

# ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

## 1. INTRODUCTION

As the population grows, so do our demands on the planet. Managing this resource and the associated impacts has never been so important in the wake of a Climate and Biodiversity Emergency. Since it was founded in 1901, Harper Adams has worked to meet these challenges. Set on a 635-hectare farm, we are the leading specialist University tackling the future development of our planet's food production, processing, animal sciences, engineering, land management and sustainable business. Our 2030 vision is to be regarded as the UK's leading specialist for food production and technology, animal health and wellbeing, and their contribution to sustainable, living environments for our planet's inhabitants.

## 2. OWNERSHIP

The Vice Chancellors Office, led by the Chief Operating Officer, governs this policy on behalf of Harper Adams University and has overall responsibility for environmental performance improvement. Operational implementation is led by the Environmental and Sustainability Manager.

To ensure meaningful contributions, all staff and students share this responsibility and are therefore required to adopt and adhere to the principles of this policy and any associated standards and procedures of the Environmental Management System/Strategy. Tenants and partners of the University also share certain responsibilities and are expected to adopt and adhere to the same standards and procedures where appropriate.

## 3. SCOPE

This policy applies to staff, students and contractors of the University, during the provision of teaching, research facilities and management of the University and associated support facilities at Harper Adams University Campus.

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## 4. ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

Set in a unique rural location on the edge of Newport, Shropshire, Harper Adams has more than 4,000 students, with 2,600 students on undergraduate and postgraduate awards. With a 635-hectare farm, our mission is to be the leading specialist for food production and technology, animal health and wellbeing, and their contribution to sustainable, living environments for our planet's inhabitants.

The University is committed to:

- Protecting the environment by preventing pollution whenever possible through a reduction in emissions and discharges and minimising waste production as far as is practicable through the application of the waste hierarchy.
- Fulfilling its compliance obligations and, where appropriate, applying more stringent standards to ensure the University complies with applicable legal requirements and with other requirements to which the University subscribes which relate to its environmental aspects and impacts.
- Working towards Net Zero Scope 1 & 2 carbon emissions by 2030 through the adoption of a University Carbon Management Plan, the development of a Decarbonisation Strategy (Heat, Power and Fleet) and the efficient and responsible use of energy and water by promoting resource efficiency associated with day-to-day activities and new developments.
- Minimising the impact of transport on the environment through the adoption of a University wide sustainable travel plan.
- Minimising any adverse environmental impacts from the University's capital development programme with new build development considering the adoption of sustainable design / low carbon technologies and substantial refurbishments seeking improvements in the carbon footprint of buildings being refurbished.
- Protecting natural habitats and local wildlife and enhancing biological diversity.
- Embedding the principles of environmental stewardship and sustainability within the University's Teaching and Learning Strategy advocating environmental sustainability and ethical approaches.
- Continually improving the University's environmental performance through the introduction of an Environmental Management System and the annual development and review of environmental objectives and targets.
- Monitoring and auditing the University's environmental performance and practice at regular intervals.
- Participating in dialogue to build partnerships with local community and national organisations to reduce the University's environmental impact within the regions in which core activities take place.
- Seeking to influence our suppliers and contractors through the development and implementation of a sustainable procurement policy, an objective of which will require sustainable issues to be considered in the procurement of all goods and services supplied to the University.
- Increasing the awareness of environmental responsibilities among staff and students.
- Making this Policy available to the public and communicating it to all parties working for or on behalf of the University.

This Environmental Policy will be reviewed annually. A series of targets and key performance indicators will be detailed in the University's Sustainability Strategy. Progress on achievements will be reviewed and reported via the University Sustainability Steering Group to University Executive on a regular basis and to Finance and General Purposes Committee on an annual basis and to the University Board of Governors annually.

**Signed by:**

**Jo Horsburgh, Chief Operating Officer, July 2023**

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## 5. GOVERNANCE PROCESS

This Policy has been developed by the Sustainability Steering Group and approved at the Finance and General Purposes Committee.

The official signatory is the Chief Operating Officer and the Policy will be reviewed annually and/or when there is a change in related environmental legislation/regulation.

## 6. ASSOCIATED STRATEGIES/DOCUMENTS

The following [strategies/policies and associated documents](#) relate to this Policy:

- University Strategic Plan – Our 2030 Vision

Together, we will make the difference: by 2030, Harper Adams will have realised its vision to combine being regarded as the UK's leading specialist institution with being an international recognised University for food production and technology, animal health and wellbeing, and their contribution to sustainable, living environments for our planet's inhabitant's. (pp 10).

- Sustainability Strategy 2020 – 2025

Specifying all environmental aspects, impacts and related environmental improvement programmes.

- Carbon Management Plan 2020 – 2025

Specifying carbon reduction targets for 2025 and to achieve Net Zero by 2030 (Scope 1 and 2) and 2040 (Scope 3, all scopes University Farm).

- Signatory to the Universities and Colleges Race to Zero

A global campaign to rally leadership and support for a healthy, resilient, zero carbon recovery.

- Signatory to the SDG Accord

A global campaign to deliver the goals, to annually report on progress both nationally and internationally with sector SDG reporting metrics being presented at the annual UN High Level Political Forum

- Ethical Investment Policy

Specifying a requirement to consider the published guidance of the Charity Commission on ethical and socially responsible investment of charitable funds.

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## 7. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPACT STATEMENT

Harper Adams University’s commitment to equality and diversity means that this policy has been screened in relation to the use of gender-neutral language, jargon-free plain English, recognition of the needs of disabled people, promotion of the positive duty in relation to race, gender and disability and avoidance of stereotypes. This document is available in alternative formats on request.

If you think we can improve the fairness of this policy please contact the individual who has responsibility for its update.

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## 8. DEFINITIONS

The following definitions related to this policy (pp 2):

Keyword	Definition
<b>Environmental Impact</b>	Change to the environment, whether adverse or beneficial, wholly or partially resulting from an organization's environmental aspects. (EN ISO 14001:2015)
<b>Environmental Aspect</b>	Element of an organization's activities or products or services that interacts or can interact with the environment <i>Note 1 to entry: An environmental aspect can cause (an) environmental impact(s) (3.2.4). A significant environmental aspect is one that has or can have one or more significant environmental impact(s)</i> <i>Note 2 to entry: Significant environmental aspects are determined by the organization applying one or more criteria.</i> (EN ISO 14001:2015)
<b>Environmental Management System</b>	Part of the management system used to manage environmental aspects, fulfil compliance obligations, and address risks and opportunities (EN ISO 14001:2015)
<b>Compliance Obligations</b>	Legal requirements that an organization has to comply with and other requirements that an organization has to or chooses to comply with. (EN ISO 14001:2015)
<b>Net Zero (target)</b>	Net zero target refers to reaching net-zero carbon emissions by a selected date, but differs from zero carbon, which requires no carbon to be emitted. Net-zero refers to balancing the amount of emitted greenhouse gases with the equivalent emissions that are either offset or sequestered. This should primarily be achieved through a rapid reduction in carbon emissions, but where zero carbon cannot be achieved, offsetting through carbon credits or sequestration through rewilding or carbon capture and storage needs to be utilised. (source: edie.net)

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## 9. VERSION CONTROL

Name of Policy:	Environmental Policy
Purpose of the Policy:	Sets out the University's objectives to manage its environmental impact across all core areas of activity
Approved by:	University Secretary's Office (Finance and General Purposes Committee)
Responsibility for Updates:	Environmental and Sustainability Manager
Policy Applies to:	All University employees, students, contractors and any interested public parties
Version number:	3
Date of Approval:	28 June 2023
Proposed date of Review:	28 June 2023
Related documents	Sustainability Strategy
Updates to previous version (if applicable):	<p>Amendment to version 2, 28 June 2023, included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>i. Management reporting structure for Environmental and Sustainability Manager / Policy signatory</li><li>ii. University Strategy alignment</li><li>iii. Time specific targets for Net Zero Scopes</li><li>iv. Inclusion of SDG Accord, sec. 6</li><li>v. Amendments to revised Sustainability Strategy and time period and governance reporting</li></ul>

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