

# Newcastle University Environmental Sustainability Policy

*University commitments to continual improvement in environmental performance*

**Effective from 05/04/23**

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## **1. Purpose**

The Policy seeks to inform Newcastle University colleagues and students, and other interested parties, of the University's commitments to continual improvement in environmental performance, in line with our ISO 14001 Environmental Management System (EMS).

## **2. What is covered by the policy?**

All university operations in the UK and abroad, applying to education, research, engagement and facilities management.

## **3. Who does the policy apply to?**

All colleagues, students and other interested parties including visitors, contractors, suppliers and other stakeholders.

## **4. Roles and responsibilities**

- Executive Board and Council – act as 'top management' (as defined in the ISO14001 standard) and are responsible for:
  - Taking accountability for the effectiveness of the environmental management system;
  - Ensuring that the environmental policy and environmental objectives are established and are compatible with the strategic direction and the context of the organization;
  - Ensuring the integration of the environmental management system requirements into the organization's business processes;
  - Ensuring that the resources needed for the environmental management system are available;
  - Communicating the importance of effective environmental management and of conforming to the environmental management system requirements;
  - Ensuring that the environmental management system achieves its intended outcomes;
  - Directing and supporting persons to contribute to the effectiveness of the environmental management system;
  - Promoting continual improvement;
  - Supporting other relevant management roles to demonstrate their leadership as it applies to their areas of responsibility
- Pro Vice Chancellor Global & Sustainability– Chair of Environment and Sustainability Committee (ESC). Reporting to Executive Board and Council ESC has delegated authority to act as the University body conducting 'Management Review' of the EMS
- Head of Sustainability - Responsible for all aspects of operational sustainability within the University including the ISO14001 EMS.
- Sustainability Manager – acts as EMS Manager with responsibility for implementation of the EMS.
- Sustainability Team - Enabling, maintaining and implementing processes and procedures within the EMS.
- All colleagues, students and other interested parties including visitors, contractors, suppliers and other stakeholders – to be aware of the policy and contribute towards delivery of the commitments.

## 5. Policy

Providing higher education to more than 28,000 students and employing around 6,500 people, Newcastle University has an excellent pedigree in research and teaching. With a global reach, we are based on a campus in the heart of Newcastle upon Tyne. We pride ourselves on being closely integrated into the economic, cultural and social life of the North East and our estate comprises a diverse range of facilities in the UK and abroad.

As a responsible institution we are committed to visibly leading on environmental sustainability at local, national and international scales. We will protect the environment and prevent pollution by reducing emissions and discharges, meet all of our compliance obligations and, where possible, demonstrate best practice. Our Environmental Management System (EMS) covers all University operations in the UK and abroad and provides a structured framework for achieving our commitments. We will demonstrate and communicate our continual improvement in our EMS to enhance our environmental performance.

We are committed to advancing the aims of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UNSDGs) and embodying the values of the goals within our activities. We recognise the urgency associated with environmental challenges such as climate change, pollution and biodiversity loss, and the inequitable impacts these have on human societies and the natural world upon which they rely. In April 2019, Newcastle University declared a climate emergency and we acknowledge this context in making the following commitments:

### Our Commitments:

1. Promoting education for sustainability throughout our educational activities.
2. Helping to transform society through our sustainability research.
3. Empowering and motivating colleagues, students and stakeholders through effective engagement.
4. Improving our resilience to climate change impacts by taking a risk-based approach to adaptation.
5. Minimising our carbon footprint.
6. Investing in energy efficiency, generation, awareness and conservation measures.
7. Encouraging sustainable travel choices for students, colleagues and visitors.
8. Preserving and enhancing biodiversity.
9. Adopting circular economy principles in our approach to waste and resource management.
10. Embedding sustainable practices across our supply chain, investment portfolio and the procurement of goods and services.
11. Enabling sustainable water use.

All colleagues and students are responsible for contributing to our continual improvement in environmental performance. Progress is monitored and governed by our Environment and Sustainability Committee, which is chaired by the Pro Vice Chancellor Global & Sustainability and reports to Executive Board and Council.

For further information on how we aim to meet our commitments, please see our Objectives, Targets and Action Plans at the [Newcastle University Sustainable Campus website](#).

## 6. Related regulations, statutes and policies

University Vision and Strategy:

<https://www.ncl.ac.uk/who-we-are/> Energy Policy:

<https://www.ncl.ac.uk/sustainable-campus/about-us/policies/>

As part of our EMS we maintain a comprehensive compliance /obligations register which lists all relevant environmental regulations: <https://www.ncl.ac.uk/sustainable-campus/about-us/environmental-management/#legislation>

## 7. Procedure to implement the policy

The University's Environmental Management System (EMS) documents the procedures used to implement the policy i.e. Objectives, Targets and Action Plans.

## 8. Monitoring and reporting on compliance

What will be monitored?	Frequency	Method	Who by	Reported to
<i>Effectiveness of the EMS</i>	<i>Annually</i>	<i>Management Review process</i>	<i>Environment and Sustainability Committee</i>	<i>Executive Board and Council</i>

## 9. Failure to comply

- Decrease in environmental performance, and increase in negative environmental impacts.
- Failure to meet University compliance obligations in line with the EMS with potential breaches of environmental legislation.
- Decreased emergency preparedness with respect to environmental related risks, and associated business continuity impacts.
- Failure to meet the needs and expectations of interested parties as identified within the EMS.
- Reputational damage to the University.
- Colleague and student dissatisfaction.

<b>Document control information</b>	
<b>Does this replace another policy?</b> Yes / <del>No</del> If yes please state. <b>This policy replaces the version approved by Council 10/07/17</b>	
<b>Approval</b>	
<b>Approved by:</b> University Council	<b>Date:</b> 12/07/2021
<b>Effective from:</b> 05/04/23 <b>Amends to v7 were minor administrative edits that did not require at UEB/Council approval.</b>	
<b>Review due:</b> July 24	
<b>Responsibilities</b>	
<b>Executive sponsor:</b>  Professor Richard Davies, Pro Vice Chancellor Global & Sustainability and Chair of Environment & Sustainability Committee	
<b>Policy owner:</b> (This maybe an officer or Committee)	Environment and Sustainability Committee
<b>Policy author:</b>	Head of Sustainability, Estates and Facilities.

<b>Person(s) responsible for compliance:</b> Head of Sustainability, Estates and Facilities.		
<b>Consultation</b>		
<b>Version</b>	<b>Body consulted</b>	<b>Date</b>
<u>v1</u>	<u>ESC</u>	<u>21/03/19</u>
<u>v2</u>	<u>ESC</u>	<u>10/04/19</u>
<u>v4</u>	<u>UEB &amp; SOG</u>	<u>June '19</u>
<u>v5</u>	<u>UEB</u>	<u>23/07/19</u>
<u>v6</u>	<u>ESC</u>	<u>15/04/21</u>
<u>v7</u>	<u>ESC</u>	<u>05/04/23</u>
<b>Equality Impact Assessment:</b>		
Does the policy have the potential to impact on people in a different way because of their protected characteristics? <del>Yes</del> / No / <del>Unsure</del>		
Initial assessment by: Matt Dunlop		Date: 25/04/19
<b>Document location</b>		
<a href="https://www.ncl.ac.uk/sustainable-campus/about-us/policies/">https://www.ncl.ac.uk/sustainable-campus/about-us/policies/</a>		