

# ENVIRONMENTAL & ENERGY POLICY

The University of Reading is at the forefront of research into sustainability and the environment and takes its environmental responsibilities seriously. The University aims to manage its activities in ways that are environmentally sustainable, economically feasible and socially responsible. The University is committed to protecting the environment and minimising the impact of its activities on the environment and embedding a culture of sustainability. The University commits to:

## 1. Compliance Obligations and Management

- Comply with applicable legal requirements, accreditations, agreements and other compliance obligations (as listed in the EEMS).
- Continually improve the Energy and Environmental Management System (EEMS) in order to:
  - Enhance the University's environmental performance;
  - Manage its negative environmental impacts in order to reduce them;
  - Recognise its positive impacts in order to communicate and promote them;
- Ensure that necessary resources are available to meet the requirements of this policy and that effective governance structures are in place to review, authorise and oversee relevant actions.

## 2. Prevention of Pollution

- Reduce the risk and minimise the impact from campus activities by controlling emissions, meeting regulatory standards and implementing emergency response procedures to prevent pollution.

## 3. Energy and Water Consumption

- Continually reduce energy and water consumption and overall carbon emissions in line with the University's Net Zero Carbon Plan.
- Continually improve energy and water efficiency, using absolute and relative metrics to assess performance.
- Invest in new energy and water efficient and re-use technologies, and support relevant design activities, where these cost-effectively improve performance.
- Work towards appropriately metering all buildings, linking all metering automatically to the University's utilities database.
- Ensure the availability of information by monitoring, measuring and reporting on energy and water consumption on an on-going basis.

## 4. Waste

- Minimise the impact of waste on the environment by promoting and facilitating the consideration of the waste hierarchy (reduce, reuse, recycle, recover, dispose); whilst diverting waste away from landfill where possible and managing waste in a responsible and compliant manner.
- Maintain and actively progress a University Waste and Resource Use Strategy, including a focus on tackling food waste and reducing single-use plastics in line with UK Government Plans.

## 5. Travel and Transport

- Promote and facilitate sustainable modes of travel including walking, cycling, travelling by public transport and car sharing.
- Monitor the University's business and commuter travel (students and staff), seeking options to reduce its environmental impact and exploring options for reducing the need to travel.

- Maintain and actively progress a University Travel Plan.

## **6. Procurement**

- Promote sustainable resource management practices and support the purchase of energy efficient products and services that positively impact energy performance.
- Purchase energy and water cost-effectively, ethically and from certified renewable energy suppliers.
- Ensure that sustainability is an embedded part of the University's end to end procurement process.

## **7. Conservation and Biodiversity**

- Promote awareness of the natural environment and operate in a manner that protects and enhances biodiversity.

## **8. Estates Development and Maintenance**


- Manage the University's property portfolio by considering appropriate sustainable construction, energy and water efficiency opportunities in the design, modification, and refurbishment of new and existing facilities and maintenance practices where practical.
- Consider the whole life costs for mechanical, electrical and building design, including considerations of suitable sustainable technologies and renewable energy options to ensure our estate is resilient to the changes in climate.

## **9. Communication and Community Involvement**

- Engage with staff, students and the wider community to raise the profile of sustainability, ensure environmental responsibilities are clearly understood, and actions to reduce individual and collective environmental impacts are encouraged.
- Communicate the University's environmental, energy and water performance annually, both internally and externally.
- Invite and respond to feedback and suggestions for on-going environmental improvements and promote best practice.
- Develop an Education for Sustainable Development Plan with the aim of equipping graduates with the skills and knowledge to build a sustainable future.

## **10. Noise and Nuisance**

Minimise the impact of noise and nuisance on the environment and local community from the University's activities.



Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Professor Robert Van de Noort  
Vice Chancellor

Date: 19 April 2023

Version: 1.1  
Issue Date: 19 April 2023  
Next Review Date: 19 March 2024

Progress against these Policy Objectives is reported to University Executive Board via the Annual Environmental Sustainability Report [www.reading.ac.uk/sustainability/policies-and-strategies](http://www.reading.ac.uk/sustainability/policies-and-strategies)