



# Environmental Policy

UEP/0/12

## Vision

The University recognises that in pursuing its strategic objectives, not least in relation to research and teaching, it has a responsibility towards, and should aim to protect and nurture the environment. By exercising proper control over all its activities the University will aim to ensure sustainable use of resources and prevent wasteful or damaging practices.

The environment is a key part of the University's Strategic Framework, Shaping our Future: Birmingham 2015. *'We are producing an environmental strategy which sets out our core ambition to reduce our carbon footprint and evaluate the environmental impact of all our activities. This will encompass imaginative projects to ensure that our historic estate can be managed sustainably, preserving the legacy of our founders while updating it to meet the challenges of the future.'*

*Environmental sustainability is a core aim, and our Carbon Management Strategy will deliver a range of responses to ensure we achieve a 20% reduction in our carbon emissions by 2020, whilst preserving the iconic cultural heritage embodied by our historic estate.*

This document sets out the University's aims and objectives for safeguarding the environment, and details the organisation and arrangements for implementing and monitoring them. It applies to all land, premises and activities within the control of the University. It has been approved by the Sustainability Task Group.

The Environmental policy aims and objectives will be supported by a series of specific policies aimed at identified environmental issues (for example Paper Policy). The specific policies will set the management standards for these issues and will be further supported by guidance to assist responsible groups and individuals. Current policies and guidance may be accessed from the University's Environment World Wide Web Pages at: <http://www.environment.bham.ac.uk/>

Colleges and the Corporate Services will be required to produce internal systems and documentation for implementing this and associated policies locally.

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# Environmental Policy Statement

UEP/0/12

## Aims and Objectives

### Environmental Management

- To promote sound environmental management policies and practices throughout the University.
- As a minimum, to comply with the requirements of relevant legislation.
- To reduce and, where practicable, prevent pollution.
- To adopt targets for improving environmental performance.
- To ensure a sound understanding of current environmental performance.

### Carbon Management

- To implement a carbon management strategy and associated implementation plan, including the efficient use of energy.
- To reduce greenhouse gas emissions in line with University targets ; 20% on 2005/06 levels by 2020.
- To ensure the uptake of low carbon technologies and practices in relation to buildings and equipment.

### Water

- To make efficient and environmentally responsible use of water, including identifying opportunities for water reuse.

### Procurement

- To promote sustainable resource management practices as identified in the University's Sustainable Procurement Policy

### Waste Reduction and Recycling

- To set and achieve targets for reducing resource use.
- To minimise the adverse environmental impacts of the decommissioning and disposal of University assets.
- To increase the rate of recycling of all appropriate materials, based on life-cycle principles.
- To implement sustainable resource management practices, based on reduce, reuse and recycle principles.

### Transport

- To implement the University's Sustainable Travel Plan.

### University Estate

- To develop and implement a University estate strategy based on sound environmental sustainability principles.
- To implement the University's biodiversity policy.
- To require a sustainable construction plan for any new University development and refurbishment project

### Communication and Awareness

- To communicate internally and externally the University's environmental objectives and performance.
- To raise awareness of staff and students of the University's environmental impact, activities and performance and good practice.
- To provide appropriate environmental educational programmes for staff and students.
- To encourage and facilitate feedback and suggestions on ensuring good practice.

## **Evaluation of Environmental Policy**

- To undertake a regular review of environmental management procedures and activities to ensure suitability, adequacy and effectiveness.

## **Responsibilities**

The main responsibility for implementation of this policy lies with the University Council and the Vice-Chancellor as the University's Chief Executive.

The Heads of Colleges and the Directors of the Corporate Services are responsible for ensuring compliance with University Environment Policy within their area of control.

The University will actively monitor the performance of Colleges and Divisions in the implementation of the aims and objectives of this Policy in the activities under their control.

Whilst the University accepts the main responsibility for implementation of this policy, individuals have a very important role in co-operating with those responsible for safeguarding the environment. Individuals are required to abide by rules and requirements made under the authority of this policy.

Vice-Chancellor  
July 2012

# Organisation and Arrangements for Implementing the Policy

*Many environmental issues, including hazardous waste disposal, the keeping of radioactive materials, releases of substances to atmosphere, are also of concern because of their health and safety implications and are already the subject of arrangements made under Health and Safety Policy. Where appropriate, joint environmental and health and safety arrangements have been made.*

In order to implement the Environmental Policy the University has established clear lines of responsibility at University, College and Corporate Service level. Individual Colleges and Corporate Services are required to make arrangements for promoting environmental awareness and dealing with environmental impacts encountered within their sphere of activities.

## University Level Organisation

### Vice-Chancellor

The Vice-Chancellor has overall responsibility to Council for environmental affairs at the University. In this position the Vice-Chancellor is advised by the Sustainability Task Group. A Pro-Vice-Chancellor, as his nominee, acts as chair of the Group.

### Registrar and Secretary

The Registrar and Secretary has responsibility for the University's administration and therefore the impact on the environment of the University's corporate services, in particular the management and development of its estate.

### University Executive Board

UEB considers matters affecting the University, its strategy, operation or management. It receives reports from the Sustainability Task Group and reports to Council on matters of Environment and Sustainability.

### Sustainability Task Group (STG)

The Sustainability Task Group develops the University's Sustainability Strategy and is responsible for reporting on performance. Senior members of the University community with key responsibilities in relevant areas are members of the task group. Its terms of reference are;

- Embed sustainability in the strategic framework for 2010-2015
- Actively promote and advocate the identified strategic aims of the University, one of which should be for the University of Birmingham to be recognised as one of the HE leaders in Sustainability, particularly within the Russell Group.
- Monitor implementation of the strategic aims by the University with authority to take action where necessary.
- Identify relevant legislative changes and new requirements in relation to sustainability and determine required responsibilities and actions
- Implement the University's 21 Declaration on Sustainability and UUK statement of Intent.
- Provide input and expertise and ownership of reporting sustainability performance
- Have oversight of University participation in relevant league tables, schemes and awards relevant to the broad sustainability agenda.
- Monitor the progress of the University's carbon management plan.
- Report to UEB on progress against priorities as needed and as a minimum once a year.

## **Support and Advice**

The University has appointed a Sustainability and Environmental Advisor whose role is to:

- provide advice on environmental matters;
- keep up to date on developments in environmental legislation and practice;
- monitor on behalf of STG the implementation of the University Environmental Policy;
- liaise with specialists in or outside the University, as appropriate;
- organise environmental awareness, training and instruction;
- publicise and promote environmental information, policies and guidance.
- liaise with the Environment Agency where appropriate

The Health and Safety Unit is staffed by experienced persons who have appropriate qualifications and knowledge of environmental issues which overlap with health and safety risks arising from the University's activities.

## **Strategy, Planning and Resources Committee**

The SPRC is responsible to Council for the overall management of University assets and resources, bringing together all academic, financial and physical planning in a strategic framework.

## **Infrastructure Coordination Group**

The Infrastructure Coordination Group is responsible to SPRC via UEB for general planning and development of the University's Estate as part of the University's overall corporate plan. This includes the acquisition, development and disposal of buildings and sites and approval of new buildings.

## **The Estates Office**

The basic infrastructure of the University, including policy on planning, water and energy use, and therefore its impact on the environment, in most cases, comes under the responsibility of the Director of the Estates Office under the authority of the Registrar and Secretary.

The Director of Estates is responsible for the maintenance of premises and is also responsible for those parts of the University estate not associated with Colleges or other Divisions of Corporate Services, e.g. University roadways, footpaths, and car parks.

The University's supply and distribution of water, electricity and gas are managed by the Operations Section. The head of utilities:

- provides advice on energy, carbon management and water conservation issues;
- co-ordinates the purchase of utilities; and
- monitors the University's utility costs, consumption and associated carbon emissions.

## **Hospitality and Accommodation Services (HAS)**

Environmental Services, HAS are responsible for waste management and recycling services.

A Policy and Environmental Services Manager has been appointed to:

- manage the University's waste management and recycling contracts
- provide advice on waste management and recycling;
- keep up to date on developments in relevant legislation and practice;
- liaise with the Environment Agency where appropriate

A Sustainable Travel Plan Coordinator has been appointed to:

- develop and implement the University's Sustainable Travel Plan
- implement and provide advice on sustainable travel initiatives;
- keep up to date on developments in relevant legislation and practice;
- liaise with the relevant authorities such as the City Council where appropriate

## **Waste Reduction and Recycling Group**

The group is responsible for developing waste reduction and recycling initiatives, and provides occasional reports to STG

## **Finance Office**

The Director of Finance is responsible for the preparation of annual capital and revenue budgets and financial plans, within the context of the approved University Plan, and for the financial administration of the University under the authority of the Registrar and Secretary. The Procurement Division provides an advisory service on all matters related to supply chain management and, in particular, on commercial and contractual issues. The Procurement Division is responsible for providing advice and guidance on implementing the University Sustainable Procurement Policy.

## **Colleges and Corporate Services Organisation**

In addition to the 5 academic Colleges, the Corporate Services are seen as separate for the purposes of implementation of environmental policy.

## **Responsibilities of Heads of Colleges and Director's of Corporate Services**

The Head or Director is responsible for fostering an environment in which environmental issues are seen as integral and essential to the College's or Corporate Service's activities. The Head or Director is responsible to the University for ensuring that risks to the environment arising from the College's or Corporate Service's activities are properly identified and controlled in conformity with University policy. This responsibility extends to staff and student activities away from University premises. .

In discharging their duties, Heads or Directors will need to appoint Environmental Coordinators. Heads or Directors should identify coordinators depending on need, potentially based around Schools and Departments. In delegating some of the day-to-day tasks to such people the Head must ensure that they have appropriate experience, special knowledge (of the equipment, process, materials or activity), appropriate training and adequate resources (especially time) to carry out the tasks. The duties of such persons should be agreed by the Head or Director in a written statement of duties and responsibilities.

In particular Heads or Directors must ensure that:

- actively promoting awareness and good practice amongst their staff and students
- environmental issues are included in appropriate local policies that are disseminated throughout the College or Corporate Service;
- there is an annual College or Corporate Service carbon management plan including aims and objectives which are specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and have clear deadlines for completion;
- consideration is given to the environmental impact of all activities under their control and that, in certain circumstances where required by current University Policy, an environmental impact assessment is carried out and that appropriate action is taken to eliminate or control the impacts identified, in particular to:
  - implement waste hierarchy;
  - implement College or Corporate Service carbon management plan;
  - minimise hazardous discharges;
  - implement University Sustainable Procurement Policy.
- there is effective consultation and co-operation with staff and students within their College or Corporate Service and arrangements exist for raising environmental matters;
- suitable monitoring and review arrangements are introduced to ensure University Policy and College or Corporate Service rules are being adhered to;
- proper arrangements are made for the segregation and collection of waste in conformity with University Policy.

## **Responsibilities of Environmental Coordinators**

- Liaise with the University Sustainability & Environmental Advisor to implement the University's Environmental Policy in line with the College's or Corporate Service's environmental plan

## **Responsibilities of Facilities Managers**

- To communicate progress of the College Carbon Management plan to STG

## **Responsibilities of Supervisors**

Persons in supervisory positions, including any such persons not actually employed by the University, have special responsibilities with regard to risk to the environment when in charge of students, research workers, employees or visitors, either individually or in groups. Such persons must ensure that adequate consideration has been given to risks to the environment and appropriate action is taken to eliminate or control the risks. In cases of uncertainty, expert advice should be sought in the first instance through the College or Corporate Service Environmental Co-ordinators or the University Health and Safety Unit.

## **Responsibilities of Individuals**

Individuals have at all times a duty to conduct themselves and to do their work in such a manner to safeguard the environment.

Individuals have a duty to co-operate with the University in complying with Policy requirements that relate to their activities and actions in case of emergencies. In addition, there is a duty to report incidents that may cause harm to the environment.