

GREEN OFFICE

2016

ANNUAL REPORT

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THE UNIVERSITY
OF QUEENSLAND
AUSTRALIA

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*Stuart Green,
Manager Sustainability Operations*



*Suzanne Davis,
Sustainability Coordinator*

MESSAGE

from the Manager Sustainability Operations and Sustainability Coordinator

The Green Office Program has continued to evolve in 2016 as it commenced its second decade of operation serving the offices of The University of Queensland.

Each year the program builds on the learnings of its participants to retain its relevance to the workplace with new initiatives introduced and practices that have served their purpose in the past, being retired to make way for more appropriate activities.

The program continues to flourish across all campuses and many remote sites with outreach to UQ staff across the community.

The Green Office Program has significant impact beyond the formal office space as evidenced throughout this year and particularly during UQ Sustainability Week.

New representatives continue to join the program and enthusiastically embrace programs to introduce and promote in their workspace.

Amazing activities were organised by Green Office Representatives and Green Office staff and colleagues throughout 2016, showing dedication, enthusiasm and tireless commitment to promoting a more sustainable workplace.

There can be challenges in raising awareness and fostering behavioural change in sustainable practices, yet small incremental changes do add up.

The evolution of the sustainability culture in UQ offices over time is testimony to the positive impact of UQ's Green Office Representatives.

This report is compiled by the Sustainability Office, Property and Facilities Division.

GREEN PROGRAMS ASSISTANT

The Green Office program is primarily administered by the Green Programs Assistant, a position held by a current UQ student who supports the Sustainability Coordinator in the overall management of the program. The selected student is given the opportunity to undertake a 12 month internship which provides them with practical experience in the field of sustainability within the University's Property & Facilities Division.

Each year the Sustainability Office welcomes a new student who brings fresh ideas and a unique perspective to the Program. The Green Programs Assistant also gains valuable skills and experience as a result of liaising with various figures from across the University.

Claire Sauvage commenced in the Green Programs Assistant role in July this year to cover the semester 2 2016 and semester 1 2017 period. Claire is an Environmental Management student passionate about climate change adaptation and sustainable development. She is also interested in the role behavioural change plays in achieving sustainability outcomes and plans to use her experience to deepen her understanding of the operational level of sustainability initiatives. Claire takes over the role from Dani McLeod-Robertson.



*Claire Sauvage,
Green Office Assistant
S2 2016 – S1 2017*



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GREEN OFFICE REPRESENTATIVES

Kimberly Condon – *Heron Island Research Station*



Kimberly and her colleagues at the Heron Island Research Station are making waves with their green initiatives

Kimberly Condon joined the Green Office Program in 2015 and has since been very committed to achieving sustainability outcomes at Heron Island Research Station. The Research Station's remote positioning on Heron Island in the environmentally-sensitive and World Heritage listed Great Barrier Reef Marine Park, creates unique challenges. However, this has not stopped the Research Station staff from introducing some fantastic green initiatives over the past few years.

In 2010, the Heron Island Research Station gained funding to install a 53kW photovoltaic solar array which has seen a reduction in the Research Station's carbon footprint. Kimberly and her colleagues have also created sustainability-themed educational 'Green Boards' to promote the various eco initiatives that exist at Heron Island. One of their most impressive green initiatives is the specialised recycling streams that have been established for soft plastics, batteries, and even cable ties. These waste streams help to minimise the amount of these materials being sent to landfill, or worse, ending up in the Great Barrier Reef. Finally, in an effort to reduce paper towel consumption, they have also introduced tea towels for use in laboratories.

Gabrielle Kane – *Student Services*



In the two months since becoming a Green Office representative, Gabrielle has already convinced her office to start using durable keep cups for their coffee

The Green Office Program would like to extend a warm welcome to Gabrielle Kane from Student Services, who joined as a new representative in September of this year. Gabrielle joined the Program for a number of reasons, including to break any stereotypes about 'hippies' being the only people interested in making waves on the Sustainability scene. Since joining the Program, Gabrielle has been extremely proactive in completing her Green Office Survey. The survey results indicate that Student Services performs particularly well in the area of waste minimisation. One motivated staff member at Student services helps to reduce the amount of organic waste going to landfill by taking the initiative of collecting Office food scraps to add to her backyard compost heap!

Alongside her position as Student Living and Life Skills Officer at Student Services, Gabrielle completed a unit called 'Managing for Sustainability' as part of her Masters degree in Organisational Development. This means that Gabrielle has a solid knowledge background in the area of sustainability that allows her to facilitate positive change within Student Services. Gabrielle believes that sustainability affects everybody and that there are always ways for people to reduce their environmental footprint. In fact, Gabrielle assisted fellow representatives to discover their own environmental footprint with her contribution to the FAQ section of the Green Office's October newsletter titled 'What is my carbon footprint?'

As a Green Office representative, Gabrielle aims to encourage fellow staff members and students to use durable mugs and cups, rather than disposable plastic-lined coffee cups when they visit coffee shops on campus. Gabrielle also endeavours to remind her Office to turn off lights and fans when leaving a room, and to educate staff about sustainable procurement of coffee and clothing.

The School of Economics Green Team

As the Green Office Program matures and representative numbers increase, some Schools evolve to have not just one representative, but a team of enthusiastic representatives. The School of Economics has an amazing Green Team consisting of seven environmentally-minded and motivated members working in both professional and academics roles. The School's Green Team holds regular meetings, sets yearly sustainability goals and runs internal competitions. In 2016, the School of Economics focused on employing catering suppliers with an active sustainability policy. They also encouraged staff members to purchase coffee in reusable mugs and to use electronic devices for teaching and marking assignments online, as well as during meetings.

The School of Economics is celebrating its sixth year with the Green Office Program. Alys Hohnen, the School's first representative, offered outstanding leadership and commitment to sustainable office practices for five years. Dr Frederique Bracoud took over as the Chair of the Green Team last year, reflecting the desire of academic members to join the professional staffs' efforts in improving the School's sustainability rating. In September, Dr Bracoud and another keen representative, Sarah Brischetto, spoke about their experiences with the Green Office Program at a training session for new representatives.

Next year the Green Team hopes to commit further by joining the UQ Green Office Program's new composting scheme and encouraging the teaching staff to use exam booklets more sustainably. It is evident that there is an established culture of sustainability within the School of Economics, and this is incredibly inspiring for other offices within the Green Office Program.

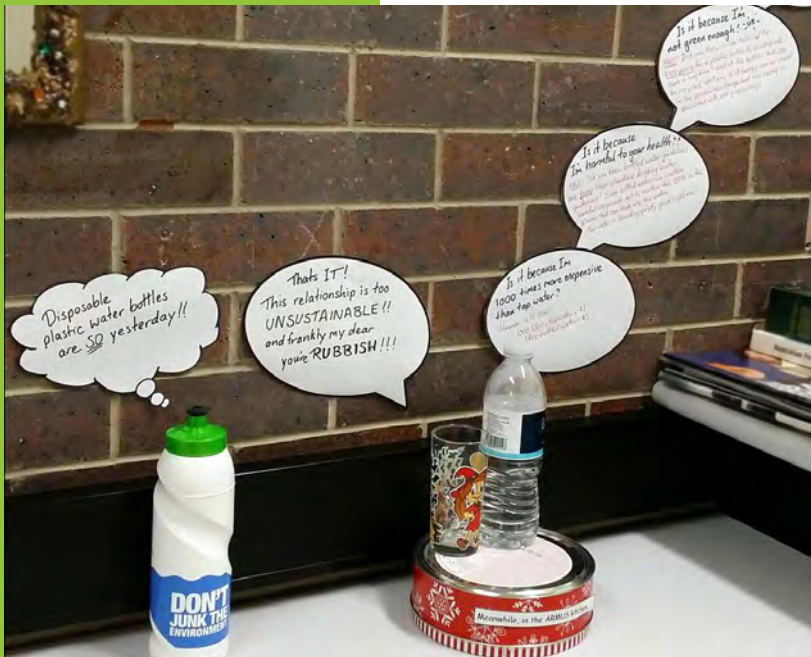


The School of Economics Green Team. Back row (L to R): Thom Cuddihy, Alys Hohnen and Dr Ian MacKenzie. Front row (L to R): Dr Frédérique Bracoud (Chair) and Sarah Brischetto



GREEN OFFICE PROMOTIONS

Green Office Promotions aim to increase awareness of various sustainability issues. The promotions offer examples of everyday sustainability initiatives and provide incentives for Green Office members to make sustainable choices around the workplace and in their home environment. This year three promotions were held, and the winners of the promotions received Fairtrade prizes for their involvement.



Above: Susan Kutzner's entry from the Architecture and Music Library

The first promotion of the year began in April and asked representatives to consider the environmental impact of bottled water. Representatives ran an internal promotion that encouraged the use of durable water bottles rather than disposable bottled water. Robyn Clare from the Duhig Library invited her colleagues to sign a pledge to not purchase bottled water on campus. Susan Kutzner from the Architecture and Music Library created a humorous display exhibiting a Sustainability Office water bottle, a disposable plastic water bottle and a reusable cup. Each of the objects was accompanied by a speech bubble, with each speech bubble commenting on the unsustainability of bottled water.

In May, the Green Office Program held a Sustainable Building Design Competition to raise awareness for the numerous examples of sustainable infrastructure on campus. Over a period of two weeks, representatives were sent six sneaky clues. Each clue included a rhyme and a picture that revealed a small snapshot of information about the selected green building feature. The competition included sustainable design features such as re-purposed carpet in the Global Change Institute, a central cooling zone at the Mayne Centre, LED Lighting in the Multi-Level Car Park and solar façade shading at Prentice Building.

There were many enthusiastic entries to the competition, however there could only be one victor. The first representative who guessed the

Below: Sun shades at Prentice Building to protect the northern facade from direct sunlight.



highest number of answers correctly was Angela Allen from the JK Murray Library at Gatton. Congratulations to Angela who received a Fairtrade Gift Hamper for winning the competition.

During UQ's annual Sustainability Week, the Green Office Program held a lunchtime screening of the humorous and thought-provoking Bag It documentary. Bag It follows the story of an everyday man on a quest to find out more about the perils of our plastic-filled world. The documentary delved deep into the lifecycle of plastics; how they are made, why we use them and where they eventually end up. Bag It also touched on the broader impact of plastics on biodiversity, the economy, the earth's oceans, and even human health. The screening left many attendees feeling inspired and motivated to reduce their plastic consumption and to educate their peers about the devastating impact that plastics can have on humans and the environment.



Angela Allen from JK Murray Library was the winner of the Sustainable Building Design Competition



Green Office representatives were given the opportunity to attend a lunchtime screening of 'Bag It' during Sustainability Week.



GREEN OFFICE UPDATE SESSIONS

Green Office Update Sessions engage UQ experts from a range of disciplines to deliver a talk to Green Office representatives on an issue related to sustainability. The sessions provide a unique and interactive platform for networking among representatives and have the ability to facilitate valuable idea exchange. They also improve knowledge on various sustainability topics and leave representatives feeling inspired to take action on green initiatives in their homes, offices and the wider community.



Australian Paper Update Session

In April, Green Office representatives, procurement officers, and representatives from FBS, joined together for a presentation with Gunther Jahnke from Australian Paper. The talk provided clarity on definitions in the paper industry, highlighted the importance of business transparency, and displayed the high environmental standards of paper produced in Australia. During the presentation, representatives learnt that waste ink and calcium carbonate are recycled as fertilizer, and residual bark is recycled as mulch. The water used in paper production is recycled on-site at the water recycling plant. Attendees also learnt that non-recycled paper is comprised of offcuts of wood that are unsuitable for furniture. The session was very useful in helping representatives to understand the impact of their paper purchasing decisions on the environment, and the steps that the paper industry are taking to actively reduce their own environmental footprint.

The Green Office Program was very grateful to have Professor John Quiggin from the UQ School of Economics speak at the second update session of the year, on the topic of Investment in the Era of Climate Change. Professor Quiggin has a wealth of knowledge on a number of topics including domestic and international economics,



Australian Paper representative speaking to the Green Office Program at the Update Session

climate change politics, and everything in between. The discussion examined the arguments for and against sustainable investments, with Professor Quiggin offering some unique insights into this increasingly pertinent topic.

The update session provided representatives with some very practical arguments for why investors should think twice about putting their money into unsustainable fuels in the 21st century. Professor Quiggin presented his take on whether carbon capture and sequestration can pave the way to a low-carbon economy and explained why it is unsustainable for investors to invest in fuels from finite resources if they are aiming for a diversified portfolio. He also spoke about a number of examples from across the globe where divestment actions have had pronounced sustainability outcomes.



Professor Quiggin presenting at the Investment in the Era of Climate Change Update Session



NEW REPRESENTATIVE TRAINING



New representatives at the March Training Session



The Green Office Program continues to grow and mature with an ever-increasing number of UQ offices involved. In 2016, two new Green Office representative training sessions were held. The training sessions are informal and interactive in nature, providing new representatives with useful information about the Green Office Program and a snapshot of the sustainability initiatives at UQ. Each session includes a guest presentation from a current representative who shares valuable information on their experience with the program. This year's guest speakers were the very enthusiastic Frederique Bracoud and Sarah Brischetto from the School of Economics, and the very engaging Jackson Ball from the Energy Division at Property & Facilities.



GREEN OFFICE SURVEYS

Green Offices are encouraged to undertake the Green Office survey to assess their environmental performance. Upon commencement of the Program, representatives are encouraged to coordinate a baseline survey. The baseline surveys set a benchmark for future years, highlight areas for improvement and provide guidance for implementing changes within the office.

For established offices within the Green Office program, representatives have the option to complete the annual survey. The annual survey provides a comparison between the current year and the previous year that the survey was undertaken. Upon conclusion of both the baseline and annual surveys, offices receive a personalised report with detailed recommendations and suggestions for improvement in their office.

The Green Office survey focuses on four areas of sustainable performance; energy use, waste management, purchasing practices and awareness of UQ's sustainability initiatives. The survey has three components; a walk-through analysis which is completed outside of usual office hours, one-on-one interviews with individuals in the office and an interview with the purchasing officer. These interviews are conducted as an anonymous online questionnaire.



Average Overall GO Ratings 2005-2016



Figure 1 Average overall Green Office Rating for the past 11 years of the Green Office Program

The survey results are then calculated as an average of the responses to each question for the three components of the survey. The walk-through analysis requires representatives to determine the environmental performance of their office by analysing the involvement of their offices in environmentally friendly waste management and efficient energy use. The second component of the survey is an interview with the purchasing officer which looks at how sustainability is considered within office procurement. Green Office staff complete a survey on their environmental behaviours including waste management, energy use and environmental awareness.

During the October 2015 to October 2016 period surveys were undertaken at St Lucia campus, Gatton campus, and the Heron Island Research Centre.

Typically, the average score for the annual survey is higher than the average score for the baseline survey. This can be seen in Figure 1 on page 9. **except in 2016, due to high baseline scores from entry offices.



GREEN OFFICE TRENDS

Waste reduction and recycling continues to be an area of strength across Green Offices at UQ. Offices currently involved in the Program consistently report easy access to a wide range of recycling facilities and educational awareness materials within offices. In 2016 the School/Centre Reduce, Reuse Recycle component was the highest scoring for all Offices that completed surveys, as shown in Figure 2. The scores for the Individual sections of the survey were also significantly higher than 2015 scores for both baseline and annual surveys.

This year the area requiring the most improvement was School/Centre and Workstation energy use. However, it is important to note that the scores for Individual energy use were significantly higher than School/Centre and Workstation energy use. This anomaly may be attributed to the data collection methods. The data for the Individual energy use section represents individual's perceptions of energy use in the office. Data for the School/Centre and Workstation energy use section represents observation of actual energy utilisation. This shows a difference between perceptions and actual utilisation and this has been a consistent trend within GO surveys over the past decade.

In order to reduce energy consumption, Offices can run energy efficiency programs including placing 'Switch Off and Save' stickers and posters around the Office to inform staff of the importance of saving energy. The Sustainability Office supports Green Offices with program ideas and implementation.

At the end of 2015, the Green Office Program held an update session on the topic of sustainable procurement. Coincidentally, there was a noticeable improvement in the sustainable procurement rating within Offices that completed surveys in 2016. This goes to show that awareness and education creates behavioural change and leads to positive improvements in the workplace.

The overall Green Office rating for 2016 was significantly higher than previous years. On average, Green Offices improved their environmental performance by 3% as compared to 2015. In 2015 the Green Office survey was modified to include an opportunity for participating Offices to provide feedback about the survey process. The feedback received from these surveys is continually being used to help inform decision-making within the Sustainability Office to improve the Green Office Program experience for its representatives.

Average Component Ratings for GO 2016

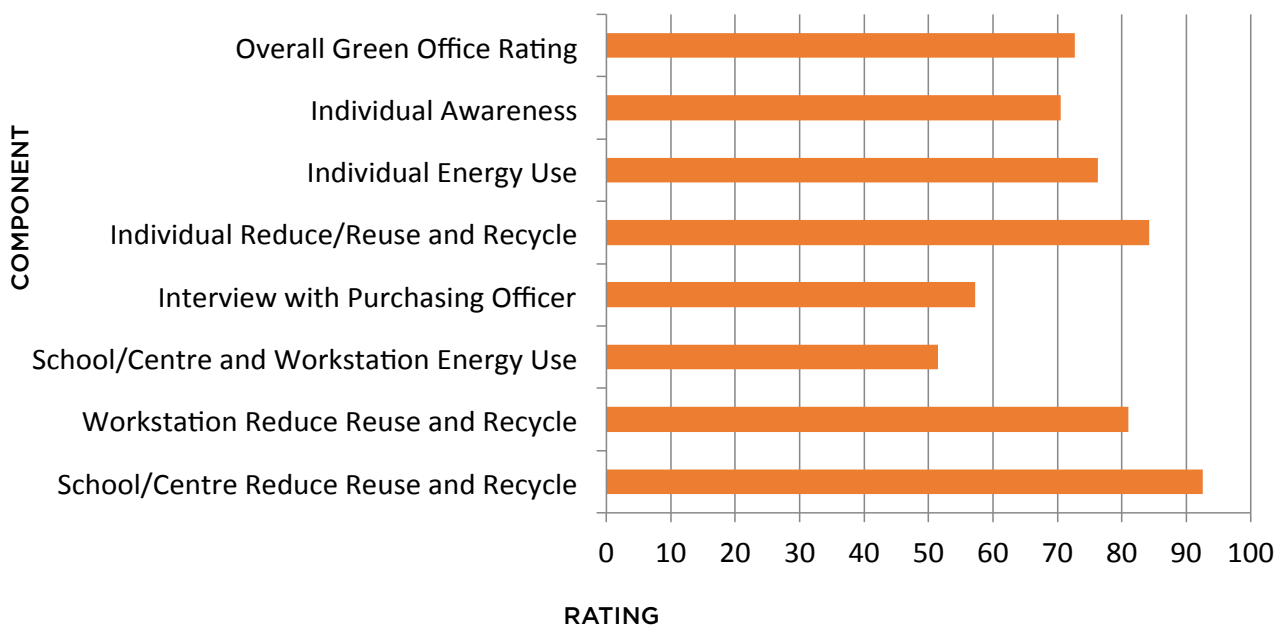


Figure 2 Average Component Ratings for all Green Office Surveys conducted in 2016, including baseline and annual surveys.

GREEN OFFICE INITIATIVES



Green Office representative Kimberly Condon exhibiting the Heron Island Research Station's numerous recycling streams



Heron Island has introduced tea towels as an alternative to paper towels in their laboratories.



Heron Island caterer Pat Williams getting involved in the Research Station's soft plastics recycling initiative.

This year UQ's Green Office Program began a composting trial to reduce organic waste going to landfill.

A Green Office Composting poster was published to raise awareness among representatives about organic waste items that are compostable.



Energy reading technology monitoring the zip boiler's energy use as part of the Duhig Library's energy reading trial. The zip boiler was the most energy intensive out of all appliances, using 17.37 kWh per week (excluding weekends).



The Green Events Poster was updated with suggestions from Julia Groening from QBI about encouraging the use of eco-friendly name tags and lanyards, made from sustainable materials such as bamboo or recycled paper.





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