

Environmental Sustainability Policy 2022/2023

Northumbria University employs over 2,500 staff and provides higher education to approximately 29,000 students.

Our University Strategy commits to enhancing our reputation for sustainability and to supporting the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through our research, teaching, campus and operations. We are a signatory of the SDG Accord and the United Nations Academic Impact in recognition of the positive impact we can make. Many the SDGs directly relate to environmental challenges such as Climate Action, Responsible Consumption, Sustainable Cities and Life on Land, however all SDGs are impacted by environmental impacts due to their interconnected nature.



The University recognises that its activities and wider influence impact upon the environment, but, through our policies and Environmental Management System, we wish to minimise these impacts and to grow and develop in a sustainable manner. We recognise the urgency associated with environmental challenges such as climate change, pollution and biodiversity loss.

In addition to this Policy, the SDGs are supported by additional Northumbria University Policies and Reports including:

- [Equality & Diversity](#) – supporting SDGs including Gender Equality and Reduced Inequalities
- [Access & Participation Plan](#) – supporting SDGs including Quality Education and Reduced Inequalities

Commitments

We are committed to:

- supporting the UN Sustainable Development Goals through our research, educational activity, campus and operations;
- the protection of the environment, including the prevention of pollution;
- meeting, and where possible exceeding, all relevant legislation, industry standards and other environmental requirements to which the University subscribes;
- demonstrating continual improvement of the Environmental Management System (EMS) in order to enhance environmental performance.

The development of our Environmental Management System (EMS) provides a framework for achieving our environmental commitments. The scope of the EMS is defined as:

Services and operations in the provision of higher education, research and training including administration, and support services.

The following policies and plans set out our commitment to supporting the UN Sustainability Goals:

| Area | Aim | SDG |
|--|--|--------------------|
| Environmental Management System | Continual improvement of the Environmental Management System. | 11, 12, 13, 14, 15 |
| Energy & Carbon | To reduce scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions, as supported by our Carbon Management Strategy 2020-2030 . | 7, 11, 13 |
| Waste & Resource Management | Support circular economy principles. Reduce the volume of waste we produce and maximise recovery and recycling of waste, as supported by our Waste Management Policy . Northumbria operate a 'No Landfill Policy'. All of our residual waste is diverted from landfill and sent for recovery via energy-from-waste. | 12 |
| Water Management | Minimise our use of water, as supported by the Sustainable Water Policy . | 6 |
| Travel | Minimise the environmental impact of organisational travel and commuter travel, as supported by our Sustainable Travel Management Plan . | 11 |
| Biodiversity | Protect and enhance biodiversity across the University as set out in our Biodiversity Action Plan . | 11, 15 |
| Procurement | Minimise the negative, and maximise the positive, environmental, economic and social impacts of the goods and services we buy, as supported by our Sustainable Food Policy . | 1, 8, 12, 16 |
| Ethical Investment | To responsibly manage direct investments as outlined in our Ethical Investment Declaration . | 1, 3, 8, 13, 16 |
| Sustainable Buildings | Minimise the environmental impacts of our buildings – from design to occupation, supported by our | 11 |

| | | |
|--|--|------------|
| | <u>Sustainable Construction and Refurbishment Guidelines.</u> | |
| Emissions & Discharges | Prevent pollution by minimising local discharges to air, land and water. | 11, 14, 15 |
| Education for Sustainable Development | Raise awareness of sustainability among staff, students and the communities in which we work, and develop their skills and knowledge to support sustainability. | 4 |
| Research & Living Lab | Undertake research that directly supports the Sustainable Development Goals. Utilise a Living Lab approach to bring together our research, teaching, campus and operations to maximise sustainable output. | All |
| Climate Change Resilience | To be resilient to risks from weather and climate change. | 13 |
| Reputation for sustainability | To enhance the University's reputation for sustainability. | 4 |

KPIs relating to these commitments are listed below.

Our Sustainability Policy is overseen by the University Sustainability Management Group and approved by the University Executive. It is reviewed on an annual basis and reported on via the Sustainability Annual Report published on the [University website](#).

Approved on behalf of the University Executive:



Signed: Professor George Marston, Pro Vice-Chancellor (Strategic Projects)

Date: July 2022

Review due: July 2023



| Area | Aim | KPI | Target | Deadline | |
|--|--|---|--|----------|------|
| Environmental Management System | Continual improvement of the EMS. | Environmental Management System certification. | Maintain ISO14001:2015 certification. | 2022 | |
| Energy and Carbon | To reduce scope 1, 2 and 3 carbon emissions. | Scope 1, 2 and 3* emissions (including Organisational Travel). | 80% reduction from 2014/15 | 2030 | |
| | | | Net Zero carbon | 2040 | |
| | | | Maximum annual emissions of 10,971 CO ₂ e (Based on 9% reduction per year from 2018/19) | 2022 | |
| | | | Minimum DEC rating. | D | 2025 |
| Waste and Resource Management | Support circular economy principles. Reduce the volume of waste we produce and maximise recovery and recycling of waste. | Total waste produced (tonnes) | 15% reduction from 2018/19 | 2030 | |
| | | | Tonnage does not exceed 1303 tonnes. (Based on 1.5% reduction per year from 2018/19). | 2022 | |
| | | | Total waste sent for reuse, composting, anaerobic digestion or recycling (%). | 65% | 2030 |
| | | | | 42% | 2022 |
| | | Waste tonnage and recycling rates from contractors onsite at the University | Determine baseline | 2022 | |
| Water Management | Minimise the volume of water we use. | Total mains water consumption (m3). | 10% reduction from 2018/19 | 2030 | |
| | | | Volume does not exceed 149,442m3. (Based on 1% reduction per year from 2018/19) | 2022 | |
| Travel | Minimise the environmental impact of organisational travel and the travel undertaken by | Emissions from Organisational Travel | See 'Energy & Carbon' targets. | 2030 | |
| | | | See 'Energy & Carbon' targets. | 2022 | |



| Area | Aim | KPI | Target | Deadline |
|-----------------------------------|---|---|--|----------|
| | staff, students and visitors to and from the University. | Single Occupancy vehicle rate for commuter travel. | City Campus: Staff 24%, Students 7% Coach Lane Campus: Staff 59%, Students 29% | 2022 |
| | | Emissions from commuter travel (average CO ₂ e per head). | 30% reduction from 2019/20 | 2030 |
| | | Emissions from commuter travel (average CO ₂ e per head). | 6% reduction from 2019/20 | 2022 |
| | | Emissions from student start and end of term travel. | Improve methodology to determine baseline | 2022 |
| Biodiversity | Protect and enhance biodiversity across the University. | Metres of space considered medium or high value for biodiversity (m ²). | 2% increase in moderate / high value from 2017/18 | 2022 |
| | | Hedgehog Friendly Campus certification. | Maintain Silver | 2022 |
| Procurement | To minimise the negative, and maximise the positive, environmental, economic and social impacts of the goods and services we buy. | Baseline emissions arising from procurement activities. | Determine baseline | 2022 |
| | | Actions within the Sustainable Food Policy. | Complete actions for 2021/22. | 2022 |
| Sustainable Buildings | To minimise the environmental impacts of our buildings – from design to occupation. | Average DEC rating | C | 2022 |
| | | SKA Rating of refurbishment projects. | Complete SKA assessment on one project to assess feasibility (usability and cost implications) of SKA as a standard for future refurbishment projects. | 2022 |
| Emissions & Discharges | Prevent pollution by minimising local discharges to air, land and water. | Scope 1, 2 and 3* emissions (including Organisational Travel). | See 'Energy & Carbon' targets. | 2030 |
| | | | See 'Energy & Carbon' targets. | 2022 |

| Area | Aim | KPI | Target | Deadline |
|--|---|---|--------------------------------------|----------|
| | | Completion rates of new 'Pollution Prevention & Spill Response' spill training course. | 85% | 2022 |
| | | Pollution incidents. | 0 | 2022 |
| Education for Sustainable Development | To raise awareness of sustainability among staff, students and the communities in which we work, and develop their skills and knowledge to support sustainable development. | Number of programmes embedding learning about one or more SDGs. | 2% increase from 2020/21 | 2022 |
| | | Number of students who complete Sustainability Ambassadors Programme – Bronze Level | 50 students | 2022 |
| Research & Living Lab | Undertake research that directly supports the UN SDGs. Utilise the Living Lab approach to bring together our research, teaching, campus and operations to maximise sustainable output. | United Nations Academic Impact membership. | Maintain membership. | 2022 |
| | | Agree targets for 2022 onwards regarding research for the SDGs e.g. number of publications. | Agree target from new baseline data. | 2022 |
| Reputation for sustainability | To enhance the University's reputation for sustainability. | THE Impact League ranking. | Top 10% in the world | 2023 |
| | | Student rating for institutional commitment to sustainability (NUS Skills Survey). | 70% | 2022 |

Notes:

- *Scope 3 emissions include: organisational travel, waste, water supply, wastewater treatment and electricity transmission losses.
- The date listed under the 'Deadline' refers to the academic year ending with the date listed, unless otherwise stated i.e. '2022' indicates that the target should be achieved in the academic year ending July 2022.