchor institution in our region.

Our CSR commitment is at the heart of everything we do. Being a responsible corporate citizen is important to us, and to our students, people and stakeholders. We are proud to lead by example within the higher education sector, and to share our best practice to help others make a difference.

We strive to make a positive contribution across four key areas:

ENVIRONMENT - reducing use of energy, natural resources, and waste, supported by 'green' travel policies;

WORKPLACE - wellbeing and recognition initiatives; promoting equality, diversity and inclusion; and developing our people's skills;

PHILANTHROPY - financial support of the Bucks Students' Union charity and its free recreation, sports and skills development 'Big Deal' initiative; and

COMMUNITY - volunteering; fundraising; and outreach work with local schools.

At Bucks we value the importance of continuous learning, for our students, people, and as an institution. The University and Bucks Students' Union are ambitious about working together to continue building on our CSR achievements, by setting stretching targets, monitoring our progress and learning from other organisations.

OVERALL SUMMARY

1. Environment:

The University's Environmental Policy is the bedrock for our wide range of sustainability activities. We monitor and report on our progress in our Environmental Annual Report, and are working towards embedding sustainability into the curriculum for all disciplines.

Energy and natural resources

In 2011, we set an ambitious target to reduce our carbon footprint by 50% by 2020. Latest figures show we have already exceeded our 2020 target by achieving a 55% reduction in our carbon footprint. Our energy-saving initiatives include:

- Our building management system controls heating, cooling and hot water, and increases the amount of time when the plant can be turned off.
- We have installed LED lighting in refurbished areas of our campuses, and detectors to turn off lights when rooms are not in use.
- 150 kWp of solar panels have been installed on the main High Wycombe campus.
- All the electricity we purchase and consume comes from a renewable source.
- We have installed low flow shower heads in our student accommodation, and have fitted flow controls to urinals.
- Insulation has been improved through double glazed windows and roof improvements.
- Our mechanically-ventilated buildings recover heat before air is expelled, which is used to preheat air entering the building to save on energy consumption.
- We specify that our IT equipment must be energy efficient.
- A wildflower garden at our High Wycombe Campus supports biodiversity, and we have created green roof spaces at our Hughenden student accommodation.

Buckinghamshire New University

Waste

We manage and dispose of our waste responsibly:

- Recycling is available for paper, card, plastics, metal, electrical equipment, batteries and mattresses. Our recycling rates are currently at 49%, and increasing.
- The 380 tonnes of waste produced by the University in 2016/17 represents a reduction of 52 tonnes (12%) on the previous year.
- We are working on food recycling at our campuses and halls of residence, and coffee cup recycling for our cafes. Customers using a reusable Bucks cup already receive discounts on hot drink purchases to discourage the use of paper cups.
- Office furniture is reused and repaired until it is no longer economical to do so.
- Waste that cannot be recycled is sent to a waste-to-energy plant where possible, and to landfill as a last resort. All hazardous waste is stored in suitable containers and disposed of by specialist contractors using best available techniques.
- The University's Multi-faith Chaplaincy runs an upcycling scheme known as Bucks New Usage which won a Green Apple Award for Environmental Best Practice in 2016. This scheme collects donations of household items from students, such as crockery and bedding, and makes them available free of charge to new students. In 2017/18, 190 bin bags of items that would have gone to landfill were upcycled, reused or recycled. Usable duvets go to the YMCA, and the remainder will be donated to the Stokenchurch Dogs' Home. All donations are delivered using the University's electric car, the post bus or are collected in person.
- Our students engage in volunteering which has an environmental impact. Further information is provided in the Community section of our submission.

Travel

The University has implemented schemes to reduce the impact of travel by both staff and students.

- To discourage short car journeys, car parking permits are only available to staff who live outside a two-mile radius of our High Wycombe campus.
- We are working with the Living Streets charity to promote the benefits of increasing the time spent walking to our staff and students.
- Electric vehicles comprise 66% of our fleet. We also have an electric car club scheme for staff, along with charging points for our employees' electric vehicles.
- Our people use video-conferencing to reduce travel to meetings.

2. Our workplace:

The Bucks People 2022 strategy - developed with people across the University - outlines our people aims, outcomes, and priorities during the next four years and beyond.

Each department has an Engagement Champion responsible for encouraging colleagues to make their voices heard and contribute to the University's future success.

Our Bucks Offer encompasses all the things we do to make the University a great place to work, to ensure we retain and attract talented people dedicated to providing our students with the best experience. It includes:

Benefits:

Family friendly policies and childcare vouchers; pension schemes into which the University contributes a minimum of 14.5% of salary; and staff discounts. We have a cycle to work scheme, and discounted fares have been negotiated for local buses. There is a free shuttle bus for staff and students between our High Wycombe and Uxbridge campuses.

Wellbeing:

A raft of initiatives include free sports and recreation sessions; staff counselling; access to 24/7 online mental health support; and

e-learning modules on topics including meditation and relaxation.

Continuous professional development:

At Bucks we are as ambitious for our employees as we are for our students. We take proactive steps to address the gender pay gap in our sector, and support the development of female leaders through the Aurora scheme. Apprenticeships, coaching, work shadowing, no-fee University courses, and a broad portfolio of eLearning modules combine together to support our people's professional and personal development.

Reward and recognition schemes to recognise and celebrate staff successes:

Staff are encouraged to nominate colleagues whom go over and above in their roles. Vouchers are given to winners each month, and at an annual Vice-Chancellor's awards ceremony.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

We recognise that a diverse workplace is key to our success, and all staff must complete mandatory Equality, Diversity and Inclusion training.

Fair Trade

The University is registered as a Fairtrade University through Bucks Students' Union.

3. Philanthropy:

Bucks Students' Union

Bucks New University is the principal funding partner of Bucks Students' Union, an independent educational charity with a mission to make life better for students at Bucks.

We invest in the Students' Union because we believe it is important to support their work, not only in supporting and developing our students, but in building links between their members and the local community; charity fundraising; volunteering; citizenship and endeavours to promote fair trade, sustainability, social inclusion and environmental and ecological good practice.

In 2017/18 (the University's financial year

Buckinghamshire New University

runs from August to July), Bucks Students' Union received a funding grant of £1,448,082.

The Students' Union's unique Big Deal initiative ensures that all students, irrespective of their income, can access free recreation, sports and skills development opportunities.

Charitable giving

Each year Bucks Students' Union engages in Raise and Give (RAG) fundraising activities to support local charities including Wycombe Mind, Rape Crisis, Pepper Foundation and Medical Detection Dogs. In 2107/8, our students raised £6,881 through their fundraising efforts.

Volunteering:

The University's volunteering policy gives all staff two days' paid leave each year to support charities. Bucks Students' Union promotes volunteering to students using videos and a handbook to extol the benefits and how to get involved. All hours are formally logged via a portal, with awards given to students who contribute more than 25 hours including Platinum Awards for those whom donate 250 hours of their time. The Union also recognises its 'Volunteer of the Year' and 'Fundraiser of the Year' at an annual awards ceremony.

A total of 11,333 volunteering hours were recorded on the portal in 2017/18. The total so far for 2018/19 is 3,692 hours. Community organisations which have benefited include Wycombe Homeless Connection, Hillingdon Samaritans, One Can Trust, Guide Dogs, Child Bereavement, Rye View Manor, the Epilepsy Society, the British Legion, Thames Valley Police and High Wycombe Church of England School.

Students have also engaged in green volunteering activities, and the Students' Union recruits two student Green Ambassadors to help run sustainability campaigns throughout the year such as the

Big Bouncer initiative.

Together we promote the efforts of our staff and students to encourage and inspire wider participation, both internally and externally via our website, local press and social media.

Global reach:

We are part of a major international research project to develop low-cost technologies which give more people access to safe drinking water.

4. CSR Community:

The charitable work of our students and staff in our communities has been outlined.

Widening participation (WP):

A quarter of our students come from postcodes with low participation rates in higher education, and one-third from areas with higher levels of deprivation.

We work with local schools and colleges as part our commitment to widen participation amongst these students. We run events for a variety of year groups, ranging from subject-specific taster sessions to progression days, to promote higher education opportunities and help ease the transition into sixth form and university. Our Passport Day campus visits raise awareness and offer students a first-hand experience of university life, to encourage them to consider higher education, irrespective of their background.

We actively recruit Student Ambassadors whom attended our target WP schools to provide students with relatable role models.

Bucks New University works together with Oxford Brookes, and the Universities of Reading and Oxford, as partners in Study Higher as part of the National Collaborative Outreach Programme to target students from areas where progression to higher education is low.

We run our own projects including e-mentoring by our Student Ambassadors

to support young people through the UCAS process. Our Going for Goals project encouraged Y9 and Y10 pupils to consider careers in sport, and culminated in a residential summer school at Bucks, and a visit to our partner institution UCFB at Wembley Stadium.

Our Simulate Your Future project is a mobile classroom with a simulated environment that takes Y9 and Y10 pupils into their future careers. For example, following a patient's journey that transports participants into A&E and the operating theatre.

The University also offers all local schools presentations about personal statement writing and the UCAS application process, as well as supporting their parents' evenings and HE workshops.

Working in partnership with our community

Bucks Students' Union represents and supports around 7,000 students who study at Bucks New University.

It has a good working relationship with Wycombe District Council and Thames Valley Police, working in partnership to create a Community Guide to promote the importance of living safely and sensibly in the community, and increase students' contributions within our local community.

The Students' Union also created a working partnership with Neighbourhood Watch.

Responsible premises

Bucks Students' Union holds the highest Gold accreditation in the national Best Bar None scheme, demonstrating its commitment to ensuring all students have access to licensed premises that promote responsible alcohol retailing and customer safety.

In a recent independent mystery shopper audit, Bucks Students' Union was the only student venue in the country to score 100%.

<https://csr-accreditation.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/vfb/2018/12/Bucks-New-University-CSR-Accreditation-submission.docx>

<https://csr-accreditation.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/vfb/2018/12/Bucks-New-Uni-supporting-evidence-for-submission.docx>

<https://csr-accreditation.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/vfb/2018/12/Bucks-New-Uni-Sustainability-Report-2017-18.docx>

<https://csr-accreditation.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/vfb/2018/12/BUCKS-NEW-USAGE-INFO-GRAPHIC-1718.pdf>