



University of Essex



Sustainability Sub-Strategy Bitesize

Priority 13: Our Community

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Introduction

Our Sustainability Sub-Strategy outlines our commitment to acting in response to the climate and ecological emergency, while supporting the University's mission of excellence in education and research, for the benefit of individuals and communities.

Priority 13: Our Community

We all have a responsibility to contribute to reducing our environmental impact, and through creating the right environments, developing new ways of thinking and encouraging and supporting changes in behaviour our community will be able to play its part. Engaging with students, staff, partners, campus unions, alumni and friends in ways that encourage participation, increase understanding, celebrate relevant education and research, and empower all members of our community to support each other and the development of positive solutions by working collaboratively will maximise individual actions. Through aligned working and common aspirations, our Students Union will maximise our ability to connect, share, encourage and embrace change with our student body, as representatives of the greatest proportion of our community.

Communications will be targeted, effective and prominent, reinforcing the need for urgent, decisive action and underlining the University's commitment to the climate and ecological action. In communicating the realities of the climate and ecological emergency and the work we are undertaking to contribute to the global challenge, will be communicated in accessible, transparent and meaningful ways. Our approach to design, print and to our IT infrastructure will be reviewed, to seek opportunities to reduce the environmental impacts of our communication work, embedding principles into policy, setting examples that can be followed by all.

Objective: Support our community as we normalise sustainability by emphasising environmentally-conscious behaviours and providing the mechanisms to empower prospective and existing students, staff, alumni and partners to think sustainably and integrate it into their lives.

- Reciprocal communication and engagement will drive behavioural change amongst our community and we will champion sustainable and environmental choices, sharing institutional and community sustainability progress and successes.
- We will help to inform our community and empower change through education and engagement, and by sharing sustainability metrics and data we will maximise gains from behavioural change.
- The ways we communicate, our processes and collateral choices will demonstrate our commitment to the climate and ecological emergency.

- Reinforcing our local partnerships will ensure a coherent and informed approach to our work on engagement and increase our reach.

Key Performance Indicators

KPI 36: Sustainability embedded into pre-arrivals and inductions for new starters by 2023

KPI 37: Regular opportunities for idea sharing and consultation in place by 2023

KPI 38: All departments participating in and achieving a minimum of Bronze in Sustainable Essex Awards programme by 2023

KPI 39: Students report satisfaction in provision of sustainability education and extra-curricular activities, measured through SOS-UK Sustainability Skills Survey, by 2026

Action Plan

Type	Year	ID	Objectives and deliverables	Objective Owner
Priority 13			Our Community	
Aim			Support our community as we normalise sustainability by emphasising environmentally-conscious behaviours and providing the mechanisms to empower prospective and existing students, staff, alumni and partners to think sustainably and integrate it into their lives	
Objective		SSS61	Emphasise sustainable and environmental choices	
Deliverable	2021/22	SSS61.1	Review the relevant touchpoints through the entire student/staff cycle, including pre-arrivals and induction to identify areas that sustainability messaging can be embedded	Sustainability Manager
Deliverable	2022/23	SSS61.2	Introduction of a sustainability campaign to promote and highlight environmental choices and benefits to individuals	Sustainability Manager
Objective		SSS62	Share institutional and community sustainability progress and successes	
Deliverable	2021/22	SSS62.1	Publish online an annual Sustainability Report with key data	Sustainability Manager
Deliverable	2022/23	SSS62.2	Introduce a framework to recognise student (both academic and extra-curricular) and staff projects/research and their impact	Sustainability Manager
Deliverable	2021/22	SSS62.3	Develop collateral to highlight achievements students and staff have made [Email signatures, Zoom backgrounds...]	Sustainability Manager
Deliverable	2023/24	SSS62.4	Link Sustainability Sub-Strategy KPIs to Tableau to both embed sustainability thinking and monitor progress	Sustainability Manager
Deliverable	2021/22	SSS62.5	Collate information on the range of communication tools available for communicating stats & KPIs	Sustainability Manager
Deliverable	2024/25	SSS62.6	Further development of the Sustainable Essex Awards programme to integrate into existing schemes, and expand to students living on campus	Sustainability Manager

Type	Year	ID	Objectives and deliverables	Objective Owner
Objective		SSS63	Educate our community by sharing sustainability metrics and data	
Deliverable	2022/23	SSS63.1	Create a communication plan that takes our community on a journey of what's been achieved, what we are currently doing and where we are going. Making the unseen, seen.	CER
Deliverable	2024/25	SSS63.2	Prominently display information on energy and carbon emissions in key buildings and locations including use of digital screens for 'live' updates	Head of Energy and Carbon Reduction
Deliverable	2023/24	SSS63.3	Make headline data accessible on University webpages to assist in making informed choices	Sustainability Manager
Deliverable	2022/23	SSS63.4	Introduce a personal carbon footprint calculator to enable people to understand the footprint of university-related activities	Head of Energy and Carbon Reduction
Objective		SSS64	Listen to our community through continuous consultation	
Deliverable	2022/23	SSS64.1	Create termly moments and touchpoints for students and staff to share ideas and input into University action on sustainability	Sustainability Manager
Objective		SSS65	Communication processes and collateral choices to be considerate to the environment	
Deliverable	2021/22	SSS65.1	Develop guidance to support life-cycle thinking in the purchase of promotional materials and resources	Sustainability Manager
Deliverable	2023/24	SSS65.2	Produce guidelines on how to communicate and engage sustainably, setting out the steps to consider within branding guidelines	CER
Objective		SSS66	Reinforce local partnerships to ensure joined up approaches for projects and engagement	
Deliverable	2021/22	SSS66.1	Develop system to record relevant partnership and outreach activity in relation to sustainability engagement and environmental projects	Sustainability Manager
Deliverable	2021/22	SSS66.2	Regularly communicate benefits of sustainability-related external partnerships and the impacts they are supporting	CER
Objective		SSS67	The Students Union to maximise the contribution students can make to the climate and ecological emergency, aligned with University strategy and policy	

Type	Year	ID	Objectives and deliverables	Objective Owner
Deliverable	2022/23	SSS67.1	Develop activities and programmes to give students the opportunity to engage with sustainability and influence change	SU
Deliverable	2022/23	SSS67.2	Integrate sustainability messages into SU initiatives	SU
Deliverable	2021/22	SSS67.3	Include SU presence in university-wide sustainability events	Sustainability Manager