

Environment and Sustainability Policy

1 Scope

1.1 The University of Northampton recognises that our activities can have a negative impact on the environment, both locally and globally and we are committed to making sustainable development part of its operations, research and curriculum. Estates & Campus Services own and manages the Environment & Sustainability policy on behalf of The University of Northampton with the policy reviewed by the Environment & Sustainability Team on a 3-year basis or amended in response to changes in future legislation and/or case law.

1.2 The Environment & Sustainability Team will produce an annual action plan which will establish the broad priorities and program of work for the coming year. This plan will be used to monitor progress and performance, whilst also supporting Investors in the Environment accreditation. The plan for the next academic year is provided in the [Environmental Management System Manual](#) (updated and verified annually).

2 Purpose

2.1 This Environment & Sustainability Policy Statement is a corporate policy and applies to all employees (and workers, as applicable) and students of The University of Northampton including any wholly owned subsidiaries, unless an alternative policy exists, subject to any qualifying conditions. Detailed arrangements for implementing this policy are given in separate subject specific Environment & Sustainability Policies.

2.2 In order to achieve its aim, the University is committed to:

- By 2050 no student leaves the University without an understanding of climate change and sustainability, and the role that they can play in reducing their impact on the environment in their personal and professional lives.
- Require catering outlets to offer sustainably sourced food that incorporates environmental, ethical, and animal- welfare considerations, including local and seasonal produce.
- Raise awareness on both the environmental and health benefits of plant-based diets (vegetarian/vegan) through transparent product information,

education and campaigns.

- Reducing our staff and student carbon emissions associated with travel, to include but not limited to, commuting to and from UON, field trips, international student travel and university business travel in line with our Net Zero Carbon by 2050 target.
- Developing and embedding environmental awareness and principles with staff and students; encouraging a university-wide participation in environmental activities, training, and programmes.
- Developing and delivering the University Travel Plan's legacy.
- Protecting the environment and preventing pollution, taking direct responsibility for the environmental impacts associated with all activities and operations in pursuance of high standards of environmental management across the estate.
- Development, maintenance, and improvement of an externally audited Environmental Management System (EMS) to maintain continual improvement of performance and environmental best practice. This also ensures that UON fulfils its compliance obligations.
- Setting environmental objectives and targets and reporting performance annually on the UON website.
- Communicating the Environment & Sustainability Policy to employees and all interested parties.
- Developing programmes and initiatives for energy conservation, improving energy efficiency, and instilling personal responsibility for conserving natural resources. Specific work includes maintaining and updating carbon management plans in line with UON Net Zero Carbon targets, which include specific carbon reduction targets and Government strategies.
- Minimising waste generated through effective management, focusing on avoidance, reuse, and recycling and calculating associated carbon emissions in line with our Net Zero Carbon by 2050 target.
- Minimising water wastage and optimising the use of water saving to calculate associated carbon emissions in line with our Net Zero Carbon by 2050 target.
- Protecting the environment by enhancing biodiversity within the management of the existing estate as well as with any new developments, including the appropriate management of protected and invasive species. Specific work includes maintaining and updating Management Plans for Biodiversity, which include specific targets and linked to relevant Government strategies.
- Ensure sustainable procurement policies take a long-term view of purchasing decisions, focusing on reducing environmental impacts and increasing the benefits that the University has on society.
- Take appropriate actions to enhance the environmental performance of the University estate, including consideration during construction and refurbishment.
- Enhancing UON's place in the community, proactively working with external organisations to promote a better environment and encouraging best practice principles.
- Acknowledge responsibility for protection of the environment and the prevention of pollution. across UON estate, at local and national levels.
- Encourage staff, students and contractors to be actively involved in environmental improvement on the University estate and in engaging with the wider community.

2.3 The University reports progress against its targets in several ways:

- Internal reporting:
 - Annual reporting to UMT via end of year operational reports
 - Annual reporting to liE via its Environmental Management Systems Manual
 - Quarterly reporting to the Sustainability Board
 - Quarterly reporting to the HSSE Committees
 - Monthly internal reporting to the Executive Director of Estates & Campus Services
- External reporting
 - Annual reporting progress via the Sustainable Development Goals Accord survey
 - Annual Sustainability Leadership Scorecard Assessments, feeding

3 Governance

3.1 The University of Northampton has developed an Environment & Sustainability Governance Structure to demonstrate its commitment to embedding sustainability across its operations, research and curriculum. The main responsibility for the organisational control and direction of the Environment & Sustainability are outlined below. Full details of the Governance Structure, members, roles, purpose and reporting structure are provided in Section 7.

3.2 University Leadership Team

The University Management Team (ULT) are responsible for agreeing sustainability strategy, accountability, responsibilities and governance structure with respect to environment and sustainability.

3.3 Sustainability Board

The Sustainability Board is chaired by a senior member of staff from UMT and includes membership from senior Faculty and Professional Service representatives, team leads or members from the wider university teams, representatives from the Action Groups and the Environment & Sustainability Manager (or representative of the Environment & Sustainability Team). The purpose of the board is to oversee UON objectives, targets and work on sustainability. Members are responsible for ensuring that UON sustainability targets are

integrated into projects, initiatives and where appropriate approving projects. This group is responsible for reviewing our progress against targets and strategy and responsible for signing off relevant policies and procedures.

3.4 Environment & Sustainability Team

The Environment & Sustainability team will oversee and coordinate the implementation of the sustainability strategy and are responsible for monitoring, reporting and reviewing UON's sustainability policies and practices. The team will also provide specialist advice as required.

3.5 Action Groups

Action Groups are voluntary groups responsible for generating ideas for innovation and support activities such as applying for support and funding for initiatives, implementing specific UON environment and sustainability projects, engaging staff, students and the local community. Representatives of Action Groups will report to the Sustainability Board on activities and projects.

3.6 In order for the University to ensure legal compliance with the range of environmental legislation that applies, a legal register will be held and managed by the Environment & Sustainability Team. This register details the action taken to comply with specific legislation and is audited as part of the University's Investors in the Environment accreditation. The Environment & Sustainability Team will produce appropriate policies, procedures and guidance documents to assist the University in being able to comply with the requirements of the relevant legislation or best practice.

4. Where to get help, how to report an issue

4.1 Associated Policies & Plans which support specific targets and can be used as a guide. There are several supporting documents which outline specific targets and activities associated with the implementation of this policy:

- Waste Policy
- Single Use Plastics & Disposable Items Policy
- Waste Avoidance Policy
- Ecology Policy
- Energy Policy

- Sustainable Construction Policy
- Carbon Management Plan
- Travel Plan
- Management Plan for Biodiversity
- Sustainable Travel
- Sustainable Catering Policy

4.2 Issues can be reporting either to environment@northampton.ac.uk or raised at the Sustainability Board meeting.

5. Sustainability Board

5.1 Purpose

To oversee our objectives, targets and work on sustainability. Responsible for ensuring that our sustainability targets are integrated into projects, initiatives and where appropriate approving projects. This group is responsible for reviewing our progress against targets and strategy. This Group is responsible for signing off policies and procedures.

5.2 Meetings

The Sustainability Board shall meet quarterly to review progress against sustainability targets, projects and initiatives.

5.3 Members

The meeting shall be chaired by the Executive Director of Estates & Campus Services, with the Director of Enterprise & Employability as Deputy Chair, attendees are representatives from across the University.

- Estates & Campus Services
- Faculty of Arts, Science & Technology
- Faculty of Health, Education & Society
- Faculty of Business & Law
- Research & Enterprise
- Library Learning Services
- Professional Services
- Student Employability/Student Futures
- Environment & Sustainability
- 1st Degree Facilities
- Student Union
- Representatives from Action Groups

5.4 Role and Responsibilities

To consult on the Sustainability Strategy and operational plans (including the Carbon Management and Management Plan for Biodiversity) and monitor performance against the University's sustainability objectives, targets and key performance indicators.

Responsible for ensuring that sustainability targets are integrated into all parts of the University's activities and be actively involved in:

- Attend quarterly update meetings
 - Ensure progress is made against targets
 - Review and agree targets and objectives to ensure these align with the University's sustainability agenda

5.5 Reporting

Chair and/or nominated Sustainability Board member shall update the University Management Team (ULT) after each meeting.

5.6 Outcomes and Effectiveness

Notes from the meeting shall be taken and in the Sustainability Board TEAMS site as soon as possible after each meeting with acceptance at the next meeting. Update ULT annually on progress against targets (report and/ or presentation).

6. Equality Impact Assessment

An Equality Impact Assessment is in place for this policy and procedure

1. Policy/ Practice (name and brief description) Environment & Sustainability Policy
2. Reason for the EIA <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Proposed new policy/practice ○ Proposed change to an existing policy/practice ○ Undertaking a review of an existing policy/practice ○ Other (please state):
3. Person responsible for the policy/ practice Name: Hollie Darby & Emma Stone, Job title: Environment Advisors
4. Groups the policy, practice applies to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Staff <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Student <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Parents <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Visitors/Public
5. Data and evidence used to facilitate the screening of this policy/ practice including internal and external metrics and qualitative and anecdotal evidence

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benchmarking via: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Internal and External audits ○ Annual reporting such as HESA and liE
<p>6. Gaps in information/ evidence to allow proper assessment of the policy/ practice and how this will be addressed</p> <p>N/A</p>
<p>7. Groups who have been consulted with in the development / review of this the policy/ practice:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Unions ○ Staff networks ○ HR ○ ULT ○ Internal experts ○ External experts ○ Focus groups ○ Other (please state):

8. Potential/actual impacts of the policy/ practice on the following characteristics

Reviewed characteristic	Positive impact <i>A positive impact is one in which a person or people will experience an advantage or benefit.</i>	Negative impact <i>A negative impact is one in which a person or people will experience a disadvantage.</i>	Detail of impact <i>If there is no impact – you do not need to fill in this section</i> <i>Explain how the proposal will disproportionately impact people who share the characteristic and/or what the effect of that impact will be on those people.</i> <i>This section should be completed whether the impact is positive or negative. With positive impact, detail the actions you will take to promote the positive impact to the university in the next column.</i>	How will you mitigate or remove any identified negative impacts and/or promote any positive impacts? Can any identified impact be justified for business reasons? If yes, please explain why. <i>If an identified negative impact cannot be removed or mitigated, explain why this can be justified for business reasons. Where you identify negative impact which cannot be justified for business reasons, you should identify any changes you can make to your proposal which will mitigate or eliminate this.</i>
Age			No impact	
Disability			No impact	
Gender reassignment			No impact	
Marriage and civil partnership			No impact	

Pregnancy and maternity			<i>No impact</i>	
Race			<i>No impact</i>	
Religion or belief			<i>No impact</i>	
Sex			<i>No impact</i>	
Sexual orientation			<i>No impact</i>	

7. Ownership and approval

Policy Owner: Environment & Sustainability Team, Estates & Campus Services

Author Date: October 2007

Approved By: TU Liaison + Sustainability Board

Date of Approval: 01/10/2007

Date of next review: 2028

8. Version control

Version Control: V15

Amendment History:

03/06/2017 – Support wider sustainability initiatives in Northamptonshire

23/05/2018 - Inclusion of renewable energy, specific sustainable travel options and reducing plastic waste

14/05/2019 - Additional Environment Statement

04/08/2022 - Update of Environment Statement, inclusion of additional policies, targets and plans and details of governance structure.

13/05/2025 – update on structure of E&S Team. Update on plant-based targets