

Terms of Reference

Newcastle University Sustainable Development Committee (SDGC)

1. Membership.

University SDG lead/Dean, Engagement & Internationalisation, SAgE (Chair): Professor Philip McGowan

PA to Senior Managers (Executive Office) (Secretary): Kay Mason

Senior Lecturer in Politics (GPS): Dr Graham Long

Senior Lecturer in Population Health Sciences (PHS Institute): Dr Heather Brown

Senior Lecturer in Human Resource Management (NUBS) and Associate Dean (Undergraduate) HaSS: Dr Tracy Scurry

Clinical Senior Lecturer (School of Dental Sciences): Dr Chris Vernazza

Senior Lecturer in Geospatial Data (School of Engineering): Dr Alistair Ford
Education officer, NUSU

Assistant Director, Careers Service: Naomi Oosman-Watts

Head of Sustainability (ESS): Matt Dunlop

Research Funding Development Manager and Co-Director Global Challenges Academy: Dr Elisa Lawson

Opportunities will be made available for non-members to attend as appropriate to discuss matters of particular interest with the committee.

The composition of the committee will be reviewed and updated as required due to changes in personnel. Membership term is three-years. These terms of reference will be reviewed annually, in January each year.

2. Meetings.

The Committee will initially meet once a month and meetings will be scheduled for 90 minutes. This will be reviewed as appropriate and in the first instance no later than during its fifth meeting (April 2020).

3. Membership and responsibilities.

Sustainable Development Group Committee is a sub-group of University Executive Board (UEB) and reports to UEB on a six monthly basis. The notes of each meeting will be circulated to Secretaries of Faculty Executive Boards, University Committees for Education, Research and Innovation, Engagement and Place, and Global, and the Environment and Sustainability Committee.

Membership shall be drawn from colleagues who have a particular interest in the SDGs and with a minimum of two members from each faculty, two members from Professional Services and a representative from the Students Union.

The Committee is responsible for:
Leadership and strategy

- a) Developing Newcastle University's approach to the SDGs, such that it plays a leading role in understanding how the principles and ethos encapsulated by the Goals can inform all of our activities so that we can realise a distinctive contribution to change, as envisaged in Annex 1
- b) Providing strategic guidance in relation to the SDGs, and to coordinate efforts to enhance alignment of teaching and learning, research, impact and university operations in support of the SDGs.
- c) Supporting the incorporation of the SDGs in the implementation of University strategies and implementation plans.
- d) Providing guidance, as appropriate, on the SDG implications of university policy options.
- e) Responding to demand from across the university (e.g. faculties, schools, committees) for advice, guidance and other information and perspectives on the SDGs.
- f) Representing the university in external SDG-focussed for a.

Reporting and metrics

- g) Evaluating any compliance requirements, such as those flowing from the SDG Accord.
- h) Supporting the university's response to relevant metrics, such as the THE Impact rankings.
- i) Explore where supporting the SDGs can be captured in metrics and reporting within the university, enhancing the embedding of the SDGs in the university's Integrated Report.

Raising awareness of the SDGs

- j) Raising awareness of the SDG, and their context and underlying principles across the university.
- k) Promote 'SDG literacy' across the university, such that the university's SDG values are understood widely.
- l) Enhance understanding of the potential for the SDGs to provide a rich, challenge-led context for research, education, engagement and impact, and the way that we operate.
- m) Exploring the extent to which the student experience can be enhanced by an understanding of the SDGs and their context and principles.

Approved by Executive Board: 24.03.2020

Editorial change at meeting of SDGC: 01.02.2021

Newcastle University and the Sustainable Development Goals: statement of values

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, with 17 Sustainable Development Goals at its heart, is a global agenda that seeks to transform our world. Universities can be agents for powerful change towards achieving these ambitious Goals, through their research, their curricula, through empowering and energising graduates, and through their wise and innovative management and working practices. Simultaneously, in each of these areas, the SDGs are changing the landscape in which universities operate, nationally and globally. Newcastle University aspires to play a leading role in understanding how the principles and ethos encapsulated by the Goals can inform all of our activities such that we can realise a distinctive contribution to change. These activities include generating new knowledge, engaging with policy and society, and nurturing graduates to relish the challenge of developing a better future, in partnership, for people and planet.

In a time of short-term competitive pressures on universities, and in a world of increasing popularism and national introspection, the SDGs are a distinctive long term, cooperative, multilateral agenda that articulates a shared purpose of human and planetary wellbeing. This gap between the world we inhabit, and the “future we want”, demands a considered yet bold role for our universities. We seek therefore to place an awareness of the Goals, and consideration for their core principles, at the heart of what we do:

- We will strive to embed awareness and understanding of the SDGs in the student experience by developing a curricular and extracurricular offer that addresses the SDGs and explores the Agenda’s underlying principles of indivisibility, universality and of leaving no one behind.
- We will seek to develop research capability and new knowledge that help inform the implementation of the Goals and their targets, provide meaningful perspectives on their interaction, and engage critically with the complexity of this new agenda.
- We will also seek to develop new, and enhance existing, partnerships with those whose roles are to foster and drive change around the SDGs, whether they are local to where we operate, operate nationally, or have a global reach, and whether stakeholders are governments, businesses or civil society groups, and paying special attention to the poorest and most marginalised.
- Finally, we accept that the way that our university works, through the management of our estate to our interactions with staff, students and stakeholders, must embody the values that underlie the Goals.

Through pursuing these strands, we will reflect the principles and values of Goals, whilst deepening our commitment and strengthening our contribution. We will aim to better understand and realise our contribution, alongside stakeholders of all kinds, to the global transformation envisaged in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development as adopted by 193 Member States of the UN.

We recognise that many universities are seeking to work towards the Sustainable Development Goals, and will do so in many different ways and in different contexts. We pledge, therefore, to share our work, and to seek to learn from others. There is much to do, and working collegially offers the greatest possibility that we, collectively, can make the progress that we need to make.