

Healthy Eating Commitments



January 2025



OUR AIM

World cultures are moving away from carnivorous based diets to more vegetarian and vegan led dishes. We aim to deliver menus that offer a reduction in meat choices balanced with promoting vegan and vegetarian alternatives which are more cost effective, allow stocks to replenish and contribute towards the reduction of greenhouse gases. Additionally, we must ensure that our menus are sensitive to the different cultures of our diverse customer base while responding to their increased curiosity regarding nutritional data and their desire to develop healthy eating habits.

The aims of our Healthy Eating Commitments are as follows:

- To ensure that we deliver menus that promote vegetarian and vegan alternatives as a balance to red meat dishes
- To ensure that the allergen and nutritional data of all our dishes is readily available to everyone in our community
- To ensure that we take measures to reduce the consumption of salt, sugar and alcohol in our dishes and increase the consumption of fibre, fruit and vegetables
- To ensure that everyone in our community understands the quality and benefit of healthy eating and how their menu choices can impact their overall wellbeing
- To ensure that our menus are inclusive to all and support the different cultures of a diverse student demographic

We define our community as staff, students, visitors and our own teams.

OUR STRATEGY

The university is dedicated to delivering the RH 2030 strategy. Of its four values, the two below are where our Healthy Eating Commitments can make the most impact:

1. Innovative

Relentlessly curious and ambitious in the development of our menus

2. Daring

Challenging ourselves and others to make a positive difference in the world.

Additionally, our Healthy Eating Commitments will support the University's strategic enablers:

1. People, culture and inclusion

Promoting a sense of wellbeing and belonging for the whole community

2. Environmental sustainability

Embedding environmental sustainability in our operations.

OUR COMMITMENTS

1. Leadership and accountability

- We are committed to designing our menus around the NHS Eat Well Guide to ensure our students and staff get a balance of healthier, more sustainable food.
- We ensure that there is at least one Eat Well dish on our menus daily, which is easily identifiable by our Eat Well logo
- We actively promote the importance of staying hydrated and offer water free of charge in all our outlets and at a range of other locations across campus

2. Ensure that we deliver menus that promote vegetarian and vegan alternatives as a balance to red meat dishes

- We offer vegetarian and vegan dishes in all outlets daily
- We have reduced the amount of red meat served in our dining halls by 13% in the last 3 years
- We have introduced more pulses and beans into recipes as a substitute to meat to offer an alternative source of protein
- We only serve beef/pork three times a week in our dining halls
- We have reduced beef burgers to twice per week on both of our dining hall menus

3. Ensure that the allergen and nutritional data of all our dishes is readily available to all our customers

- We are committed to detailing the allergen and nutritional data for all our dishes via our online portal
- We signpost our customers to our allergen portal via in-outlet tablets, in-outlet QR codes and links on the intranets
- We proactively capture data on all our catered hall customers with dietary requirements at the beginning of each year
- We ensure our staff are trained to offer advice and assist with allergen related enquiries
- We ensure we offer dishes that are free from major allergens in all outlets, eg gluten free products

4. Ensure that we take measures to reduce the consumption of salt, sugar and alcohol in our dishes

- We have reduced salt and increased our use of alternative seasoning including fresh herbs, black pepper, garlic, ginger, chilli and lime,
- We use low salt stock concentrates
- We have replaced tinned products with low salt alternatives (eg baked beans) and we have replaced tinned fruit in syrup with tinned fruit in juice
- We have replaced some of our high sugar breakfast cereals with wholegrain alternatives
- 25% of the drinks offered in our outlets have no added sugar
- We offer a range of non-alcoholic and low alcohol drinks including alcohol free beer and wine

5. Ensure that we take measures to increase the consumption of fibre, fruit and vegetables in our menus

- We are committed to offering whole wheat pasta and brown rice as alternatives to white pasta and rice in our dining halls
- We have increased the ratio of wholemeal and seeded breads to white bread at our bread stations
- We have fresh fruit available in all outlets and we actively promote a seasonal fruit and/or vegetable of the month
- We have created recipes with more vegetable and pulse content and we have increased the selection of vegetables offered from 2 to 3 per service

6. Ensure that our menus are inclusive and developed to support the different cultures of a diverse student demographic

- We ensure that there are Eat Well menu options that are also part of our Everyday Value range available daily
- We ensure that our daily international counters reflect the cultures of our largest international student populations
- We have introduced a “quiet zone” in one of our dining halls

7. Publicity, monitoring and reporting

- We ensure that our Eat Well logo is clearly displayed on all menus, both in-outlet and online
- We ensure that our Healthy Eating Commitments are available to students and staff on our catering intranet pages and that we signpost our customers to them via in-outlet QR codes
- We collect data from our customers and share these results to maintain transparency and accountability
- These Healthy Eating commitments will be reviewed annually by the Head of Conference and Catering Services.

Our action plan for 2024/25

- We will ensure that key healthy eating and allergen messages are communicated at all our open days, applicant visit days and at Start of Session via pull up banners
- We will actively promote Veganuary and national vegetarian week
- We will ensure that our customers understand that every dish with an Eat Well logo has a health benefit and supports a balanced diet so that they can be confident they are making a healthier choice
- We will hold one large scale event per term to promote healthy eating / ethical consumption

Our priorities for 2025/26

- We will monitor future trends in expert health advice with regards to healthy eating and adapt our menus accordingly
- We will investigate the feasibility of promoting healthy summer picnics in the meadow as a driver to improved health and well-being.