

Sustainability Steering Group Terms of Reference
January 2026

Aim	The Sustainability Steering Group provides strategic leadership for sustainability at the University of Birmingham, ensuring effective delivery of sustainability priorities and our net zero commitment and providing bi-annual performance reporting to University Executive Board .
Background	<p>As a University founded on social responsibility, we are committed to addressing the sustainability and climate challenges facing our world. Our ambition is to embed sustainability into everything we do, delivering positive change through research, education, operations, partnerships, and through the behaviours and actions of our staff, students and local communities.</p> <p>To achieve this ambition and deliver our sustainability goals, the University has identified four priority areas:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Make major contributions to research in sustainability and climate action 2. Integrate sustainability into our academic programmes 3. Adopt environmentally responsible practices across our University 4. Embed a culture of sustainability within and beyond our campus <p>Sustainability Steering Group monitor progress against a suite of measures outlined the UEB Sustainability Scorecard, including our commitment to make annual gains in reducing our carbon footprint, aiming to achieve net zero carbon for scope 1 and 2 by 2035 and overall by 2045.</p>
Purpose	<p>The Sustainability Steering Group (SSG) will:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide strategic oversight and coordination for the University's research, education, operational and external engagement sustainability priorities (including net zero commitment), advising on key decisions and escalating material issues related to the University strategy, operations/policy, or management to University Executive Board 2. Provide strategic advice and endorsement for investment and/or major change projects impacting our sustainability goals 3. Lead University-wide coordination to deliver research, education, operations and external engagement sustainability goals, establishing shared plans and appointing accountable leads and commissioning SSG Action Groups 4. Ensure sustainability is embedded appropriately within University governance, planning, risk management, decision-making at both institution and college levels 5. Set institutional sustainability and carbon reduction measures and targets, oversee performance, and monitor progress 6. Receive regular updates from SSG Action Groups, College Sustainability Committees, Professional Service Division Sustainability Committees and Dubai campus and provide appropriate support, challenge, guidance and escalation

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. Oversee sustainability-related league table action plans and drive continuous performance improvement 8. Lead and support communication and engagement on sustainability across the University, including students, staff and external stakeholders 9. Produce publicly available progress updates and carbon accounting reports 10. Review external benchmarking, legislation and best practice to inform continuous improvement 11. Support knowledge-sharing by maintaining accessible information, materials and examples of best practice
Reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SSG will receive a monthly update progress update from sustainability accountable leads at each meeting • SSG will receive a bi-monthly progress update from College Sustainability Committees and Dubai campus • SSG will report risks to University Executive Board quarterly and provide a broader performance update (minimum) annually • SSG will provide subject-specific updates to University Research Committee and University Education committee, to enable strategic oversight, annually • SSG will share minutes and highlight report with College Sustainability Leads
Membership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professor David M. Hannah, DPVC Sustainability (Chair) • Zoe Hurley, Head of Sustainability (Deputy Chair) • Professor Julia Myatt, Director of Sustainability Education • Professor Jonathan Radcliffe, Academic Representative (Net Zero) • Professor Paul Lewis, Academic Representative (Responsible Business) • Professor Aleks Cavoski, College Lead Representative • Professor Sarah Aldred, DPVC Research Environment • Mark Senior, Chief of Staff • Steve Jordan, Director of Estates • Steve Hawkins, Director of Campus Services or Monica Guise, Director of Facilities Services • Rebecca Lambert, Director of Planning and Performance Insight • Kathryn Hobbs, Deputy Director, Communications and Reputation • Danielle Edwards, Deputy Finance Director (Projects) • Gaynor Collins-Punter, Deputy Director IT Services • Max Williams – Sustainability Officer, University Guild • Abhijeet Patel – Sports & Sustainability Officer, University Guild • Aimee Archer, Secretariat
Member Responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attend all SSG meetings or nominate a briefed deputy with equivalent expertise and leadership responsibility • Submit papers using SSG templates and updates to the SSG Priorities Update Report - 2526.xlsx minimum 7 working days in advance • Report progress and risks honestly and promptly • Read papers in advance and come prepared to discuss, challenge, and support decision-making

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actively contribute expertise, insights, perspectives and provide constructive, evidence-based challenge to strengthen decision-making • Ensure information, decisions and actions from SSG are communicated back to relevant teams • Champion sustainability within their own College, Professional Service Division and Student Networks • Take ownership of assigned actions and deliver within agreed timescales • Promote and model the University's sustainability values and behaviours
Secretariat and administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Sustainability Steering Group will meet monthly, excluding August • The agenda will be prepared by SSG Secretariat in collaboration with the Chair • All papers for the meeting will be filed and uploaded onto the SSG Teams site, 5-7 working days in advance of the meeting. • Draft minutes will be uploaded to the SSG Teams site within 5 working days • SSG business will be scheduled for discussion at a monthly meeting; urgent decisions may be taken out of committee by exception and by express agreement of the Chair
Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SSG terms of reference will be reviewed every 2 years, scheduled by SSG Secretariat; membership will be updated as frequently as required • The existence and purpose of SSG Actions Groups will be reviewed every 2 years, scheduled by SSG Secretariat