

Cardiff Metropolitan University Fairtrade Annual Impact Report

2025-2026



CardiffMet
Sustainability

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Foreword

The true value of the Future Generations Act in Wales is in driving meaningful changes in how we live and work.

One of the simplest ways we can support a Globally Responsible Wales is to think about what we buy and how those products are made. The choices we make every day - the coffee we drink, the chocolate we eat, the clothing we wear - can shape the lives of farmers, cooperatives, communities and families across the world.

That's why Fairtrade matters. For millions of producers in developing countries, fair access to global markets, and the recognition of true custodianship of small enterprises, determines whether farming can provide a stable livelihood. Fairtrade ensures that farmers receive a fair price, safe working conditions and provides additional funding directly into community initiatives that improve living standards for everyone in that community.

At Cardiff Metropolitan University, we recognise that universities play an important role in building a fairer global economy. Through close collaboration with our Students' Union, students, staff and suppliers, we are strengthening Fairtrade across our campus operations, embedding its principles in our curriculum, and supporting wider community partnerships.

I'm delighted to showcase this report that highlights the actions taken during 2025-2026 to strengthen Cardiff Met University's commitment to a fairer and more sustainable world.



-DR DAVID CLUBB

Climate Action Lead

History of Fairtrade at Cardiff Met

Cardiff Metropolitan University and Cardiff Metropolitan Students' Union have a long-standing commitment to Fairtrade, supporting and selling Fairtrade products since 2003 and achieving accreditation in 2007. Over the past few years, we have continued to build on this strong foundation through several key achievements.

Fairtrade tea and coffee are offered as standard across campus, and our Print Studio shop sells merchandise made with Fairtrade cotton as standard, embedding ethical sourcing into everyday practice. Across the years, we have also delivered a range of events to raise awareness on Fairtrade. For example, as part of Fairtrade Fortnight in 2023, the Students' Union hosted a Fairtrade event where the Cardiff Met community was joined by Jane Hutt MS, Minister for Social Justice, to celebrate trade justice and sustainability.

We are proud of this progress and aim to continue building on our existing work and efforts, with the goal of achieving Fairtrade accreditation again in the 2026 submission.



Highlights from 2025-2026

This year Cardiff Met continued to build on its long-standing Fairtrade commitment:



A strong year for student involvement through Fairtrade campaigns and research projects, including storytelling events and awareness initiatives.



9-15th March 2026 was our dedicated Fairtrade Week including special events, social media campaigns and community engagement.



An increase in Fairtrade sales and continued provision of Fairtrade products across campus catering and hospitality.

Highlights from 2025-2026



Increased promotion of our Fairtrade cotton products in clothing and merchandise.



Collaboration with local Fairtrade groups in the community.



Engagement of staff and students in the annual Fairtrade Awareness Survey.

Together, these actions have helped ensure that Fairtrade has remained visible, accessible, and meaningful across campus

Fairtrade Leadership and Governance

Cardiff Met maintains a Fairtrade Steering Group that coordinates activity and awareness across the university and Students' Union. The group formally met three times during the academic year, alongside additional ad hoc working meetings to coordinate the Fairtrade Award submission. The group also publishes a bi-annual SMART plan that sets out clear targets and objectives, and works to ensure that Fairtrade initiatives are embedded across operations, procurement, student engagement, and learning.

Membership includes representatives from across the institution:

Head of Climate Action

Sustainability Engagement Officers

Catering & Hospitality Services Manager

Students' Union CEO

Students' Union Hospitality Manager

Students' Union President / Vice President

Student representatives

Print Studio



Fairtrade Leadership and Governance

Institutional Commitment

In 2025, the university reviewed its Fairtrade and Sustainability policies. Cardiff Met continues to demonstrate institutional leadership on Fairtrade through the integration of Fairtrade commitments into key sustainability policies, targets and objectives. All policies are publicly accessible through the university' Policy Hub webpages.

These include:

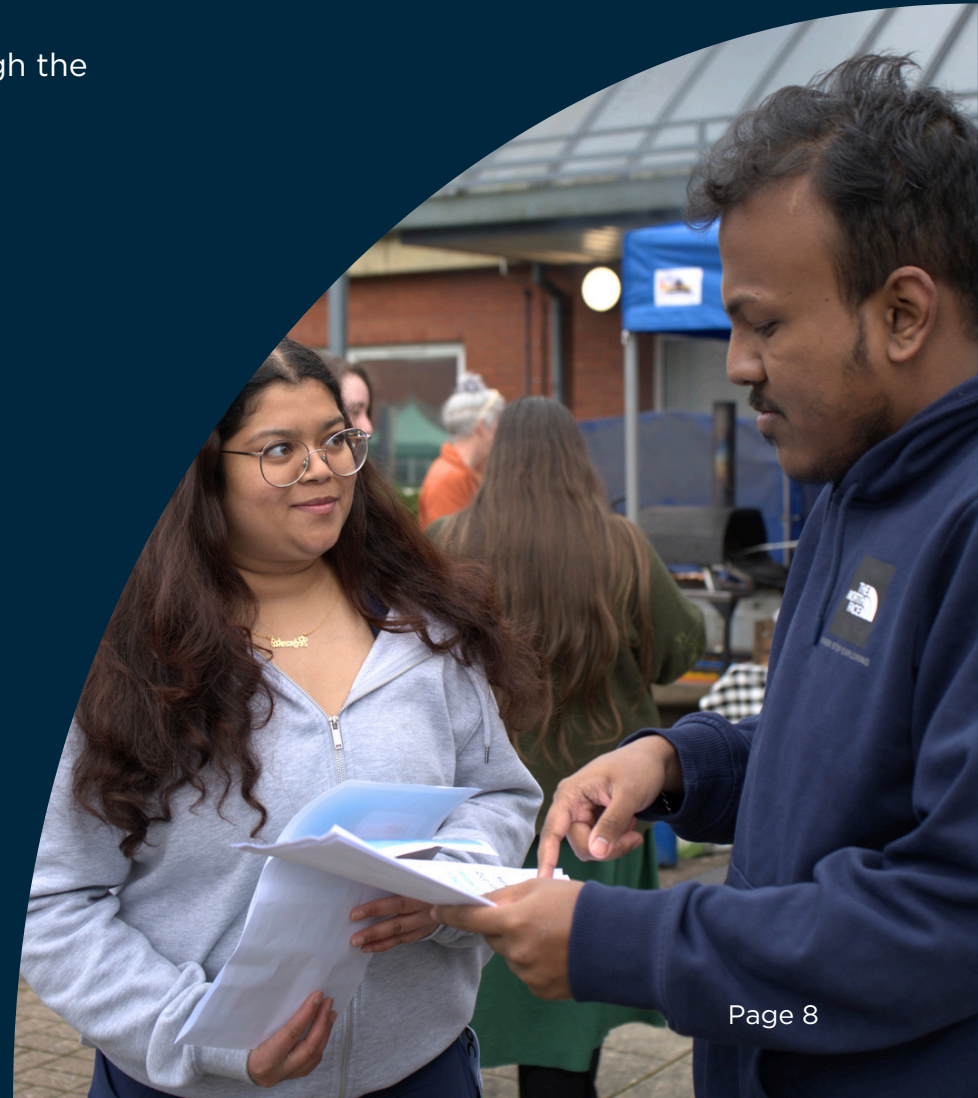
The Fairtrade Policy

The Sustainability Policy

The Sustainable Food Policy

Students' Union Commitment

The Students' Union reaffirmed its commitment to Fairtrade by renewing its Fairtrade policy in 2026, reinforcing the role of student leadership in promoting ethical consumption.



Fairtrade in Catering and Procurement

Food and drink are among the most visible ways universities can support Fairtrade producers. Cardiff Met continues to prioritise Fairtrade sourcing across catering outlets, hospitality services and retail spaces.

Fairtrade Products Across Campus

Fairtrade tea and coffee are served as standard in university hospitality, including conferences and events hosted on campus. Throughout the year, the university maintained stocks of Fairtrade products across key categories, including:

- Tea
- Coffee
- Sugar
- Chocolate and confectionery
- Bananas
- Snacks

Since 2007, the university's print studio has used only Fairtrade-certified cotton for clothing sold during events, graduation and within the university shop. Tender documentation on sport kits references Fairtrade requirements where relevant and indicates that Fairtrade suppliers will be preferred when available. The university has also worked with existing suppliers to encourage them to expand their Fairtrade product ranges.

Promotions and Engagement

Our hospitality outlets periodically promote Fairtrade products to encourage ethical purchasing. For example, this year two promotional campaigns highlighted Fairtrade chocolate from Tony's Choclonely, raising awareness of ethical chocolate sourcing. The Fairtrade Steering group leads on the creation of new Point of Sale promotions and coordinate this across all sites of the university. In 2025-2026 new campaign materials were distributed across the university sites.



Fairtrade Student, Staff and Community Engagement

Universities play a unique role in shaping the attitudes and values of future leaders. At Cardiff Met, engagement activities have helped students and staff understand how everyday choices can support fairer trade.

Fairtrade Week 2026

During 10-15 March, Cardiff Met hosted its annual Fairtrade Week, featuring a range of activities initiated to raise awareness of ethical consumption.

Activities included:

- Social media campaigns promoting Fairtrade products
- Fairtrade stalls at the university Community Day
- A Fairtrade Afternoon Tea event with Storytelling activities highlighting the impact of fairtrade globally

"Thank you very much to the Sustainability Team for a fantastic Fairtrade event yesterday, I was happy to attend, the cakes were delicious and the activities, storytelling great. An amazing event overall, thank you again and please consider running it in the near future!"

Cardiff Met Staff Member
Fairtrade Afternoon Tea Event
11th March 2026

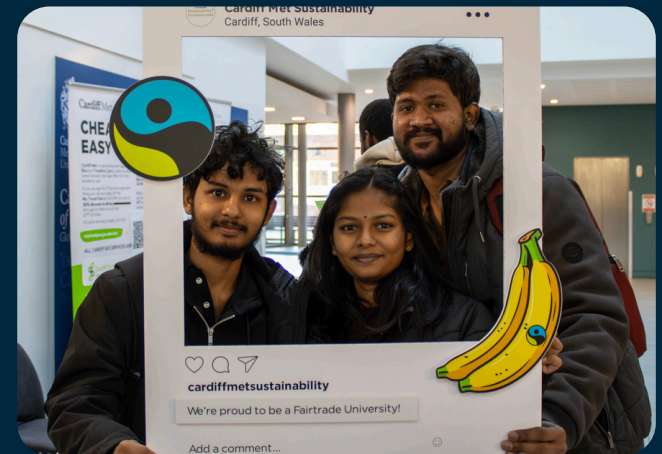
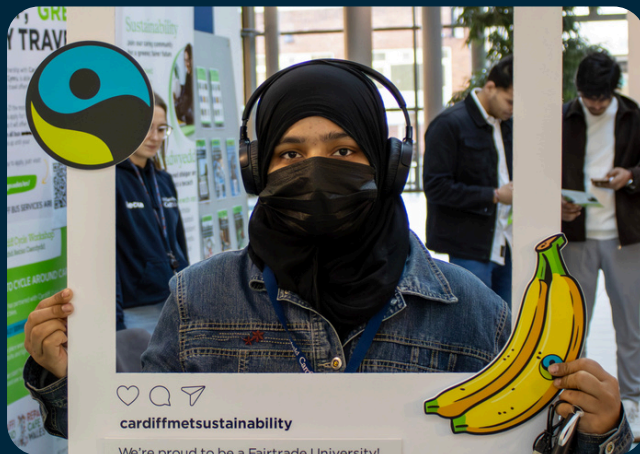
These events created opportunities for students and staff to learn about Fairtrade while experiencing Fairtrade products directly.



Student Campaigns and Advocacy

The Steering Group has supported students in campaigning on Fairtrade issues, with activities taking place throughout the academic year.

For example, students actively promoted Fairtrade during Go Green Week (17-23 November) 2025 and were present at the Freshers' Fair on 24 September 2025, engaging peers and raising awareness of ethical consumption. Students also attended each Community Day, promoting Fairtrade and encouraging participation in the Fairtrade survey, helping to gather insights and further engage the university community.





Jenisha Shrestha

MSc Accounting and Finance

“Volunteering for Fairtrade was an educational and meaningful experience for me.[...] I learned a lot about ethics through this experience, and I feel that this is especially important in professional settings where responsibility and fair decision-making matter so much. I also felt proud knowing that Cardiff Met actively promotes Fairtrade on campus. I am glad to be a part of something bigger.”

Ferdous Raz

MSc International Business Management

“Volunteering for the university’s Fairtrade initiatives has been an incredibly rewarding experience that has greatly added to my time at the university. [...] Through learning about Fairtrade, I have also been made more aware of the importance of our everyday choices in making a difference to producers across the globe. I am proud to be part of a university community that truly promotes these values and encourages others to do the same. “



Fairtrade in the Curriculum

Each year, the sustainability team offers 20–25 days of work-based learning placements focusing on sustainability, including Fairtrade. Placements are advertised across departments and schools, providing interdisciplinary opportunities for students. In 2025-2026 two work placements were secured by enthusiastic design students that will be working to create innovative Fairtrade marketing campaigns, targeting our student population with aim to boost understanding of Fairtrade and improve our Fairtrade promotions across campus. The placements will be completed during April 2026, and the campaigns will then be published later in the year.

Within the past two years, Cardiff Met has supported multiple student cohorts to investigate Fairtrade issues within their coursework. One example includes supporting Fashion Buying and Management students to research ethical sourcing, exploring sustainability issues and Fairtrade across the wider supply chain. As part of their work, students were challenged to reimagine brands through a sustainability lens, often incorporating Fairtrade principles into their proposals. Their learning experiences were then shared across social media channels, celebrating their work and showcasing how students' work through the curriculum contributes to raising awareness and understanding of Fairtrade.

With the establishment of the Climate Action Team in 2025, further efforts are being directed towards embedding sustainability and Fairtrade within the curriculum in the coming years. Many degree programmes already incorporate elements of trade justice and ethical sourcing, and our goal is to map these modules across the university to better understand current provision, identify opportunities for growth, and strengthen the integration of Fairtrade principles into teaching and learning.



Staff Engagement

Fairtrade is widely promoted to staff through sustainability communications and initiatives. In addition to purchasing Fairtrade products where they are provided as standard in catering outlets, staff are encouraged to choose Fairtrade options in communal kitchens and office spaces, where Fairtrade tea and coffee are readily available. During 2025–2026, the Fairtrade Steering Group further supported this through targeted promotional activities to raise awareness and encourage uptake.



Community Partnerships

Fairtrade at Cardiff Met extends beyond campus boundaries through partnerships with local organisations and community groups. During the 2025-2026 academic year, Cardiff Met organised three Community Days, bringing local farmers and traders onto campus.

One example includes Stronghold Coffee, who sold Fairtrade tea and coffee to staff, students, and the wider community, while also sharing insights into how these events provide valuable opportunities for traders to promote and sell Fairtrade products.

These experiences were captured through a short-form interview and shared across social media, helping to amplify the impact of these initiatives and raise wider awareness of Fairtrade. The events also provide an opportunity to welcome the local community onto campus, creating a space for engagement with Cardiff Met and its Fairtrade activities.

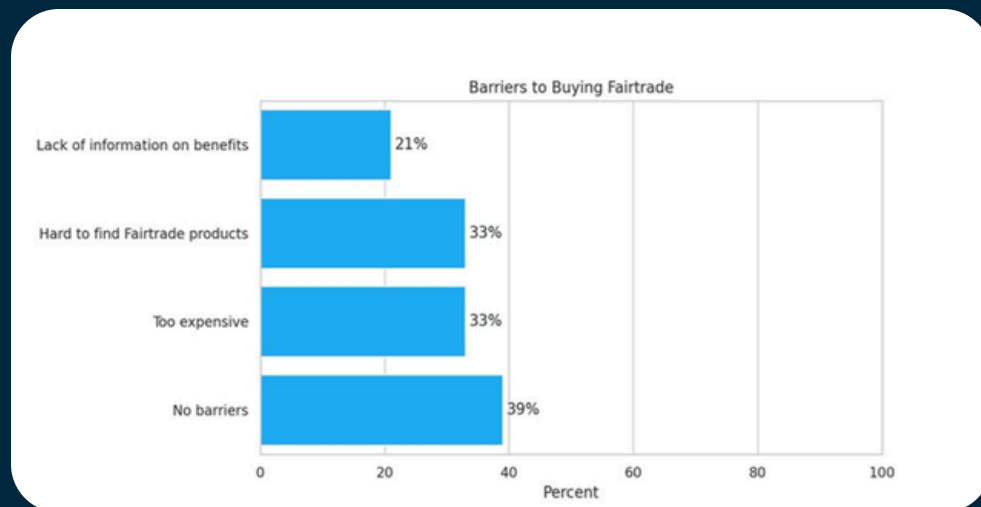
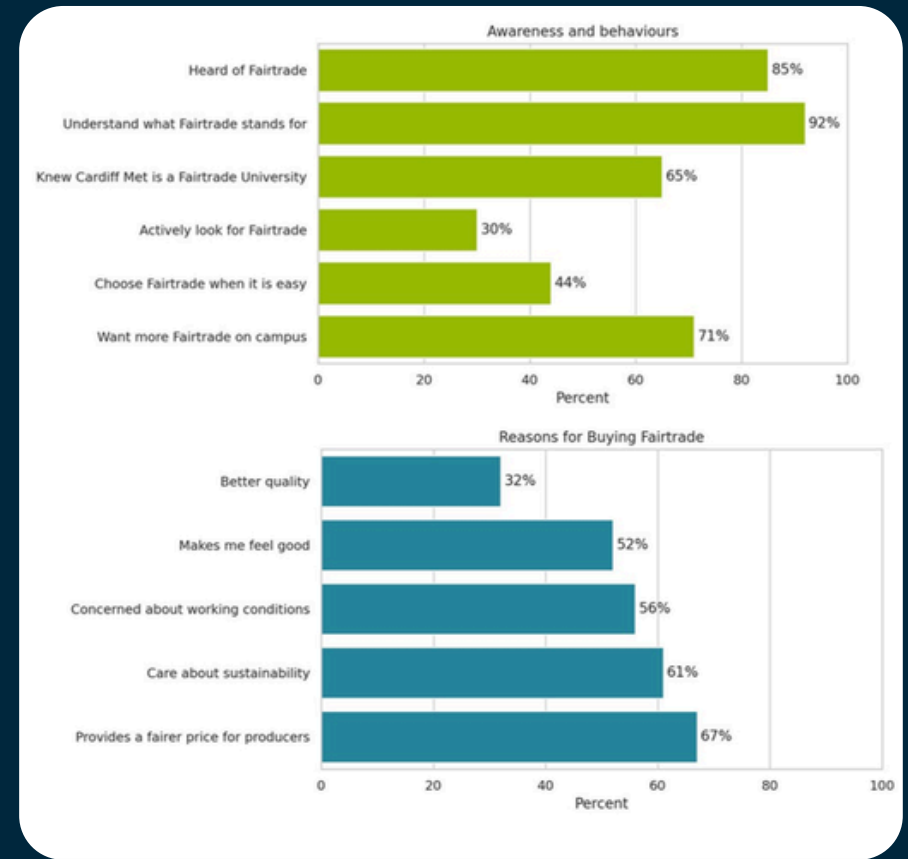
During Fairtrade Week, the university partnered with Pontypridd Fairtrade Group to host a Fairtrade Afternoon Tea and storytelling event. The group was also invited to host a stall, offering students and staff the opportunity to learn more about how to get involved. As many members of the university community live in surrounding towns and local areas, this created a valuable opportunity to engage with Fairtrade beyond the university and the city of Cardiff, strengthening connections with the wider community.



Measuring Awareness and Impact

Cardiff Met conducts an annual survey to measure awareness of Fairtrade and identify opportunities to strengthen engagement. The 2026 survey received 129 responses from staff and students.

Key findings, presented in Figures 1 and 2, show that Cardiff Met is in a positive position in relation to Fairtrade. Awareness is high, with most staff and students understanding what Fairtrade stands for, and many are motivated by values such as fairness, sustainability, and improved working conditions. It is also encouraging that people are more likely to choose Fairtrade when it is readily available, and that a clear majority would like to see more Fairtrade initiatives and products on campus. However, there remains a gap between awareness and consistent action. A smaller proportion actively seek out Fairtrade products, with key barriers identified as limited visibility, perceived cost, and a lack of clear information about the benefits.



This highlights an opportunity for the university to make Fairtrade more visible and accessible in everyday settings, while strengthening communication around its impact in a clear and relatable way. Moving forward, our approach will focus on storytelling, delivering engaging and personable events with inspiring speakers, and continuing to share the real stories of those at the forefront of the supply chain.

There is also scope to promote affordable Fairtrade options to help challenge the perception that these products are always more expensive.

Looking Ahead

Building on the strong progress made to date, Cardiff Met is well positioned to further embed Fairtrade across teaching, engagement, and partnerships. Over the coming years, the university will focus on strengthening collaboration both within and beyond the institution, ensuring that Fairtrade continues to be visible and impactful. Strengthening student involvement through campaigns, fundraising, and collaboration will also be a key focus.

Another key priority will be to deepen partnerships with local schools and colleges, creating more opportunities for joint projects and campaigns, and supporting the development of new Fairtrade groups where they do not already exist. Alongside this, the university will continue to share learning and best practice with the wider sector, contributing to the collective progress of the Fairtrade University and College network.

Within the curriculum, there is a clear opportunity to further embed Fairtrade, ethical consumption, and trade justice themes. This includes encouraging greater participation in initiatives such as the SDG Teach-In, supporting staff to join the Fairtrade Directory of Supporting Academics, and exploring the development or validation of modules focused on these topics.

Operationally, the university will work to ensure that Fairtrade remains embedded within procurement and catering, including clear processes to support new suppliers and tenants in providing Fairtrade options wherever possible.

