

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY POLICY 2015

The Vice-Chancellor and Principal, as delegate of the Senate of the University of Sydney, adopts the following policy.

Dated: 9 June 2015

Last amended: 19 June 2017 (administrative amendments only)

1 October 2021 (administrative amendment)

22 February 2024 (administrative amendments)

Signature:

Name: Dr Michael Spence

Current policy approver: Vice-Chancellor and Principal

CONTENTS

1	Name of policy.....	1
2	Commencement.....	1
3	Policy is binding.....	1
4	Statement of intent.....	2
5	Application.....	2
6	Definitions.....	2
7	Environmental sustainability objectives.....	4
8	Governance and responsibilities.....	7
9	Rescissions and replacements.....	10

1 Name of policy

This is the Environmental Sustainability Policy 2015.

2 Commencement

This policy commences on 19 June 2015.

3 Policy is binding

Except to the extent that a contrary intention is expressed, this policy binds the University, staff, students and affiliates.

4 Statement of intent

This policy:

- (a) establishes principles for a University-wide approach to achieving environmental sustainability;
- (b) specifies the environmental sustainability principles to be applied throughout the University;
- (c) provides for continual improvement in environmental sustainability, and avoidance and minimisation of environmental risks;
- (d) provides for the management of compliance with applicable legislation;
- (e) establishes a framework for setting environmental sustainability objectives; and
- (f) promotes environmentally sustainable investment practices.

5 Application

This policy applies to:

- (a) the University, staff, students, affiliates and visitors;
- (b) tenants, licensees, occupants, managers and operators of University properties and infrastructure; and
- (c) all University activities.

6 Definitions

active transport means non-motorised forms of transport involving physical activity, and includes travel by foot, bicycle and other non-motorised vehicles powered by human physical activity.

affiliate has the meaning given in the [Staff and Affiliates Code of Conduct 2021](#), which at the date of this policy is:

means a person appointed or engaged by the University to perform duties or functions on its behalf, including but not limited to:

- an honorary title holder engaged under the Honorary Titles Policy 2013;
- a consultant or contractor to the University; and
- an office holder in a University entity, a member of any University committee, board or foundation.

An affiliate is not an employee of the University.

biodiversity means the existence of a wide variety of organisms and the natural ecosystems of which they are a part.

carbon footprint	means a measurement of the total greenhouse gas emissions produced, expressed in tonnes (or kilograms) of carbon dioxide equivalent. University operations mainly contribute to greenhouse gas emissions through consumption of energy generated from combustion of fossil fuels, fossil fuel use in transport vehicles, fossil fuel combustion in stationary plant, waste management and industrial processes.
CIS	means the University's Campus Infrastructure & Services professional services unit.
environment	means components of the earth including land, air, water, the atmosphere, organic and inorganic matter, living organisms and any interacting natural ecosystems, as well as human made structures and areas.
environmental management system	<p>means a documented management system which is consistent with the international standard ISO 14001:2004, <i>Environmental Management Systems – Requirements with guidance for use</i> , and includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• evaluating significant environmental risks and associated legal requirements;• setting environmental objectives and programs;• establishing organisational structures and responsibilities for environmental management;• implementing procedures to manage environmental risk and achieve environmental objectives;• monitoring and measuring effective implementation of environmental management; and• conducting management review to ensure adequacy and effectiveness of environmental management.
ESG	means environmental, social and corporate governance.
environmental sustainability	means minimising the impact of current and future undertakings on the environment in a manner that meets present needs of our able, disadvantaged and disabled communities whilst preserving and sustaining natural resources and environmental quality for the needs of successive future generations.
FP	means the Financial Performance Committee of the UE
green lease clauses	means clauses within a lease, licence or other agreement with a tenant, licensee or other third party who occupies, operates or uses the University's property or assets that require those parties to occupy, operate and manage spaces in an environmentally sustainable way, and in compliance with this policy.

Head of Administrative Area (HOA)	has the meaning given to the term “HOA” by the University of Sydney (Delegations of Authority) Rule 2020 , which at the date of this policy is: Head of Administrative area, which means a senior staff member, outside a faculty or University school, whose position is declared as such by the Vice-Chancellor in writing and recorded as such in the relevant human resources recordkeeping systems. Where appropriate, a reference to HOA includes a reference to The Director, Law Extension Committee
Head of School (HOS)	has the meaning given to the term “HOS” by the University of Sydney (Delegations of Authority) Rule 2020 , which at the date of this policy is: means a Head of School within a faculty (including a Head of School and Dean within a faculty). Where appropriate, a reference to HOS includes a reference to the Director, Law Extension Committee.
ICC	means the Investment and Commercialisation Committee of Senate.
ICT	means the University’s Information and Communications Technology professional services unit.
PSU	means a professional services unit of the University.
Sustainability Sub-Committee	means the sub-committee of that name established by and reporting to the FP.
UE	means the University Executive.
University properties	means any land or buildings owned, operated, controlled and/or managed by the University, including but not limited to campuses and farms.
VP (O)	means Vice-Principal (Operations).

7 Environmental sustainability objectives

- (1) **Plan strategically for University-wide environmental sustainability**, through:
 - (a) integrating environmental sustainability into the University strategic planning framework;
 - (b) identifying environmental sustainability risks and compliance requirements for faculties and PSUs;
 - (c) developing objectives and business cases for faculties and PSUs to improve environmental sustainability outcomes; and
 - (d) establishing accountabilities and responsibilities for faculties and PSUs to achieve environmental sustainability objectives.
- (2) **Integrate environmental sustainability into teaching, learning and research**, through:
 - (a) integrating environmental sustainability themes into curricula;



- (b) minimising the adverse impacts on environmental sustainability of teaching, learning and research activities; and
 - (c) engaging with the wider community to address local and global environmental challenges in our teaching, learning and research activities.
- (3) **Plan and develop environmentally sustainable buildings and infrastructure**, through:
- (a) including environmental sustainability requirements in campus master planning;
 - (b) minimising the life-cycle impact of new University buildings on environmental sustainability;
 - (c) designing University infrastructure that is flexible so as to accommodate continual improvements in environmental sustainability; and
 - (d) undertaking environmentally sustainable refurbishments and fit-outs of existing University buildings.
- (4) **Conserve and efficiently use energy and water resources**, through:
- (a) improving the energy and water efficiency of University buildings, infrastructure and farms;
 - (b) providing passive, natural or low-energy, efficient heating and ventilation in preference to centralised mechanical air conditioning where practical;
 - (c) embedding environmental sustainability and energy efficiency in appropriate University design, construction and operational standards; and
- Note:** See: <http://sydney.edu.au/about/working-with-us/contractors.shtml>
- (d) providing building occupant thermal comfort whilst achieving environmental sustainability and energy efficiency standards.
- (5) **Reduce climate change impacts and manage the University's carbon footprint**, through:
- (a) reducing greenhouse gas emissions from building and infrastructure operations;
 - (b) managing education and research activities to reduce greenhouse gas emissions; and
 - (c) managing carbon sequestration on University properties.
- (6) **Conserve natural resources and minimise waste**, through:
- (a) sustainably managing soil, water and natural resources at University farms and properties;
 - (b) promoting indigenous ecological knowledge for management of natural resources;
 - (c) minimising and, where possible, avoiding waste generation;
 - (d) improving recovery of resources from waste streams;
 - (e) recycling demolition materials and prioritising use of recycled materials in new construction; and
 - (f) maximising waste recycling.

- (7) **Conserve and enhance biodiversity**, through:
- (a) conserving, protecting and enhancing native fauna and flora habitats of University properties;
 - (b) promoting indigenous ecological knowledge for management of biodiversity; and
 - (c) managing pests and weeds that threaten native fauna and flora.
- (8) **Improve environmental sustainability of the University's supply chain**, through:
- (a) specifying environmental sustainability requirements in the procurement of goods and services relating to University activities including the provision of teaching, learning and educational research; and
 - (b) procuring products that are:
 - (i) sustainably produced;
 - (ii) have lower environmental impacts over the product's life cycle; and
 - (iii) are locally produced, where practical.
- (9) **Promote sustainable transport and mobility**, through:
- (a) providing quality infrastructure and facilities to support active transport;
 - (b) encouraging and supporting use of active transport and public transport; and
 - (c) using communications technology to minimise business travel.
- (10) **Implement green lease clauses**, which may include clauses relating to:
- (a) minimising and, where possible, avoiding the use of disposable non-renewable packaging and materials;
 - (b) minimising waste;
 - (c) increasing resource recovery and recycling;
 - (d) reducing use of consumables that are not environmentally sustainable;
 - (e) conserving energy and water and implementing energy efficient measures;
 - (f) using sustainable, non-toxic materials in fit outs where practicable; and
 - (g) where possible, promoting active transport options for staff, students and other customers.
- (11) **Establish an environmental management system for faculties and PSUs**, which:
- (a) manages operational environmental impacts and risks;
 - (b) complies with applicable legislation; and
 - (c) improves environmental performance.
- (12) **Promote environmentally sustainable investments**, by:
- (a) implementing the [Investment Policy 2022](#), which requires incorporation of ESG into the University's investment strategies and principles; and
 - (b) regularly reporting progress on the implementation of ESG strategies across the investment portfolio to the Senate.

8 Governance and responsibilities

- (1) **The Senate** receives and considers reports from:
 - (a) the UE, on progress of environmental sustainability initiatives and programs;
 - (b) its Safety and Risk Management Committee, on environmental risk management, legislative changes and compliance requirements; and
 - (c) the ICC, on the development and effectiveness of the ESG investment framework.
- (2) **The ICC:**
 - (a) develops and oversees the ESG investment framework for management of the University's investment portfolio; and
 - (b) monitors and reviews effective implementation of the ESG investment framework.
- (3) **The UE:**
 - (a) endorses the University's environmental sustainability strategy; and
 - (b) through the FP:
 - (i) monitors implementation of environmental sustainability initiatives and programs; and
 - (ii) receives and considers reports on progress of environmental sustainability initiatives and programs.
- (4) **The FP:**
 - (a) through its Sustainability Sub-Committee, monitors environmental sustainability performance across the University;
 - (b) reviews and, if appropriate, approves strategic environmental sustainability initiatives and programs; and
 - (c) receives progress reports on environmental sustainability initiatives and programs.
- (5) **The Sustainability Sub-Committee:**
 - (a) co-ordinates environmental sustainability management and performance across the University;
 - (b) develops strategic environmental sustainability initiatives and programs;
 - (c) proposes and prioritises environmental sustainability initiatives and programs;
 - (d) develops work groups to oversee and progress environmental sustainability initiatives programs; and
 - (e) monitors and reports to the FP on the University's environmental sustainability performance.
- (6) **The VP(O)** is responsible for:
 - (a) developing and overseeing the execution of environmental sustainability strategies, including the ESG investment framework;
 - (b) monitoring and measuring progress of the University's environmental sustainability strategies, including the ESG investment framework;



- (c) integrating environmental sustainability considerations into the University's risk management framework; and
 - (d) ensuring resources are available for faculties and PSUs to implement requirements of this policy.
- (7) **Faculties, University schools and PSUs generally** are responsible for:
- (a) setting their specific environmental sustainability objectives and establishing programs to achieve them;
 - (b) monitoring progress towards achieving their specific environmental sustainability objectives;
 - (c) managing education, research activities and support services to reduce greenhouse gas emissions;
 - (d) procuring goods and services that are affordable, sustainably produced and have low impacts on environmental sustainability during operations;
 - (e) implementing the environmental management system to identify and manage environmental aspects of their operations;
 - (f) conserving soil, water and natural resources at properties under their control;
 - (g) complying with legislation and other requirements relevant to their activities;
 - (h) assigning appropriate responsibilities for implementing environmental sustainability requirements in their areas of operation; and
 - (i) providing appropriate resources for managing environmental sustainability within their areas of operation.
- (8) **CIS** is responsible for:
- (a) establishing a framework environmental management system to be adopted and implemented by faculties and PSUs;
 - (b) managing environmental sustainability impacts in campus master planning and space planning activities;
 - (c) considering key lifecycle environmental sustainability impacts for designs of new buildings and major refurbishments;
 - (d) including green lease clauses in property leases, licences and other similar agreements;
 - (e) developing and implementing building and fit-out standards that comply with the environmental sustainability requirements;
 - (f) monitoring and managing facilities' operations to improve their energy and water efficiency and reduce greenhouse gas emissions;
 - (g) maintaining temperature ranges in buildings consistent with requirements to improve energy efficiency;
 - (h) maximising resource recovery and recycling to minimise waste disposal from facilities management, events management and construction projects;
 - (i) managing University properties to conserve and enhance natural resources, biodiversity and habitats for native fauna and flora;
 - (j) implementing pest and weed control to eliminate and manage pests, feral animals and weeds that threaten native fauna and flora;



- (k) incorporating active transport and public transport requirements in master and precinct planning, and the design of major new building projects; and
 - (l) procuring goods and services that are affordable, sustainably produced and have low environmental sustainability impacts during operations.
- (9) **ICT** is responsible for:
- (a) developing and implementing University-wide plans to minimise energy use and whole-of-life environmental impacts across communications networks and computer assets; and
 - (b) implementing recognised and reputable environmental standards for procurement of ICT equipment and consumables which are accepted by industry and government.
- (10) **The Investment and Capital Management Unit of Financial Services** is responsible for:
- (a) implementing investment strategies consistent with the ESG framework and the [Investment Policy 2022](#) and
 - (b) reporting on ESG matters concerning the University's investments to the ICC.
- (11) **Human Resources** is responsible for:
- (a) implementing active transport and public transport initiatives agreed to in the [University of Sydney Enterprise Agreement 2023-2026](#) (or any replacement agreement) or identified through the human resources strategic planning process; and
 - (b) developing and implementing human resources policies and practices which support environmental sustainability initiatives.
- (12) **Marketing and Communications** is responsible for encouraging and promoting environmental sustainability initiatives through print, web and social media.
- (13) **Procurement Services** is responsible for:
- (a) including environmental sustainability requirements in competitive tender processes;
 - (b) selecting products and services that are fit-for-purpose, safe and which demonstrate lower environmental sustainability impacts across their lifecycle compared with competing products and services; and
 - (c) establishing preferred suppliers for environmentally sustainable products and services.
- (14) **Safety Health and Wellbeing** is responsible for providing safety management systems for, and advising on any likely safety implications of, environmental sustainability initiatives and programs.
- (15) **Deans, Heads of Schools and Deans (University schools) and Heads of Schools** are responsible for:
- (a) providing visible leadership in environmental sustainability in their areas of operation;
 - (b) integrating relevant environmental sustainability themes into curricula, courses and research;
 - (c) identifying and managing the adverse impacts on environmental sustainability of teaching, learning and research activities;



- (d) establishing specific environmental sustainability objectives in their areas of operation and establishing programmes to achieve them;
 - (e) monitoring progress towards achieving environmental sustainability objectives in their areas of operation;
 - (f) engaging with the wider community to develop teaching and research programmes that address local and global environmental challenges; and
 - (g) providing appropriate resources for environmental sustainability management within their areas of operation.
- (16) **Heads of Administrative Areas** are responsible for:
- (a) providing visible leadership in environmental sustainability in their areas of operation;
 - (b) establishing specific environmental sustainability objectives and targets in their areas of operation and establishing programmes to achieve them;
 - (c) monitoring progress towards achieving environmental sustainability objectives in their areas of operation; and
 - (d) providing appropriate resources for environmental sustainability management within their areas of operation.
- (17) **All occupants of University properties** are responsible where practical for:
- (a) managing and reducing energy and water consumption demand in buildings and spaces they occupy;
 - (b) maintaining temperature ranges in buildings consistent with requirements to improve energy efficiency;
 - (c) avoiding use of non-renewable packaging and materials;
 - (d) maximising resource recovery and recycling;
 - (e) minimising waste disposal;
 - (f) managing their activities and products to safeguard the environment and prevent pollution;
 - (g) complying with relevant environmental legislation and regulations;
 - (h) complying with green lease clauses where applicable;
 - (i) promptly reporting incidents and impacts that may harm the environment, including near misses; and
 - (j) co-operating with environmental inspections, audits and investigations and supporting emergency response measures.

9 Rescissions and replacements

This document replaces the following, which are rescinded as from the date of commencement of this document:

- (a) *Environmental Policy*, which commenced on 25 September 2002;
- (b) *Bird Control within University Grounds Policy* which commenced on 1 December 1999; and
- (c) *Air Conditioning Policy*, which commenced on 1 July 1999.

NOTES

Environmental Sustainability Policy 2015

Date adopted:	9 June 2015
Date commenced:	19 June 2015
Date amended:	23 February 2017 (administrative amendments only) 19 June 2017 (administrative amendments only) 1 October 2021 (administrative amendment) 22 February 2024 (administrative amendments)
Original administrator:	Director, Campus Infrastructure and Services
Current policy owner:	Vice-Principal (Operations)
Review date:	9 June 2020
Related documents:	<i>Energy Efficiency Opportunities Act 2003 (Cth)</i> <i>National Greenhouse and Energy Reporting Act 2007 (Cth)</i> <i>Environment Protection and Biodiversity conservation Act 1999 (Cth)</i> <i>Coastal Protection and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2010 (NSW)</i> <i>Energy and Utilities Administration Act 1987 (NSW)</i> <i>Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (NSW)</i> <i>Environmentally Hazardous Chemicals Act 1985 (NSW)</i> <i>Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997 (NSW)</i> <i>Smoke-Free Environment Act 2000 (NSW)</i> <i>Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Act 2001 (NSW)</i> <i>Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (NSW)</i> <i>Procurement Policy 2019</i> <i>Smoke Free Environment Policy 2019</i> <i>Work Health and Safety Policy 2016</i> <i>Investment Policy 2022</i> <i>Procurement Sourcing Procedures 2022</i> <i>Work Health and Safety Procedures 2016</i>

AMENDMENT HISTORY

Provision	Amendment	Commencing
6	Updated definitions of HOA and HOS (administrative amendment)	24 August 2015
7.12 & 8.10	Updated reference to <i>Investment Policy 2015</i> (administrative amendment)	24 August 2015
6; 8(1); 8(3)	References to Senior Executive Group (SEG) amended to University Executive (UE)	23 February 2017
6; 8(3)(b); 8(4); 8(5)(e)	References to Finance and Infrastructure Committee (FIC) amended to Financial Performance Committee	23 February 2017
6	Consequential amendments arising from <i>University of Sydney (Delegations of Authority – Administrative Functions) Rule 2016</i>	19 June 2017
8(7); 8(15)	Consequential amendments arising from organisational design changes	19 June 2017
6	Remove definition of SEG	19 June 2017
7(12); 8(10)(a); related documents	Updated references to Investment Policy	19 June 2017
Related documents	Updated reference to Work Health and Safety Policy and Procedures	19 June 2017
6	Replaced ‘Code of Conduct – Staff and Affiliates’ with ‘Staff and Affiliates Code of Conduct 2021’	22 February 2022
	Replaced ‘University of Sydney (Delegations of Authority – Administrative Functions) Rule 2016’ with ‘University of Sydney (Delegations of Authority) Rule 2020’	
6	Amended definitions of ‘affiliate’; ‘Head of Administrative Area (HOA)’; and ‘Head of School (HOS)’	22 February 2022
7(12)(a); 8(10)(a); related documents	Replaced ‘Investment Policy 2017’ with ‘Investment Policy 2022’	22 February 2022
8(11)(a)	Replaced ‘Enterprise Agreement 2013 – 2017’ with ‘Enterprise Agreement 2023 – 2026’	22 February 2022



Provision	Amendment	Commencing
Related documents	Replaced 'Smoke-free Environment Policy 2012' with 'Smoke-free Environment Policy 2019'	22 February 2022
	Replaced 'Procurement Tendering Procedures' with 'Procurement Sourcing Procedures 2022'	
Related documents	Deleted 'Smoke-free Environment Procedures' and 'Tree Management Procedures'	22 February 2022