

Meet a... Waste and Recycling Manager



Liz Rhodes, Waste and Recycling Manager at the University of Bath

How would you describe your job in a tweet i.e.140 characters?

A whole lot of rubbish (pun intended!)

What does an average day look like?

My working hours are 8:30am to 4:50pm Mon-Fri, although I often host student events in the evening and work weekends for Open Days, Freshers Week and when the students leave in June. My days are normally split between:

- the operational side of waste management, e.g. working with porters, managing the multiple waste and recycling contracts, attending meetings, infrastructure (e.g. ordering new bins)
- facilities management – I line manage the Facilities Co-ordinator
- strategy work – monitoring data, report writing
- communications – engaging students, staff and members of the public

What are the key skills and qualifications required for your job? *What legal knowledge do you need that's mandatory? If none, what is useful to keep up to date on?*

A good understanding of EU and UK law is essential regarding all aspects of waste management, this ensures that we do not break the law and also is good practice. I have a degree in Environmental Studies, 4+ years' of experience in consultancy and am also a Chartered Waste Manager through CIWM (Chartered Institution of Wastes Management). Since working at the University I have also achieved AIEMA, which gives me a broader understanding of environmental issues.

What training and continuous professional development do you require?

In order to keep my Chartered status I must demonstrate a minimum of 30 hours of CPD per year and within that there must be a Health and Safety element. Working at a University has meant that I often get the opportunity to attend training including management courses.

What are your top three responsibilities?

- Increasing recycling
- Decreasing waste
- Engaging students and staff

Tell us something surprising about your job that people may not know about?

I have line management responsibility for all kinds of contracts including pest control and fire extinguishers.



To help our Members understand more about the roles in further and higher education institutions, we've created a suite of career profiles. These share the main responsibilities and skills and knowledge required of many of the key roles that play a part in embedding sustainability in a tertiary education institution.

View the entire suite at www.eauc.org.uk/meet_a_member

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What are the positives and negatives of the job?

I find that working at a University is quite repetitive, the students move in to Halls – you encourage them to recycle – you promote good environmental practices – they move out of Halls – you get a new group of students moving in to Halls.

On a positive note I am rarely stuck behind my desk, I get to plan fun waste and recycling related activities and work with a wide variety of people from students to porters to the Students Union to charities.

Do you manage a budget, and what are your key priorities for this?

I manage an annual waste budget of approximately £200,000/year, a communications budget of £10,000/year and a student labour budget of £10,000/year. I aim to get best value on all our contracts and shop around when buying anything, from bins to consultants.

What does the path to career progression in this role look like? *What are the opportunities? What's this limited by?*

I have opportunities to increase my knowledge whilst working at the University and since working here I have picked up Line Management responsibilities. However, there is limited progression for me under the current structure.

What is the minimum and maximum salary band for this role?

Currently £31,000 to £37,000.

What advice do you have for graduates and other potential candidates who are considering joining?

Join CIWM as a graduate with the aim to get Chartered, gain as much experience as you can through paid or voluntary work. I have had three people contact me in the last year to arrange work experience or internships, this experience is invaluable. I also employ 6 students to work as Green Champions which is excellent for them to put on their CVs. You can also do interesting things through the Students Union such as being an Environment Rep or joining People and Planet.

For institutions without a Waste and Recycling Manager – what 3 aspects of your role do you think are the most important for any institution's sustainability journey?

Having someone to focus on waste and recycling can dramatically improve your recycling rates, you can save money by improving contracts and value for money, plus it is a link between the operational part of a University and everything else!

What department do you and your line manager sit in? Which departmental interactions are vital for your role?

We are based within Estates. I have to work with every other department at the University such as Accommodation and Hospitality, the Students Union, Campus Retail and all Academic Departments.

What opportunities and challenges does working in a higher education institution bring? *How is this role different in tertiary education compared to another sector?*

There are a lot of similarities between how a University is run and how a Council is run, in regards to budget, structure etc. I find the biggest difference between the University and Consultancy. One of the advantages is that as a Consultant you often work on a project, setting it up, running it and then leaving. At the University you get to see everything through from start to finish.





How do you communicate the outputs of your role to the wider institution, and what does this include?

We have an environmental policy and targets to meet, an Estates website, I often do presentations to all parts of the University. I also use the Accommodation and Students Union websites and social media. I carry out lots of face to face work, through campaigns and events.

What are the unique opportunities to embed sustainability in to this job?

The local Council (Bath and North East Somerset) do a lot of work with me on campus targeting the students that live in private accommodation and members of staff. I am involved with new contracts from an environmental perspective and the Estates Dept also sponsors two environmental PhD's.

How has EAUC Membership helped you in your job and within your institution?

I have attended one of the EAUC annual conferences and have also watched a few of the lunchtime seminars which I found particularly helpful. I find being able to email other members of the EAUC any questions I might have most helpful.

How can other Members contact you?

- Email: e.j.russell@bath.ac.uk
- Telephone: 01225 383735
- Website: www.bath.ac.uk/estates/energy-sustainability-environment/items-waste-recycling

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