

ENVIRONMENT & CLIMATE EMERGENCY POLICY STATEMENT

Environmental sustainability and climate change are probably the greatest issues facing humankind in the twenty-first century. They are a major focus of Exeter's research and teaching activities, as well as a key responsibility for the staff, students and governors of the University.

The Environment and Climate Emergency Policy aims to integrate carbon and environmental management into all University processes and to maximise the influence of the University in reducing its footprint through education and research, its operations and ambitions. As such it is integral to the University's Strategy 2030. As part of the University mission to lead meaningful action against the climate emergency and ecological crisis, the following Climate Emergency goals have been adopted which are embedded in our Research and Impact, Education and Global Strategies.

CLIMATE EMERGENCY GOALS:

1. All Campus activities / operations shall have a carbon net zero impact and / or result in environmental gain by 2030, the University aims to be a leader within the Higher Education sector, as set out in the Environment and Climate Emergency Working Group Report (Nov 2019).

RESPONSIBILITY:

The Climate and Environmental Crisis Board (attendees from Research, Faculties, Professional Services and Students) is accountable for ensuring the Policy is implemented. Implementation of carbon net zero has been embedded in all new decisions/ operations and activities and incrementally embedded into existing processes, contracts and tenders on renewal. All employees have a responsibility to ensure that the aims and objectives of the policy continue to be met.

POLICY AIMS: The University requires its staff, students, partners and suppliers to:

1. Respect, embrace, and actively support the University's Strategy 2030 goals for carbon net zero and environmental net gain outcomes across all our operations and activities,
2. Proactively act in ways to support environmental net gain and the climate emergency, raising awareness and recognising positive action, whether it be teaching, researching or other University related activity
3. Demonstrate commitment to managing, minimising and mitigating the impacts from operations, activities, research and education,
4. Seek to minimise the environmental impact through environment and climate emergency conscious decision making including choice of products, partners and suppliers,
5. Evaluate performance and transparently report on decisions, outcomes and actions; providing commentary and explanations holding ourselves to account,
6. Demonstrate compliance with all relevant legislation as a minimum, and where possible go beyond it
7. Demonstrate commitment to continually improve and monitor environmental performance, report openly and transparently to support greater recognition of the benefits of environmental change and ensure that outcomes do not create a detriment to any group with protected characteristics within our community.

The University embraces the environment and climate emergency agendas both strategically and globally through its development of [supporting strategies](#), local sustainability plans and staff, student and community engagement. We will strive to minimise negative impacts and optimise positive opportunities in delivering our Climate Emergency targets and the goals of our Strategy 2030; recognising our global and local reach, through our diverse operations, partnerships and programmes.

Signed - 

Position – Vice Chancellor University of Exeter

Date - 1 April 2025

Version Control	Last Reviewed or Updated
V.1 First Adopted	October 2020
V.2 Reviewed & updated	March 2022
V.3 Reviewed & updated	March 2025*

* During the 2025 review it was agreed that a new Sustainability Strategy will be developed in 2025/26 to replace this policy statement and reflect the University's progress and commitments relating to sustainability. Information on our current approach and progress can be found at www.exeter.ac.uk/about/sustainability.

Appendix to the E&CE Policy Statement

Summary of Policy Goals and timeline

- **Goal 1:** To be **carbon neutral (net zero)** for **scope 1 and 2 emissions** by 2030 via a front-loaded approach.
- **Goal 2:** To ensure we have data analytics so that we can **reduce scope 3 emissions** with a plan to reach net zero by 2030 publicly communicated.
- **Goal 3:** To pursue a **policy of ‘environmental net gain’** on our estates, and to use our research and education to deliver environmental net gain within region, country and across the globe.
- **Goal 4:** To be recognised as an **Environment and Sustainability** leader across the **University sector, nationally and internationally** by 2025, and first in the Russell Group Universities in key sustainability benchmarks.

Summary of Policy Targets by 2025 (compared to 2018 footprint as outlined in the Environment and Climate Emergency Working Group Report (2019).

2025 - Update on Policy Targets

The targets below were set in 2019, when the ECE Policy was first published.

Development of new strategies has seen the review and update of some targets. Other targets will be reviewed when developing our new Sustainability Strategy in 2025/26.

We report on our progress annually via our [Annual Sustainability Report](#).

Targets		2025 update indicating where these targets are now embedded into new strategies and processes
1	All areas of activity across the University shall be responsible for the delivery of the Environment and Climate Emergency policy and targets through their day to day work; via governance and risk reporting, developing and delivering Climate Action Plans which will be tracked by quarterly carbon scorecard reporting	Sustainability embedded into Strategy 2030
2	Adoption of the policy to act as an enabler for transformational culture change across all areas of the University to accelerate and drive environmental and climate conscious business decisions and outcomes	Under the remit of the Climate and Environmental Crisis Board
3	<i>Implement</i> mandatory Carbon Literacy training for all staff and students	Under the remit of the Education Thematic Forum
4	Renew and promote flexible working policy	Embedded within Flexible Working Policy .
5	E&CE requirement on VCEG / Procurement Activity / Spend papers (incorporating lifecycle thinking)	Embedded into University Business Case templates
6	College Climate Action Plans developed, delivered and driven across teams and departments to meet /if not exceed in year targets and goals to reduce College level footprint	Faculty and Professional Services Sustainability Committees
7	Professional Service Climate Action Plans developed, delivered and driven across teams and departments to meet /if not exceed in year targets and goals to reduce Professional Service level footprint	
Digital		
8	<i>Enable up to 60% 'Off Campus' working.</i>	IT Services - Working from home Digital Strategy 2030 Under the remit of the IT Sustainability Committee
9	Invest in technology to enable 50% reduction in business travel carbon, e.g. including 'Off Campus' working e.g. video conferencing, virtual field courses, on line conferencing etc.	
10	Implement a policy to deliver zero carbon footprint in IT equipment, data processing and services, including end of life waste recycling of equipment	
11	95% reduction in paper / non-essential printing (giving consideration to reasonable adjustments)	
Bought Goods and Services/Sustainable Procurement		
12	<i>Implement</i> a policy that all new travel, procurement & spend requests have environmental & carbon impact/benefit & all contracts & tender renewals include environmental & carbon impact/benefit specifications, including IT, digital & in-house production.	Sustainability embedded within the Responsible Procurement Strategy
13	Establish a policy requiring local, sustainable sources and practices from all producers and suppliers e.g. best environmental/welfare practice animal products, sustainable palm oil.	

Business Travel		
14	Reduce non-essential business travel carbon footprint by 50% (stretch goal 75%), through adoption of low carbon travel alternatives and policy of 'essential travel only'.	Updated objectives, targets and KPIs embedded in the Sustainable Transport Strategy 2024-2030 University's Performance Framework includes faculty/PS metrics to reduce business travel emissions
15	Incentivise sustainable travel e.g. low carbon / slow travel	
Local Travel		
16	Improve and incentivise active travel e.g. improve pedestrian access points; more sheltered and secure cycle storage, preferential parking 'Off Campus, preferential routes for walking/cycling, preferential rates for parking of EV vehicles, and improved access catering for all abilities.	Updated objectives, targets and KPIs embedded in the Sustainable Transport Strategy 2024-2030
17	Provide 50% parking as E-charging points for cars and bikes (vans, fleet, other E vehicles)	
Research		
18	Implement a 'Sustainable Research Framework' to steer all research practice.	Sustainability embedded in Exe-Tech Strategy 2030 and forthcoming Research and Innovation Strategy
19	Implement Laboratory Efficiency Assessment Framework (LEAF) accreditation	
20	Reduce minus 80 freezers set points by 10 degrees	
Global		
21	Develop 'climate-compatible global partnership activities' with aligned core values to help the university achieve carbon neutrality	Sustainability embedded in Global Exeter 2030 Strategy
22	Embed Environment & Climate Emergency considerations into College Global Plans and International Student Recruitment operations, and establish a strategy to share this approach to international partner institutions, students and prospective students'	
Education		
23	Embed Sustainable Development Goals and Climate Emergency across all courses, including integration of carbon literacy training into the curriculum <i>and</i> launch of Student Climate Emergency Companion Pack	Sustainability being embedded into the curriculum via Curriculum for Change. Under the remit of the Education Thematic Forum
24	Continue blended learning opportunities; through the use of digital/ online teaching (i.e. 'Off campus' working)	
25	Require justification of all international field courses offering long-haul options, and look for alternative low carbon alternatives – 50% carbon footprint	
Buildings and Work Place		
26	Maximise onsite renewable sources and procure 100% renewable energy supplies	Updated objectives, targets and KPIs embedded into forthcoming Climate Strategy . Sustainability Design Guide
27	Adopt Sustainable Design guide for New build/Refurbishment maintenance of Buildings	
28	Improve environmental and energy performance of buildings through capital spend programmes to meet best practice standards	
Energy and Water		
29	Only purchase equipment with high energy efficiency ratings and low WLC embodied environmental impact e.g. A+++	Updated objectives, targets and KPIs embedded into the Responsible Procurement Strategy and Sustainable Procurement Policy Water Resilient Policy
30	Implement 50% water use reduction.	
Waste and Recycling		
31	95% reduction in single use plastic packaging	Updated objectives, targets and KPIs embedded into the Circular Economy Strategy 2024-2030
32	85% recycling or all waste	
33	Campus wide waste refuse / recycling programme	
Hospitality, Catering & Retail		
34	100% reduction in non-compostable single use plastic cups and containers	Updated objectives, targets and KPIs embedded in the Sustainable Food Policy
35	95% reduction in single use plastic packaging	
36	95% reduction in paper / printing (giving consideration to reasonable adjustments)	
37	85% recycling or all waste	
38	Environmental and carbon impact/benefit required for all contracts, specifications, tenders	
39	Implement a Meat second policy	
40	Implement local, sustainable sources and practices from all producers and suppliers e.g. best environmental/welfare practice animal products, sustainable palm oil, low carbon footprint	

Biodiversity		
41	Establish net positive plan for Woodland, Wetland and Campus wide biodiversity	Updated objectives, targets and KPIs embedded in the Nature Positive Strategy 2024-2030
Data Analytics & Reporting		
42	80% accuracy, 100% coverage	Progress reported in annual Sustainability Report
43	Quarterly Carbon Scorecard Reporting / Target Performance tracking (to be made publicly available)	
44	Adopt life cycle thinking and analysis in the evaluation of savings to achieve lowest environmental and carbon footprint from our actions and decisions	