

# Environmental Management Policy

## Section 1 - Purpose and Context

- (1) As a signatory to the Talloires Declaration, the University has a clear obligation to plan and implement actions for a more sustainable future, and a clear role of leadership in the future sustainability of Western Sydney.
- (2) The University recognises its obligations under the law in regard to the need to effectively manage its activities in a way that protects and enhances the environment, as well as the potential implications for its reputation, image and future standing. The University also recognises that it has a duty of care to provide a safe environment for its employees, in this regard not only protecting them from potential environmental hazards, alerting them to possible damage to reputation and the possibility of prosecution.
- (3) In relation to environmental management and pollution prevention, legislative compliance and the demonstration of due diligence is required by legislation and common law. NSW Legislation includes the Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997 and related regulations and amendments.
- (4) Along with local and regional issues of environmental quality, the international agenda of sustainable development and global issues such as climate change have led to a recognised need for broad sustainability targets. These include conceptions such as carbon neutrality, and reductions in our ecological footprint.
- (5) The implementation of an Environmental Management System assists the University in its due diligence in relation to statutory requirements for environmental management, along with supporting broad ranging sustainability programs and actions.
- (6) The purpose of this policy is to:
  - a. explain the University's overarching environmental objectives and expectations;
  - b. provide a clear framework that enables its business activities to be carried out in a manner consistent with its stated environmental objectives and expectations;
  - c. explain the potential risks associated with environmental mismanagement.

## Section 2 - Definitions

- (7) For the purpose of this policy:
  - a. Environment - means components of the earth, including:
    - i. land, air and water;
    - ii. any layer of the atmosphere;
    - iii. any organic or inorganic matter and any living organism;
    - iv. human-made or modified structures and areas, and includes interacting natural ecosystems that include components referred to in (a)-(c).
  - b. Environmental Management System (EMS) ISO AS/NZS 14001 - means a framework that assists an organisation to identify and manage environmental issues in a structured manner through the allocation of resources,

assignment of responsibilities and ongoing assessment and improvement of practices, procedures and processes.

- c. Environmental Management System (EMS) Manual - means the environmental handbook that provides an overview of the University's activities and environmental commitment outlines its management structure and responsibilities as well as its system and process procedures.
- d. Environmental Management Plan - means a suite of environmental management programs addressing key activity areas that addresses the organisations goals and objectives. These also include prioritised action plans to achieve these targets that are mapped against key performance indicators, with a timeframe and delegated areas of responsibility.
- e. Environmental Management Procedures - detail a chronological method of performing a particular task to achieve a result which conforms to environmental and work health and safety best practice and legislative requirements.
- f. Environmental Legal Register - outlines the compliance requirements defined through both NSW and Commonwealth Environmental legislation and associated regulations, as they apply to the University.
- g. Environmental Risk Register - outlines the environmental risks, impacts, controls and mitigation associated with the University's activities.

## Section 3 - Policy Statement

(8) Western Sydney University is committed to minimising the impacts of its activities on the environment and conserving and continually improving the natural, built and social environment of its campuses. In stating this commitment the University recognises that it has an ethical and legal responsibility to protect and enhance the environment and that this responsibility extends to the University's staff, students and visitors.

(9) The University will, as a minimum, meet its statutory requirements under the relevant legislation.

(10) Toward the fulfilment of its stated commitment the University will:

- a. promote awareness and understanding of and responsibility for environmental issues both within the University and the community.
- b. implement a University-wide Environmental Management System that allows significant environmental impacts to be identified and managed while also helping to foster implementation of environmentally responsible practices on all campuses;
- c. set objectives and targets for those activities which significantly affect the environment and measure performance against those targets over time;
- d. where necessary, refine practices and procedures to ensure the fulfilment of stated objectives;
- e. minimise waste production and pollution, as far as practicable and seek to re-use and recycle materials where possible;
- f. seek to reduce consumption of water and energy by promoting water and energy efficiency measures and by encouraging research within these areas;
- g. use best practice environmental management in conserving the biodiversity of its remnant bushland areas, including protected Cumberland Plain woodlands;
- h. communicate its environmental performance both within the University and the community; and
- i. ensure staff, students and visitors are informed and aware of their roles in implementing its environmental policy.

(11) The University expects its staff, students and visitors to comply with the principles of this policy and to support fulfilment of the University's stated environmental management objectives. To this end staff, students and visitors are

expected to familiarise themselves with and support the efficient implementation of the University's Environmental Management System, and to take appropriate action to ensure that their activities are carried out in an environmentally friendly manner.

(12) Individuals and/or groups who participate in activities that contravene this policy or the governing legislation may find themselves subject to disciplinary and/or legal proceedings. Individuals should be aware that they can be personally pursued for crimes against the environment and those penalties for crimes against the environment include significant fines and incarceration.

## **Section 4 - Procedures**

(13) The University has developed an Environmental Management System that documents in detail the requirements placed on the University by relevant legislation. The Environmental Management System provides a detailed schedule of strategies to ensure that the University's practices are examined regularly with a view to compliance. Supplementary Environmental Procedures , guidelines and explanatory material related to specific areas of environmental management within the University will continue to be produced in accordance with the directions set in the Environmental Management System.

(14) The Environmental Management System also contains links to relevant University procedures as well as information on how to achieve compliance on environmental management issues within the University. Where specific procedures are available they must be followed.

## **Section 5 - Guidelines**

(15) Further information about environmental management at the University can be obtained via the University's [Environmental Sustainability web page](#).

## Status and Details

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