

African Leadership University (ALU)

Waste, Plastic Use Reduction, and Sustainable Materials Management Policy

1. Policy Statement

African Leadership University (ALU) is committed to reducing waste generation, minimizing plastic pollution, and promoting sustainable materials management across its campuses and operations. In line with the University's environmental commitments and responsible resource use principles, ALU shall reduce unnecessary waste, phase down single-use plastics, strengthen recycling and recovery systems, and promote reusable, recyclable, compostable, and environmentally responsible alternatives.

The University recognises its responsibility to lead by example through sustainable procurement, campus operations, food services, teaching, events, and community engagement, while fostering a culture of environmental stewardship among students, staff, contractors, vendors, and visitors.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- 1) Reduce the volume of waste generated through academic, administrative, catering, retail, and event-related activities.
- 2) Minimize the use of single-use plastics across campus operations and services.
- 3) Promote reusable, recyclable, compostable, and low-impact materials in procurement and campus operations.
- 4) Strengthen waste segregation, recycling, recovery, and responsible disposal systems.
- 5) Support circular economy practices by prioritising waste prevention, reuse, recycling, and resource efficiency.
- 6) Build awareness and encourage responsible behaviour in relation to waste, plastics, and sustainable consumption.

- 7) Provide a framework for implementation, accountability, monitoring, and continuous improvement.

3. Scope

This policy applies to all ALU campuses, units, and activities, including:

- a) Academic and administrative departments;
- b) Student learning spaces and shared facilities;
- c) Caterers, cafés, and food vendors;
- d) Contractors, vendors, concessionaires, and service providers;
- e) Student organisations, clubs, and campus events;
- f) Offices, classrooms, laboratories, workshops, and research spaces;
- g) Visitors and external users of university facilities.

The policy applies to all major waste streams generated through university operations, including plastics, paper, cardboard, glass, metals, organic waste, and residual waste, and should be read alongside any specialised procedures for hazardous, laboratory, or electronic waste where applicable.

4. Policy Principles and Provisions

4.1 Waste prevention and reduction

ALU shall prioritise the prevention of waste at source. University units shall reduce unnecessary consumption, avoid over-packaging, minimise disposable items, and adopt practices that reduce waste before disposal becomes necessary.

4.2 Single-use plastic reduction

The University shall progressively phase down unnecessary single-use plastics in campus operations. Priority items include plastic bags, straws, stirrers, cutlery, takeaway containers, cups, plates, and single-use bottled water distributed during meetings, conferences, and events. These shall be replaced, where feasible, with reusable, refillable, recyclable, or compostable alternatives.

4.3 Sustainable procurement and materials use

All procurement and purchasing processes shall incorporate sustainability criteria. Preference shall be given to products and suppliers that:

- a) Minimise packaging;
- b) Provide reusable, refillable, recyclable, or compostable materials;
- c) Demonstrate environmentally responsible packaging and delivery practices; and
- d) Support waste reduction and resource efficiency.

Relevant tenders, contracts, and service agreements shall include requirements on waste reduction, packaging minimisation, and sustainable materials use.

4.4 Waste segregation, recycling, and recovery

The University shall provide and maintain clearly labelled waste segregation systems across campus. Separate collection streams shall be established, where feasible, for plastics, paper and cardboard, glass, metals, organic waste, and residual waste. ALU shall work with appropriate service providers and recycling partners to ensure that recyclable materials are collected and managed responsibly.

4.5 Organic waste management

Where feasible, organic waste from dining facilities, residences, landscaping, and events shall be separated and managed through composting or other suitable recovery systems. Organic waste diversion shall be promoted as part of campus greening and resource recovery initiatives.

4.6 Water refill and reuse systems

To reduce plastic bottle waste, ALU shall expand access to safe drinking water refill infrastructure and promote the use of reusable bottles and containers. Campus meetings, events, and food service operations shall prioritise refill systems, water dispensers, or bulk service options in place of individually packaged bottled water wherever practical.

4.7 Food services, catering, and campus retail

Caterers, cafés, and campus retail outlets shall reduce waste and plastic use by:

- a) Prioritising reusable service ware where feasible;
- b) Avoiding unnecessary disposable packaging and utensils;
- c) Using recyclable or compostable alternatives where reusable systems are not possible; and
- d) Supporting customer use of reusable containers and cups where appropriate.

4.8 Sustainable events and conferences

All university events, workshops, conferences, and official functions shall seek to minimise waste and avoid unnecessary single-use plastics. Event organisers shall incorporate waste minimisation, segregation, and responsible procurement into event planning and implementation.

4.9 Awareness, education, and behaviour change

ALU shall promote awareness of waste reduction, plastic pollution, recycling, and responsible consumption through orientation programmes, signage, campaigns, awareness events, and student-led initiatives.

4.10 Research, innovation, and circular economy practice

The University shall encourage innovation and applied learning related to waste reduction, sustainable materials, recycling systems, and circular economy approaches. Where appropriate, campus operations may be used as practical learning platforms for waste reduction and materials management solutions.

5. Implementation Responsibilities

5.1 University Leadership

University leadership shall provide oversight for this policy, approve institutional priorities and targets, and support the integration of waste reduction and plastic reduction into ALU's operational planning and environmental commitments.

5.2 Campus Operations

Campus Operations shall serve as the lead unit responsible for coordinating implementation of this policy. Its responsibilities shall include:

- a) Overseeing the implementation of campus waste reduction and plastic reduction measures;
- b) Coordinating waste segregation, collection, storage, and disposal systems;
- c) Supporting the installation and maintenance of waste infrastructure, including bins, collection points, signage, and refill stations;
- d) Working with service providers, vendors, and contractors to ensure compliance with campus waste management requirements;
- e) Facilitating waste audits and maintaining relevant operational records; and
- f) Monitoring implementation progress and reporting on policy performance to university leadership.

5.3 Facilities and operations staff

Relevant facilities and operational staff under Campus Operations shall support the day-to-day implementation of waste management systems, including bin placement, maintenance of waste collection points, coordination with recycling or waste service providers, and upkeep of refill infrastructure and associated signage.

5.4 Procurement and finance

Procurement and Finance units shall integrate sustainability and waste reduction requirements into purchasing systems, supplier engagement, tenders, and contracts in accordance with this policy.

5.5 Dining services, vendors, and contractors

Dining services, caterers, vendors, concessionaires, and contractors operating on campus shall comply with university requirements on waste reduction, plastic reduction, waste segregation, and the use of approved sustainable alternatives.

5.6 Staff and students

Staff and students shall reduce personal use of disposable materials, use waste segregation systems correctly, and participate in university waste reduction initiatives.

5.7 Event organisers and student associations

Units organising events, campaigns, conferences, and student activities shall comply with this policy and apply low-waste and low-plastic practices in event planning and delivery.

6. Monitoring and Reporting

Campus Operations shall monitor implementation of this policy through periodic data collection, waste audits, and institutional reporting on waste reduction, plastic reduction, recycling, and compliance performance.

Monitoring shall assess:

- 1) Reduction in single-use plastic consumption;
- 2) Total waste generated on campus;
- 3) Proportion of waste segregated, recycled, composted, or otherwise recovered;
- 4) Number and coverage of refill stations and waste segregation points;
- 5) Compliance of vendors, contractors, and events with low-waste requirements;
- 6) Participation in awareness and waste reduction programmes.

Monitoring results shall inform corrective action, planning, and continuous improvement, and shall be communicated through relevant university reporting processes.

7. Compliance and Review

- All university units, staff, students, contractors, vendors, and service providers are expected to comply with this policy and any associated procedures developed under it.
- Waste reduction and plastic reduction requirements shall be incorporated into relevant operational procedures, procurement rules, vendor agreements, and event protocols.
- Campus Operations shall coordinate the periodic review of this policy and recommend revisions to university leadership as required.

- This policy shall be reviewed every three years, or earlier, if necessary, to ensure alignment with institutional priorities, emerging good practice, technological developments, and applicable environmental requirements.

8. Related Policies

This policy should be read together with other relevant university policies and procedures, including those relating to:

- Procurement and supplier standards;
- Campus operations and facilities management;
- Food services and event management; and
- Hazardous, laboratory, and electronic waste management where applicable.

Effective Date

This policy shall come into effect on: _____

Approved by

Name: _____

Title: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____