



Sustainability Policy

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POLICY

1. Introduction

The University of Wolverhampton is committed to developing and maintaining constructive relations with its wider community. This Policy has been approved by the University Executive Board. It sets out the University's requirements to embed environmental considerations into its education, engagement, research and operations.

The Policy follows the University ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance) Strategy and Targets 2035. The ESG Strategy aligns, where appropriate, with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals to minimise the University's environmental impact and to support a just and sustainable future ([Environmental, Social and Governance - University of Wolverhampton](#)).

2. Purpose

The purpose of this Sustainability Policy is to establish a clear and unified strategic framework for embedding Environmental principles across all aspects of the University of Wolverhampton's operations, education, research, and community engagement.

This policy supports the University's commitment to responsible governance, social justice, environmental stewardship, and supports the University's Net Zero ambitions.

It also ensures compliance with the University's Articles of Government, Regulations, and other Policies and Procedures, which align to the overall University's strategic plan and has been reviewed considering the University Strategy 2035 and its commitment to sustainable environmental, social and governance (ESG) ([Strategy 2035 - University of Wolverhampton](#)).

3. Principles

The objectives of this policy are to ensure that the University upholds its commitment to the environment and works towards the outcomes and targets from the University ESG Strategy 2035. The university must ensure compliance with legal and regulatory requirements.

It aims to:

- Integrate environmental and ethical considerations into core operations.
- Promote transparency, equity, and accountability.
- Empower the University Community to take meaningful climate and social action.

The implementation of this policy is in accordance with the University's core values which are to be:

- **Accountable;** we take pride in what we do and how we do it, take responsibility for our actions and operate with transparency and integrity.

- **Resilient**; we have a positive outlook; we are adaptable and recover from setbacks.
- **Inclusive**; we are welcoming, respectful, collegiate and supportive.
- **Ambitious**; we are imaginative, confident, innovative and deliver excellence.

4. Scope

This policy applies to the University community, including staff, students, governors, agency workers, contractors, consultants, visitors, partners, suppliers and any other third parties undertaking activities on behalf of the University. It covers all campuses, buildings, facilities, and services operated by; or on behalf of; the University.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

This policy requires shared responsibility and accountability across the institution, to ensure sustainability principles and our commitments are embedded into our environmental and social objectives and managed appropriately through governance protocols.

Board of Governors

Oversee the effective and efficient use of the University resources and provide strategic leadership by embedding sustainability into the University's core mission.

University Executive Board

Oversee the strategic direction and governance of the sustainability policy, commitments and strategic plans. Receive and review relevant sustainability reports, review resource requirements in line with regulatory compliance. Review institutional risks associated with sustainability, in addition to having operational oversight of the sustainability strategy.

Promoting a university-wide culture that values environmental responsibility, social equity, and inclusion.

University Estates and Facilities Directorate Sustainability Team

Responsible for developing, coordinating and implementing sustainability strategies and policy into campus operations, with the assistance of relevant departments, faculties and boards. The team shall advise the University Executive Board of the development of protocols and procedures and provide updates of sustainability activity through the monitoring and oversight of relevant statutory and regulatory obligations.

Will provide support and review sustainability activities across the University and highlight sustainability matters to the appropriate department and faculty areas. Monitor and analyse the University's environmental impact and support with managing issues and risks, will promote sustainability throughout the University through working groups, champions and relevant communications.

Highlight where sustainability can be embedded into the university's overarching strategic plan, covering both

academic activities and operational practices.

Department Leads

Will ensure that activities and operations within their control are conducted in accordance with relevant environmental legislation and day to day operations are conducted in line with this policy requirements.

Staff, Students and Third Parties

Environmental care and consideration responsibility lies with all the University Community, who are responsible for taking accountability of their own environmental impact(s), reporting any environmental accidents and/or incidents. In addition to ensuring that they are aware of and have read this policy to understand its requirements and operate within the parameters of this policy.

6. Policy

This Policy provides guidance on managing and using resources in a responsible and sustainable manner to reduce environmental impact and govern environmental risks within the activities below and outlines our commitments to operating our services in a sustainable manner

Our Commitments include:

- Promoting education for sustainability throughout our educational activities.
- Helping to transform society through our sustainability research.
- Empowering and motivating colleagues, students and stakeholders through effective engagement.
- Improving our resilience to climate change impacts by taking a risk-based approach to adaptation.
- Reducing our carbon footprint.
- Enabling sustainable travel choices for students, colleagues and visitors.
- Preserving and enhancing biodiversity.
- Adopting circular economy principles in our approach to waste and resource management.
- Embedding sustainable practices across our supply chain, investment portfolio and the procurement of goods and services.
- Enabling sustainable water use.

Category	The University strives to:
Carbon Management	• Measure, monitor and publish annual Greenhouse Gas emissions inventory reports following best practice reporting requirements. • Reduce scope 1 and 2 carbon emissions in line with University KPIs and the Carbon Management Plan (UoW_CMP_Final-version.pdf). • Expand scope 3 carbon emission reporting and seek to reduce scope 3 emissions. • Seek to purchase renewable energy backed with Renewable Energy Guarantees of Origin (REGO) certificates where it is financially viable to do so. • Reduce the consumption of primary raw materials (including fossil fuels and water) and seek to enhance the contribution of energy efficient, low carbon measures, recyclable components and renewables. • Protecting the environment and preventing pollution that may arise from our activities. • Future proof the university and build resilience to climate change. • Endeavour to expand on-site clean energy generation systems capacities to both offset operational emissions and generate potential revenue streams.
Recycling and Waste Management	• Implement a waste management strategy to reduce overall waste production and increase the recycled component of the waste stream for all university activities. • Avoiding or limiting, wherever practical, the use of environmentally damaging substances, materials and processes. • Hazardous materials are disposed of safely as detailed by legislation. • Monitor all waste streams. • Continue to divert the University's waste from landfill. • Promote circular economy initiatives.

	• Increase recycling year on year percentages in line with ESG Targets. • Strive to place recycling and waste bins side by side to aid recycling for students, staff and visitors. • Educate the University community on responsible disposal. • Strive to re-use and re-purpose before purchasing new. • Utilise existing University furniture, IT and AV equipment fully. • Reduce the use of paper and disposables where possible. • When items are surplus to university needs; donate, re-use or recycle where applicable.
Sustainable Construction	• Where possible, projects on site for 12 weeks or longer are registered with the Considerate Constructors monitoring scheme to support University goals. • Ensure projects are designed to support net-zero operational emission aspirations where feasible. • Integration of on-site renewable energy generation in new builds and major refurbishments to offset operational emissions where feasible. • Endeavour to promote the use of low-carbon construction materials. • Strive to measure embodied carbon in construction projects. • Incorporate circular economy principles by designing buildings for disassembly and adaptability, reducing waste during future renovations or decommissioning. • Optimise Heating, Ventilation and Cooling (HVAC) systems using smart controls. • Exceed the minimum of 10% biodiversity net gain for projects where possible, contributing to local ecosystem enhancements and green spaces. • Installation of low-flow fixtures and water-saving technologies. • Seek certification where appropriate.

	Continue to explore clean energy and water recycling technologies as markets and innovations develop.
Sustainable Investment and Procurement	- Procurements shall comply with the University's Environmental Social & Governance (ESG) Strategy 2035 and promote awareness of this within tender activities and ongoing contract management. - Consider long term sustainable cost implications i.e. financial, environmental, social and environmental during the Procurement process and assessment of value for money. - Utilise ethical goods wherever there are demonstrable benefits to using them in accordance with legislation and the Procurement process. - Create a range of work-based opportunities both within the University and with its suppliers to enhance the employability of the University's Students and Graduates. - Equality & Diversity shall be considered at all stages of the procurement process. - Seek to advance the sustainability agenda and maximise the University's contribution to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs). - Encourage existing and future suppliers to provide options to enhance the sustainability outcomes for consideration. - Ample opportunities are provided to award contracts to small and medium enterprises (SMEs) where the Procurement Regulations/thresholds permit. - Procure energy efficient IT/ AV devices and peripheral equipment. - The university strives to review and screen out investments in fossil fuels, arms companies, border industry companies and companies in violation of international law.
Sustainable Catering	- Use Public Sector Frameworks such as The University Caterers Organisation (TUCO). - Strive to source sustainable and ethically produced food for its catering services and increase plant-based meal offerings. - Reduce the use of disposables and promote crockery and other re-usable food and drink serving options.

	• Where disposables are required, procure responsibly sourced and manufactured goods. • Reduce food waste by reducing the price of food or donating as it nears its 'consume-by' date. • Reduce food waste by recycling waste food or food by-products. • Monitor the carbon emissions from the catering service. • Seek to facilitate community food projects with the university community.
Energy Management	• The university shall continue to adopt energy saving practices including switching off lights and electrical devices with automatic energy saving power down or presence detection used where appropriate. • The Estates & Facilities Directorate will work to ensure that University HVAC is managed effectively and sustainably as far as is reasonably practical given building and equipment age, type and use. This is to maintain a healthy and comfortable working environment and reduce carbon emissions. • In the winter, in rooms where heating is present, during core heating hours (set appropriately for each building usage) the University aims to heat teaching and administration spaces to between 19 °C and 22 °C. • The University aims to heat Student Accommodation to between 19 °C and 22 °C in line with heating times published on the University Student Accommodation handbook and webpages. • In the summer, in rooms where cooling is present, during core cooling hours (set appropriately for each building usage) the University aims to cool spaces between 21°C and 24 °C. • The achieved temperatures in corridors, kitchens, building entrances and stairwells are subject to variation depending on the most suitable ventilation and weather conditions. Temperature queries will be investigated in a fair and consistent manner. • Data Centre temperatures will be maintained in line with Digital Services requirements and manufacturers' guidance to protect equipment. • The university will continually strive to ensure an efficient digital estate including automatic power down of the shared AV and student IT equipment.

	• Actively manage and reduce the energy intensity of servers, IT and communications infrastructure across the campuses through efficient cooling and energy conservation measures. • The university commits to supporting the adoption of new business processes -where appropriate- to make the most effective use of energy efficient digital assets. • Support technological advances to support Sustainability including hybrid conferencing and teaching where appropriate and proportionate.
Sustainable Travel	• Bike racks shall continue to be made available at each campus. • EV Charging infrastructure shall continue to be made available at each campus. • Travel Plans shall be kept up to date. • Commuter travel data shall be collected to inform scope 3 carbon emission reporting. • The university will seek to continue to provide shower facilities to support active travel. • Staff benefit schemes supporting sustainable travel shall continue be made available where possible, including cycling to work and the use of low-emission vehicles.
Biodiversity	• The University strives to develop and maintain the grounds and buildings of the University in an environmentally sensitive way, seeking to protect and enhance natural habitats and biodiversity. • Provide green space for leisure and wellbeing at all campuses. • Support planting activities at campuses to increase biodiversity and nature.
Education, Engagement, Research and Knowledge Exchange	• Strive to support the aims of the Concordat for the Environmental Sustainability of Research and Innovation Practice and work towards the priority areas (https://wellcome.org/about-us/positions-and-statements/environmental-sustainability-concordat)

	• Ensure that conferences and events are run in a sustainable manner possible by facilitating hybrid attendance where appropriate and practical, reducing the use of paper, and increasing recycling where possible. • Raising awareness of the sustainability agenda with students and staff through regular communications, activities and events. • Embed ESG into the university curriculum through Curriculum Framework and course validation. • Continue to integrate a consideration of the UN Sustainable Development Goals into the University's research activities. • Encourage ethical careers for graduates. • Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools rely on resource-hungry data centres that can constitute an environmental concern. University courses may consider drawing attention to the ways in which this concern may influence responsible and sustainable practices. The university community can develop critical thinking tools to consider the true cost of using AI in real-world contexts. This equips the university community to consider balanced use of resources and promotes critical thinking around AI dependency. • Promote the University's environmental achievements to attract environmentally conscious partners and students. • Utilise the University estate – including buildings, energy systems and infrastructure - as Living labs for student-led research, practical projects and hands-on sustainability engagement. • Seek to deploy digital tools - including applications and dashboards - to make environmental performance data visible and accessible to the university's community.
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7. Monitoring and Review

To ensure the effectiveness of this policy, the Estates and Facilities Directorate, the University sustainability team and key stakeholders and relevant departments and faculties will ensure regular communication takes place with key stakeholders to review objectives and targets set in line with this policy and ensure any issues/concerns are managed through the appropriate means, whilst reporting any impact to the relevant bodies and boards.

8. Data Protection Requirements

When personal data is expected to be used under this policy, staff must adhere to applicable data protection laws. These are outlined in the University's Data Protection Policy and related policies

(<https://www.wlv.ac.uk/about-us/corporate-information/wlv-policies/>). Any use of personal data should be detailed in the relevant privacy notice and processed in accordance with all data protection principles.

For processing activities that may carry high risk; completion of a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) may be required. This is determined by answering a series of screening questions included in the DPIA template. The Data Protection Team is available to provide assistance and guidance with any part of this process, please contact them via email: dataprotection@wlv.ac.uk.

Please note that whilst the Data Protection Act does not cover aggregate data, it must be ensured that small numbers held within aggregate data sets do not inadvertently identify individuals.

9. Training

Training requirements shall be addressed on a case-by-case basis. Stakeholders shall be communicated with, and actions shall be agreed through ESG working groups. An E-Learning module (mandatory training requirement) for staff has been developed to support the implementation of this policy. Information on sustainability shall be available to students and readily available to those situated in accommodation.

10. Exceptions

Where exceptional circumstances arise and result in non-compliance with this Policy, Sustainability Managers must be made aware, information can be reported directly to management or through the following email address: estatesmanagement@wlv.ac.uk.

11. Policy Review and Amendments

This Policy was approved by the University's Executive Board on 7th July 2026. The University may change this Policy at any time, and where appropriate. Where a policy is not due for review, but is found to require updating, it will remain published, unless the reasons for review render it obsolete.

12. Information and Resources

For further information on the University sustainability approach and for related strategies and plans please see the following link: [Environmental, Social and Governance - University of Wolverhampton](#).

For key related policies and information please access the Policy Hub:

- Procurement Policy
- Ethical Investments Policy
- Travel Expenses Policy
- Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking Policy
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion ([Equality, Diversity and Inclusion - University of Wolverhampton](#)).

Key Related Legislation

- Climate Change Act 2008
- Environment Act 2021
- Environmental Protection Act 1990
- Waste (England and Wales) Regulations 2011
- Procurement Act 2023/2024
- Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981
- Environmental Information Regulations 2004
- Modern Slavery Act 2015
- Hazardous Waste Regulations 2005
- WEEE Regulations 2013
- Energy Performance of Buildings Regulations 2012
- Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards (MEES)
- Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992

13. Contact

For guidance, support and queries regarding this policy please contact the Director of Estates and Facilities Robert Gilbert and the University Sustainability Managers Charlotte Baker and Zainab Own:

Email: r.gilbert5@wlv.ac.uk; c.baker23@wlv.ac.uk; z.own2@wlv.ac.uk

For general queries, please contact the Corporate Compliance Team via email: compliance@wlv.ac.uk.

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