



OLLSCOIL NA GAILLIMHE
UNIVERSITY OF GALWAY

Sustainability

Terms of Reference

May 2022

LEARN

LIVE

LEAD



www.nuigalway.ie/sustainability

Introduction

The **NUI Galway Sustainability Strategy 2021-2025** sets out our vision and commitment to lead the implementation of sustainability across the university mission and beyond. Using a Learn-Live-Lead approach, our strategic aim is to embed sustainability in our culture, operational policies and governance structures and empower our communities to be champions of sustainability. The focus of *learn* is to embed sustainability literacy into all aspects of University learning and research, the focus of *live* is to implement the principles of sustainability through campus operations and engagement activities, from a *learn* perspective the aim is to play a central and transformative role in attaining the SDGs by 2030. The Strategy was developed by the Community and University Sustainability Partnership (CUSP) General Board, following a yearlong comprehensive engagement process with the campus community. The **NUI Galway Strategic Plan 2020-2025** commits to build on the work of CUSP to embed sustainability in our culture, operational policies and governance structures and empower our communities to be champions of sustainability. Through the **NUI Galway Climate Action and Sustainability Policy** we commit to: (i) embed the United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into all our major efforts in education, research, leadership, operations, administrative and engagement activities and (ii) embed carbon management into all University operations and processes with a view to achieving net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 (See *Appendix 1*).

To delivery on its sustainability commitments, NUI Galway has established a cohesive governance structure to guarantee clear and consistent leadership, responsibility, accountability, and oversight of sustainability. As the Head and Chief Officer of the University, the **President** provides leadership, commitment and support for the University's Climate Action and Sustainability Policy. The **Deputy President and Registrar** is the University Management Team (UMT) leader with overall responsibility for the sustainability function of the university. The governance structure for the implementation of the sustainability agenda, using the Learn-Live-Lead model, is outlined in the section below:

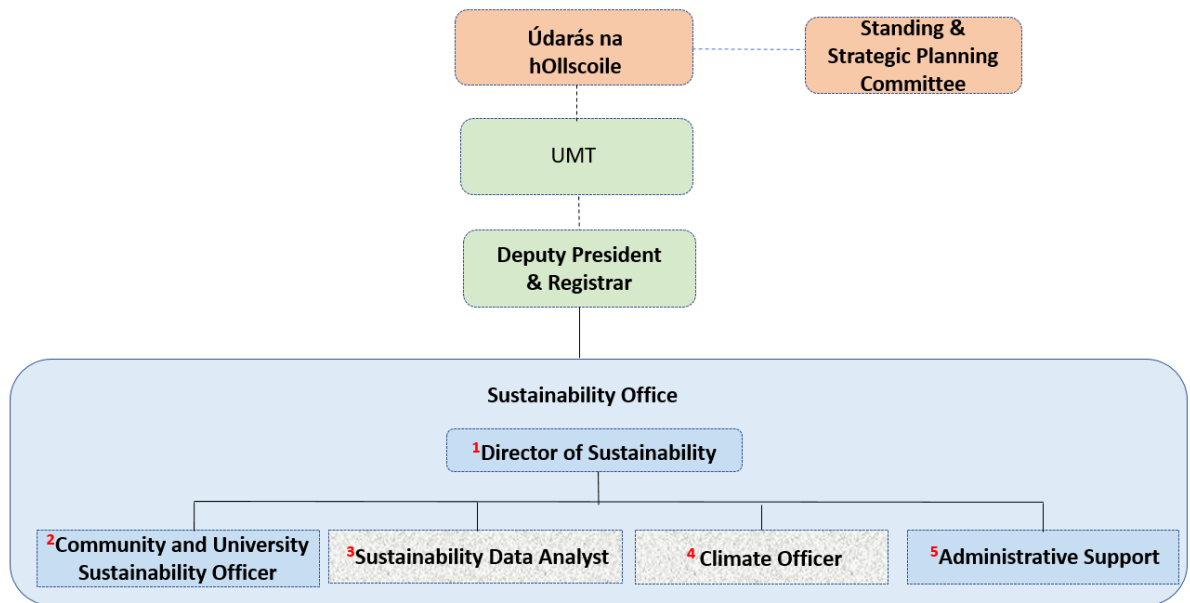
- Led by the **Director of Sustainability**, the purpose of the **Sustainability Office** is to enable greater engagement with and awareness of sustainability and the SDGs at all levels of the university. The Sustainability office leads campus efforts to embed sustainability literacy into all aspects of University learning and research, to implement sustainability throughout campus operations and engagement activities and play a central and transformational role in attaining the SDGs by 2030. The Sustainability office aims to equip empower and engage the campus community to co-create tomorrow's sustainable campus.
- The **Sustainability Office** ensures milestone targets and accomplishments are shared across the NUI Galway community through its principal staff members (the **Director of Sustainability**, the **Community and University Sustainability**

Officer, the Climate Officer, the Sustainability Data Analyst) and three multidisciplinary Boards (the **CUSP General Board**; the **CUSP Executive Board** and the **University Sustainability Advisory Board**).

- The **Director of Sustainability**, serves as an advisory function to the **Deputy President and Registrar**, who has overall responsibility for sustainability at NUI Galway. The **Director of Sustainability** reports to the **Deputy President and Registrar**.
- The **Director of Sustainability communicates CUSP General Board minutes and Sustainability Strategy progress to the Standing and Strategic Planning Committee for the attention of Governing Authority.**
- The **CUSP Executive Board** represents the **CUSP General Board** on the **University Sustainability Advisory Board**.
- The **Sustainability Advisory Board** is **chaired** by the Deputy President and Registrar and **minutes are reported to UMT.**

Figure 1 summarises the NUI Galway Sustainability reporting structure and *Figure 2* presents the structure of the Community and University Sustainability Partnership (CUSP) and the University Sustainability Advisory Board.

The following document sets out the work plan and reporting structure of the **Sustainability Office, Director of Sustainability, Community and University Sustainability Officer, Climate Officer and Sustainability Data Analyst** and the purpose, organisation and membership of the **CUSP General Board**, the **University Sustainability Advisory Board** and the **CUSP Executive Board**.



¹ New role, funding required for 5 year post ² Funding in place until August 2023, seek permanent funding for 0.5FTE
³ Funding in place for 2022-2023 to pilot role ⁴ Funding in place for 2022-2023 to pilot role ⁵ New role, funding required for 5 year post

Figure 1: NUI Galway Sustainability Reporting Structure

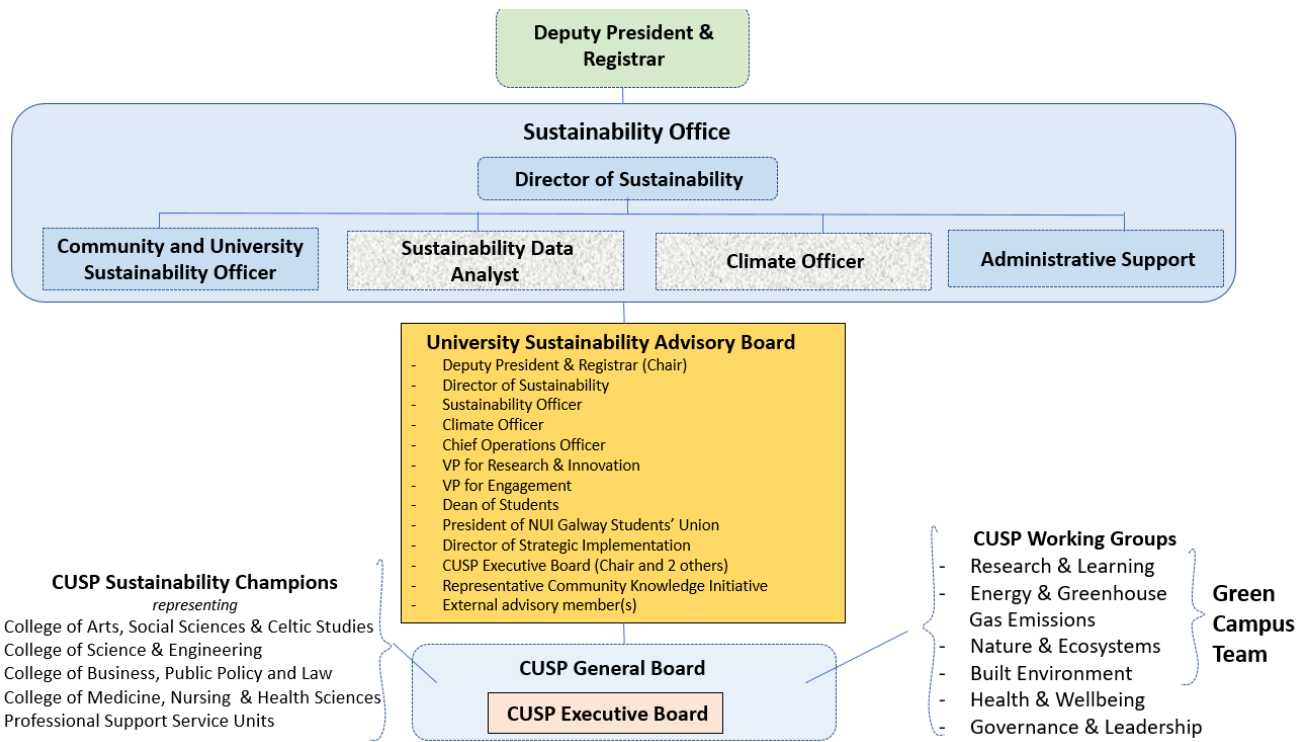


Figure 2: Community and University Sustainability Partnership

Sustainability Office

Purpose

- Led by the Director of Sustainability and working in conjunction with principal staff members, multidisciplinary Boards and dedicated Sustainability Champions; the purpose of the Sustainability Office is to embed sustainability in NUI Galway culture, operations, policies and governance structures and to empower its diverse communities of staff, students and partners to be champions of sustainability.
- The Sustainability Office acts as a central point of contact internally, for all matters relating to campus sustainability, for all members of the university community (including UMT, Údarás na hOllscoile, colleges, schools and operating units). Our sustainability ambitions extend far beyond the campus walls, the Sustainability Office acts as a central point of contact for external stakeholders, (local, national and international) aiming to maximise our sustainability ambition and reach.
- Recognising that sustainability emerged as a core value of our campus community, the Sustainability Office works to develop and implement continuous opportunities for student and staff involvement in sustainability on campus. By working with colleges and units to identify and remove barriers to sustainability, the Sustainability Office aims to equip, empower and engage our campus community to co-create tomorrow's sustainable campus.
- The Sustainability Office supports the development of educational programmes for all students', staff and community partners to become lifelong learners who continue to pursue sustainability literacy. For example, develop programme of sustainability induction training for new staff, recruitment and orientation material for students and lead the development of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) programmes in sustainability.
- The Sustainability Office aims to elevate NUI Galway as a transformative leader in sustainability building leadership opportunities locally, nationally and internationally as part of our collective response towards the achievement of the SDG framework.
- The Sustainability Office is responsible for leading the implementation of the NUI Galway Sustainability Strategy and supporting development of strategic and operational plans at university and college/unit level.
- The Sustainability Office, working in conjunction with the Office of the Chief Operating Officer supports the development of the Climate Action Plan.
- The Sustainability Office is responsible for tracking progress, publishing annual and interim sustainability reports and working in conjunction with colleges and units to report progress on aligning all major efforts in their unit to the SDGs goals, targets and indicators.

- The Sustainability Office manages and supports sustainability related external rating programmes, for example, Sustainability Tracking Assessing and Rating Systems (STARS); Times Higher Education Societal Impact Ranking in conjunction with Institutional Planning and Research office and; An Taisce Green Campus in conjunction with Buildings and Estates office.
- Manage the three university sustainability Boards including CUSP General Board, CUSP Executive Board and the University Sustainability Advisory Board.
- Play an integral role in developing new sustainability related policies and procedures and aligning all existing NUI Galway policies and procedures to sustainability.
- Represent sustainability interests in community partnership programmes.
- Represent sustainable NUI Galway in local to international settings.
- Lead communications via NUI Galway sustainability website and social media platforms.

Organisation

- The Sustainability Office is led by the Director of Sustainability, who reports to the Deputy President and Registrar, and currently includes three other principal staff members, the **Community and University Sustainability Officer**, the **Climate Officer**, and the **Sustainability Data Analyst**.
- The Sustainability Office services three multidisciplinary Boards (**the Community and University Sustainability Partnership (CUSP) General Board**; the **CUSP Executive Board** and; the **University Sustainability Advisory Board**).
- The Sustainability Office receives formal input from colleges and units from a network of **Sustainability Champions** that have time formally dedicated to sustainability and clearly reflected in the work allocation models for the Champion. Each Sustainability Champion is a member of their **respective College Executive Boards**.
- The **Sustainability Office** reports progress on a bi-monthly basis to the **UMT** via the **Deputy President and Registrar**.
- The **Sustainability Office** reports progress on an annual basis to **Údarás na hOllscoile** via the **Standing and Strategic Planning Committee**.

Director of Sustainability

Purpose

- Lead the Sustainability Office including its principal staff members, the CUSP General and Executive Boards and the input from its dedicated Sustainability Champions.
- Collaborate with faculty, staff, students, administrators, and campus committees to advance NUI Galway leadership in sustainability on campus and beyond.
- In conjunction with the Climate Officer, oversee preparation of annual greenhouse gas emissions inventory and carbon footprint report.
- Responsible for the university's Sustainability Risk Register and the development of the sustainability risk assessment procedure. Work with units across the university to include sustainability risks within unit risk registers.
- Lead the development of an annual sustainability implementation plan, annual sustainability report and operational and implementation plans for colleges and units.
- Play a leading role in providing baseline reports on current efforts, articulating goals and strategies for improvement, and publishing online annual operational plans, targets and impacts with a view to promoting NUI Galway's ambition to lead on sustainability.
- Disseminate results and analysis of progress toward carbon neutrality, and overall campus sustainability to UMT via the Deputy President and Registrar and Údarás na hOllscoile via the Standing & Strategic Planning Committee.
- Lead the effort to develop and update NUI Galway's sustainability strategy and sustainability implementation plan in order to include all aspects of the campus's sustainability efforts.
- Prepare NUI Galway's Sustainability Tracking and Assessment Rating System (STARS) submission; update the submission annually to keep its information current; disseminate and communicate its results; identify means and methods for continuous improvement.
- Providing leading supports to other sustainability related external rating programmes, for example, Sustainability Tracking Assessing and Rating Systems (STARS); Times Higher Education Societal Impact Ranking in conjunction with Institutional Planning and Research office and; An Taisce Green Campus in conjunction with Buildings and Estates office.
- Direct and facilitate sustainability initiatives in teaching and learning, research operations and engagement by providing information and assistance to Colleges and operating units.

- Be a leader in the sustainability related academic mission of the University. Act as the liaison between academics and operations at NUI Galway in order to create a living laboratory environment for students around sustainability topics.
- Aid in the implementation and development of educational materials by providing support to students, faculty, and staff for the development of course content, academic projects, presentations, and experiential opportunities related to sustainability.
- Be a leader in supporting and facilitating opportunities for student engagement in sustainability including orientation, clubs societies, collaboration with the Dean of Students and Students Union.
- Work with the Communications and Press Office to promote coverage of sustainability at NUI Galway and serve as the primary contact for media and wider community on sustainability issues. Oversee the production of internal and external sustainability communications.
- Oversee the office of sustainability budget, including forecasting, tracking, and verification.
- Provide supervisory guidance to staffing levels, training programs, and in planning the use of resources to ensure that the college achieves sustainability goals.
- Oversee supervision of student interns and research assistants.

Organisation

- The Director of Sustainability reports to the Deputy President and Registrar.
- The Director of Sustainability works with the Deputy President and Registrar and all members of UMT to achieve sustainability goals.
- The Director of Sustainability updates Údarás na hOllscoile on campus sustainability efforts via the Standing and Strategic Planning Committee.

Community and University Sustainability Officer

Purpose

- Take a lead role in the implementation of the NUI Galway Sustainability Strategy 2021-2025 and subsequent strategies thereafter.
- Build relationships with key staff whose responsibility is that the 25 prioritised areas will be embedded, by the end of the Sustainability Strategy 2025.
- Create and implement the NUI Galway Sustainability Strategy beyond 2025 with support from the Sustainability Office and the wider university and local communities.
- Working in conjunction with Colleges, Schools and operating units, play a lead role in developing the NUI Galway Annual Sustainability Report and reporting NUI Galway progress on the implementation of the SDG framework.
- The Community and University Sustainability Officer shall be Secretary to the University Sustainability Advisory Board, the Executive Board and the CUSP General Board with responsibility for maintaining records and minutes of meetings.
- Develop sustainability activities with local external actors, especially Saolta University Healthcare Group and Galway City Council, whose activities impact on NUI Galway, and local industry and communities interested in practical sustainability solutions.
- Drive the external communication of NUI Galway's sustainability strategy and align the brand of the university with the concept of sustainability.
- Represent NUI Galway in the developing network of universities and local national and international organisations promoting and advancing sustainability and the UN SDG framework.
- Act as an Ambassador for sustainability at the University.

Organisation

- The Community and University Sustainability Officer is a 0.5FTE post located within the Sustainability Office. The post-holder reports to the Director of Sustainability and will have frequent (e.g. fortnightly) meetings with the Director of Sustainability.
- The SO works directly with the three multidisciplinary Boards (**the Community and University Sustainability Partnership (CUSP) General Board**; the **CUSP Executive Board** and; the **University Sustainability Advisory Board**) to progress all matters relating to campus sustainability.

- The post-holder will liaise with the Sustainability Champions, Director of Student Services, Heads of Schools, Buildings and Estates Office, Research Office, Senior Administrators in NUI Galway, Student's Union and CKI representatives, Director of Financial Accounting, Marketing Office and those responsible for sustainability in external public agencies, (e.g. Saolta University Healthcare Group and Galway City Council) to ensure the successful implementation of the NUI Galway Sustainability Strategy 2021-2025 and the formulation of the next one.

Climate Officer

Purpose

- Co-ordinate, manage and develop the implementation of NUI Galway's response to the challenges of climate change mitigation and adaptation. Lead the development and delivery of NUI Galway's climate action plans and implementation plans.
- Lead the development of NUI Galway's Carbon Footprint. Using this data, set ambitious climate mitigation targets for the university that will feed into the achievement of targets set out in the Climate Action Plan, NUI Galway Sustainability Strategy and NUI Galway Strategic Plan 2020-2025.
- Develop and deliver plans for embedding carbon management into the procurement of equipment, services and projects in conjunction with public sector bodies, procurement specialists and the Office of Government Procurement (OGP).
- Work with the Procurement office, Commercial Services and ISS to embed carbon management into the procurement of goods and services.
- Consult widely with internal key stakeholders, including the working groups and committees established by the University to oversee the delivery of NUI Galway's sustainability and carbon neutrality objectives. Consult widely with external stakeholders, including industry experts and professional bodies; the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI); the Department of the Environment, Climate, and Communications and other state, semi-state and local authority agencies; associates in the higher education sector; and relevant national and EU funding agencies.
- Ensure the required level of reporting and feedback to Government agencies providing the strategic overview of progress on climate action targets and provide on-going reports on progress with regard to the Programme for Government.
- Identify and develop funding streams and oversee applications to the various external agencies i.e. European Commission, Department of Environment, Climate and Communications, Sustainable Energy Authority, Higher Education Authority, etc.
- Promote and support a greater understanding of climate change issues on the NUI Galway campus and the wider community including supporting relevant community initiatives, public outreach programmes and business initiatives.
- Promote NUI Galway as a leader in the growing network of institutions supporting climate action and carbon mitigation. Recommend potential opportunities for establishing strategic partnerships with external organisations and agencies with the mutual shared objective of decarbonisation.
- Identify key risks to the achievement of the University's carbon neutrality objectives, and propose solutions to manage those risks.

Organisation

- The Climate Officer reports to the Director of Sustainability and is a member of the University Sustainability Advisory Board.
- The Climate Officer is based in the Sustainability Office and works alongside the Director of Sustainability, Community and University Sustainability Officer and Sustainability Data Analyst to achieve the university's sustainability and climate action goals.
- The Climate Officer reports progress on the university's climate action efforts on behalf of the Sustainability Office, to the Director of Sustainability.
- The Climate Officer works closely with Buildings & Estates who will play a major role in achieving climate action goals. Other key areas include Procurement Office, Commercial Services, Compliance, ISS and all professional support services units. The post holder liaises with Students Union, academic staff and the wider campus community in achieving climate action goals.

Sustainability Data Analyst

Purpose

- Effective relationship building with data custodians and subject matter experts across the University to obtain, analyse and report information related to campus sustainability.
- Develop and selecting metrics, measurements systems, and tools to assess the efficacy of the University's overall sustainable operations.
- Performing data collection, analysis, and reporting to support the sustainability measurement and assessment programme.
- Coordinating reporting activities to ensure successful completion of external and internal reporting according to established deadlines.
- Identifying opportunities for improving the sustainability measurement and assessment programmes and make recommendations to CUSP.
- Develop internal and external contacts with researchers in related areas.
- Working with the Research Office and Research Institutes to assist early-career academic staff to take advantage of national and international funding opportunities for sustainability research.
- Develop quantitative metrics to demonstrate financial savings and income to NUI Galway from the activities of the Sustainability office.
- Play a lead role in sustainability related grant writing. Participate in internal and external networks for the exchange of information and to form relationships for future research collaborations.

Organisation

- The Sustainability Data Analyst post is located within the Sustainability Office. The post-holder reports to the Director of Sustainability and will have frequent (e.g. fortnightly) meetings with the Director of Sustainability.
- The Sustainability Data Analyst works directly with the three multidisciplinary Boards (**the Community and University Sustainability Partnership (CUSP) General Board**; the **CUSP Executive Board** and; the **University Sustainability Advisory Board**) to progress all matters relating to campus sustainability.
- The post-holder will liaise with the Sustainability Champions, Director of Student Services, Heads of Schools, Buildings and Estates Office, Research Office, Senior Administrators in NUI Galway, Student's Union and CKI representatives, Director of Financial Accounting, Marketing Office and those responsible for sustainability in external public agencies, e.g. Saolta, Galway City Council, to ensure the

implementation of the NUI Galway Sustainability Strategy 2012-2025 and the formulation of the next one.

University Sustainability Advisory Board

Purpose

- Provide strategic oversight of the University's commitment to sustainability as detailed in *NUI Galway Strategic Plan 2020-2025* and the SDG Accord.
- As a signatory to the SDG Accord, demonstrate leadership in sustainability by aligning all major efforts with the SDG framework, including education, research, operations, administration and engagement activities.
- Support the development and implementation of the NUI Galway Sustainability Strategy 2021 - 2025 and beyond.
- Demonstrate leadership for sustainability by collaborating with key staff across all disciplines to advise on necessary support and resources to improve sustainability performance.
- Undertake high-level strategic analysis to inform decision-making in the allocation of resources for the implementation of sustainable operations across NUI Galway.
- Recommend for approval and drive forward sustainability-related policies, procedures and action plans. Support work that is already underway in the development of strategies to engage the campus community and other key stakeholders.
- Play a key role in development of strong governance structures and support the integration of sustainability into daily business at all levels of the University.
- Oversee the production of interim sustainability reports. Report bi-annually to UMT via the Director of Sustainability. Report annually to Údarás na hOllscoile through the Standing and Strategic planning committee via the Director of Sustainability.
- Work closely with external strategic partners to raise the profile of NUI Galway amongst key national and international audiences.
- Engage on behalf of NUI Galway in the developing network of universities promoting sustainability.

Organisation

- The University Sustainability Advisory Board is chaired by the Deputy President and Registrar and reports bi-annually to UMT.
- The University Sustainability Advisory Board Reports annually to Údarás na hOllscoile through the Standing and Strategic Planning Committee via the Director of Sustainability.
- The University Sustainability Advisory Board is advised on all matters related to the University's commitment to sustainability by the Director of Sustainability.
- The University Sustainability Board meets at least two times a year, once each semester.

- The Community and University Sustainability Officer shall be Secretary to the University Sustainability Advisory Board, with responsibility for maintaining records and minutes of meetings.
- Copies of all minutes are forwarded to the University Management Team and held by the Sustainability Office.

Membership

The University Sustainability Advisory Board consists of the following members:-

1. Deputy President & Registrar (Chair)
2. Director of Sustainability
3. Community and University Sustainability Officer
4. Climate Officer
5. Chief Operating Officer
6. Vice-President for Research and Innovation (or nominee)
7. Vice-President for Engagement
8. Dean of Students
9. President of NUI Galway Students' Union
10. CUSP Executive Board (Chair and 2 others)
11. Director of Strategy Implementation
12. Co-ordinator Community Knowledge Initiative
13. External representative(s) with expertise in sustainability

CUSP General Board

Purpose

- Align all our major efforts with the SDGs targets and indicators, including education, research, leadership, operational and engagement activities.
- Inform, advise and make recommendations to the University Sustainability Advisory Board on all matters relating to campus sustainability, including governance, policy, resourcing and implementation of sustainability.
- Report to the University Sustainability Advisory Board on the status of campus sustainability performance.
- Support the delivery of objectives, targets and measures of success set out in the NUI Galway Sustainability Strategy 2021-2025, and subsequent strategies thereafter, through the **6 sustainability working groups** aligned to the themes of **Research & Learning; Energy & Greenhouse Gas Emissions; Nature & Ecosystems; Health & Wellbeing; Built Environment** and; **Governance & Leadership**.
- Embed objectives, targets and measures of success set out in the NUI Galway Sustainability Strategy 2021-2025, across each of NUI Galway's 4 colleges, with the support of **designated CUSP Sustainability Champions**, representing each college.
- Work with the Research & Learning working group to embed the SDG framework into our education and research and inform, encourage, support and monitor developments in teaching and research for sustainability.
- Work with Built Environment, Energy and Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Nature and Ecosystems working groups to embed the SDG framework into our operations and to sustainably manage our campus.
- Work with the Governance and Leadership working group to embed the SDG framework into our leadership activities and to scale sustainability successes beyond the campus by building sustainability partnerships with neighbouring communities, national bodies and partners across Europe and the globe.
- Work with the Sustainability Champions to embed the SDG framework across all our colleges and annually report progress on achieving the SDG framework.
- Disseminate information and feedback on sustainability accomplishments, tools, and challenges.
- Support the development of sustainability for the University's competitive advantage:-in recruitment, fundraising, financial and resource management, and funded research.
- Act as ambassadors for sustainability both in and outside the University.

Organisation

- The CUSP General Board is chaired by the Director of Sustainability.
- The responsibilities of the Chair includes setting the agenda and distributing it to members before each meeting, facilitating meetings, and serving as a liaison for the CUSP General Board. The Chairperson working together with the Sustainability Officer, shall be responsible for soliciting nominations to all CUSP General Board seats for the following term of service before the last meeting of the current term of service. The Chair shall also be responsible for convening the first Committee meeting in the term following his or her term of office.
- The Community and University Sustainability Officer shall be Secretary to the General Board, with responsibility for maintaining records and minutes of meetings.
- The CUSP General Board has a direct reporting line to the University Sustainability Advisory Board.
- Each of the Sustainability Working Groups will be chaired by a member of the CUSP General Board.
- Sustainability Champions represent each of the 4 Colleges (College of Arts, Social Sciences & Celtic Studies, College of Science & Engineering, College of Business, Public Policy and Law, College of Medicine, Nursing & Health Sciences) will have 0.4FTE dedicated to sustainability.
- Each CUSP General Board member is required to actively serve on one of more of the Sustainability Working Groups.
- The CUSP General Board is advised on matters related to sustainability by the Director of Sustainability, the Community and University Sustainability Officer and the Sustainability Working Groups.
- The CUSP General Board meets between 4 and 6 times per year.
- Copies of all minutes are forwarded to the University Sustainability Advisory Board.

Membership

- The CUSP General Board member constituency is intended to broadly represent all campus constituencies; and provide expertise in operations, teaching & learning, research, student life, health and wellbeing, nature and ecosystems, marketing, communication, engagement and community.
- For a new member to join the CUSP General Board, a proposal is presented to the Chair and the proposal is raised as an agenda item at the next CUSP meeting for approval among members.
- The CUSP General Board consists of the following members:-¹

¹ This wide-ranging membership is deliberately intended to be inclusive and reflective of the holistic campus/institutional approach to sustainability outlined in the CUSP Strategy.

- Director of Sustainability (Chair)
- Sustainability Officer (Secretary)
- Representative from the Community Knowledge Initiative
- Up to 2 Representatives from Local Community Groups
- Student Union President and their nominated Vice-President
- 3 Representatives from Student Societies (to be nominated by Students Union Societies Chairperson)
- Director of Financial Accounting
- Director of Student Services
- Senior Marketing Officer
- Innovation and Engagement Officer
- Representative from Information Services
- Manager of Commercial Services
- Environmental Health & Safety Officer
- Head of Facilities Management & Services
- Head of Business Support Services
- Head of Buildings Services, Utilities and Energy
- Assistant Director, Estates Operation
- Representative(s) from each of the Schools
- Representative from each Research Institute
- From the CUSP General Board, a leader for each of the working groups will be selected:
 - Research & Learning
 - Nature & Ecosystems
 - Energy & Greenhouse Gas Emissions
 - Health & Well-being
 - The Built Environment
 - Governance & Leadership
 - Communication & Engagement (cross-cutting across all working groups)

CUSP Executive Board

Purpose

- Represent the CUSP General Board on the University Sustainability Advisory Board.
- Provide a forum from which the Director of Sustainability /or representative can solicit advice and recommendations from senior campus leadership on the creation and implementation of sustainability principles and policies to guide the campus.
- Distribute administrative responsibility, decision-making, and planning among CUSP General Board Members.
- Review and assess budget and funding strategies to support sustainability and implementation of the strategic plan.
- To review proposals for major campus sustainability initiatives and bring forward recommendations to the CUSP General Board.

Organisation

- The CUSP Executive Board is chaired by the Director of Sustainability.
- The CUSP Executive Board is a sub-committee of the CUSP General Board.
- The CUSP Executive Board meets a minimum of one time between meetings of the CUSP General Board.
- The Community and University Sustainability Officer shall be Secretary to the CUSP Executive Board, with responsibility for maintaining records and minutes of meetings.

Membership

- The CUSP Executive Board shall be composed of the following members:
 - The Director of Sustainability (Chair).
 - The Community and University Sustainability Officer.
 - Two additional Members of the CUSP General Board, elected from the CUSP General Boards membership and ideally serve a minimum of two years.
- Upon resignation, the CUSP Executive Board Member shall inform the Chairperson(s). The CUSP General Board shall then elect a replacement from its Membership to serve out the remainder of the current term of service.

Appendix 1

Code: QA205

Title: **Climate Action and Sustainability Policy**

Date: September 21st, 2021

Approval: University Management Team

Policy Owner: Deputy President & Registrar

1. Purpose

The '*NUI Galway Strategic Plan 2020-2025*' and the '*NUI Galway Sustainability Strategy 2021-2025*' commits to providing leadership to inform the transition to a sustainable future through our teaching, research actions and impacts; and to developing a roadmap to move ambitiously towards carbon neutrality by 2030. NUI Galway, as a signatory to the '*SDG Accord*', commits to align all major efforts with the United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), targets and indicators, including through our education, research, leadership, operational and engagement activities. NUI Galway as a public body is required under the '*Climate Action Plan and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Bill 2021*' to lead in the achievement of net zero emissions, by 2050.

The latest *Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change Report*², finds that unless there are immediate, rapid and large-scale reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, limiting warming to close to 1.5°C, or even 2°C, will be beyond reach. Given the significant legislative and strategic requirements in the areas of climate change and sustainability, the purpose of the NUI Galway Climate Action and Sustainability Policy is (i) to embed carbon management into all University operations and processes with a view to achieving net zero emissions by 2050 in line with global efforts to limit warming to 1.5°C. The Climate Action and Sustainability Policy will incorporate measuring carbon emissions and those that we offset with natural and artificial methods and (ii) to lead the transition to a sustainable future by embedding the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), targets and indicators into all our major efforts, including education, research, leadership, professional support services, operations and engagement activities.

2. University Climate Action and Sustainability Goals

NUI Galway will develop a roadmap to move ambitiously towards carbon neutrality by 2030. In line with the '*Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Bill 2021*', NUI Galway commits to pursue and achieve no later than 2050, the transition to being a university

² Find out more about the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change Report
<https://www.ipcc.ch/2021/08/09/ar6-wg1-20210809-pr/>

with net-zero greenhouse gas emissions that is climate resilient, biodiversity-rich and environmentally-sustainable.

As a signatory to the '*SDG Accord*', NUI Galway aims to become a leader in the transition to a sustainable future by embedding the SDGs into all our education, research, leadership, professional support services, operations, administrative and engagement activities by building on the work of the Community and University Sustainability Partnership (CUSP) and its approach to learn live and lead sustainability.

3. Definitions

The *UN SDGs* are a collection of *17 global goals*³ that UN member states, including Ireland, are expected to use as a guide for tackling the world's most pressing challenges including ending poverty and hunger and bringing economic prosperity, social inclusion, environmental sustainability, peace and good governance to all countries and all people by 2030.

The *SDG Accord* is the University and College Sectors Collective Response to the Global Goals. The purpose of the *SDG Accord* is twofold: First it is to inspire, celebrate and advance the critical role that education has in delivering the SDGs and the value it brings to governments, business and wider society. Secondly, the *Accord* is a commitment learning institutions are making to one another to do more to deliver the goals, to annually report on each signatory's progress, and to do so in ways which share the learning with each other both nationally and internationally.

Climate Change refers to long-term changes in the earth's weather patterns or average temperature. A wide range of gasses known as greenhouse gases (GHGs) contribute to climate change. Carbon, in the form of carbon dioxide (CO₂), is the earth's major emitted greenhouse gas (GHG). GHG emissions and the impact of an organisation on climate can be measured in terms of equivalent CO₂ emissions. *Carbon management* means, firstly, understanding where the organisations CO₂ emissions are coming from and then putting in place a plan to reduce/eliminate/offset the carbon.

Carbon neutrality is defined by an internationally-recognised standard – PAS 2060 – which sets out requirements for the quantification, reduction and offsetting of greenhouse gas emissions. Achieving carbon neutrality means that the CO₂ emissions attributable to NUI Galway are fully compensated by CO₂ reductions or removals exclusively claimed by NUI Galway, such that NUI Galway's net contribution to global CO₂ emissions is zero, irrespective of the time period or the relative magnitude of emissions and removals involved. An organisation can purchase credits to become 'carbon neutral'.

Net Zero Emissions means achieving an overall balance between greenhouse gases emitted and those that can be taken out of the earth's atmosphere through natural or artificial systems, referred to as *off-setting*. A net-zero GHG emissions organisation reduces its emissions following science-based pathways, with any remaining GHG emissions attributable

³ Find out more about the 17 Global Goals on the United Nations website <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>

to NUI Galway being fully neutralised by like-for-like removals of emissions from the earth's atmosphere, without purchasing carbon credits, in line with global efforts to limit warming to 1.5°C. The boundary of a net zero target for NUI Galway includes global scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions attributable to NUI Galway, as defined in The Greenhouse Gas Protocol – A Corporate Accounting and Reporting Standard⁴.

The Community and University Sustainability Partnership (CUSP) was established in 2015 under the direction of the Deputy President and Registrar to showcase how a university can become a role model for the transition to a sustainable future. CUSP is a multi-disciplinary, voluntary team of over 30 students and staff from across the campus and community partners, all working together with the common aim of establishing the university as a leading institutional model for sustainability. CUSP operates through a multidisciplinary board - the CUSP General Board. The University Sustainability Advisory Board provides strategic oversight of NUI Galway's commitment to sustainability as detailed in the Strategic Plan, Sustainability Strategy, SDG Accord and Climate Action and Sustainability Policy. The Sustainability Terms of Reference sets out roles, responsibilities and constitution of the CUSP General Board and University Sustainability Advisory Board.

At NUI Galway, we adopt a *Learn, Live, Lead* approach to sustainability. The aim with *learn* is to embed learning about sustainability into all aspects of university practice, learning and research, so that our campus community can gain the necessary knowledge and skills to facilitate sustainable thinking and decision-making in the wider world; the aim with *live* is to implement the principles of sustainability through campus operations, so that our communities understand the importance of sustainable living in all aspects of their lives and value their connection to the physical environment, ecosystems and biodiversity; the focus of *lead* is developing the campus as a role model for sustainability and fostering partnerships between community and university so that we all work together to address local and global sustainability challenges.

4. Governance and Responsibilities

| Role | Responsibilities |
|--|---|
| President | As the Head and Chief Officer of the University, provides leadership, commitment and support for the University's Climate Action and Sustainability Policy. |
| Office of the Deputy President & Registrar | The Deputy President is the UMT Leader with responsibility for the sustainability function of the University and oversees compliance with this Policy. |
| Office of the Chief Operating Officer | The Chief Operating Officer is the UMT Leader with responsibility for achieving carbon neutrality and net zero emissions. |

⁴ <https://ghgprotocol.org/sites/default/files/standards/ghg-protocol-revised.pdf>

| | |
|---|--|
| University Management Team | Play a lead role in supporting the integration of climate action and sustainability into daily activities and all levels of the University and ensure leadership and implementation of climate and sustainability goals set out in this policy. |
| Heads of School/College/Research Centres/Support & Professional Units | Annual operational plans for all schools/colleges/research centres/ Support & Professional Units must include clear actions for fulfilling the university's Climate Action and Sustainability Policy. All schools/colleges/research centres/ Support & Professional Units must annually report progress on achieving the Climate Action and Sustainability Policy. |
| University Sustainability Advisory Board | Provide strategic oversight of the University commitment to sustainability as set out in the NUI Galway Climate Action and Sustainability Policy. Undertake high-level strategic analysis to inform decision-making in the allocation of resources for the implementation of sustainable operations across NUI Galway. Recommend for approval and drive forward sustainability-related policies, procedures and action plans. Play a key role in development of strong governance structures and support the integration of sustainability and climate action into daily business at all levels of the University. |
| CUSP General Board | Responsible for developing the University's Climate Action and Sustainability Policy based on relevant Government Policy, EU Directives and Best Practise Guidelines; and for monitoring compliance with the Climate Action and Sustainability Policy. Inform, advise and make recommendations to the University Sustainability Advisory Board on all matters relating to Climate Action and Sustainability Policy development and implementation, including governance, resourcing, monitoring and performance. |