



Loughborough
University

SUSTAINABILITY ACTION PLAN 2020-2024

Sustainability and *Building Excellence* Strategic Principles

Introduction

The University is committed to acting in a socially responsible way that maximises its positive impact and minimises its negative impact on society and the communities in which it is based. This is reflected in the University's strategy *Creating Better Futures*. Together which is outward and forward looking, recognising the importance of our external influence and the impact of our actions on the world around us, and reflecting the challenges that face us as a society and states that **"we will develop students who have a high degree of climate change awareness and carbon literacy so that they can take responsibility for sustainable actions in themselves and others"** and also **"we will seek and engage strategic partnerships that will strengthen our response to the climate emergency and help accelerate progress towards net zero"**.

The University takes its responsibility for the environment seriously, and understands the need to respond to the challenges we face globally around issues such as climate change, human wellbeing, food, water and energy security. Loughborough seeks to respond to these opportunities by leading in environmental sustainability, building on the work of our research and enterprise activities and aspiring to make the campus a living laboratory demonstrating operationally our mission to provide a sustainable campus. There is also an opportunity in teaching and learning where students are increasingly interested in courses which include sustainability.

In respect of social responsibility there are wide-reaching implications for how staff and students are respected and supported, for relationships with local communities and for how we undertake our academic and business activities, as well as opportunities to embed research and enterprise. There is a strong link to the curriculum where, within the key aim Education and student experience, **"embedding environmental sustainability and ensuring all our staff and students have a high degree of carbon literacy" and "developing individuals who can have a positive influence across diverse communities, improving society for the future"**. The Students Union is central to our social responsibility response.

Implementation

Practical steps Heads of Service and Deans of School can undertake to support delivery of this action plan:

1. Display the University Environmental Policy and Sustainability Charter and support communication of these by strongly encouraging Champions and Enthusiasts to aid dissemination and promote proactive behaviour.
2. Promote energy saving, carbon reduction and save water as part of daily routines.
3. Support resource efficiency by ensuring reuse, making use of recycling facilities and complying with waste management practices.
4. Be mindful of the external and internal environment in any construction or refurbishment projects, including any impact on flora and fauna and wider biodiversity.
5. Actively support staff and student health and wellbeing by promoting community engagement and volunteering.
6. Promote sustainable business travel to save money and help the environment. Encourage staff and students to use sustainable travel alternatives offered across, to and from campus.
7. Familiarise yourself and your team with relevant Environmental Management System Operational Control Procedures to help the University maintain compliance and reduce risk.
8. Identify opportunities to enhance the student experience by exploring and being open to integration of sustainability into the curriculum.
9. Collaborate on projects that can link research, teaching and operational activities to put theory into practice.

10. Read this document and develop additional actions as appropriate. Ask the Sustainability Team to help you create an action plan for your area.

Context

For the purposes of implementing its *Creating Better Futures. Together* Strategy, the University defines Sustainability as:

Action by the University, and its staff and students that considers environmental impact from a social, economic and environmental perspective following the principles of inclusivity, integrity, stewardship and transparency, embedding sustainability into all our activities, operations and processes.

And defines Corporate Social Responsibility as:

Action by the University, and its staff and students, to maximise the positive and minimise the negative impacts of their actions and activities in line with the principle of “good citizenship”.

Sustainability is strategically important to the University because:

- It is the *right thing* to do, reflecting our mission and values
- It builds on the work of our research
- There is a *sound business case* based on the contribution sustainability makes to achieving institutional strategic goals which include legal compliance, aspiring to best practice and financial efficiencies

Sustainability is also of growing importance to a range of important stakeholders including:

- Prospective students (Campus environment, health & wellbeing, ethical)
- Prospective staff (Health & Wellbeing, Ethical)
- Current students (student experience, belonging and community)
- Current staff (retention, added value, engagement, funding and grants)
- Organisations and businesses (Award winning, good practise, compliant ISO 14001, risk reduction, collaborative)

Strategic Principles

- Embedded.*** *We will demonstrate a consistent and meaningful engagement with sustainability through our capital development programme, campus operations and academic activities and embed sustainability considerations in our school and services management processes*
- Visible.*** *Sustainability considerations will be evident throughout our activities and be a common thread in the partnerships that we forge. We will continue to have an important role in enhancing the social and economic wellbeing of the town and the wider region, working closely with key stakeholders and organisations, including residents, local authorities and businesses.*
- Integrated.*** *Management of environmental impact in our operational activity to protect and enhance the surrounding environment. ISO 14001 provides the framework to meet increasingly high customer expectations of corporate responsibility as well as legal and regulatory requirements.” This will reduce risk.*

Strategic Rationale

Sustainability will make a significant contribution across all four main themes of Creating Better Futures. Together:

Strategic Theme	Examples of Sustainability Contribution
Sport, health and wellbeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Delivering benefits to the world of sport and improvements to public health• Improving health and wellbeing across diverse communities• Creating an active and accessible environment to ensure that our staff, students and partners can access a healthy lifestyle
Climate change and net zero	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Grow our research and innovation capacity, in areas such as clean energy and the circular economy• Develop students with a high degree of climate change awareness and carbon literacy so they can take responsibility for sustainable actions in themselves and others• Help diverse communities around the globe adapt and prosper in a changing world climate.• Bring together our creative, analytical and technological expertise to accelerate a reduction of global emissions• Use our expertise and influence to help sporting policy makers and organisations in their transition to net zero• Seek and engage strategic partnerships that strengthen our response to the climate emergency and help accelerate progress towards net zero• Engage staff, develop our estate, and change working practices to achieve net zero emissions from our own operations
Vibrant and inclusive communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bring together creative and communication skills alongside analytical and technological approaches to find novel solutions to societal issues• Develops individual who have a positive influence across diverse communities, improving society and enriching cultures• Spotlight and address concerns and inequalities faced by a diverse range of people, with impact spanning local and international communities• Be a trusted source of knowledge and expertise on global societal and cultural issues, informing policy makers, the public and the world's media• Seek and engage strategic partnerships to amplify our impact on societal and cultural issues

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Action Plan

The University of Loughborough is committed to leading change in environmental sustainability. The following table sets out strategic aims and objectives for sustainability for the years 2020 – 2024.

Sustainability Action Plan – Strategic Aims & Objectives			
Aims	Objectives	Actions to be taken	Lead
TEACHING			
1. We will aspire to create a learning environment where students are provided with the opportunity to become informed on the applicability of sustainability to their area of study	<p>To provide appropriate training to academic colleagues with professional development opportunities in educating for sustainable development (ESD)</p> <p>To give students access to ESD via a set of learner attributes that are delivered through the formal and informal curriculum</p> <p>To embed elements of sustainability across the curriculum using the interdisciplinary approach already in place within the Research challenge areas and alignment with wider institutional pedagogic, teaching, learning and curriculum initiatives. To provide opportunities for students to develop skills to respond to global sustainability challenges as <i>adaptable 21st century citizens that make a significant contribution to global society</i> in an emerging green economy</p>	<p>Work towards the UNESCO framework for ESD</p> <p>Increase the number of students on relevant environmental or sustainability modules and courses</p> <p>Map ESD in the formal and informal curriculum utilising existing University systems and processes.</p> <p>Conduct a baseline review of all taught units, develop training initiatives, generate open access online resources and implement monitoring procedures.</p> <p>Continue to promote internships and placements</p>	<p>PVC Teaching (lead)</p> <p>Associate Dean Teaching (Lead)</p> <p>Learning & Teaching Committee (Enablers)</p> <p>Centre for Academic Practice (Enablers)</p> <p>ESD Working Group (enabler)</p>
2. To enhance the student experience through informal learning using the biodiverse and exceptionally green campus as a platform to foster sustainable and healthy lifestyles alongside learning	<p>To create a “living laboratory” through our teaching, research and operational activity and programmes allowing students to live and study sustainably whilst learning through experience.</p> <p>To promote the Loughborough community</p>	<p>Seek to empower students to become global citizens through their fields of study, our community action programmes and employability award scheme.</p> <p>Encourage students to support the demonstrator campus and living laboratory</p>	<p>Academic (enabler) SU (lead)</p> <p>Employability/Careers (enabler)</p> <p>Centre for Academic</p>

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	<p>where engagement and participation are encouraged supporting a sense of wellbeing and belonging. <i>Working in partnership with Loughborough Students' Union, we will offer the best possible all-round experience, providing our students with a wide range of opportunities that enable them to achieve their full potential, professionally and personally as well as academically.</i></p> <p>To provide students with the tools to promote sustainable business practice, leadership and an awareness of environmental issues</p>	<p>themes either through their studies or day to day activities.</p> <p>Continue to promote active social and cultural engagement with sustainable volunteering opportunities on campus</p>	<p>Practice (Enablers)</p> <p>Enterprise (enabler)</p> <p>Sustainability Team (enabler)</p>
RESEARCH			
<p>3. We will encourage knowledge transfer amongst our staff, students and alumni that can contribute to a meaningful and positive approach to addressing some of the challenges of sustainable development and Corporate Social Responsibility.</p>	<p>To widen the community action programme to ensure staff and students can participate in environmental, sustainability and CSR projects</p> <p>To communicate and promote our environmental sustainability activities and achievements to the Loughborough community.</p>	<p>Expand our community action programme to include staff.</p> <p>Continue to improve our award winning behavioural change campaign to ensure engagement and positive behaviour change.</p> <p>Consult with our community through our policies and strategies using meaningful and accessible examples of sustainability</p> <p>Encourage our alumni team to promote our sustainability and CSR achievements</p>	<p>HR (lead)</p> <p>Sustainability Team (Lead)</p> <p>Marketing & Advancement (enabler)</p> <p>Centre for Academic Practise (enablers)</p>
<p>4. To identify research related to sustainability and identify where this can be linked to operational activity on campus.</p>	<p>To continue to identify and publicise research activity in our 6 challenge areas that focuses on climate change, human wellbeing, food, culture and citizenship, water and energy security</p>	<p><i>Work with Research Office to:</i></p> <p>Evidence funding for environmental sustainability related research</p> <p>Ensure transparency through annual</p>	<p><i>PVC Research (Lead)</i></p> <p><i>Associate Dean Research (Knowledge)</i></p> <p><i>Research Challenges</i></p>

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<p>To utilise our Research Challenge areas to facilitate knowledge exchange amongst the Loughborough community</p>	<p>To establish the synergies between teaching, research and operations identifying current activities and initiating new activity through alignment with Research Challenge implementation plans and funding proposals. <i>The relevance of our research to real-life issues will place us at the forefront internationally, increasing significantly the global visibility and reputation of the University</i></p> <p>To evidence that our students are involved with and introduced to world leading research that responds to these opportunities fulfilling the ambition of <i>Building Excellence</i></p>	<p>reporting of research led operational activities</p> <p>Promote and signpost key activity on the sustainability webpages</p> <p>Identify and publicise relevant case studies</p>	<p><i>Academic (enablers)</i></p> <p><i>School Research Coordinators (enablers)</i></p> <p><i>RCD Managers (enablers)</i></p> <p><i>Sustainability Team (enablers)</i></p> <p><i>FM (enablers)</i></p>
ENTERPRISE			
<p>5. To create a Demonstrator Campus</p>	<p>To establish tangible evidence of a “living laboratory” through teaching, research and operational projects <i>by identifying current activities and initiating new activity through alignment with current implementation plans and enterprise projects.</i></p> <p>Foster collaborative projects within the Loughborough Community to deliver this objective moving from theory based work and research to actual practice <i>providing our students with an exceptional learning environment.</i></p>	<p>Identify the synergies between teaching, research and operations and to evidence this through active programmes of delivery on campus.</p> <p>This may include projects such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Campus partner cluster activity • Sustainability of LUSEP infrastructure • Active Travel • Greening the fleet (low emission) • Fruit Routes and Eat your Campus • Developing research led projects into campus development 	<p><i>PVC Enterprise (lead)</i></p> <p><i>Research Challenges Academic (enablers)</i></p> <p><i>Sustainability Team (lead)</i></p> <p><i>Associate Dean Enterprise (enablers)</i></p> <p><i>RCD Managers (enablers)</i></p> <p><i>FM(enablers)</i></p>
<p>6 To use enterprise and</p>	<p>To continue to create social, cultural and</p>	<p><i>Work with the Enterprise Office to:</i></p>	<p>PVC Enterprise (lead)</p>

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<p>innovation to showcase our contribution to meeting the global challenges in sustainable development</p>	<p>economic impact from University research that contribute to the global challenges of climate change, human wellbeing, food, water and energy security <i>ensuring that the impact of our activities helps to support economic development and drive innovation and performance on local, national and international levels.</i></p> <p>To encourage the building of partnerships (particularly in developing countries) that creates successful sustainable projects that are mutually beneficial. <i>Through the integration of influential research, vibrant enterprising culture and outstanding learning opportunities, we will enhance our ability to drive forward solutions to contemporary global challenges</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence where funding has been awarded to create impact for environmental sustainability related activity • Ensure transparency through annual reporting of enterprise led operational activities • Promote and signpost key sustainability related case studies <p>Evidence the number of spin out/businesses that are working in or have contributed technologies to developing countries</p> <p>Evidence of knowledge, technology and innovation that has contributed to the global challenges of climate change, human wellbeing, food, water and energy security.</p>	<p>Associate Dean Enterprise (enabler)</p>
<p>OPERATIONAL</p>			
<p>7 To manage our estate in an efficient and low risk way reducing our impact through ongoing monitoring of our operational processes, systems and outputs.</p>	<p>Waste - To ensure that, in accordance with legislation, waste will be managed in a sustainable manner following the waste hierarchy</p> <p>Carbon - To reduce the institution's carbon footprint, focusing in particular on the reduction in use of gas and electricity from the national grid.</p> <p>Water - To reduce water consumption from the University's operations.</p> <p>Construction and Refurbishment - To reduce the impact of construction,</p>	<p>Deliver operational objectives and targets in the following areas: Waste Management Carbon Management Water Management Construction and Refurbishment Sustainable Travel Emissions to Air & Discharges to Water Sustainable Procurement Ethical Banking & Investment These will be measured using a per capita framework.</p>	<p>Sustainability Team (lead) Local HSE Groups (enablers) Operational Managers (lead) FM (lead) Finance (lead) Procurement (enabler) SU (enabler)</p>

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	<p>refurbishment and maintenance of the estate Sustainable Travel - To reduce the use of fossil fuels for personal and business travel in order to decrease the carbon impact of these as part of the transport management strategy.</p> <p>Emissions to Air & Discharges to Water - To reduce risk of pollution.</p> <p>Sustainable Procurement - To reduce the demand for non-sustainable goods and services. Ethical Banking & Investment- To ensure that we only bank/invest with companies that do not fund fossil fuels, arms or breach international laws Noise Pollution - To reduce complaints and nuisance.</p>	<p>Provide cohesion for these areas using the environmental management system ISO 14001. This will also give quality assurance and support LU to <i>embed sustainability and social responsibility into all of its processes, operations and developments.</i></p>	
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