University Grants Committee Secretariat Environmental Report 2021

INTRODUCTION

The aim of the University Grants Committee Secretariat (UGCS) is to service the University Grants Committee (UGC) which advises the Government on the development and funding of higher education in Hong Kong, to administer government grants to the UGC-funded universities, and to support the UGC's objectives of advancing the quality of teaching and learning, research and knowledge sharing at the UGC-funded universities, and monitoring the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of the universities' UGC-funded activities.

2.   The UGCS had an establishment of 89 permanent civil service posts and 32 contract staff as at 31 December 2021.   Our main office is located at 7/F Shui On Centre, 6-8 Harbour Road, Wanchai.   We also have a sub-office at Unit 101, The Hub, 23 Yip Kan Street, Wong Chuk Hang.

3.   This report sets out the environmental policy and green measures adopted by the UGCS in 2021.

ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

4.   We are committed to contributing to a healthier and more sustainable environment by ensuring that our operations are conducted in an environmentally-responsible manner, in that –

(a) we support 3 "R" principles of Reduce, Reuse and Recycle in the consumption of materials, supplies and energy and seek continual improvement to make effective use and reduce consumption of natural resources;

(b) we encourage the practice of environmentally-responsible purchasing among staff in accordance with the relevant government regulations and guidelines;

(c) we promote greater awareness among staff in assuming their environmental responsibilities; and

(d) we review our activities and operations regularly to strive for continual improvement in our environmental performance.

GREEN MEASURES ADOPTED IN 2021

5.   In 2021, we continued to implement the following green measures in our workplace –

(A) Waste minimisation

- conducting meetings as video-conferences where appropriate to reduce the carbon footprint arising from physical travelling of participants;

- distributing meeting papers in electronic means or using electronic devices for meeting materials to reduce the use of paper;
- making available publications such as Annual Reports and newsletters onto the UGC website for public viewing;
- using printers and photocopiers with duplex function;
- using the back of used paper for drafting before collection for recycling;
- re-using file jackets and envelopes;
- reducing the use of fax covering and printing of fax journals;
- previewing printouts, particularly for lengthy database and spreadsheet, on computer screen first to prevent abortive printing;
- disseminating departmental information or other reference materials by e-mails;
- using departmental electronic-Christmas cards instead of paper ones; and
- using plain paper (non-thermal) fax machines.

(B)   Waste recovering for recycling

- collecting waste paper for recycling;
- collecting used toner cartridges for printers and fax machines for recycling; and
- adding the term on the use of degradable plastic bags or plastic bags with recycled content for garbage collection in cleansing service contract.

(C)   Energy conservation

- using lamps and fluorescent tubes with Energy Efficiency labels;
- installing energy saving fluorescent lights with electronic ballasts and occupancy sensor control on the lighting system;
- disseminating green messages to remind staff to switch off their computers, lights and air-conditioning outside office hours or when not in use;
- switching off unnecessary lighting and air-conditioning when area is not in use;
- arranging for the last-man-out to check and turn off all lighting and electric devices before leaving office; and
- maintaining the office room temperature at 25.5 degree Celsius.

(D)   Improvement in indoor air quality

- implementing government "Smoke-free Workplace" policy; and
- cleaning the office ventilation system on a regular basis as well as using air purifier to improve the indoor air quality of the office.

(E)   Environmentally-responsible purchasing

- following the green procurement practice issued by the Environment Bureau to procure environmental friendly products of computer equipment, electrical appliances, etc.;

- using e-Procurement Service for the purchase of IT products or services under IT Standing Offer Agreements;
- including common environmental friendly terms such as trade-in clause, recycling arrangement, etc., as far as practicable when arranging tenders;
- using environmentally-responsible products such as refillable ball pens, refillable correction tapes, paper towels, recycled papers, etc supplied by the Government Logistics Department;
- incorporating green guidelines in cleansing contracts in our office and requesting tenderers of such contracts comply with green specifications as promulgated by the Environmental Protection Department when submitting their tenders; and
- using recycled paper for printing and photocopying.

(F)   Raising awareness

- re-circulating circulars on a variety of issues including green management practices, waste avoidance and energy saving measures on quarterly or biannual basis.

PERFORMANCE

6.   The quantities of consumption and recycled items for the past three years are summarised as follows –

	Consumption/Recycled Items	Year		
		2019	**2020**	**2021**
(a)	Paper (reams)	2 525	1 460	1 635
(b)	Envelopes (nos.)	13 000	8 100	9 500
(c)	Electricity (kWh)	282 338	256 521	278 055
(d)	Recycled paper waste recycled (kg)	5 030	5 030	7 590
(e)	Recycled waste toner cartridges (nos.)	133	171	100

WAY FORWARD

7.   The UGCS will continue to pursue the green measures as mentioned in the previous section of the report.   In particular, we will continue to explore the feasibility of more extensive application of technology for achieving greener operations.

FEEDBACK AND ENQUIRIES

8. Any comments or enquiries on this Environmental Report are welcome. Members of the public may contact us by the following means –

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