

Sustainability Framework

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Contact Officer	Executive Director, Learning Resources

Introduction

This document sets out the University’s framework around the incorporation of sustainability concepts (social, environmental and economic) as part of decision making at all levels of the University, but within the University’s resources.

Definitions

Kaitiakitanga – guardianship and protection of people, environment, knowledge, culture, language and resources for future generations.

Mahinga Kai – traditional customary food gathering, encompasses the places where natural resources were obtained; the resources themselves; and the practises and principles that guided how those resources were managed

Manaakitanga –The extension of charity, hospitality, reciprocity and respect to others.

Mana Whenua – Mana or ‘authority’ held by the local hapū or iwi over the land or particular area.

Mauri Tū – environmental health is protected, maintained and/or enhanced

Sustainability – according to a definition provided by the [Oxford English Dictionary Online](#), means the quality of being sustainable at a certain rate or level.

Sustainable development – according to the foundational definition in *the Our Common Future (“Brundtland Commission”) Report to the United Nations* (see [Related Documents and Information](#) section for link) on March 20, 1987, is “meeting the needs of the present

without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.” In which case sustainability means development which is sustainable

Sustainable development consists of

- environmental sustainability
- social sustainability ,and
- economic sustainability

Tauutuutu – Reciprocity; giving back what is taken; maintaining balance

Te Ao Māori – Māori worldview, including Te Reo Māori (Māori language), Tikanga (processes and practices) and Mātauranga Māori (Māori knowledge systems).

Framework Statement

The purpose of this document is to set out the framework the University has adopted to ensure that our research, teaching and learning, community engagement and operational plans

- Align with New Zealand’s national greenhouse gas emissions commitment, to reduce our own ecological footprint;
- Facilitate ways to address social and economic sustainability within the University.

This document frames the values and principles that will be progressively embedded throughout the University as time and budget permit, identifies the key areas of focus in order to achieve a sustainable community and Campus, and to contribute informed gradualness towards solving global sustainability challenges

Commitments

New Zealand has a national target under the [Paris Agreement \(Ministry for the Environment website\)](#) to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to 30% below 2005 levels by 2030. The University’s role with respect to contributing towards NZ meeting greenhouse gas emissions is twofold. Firstly, the University will strive to improve its own environmental impact. Secondly, as an educator, the University will seek to inform and develop students to grow their own knowledge of sustainability issues and practise.

Our success in meeting *“the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs,”*¹ truly requires more people prepared to make a difference - tangata tū, tangata ora.

¹ Our Common Future: Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987. Section 3:27

The University has an obligation under Section 181 in the [Education Act 1989](#) to encourage the “*greatest possible participation by the communities served by the institution...and ensure that it gives the “proper standard of concern for the public interest’.*”

The University also has an obligation under [Section 181](#) of the [Education Act 1989](#) to operate “*in a financially responsible manner that ensures the efficient use of resources and maintains the institution’s long-term viability’...*”

The University recognises it can play a role toward securing a sustainable environment for current and future generations, and is committed to:

- Increasing awareness of environmentally sustainable development and engagement;
- Identifying and implementing affordable, evidence-based, sustainable business practises to reduce and manage the University’s own ecological footprint;
- Supporting the teaching, learning and research in sustainability topic areas;
- Meaningful partnerships with Māori under Te Tiriti o Waitangi (the Treaty of Waitangi), which recognises the concept of Kaitiakitanga, or guardianship, of the natural environment. The University also recognises the concepts of Manaakitanga, Mauri Tū, Mahinga Kai and Tautuutu.

Research for Sustainability

The University plays a role in New Zealand’s education, research, policy formation and information exchange, all of which are crucial to creating a sustainable world. Thereby it will:

- Encourage research that contributes significantly to knowledge and action across the interdisciplinary dimensions of sustainability;
- Support researchers within the University’s resources across different fields, to work collectively to develop interdisciplinary approaches to curricula, research initiatives, and outreach activities that support improved sustainability outcomes;
- Promote Ngāi Tahu and wider Māori engagement and Te Ao Māori knowledge systems in the University’s sustainability research portfolio.

Teaching and Learning for Sustainability

The teaching and learning programmes at the University will seek to inspire students, and create graduates prepared to make a difference - tangata tū, tangata ora. Thereby the University will:

- Develop graduates to be bi-culturally competent, globally aware and to be engaged with their community (as per the UC Graduate Profile), in order to create, define and succeed in future careers and industries of sustainable societies;

- Offer education and opportunities that enable students from all disciplines to contribute to reducing ecological impacts and improving sustainability outcomes;
- Provide opportunities for interdisciplinary education in the areas of environment and sustainability.

Sustainable Operating Practises

Sustainable practices are embedded in the University's operations, ensuring that it seeks to become a sustainable organisation that will endure. Thereby it will:

- Continue to build and uphold a strong and sustainable economic foundation and financial viability, appropriate infrastructure and a healthy environment;
- Provide opportunities for staff and students to be involved in the on-going improvement of the University's environmental performance;
- Seek to be a role model in our community for environmental leadership and sustainable practices;
- Engage with the community, and share experiences and other information, to inform creative and innovative solutions to sustainable challenges.

Partnerships for Sustainability

The University embraces its contribution to New Zealand and global academic community. Thereby it will:

- Draw on the special significance of Te Tiriti o Waitangi and commit to being good stewards of our environment in line with the principles of Kaitiakitanga, Manaakitanga, Mauri Tū, Mahinga Kai and Tauutuutu.
- Develop bicultural competence and confidence through knowledge of and engagement with Mana Whenua, locally and nationally.
- Commit to developing and enhancing partnerships that will advance sustainable development.

Areas for Focus and Action

Operational

- Provide a safe, healthy, and culturally inclusive learning environment for the members of the University and the wider community.

- Commit to meeting minimum environmental standards, and build on current efforts to reduce consumption, particularly of non-renewable resources, and increase reuse and recycling.
- Engage with Ngāi Tahu and wider Māori communities through consultation on sustainability issues.
- Commit to an openness of proposals around sustainable practices and initiatives.
- Identify and assess sustainable and environmentally friendly resources as part of the procurement process where feasible. The use of such resources will be subject to University financial restraints.
- Operate within affordable and achievable prudent financial limits, minimising waste, and emphasising efficiency and effectiveness.

Academic

- Seek to create and support programmes, to develop capability to teach cultural, social, economic and environmental benefits of sustainability;
- Endeavour to support research within the University's resources that promote new ideas, values and practises related to sustainability, as well as the innovation, development and implementation of solutions that will contribute to a sustainable future for all.

Students and Staff

- Actively encourage students and staff to consider sustainability in their everyday lives;
- Continue to foster the success of external and internal sustainability initiatives on Campus;
- Promote and support the use of environmentally responsible transportation modes such as public transport, ride sharing, cycling and walking.

Reporting and Review

The Sustainability Office ("The Office") is an on-campus hub where individuals and groups interested in how they can create positive change and promote sustainable practices within the University and the wider community. It sits within the Learning Resources portfolio.

The Office is a resource for staff, students and the wider community who want to connect with sustainable –minded others and create change in their own lives and spaces.

The role of the Office is to:

- To help people see how sustainability relates to their area of work, research, studies and their wider lives;
- To act as a catalyst for the University regarding sustainability and environmental leadership;
- To foster a culture of people prepared to make a difference in creating socio-ecologically sustainable societies;
- To value, recognise and reward people for sustainable efforts and participation.

The Office is responsible for sustainability annual planning reporting. Operational elements of the plan are then reviewed by Engineering Services as part of its annual planning.

Individual Schools/Colleges/Departments may also do additional planning and reporting as resources allow and as required.

Related Documents and Information

Legislation

- [Education Act 1989 \(New Zealand Legislation website\)](#)
- [Resource Management Act 1991 \(New Zealand legislation website\)](#)
- [About the Paris Agreement \(Ministry for the Environment website\)](#)
- [Treaty of Waitangi Act 1975 \(New Zealand legislation website\)](#)

UC Policy Library

- [Asset Management Policy \(PDF, 576KB\)](#)
- [Equity and Diversity Policy \(PDF, 226KB\)](#)

UC Web and Intranet

- [Sustainability \(University Sustainability website\)](#)
- [About the Sustainability Office \(University Sustainability website\)](#)

External

- [Australian Campuses Towards Sustainability \(Acts INC\) \(Acts INC website\)](#)
- [Our Common Future: Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987. Section 3:27](#)
- [Oxford English Dictionary Online \(Oxford English Dictionary Online website\)](#)

Document History and Version Control Table			
Version	Action	Approval Authority	Action Date
1.00	New document setting out the University's framework around incorporating sustainable practices into decision making.	Vice Chancellor	Feb 2018
1.01	Review date pushed out for 6 months	Policy Unit	No 2019

This document remains in force until it is updated.