NGU Plastic Minimization Policy

Policy Name	Plastic Minimization Policy
Effective Date	January 2025
Review Cycle	Every 2 years
Approved By	NGU University Council

1. Overview

Newgiza University (NGU) uses plastic in many forms across its campus, including food and drink packaging, bottles, bags, cutlery, office supplies, cleaning products, and laboratory and clinical consumables. Most plastic is made from fossil fuels, takes hundreds of years to break down, and pollutes land, rivers, and seas, harming wildlife and entering the food chain as microplastics. NGU is therefore committed to minimizing the use of plastic across the University, eliminating avoidable single-use plastic, choosing reusable and sustainable alternatives, and ensuring that plastic that cannot be avoided is reused or recycled.

2. Purpose and Scope

This policy aims to:

- Reduce the total amount of plastic bought, used, and thrown away by NGU
- Eliminate avoidable single-use plastic items on campus
- Replace plastic products and packaging with reusable, recyclable, or lower-impact alternatives wherever they are available and practical
- Make sure that plastic waste is separated and recycled rather than sent to landfill
- Raise awareness among staff, students, and suppliers of the impact of plastic and encourage plastic-free habits

This policy applies to:

- All NGU campuses, schools, offices, laboratories, NGU Hospital, clinics, student housing, sports facilities, and events
- All purchases of goods and services by or for NGU, including food, drinks, packaging, office and teaching supplies, cleaning products, and promotional items
- All catering outlets, canteens, cafés, and vending machines operating on campus
- All staff, faculty, students, researchers, visitors, and contractors, including catering, cleaning, and event contractors, and their subcontractors

3. Definitions

3.1 Plastic

Any material made wholly or partly of synthetic polymers, including bottles, bags, films, packaging, containers, cutlery, cups, lids, straws, and products made of polystyrene foam.

3.2 Single-Use Plastic

A plastic item that is designed to be used once, or for a short time, before being thrown away, such as plastic bags, water bottles, cutlery, straws, stirrers, cups, lids, food containers, and cling film.

3.3 Avoidable Plastic

Plastic for which a practical, reusable, recyclable, or non-plastic alternative is available at a reasonable cost.

3.4 Essential Plastic

Plastic that is needed for health, safety, hygiene, sterility, or accessibility reasons, for example, in clinical care, laboratory work, and medicine packaging, and for which no safe alternative currently exists.

4. Policy Statement

NGU will minimize its use of plastic by following the order: refuse, reduce, reuse, replace, and recycle. Avoidable single-use plastic will be phased out from NGU purchasing, catering, offices, and events. Plastic will be bought only where no practical alternative exists, and in that case, NGU will prefer products that are reusable, made with recycled content, and easy to recycle. Essential plastic used for health and safety reasons will be used carefully and recycled or disposed of safely.

5. Plastic Minimization Measures

5.1 Drinking Water

- Free drinking-water refill stations are provided in all buildings, and staff and students are encouraged to use reusable bottles and cups
- The sale and provision of water and drinks in single-use plastic bottles on campus is reduced, and alternatives such as cans, glass, and refillable containers are preferred
- Water dispensers with reusable containers replace small plastic bottles in meetings and offices

5.2 Catering, Canteens, and Cafés

- Single-use plastic straws, stirrers, cutlery, plates, and polystyrene foam containers are not provided
- Take-away food and drinks are served in paper, cardboard, or other compostable or recyclable packaging
- Sauces, sugar, and condiments are offered in bulk dispensers rather than in individual plastic sachets wherever possible

5.3 Shopping Bags and Packaging

- Campus shops and outlets do not provide free single-use plastic bags and offer paper bags instead
- Suppliers are asked to reduce packaging, avoid plastic packaging where alternatives exist, and take back packaging for reuse or recycling
- Goods are bought in bulk, which reduces packaging

5.4 Offices and Teaching

- Plastic folders, sleeves, laminated documents, and plastic-bound reports are avoided, and digital documents are used wherever possible
- Refillable pens and markers, and durable office equipment are preferred
- Plastic name badges and lanyards are collected and reused

5.5 Events and Promotional Items

- University events are organized without single-use plastic bottles, cups, plates, cutlery, balloons, or decorations
- Promotional items and merchandise are made from sustainable materials and avoid plastic
- Banners and signs are designed for reuse, without dates where possible

5.6 Laboratories, NGU Hospital, and Clinics

- Essential plastic used for safety, sterility, and infection control continues to be used where required
- Reusable glassware and equipment are used instead of disposable plastic where this is safe and practical
- Plastic consumables are ordered in the quantities needed to avoid waste, and suppliers with take-back or recycling schemes are preferred
- Clean, non-contaminated plastic packaging from laboratories and clinics is separated for recycling

5.7 Cleaning and Facilities

- Cleaning products are bought in concentrated form and in large refillable containers
- Plastic bin liners are used only where needed, and recycled-content liners are preferred

6. Procurement

- Plastic reduction criteria are included in specifications and tender documents for food, drinks, catering, cleaning, office supplies, and events
- Preference is given to products that are plastic-free, reusable, made with recycled content, or easily recyclable
- Contracts with catering, cleaning, and event contractors include clauses requiring them to comply with this policy
- Suppliers are asked to report on the plastic packaging they deliver and to reduce it over time

7. Recycling of Plastic Waste

- Clearly labeled recycling bins for plastic bottles and containers are provided in all buildings and outdoor areas
- Plastic waste is collected separately and sent to licensed recyclers
- The weight of plastic waste recycled is measured and recorded in line with the NGU Waste Measurement, Recycling, and Landfill Diversion Policy

8. Responsibilities

8.1 University Council

- Approve this policy, provide the resources needed to apply it, and review the annual report on its implementation

8.2 Sustainability Committee

- Lead the application of this policy, set annual plastic reduction targets, monitor progress, and run awareness campaigns

8.3 Procurement Department

- Apply plastic reduction criteria in all purchasing and contracts, and work with suppliers to reduce plastic packaging

8.4 Facilities Management

- Install and maintain water refill stations and recycling bins, manage on-campus contractors, and monitor their compliance

8.5 Schools, NGU Hospital, and Offices

- Reduce plastic in their activities and events, and name a contact person to support this policy

8.6 Staff, Faculty, Students, and Visitors

- Avoid single-use plastic, use reusable bottles, cups, and bags, and use recycling bins correctly

8.7 Contractors and Suppliers

- Comply with this policy, offer plastic-free alternatives, and reduce plastic packaging

9. Training and Communication

- This policy is published on the NGU website and shared with all schools, offices, suppliers, and contractors
- Signs at refill stations, outlets, and recycling bins encourage plastic-free choices
- Awareness campaigns, such as plastic-free days and student-led initiatives, are held each year
- New staff and students are introduced to this policy during induction

10. Monitoring and Reporting

The Sustainability Committee reports each year to the University Council:

- The number of water refill stations on campus
- The single-use plastic items that have been phased out and those still in use
- The number of single-use plastic bottles sold or supplied on campus, compared with the previous year
- The weight of plastic waste collected for recycling

- Progress against plastic reduction targets, and the actions planned for the following year

11. Review

This policy will be reviewed every two years, taking into account monitoring data, new alternatives to plastic, changes in Egyptian law, and feedback from staff, students, suppliers, and contractors, to ensure that NGU continues to reduce its use of plastic.

This policy is applied in line with Environment Law No. 4 of 1994, Waste Management Regulation Law No. 202 of 2020, and Egypt's national efforts to reduce single-use plastic, as amended. Where the law sets a stricter requirement than this policy, the law applies.