

**Purpose**

This document sets out Sustainability Services’ Communications Strategy, with a vision to promote the Universities sustainability credentials and commitments to its Staff, Students and wider community. The communication strategy centres on the communication objectives illustrated in Figure 1 below. It is designed to provide a framework for the Annual Communication and Engagement Plan to operate in. This supporting Plan provides detail on what activities will be delivered in each academic year as well as ensuring we comply with our environmental management system obligations.



Figure 1 - Communication objectives

**Developing the Action Plan**

When developing the Annual Communications and Engagement Plan, consideration will be given to how activities will deliver against our objectives. Activities will try to deliver against a number of these objectives. Depending on the overarching aims of the Business Plan for the year, more weight may be given to one objective over another, however there should always be actions that deliver on a mix of objectives.

Priorities each year will change, although some messages may span a number of years. Each Annual Communication and Engagement Plan will provide a yearly layout of the monthly agenda for communication that will be focus upon. This may include some repetition through the year, to ensure that certain messages are heard more often by target audiences, resulting in an increased understanding and awareness.

Although messages may vary they should include, where possible, reference to our overarching sustainability vision, for the University to be:

***“...a leader in reducing its impacts on the local as well as global environment, by embedding a culture of sustainability throughout its teaching, research and operations.”***

The University is working on a new strategy which may mean the early review of the Sustainability Services Communication Strategy this will be considered once the new University strategy is released.

**Communication Channels**

It is important to recognise the abundance of communication channels available that can reach different target audiences and which change in popularity of fluid audiences. In most cases, a variety of channels will have to be utilised to ensure messages are communicated effectively. This may include social media (Twitter, Facebook & Instagram), newsletters or internal channels (Staff Portal & Student Essentials Pages). A stakeholder communication analysis will be completed to identify how best to communicate with relevant stakeholders and what impact and influence stakeholders have. This will sit as an appendix to the Action Plan.

|        |                              |                              |
|--------|------------------------------|------------------------------|
|        | Influence                    |                              |
| Impact | low impact & high influence  | high impact & high influence |
|        | high impact & high Influence | high impact & low influence  |

*Figure 2 - Proposed stakeholder matrix format*

Whilst communications will be designed to meet the needs of a broad range of audiences, having an understanding of the key ones is important to ensuring the communications are effective. Staff, students (including research students) and contractors are obvious key audiences but more widely, stakeholders such as the local community, local authorities, regulatory bodies as well as other interested parties will all need their requirements met. It will be important to look at sub-groups within audiences to ensure communications are appropriate. One example within staff would be Heads of Schools / Senior Management who are important to communicate with due to their influence but may need very different messages to technical staff who may need more detailed, practical information.

The Annual Action Plan, developed and reviewed annually each spring, will be a practical document which articulates:

- A review of the previous year’s key activities to learn lessons
- The specific activities that will take place during the year
- How these deliver against the core objectives
- A yearly month by month breakdown of communications
- Timeline for delivery
- Risks associated with delivery of the plan
- How each activity will be measured and what success looks like

**Monitoring and Measuring**

Thought will be given to how to assess the impact of the main communication activities each year. Whilst measuring precise savings, changes in behaviour etc. may be challenging, there will be quantitative and qualitative metrics used to assess the performance of the communications. These quantitative and qualitative metrics will be measured from the analytics tools within the social media platforms Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, sustainability website (dashboard) and the JUMP platform (dashboard). It may also include attendance at events/scheme sign ups, and will be identified for each activity in the Action Plan.