

Response submitted online

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Dear Sir/Madam,

Please find below our response on the following consultation.

- Introducing a Deposit Return Scheme in England, Wales and Northern Ireland

EAUC – The Alliance for Sustainability Leadership in Education:

Response on behalf of our Members (United Kingdom and Ireland)

About the EAUC

Our passion is to create a world with sustainability at its heart. That's our vision. We exist to lead and empower the post-16 education sector to make sustainability 'just good business'.

The membership of the EAUC comprises higher and further educational institutions, with a combined budget of some £43 billion, responsible for educating over 4.5 million students supported by over half a million staff.

We have regional and country chapters, with member institutions connected deeply with business, industry, health and civic bodies at local levels, with reach internationally via their research, innovation and student mobility.

We believe

- That UK and Irish education should be a global leader in sustainability
- That educational institutions have a responsibility as anchors in their communities to be agents of change
- That education has a unique opportunity to transform lives and communities
- That education is at the heart of global sustainability
- That every student should have access to sustainability education
- That education should reflect best practice in operational sustainability
- In being flexible and adaptable to find solutions for a resilient future
- In the value of international collaboration

Our values

- Pioneering - driving sustainability through innovation
- Independence - our own unique voice
- Collaboration - together we go further
- Role Model - leading by example
- Empowering - supporting and inspiring our members

Response to the consultation:

We responded to the first DRS consultation in May 2019 and welcome the opportunity to respond to the second consultation.

Introducing a Deposit Return Scheme in England, Wales and Northern Ireland

DRS is a sensible solution in the attempt to lower littering and improve recycling. Our preferred option is Option 2 'all in' model. It is important to make the scheme as straight forward as possible for both retailers and consumers. The infrastructure must be in place to support. Where exemptions to hosting a return point are due to retailers being in close proximity and any compromise of safety, signage should be required to clearly indicate the nearest return point. While we recognise the pandemic has had a major impact we advise against the proposed delay as outlined in the consultation (from 2023 until late 2024 at the earliest). The DRS system in Scotland which will be available from July 2022 should heavily influence a UK-wide DRS system, they must all be able to work together.

Many universities and colleges have already recognised plastic and other single use items for the increasingly problematic issue that they are and are pioneering in their fight against single use products on their campuses. We would encourage the Government to engage with the further and higher education sector to discuss research into plastic alternatives.

We are supportive of the DRS but in face of the climate crisis we are facing a greater emphasis must be placed on removing single use items from the supply chain. Reduction should always be the priority and therefore avoiding single use would be preferable to an improved recycling scheme. However, we recognise that introducing a DRS alongside other reduction measures and policies can play a part in protecting our environment. It is therefore crucial that the scheme is simple and convenient if it is to be effective.

We hope you find this information useful and we would be keen to discuss the role of Further and Higher Education with tackling waste and recycling moving forward.

Yours sincerely



Iain Patton
CEO