Drinking Water Policy

Oxford Brookes University is based at Three Campus in Oxford: Headington, Wheatley and Harcourt Hill, and at Ferndale in Swindon. It has over 2,200 FTE employees and over 12,000 FTE students. This policy contributes to the University’s Corporate Responsibility.

The University aims for its drinking water provision in offices and communal areas to have a low carbon footprint, be sustainable and cost effective. To achieve this bottle feed water coolers will be phased out of offices and communal areas where main feed provision can replace them.

Where practical, the University will move away from bulk bottled water coolers in favour of mains water coolers that provide filtered and chilled water from the mains supply. All new developments and major refurbishments will provide filtered and chilled mains water.

This policy does not apply to the provision of bottled water as part of hospitality servings, in catering outlets and shops.

The policy will be to consolidate all contracts for water cooler provision whether they are mains feed or bottle feed (instances where mains provision is not possible) under one supplier.

Justification

Reducing the reliance on bottle filled coolers has the following benefits:

- Enhanced levels of infection control
- No storage of water bottles, space savings
- Elimination of Health & Safety concerns with lifting heavy bottles
- Reduction in waste and transport fuel use and associated emissions to air (E.g. CO2) reduction in Scope Three carbon emissions.
- Mid to Long term cost savings once coolers have been purchased (Aberdeen’s payback period was 2 years and the NUS have found that bottled water coolers are 150 times more expense to run than mains feed water coolers).