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** and Single Use Plastics 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 Procurement Policy** and **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 **Sustainable Construction and Refurbishment Guidelines**.	11
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_2e (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_2e per head).	30% reduction from 2019/20	2030
		Emissions from commuter travel (average CO_2e 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.