

Supplier Engagement HE Tool

Action Plan for University of Worcester

We have used the issues you have selected to suggest some actions to help improve your sustainability performance. You can remove actions if they are not relevant to your business, or add your own actions to this list. The action plan is likely to form part of discussions between the universities or purchasing consortia and clients during contract review meetings. We encourage you to update your progress on these actions and to add evidence that shows how you are demonstrating progress and improvement. Please feel free to share this action plan with colleagues within your business and your clients.

Social Impacts

2 We could do more to engage and develop our staff

Engaged staff are assets to your business; when they understand what you are trying to achieve they can help make it happen. Sustainability is linked to staff development as it forms part of organisational process and practice.



Support staff to shape sustainability strategy and drive implementation **Completed**

Help your staff understand what sustainability means and how their professional practice contributes to broader strategic ambitions. Systems and processes can be developed to include sustainability formally across the business or a network of 'champions' might be supported to drive progress less formally. Reporting on progress and impact should be part of either approach, as should ensuring your approach is inclusive, which will bring the benefits of diversity to your sustainability activity.

Evidence

University Staff have often taken a lead in encouraging and promoting sustainability. There is a wide cross section of staff from across the University who sit on the Sustainability Strategy Group. The University of Worcester sees its commitment to society to be much broader than mitigating its negative impacts and focuses its resources on positive societal impacts of activities. The assessment of what is material is a matter of professional judgement and we have utilised the wisdom of the Sustainability Strategy Group to help set and identify these over a series of workshops to keep this continuously under review.

3 We should know more about where the things we buy come from and how they are made

Every product we buy has a story attached to it; how it is made, what it is made from, who has made it and where it has travelled from. These stories all have both positive and negative impacts. Select this issue to explore how to embed responsible purchasing in your business or to share your own approach.



Understand the impacts of the products your business buys **In progress**

There is a business risk attached to not having any understanding of your supply chain. There may also be opportunities to source more ethical or environmentally sound alternatives (those which produce less waste, have a lower carbon footprint, use less raw materials or are produced with less damage to the environment, and where good labour practices are followed). The starting point is understanding where the products your business depends upon come from and how they are made and transported. Don't be afraid to ask questions of your own suppliers.

Evidence

In line with the University financial regulations, the procurement team complete tenders, during this process the team consider the supply chain and assesses this as part of the marking process. There are a number of ways the Procurement team try to have a positive impact, these include but are not limited to: consolidating deliveries, waste created from the contract to be recycled, electric vehicles utilised, the use of recycled products for packaging, where possible.

Develop your suppliers don't just assess them! **In progress**

Develop ways to train, support and engage your suppliers on sustainability that go beyond simply assessing them via your tender or contract management processes. Find out about their needs and support them to develop for mutual benefit.

Evidence

We engage with our suppliers and support them through regular contact. We build relationships to encourage them to consider their business impact. Sustainability is a subject matter discussed at regular CRM meetings.

Make a public commitment relating to ethical or responsible purchasing **Completed**

A simple sustainable procurement commitment (buying 'greener' or more ethical products or services) can be used to communicate what is important to your business. You may use certified products or services or choose to have your own certified. A public commitment demonstrates to your customers how you consider and address the impacts within your supply chain. Include them as part of your sustainability approach and report on progress accordingly.

Evidence

The University is one of the largest procurers in the county of Worcestershire and recognises that it has a responsibility to minimise the environmental and social impact of purchased goods and services. The Purchasing strategy which runs alongside the University Strategy Plan provides a commitment to responsible procurement. With an aim to reduce the negative impacts and increase the positive impacts when purchasing items <https://www2.worc.ac.uk/finance/52...>

4 Our activities have an impact in our immediate locality

Businesses often have a range of positive or negative impacts on the immediate locality; an efficient and responsible business will strive to understand what these impacts are. They will then seek to reduce any negative impacts and make the most of opportunities to enhance the positive impacts they could have.



Economic Impacts

Actions you select here will help increase your financial resilience, reduce your business risk and generate a positive impact on the wider economy. Indicate against actions in this list whether they are in progress, are ready to start or have already completed.

Your issues

1 We want to be part of a robust, resilient and ethical supply chain

Ensuring strong business relationships are formed with suppliers is key to maintaining and developing trust along your supply chains. An effective and responsible business will be keen to share its values with its suppliers for mutual benefit.



Your action plan

Guarantee suppliers a payment date Completed

Businesses can ensure payments are met by a specified date, and offer compensation or another gesture if this deadline is not met. Guaranteeing suppliers a date of payment builds trust across your supply chain as suppliers feel they will suffer less financial risk when carrying out business with you.

Evidence

The University is committed to paying valid invoices within agreed timescales. The University has standard payment terms of 30 days net of invoice being received. Alternative payment terms to be agreed and formalised via negotiation with the contract manager.

Ask suppliers for feedback In progress

There are a range of ways you can ask your suppliers for feedback. As well as using this to inform your business development it can also be something you publish to attract new business.

Evidence

Procurement engage with suppliers at various stages of the tender process subject to strict regulations. Supplier engagement is encouraged at various points of a tender process depending on the specific requirements. Recently catering companies had been invited to site before the tender documents had been finalised and published to engage with the suppliers and give an opportunity to gain feedback from existing suppliers in the catering market to use their expertise to help build the tender documents.

Embed a commitment to social value within your supply chain In progress

Part of demonstrating social value for your customers is delivering it with your suppliers.

1 We are keen to communicate with our customers

An effective and responsible business understands that customers can be your biggest supporters and so it is important to communicate openly and honestly with them.



Communicate sustainability to your customers Completed

Including the benefits of sustainability and how you integrate it into your business practice can help build a stronger customer base. Considering sustainability in your business and communicating it is now becoming normal business practice, ensure you are part of this growing trend!

Evidence

The University takes its sustainable responsibilities extremely seriously and has received high recognition as a result. The Sustainability Team are very proud to have received a number of awards for their commitment and hard work in this area. <https://www.worcester.ac.uk/about/...> There are a number of events held throughout the year such as Go green week to gain students attention and to get them involved. Students are encouraged to get involved in many ways throughout the year by volunteering with the green impact team, student switch off. <https://www.worcester.ac.uk/discov...>

2 We are keen our business contributes to the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

192 Member States of the United Nations (including the UK) agreed new Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in 2015. They will need the support of businesses to achieve them. Select this statement to explore how your business can get ready to meet this new global challenge.



Know how your business activities can contribute to the SDGs In progress

Identify how your business activities contribute to the [\[\[global goals\]\]](#) <http://www.netpositivesupplier.co...> or how they could contribute. A mapping exercise may be needed to identify both risks and opportunities from the SDGs for your business operations.

Evidence

The Sustainability team have completed a mapping exercise to identify risks and opportunities.

Find out more about the SDGs In progress

The [\[\[Sustainable Development Goals\]\]](#) <http://www.netpositivesupplier.co...> were adopted to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure prosperity for all. They will impact on business practice over the next decade at least as governments are challenged to demonstrate progress against the targets within them.

Include the SDGs as part of your sustainability plans and reporting Completed

The [\[\[SDGs\]\]](#) <http://www.netpositivesupplier.co...> could be at the heart of your sustainability activity with targets and evidence of progress part of your journey. Have a look at the [\[\[South Yorkshire Police Sustainability Strategy\]\]](#) <https://www.southyorks.police.uk/m...> to see how they have included the SDGs in the strategy.

Evidence

The University of Worcester has signed up to the SDG Accord and are reporting annually on our progress on the UN Sustainable Development Goals. The Sustainability Policy has clear objectives to promote sustainable development. The Sustainability Strategy 2020-2030 has the SDG's at the core of its strategy <https://www.worcester.ac.uk/docume...>

Environmental Impacts

Actions selected in this sector will help increase your environmental sustainability. Indicate against actions from this list whether they are in progress, are ready to start or have already completed.

Your issues

1 Our business activities generate food waste

Organic waste being sent to landfill has been clearly linked to climate change due to the methane released. Food considered as waste is often fit for consumption and so diverting it to re-use is often perfectly possible.



Your action plan

Divert excess food In progress

The number of schemes promoting food redistribution is growing. Small scale projects such as [\[\[The People's Fridge\]\]](#) <http://www.crowdfunder.co.uk/peopl...> could be replicated locally and [\[\[Olio\]\]](#) <https://olioex.com/about/#about> is an app suitable for individuals so appropriate for both smaller scale food re-use or something to promote with staff. Those with more significant food waste volumes might like to investigate a scheme like [\[\[Fareshare.\]\]](#) <http://www.fareshare.org.uk/>

Evidence

The contractor responsible for the catering is also responsible for the shop. Any fruit/vegetables that are coming to the end of life in the shop will be utilised by the catering team to avoid wastage. The University is keen to reduce food waste where possible: <https://www.worcester.ac.uk/discov...>

Consider composting

Plan for waste reduction Completed

Understanding your waste streams will help you work out how to reduce the amount you produce. This could mean buying different products, finding ways to re-use certain items or increasing recycling rates. Having a [\[plan to reduce waste\]](#) <https://www.bitc.org.uk/report/a-g...> will help you monitor progress and you can share it with others.

Evidence

The University of Worcester has a Waste Strategy plan as follows: <https://www.worcester.ac.uk/docume...> The University is dedicated to reducing waste.

Report on your waste management progress Completed

Excellent businesses can demonstrate appropriate governance and [\[\[transparent reporting.\]\]](#) <https://www.wrap.org.uk/sites/file...> with a focus on impacts. Ensure your approach to waste management maximises opportunities to inspire confidence in your process and practice and demonstrates clear progress over time.

Evidence

The University of Worcester annually reports on waste management progress: <https://www.worcester.ac.uk/about/...>

3 Our business activities use natural resources (energy, water, mined materials, plant or animal products)

All businesses use natural resources. From the energy we use for power to the materials we rely on every day, we are using finite resources that are often damaging to produce or extract. It is important to use resources responsibly opting for renewable or sustainable options where possible. Select this issue to explore actions to help you think about understanding and managing resources or to provide information about how you already do this effectively.



Report on your environmental performance Completed

Excellent businesses demonstrate appropriate governance and transparent reporting with a focus on impacts. Ensure your approach to resource efficiency maximises opportunities to inspire confidence in your process and practice and demonstrates clear progress over time. You may also demonstrate participation in appropriate accreditation programmes offering external validation.

Evidence

Since 2007 the university has had an Environmental Management System (EMS) EcoCampus, to provide a framework for managing our environmental responsibilities efficiently in a way that is integrated into all our operations. In May 2010 the university became the first in England to achieve the EcoCampus Platinum Award for the whole campus, its highest award. EcoCampus is specifically designed for Higher Education <https://www.worcester.ac.uk/discov...> The University also has a dedicated website for Sustainability <http://susthingsout.com/index.php/...> to actively engage with our customers - the students on sustainability.

Measure your progress Completed

If you are committing to reducing your energy, water or other natural resources you will need to measure changes in usage over time to engage your staff and also communicate with your customers. Ensure your plans include details of how you measure and monitor your progress over time.

Evidence

The University has set clear targets, these are reviewed on an annual basis and reported on. Details can be found as follows: <https://www.worcester.ac.uk/docume...> For further details on the targets set please refer to: <https://www.worcester.ac.uk/discov...>

4 Our goods (or our people) travel

Whether your people or your goods travel there are impacts on health and wellbeing, the environment and, of course, the bottom line. Select this issue to explore actions suggesting sustainable travel options for your business or to provide information about your existing activities in this area.



Understand the travel impacts of your business In progress

Determine what moves from A to B as part of your business operations and exactly how things are transported. This will help you develop a baseline for your sustainable travel plan or simply help you make the most obvious changes to your business practice. Even if road travel is critical to your business efficiencies are possible. [\[\[Read about Eco-driving\]\]](#) <http://www.energysavingtrust.org.u...> or explore [\[\[energy efficient products.\]\]](#) <http://www.energysavingtrust.org.u...>

Evidence

The University has commissioned an external company to complete a travel plan: <https://www.worcester.ac.uk/docume...>

Explore your sustainable travel options Completed

An efficient and responsible business will be striving to reduce dependence on polluting vehicles, exploring low carbon options and sourcing goods and services locally where possible. This will have environmental benefits, promotes health and wellbeing as well as impacting on your bottom line. Start by considering if the need for travel is business critical and then explore the most sustainable options that meet your needs. Useful starting points for your planning include [\[\[Sustrans\]\] http://www.sustrans.org.uk/](http://www.sustrans.org.uk/) and the [\[\[Energy Saving Trust.\]\] https://energysavingtrust.org.uk/b...](https://energysavingtrust.org.uk/b...)

Evidence

Transport related carbon emissions account for the second largest contribution to carbon at the University, consequently the University has set specific targets to reduce this impact. The Sustainability team has explored various methods of sustainable travel as detailed later in this report. <https://www.worcester.ac.uk/discov...> The University has explored alternatives to petrol and Diesel vehicles, the University has invested in electrical charge points for vehicles for the use of staff/students.. In addition to the above the University has also invested in some electrical vehicles to be utilised by estates and facilities staff when completing jobs across campus, minimising carbon usage.

Offer sustainable travel options Completed

Whether updating your fleet, encouraging lift sharing or remote working for your staff or incentivising certain kinds of travel there are ways to make travelling sustainably part of your culture. Highlighting public transport options for your visitors, having somewhere for staff to store bikes securely or considering a government-supported [\[\[cycle-to-work scheme\]\] https://www.gov.uk/government/publ...](https://www.gov.uk/government/publ...) might all be ways you can support sustainable travel. Try to extend the range of sustainable travel options you promote over time and think about linking to regional plans where possible.

Evidence

The University promotes sustainable travel for students, staff and visitors. We have car share, Woo Bike share so staff/students can have worry free cycling for a year, cycle to work to help staff purchase their own bike and subsidised bus tickets. Academic year-long bus tickets for staff and students' are valid on all First Bus Worcester City services <https://www.worcester.ac.uk/discov...> Staff within the estates and facilities team now have access to electrical vehicles, for use when completing jobs across the University estate, minimising carbon emissions.

1 We set (or want to set) targets to improve our sustainability

Setting clear, measurable targets is an important element of any organisation's commitment to sustainability. Targets to reduce your negative impacts will be important but a more holistic view will also demonstrate your commitment to society and the economy. Select this issue to consider how best to use targets in your business or to capture how you already do this effectively.



2 We are keen to manage our response to the challenge of sustainability in a structured and transparent manner

How an organisation manages its response to sustainability is an important indicator of its commitment. It also demonstrates an understanding of how sustainability interacts with core business practice. Governance structures need to include sustainability, which may require adapting them or even creating new ones. A well-developed governance structure usually makes it easier to set targets and report on and celebrate your sustainability activities.



Publicly report on your sustainability performance Completed

Excellent businesses demonstrate appropriate governance and transparent reporting with a focus on impacts. Regular public reporting of your sustainability performance should be part of business-as-usual for larger organisations. Any public reports will carry more weight if they are externally verified or scrutinised. The [\[\[GRI standards\]\]](https://www.globalreporting.org/st...) <https://www.globalreporting.org/st...> are seen as a gold standard in sustainability reporting requirements and may be worth a look

Evidence

The Sustainability Team regularly report on sustainability performance against the targets set. <https://www.worcester.ac.uk/docume...> The Sustainability team also communicate directly with the customers - our students via the dedicated website <https://susthingsout.com/about-con...>

Complete a materiality analysis Completed

A [\[\[materiality assessment\]\]](http://www.netpositivesupplier.co...) <http://www.netpositivesupplier.co...> is a systematic review of your business impacts. It is generally considered a key activity in the development of a sustainability strategy and subsequent action or implementation planning. Consider including this as part of your sustainability reporting also.

Evidence

The Sustainability Strategy Group has completed a materiality analysis to help identify the material aspects of the University which have the greatest societal impacts, a series of workshops have been carried out to help set and identify these <https://www.worcester.ac.uk/discovWr1/MC iseries>

Evidence