

## Focus on Breadth Units

### [XBR101 Confronting Sustainability](#)

In 2014 the University of Tasmania began introducing a new suite of explicitly cross-disciplinary units, called 'breadth units', designed to enhance student's global perspective, social responsibility, and ability to directly engage with the reality of an interdependent, interconnected and globalised world.

XBR101 (previously HAA101) Confronting Sustainability was one of the first breadth units to be introduced. It was developed by members of the University's [Education for Sustainability Community of Practice](#), a group of academic and professional staff engaged in a number of teaching, research, operational and community engagement activities within and beyond the university.

[XBR101](#) is a fully online unit, with plans for future on-campus offerings, facilitated by a teaching team drawn from five faculties at the University (Arts, Education, Health, SET, and TSBE). The unit employs a number of innovative teaching methods, including webinars involving teaching team discussions and student group project presentations, and for Semester 2, 2015 the teaching team is planning to incorporate synchronous online tutorials (using Collaborate within MyLO) to further enhance the online learning experience.

After the first iteration of *Confronting Sustainability* students were surveyed to gain insight into their expectations surrounding, and experience of, breadth units. The survey data will contribute to ongoing interdisciplinary research being undertaken by members of the teaching



Image: Graham Wood (Arts), Aidan Davison (SET), and Allen Hill (Education) discussing the concept of sustainability in a webinar within the breadth unit *Confronting Sustainability*.

team examining the function of breadth units within the curriculum, and student's perceptions of that function.

Other breadth units on offer include:

- Art of Persuasion
- Good Thinking: Reasoning Skills for Life
- Developing Your Creative and Entrepreneurial Potential
- Global Food Security
- War: The Moral and Legal Limits of Political Violence
- Working with Communities
- Forensic Science in Society
- The Sciences and Society
- Living and Working with Cultural Diversity

These units are not part of a single degree program but our objective is that they will be an integral part of all degrees in the future.

For more information visit:

<http://www.utas.edu.au/students/breadth-units>

For updates, including Sustainability Committee members, news and events:

[www.utas.edu.au/sustainability](http://www.utas.edu.au/sustainability)

## The University Waste Management Story

University of Tasmania waste management focusses on waste minimisation and resource recovery. Following years of only paper recycling and *ad hoc* recycling from tearooms, in 2009 this was expanded with installation of external co-mingled recycling bins through Packaging Stewardship Forum funding. From this grew the Resource Recovery Program (RRP) in 2010.

The RRP started with 13 buildings to provide a comprehensive resource recovery service covering paper, cardboard, co-mingleds, fluorescent lamps, batteries, mobile phones, cartridges and e-waste. This included provision of external recycling 'bin hubs' (co-located comingled and cardboard recycling bins) as collection points. The RRP has since been expanded across the University.

In addition to rolling out infrastructure and services, CSD has engaged over 140 students through the [Academic Operations Sustainability Integration Program \(AOSIP\)](#) to undertake monitoring and auditing activities.

Recycling signage and behaviour change posters were also produced with bin signage using the word 'recycling' in the top ten student languages.

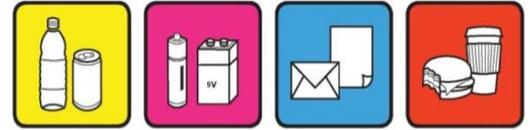
Waste minimisation has also been a focus. Examples of successes include stopping the automatic delivery of thousands of unused phonebooks and inclusion of sustainable procurement into the General Purchasing Guidelines.

In 2013, Commercial Services and Development implemented waste management and cleaning contracts with specific requirements for data collection and improved recycling outcomes.

University waste management has come a long way since the implementation of the RRP, as reflected for example in increased recycling (by weight);



# YOU DON'T NEED AN ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE DEGREE TO CHOOSE THE RIGHT BIN



### FOOD & DRINK CONTAINERS

Manufacturing plastic from recycled materials saves 25% of the energy required to make plastic from fossil fuels. Glass can be recycled an infinite number of times without any loss of quality. Recycling aluminium cans 10 times still saves energy from making one from new materials.

### E-WASTE

Electronic waste contains many toxic materials such as lead, mercury, cadmium, and valuable materials such as gold and copper. Over 90% of the materials in mobile phones can be recovered and used as new materials for new products. Look on the UTS Sustainability webpage for drop off information.

### OFFICE PAPER

Paper can be recycled into office paper, food paper, newsprint and cardboard depending on its grade. One tonne of paper or cardboard recycled saves up to 17 tonnes of different paper types are recycled separately. Look for the appropriate bin.

### DON'T CONTAMINATE

No like new coffee cups, no food, no liquids, no pens or pencils. Containers will stop your recycling being processed properly. These items in the general waste bin.

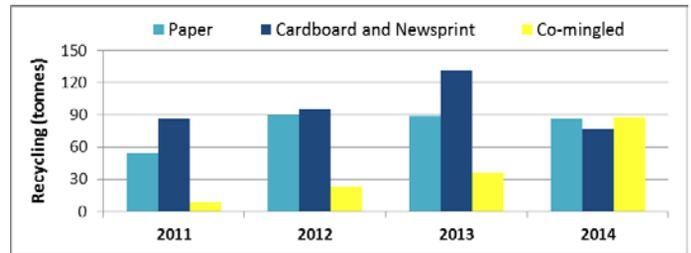
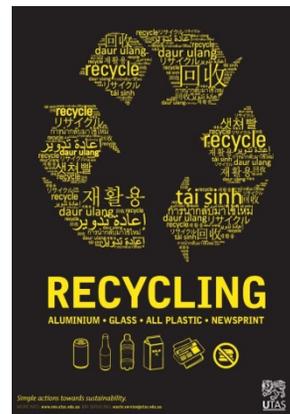


Figure 1: weight of recyclables per category

Figure 1). Very high cardboard and newsprint in 2013 come from major brochures and catalogue clean-outs.

The facilities are there for the University community to be able to make the right choices to minimise waste going to landfill. Contamination of the recyclables bins and the high amount of landfilled waste still require improvement.



Simple Actions Towards Sustainability