

Universities South West Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Statement

1. We aim to provide a great place to work

- Although Universities South West is an independently financed Association, its staff are all employed by the University of Exeter and therefore benefit from a number of the policies it has in place to support them, which include the following:
 - The University complies with all relevant legislative and contractual duties
 - It has strong diversity and equality policies and a dedicated officer.
 - Exeter jobs have all recently been assessed through a role evaluation process.
 - A new approach to developing management competencies has been introduced and will be embedded into the personal development review process that all staff undertake.
 - There is a wide range of in-house Training programmes/ Academy
 - Staff can undertake stress management classes and the University works with Exeter PCT to support smoking cessation groups at the University
 - Subsidised gym membership is available to all staff via the University of Exeter and fitness facilities are available for use at both the Streatham and St Luke's campuses. Weight management groups are open to all for advice on motivation, nutrition and diet followed by express exercise classes.
- We run regular team meetings to enable openness of communication.
- We run regular team building events to improve cohesion across the office.
- The Association operates flexible working arrangements to enable staff to manage their lives out of work more effectively.

Planned activity –

- We are in discussions looking at enabling members of staff to be included in a cycle to work scheme which would allow them to hire bikes from the University tax-free. It is envisaged that this will encourage staff to cycle into work, thus reducing the number of vehicles used on a daily basis and promoting healthy exercise.

2. Our impact on the South West's HEI's and other regional stakeholders

- We aim to maximise the positive collective impact of higher education on the economic, social and cultural development of the south west, and to ensure that these contributions are recognised and acknowledged both within the region and nationally by key agencies and influencers;
- We promote HE in the south west as a generator and provider of world-class knowledge and high quality graduates contributing to regional productivity and competitiveness, whilst impacting at both a national and international level;
- We provide a forum where there is a high level of trust and in which open discussion on key regional and/or national policies can take place;
- We facilitate the collective and regular engagement with key regional stakeholders involved in policy setting and decision making;
- We identify and manage opportunities and resources in support of collaborative activities which bring benefit and enhanced reputation to HEIs individually and collectively, and to the region as a whole.
- We offer HEIs and other regional stakeholders the opportunity to utilise our meeting space, at no or minimal cost.

- The Association is project managing a piece of work which aims to carry out completion of the Business in the Community CSR index and the Environment index across all HEIs in the South West. The objectives of this project are to provide Universities South West members with a well-founded framework to measure their environmental and corporate responsibility achievements, to encourage peer-to-peer comparisons and sharing of best practice to achieve further improvement, and to provide a basis for promoting SW HE institutions' commitment to sustainability and responsibility to prospective and current students, staff and other stakeholders.

Planned activity –

- Once the outcomes of the Business in the Community project are known we aim to look at how the results can be used to improve upon the region's position in relation to the CSR and Environmental Indices.

3. We aim to make a positive difference to our community

- Where possible we use regional suppliers for services such as catering, production of marketing materials etc.
- We have been successful in gaining funding for and provide management for a number of regional projects which help businesses, graduates and employers in the south west to engage with HEIs and each other and maximise the benefits which can be achieved through collaboration. A number of these projects have created jobs in the region, as well as increasing GVA and improving graduate retention
- We manage the www.universitiessouthwest.ac.uk/business website which assists businesses and non-profit making organisations in achieving their goals and ambitions by helping them gain access highly skilled employees, new ideas and technologies and commercial opportunities.
- We played a coordinating role in the production and distribution of a series of short films by the region's HEIs which enhanced the promotion of HE research and innovation in the region's priority sectors. These in turn promoted innovation for businesses in the region's priority sectors, supported business growth and enhanced investment in innovative firms in the region.
- We use events such as our annual conference to promote regional suppliers to delegates and increase awareness of the services available in the south west.

Planned Activity –

- As from 2008 all staff will be given the opportunity to take part in an annual volunteering day to help projects in the south west that will have a positive impact on the surrounding community.

4. We aim to reduce our negative impact on the environment

- We recycle all paper, cardboard, envelopes and glossies/newspapers
- We recycle all glass
- All printers, copiers & PCs have power save functions and are switched off over night
- Where possible all printing is done double sided to save paper
- We encourage staff to only print documentation when absolutely necessary
- All paper products we use are made from recycled paper and many other stationary items are made from recycled materials
- All kitchen appliances are A rated for energy efficiency
- We encourage car sharing and the use of public transport when travelling to meetings

- We encourage visitors to share taxis to common destinations and we use an eco friendly, local taxi company when possible
- The majority of our meetings are held at venues which are accessible via public transport
- We have reduced the amount of printed publications produced and documentation such as event programmes and registration for events are done electronically
- We encourage the use of phone and video conference to conduct meetings when appropriate.
- We take steps to ensure our annual conference is a Carbon Neutral event by offsetting carbon emissions via Climate Care.
- Where appropriate we use events to promote the importance of CSR to delegates by distributing environmentally friendly products, such as energy saving light bulbs, and allowing them to sample local produce.
- We have had draft proofing fitted to all windows and doors to ensure better insulation and therefore improve the energy efficiency of the office.

Planned activity –

- We are investigating the possibility of using power saving devices in conjunction with all desktop computers used in the office.
- We are considering the feasibility of monitoring the amount of printed material produced in the office and the potential of introducing targets to encourage the reduction of pages printed.

5. Sourcing with integrity

- We buy fair-trade products when possible, for example coffee, sugar, tea
- The majority of office products are purchased from one supplier to minimise the amount of mileage travelled for delivery of items
- We use local suppliers where possible also to minimise mileage travelled and to support the regional economy