

Environment and Sustainability Policy



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Monitor Changes

Version Level	Details of Change	Date
01	New Policy – Replaces the previous Environment Policy	February 2024
02		
03		
04		

Key search words for this document
Sustainability; Environment; Climate Change

This front page is for monitoring and dissemination purposes only. It does not form part of this Policy document.

Environment and Sustainability Policy

1. Introduction

Gateshead College is committed to taking positive action to address climate change and creating a better environment for our learners, our people and our future. In doing so we will focus on minimising our environmental impact and promoting sustainability across all our operations and curriculum.

This Environmental and Sustainability Policy outlines our commitment to integrating environmentally responsible practices into our daily activities, fostering a culture of environmental awareness, and complying with relevant environmental legislation.

In our Strategic Plan we state we will:

- Take a college-wide approach to tackle climate change. We will set targets, implement actions and encourage behaviours which reduce our carbon footprint and instil working practices which reduce waste, save energy and promote environmental sustainability.
- Prepare our learners for a world impacted by climate change providing them with skills, knowledge and experiences so that they can actively engage in promoting sustainability and secure jobs in the green economy.

If you need this information in a different format or language, would like someone to help explain it to you or require any other support please let us know by emailing start@gateshead.ac.uk or calling 0191 490 0300.

2. Aims

The aims of this Policy are detailed under an operating framework of Campus, Curriculum, Culture and Community.

2.1. Campus

- **Resource Efficiency:** We will strive to minimise resource consumption, including energy, water, and raw materials, through efficient practices and continuous improvement initiatives.
- **Waste Management:** We will work to address waste generation, promoting a culture of 'reduce, reuse and recycle', and responsibly dispose of waste to minimise our environmental footprint.
- **Carbon Footprint:** We will focus on reducing our carbon emissions by implementing a Carbon Reduction Plan, including the introduction of energy-efficient measures, the use of renewable energy sources, and promoting sustainable transport options.
- **Procurement:** We will implement responsible procurement practices which take account of the environmental impact of the goods and services we purchase. We will consider these impacts when appraising procurement options.
- **Biodiversity:** We recognise the importance of biodiversity and will work to protect and enhance the natural environment on and around our campus.

2.2. Curriculum

- **Teaching and Learning:** We will embed sustainability in what we teach and how we teach it. We will ensure that curriculum staff and learners are aware of their responsibilities in relation to sustainability, understand how this applies to their studies and future careers, be aware and actively support the College's approach and also understand how they, as individuals, can have a positive impact in their work, homes and communities.

We will deliver curriculum that equips learners with the sustainability skills they need in every job and for jobs linked to new roles emerging in response to green skills needs. This aligns to our commitment to deliver Education with Employment Edge.

2.3. Culture

- **Values and Behaviours:** Embedding sustainability is integral to our values of taking responsibility, respect, courage, working together and creativity. We will seek to develop a sustainability mindset that ensures everyone in the college makes positive and informed choices about what they do and how they do it.
- **Education and Training:** We are committed to raising awareness about environmental matters and promoting a culture of sustainability. We will integrate environmental education into our Continuous Professional Development and curriculum, deliver awareness and action campaigns, and provide resources to inform and engage our college and wider community to improve their knowledge and skills.
- **Leadership:** Sustainability is stated as a priority within the College's Strategic Plan and Board and Executive leadership will ensure it is embedded across all of our operations.

2.4. Community

- **Collaboration:** Working in partnership is integral to our approach and how we will progress our climate responsibilities at Gateshead College. We will work together with those who can support us to achieve our individual and collective goals and will share our resources, knowledge and expertise so we can all achieve more together. This includes public sector partners, employers, third sector and our suppliers.

3. Responsibilities

- **Board:** The College's Board will lead the approach to delivering this policy, setting direction and ensuring change is achieved and sustained.
- **Executive Team:** The Executive Team will champion environmental sustainability, providing the necessary resources and support for the implementation of this policy.
- **Executive Team Lead:** The Director of Brand and Learner Experience has executive responsibility for the college-wide leadership of sustainability and is responsible for the implementation of this policy.
- **Sustainability Co-ordinator:** This postholder will support the implementation of this policy, and the development and delivery of the Sustainability Strategy and will have the specialist skills and knowledge necessary to undertake this specialist role.

- **Staff and Learners:** All staff and students are expected to operate in line with environmental best practices, actively participate in relevant initiatives, and contribute to the college's sustainability goals.
- **Green Steering Group:** Comprising appropriate members of staff from across the college and chaired by the Director of Brand and Learner Experience, the group will help shape the development of the Sustainability Strategy and associated action plans, discuss key challenges, opportunities, and best practice.
- **Green Champions:** Groups for staff and learners which will be action-focused supporting awareness raising and campaigns.

4. Legal Compliance

The college will ensure compliance with all applicable environmental laws and regulations. An environmental impacts and aspects register will be maintained by the Facilities Manager, and we will stay informed about developments in environmental legislation and adapt our practices accordingly.

5. Monitoring and Review

We will regularly monitor our environmental performance, set targets for improvement, and review the effectiveness of our environmental management systems. We will continuously gather internal and external feedback and seek best practice to help refine and enhance our sustainability efforts.

Board oversight will be provided by the Finance and General Purposes Committee.

6. Communication of the Policy

This Environment and Sustainability Policy will be communicated to all staff, learners, suppliers and the wider communities we support and work with. It will be published on our website.

Updates on our environmental performance and initiatives will be shared transparently and published online and within our corporate annual review. An active Green Steering Group and a Green Champion Group led by the Sustainability Co-ordinator, will ensure an action focused approach to achieving commitments laid out in this policy.

7. Review Date

This Environment and Sustainability Policy will be reviewed every three years.