

Environmental and Social Sustainability Policy

1. Overview

Keele University is the UK's largest integrated campus university, occupying a 617 acre estate and has over 10,000 students, predominantly full time and some part time. It was the first new UK University of the 20th century and undertakes world leading research and provides high quality teaching across a wide range of academic subjects. The campus community includes over 3,000 students living in Halls of Residence as well as over 180 staff residential properties, two 19th century Grade II listed buildings, extensive woodland and lakes and a large Science and Innovation Park. With a turnover in excess of £160 million, and over 2,000 staff, the University plays a major role in the regional economy.

2. Scope and aim of policy

Keele University is committed to 'promoting environmental and social sustainability in all that we do'. In order to achieve this we recognise, through our root and branch approach, the economic, environmental and social impact associated with our internal operations, research and teaching activities, the development of the campus infrastructure, energy consumption and carbon emissions and the university's influence on the wider local, regional, national and international communities. Our activities and operations contribute to achieving the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals and contributing to a fair, equitable and sustainable future for current and future generations, both in our local community and beyond the Keele campus. This policy sets out commitments to enable the University to deliver environmentally and socially sustainable activities and operations through achieving KPIs set out in associated strategies.

3. Our commitments:

3.1 Education, Research and Engagement

- Engage with staff, students and the community to raise awareness of environmental and social sustainability and all our roles in contributing to the UN's Sustainable Development Goals.
- Engage with staff and students to increase carbon literacy and understanding of the impacts of energy generation and consumption and other actions on climate change.
- Equip students with the knowledge and understanding, skills and attributes needed to work and live in a way that safeguards environmental, social and economic wellbeing through formal and informal curriculum approaches.
- Have world leading research in environmental and social sustainability and enable students, researchers and innovators to use the campus as a 'living laboratory' for research and development projects, student projects and dissertations and public awareness.
- Develop partnerships with key stakeholders to promote sustainability and opportunities for collaboration through research, education and operational activities.
- Support the health and wellbeing of staff and students through campus developments and sustainability initiatives.

3.2 Campus and Operations

- Develop and implement a Net Zero 2030 Carbon Strategy and action plan.
- Improve energy efficiency and maximise the use of renewable energy and on-site energy generation to reduce carbon emissions and support the Smart Energy Network Demonstrator (SEND).
- Develop a Water Efficiency Strategy to reduce overall water consumption year on year.
- Ensure environmental and energy best practice is properly considered and appropriately applied within all new build and refurbishment projects.
- Manage waste efficiently, minimising waste generated at source and increase reuse and recycling.
- Promote sustainable food choices to ensure healthy, nutritious food options are available on campus; consider food miles, embedded carbon, sustainable food production and welfare; and reduce food waste.
- Create an IT and Sustainability Roadmap to outline environmentally and socially sustainable approaches to managing IT assets (hardware and software). Support development and adoption of IT infrastructure to contribute to carbon reduction and alternative mobility objectives.
- Continue to implement sustainable travel options to and from campus and evaluate the need for travel and explore alternatives. Enhance public transport provision and reduce single occupancy car commuting. Enhance sustainable travel facilities on campus and improve the sustainability of University Owned fleet.
- Maintain and enhance the campus grounds to support biodiversity for the benefit of people and wildlife.

3.3 Leadership and Governance

- Embed environmental and social sustainability concerns reflected in the UN's Sustainable Development Goals into the governance structures and decision making of the university and university-level communications.
- Work to recognised environmental and energy standards including 'ISO 14001' and 'ISO 50001' to continually improve processes, practices and performance and set objectives and targets that are reviewed and updated annually. Ensure that the necessary resources, support and information is made available to achieve the stated objectives and targets.
- Maintain an environmental legal register and undertake effective monitoring and auditing to ensure compliance with all applicable environmental and energy legislation and other requirements.
- Maintain appropriate data protection and data usage policies to instill an understanding around the ethical use of data and to ensure compliance with all applicable legislation and other requirements.
- Maintain appropriate emergency and maintenance plans and instill excellent management to prevent pollution.
- Support a procurement policy and processes that encourage a positive environmental and social impact and ensure that sustainability is embedded within the procurement systems of the University.
- Uphold an ethical investment policy and consider environmental, social and ethical values of University investments.

The University Council, the Vice-Chancellor and University Executive are responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented within the University, however all staff and students share this responsibility. This Policy will be made available to the public via the University webpages and will be reviewed and updated on an annual basis. A biennial Sustainability report will be produced to highlight success and report on progress.

Signed:



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