

ENP-02 / Environmental Policy

Version Number:2023/1.0



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1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose

This policy sets out Unite Students' approach to managing and reducing the environmental impact of its operations.

1.2 Scope

This policy applies to all aspects of Unite Students' operations under direct operational control.

1.3 Responsibilities

This policy is managed by the Head of Sustainability and applies to all Unite's employees and contractors across all our operations including joint ventures and co-investment vehicles.

1.4 Definitions

CDP Formerly the Carbon Disclosure Project

EMS: Environmental management system. A collection of policies and

processes intended to help manage environmental impacts and drive

continual improvement.

<u>EPRA sBPR</u> European Public Real Estate Association Sustainability Best Practice

Reporting Standards

GHG: Greenhouse gasses. Emissions that contribute towards climate change,

including a number of gasses some of which are more potent than carbon dioxide. Usually represented simply as tonnes of carbon dioxide

equivalent (CO₂e)

GRESB Global Real Estate Sustainability Benchmark

1.5 References

Various other documents are relevant to this policy including:

- Sustainability Policy
- Sustainable Construction Framework
- Procurement Policy
- Net Zero Carbon Pathway



• Online sustainability reporting see https://www.unite-group.co.uk/responsibility

2 Policy

2.1.1 Intent

This policy seeks to reduce the environmental impacts arising from Unite Students' business operations in line with our overarching sustainability strategy as set out in our Sustainability Policy, specifically in three areas of our strategy.

- Tackling climate change (including our net zero carbon target)
- Responsible use of resources
- Greener, sustainable buildings

Making a positive impact through people and places



PEOPLE

Everyone is unique. Everyone is important. Everyone deserves to be safe, respected and included, and to be their best selves. At Unite, we strive to make that happen whether you stay with us or work with us.

Opportunities for people to develop and grow

We're giving employees and students the support they need to grow and succeed. To do their best work, discover their passions and be their best selves.

Diversity, equity & inclusion

We're creating a culture where being different is valued. A culture where our people and students can thrive and there's room for everyone, no matter what their background, identity or circumstances.

Wellbeing – employees and students

We aspire to build a mindful culture, where supporting the mental, physical, financial and social wellbeing of students and employees is a priority for everyone.

Health & safety

We don't take shortcuts when it comes to health and safety. We work hard to make our people and the students who live with us safe and supported.

PL

PLACES

We want to create places that deliver a positive impact on our people, our communities and the planet. We're aiming for net zero carbon buildings, finding ways to use fewer resources, and helping build strong communities in and around our properties.

Tackling climate change

We're playing our part in keeping global warming below 1.5°C, reducing greenhouse gas emissions from operations and new buildings in line with science based carbon targets and to be net zero carbon by 2030.

Responsible use of resources

Reducing resource consumption and waste, working with suppliers to improve circularity, and helping students and staff adopt life-long sustainable behaviours.

Greener, sustainable buildings

We're designing, constructing and managing our buildings to be sustainable, support nature, and provide a healthy inspiring environment for those who work or live there.

Playing an active role in local communities

We're ensuring our actions have a positive impact on the communities and environments around us.

OUR APPROACH

Our goal is to lead on sustainability and raise standards in the living sector. Our governance and processes ensure that working responsibly and sustainably isn't optional, that we always operate with integrity and transparency.

Transparency and disclosure

We're committed to transparency when it comes to our sustainability targets, reporting progress and disclosing performance.

Operating with integrity

We do the right thing, always operating with integrity and expecting the highest standards.



2.1.2 Principles

We recognise that our operations have an impact on the environment, and that we have a responsibility to manage and reduce this for the benefit of current and future generations via the three key areas of ambition set out above. We also have a duty to help our student residents develop lasting responsible living habits. To do this we target reductions in our three most materially significant environmental impacts: **Energy & Carbon**, **Water**, and **Resource Use & Waste**, via a range of activity across three environmental themes **Good Management**, **Responsible Behaviour** and **Sustainable Buildings** as below:

EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT

Budget and purchase utilities in a way that manages risk, delivers good value, provides good cost certainty, and reduces environmental impacts.

AREAS OF FOCUS:

- ESG related risk management
- ESG Reporting & disclosures
- Utilities risk management
- Data and performance monitoring & reporting

RESPONSIBLE BEHAVIOUR

Educate, engage and encourage employees, students, and supply chains to more responsible ways of living and working that reduce environmental impacts.

AREAS OF FOCUS:

- Student behaviour
- Employee behaviour
- Supply chain impacts & emissions
- Improvements in:
 - Energy use
 - Waste & recycling
 - Water use
 - Resource use
 - Biodiversity

EFFICIENT BUILDINGS

Optimise building fabric and services to ensure existing and new builds are energy and water efficient, and support responsible living and working habits.

AREAS OF FOCUS:

- Energy & water consumption
- Asset Transition PlansE&E capex programme
- E&E capex EPCs
- Sustainable construction
- Asset operation & performance

2.1.3 Key Outcomes

Our Environmental Strategy seeks to ensure manage all environmental aspects of our business to ensure regulatory compliance and to reduce environmental impacts, including but not limited to:

- Reducing our contribution to climate change by targeting net zero carbon by 2030 through reductions in operational green house gas emissions and embodied carbon of our new developments
- Managing and mitigating climate related and other environmental risks
- Reducing our energy use
- Reducing our water consumption and waste
- Reducing our resource use and waste, increasing recycling, reducing litter and pollution in and around our sites



- Responsible procurement of materials, products and services we consume to reduce their impact.
- Reducing pollution and emissions to air, water and land
- Supporting biodiversity

The following areas however have been identified during stakeholder consultation to be the most materially significant and so are the focus of our activity:

- **NET ZERO CARBON:** We recognise that greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions contribute towards climate change, and the serious threat this poses to humanity and the planet, as well as our business. We are believe that reducing our GHG emissions is the most significant contribution we can make to reducing our environmental impact, and are aiming to be net zero carbon for both operations and development by 2030. We have published our Net Zero Carbon Pathway that sets out details of our target including Science Based Targets Initiative (SBTi) validated 1.5°C aligned carbon targets, operational energy reduction targets, renewable energy targets, and new development embodied carbon and operational energy targets.
- **CLIMATE RISK:** The effects of climate change will increasingly impact on our business, and we monitor, assess, track and report on these in line with TCFD in our annual Report and Accounts.
- **ENERGY CONSUMPTION** Energy used within our buildings constitutes our most significant source of GHG emissions, as well as being a significant business cost; we are therefore committed to reducing energy consumption to ensure an environmentally and financially sustainable future for Unite Students. Unlike many real estate companies, all energy consumed by tenants within our buildings is our responsibility owing to our all-inclusive billing model, meaning our scope 1 and 2 GHG emissions include all building energy use. This presents a significant opportunity for us to improve operational energy efficiency.
- WATER USAGE: We believe that water is a valuable and finite resource, and that wasting water also wastes energy used in its treatment and delivery, contributes towards water scarcity and disruptions, and necessitates increases abstraction from aquifers, reservoirs and rivers that can be damaging to the environment. The supply of potable water is essential for all our buildings, and also constitutes a significant operational cost. While we neither operate in areas deemed to be water stressed nor undertake water intensive operations, we are nonetheless committed to reducing our water usage through a range of physical water efficiency measures, close liaison with water supply companies, leak detection and student and staff education and engagement. We also ensure new



constructions are specified to have the lowest practicable consumption to avoid placing undue stress on local water supplies.

• **RESOURCE USE & WASTE:** Waste arising from our business activity during the operation, management and maintenance of our buildings constitutes a significant environmental impact. We are committed to ensuring waste is managed in accordance with legislation and regulation at all times, to reducing the overall quantity generated, and increasing the proportion that is recycled. We are also committed to helping our student residents better manage their waste and work closely with local authorities and other organisations who collect the domestic student waste from our properties, and with our students too, to help them manage their waste and maximise the proportion of student waste recycled. We also recognise that there is increasing competition for limited global resources, and we are committed to reducing the impact of resources we consume during the construction and operation of our buildings by considering the full lifecycle impact of materials and resources used. We are committed to applying the principles of sustainability in this area, and our Procurement Policy sets out more details. We are also committed to reducing and controlling the use of hazardous substances and materials we use, and to reducing nuisance from our operations such as that caused by noise, litter and light pollution.

2.1.4 Our Environmental Management System

To achieve this, we operate an Environmental Management System (EMS) based around the principles of ISO14001, including:

- Our environmental policy, that provides more details of our approach.
- Our management structures, roles and responsibilities.
- Identification of significant environmental impacts and implementing procedures and controls for monitoring them.
- Setting and working towards objectives, targets and programmes for continual performance improvements.
- Systems for complying with environmental legislation and other applicable requirements.
- Systems for measuring and reporting our environmental performance.

2.1.5 Governance

As a key part of our business plan, our Executive Committee are ultimately accountable for sustainability performance, including environmental issues. The Unite Group plc Board have oversight of this area via the Board Sustainability Committee, chaired by one of our Non-executive Directors, which meets four times per year. This policy will be reviewed annually.



2.1.6 Reporting

We will actively participate in various environmental and sustainability related reporting and disclosure schemes such as CDP, GRESB, TCFD and EPRA sBPR. In addition, further details targets, activity and progress in this area can be found on our website, in our annual report, and in other reporting we publish.



Appendix A - Document Control Information

Document Management										
Document R	ef / Title	Environmental Policy								
Version #	1.0	Status	Live							
Classification	n	Public (everyone has access)								
Reason for o	developmer	Set out our approach to managing environmental imapcts								
Summary of	changes	Updated								
Applicable p	arties									
Author(s) (na	ame / title)	Head of Sustainability								
Owner (nam	e / title)	Head of Sustainability								
Function										
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Date Approv	Date Approved			22/06/2023						
Review date	Review date			15/06/2024						
Location										
Distribution										
Consultation										
□ Data Prote	☐ Data Protection ☐ 0		Communications		□ NCC / ECC		☐ City Teams			
□ Sales	□ Sales		□ IT Service Desk		□IT		□ Legal			
☐ Finance - AR		☐ Finance - Treasury		□ InfoSec		□ HR				
☐ Finance - /	□Р	□ Procurement		□ H&S		☐ Business Intelligence				
□ Estates ⊠			Environment		☐ Marketing		☐ Asset Management			
□ Digital □			Office Support		□РМО					
☐ Commercial ☐ Finance De		_	Acquisition / velopment		☐ Student Services [
Version History (copy and paste from top section to here as a record)										
Version Do	ersion Date approved			Author		Summary of changes				
1 22/06/2023			Head of Sustainabilit		У	Update				