



## Environmental Sustainability Policy

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**Custodian:** Associate Vice-President, Campus Estate

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In developing this policy the University had regard to the provisions of section 40B(1)(b) of the Human Rights Act 2004 (ACT).

### PURPOSE:

*UC's commitment to sustainability is founded on the desire of our community – students, staff, and other stakeholders – to walk with a light touch; to preserve and nurture our environs; to leave our world in a better state than we found it. As an organisation focused on the future – teaching and research to improve the world – environmental sustainability is a natural concomitant to our commitment to provide a better future.*

*Sustainability is not just about helping to avert climate change, it's about an overall commitment to stewardship of our world and its precious resources.*

The University of Canberra is committed to supporting a sustainable and responsible future. This policy outlines the practices of the University and describes the framework to support sustainable outcomes and practices on University campuses. This policy is supported by the University Environmental Sustainability Strategy, which sets out targets and timeframes and is periodically updated.

### SCOPE:

This Policy establishes the University's commitment to environmental sustainability and outlines the principles to guide the selection of particular actions and desired outcomes. These actions and outcomes are then described in the UC Environmental Sustainability Strategy, which is in place for designated periods of time aligned with Strategic Planning and reflects different emphases from time to time. This policy applies to the University Community.

### PRINCIPLE:

As a leader in our community, and as a signatory to the Talloires Declaration, the University of Canberra is committed to incorporating sustainability and environmental literacy in teaching, research, operations and outreach and to take real action towards a sustainable future that supports generations to come. Our vision

is underpinned by six principles.

### **1. Learning for life**

Recognising that Environmental Sustainability reflects a lifelong commitment, we will embed environmental social responsibility in our learning, teaching, and research activities and behaviours. We will position the University Community to be equipped, prepared, and motivated to take actions that reduce our environmental footprint and provide a positive contribution to the global commitment to a more sustainable future.

### **2. Open and Consultative**

We will be open and consultative in our decision-making processes for environmental sustainability across the University community.

### **3. Shared responsibility**

Recognising that the environment is crucial to a fulfilling life, our actions will be driven by a shared responsibility. As a University Community, we recognise and accept our role as stewards of the resources we use, and we will take collective action to minimise adverse impacts on the environment as a result of our activities.

### **4. Leadership and innovation**

Creative and innovative approaches will be employed to improve UC's sustainability outcomes. Evidence-based and innovative research for sustainability will be complemented by monitoring and analysing best practice in the higher education and other sectors to ensure the University maintains or leads best-practice in relation to sustainability wherever possible.

### **5. Informed decision-making**

Long-term environmental, economic and social sustainability considerations will be:

- integrated into the University's decision-making processes;
- considered in strategic and operational planning;
- informed through cost-benefit analysis;
- central to student experience, research, learning and teaching, and community engagement; and
- enabled through sustainable practices.

### **6. Global and long-term commitment**

We understand that the actions we take today reach beyond the confines of our current campus boundaries, both to the wider world and to future generations.

### **[Sustainability Focus Areas](#)**

UC's Sustainability Policy will be enacted through a series of Environmental Sustainability Strategies that reflect different focuses and emphases from time to time, and they will normally be aligned to the

timeframe of the UC Strategic Plan. The University will concentrate on four core focus areas of environmental sustainability:

1. **Urban realm & built environment**
  - a. Sustainable design and development
  - b. Sustainable water practices
  - c. Sustainable energy practices
  - d. Education and community engagement
2. **Biodiversity and natural landscapes**
  - a. Biodiversity conservation
  - b. Education and community engagement
3. **Mobility and access**
  - a. Sustainable transport
  - b. Community wellbeing
  - c. Education and community engagement
4. **Resource conservation**
  - a. Sustainable waste management
  - b. Sustainable food, goods and services
  - c. Education and community engagement

These focus areas have been developed following extensive consultation with the University community and experts to ensure long term support for and visibility of actions for the University’s commitment to environmental sustainability. These four areas bring together, under broad areas, consideration for the categories of the UN Sustainability Development Goals and alignment to the UI GreenMetric University Ranking Initiative that will enable the University to benchmark against our sector nationally and internationally. Furthermore, this Policy has been developed to align with the 2020 Campus Master Plan. These measures and methods will ensure that the University is able to demonstrate and drive commitment to environmental sustainability within the University community and to our global community.

**RESPONSIBILITIES:**

Who	Responsibilities
Students	Students are expected to uphold the vision of the Environmental Sustainability Policy and are responsible for conducting themselves in line with the policy
Staff	Staff are expected to uphold the vision of the Environmental Sustainability Policy and are responsible for conducting themselves in line with the policy in respect to the Charter of Conduct and Value.
Campus Estate	Campus Estate is responsible for the management, implementation, monitoring and tracking of the Environmental Sustainability Policy.

Vice-Chancellor	The Vice-Chancellor is committed to the effective implementation of the Environmental Sustainability Policy.
Planning and Development Committee	The Committee is responsible on the delegated authority of the Council for the monitoring of the associated policies and strategies of the Campus Master Plan.
University Council	The University Council is responsible for the University's strategic direction, including Key Performance Indicators and their annual assessment.

#### LEGISLATION:

- *Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*
- *Energy Efficiency Opportunities Act 2003*
- *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*
- *National Greenhouse and Energy Reporting Act 2007*

#### SUPPORTING INFORMATION:

- *University of Canberra Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2020 - 2022*
- *Talloires Declaration 1990*
- *2020 Campus Master Plan*

#### DEFINITIONS:

Terms	Definitions
Biodiversity	The existence of a wide variety of organisms and the natural ecosystems of which they are a part.
Environment	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 Sustainability	Meeting the needs of the present without compromising those of future generations by minimising the impact of current and future undertakings on the environment and sustaining natural resources and environmental quality.
University Community	All University campus users engaged in University activities or activities reasonably considered related to the University in all University locations.
University Campus Users	Any person engaged in an activity on the University campus or within University run or owned properties.

#### LINKS:

