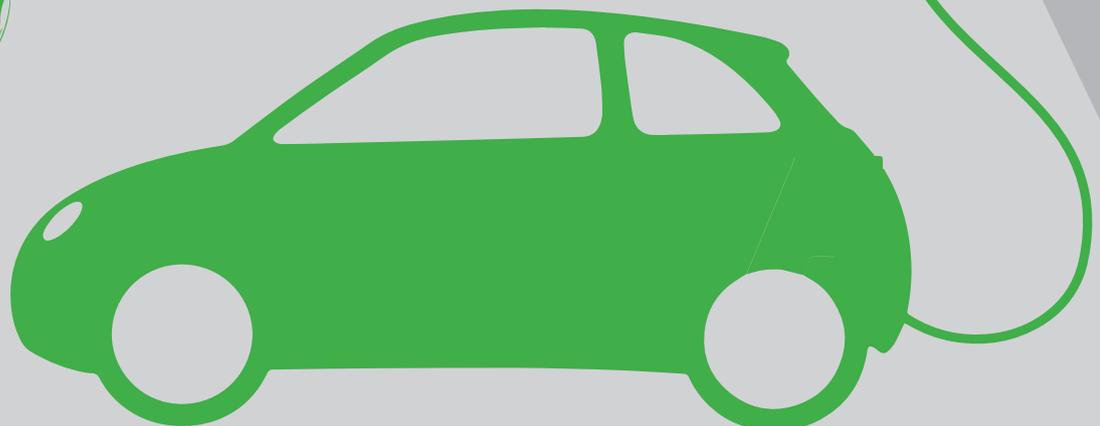


**ENVIRONMENTAL & SOCIAL  
SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY**



## 1.0 Introduction

North East Scotland College is committed to environmental and social sustainability, ensuring that the needs of the present do not compromise the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Further, we are committed to the dual ethos of sustainability and responsible global citizenship.

The College recognises that its activities will have effects on sustainability and will continue to ensure legislative compliance, and wherever practicable, exceed this minimum requirement by incorporating sound sustainability management practices into all aspects of College operations.

By implementing this Strategy, the College aims to be a leader in sustainability. It is a signatory to the Universities and Colleges Climate Commitment for Scotland (UCCCFs) and, as a signatory to the Environmental Association for Universities and Colleges' (EAUC) SDG Accord, recognises the importance and relevance of the United Nations' 17 Sustainable Development Goals, as illustrated below, in achieving this. North East Scotland College will continue to embed Sustainable Development Goals into our education, research, leadership, operations, administration and engagement activities.



The College holds both the ISO 14001 Standard, for its Environmental Management System, and also the ISO 50001 Standard for its Energy Management System ISO50001, and will use these as a basis for continual improvement.

In delivering on our goals, North East Scotland College is committed to reporting on progress to share our learning with other institutions both nationally and internationally.

## **2.0 Key Principles**

The College is aware of its educational, organisational and social responsibilities. In promoting and developing environmental sustainability, the College will:

- (i) Use both the curriculum and continuing professional development (CPD) for staff to promote knowledge, attitudes, behaviours and skills that enable individuals to make informed decisions relating to the impact of their actions on the environment;
- (ii) Act in ways that promote a sustainable world environment through reducing, reusing and recycling wherever possible, and implementing safe and ethical disposal procedures;
- (iii) Develop and share good practice in order to influence society in a positive way, seek to engage creatively and diversely, and promote opportunity for all;
- (iv) Recognise that the minimum acceptable level of environmental performance is that stipulated in environmental legislation;
- (v) Set clear environmental aims, actions and targets and monitor progress;
- (vi) Recognise the indivisible and interconnected nature of the universal set of goals – People, Prosperity, Planet, Partnership and Peace; and
- (vii) Recognise that, as educators, we have a responsibility to play a central and transformational role in attaining the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030.
- (viii)



### **3.0 Strategy Aims**

The following broad aims are essential to the Strategy:

- 3.1 Reduce the use of fossil fuels, water and hazardous substances through improved efficiency of resource utilisation and recycling.
- 3.2 Encourage the use of public transport, walking and cycling, video and audio conferencing to reduce harmful emissions and from car usage.
- 3.3 Reduce the pollution of air, water and land arising from the activities of the College.
- 3.4 Adopt a purchasing policy that will give preference, where practicable, to those products and services that cause least harm to the environment and takes account of the environmental performance of suppliers and contractors.
- 3.5 Ensure the College's estate is managed to protect biodiversity.
- 3.6 Ensure new and refurbished buildings are sensitive to visual amenity and impact on the local community.
- 3.7 Collaborate with appropriate external organisations and communities to improve the mutual understanding of environmental problems and their solutions.
- 3.8 Embed environmental and social sustainability knowledge and training into academic and vocational courses to ensure learners are able to make informed judgements and decisions whilst transforming their thinking.
- 3.9 Provide environmental and social sustainability training and development opportunities for appropriate staff and promote general environmental awareness of all staff.
- 3.10 Communicate the College's sustainability performance to appropriate stakeholders both internally and externally including students.
- 3.11 Align all major efforts with the Sustainable Development Goals, targets and indicators, including our education, research, leadership, operational and engagement activities. Share our learning and account to both local and global communities on our progress against the goals.

## **4.0 Context**

4.1 In its Strategic Plan 2018 – 2021, North East Scotland College (NESCol) has identified five Strategic Themes with accompanying Strategic Goals. These are:

4.1.1 Strategic Theme: Being Responsive  
Strategic Goal One: Deliver high quality, accessible and inclusive learning and training opportunities, which transforms lives and which support the economic and social development of our region.

4.1.2 Strategic Theme: Developing People  
Strategic Goal Two: Develop the skills, talents and potential of all of the people who come to college either to learn or to work.

4.1.3 Strategic Theme: Working in Partnership  
Strategic Goal Three: Work with our partners to deliver positive and sustainable change for the individuals, communities and businesses in our region.

4.1.4 Strategic Theme: Delivering Quality  
Strategic Goal Four: Deliver an excellent learning environment and experience leading to successful outcomes for all learners.

4.1.5 Strategic Theme: Building Sustainability  
Strategic Goal Five: Optimise the use of our available resources to deliver financial and environmental sustainability.

4.2 A number of Strategic Objectives have been identified in relation to each Strategic Theme and its Goal which detail how they will be achieved. This supporting Strategy aims to ensure progress against the following Strategic Objectives:

- Strategic Goal Two – Objective 2.4
- Strategic Goal Three – Objectives 3.1, 3.8
- Strategic Goal Four – Objectives 4.3, 4.6, 4.7, 4.8
- Strategic Goal Five – Objectives 5.3, 5.6, 5.7.

## 5.0 Strategy Themes and Objectives

5.1 The College has identified four key themes that will be crucial in ensuring that its strategic ambitions relating to sustainability are achieved:

- 5.1.1 Sustainability Leadership
- 5.1.2 Carbon Reduction and Management
- 5.1.3 Embedding an Ethos of Sustainability
- 5.1.4 Governance and Management

5.1.1 In terms of **Sustainability Leadership** the College will ensure that the Regional Board and Senior Executive Team (SET) demonstrate collective responsibility for sustainability through their decision-making processes. Effective leadership will be demonstrated by clear communication to managers and staff regarding roles and responsibilities in relation to sustainability and the importance of adherence to College's Environmental and Energy Management Systems and practices across the organisation.

The commitment from the Regional Board and SET, will be reflected in the resources and business priority given to sustainability, with a robust monitoring of environmental performance by the Regional Board and SET.

The College will pro-actively address any legislation that will affect the College prior to the legislation commencing. Consideration of environmental and sustainability processes and risk assessments will be embedded as a standard part of business decision making.

5.1.2 In addressing Carbon Reduction and Management, the College will ensure effective environmental and energy management systems are maintained to provide suitable competence at all levels of the organisation.

The College will develop a Carbon Management Plan (CMP) and the SET will monitor performance against the targets set out in the Plan. The CMP complements the college's existing strategies and policies whilst focussing on the management of the opportunities associated with the reduction of carbon emissions. The College's current CMP states that:

North East Scotland College will reduce the CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from its activities by 15% from the baseline year by July 2020.

- 5.1.3 In **Embedding an Ethos of Sustainability**, the College will ensure genuine partnership working based on trust, respect and co-operation that ensures risks are managed and controlled in a proportionate and effective way.

The College will engage with staff, students, contractors, suppliers and other stakeholders in the promotion and achievement of an environmentally sustainable College. We will ensure sustainability is embedded in everything we do by addressing sustainability within every departmental and faculty Enhancement Plan and by clearly linking these to the Sustainable Development Goals.

It is essential that staff have the necessary and relevant skills to assess risks generated by their work and identify the most appropriate means of managing them. This competence is not only achieved through continuous professional development, but by enabling and empowering staff to take responsibility for sustainability issues where appropriate. The College will also support the development of competence by ensuring policies, procedures, guidance and advice are clear and concise, and easily accessible to staff, students and, where appropriate, visitors and contractors.

- 5.1.4 Our approach to **Governance and Management** will include reporting to the Regional Board achievement against high level targets.

The day-to-day operational management of sustainability is delegated to line managers. Everyone who learns, visits or works in the College also has responsibility for the College's environmental and social sustainability goals.

The Environmental and Sustainability Manager will lead on the delivery of this strategy, including rigorous monitoring of its implementation, and ensuring any corrective actions are taken to address and non-conformities or incidents.

The Environmental and Sustainability Manager will work to enable and empower managers and others to actively manage sustainability issues to a high standard. This will involve close working with all Faculties, Support Services, Trade Unions, the Students' Association and other stakeholders to promote ownership of sustainability across the organisation and to ensure compliance with environmental legislation and good practice.

Plans, policies, procedures and risk assessments will be reviewed and updated in accordance with set frequencies and in response to changes to legislation and/or emerging good practice.

## **6.0 Responsibilities**

- 6.1 The Senior Executive Team is responsible for approving the Strategy.
- 6.2 The Vice Principal – Finance and Resources will monitor implementation of the Strategy and review the Strategy to ensure it continues to meet the College's needs.
- 6.3 The Environmental and Sustainability Manager is responsible for implementing the Strategy.
- 6.4 The Leadership Team is responsible for embedding the Strategy in Enhancement Plans and delivering on the elements of the Strategy specific to their own areas.
- 6.5 The College will maintain and ensure continual improvement the ISO 14001 Standard, for its Environmental Management System, throughout all sites.
- 6.6 The College will maintain and ensure continual improvement of the Energy Management System ISO50001 to continually improve energy use throughout all sites.
- 6.7 The College will ensure the SDG Accord is embedded into our education, research, leadership, operations, administration and engagement activities to attain set goals by 2030.

## **7.0 Monitoring and Review**

- 7.1 The Environmental and Sustainability Manager will provide reports to the Leadership Team annually to review the progress of the Strategy and associated action plans.
- 7.2 Reports/updates will be submitted to the Vice - Principal Finance and Resources, and in response to requests received from the Regional Board.

**Status:** Approved

**Approved by:** Senior Executive Team

**Date of Version:** May 2019

**Date of EIA: May 2019**

**Responsible for Strategy:** Vice Principal - Finance and Resources

**Responsible for Implementation of Strategy:** Environmental and Sustainability Manager

**Date of Review:** July 2020

## Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) Form

**Part 1. Background Information.** (Please enter relevant information as specified.)

<b>Title of Policy or Procedure. Details of Relevant Practice:</b>	Environmental and Social Sustainability Strategy
<b>Person(s) Responsible.</b>	Vice Principal – Finance and Resources
<b>Date of Assessment:</b>	21 <sup>st</sup> May 2019
<b>What are the aims of the policy, procedure or practice being considered?</b>	Highlighted in Strategy.
<b>Who will this policy, procedure or practice impact upon?</b>	This strategy will impact upon all staff and students within the College by reminding them of their obligations to environmental and social sustainability through all practices.

**Part 2. Public Sector Equality Duty comparison** (Consider the proposed action against each element of the PSED and describe potential impact, which may be positive, neutral or negative. Provide details of evidence.)

Need	Impact	Evidence
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation.</li> </ul>	<p>Positive, Staff and Students opportunity to view and understand all Environmental and Social Sustainability responsibilities places upon them.</p>	<p>No equality complaints on current practices.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advancing Equality of Opportunity</li> </ul>	<p>All staff are affected equally by this strategy, there is no need for any differentiation. No groups or individual roles will be identified or treated separately.</p>	<p>All information is made available at staff inductions and student inductions where practicable.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promoting Good relations.</li> </ul>	<p>Positive, Staff and Students opportunity to view and understand all Environmental and Social Sustainability responsibilities places upon them and the expectations of the College.</p>	<p>All information is made available at staff inductions and student inductions where practicable.</p>

**Part 3. Action & Outcome** (Following initial assessment, describe any action that will be taken to address impact detected)

**Monitor any complaints or suggestions as they arise.**

**Sign-off, authorisation and publishing \***

Name:	Gillian Forshaw
Position:	Environmental and Sustainability Manager
Date:	21/05/19

*\*Please note that an electronic sign-off is sufficient*