



Environmental Policy

UEP/0/09

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 University of Birmingham will aim to manage its operations in ways that are environmentally sustainable, economically feasible and socially responsible. Therefore, this policy represents an important component of the University's broader sustainability strategy.

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 Environment, Health and Safety Executive Committee, in consultation with the Joint Safety Advisory Committee, and it will be subject to review.

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/0/07

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, including the efficient use of energy.
- To reduce greenhouse gas emissions in line with University targets ; 6% on 2005/06 levels by 2011.
- To ensure the uptake of low carbon technologies in buildings and equipment.

Water

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

Procurement

- To promote life cycle thinking in the procurement of goods and services.
- To work with suppliers to promote sustainable resource management practices.

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 sustainable transport practices across all activities with the aim of achieving the University's carbon reduction targets.

University Estate

- To develop and implement a University estate strategy based on sound environmental and sustainability principles.
- To manage the University estate with a view to enhancement of biodiversity wherever possible.
- To require a sustainable construction plan for any new University development and refurbishment project.

Awareness and Training

- 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
November 2009

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 or a Pro-Vice-Chancellor as his nominee, acts as chair of the Environment, Health and Safety Executive Committee and Joint Safety Advisory Committee.

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 central services, in particular the management and development of its estate.

University Executive Board

UEB considers matters affecting the University, its strategy, operation or management.

Environment, Health and Safety Executive Committee

The Environment, Health and Safety Executive Committee is also responsible to Council for overseeing the management of risks to health and safety throughout the University.

The Environment, Health and Safety Executive Committee (EHSEC) is responsible to Council for overseeing the management of risks to the environment throughout the University. This involves:

- formulation of environmental policies, including general policy, specific policies for identified issues and accompanying guidance;
- ensuring the full implementation of the Environmental Policy by means of monitoring and audit;
- taking appropriate action where standards are not being met;
- regular review of the effectiveness of existing policies.

In order that this Committee can receive expert advice on certain environmental issues it has a specialist *Advisory Group* on the Environment.

Advisory Group on the Environment

Members of the Advisory Group are selected purely on the basis of expertise and ability to make a direct personal contribution to the work of the Group.

Sustainability Task Group

The Sustainability Task Group (STG) 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.

Joint Safety Advisory Committee

The University has established a Joint Safety Advisory Committee (JSAC) primarily to fulfil the statutory health and safety function. In addition, EHSEC consults JSAC on environmental matters.

Health and Safety Unit

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.

Within its area of expertise the Unit assists EHSEC and JSAC, in particular a Sustainability and Environmental Advisor has been appointed to:

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

The Health and Safety Unit acts as the formal point of contact between the University and relevant enforcing authorities, in particular the Health and Safety Executive, the Environment Agency, Environmental Health departments and any other relevant authority.

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.

Estate and Infrastructure sub Committee

The Estate and Infrastructure sub Committee is responsible to SPRC 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 Estate Services Division. 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

Hospitality and accommodation services (HAS) are responsible for waste management and recycling services. They are also partly responsible for transport strategy.

Waste Reduction and Recycling Group

The group is responsible for developing waste reduction and recycling initiatives, and reports to the Advisory Group on the Environment.

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 endeavours to work with Colleges and Corporate Services to ensure that only suppliers who are able to meet appropriate quality standards in terms of product and service are utilised.

The Procurement Division issues Procurement Guidelines, which are updated from time to time, to all Colleges and Corporate Services and these provide advice, recommendations and, where necessary, details on procedures which can, or in certain cases, must be followed.

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 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. The Head or Director is also responsible for promoting environmental awareness and good practice integral to the College's or Corporate Service's activities.

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:

- 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 Environmental 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:
 - minimise waste;
 - minimise energy use and reduce carbon emissions in line with University targets;
 - minimise hazardous discharges;
 - consider impact of purchases.
- 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 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.