



**UNIVERSITY OF  
PLYMOUTH**

# **Environmental Policy**

**Issue 8**

<b>TITLE</b>	Environmental Policy
<b>VERSION</b>	8
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<b>DOCUMENT PURPOSE &amp; DESCRIPTION</b>	To outline how our activities are carried out in conformance with environmental legislation and compliance obligations, including requirements relating to fulfilment of ISO 14001 requirements.
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<b>JOB TITLE OF PERSON RESPONSIBLE FOR REVIEW</b>	Head of Sustainability
<b>CONSULTATION PROCESS</b>	E&F Safety Group, E&F Health, Safety & Environment Committee, Sustainability Advisory Group
<b>EQUALITY ANALYSIS</b>	n/a
<b>REFERENCES</b>	n/a
<b>Sign off</b>	Sustainability Advisory Group

Version No.	Date of Change	Originator of Change (Title)	Description of Change
4	May 2013	Energy Manager	Amended to reflect new objectives and targets
5	Mar 2015	Energy Manager	Amended to reflect new objectives and targets and new terms of references
6	Oct 2017	Energy Manager	Reviewed to reflect new standard and resigned
7	May 2018	Environment & Sustainability Manager	Reviewed to reflect new standard and resigned
8	June 2021	Head of Sustainability	Reviewing layout in compliance with new layout for CoP and Policy documents. Updating main ambitions in line with net zero commitment.

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## 1 Summary and purpose

The University of Plymouth aims to be a broad-based, research-intensive university, open to all who can benefit from a University of Plymouth education, and delivering excellent interdisciplinary research, experiential education and civic engagement. Within this context the drive is to understand sustainability as an embedded principle across the University, including environmental performance and global contribution, underpinned by the University's declaration of a climate emergency and commitment to net zero carbon (scope 1 & 2 emissions) by 2025.

We aim to ensure that our activities are carried out in conformance with environmental legislation and compliance obligations, including requirements relating to protection of the environment, prevention of pollution and fulfilment of ISO 14001 requirements. We endeavour to provide and promote a cleaner, safer environment and are proactive in progressing environmental matters.

This Policy complements the University's suite of policies relating to sustainability. The University will deliver this policy through the continued implementation and improvement of our Environmental Management System certified to ISO 14001:2015 standard.

## 2 Environmental Policy Statement

University of Plymouth aims to build on its existing performance to be outstanding in terms of financial, environmental and social responsibility and to demonstrate best practice across all its activities. To continue our progress we have the following aims.

More information on actions for each, as well as detailed targets, are included in separate, detailed plans and actions plans which are referenced.

**Energy and water management:** promote resource efficiency and reduce utilities usage, by reducing demand through more effective and efficient use of plant and equipment and energy and water efficiency projects.

Refer to the *Energy and Water Plan*, *Carbon Management Plan* and Sustainability Reports.

**Carbon emissions:** measure and reduce our environmental footprint associated with energy, water, waste, travel and supply chain in line with our carbon reduction targets and commitments.

Refer to the *Carbon Strategy* and *Carbon Management Plan* and Sustainability Reports.

**Waste and recycling:** promote initiatives to reduce waste generation, prioritise reuse and recovery of waste materials, and sustainable disposal options including recycling, composting and energy recovery when waste generation is unavoidable.

Refer to the *Waste Management Plan* and Sustainability Reports.

**Biodiversity:** maximise biodiversity on campus through diverse planting and appropriate grounds maintenance procedures and encourage the preservation and creation of green environments.

Refer to the *Biodiversity Plan* and Sustainability Reports.

**Sustainable food:** develop a sustainable food culture, providing Fairtrade and local products where possible and working with our partners to increase the demand and supply of seasonal, local and organic food. Including provision of support for student/staff led sustainable food projects.

Refer to the *Sustainable Food Plan* and Sustainability Reports.

**Travel and transport:** minimise the environmental impact from transport associated with our activities through the promotion of sustainable travel for students, staff and suppliers and greater use of video conferencing and other technology to reduce the need for travel.

Refer to the *Travel Plan* and Sustainability Reports.

**Sustainable construction and refurbishment:** the design of new construction and refurbishment projects include the commitment to reduce environmental impact, operating costs, energy use and carbon emissions and to enhance the wellbeing of occupants.

Refer to the *Sustainable Construction and Refurbishment Policy Statement* and Sustainability Reports.

**Procurement:** embed sustainable procurement by working with and influencing suppliers to operate in a socially, ethically and environmentally responsible manner.

Refer to the Responsible Procurement Statement as detailed in the *Tendering Policy*.

**Ethical Investment:** ensure that investment and banking practices are conducted in a transparent and economically viable, socially responsible manner; and strive to invest in companies where the activities of the company are on ethical grounds consistent with objectives of the university.

Refer to the *Ethical Investment Policy*.

#### **Environmental Management:**

- Fully commit to the protection of the environment, and the prevention of pollution to air, water and land, including monitoring activities where emissions and discharges could arise, and manage the University estate in an environmentally sensitive manner.
- Set, monitor and review annual environmental improvement objectives and targets and report progress through the Estates and Facilities Health, Safety and Environment Committee.
- Maintain our Environmental Management System (EMS) to ISO 14001 standard, including regular internal audit against requirements and annual external audits through a certified auditing body.
- Fully meet all legal and compliance requirements, including health and safety regulations that may include environmental aspects.
- Ensure that all staff and students are well informed regarding best practice, by proactively communicating this policy (and related sustainability policies), obligations and responsibilities to enable a shared vision for high quality environmental management across all our activities.
- Use the campus as a resource for high quality teaching and learning and as a facility for high quality environmental research.
- Raise awareness and build an environmentally aware and engaged community with our staff and student population.
- Be actively involved in projects that seek to encourage and promote positive environmental transitions in the city, including supporting community partnerships with staff and students.

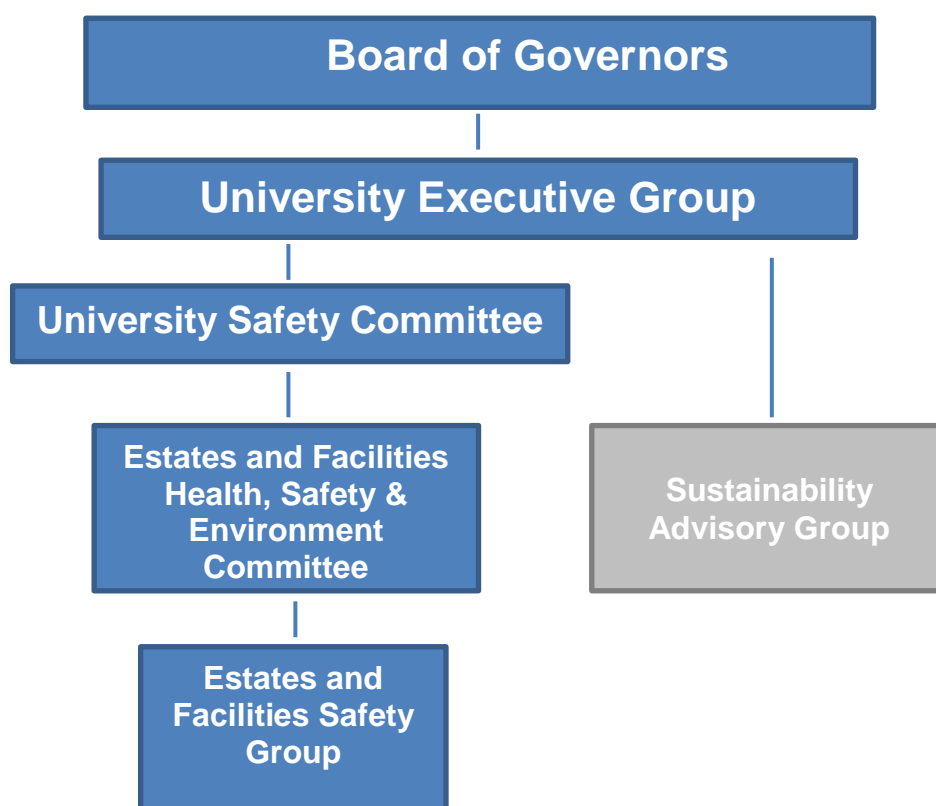
This Policy and the accompanying Environmental Management System, located on the Environment and Sustainability team site, are appropriate to the nature of all our activities.

The *Environmental Management System Manual* contains further detail on implementation of aspects of this policy including; codes of practice, associated policies and action plans and compliance requirements. Our vision for high quality environmental management is set out within the Manual, and individual targets and actions plans are included in the policies and plans referenced above.

### 3 Governance, Roles and Responsibilities

The Vice-Chancellor, and the University Executive Group, has ultimate responsibility for the sustainability agenda. The Executive Dean for Science and Engineering is the senior representative for sustainability at the University Executive Group, and chairs the Sustainability Advisory Group, one of the University Executive Committees.

In relation to environmental management specifically, the Estates and Facilities Health, Safety and Environment Committee has ownership of the Environmental Management System and the *Environmental Policy*. This Committee meets quarterly. This Committee reports into the University Safety Committee and is supported by the wider Estates and Facilities Safety Group which meets monthly. This Committee has the opportunity to report into the Sustainability Advisory Group on specific items of relevance to that group.



**Vice Chancellor:** the Vice Chancellor (VC) sets the overall environmental policy and ensures that the necessary resources are available. The VC or their deputy, and the Estates and

Facilities Health, Safety and Environment Committee, regularly reviews EMS performance within the committee meeting, and by direct supervision of the EMS Team as meeting attendees.

**Head of Sustainability:** the Vice Chancellor has designated the Head of Sustainability as the management representative who has responsibility for ensuring that the requirements of the ISO 14001 standard are implemented and maintained. The Head of Sustainability is also responsible for the on-going measuring and monitoring of the sustainability plans.

**Energy Manager:** responsible for managing energy and water issues to ensure that utilities are managed effectively and efficiently and objectives and targets included within our *Carbon Management Plan* are delivered. The contingency manager to deal with environmental issues should the Head of Sustainability be unavailable.

**Environment Officer:** responsible for leading on the implementation and improvement of the EMS including internal auditing, compliance reviews, supporting with external audits and leading improvement projects.

**Head of Facilities:** responsible for coordinating the disposal of controlled waste and non-liquid hazardous waste streams and is also responsible for the management of cleaning personnel on the campus. There are other personnel with waste disposal responsibility for specific waste streams and these are listed in the *Waste Management Plan*.

**Health and Safety department:** responsible for monitoring and reviewing the health and safety management system for the University, which includes some aspects of environmental management e.g. COSHH, and Radiation.

**Genetic Modification Advisors:** responsible for advising the Head of Health, Safety, EDI and Training on the management of Genetic material that may present a hazard/risk to human health or the environment.

**Radiation Protection Supervisor (RPS):** responsible for advising Head of Health, Safety, EDI and Training on all matters of radiation safety in accordance with the requirements detailed in the 'Register of Legislation and Other Requirements'. The RPS is supported with external advice from the Radiation Protection Adviser.

**Heads of School, Managers, Technicians and Team Leaders:** responsibility to ensure operational activities comply and deliver against environmental management requirements, including the operational requirements of the EMS, which includes; promoting a culture of environmental protection; establishing and maintaining high standards of environmental performance for all work activities; and complying with all relevant codes of practice and legislation.

**Employees and students:** have a responsibility to ensure their activities comply with the requirements of the EMS and any relevant legislation and departmental codes of practice.

## 4 Implementation

### 4.1 Incident reporting

All environmental incidents and near misses must be reported alongside existing health and safety reporting to the Health and Safety Department as soon as practicable (at least within 7 days) according to the Incident Reporting and Investigation Code of Practice.

## **4.2 Codes of Practice and Guidance**

Supporting documents in the form of Codes of Practice (CoP) and Guidance are published on the Health and Safety Team Site. Wider information on Environmental Management, such as information about our environmental aspects are included in the Environment and Sustainability Team Site.

In every area of activity, the University Health and Safety Policy and Environment Policy and associated CoP and Guidance must be considered as the minimum standard to be achieved by Schools and Services.

Local procedures and guidance can be developed by Schools and Services in order to provide further details to staff and students within that area to ensure compliance with the University Health and Safety Policy, Environmental Policy and CoP.

## **4.3 Training**

Local management should assess any training needs for their direct reports and put in place arrangements for suitable training. Refer to the *Health and Safety Policy* for current training matrix including COSHH and Risk Assessment.

## **4.4 Inspection, monitoring, audit and supervision**

Monitoring and analysis of environmental incidents is carried out to identify trends and so action can be taken to prevent recurrence. Heads of School must ensure that all incidents are reviewed and investigated to a proportionate level, putting in place mitigation controls in order to prevent recurrence. Refer to the *Incident Reporting and Investigation Code of Practice*.

Regular internal audits are carried out to ensure compliance with and continual improvement against the EMS. These audits will provide opportunity to identify good practice and areas for improvement and remedial action. The Sustainability Team will lead and advise on the audit programme, and Heads of School must actively demonstrate their commitment to this process and ensure that the appropriate staff at a local level are able to take part in the audit programme.