

## Stakeholder Identification and Engagement Procedure

<b>Brief Description &amp; Purpose:</b>	<p>This procedure sets out the organisation's measures to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• understand the context of the organisation and identify potential risks and opportunities arising between the environment and the University.</li> <li>• identify the needs and expectations of interested parties.</li> <li>• address the integration of the environmental management system into the organisation's wider strategic management programme.</li> </ul> <p>The Procedure is overseen by the University Sustainability Management Group. It is reviewed on an annual basis and reported on via the Sustainability Annual Report.</p>		
<b>Applicable to (list cohorts):</b>	<b>Staff:</b> All staff	<b>Students:</b> All students	<b>Third Parties:</b> All Stakeholders
<b>Date Created:</b>	16 June 2021	<b>Last Review Date:</b>	01 June 2026
<b>Approval Authority:</b>	University Sustainability Management Group	<b>Approved:</b>	15 June 2026
<b>Executive Owner:</b>	Prof John Woodward	<b>Business Owner:</b>	Dr Paul Steadman
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### 1.0 Introduction

Stakeholder identification focuses on recognising and categorising individuals or groups who can influence or are affected by the University, evaluating their significance, and prioritising engagement to ensure clear communication and effective relationship management.

This procedure sets out the organisation's measures to:

- identify local stakeholders external to the university and engage with them.
- identify the needs and expectations of stakeholders & interested parties.
- Horizon Scanning to identify opportunities and constraints to the university.
- develop communication strategies with stakeholders & interested parties.
- address the integration of the environmental management system into the organisation's wider strategic management programme.

## **2.0 Process**

### **2.1 Stakeholder Identification - Understanding the needs and expectations of interested parties**

An 'interested party' is anyone who can affect, be affected by, or believe that they are affected by the environmental performance of an organisation.

The organisation needs to establish who the interested parties are relevant to the EMS, and to identify the needs and expectations that those interested parties have.

Examples of needs and expectations of interested parties may include mandatory requirements of regulators, as well as other expectations including from:

- partners, investors
- students
- communities
- unions
- staff

The Sustainability Manager shall lead a process of identification of all internal and external interested parties in relation to the EMS, as part of the process of undertaking the PESTLE analysis. This will be reviewed annually by the University Sustainability Management Group.

### **2.2 Horizon Scanning**

Horizon scanning involves proactively monitoring future environmental changes, potential risks and opportunities that could influence the university's environmental management. The review aims to foresee shifts in regulations, technologies or societal trends that might impact how the university operates or interacts with the environment. By doing so, Northumbria University can anticipate these changes, adjust its strategies and remain ahead in addressing environmental challenges, ensuring that its systems remain effective and aligned with future environmental needs and expectations.

The Sustainability Manager can explore various avenues to gather pertinent information for effective horizon scanning within the ISO 14001 system:

1. Environmental Reports and Data: Access environmental reports published by government agencies, NGOs and international bodies. Data on emissions, climate change and environmental impacts can highlight emerging trends.

2. Professional Networks and Associations: Engage with sustainability-focused professional networks, associations and forums. These platforms often share insights, best practices, and upcoming changes in sustainability standards.
3. Industry Conferences and Workshops: Attend sustainability-focused conferences, workshops and seminars. These events provide exposure to innovative practices, industry trends and regulatory updates.
4. Collaborations and Partnerships: Foster collaborations with other educational institutions, industry partners, local authorities or research entities involved in sustainable practices. Shared experiences can offer valuable insights.
5. Academic Research and Publications: Explore academic journals, research papers and publications in environmental science and sustainability. Universities often produce cutting-edge research that can inform future practices.
6. Regulatory Bodies and Government Updates: Monitor updates from environmental regulatory bodies at local, national and international levels. Changes in policies and regulations significantly impact sustainability initiatives.
7. Technology and Innovation Hubs: Keep tabs on technology and innovation hubs that focus on environmental solutions. Insights into emerging green technologies can influence sustainability strategies.
8. Supplier and Vendor Relationships: Engage with suppliers and vendors who provide sustainable products or services. They could offer insights into upcoming trends or advancements in eco-friendly solutions.
9. Feedback Channels: Establish feedback channels within the university community. Input from students, faculty, staff and other stakeholders can highlight concerns or opportunities regarding sustainability practices.
10. Social and Media Monitoring: Stay updated on social media, news outlets and relevant online forums. These platforms often discuss current environmental issues, trends and public sentiments.

By leveraging these channels effectively, the Sustainability Manager can gather comprehensive and timely information critical for horizon scanning within Northumbria University's ISO 14001 system. The findings of Horizon Scanning shall be recorded in the 'Horizon Scanning' tab of PESTLE and Stakeholder ID.

## **2.3 Communication with Stakeholders**

The **EF 06 B Communications Calendar** is compiled by the Sustainability Manager. It records all details for both internal and external regular communication including Interested Parties, Needs and Expectations, Communication Mechanism, Frequency and Responsibility.

There is no 'one size fits all' model for stakeholder engagement. The stakeholder engagement process should be tailored to the particular needs of the stakeholder, project, issue, situation etc. Ensuring appropriate engagement requires good judgement; for the University recognises that

poorly thought through engagement practice can create mistrust, waste stakeholders' time and lead to 'engagement fatigue' – a reluctance to participate in future consultations.

The level of interest and influence of stakeholders will depend on a range of issues, such as the nature of the policy, project, issue, strategy etc, the timing and extent of stakeholders involvement and stakeholders potential ability to impact on the effectiveness of the outcomes. There is a need, therefore, to continuously reassess and identify new stakeholders and the level of stakeholder engagement at different stages. 'Stakeholder mapping' is an analytical tool used by the University to survey and analyse the environment in which we operate. The impact and materiality of different stakeholder groups will not always remain static over time. The stakeholder mix may therefore be affected by changes in strategy, the requirements of the business, or changes in legislation. We recognise that it is important to have a process in place for reviewing the groups identified as key stakeholders to make sure that engagement remains appropriate for the relevant audience. The Stakeholder Influence/Impact grid (Fig 1 & 2) identify and categorise stakeholders with increasing influence and impact, enabling the University focus on the key stakeholders.

		Key	
		Level of Interest	
		Low	High
Influence/ Power of stakeholder	High	<b>High Influence/ Low Interest</b> <b>'Consult'</b> - Engage and consult on interest area - Try to increase level of interest	<b>High Influence/ High Interest</b> <b>'Involve'</b> - Key Players - focus efforts on this group - Involve in governance/ decision making bodies - Engage and consult regularly
	Low	<b>Low Influence/ Low Interest</b> <b>'Monitor'</b> - Inform via general communications: newsletters, website, mailshots - Try to increase level of interest	<b>Low Influence/ High Interest</b> <b>'Inform'</b> - Make use of interest through involvement in low risk areas - Keep informed and consult on interest area - Potential supporter/ goodwill ambassador

Fig 1 Stakeholder Influence/Impact Grid

Northumbria University Interested Parties					
		Level of Interest			
		Low	High		
Influence/ Power of Stakeholder	High	Consult			
		Office for Students	Energy broker and suppliers	University Executive	Students' Union
		Suppliers (Tenderers)	Water supplier	University Sustainability Management	Tenants
		Research Councils / Funding	Waste Management	Carbon Management Programme Board	HESA
		Higher education associations	Cedrec	Senior Management Group	Environment Agency
		PRME	People and Planet	Facilities & Estates	Health & Safety Executive
		Natural England	Times Higher Education	Project Managers (Internal & External)	Local Authority
		DEFRA	SDG Accord	Goalkeepers teams	
	Monitor		Inform		
	Low	Alumni		Students	
		Prospective Students		Staff	
		Donors and Patrons			
		Businesses & residents			
		Wider society			

Fig.2 Northumbria University Interested Parties

## 2.4 Internal Communication

A variety of mechanisms are used to make sure environmental information is communicated internally. This includes

- Noticeboards, poster campaigns and intranet articles
- Training sessions i.e. toolbox talks.
- Site inspection reports
- Internal audit reports
- University Sustainability Management Group meetings

The University hosts a dedicated sustainability intranet site, accessible to all staff. This includes useful information (e.g. waste management, travel options), as well as the opportunity for online Incident Reporting and access to relevant EMS Forms and Procedures. This is accessed at: [one.northumbria.ac.uk/service/cs/es](http://one.northumbria.ac.uk/service/cs/es)

## 2.5 External Communication

We take a proactive approach to communicating environmental information with interested parties and ensure that such information is:

- understandable and adequately explained to the recipient(s)
- an accurate picture of the organisation and our environmental performance.

There is a website dedicated to sustainability at Northumbria - [www.northumbria.ac.uk/sustainability/](http://www.northumbria.ac.uk/sustainability/)

The website is used to communicate information on the following:

- Documents all channels by which staff, students and members of the public can make contact
- The Environmental Sustainability Policy
- The Sustainability Annual Report
- Information on environmental best practice.
- Contact details of key University contacts for sustainability.

When needed, a number of mechanisms might be used to ensure effective communication with external interested parties. These mechanisms include:

- regulatory filings (such as permit applications and reports);
- local and national media;
- informal discussions and meetings with regulators, community representatives, and local business leaders.

## **2.6 Communication Log**

Communication relating to compliance shall be recorded in the EF 06C Communication Log, noting the category, date, name and contact details, details of communication and outcome. The Log also notes the location of any records pertinent to the relevant matter.

## **2.7 Enquiries & Complaints**

Enquiries and complaints can be made using any of the above channels or directly to the relevant staff member e.g. Project Manager, Sustainability Manager.

All formal (i.e. submitted in writing) external complaints shall be acknowledged in a timely manner by the relevant staff member.

The communication shall be recorded in the **EF 06C Communication Log**, noting the category, date, name and contact details, details of communication and outcome. The Log also notes the location of any records pertinent to the relevant matter.

Details for responding to an Environmental Incident, including informing relevant parties, are specified in **EP 15 Emergency Preparedness and Response Procedure**.

## **2.8 Requests for environmental information**

Public requests for environmental information will be handled in accordance with the Environmental Information Regulations (EIR), a regulatory function of the Freedom of Information Act (FOI).

Requests can be made via the formal FOI procedures, available at:

<https://www.northumbria.ac.uk/about-us/leadership-governance/vice-chancellors-office/legal-services-team/freedom-of-information/environmental-information-regulations/>

A log of all formal FOI (and EIR) requests will be maintained by the Vice Chancellor's Office in accordance with these procedures.

## 2.9 Integration with Strategic Management

The University Strategy commits to enhancing the University's reputation for sustainability through the support of the UN Sustainable Development Goals. This commitment ensures that sustainability is a consideration within all University activity.

It is recognised that all staff and students have a role to play in supporting the Environmental Management System and its aims and targets must be integrated with wider business processes – the University Sustainability Management Group consequently has membership from across the University and the **EF 05 Environmental Objectives and Action Plan** identifies responsibilities across the University.

Job Roles	How They Can Support Environmental Management
<b>Human Resources</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Define competency of job roles for EMS roles</li> <li>• Monitor completion of EMS training for EMS roles.</li> <li>• Provide basic EMS training (e.g. inductions)</li> </ul>
<b>Procurement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Embed sustainability considerations within procurement activity.</li> </ul>
<b>Senior Management / Service Directors</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communicate EMS management as a key business objective.</li> <li>• Commit resources:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Money</li> <li>- Time</li> <li>- Staffing</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Track and review EMS performance</li> </ul>
<b>Operatives</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Give suggestions and knowledge to help identify EMS problems and improvements in their areas</li> <li>• Help support new employees' understanding of EMS management</li> </ul>

### 3.0 Key Roles and Responsibilities

<p><b>University Sustainability Management Group</b></p>	<p>Inform reviews of Stakeholder Identification and Engagement by providing insight from all areas of the University including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• University Executive</li> <li>• Facilities &amp; Estates</li> <li>• Human Resources</li> <li>• Finance and Procurement</li> <li>• Marketing</li> <li>• Research and Information Services</li> <li>• Students' Union</li> </ul> <p>Responsible for ensuring that appropriate systems, resources and commitments are in place in order to implement and maintain control measures which minimise risk and maximise opportunity.</p> <p>To undertake Management Review of the EMS to assess whether it is meeting its intended outcomes, including an annual review of Stakeholder Identification and Engagement.</p>
<p><b>Sustainability Manager</b></p>	<p>Overall responsibility for establishing, implementing and maintaining the PESTLE Analysis and Stakeholder Identification document.</p>

### 4.0 Definitions

- **PESTLE** - Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Legal and Environmental Analysis of the University

### 5.0 Related Documents (available upon request from the Sustainability Manager)

- EP 02 Environmental Sustainability Policy
- EF 03 Environmental Aspects Register
- EF 04 A Compliance Obligations Register

- **EF 05 Environmental Objectives and Action Plan**
- **EF 06 A Competency Matrix**
- **EF 06 B Communications Calendar**
- **EF 06 C Communications Log**
- **EF 06 D Communications Plan**
- **EP 13 Contractor Control for Environmental Management**
- **EP 15 Emergency Preparedness & Response Procedure**

## 6.0 Version

Version No.	Reviewer	Date	Changes
1.0		16.06.21	Created
1.1	Dr Paul Steadman	20.06.25	Strategy update
1.2	Dr Paul Steadman	24.06.25	Policy format, targets
1.3	Dr Paul Steadman	01.06.26	Policy review