# Food Waste Reduction – Target, Measure, Act

At West London Students’ Union,we believe that setting a target, measuring and taking action to reduce our food waste by feeding people not bins, is good for the wellbeing of our local community, our planet and our business.

**Our Food Waste Reduction Actions:**

West London Students’ Union is committed to the following actions:

* **Target:**
  + Reduce the amount of food we throw away by 20% by 31st December 2026 using 31st January 2025 as a baseline
* **Measure:**
  + Track the amount of food we throw away daily using wastage logs and monthly auditors report.
* **Act:**
  + Actively engage our staff in suggesting ideas to reduce food waste and to take ownership to act on them.
  + Redistribute surplus food which is still safe to eat utilising services such as ‘Too Good to Go’ and considering distribution to partners within UWL such as London Gellar College and Elior.
  + Where the organisation has control, send food waste that cannot be prevented for anaerobic digestion/ composting through UWL’s Waste Management Contractor.
  + Comply with relevant food safety and waste legislation.
* **Engage:**
  + Create a strategic food waste reduction action plan that links all the departments and processes in the business.
  + Identify the internal and external stakeholders that must be engaged to achieve success, including customers, suppliers and waste management contractors.
  + Communicate with our customers on the actions we are taking to reducing food waste.

To achieve these actions, we are embedding the following:

**Staff Training & Support:**

* We adopt processes for cultural change.
* We adopt the ‘Guardians of Grub; Becoming a Champion’ learning programme, to empower and train existing and new staff on how to reduce food waste safely
* We appoint Guardians of Grub Champions within our business to measure, track and report on our food waste.
* We communicate standard operating procedures, targets and action plan to our employees.
* We will include food waste reduction responsibilities in job descriptions.
* We make staff aware of the benefits of reducing food waste.
* We encourage all staff to put forward ideas for further improvements.
* We challenge and address wasteful behaviours.
* We reinforce good practice and recognise the contribution of individuals.
* We communicate our success with customers.
* We will include food waste reduction responsibilities in job descriptions.

**Measure, Track and Report:**

* We set food waste reduction targets and share with all staff.
* We measure and track Spoilage, Preparation, Plate and Other (e.g. over production) food waste on a daily basis to track the impact of our actions.
* We keep staff updated on our progress
* We will develop and implement a food waste reduction action plan.
* We review and report our progress to Management Teams on a quarterly basis. We strive for continual improvement in food waste reduction, safe food redistribution and recycling.

**Smart Ordering:**

* We check our stock and purchase only what we need.
* We buy appropriate amounts of fresh produce regularly enough to prevent it going off before use, in accordance with our contractual commitments.
* We support local suppliers where possible - using fresh seasonal produce that lasts longer in accordance with our procurement approach.

**Savvy Storage:**

* We store newer items at the back to ensure older items are used first.
* We label and date new supplies as they come in.
* We use airtight containers or cling film to keep ingredients fresh – or freeze them.
* We use frozen, dried, bottled or tinned goods as alternatives to fresh, where quality is comparable.
* We review and revise shelf/storage plan frequently to reflect our menu.
* We store dairy products, cooked meat, raw meats, fish, fruit and vegetables that require chilled storage separately in the refrigerator.

**Smart Menu:**

* We ensure staff are familiar with the entire menu and all its components.
* We explore ways of using the same ingredients for different dishes.
* We use cooking methods for meat, fruit and vegetables and herbs that make the most of the ingredients.
* We are creative in our use of leftover ingredients and offcuts.
* We include seasonal produce where possible.
* We review our menu regularly.
* We work with our suppliers to arrange just-in-time deliveries.
* We buy non-perishable items in bulk.

**Preparation:**

* We avoid excess trimming of fish, meat and vegetables.
* We re-use as much of each food item as possible.
* We re-use any surplus in other dishes, use the next day or freeze.
* We use scales to measure ingredients and portions.
* We ensure every dish is of a consistently high standard.
* We review preparation schedules and food handling procedures regularly.
* We remove less popular dishes from our menus.
* We offer the same menu in different portion sizes, and/ or as side dish options.
* We keep portion sizes consistent, use standard spoons and measures.
* We present food creatively to ensure the correct quantity is served.

**Engage customers:**

* We ask our customers what they like, to ensure they want to eat everything in their meal.
* We offer takeaway boxes and share messaging with our customers
* We let our customers know about our food waste reduction initiatives, and ask them what they think

**Redistribution:**

* We will redistribute surplus food to a registered partner where it is safe.
* We will identify a key redistribution partner