

University Grants Committee (UGC) Secretariat

Environmental Report 2005/06

Introduction

Welcome to the 2005/06 Environmental Report of the University Grants Committee (UGC) Secretariat. In this report, you will find our environmental policy, performance in 2005/06 and our targets for 2006/07.

Environmental Policy

The UGC Secretariat is committed to contributing to a healthier and more sustainable environment by ensuring that its operations are conducted in an environmentally-responsible manner, in that :

- a. we work by the 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 support and promote the practice of environmentally-responsible purchasing among staff;
- 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 performance in 2005/06

In 2005/06, the following green housekeeping practices were taken in our workplace -

(A) Waste minimization

- using double-sided network printers and photocopiers;
- using the back of used paper for drafting before collection for recycling;
- re-using file jackets and economising the use of envelopes;
- reducing the use of fax covering and printing of fax journals;
- minimising the use of paper cups;
- using e-mails for distributing meeting papers thereby reducing the number of

hardcopies printed;

- promoting the extensive use of e-mail and the Local Area Network (LAN) in internal and external communications;
- minimising the number of hardcopies of circulars issued to staff by disseminating departmental information electronically or by circulation;
- increasing use of electronic Christmas and New Year banners for seasonal greetings;
- encouraging the shared use of reference materials through the intranet;
- using environmentally-responsible products supplied by Government Logistics Department e.g. refillable ball pens, clutch pencils;
- printing publications with papers made from wood pulp derived from renewable forests and uploading publications onto the Internet; and
- using plain paper fax machines.

(B) Waste recovering for recycling

- collecting waste paper for recycling; and
- collecting used toner cartridges for printers and fax machines for recycling.

(C) Energy Conservation

- using computers, lamps and fluorescent tubes with Energy Efficiency labels;
- installing energy saving fluorescent lights with electronic ballasts and occupancy sensor control on the lighting system;
- affixing "Save Energy" stickers to air-conditioning and lighting switches;
- 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.

(D) Improvement in indoor air quality

- implementing government "Smoke-free Workplace" policy; and
- cleaning the office ventilation system on a regular basis.

(E) Environmentally-responsible purchasing

- procuring energy saving computers and photocopiers with duplex function;
- including common environmental friendly terms such as trade-in clause,

- recycling arrangement, etc., as far as practicable when arranging tenders;
- using green products procured by Government Logistics Department (GLD);
 - and
 - increasing the use of recycled paper.

(F) Raising staff awareness

- discussing green housekeeping measures at the Departmental Consultative Committee.

Concerning paper consumption, there was a slight increase of 1% from 2,550 reams in 2004/05 to 2,580 reams in 2005/06. As stated in the last report, the operation of UGC Secretariat is entirely office-based and applications are received in paper-form quite frequently. We have tried hard to minimise the consumption of paper. The slight increase in paper consumed was mainly attributed to the following operational reasons:

(i) the increase in the number of applications for Competitive Earmarked Research Grant (CERG);

(ii) the launching of the Public Policy Research Grants, a new initiative stated in the Chief Executive Policy Address 2005 of reinforcing public policy research capability; and

(iii) the preparatory work for the Research Assessment Exercise 2006.

With a wider application of information communication technology, more and more meeting papers are distributed by electronic means and hence envelope consumption reduced from 19,840 in 2004/05 to 18,880 (-4.8%) in 2005/06. We also made use of the Departmental Portal to store and disseminate internal information which eliminated the need of circulating hard copies. As officers are more conscious to consume less paper as far as possible, there was a substantial decrease in waste paper collected for recycling by 12%, i.e. from 6,210 kg in 2004/05 to 5,450 kg in 2005/06.

Concerning electricity consumption, the total amount of electricity consumption increased from 257,044 kWh in 2004/05 to 262,478 kWh in 2005/06 (+2%). The increase in electricity consumption was mainly attributed to operational need, such as preparing and conducting meetings of the UGC and its sub-committees, as well as

installation of new computer servers and network equipment.

Targets for 2006/07

In 2006/07, we are actively exploring more concrete measures to seek improvement in green management. By reviewing our green performance in 2005/06 and taking into consideration our actual operational requirements, our targets will focus on:

(a) further reduce paper consumption by using electronic means -

- the scope of the CERG system, which is an electronic information system to conduct CERG business over the Internet, will be expanded. It is anticipated that a reduction in paper consumption can be achieved when the system is in full-fledge;
- the use of electronic mails becomes the most popular means of communication in the Secretariat. The Lotus Notes system will be extended to all staff in 2006; and
- the Departmental Portal has been widely used to disseminate departmental information, for examples, departmental circulars, posting notices, telephone directory, and for information sharing.

(b) further increase the use of recycled paper and other green products available from GLD so as to help reduce subsequent waste disposal problems -

- use recycled paper in lieu of plain wood-free paper for printing and photocopying;
- publication of UGC documents will be on environmental friendly paper; and
- photocopiers, printers and scanners with duplex function will be purchased to facilitate double-sided printing and electronic record-keeping.

(c) collect waste paper/newspaper/toner cartridges and other solid plastic wastes for recycling.

In addition, we will step up our efforts in promoting greater awareness among staff by -

(a) adopting green housekeeping practices, for instance, to observe the guideline of

maintaining room temperature at 25.5°C;

(b) issue of guidelines addressing various aspects of resources consumption and waste reduction during daily operations from time to time;

(c) arrange more environmental protection activities to foster in them an environmental friendly culture; and

(d) solicit support and suggestions for green initiatives from staff.

The way forward

Looking ahead, we will continue to explore the feasibility of more extensive application of information and communications technology commensurate with our operational requirements with a view to achieving, among others, the reduction of paper-based processes and records to the minimum and consequently, paper consumption.

We welcome comments on this report. Please contact us at ugc@ugc.edu.hk.

UGC Secretariat

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