



University of
Nottingham

UK | CHINA | MALAYSIA

Strategic Delivery Plan for Environmental Sustainability

Ratified by *Environmental Sustainability Committee*
February 2020



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1. Executive Summary

This strategic delivery plan is aligned primarily to the following goal in the University Strategy:

We will make an outstanding contribution to supporting the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through our research and education, our engagement with partners and our behaviour on campus and in our communities. We will place a special emphasis on environmental sustainability, supporting the City of Nottingham's desire to be a net zero carbon city by 2028 and working with partners in China and Malaysia to improve sustainability within their regions.

Specifically, this plan focuses on environmental sustainability but recognises the importance that the SDG's play in this plan and broader delivery plans. It also supports the following goals¹: solving problems and improving lives; developing the campus experience; and fostering creativity, discovery and experiment.

The delivery plan will focus on a number of key priorities:

- Delivering our greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets² from UK campus operations and develop a road map for delivery;
- Delivering the agreed actions from “Locking in the benefits of lockdown” action plan;
- Delivering an Environmental Sustainability Engagement Plan;
- Developing a sustainability-focussed decision making framework;
- Establishing a Research and Knowledge Exchange Environmental Sustainability Committee, reporting to the University Research and KE Committee;
- Establishing an Education and Student Experience Environmental Sustainability Committee, reporting to the University Education and SE Committee;
- Launching a Biodiversity Action Plan for UK campuses;
- Developing and publishing clear action plans for UNNC and UNM to support this strategic delivery plan (SDP).

The Environmental Sustainability Committee has a co-ordinating role in the delivery of this plan but it is the *collective responsibility* and actions of all members of our University community that will be key to successful delivery of these priorities We will ensure that we are transparent and open in all that we do and put in place mechanisms for our university community to engage with our work on Environmental Sustainability. This document provides a summary of our key priorities.

¹ Strategic [Goals](#)

² Developed using a Science Based Target approach for Scope 1 and 2

2. University Values

Inclusivity

Over the last decade, the University has demonstrated a strong commitment to environmental sustainability. Consultation on the University Strategy demonstrated that sustainability is highly valued by our University community and this was a major factor in its inclusion. The Environmental Sustainability Committee will be responsible for setting expectations, agreeing and setting policy, enabling and encouraging action and monitoring performance. However, delivery of the strategy will need involvement and ownership throughout the university community – across students and staff. Thus all business units and budget holders will need to have responsibility for delivery of this plan. As such, it is arguably the most inclusive of all the Strategic Areas.

Ambition

The University has recognised the climate emergency, first declared by the University of Nottingham Students Union. The University's plan, which in the UK is informed by the establishment of an evidenced science-based target, has huge ambition – to be carbon neutral by 2040 if offsetting is included and by 2050 without offsetting. It has an ambitious interim target in 2030, a secondary target in 2028 (to coincide with the City of Nottingham's stated targets) and yearly interim targets.



Science Based carbon reduction target trajectory

As would be expected from an academic institution, our targets are science-based with a rigorous methodology ensuring that the university is acting consistently with the Paris agreement, to which the UK government is a leading signatory. As importantly as ensuring sustainability of our Estate and behaviours (including travel), we recognise that as a university our plan must be about education and research.

Openness

The challenge we face to achieve our goals will require effective engagement and empowerment of staff and students and a cultural change to embrace environmental sustainability across our University. We will deliver a University-wide engagement campaign that will encourage and reward individual and collective action. The nature of the challenge will be shared through this plan and that campaign. To deliver our ambition the staff and student bodies will need to work together collaboratively and openly. Decisions taken by the

University’s Environmental Sustainability Committee will continue to be openly available, published and disseminated.

Fairness

Sustaining our environment is a key tenet of fairness to future generations of staff and students. They deserve a planet in the same health that we have enjoyed.

Respect

We commit to working together in a mutually respectful way on the environmental sustainability agenda and understanding the perspectives of others. We will actively draw on the experiences and views of our community, recognising the expertise they have. We will be tolerant and respectful of those who do not share our aims in this area. Ultimately, by creating an environmentally sustainable future we are showing respect for our planet and each other.

3. Campus Coverage

<p>Category 1: Global activities that are led and managed by the University, across the University</p>	<p>Category 2: Activities that have university-led global direction but are managed locally</p>	<p>Category 3: Activities that are managed locally</p>
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The aspiration within this plan is ambitious - to take a University-wide approach across the UK and both Asian campuses which encompasses education and student experience, research and knowledge exchange, and operations. The Environmental Sustainability committee is led by the UNUK but with strong input from both UNNC and UNMC who have senior representation.

In year 1 (2020/21), we plan to develop and implement plans largely for the UK campus whilst recognising that our environmental impacts are global. Our vision is that, in year 2, these are adapted by our two Asian campuses according to their local priorities and needs and their national contexts. We will encourage the campuses to themselves set Science-based targets consistent with achieving the international aims of the Paris Agreement. Such targets are calculated based on the realistic achievability in the country and sector in which an institution is based.

As an international university with campuses in three countries, we are in an ideal position to deliver the most environmentally sustainable solutions possible for managing a complex international university on three campuses without compromising collaborative education and research.

4. Links to Other Strategic Delivery Plans

In developing the suite of Strategic Delivery Plans it is evident that many have identified alignment to the United Nations Sustainable Delivery Goals (SDGs) – in particular the plans for ESE, R&KE, and Global Engagement - and have a clear commitment to sustainability.

If our ambitions for sustainability are to be realised, **then we will need every SDP to feature commitments to sustainability, and for this to be a major part of many. The core SDPs for Education and Student Experience, Knowledge Exchange, Research and Global Engagement and People are key to this but there are a number of other operational SDPs which will need to deliver specific elements of the sustainability SDP if these are to be delivered – notably the medium term financial plan and the Digital and Estates SDPs.** Specifically:

- ***The Digital SDP*** needs to support and enhance our ambitions for smart campuses that underpin agile working to facilitate effective reductions in the need to travel and to support effective and efficient use of the University estate – reducing energy consumption in buildings and transport and reducing the environmental impact of technology by incorporating environmental sustainability principles in technology selection and procurement decisions. The further development of infrastructure to support the development and management of curriculum will be a key enabler for delivering education for sustainability.
- ***The medium term financial plan*** will need to support the investment needed in our campuses to reduce Scope 1 and 2 emissions, support agile working, facilitate more sustainable procurement practice, and enable investment strategies (e.g. endowment funds) and any wider teaching and research needs. There will be an increasing importance in capturing data and reporting performance, particularly for Scope 3 emissions and actively engaging with our supply chains to improve environmental performance.
- ***The People SDP*** will need to support the development of all our staff to take positive responsibility for their actions and to give them the opportunities to contribute towards our key objectives.
- ***The Estates SDP*** will need to support and enhance agile working to facilitate effective reductions in the need to travel and to support effective and efficient use of the University Estate – reducing energy consumption in buildings and transport. The Estate SDP will need to invest in energy efficiency, renewable and low carbon energy systems and reduce Scope 1 and 2 emissions in line with our Science-Based Targets. It will also need to target reductions in Scope 3 emissions in the construction and food supply chains.

The University's Civic commitments and agreements have made environmental sustainability one of 5 key priorities and the University's Environmental Sustainability SDP will directly contribute towards that.

There are a number of key pieces of work which will be further developed in 20/21 that will further enhance and support SDP's:

- Clarification of which SDPs will deliver on specific Sustainable Development Goals to show where responsibility for these lies across all SDPs / committees
- Embedding the sustainability objectives into all SDPs to support the further development and understanding of dependencies between plans. Identifying areas that have a dependency with other SDPs and enabling collation of the following information:

- Where guidance / strategic direction is being provided to another identified SDP
- Where a specific capability to achieve the SDP is needed from another identified SDP
- What priority the dependency / initiative has within the SDP
- Identifying the link between the SDP prioritisation and the prioritisation of strategic projects / pipeline.
- Engagement across UNNC / UNM to focus on shared areas and priorities

Operational Priorities

The following operational priorities will be delivered through other plans:

Priority	Delivery Body
Delivery of University Scope 1 and 2 carbon reduction targets	Estates (+ School/Faculties)
Delivery of biodiversity targets	Estates
Delivery of water targets	Estates
Delivery of waste management targets	Estates/Finance (Procurement)
Delivery of Transport targets	Estates / People
Delivery of travel and expenses policy	Finance / People
Agile working / Work from anywhere to assist in the delivery of Scope 1 and Scope 2 carbon reduction targets	Digital / People / Estates
Implement Environmental and Social objectives in the management of investment funds	Investment committee

Priorities from other SDP's

The following priorities from other plans have been integrated into this plan:

Priority	Delivery Plan
To build on both universities' award-winning reputation for sustainability to drive a cleaner, more productive and inclusive economy across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire, ensuring we collectively meet ambitious local and national carbon neutral targets.	Civic (Civic Agreement)
Through our research and innovation, to help partners improve the physical infrastructure and building refit across the City and County, which are major barriers to carbon neutrality.	Civic (Civic Agreement)
To provide real actionable insight into the behavioural changes required to realise local ambitions to be carbon neutral, increase recycling rates and protect biodiversity.	Civic (Civic Agreement)

<p>Collate research involving environmental sustainability across the university. Create a plan for sustainable research. Liaise with, advise and conduct research with the City and Region in the area of Environmental sustainability Understand the opportunities to input at COP26 and promote access and provide coordination of cross institutional activities in the run up to, at the event and afterwards.</p>	<p>Research and Knowledge Exchange</p>
<p>Encourage the embedding of learning for sustainability in all of our programmes, alongside professional competencies.</p>	<p>Education and Student Experience</p>
<p>Provide the University with digital solutions to facilitate agile working and support the university with solutions to support it through and beyond the CV19 pandemic</p>	<p>Digital</p>
<p>Support and enhance agile working to facilitate effective reductions in the need to travel and effective / efficient use of the University estate, reducing energy consumption in buildings and transport. Investment in energy efficiency, renewable and low carbon energy systems and reduction in Scope 1 and 2 emissions in line with the Science-Based Targets the University has set. Reduction in Scope 3 emissions in the construction supply chain should also be targeted.</p>	<p>Estates</p>
<p>Reduce the amount of international travel through the development of the Global Skills Academy to maximise the efficiency and effectiveness of international travel</p>	<p>Global Engagement</p>
<p>People SDP in development and will be reviewed once developed</p>	<p>People</p>

5. Key Priorities

1. Deliver Science-Based Targets (SBTs) for greenhouse gas emissions from UK campus operations and activity and continue to work towards these.

- 1.1 The University's Executive Board has agreed in principle to adopt science-based carbon reduction targets with an ambition to reduce scope 1 and 2 emissions by 63% by 2030 from a baseline year 2018/19 and in line with the Paris agreement working towards zero emission by 2050 with interim targets set for 2040.
- 1.2 Develop and publish our 2nd UNUK 10-year Carbon Management Plan and implement this. This will include: the progressive removal of gas from the estate and developing plans to decarbonise space and water heating across the estate; bringing forward business cases for large-scale renewables e.g., solar at Sutton Bonington; retrofitting renewables into buildings; insulation; lighting improvements; building management systems for cooling, heating and light; new energy efficient boiler plant; improved metering and monitoring
- 1.3 Further quantify other emissions which are within our influence but not direct control (Scope 3)³. These emissions currently represent 80% of our total emission potential as calculated using the Science-Based Target methodology.
- 1.4 Set an overall Scope 3 reduction target and develop clear action plans for the most significant Scope 3 categories including:
 - a) Construction;
 - b) Paper products;
 - c) Food and catering;
 - d) University Business Travel

Note that when this work is completed in the UK, the ambition is for UNNC and UNMC to set similar Science Based Targets suitable for their locales in year 2 (2021/22).

2. Deliver agreed actions from “Locking in the benefits of lockdown” UEB paper.

Note that UEB asked for further engagement and discussion in some areas and these are omitted from this priority but included in priority 3.

2.1 Review Estates policies and action plans, agree adjustments where needed, and approve revised policies and action plan. *Specific areas include: cycle and scooter hire services; electric vehicle charging points; rapid charging facilities for electric taxis; action plan for decarbonisation of business fleet; policy on tighter control of refrigerant gases; review and agree minimum sustainability standards for refurbishment and construction projects; policy on energy consumption around water use and disposal; produce specific plans for energy efficiency and carbon reduction in highest use buildings; adjust space guidelines to optimise efficient use of building space; increase provision and signage of recycling and food waste bins; produce policy for staff responsibility for bins and personal recycling and provide bins and instructions.*

2.2 Review HR policy and agree adjustments where needed. *In particular, finalise the planned vehicle lease scheme to staff to include only electric and hybrid vehicles and very low emission non-electric.*

³ An updated HESCET tool (procurement scope 3 tool) is expected to be published in 2021 with revised carbon intensity calculations.

2.3 Review travel policy where this is not subject to further consultation (see priority 3) agree adjustments where needed and approve revised policy. *Specific areas include: avoiding air travel within the UK, northern France and Benelux countries; adjusting UK travel to favour public transport, using non-stop flights for international travel where available, prioritising sustainability over cost; scope development of an internal off-setting / in-setting for essential travel.*

2.4 Review procurement policies, agree adjustments where needed and approve revised policies and action plans. *Specific areas include: ensure environmental sustainability (including local production and manufacture) is evaluated within tenders and categories, balancing this alongside other CSR considerations (such as modern day slavery and social values); identify and implement shared-use and shared procurement across business units; build continually reducing carbon footprints into procurement; produce hard targets on reduced consumption (buy less, use longer, mend more); work with sector (e.g., NTU) to leverage lower carbon purchases; incorporate the supply chain into reporting mechanisms for carbon and deforestation avoidance; insist on responsible packaging and return to supply for re-cycling routes for packaging waste, where budget allows.*

2.5 Review catering policies, agree adjustments where needed and approve revised policies and action plans ensuring our catering offer is sustainably sourced and culturally aware. *Specific areas include: minimise or eliminate food for internal staff meetings; policy-change to avoid over-supply for catered events; policy on ensuring food is responsibly sourced including minimising food miles and local and seasonal sourcing; avoid unnecessary single-use plastics through weighted purchasing; create spaces for eating own food; prominently display carbon impact of food to help informed decision making.*

3. Deliver the Environmental Sustainability Engagement Plan

3.1 Launch the UoN Sustainability Communications Campaign, *developed with Diva Creative and our Sustainability team and Comms and Marketing teams in Q3 2020/21*

3.2 Launch a University wide sustainability engagement app to encourage staff and students through rewarding positive environmental behaviours in Q3 2020/21 alongside and as part of the sustainability communications campaign.

3.3 Hold a staff consultation on reducing travel. *This will involve a staff survey and town-hall events on Teams. It will include consultation on; a) reducing travel between UK campuses; b) reducing travel between international campuses; c) reducing travel on university business, including to scientific conferences. Following this a paper will be taken to UEB (as requested by UEB).*

3.4 Increase the opportunity for conversation across the University to enable all staff and students to better understand how sustainability relates to their lives and support them to act more sustainably.

4. Develop a Sustainability-focussed decision making framework to support and inform decision making across the University

Informed decision making for an environmentally sustainable future needs to promote the consideration of broad outcomes and immediate and long terms impacts and benefits. Building upon existing prioritisation and decision-making tools the tool will enable us to better understand the direct, indirect and associated sustainability impacts (linked to the SDGs) of decisions that we make.

5. Establish the Research and KE Environmental Sustainability Committee, reporting to the University Research and KE Committee. Lead Prof Dame Jessica Corner / Prof Chris Tuck

5.1 Provide a portal for sustainability research creating a central hub, providing information and becoming a showcase ensuring representation of and access to our international campuses.

5.2 Sponsor, encourage and monitor environmental sustainability research

5.3 Encourage research with City and Regional partners to help toward the City of Nottingham's Sustainability Plan

5.4 Enable the sharing of best practice sustainability research from across the University and support inter and transdisciplinary research for sustainability

5.5 Develop policy and guidelines for conducting research in UoN in an environmentally sustainable manner.

5.6 Engage researchers as agents for change in the environmental sustainability agenda.

6. Establish the Education and Student Experience Environmental Sustainability Committee, reporting to the University Education and SE Committee. Lead Prof Sarah Speight.

6.1 Commission and organise University-wide education on Environmental Sustainability as core content

6.2 Develop guidance and training to support staff to deliver sustainability education across the entire breadth of the curriculum

6.3 Promote and support environmental sustainability modules in specific courses

6.4 Develop policy on education delivery in an environmentally sustainable fashion including increased on-line resource and delivery and reduction / abolition of printed material and paper usage

7. Launch the Biodiversity Action Plan for UK campuses

7.1 Publish clear action plans building on outputs from the Estate Development Framework and Biodiversity Action Plans for each campus, ensuring that they are fully integrated into the landscape management plans of our campuses

7.2 Undertake periodic surveys and assessments of Biodiversity across our campuses

7.3 Develop policy on enhancing biodiversity

8. Develop and publish a clear action plan for UNNC. Lead Professor May Tan Mullins.

Work is underway on benchmarking sustainability best practice in China and this will be used to develop a clear action plan for UNNC. This action plan will be aligned to the priorities of this plan but will reflect local needs and constraints. This plan will be reviewed and approved by the Environmental Sustainability committee and the detail included within future plans.

9. Develop and publish a clear action plan for UNM. Lead Nicholas Ching

The action plan for UNM will be developed over the next year, approved by the Environmental Sustainability committee and reflected in our plan next year.

10. Publish the 2020/20211 annual sustainability report against this SDP.

6. Outcomes and Key Performance Indicators

Scope	Outcome	Benefits	Measures
UNUK	Reduced Scope 1 and 2 carbon emissions – In line with SB Trajectory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reputational • Financial • Reduced Carbon Emissions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Absolute CO2 • Tonnes/CO2/M2 • Tonnes/CO2/FTE
Global	Increased biodiversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reputational • Health • Student Experience • Research • Teaching • Carbon 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Green spaces factor • Carbon sequestration of Estate T/CO2 per annum • Net Gain • Number of BAP species present on campus • Number of trees planted annually
UNUK	Reduced water consumption	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial • Health • Carbon 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No net increase in impermeable surfaces • Water balance • M3/H2O/M2 • M3/H2O/FTE
UNUK	Reduced solid municipal waste generation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial • Carbon (Scope 3) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Absolute volume • % on site segregation • t/yr/capita • t/yr/£turnover
UNUK	Reduced single occupancy private car travel (Commuting)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced car parking space • Re-greening of hard-standing • Reduced carbon emissions • Health 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • %SOV • % of commuter journeys undertaken by public transport • % of commuter journeys undertaken by active travel
UNUK	Positive Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health • Financial • Reduced carbon emissions • Culture 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No of sign ups to Engagement App

UNMC Operational	To be developed alongside local action plans	
UNNC Operational	To be developed alongside local action plans	
Global	Research	To be developed alongside action plans
Global	Teaching	To be developed alongside action plans

7. Risk Management

The risks associated with this Strategic Delivery Plan will be detailed in project Risk Register as necessary, with agreed scores and mitigation monitored by the Environmental sustainability committee. The register will be subject to periodic review both in terms of delivery of the plan but also within the broader context of national policy.

8. Governance

The Environmental Sustainability Committee is responsible for implementation and oversight for progress and reporting, with three established sub working groups responsible for delivery. A Tri Campus model is agreed for the SDP.

9. Implementation

Professor John Atherton, chair of the Environment Sustainability Committee will lead the implementation of this delivery plan supported by the Environmental Sustainability Committee. The three specialist sub committee's and leads and subcommittees for UNNC and UNMC will be responsible for the delivery of the plan within their respective areas and will further develop their own actions plans to support this SDP.

Recognising that the whole of the University has a key part to play in the delivery of this plan we will be transparent in the implementation of this plan and will establish a clear mechanism for our community to engage with environmental sustainability.

We will continue to share best practice and support across the three campuses with overseas action plans developed to reflect local priorities but within the context of the key priorities of this SDP.

The SDP and its action plans will be reviewed regularly by the Environment Sustainability Committee and performance against it shall be reported through an annual report.