Environmental Sustainability Policy

Section 1 - Introduction

(1) The Environmental Sustainability Policy is the uppermost environmental policy for the University. It is supported by issue specific policies for its campus management, teaching and learning and research activities.

(2) The University is a signatory to the Talloires Declaration, an international, voluntary ten-point action plan for incorporating sustainability and environmental literacy in University activities. This policy underpins the University's commitment to action as a signatory.

(3) It is associated with the sustainability aims stated within the University's Institutional Strategic Plan Building Distinction and the University's vision statement for sustainability expressed in the Environmental Sustainability Plan:

> To provide leadership, innovation and inspiration to our staff, students and the broader community in environmental sustainability through our campus management, teaching and learning, research and community engagement activities.

Section 2 - Policy Scope

(4) This Policy applies to all University staff, conjoints, students, volunteers, visitors and members of advisory and governing bodies, in all campuses and locations of the University and at all times while engaged in University business or otherwise representing the University.

(5) The scope encompasses affiliates, contractors or consultants, appointed or engaged by the University to perform duties or functions, and/or recognised for their contribution to the University.

Section 3 - Policy Intent

(6) This policy provides a framework for the University's commitment to sustainable actions and responsible environmental management practices.

(7) This policy and the associated Environmental Sustainability Plan have the following objectives, formed around the actions required by the Talloires Declaration while also reflecting the University's particular circumstances:

a. increase awareness amongst our staff, students and the community of environmental sustainability and its importance to the wellbeing of current and future generations;
b. ingrain environmental sustainability and environmental responsibility into our institutional culture and across all of our campuses;
c. lead by example in the way we manage our natural and built campus assets, through achieving environmental compliance and adopting best practice;
d. deliver leading-edge interdisciplinary teaching and learning experiences to equip students with knowledge, confidence and enthusiasm so they can positively engage in fostering environmentally sustainable solutions

through their careers and everyday living;

e. strive for effective pathways and partnerships across the University organisational structure, and with local and state government, business, industry, research and community leaders to achieve environmental management solutions.

Section 4 - Policy principles

(8) The University will strive to minimise its environmental impact and carbon footprint, and provide leadership in environmental management by ensuring environmental sustainability is integral to all of its activities. To achieve this, the University has committed to the following set of Principles.

(9) The Principles are grouped around the three theme areas in the Environmental Sustainability Plan - Campus Management, Research and Innovation and Teaching and Learning. For Campus Management, the Principles are further aligned to a subtheme.

Campus Management

Energy and Carbon Emissions

(10) The University will:

a. utilise the solar advantages offered by our bushland landscape to provide daytime and passive heating needs
b. strive for best practice in energy efficiency design and fit-outs for new buildings, retrofits and refurbishments
c. optimise our use of renewable energy sources, including purchasing green power from accredited sources
d. minimise embodied energy in construction materials and product purchases.

Water

(11) The University will:

a. integrate water sensitive stormwater treatment approaches into landscape, building and carpark designs to provide for multiple benefits including water quality protection, runoff management, biodiversity and amenity
b. capture stormwater and rainwater for reuse for non-potable purposes
c. facilitate opportunities for on-site treatment and reuse of grey-water
d. install water efficient facilities and equipment, including automated monitoring systems
e. apply soil and water management best practices to protect surface water and groundwater quality.

Landscape and Biodiversity

(12) The University will:

a. preserve the bushland character and image of the University through the protection of our native flora and fauna
b. seek a practical balance between biodiversity and a safe and usable environment, minimising potential risks to people, buildings and property
c. use Australian plant species, and preferably local provenance species, for new and supplementary landscape plantings
d. utilise water sensitive urban design techniques to manage rainwater and stormwater onsite and capture for reuse
e. apply best practice bush regeneration and landscape maintenance techniques

f. target noxious weeds and feral animals through the use of integrated pest management approaches
g. actively promote the ecosystem services and amenity benefits of the bushland campus
h. promote a 'bushwise' and environmentally sensitive approach to occupying and moving around the campus to engender tolerance and appreciation of our flora and fauna
i. minimise, or at best avoid, native vegetation removal in capital works projects, and employ compensatory offsets where native vegetation must be removed
j. avoid development in locations of high ecological value
k. maximise the opportunities for building occupants to have a view to the outside, and to source fresh outside air
l. integrate building and landscape design to provide external meeting and teaching and learning spaces.

Waste

(13) The University will:

a. reduce the amount of waste generated and going to landfill through avoidance, waste minimisation and resource recovery (reuse, recycling, reprocessing and energy recovery)
b. maximise the use of recycled content material and recycling of existing materials, where cost effective
c. provide robust outdoor bin infrastructure that will restrict fauna access and foraging, reducing waste spillage and detrimental fauna impacts
d. provide food and beverage services that deliver recycling and minimise waste generation
e. minimise building materials that have damaging ecological effects during harvesting, manufacturing, and/or construction
f. use materials and equipment that have minimal maintenance and longevity of expected useful life
g. employ building designs that can be readily adapted to meet changing growth and use needs.

Sustainable Transport

(14) The University will:

a. provide campus-to-community sustainable transport options that also support broader lifestyle needs around reasonable travel times, access, safety, wellbeing and an active healthy lifestyle
b. facilitate sustainable travel alternatives around walking, public transport, cycling and carpooling to seek to reduce the use of single-occupancy vehicles for University commuting and business travel
c. engage in regional transport strategies to represent public transport service needs of staff and students
d. provide IT solutions for communication needs to aid in reducing car use
e. deliver secure bike facilities with lockers and showers, which showcase environmental design principles
f. integrate shower and locker facilities into buildings to support sustainable transport users and healthy lifestyle options around cycling, walking and recreational pursuits.

Sustainable Business and Procurement

(15) The University will:

a. employ sustainable procurement practices which take a whole of life cycle approach to minimising waste and damage to the environment, while achieving value for money benefits for the University and the broader community
b. incorporate the cost and impact of environmental externalities into decision making
c. purchase local products and services where possible
d. employ business practices that support the global fair trade movement aimed at tackling poverty and

empowering producers through trade.

Asset Planning and Environmental Compliance

(16) The University will:

a. employ campus management practices that minimise environmental impact through the use of best practice and ensure compliance with regulatory requirements
b. build staff understanding of, and procedural capacity in, environmental sustainability as it applies to their work activities and activities undertaken by external contractors, lessees, project managers and consultants managed by the University.

Research and Innovation

(17) The University will:

a. enhance the University's reputation as a hub of research excellence in the sustainable energy and resources fields
b. expand the University's contribution to national and international research on a range of environmental sustainability issues
c. foster collaboration between research, teaching and learning, campus management practitioners and external stakeholders to achieve environmental improvements and innovations in the University's campus facilities
d. establish external partnerships to develop and export environmental solutions for community and commercial use
e. grow our partnerships with external agencies, including industry, government and other research institutions, to provide collaborative solutions to global environmental sustainability challenges.

Teaching and Learning

(18) The University will:

a. prepare graduates with the knowledge and skills to practice and advocate sustainable energy use
b. engage students and staff with curricula and projects that promote sustainable practices
c. share and exchange environmental sustainability knowledge and experience with other universities, community groups, and others in the public and private sectors
d. optimise online learning as part of contributing to a wider societal transition to a low transport economy
e. actively engage in professional affiliations to build institutional capacity in environmental sustainability.

Status and Details

Status	Historic
Effective Date	1st June 2011
Review Date	31st December 2019
Approval Authority	Vice-Chancellor
Approval Date	1st June 2011
Expiry Date	19th November 2020
Responsible Executive	Morven Cameron Chief Operating Officer
Enquiries Contact	Office of the Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic & Global)

Glossary Terms and Definitions

"Graduate" - (Noun) Has the same meaning as in section 3(2) of the University of Newcastle Act 1989.

"University" - The University of Newcastle, a body corporate established under sections 4 and 5 of the University of Newcastle Act 1989.

"Vehicle" - Has the same meaning as section 4 of the Road Transport Act 2013.

"Carbon footprint" - A measurement of the weighted average carbon intensity (WACI) of the portfolio. The WACI represents the Scope 1 and 2 greenhouse gas emissions for each portfolio company, normalised by sales in US dollars, as a proportion of the portfolio. WACI is the preferred carbon footprint metric recommended by the Financial Stability Board Taskforce or Climate Related Financial Disclosure (TCFD).

"Risk" - Effect of uncertainty on objectives. Note: An effect is a deviation from the expected, whether it is positive and/or negative.

"Asset" - Any tangible or intangible item (or group of items) that the University owns or has a legal or other right to control and exploit to obtain financial or other economic benefits.

"Student" - A person formally enrolled in a course or active in a program offered by the University or affiliated entity.

"Procurement" - The overarching activities, processes and systems undertaken to acquire goods and services for the University.

"Staff" - Means a person who was at the relevant time employed by the University and includes professional and academic staff of the University, by contract or ongoing, as well as conjoint staff but does not include visitors to the University.

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