

Sustainability Steering Group (SSG) Terms of Reference

Purpose of the group

The SSG exists to provide directional guidance on delivering the requirements of the UN Sustainable Development Goals Education Accord signed by Vice Chancellor Karen Cox in February 2018 and for leading development and implementation of a University-wide Sustainability and Net Zero Strategy.

The steering group will also further the management review function of the University's Environmental Management System (EMS) by providing relevant information on request endorsing the findings, agreeing or specifying actions arising and passing the report to the Executive Group (EG) or the relevant board.

The Steering Group has authority to direct actions towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and key commitments of the Sustainability and Net Zero Strategy across the whole institution through the sustainability sub-groups and working groups.

Functions of the group:

- Develop and monitor progress towards key commitments set out in the University's Sustainability and Net Zero strategy.
- To develop the University's Sustainability policy.
- To oversee the Environmental Management System Management Review, agreeing or specifying actions arising.
- To direct and support sub-groups and working groups to deliver against key commitments.
- To monitor and ensure sufficient internal skills and resources to deliver our sustainability commitments.
- To ensure that sustainability is included in the financial decision making of the University and that we monitor our investments in line with the ethical investment policy.
- To provide robust leadership for sustainability across the organisation.
- To produce and present an annual sustainability report to Council.

Meetings

Meetings will be held quarterly and be chaired by the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Education and Student Experience). Meetings will be minuted and an action list produced for all the members following each meeting.

Governance

Our Sustainability and Net Zero strategy and the certification of our Environmental Management System to the ISO14001 standard will be overseen by the Sustainability Steering Group.

Delivery of our key strategic commitments and operational of the Environmental Management System will be undertaken across 3 core sub-groups and 2 working groups.

Sub-Groups

- Sustainable Campus Operations (SCO)
- Sustainable Curriculum and Research (SCR)
- Sustainability Partnerships, Engagement and Student Experience (SPESE)

Working groups

- Net Zero and Climate Change
- Biodiversity Forum

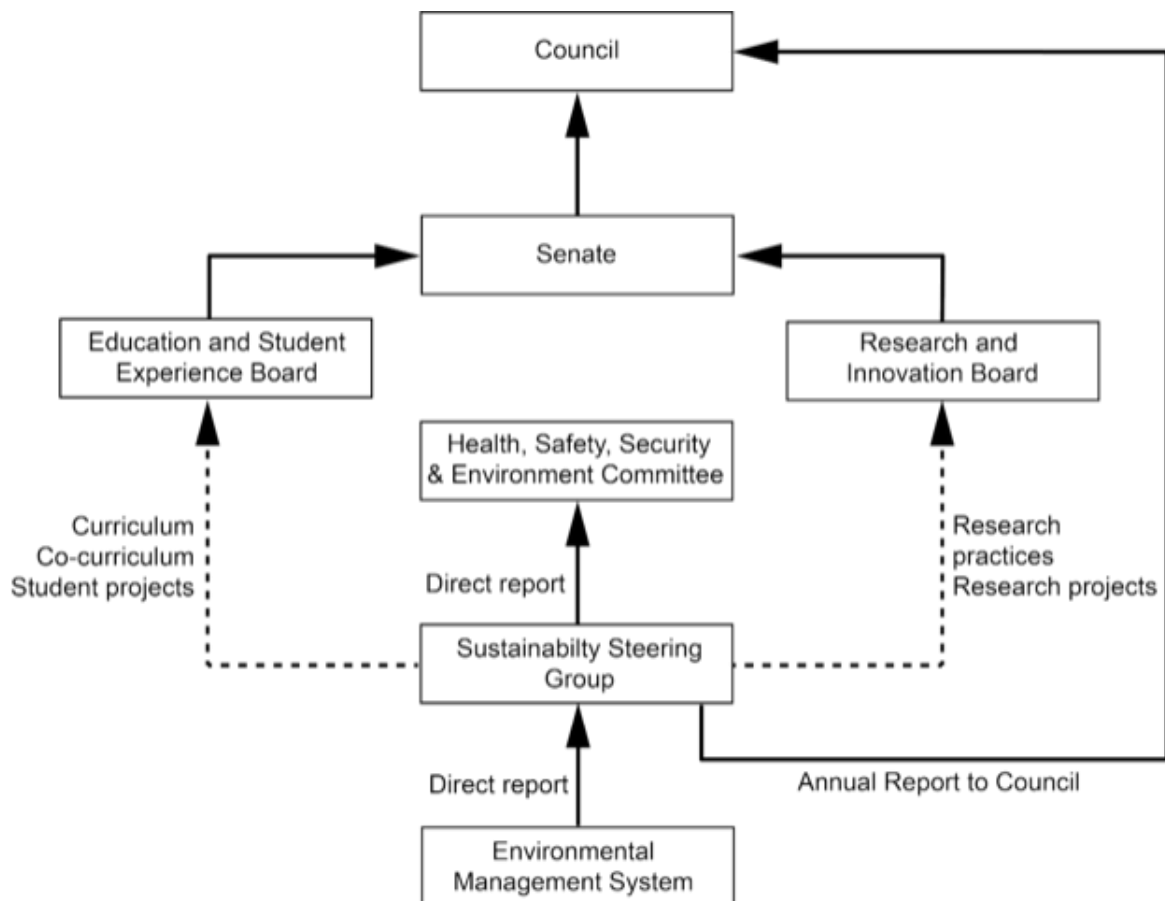
At least 2 members of each sub group and working group will attend SSG meetings. Sub-groups and working groups will report to the SSG quarterly and through updates to the sustainability dashboard as appropriate.

Membership:

Chair	Richard Reece (DVC Education and Student Experience)
(Environmental) Sustainability Manager	Catherine Morris
Head of Health, Safety & Environmental Sustainability (HSES)	Graham Slater
SCO Sub-Group	Helen Holland, Gary Law
SCR Sub-Group	William Collier, Sideeq Mohammed
SPESE Sub-Group	Melissa Browne
Net Zero Working Group	John Kingsland, Mark Reed
Biodiversity Working Group	Emily Mason & Jake Bicknall

Reporting structure

The Sustainability Steering Group will formally report to the Health, Safety, Security and Environment Committee through to EG or to the relevant board(s) through the DVC Education and Student Experience Board. The SSG also has a reporting line to Council and will provide to it an annual report on Sustainability.



Sub-Groups and Working Groups

All sub and working groups are required to determine their own Terms of Reference and action plans within the scope and functions outlined below.

Additionally, all sub-groups will be required to complete an Environmental Management System return annually in order to:

- Identify all relevant environmental legislation and voluntary commitments and ensure compliance is achieved and demonstrable.
- Identify environmental aspects and impacts and to determine their significance.
- Develop operational control documentation where required to ensure compliance.
- Identify the internal and external enablers and barriers (context) to achieving targets and objectives.

- Capture and record the needs and expectations of stakeholder groups and to consider these during planning of objectives.
- To identify opportunities and risks related to significant environmental aspects.

This process will initially be undertaken by the (Environmental) Sustainability Manager in conjunction with relevant staff. In subsequent years, updating the annual return will be the responsibility of the sub-group.

Sustainable Campus Operations (SCO)

The sustainable campus operations sub-group is an internal Commercial Services and Estates department group. Its core responsibility is delivering on our key commitment to develop and operate a sustainable campus. Some members of this sub-group may also be part of the Net Zero & Climate Risk, and Biodiversity working groups.

This sub group will deliver on the operational elements of the University's environmental management system related to the following environmental aspects:

- Energy
- Water
- Waste and Recycling
- Landscape and Biodiversity
- Buildings and Infrastructure
- Emissions and Discharges
- Transport
- Hazardous materials storage

The group must develop targets and objectives related to achieving our core strategic objectives and report regularly on progress towards these via the sustainability dashboard.

Sustainable Curriculum and Research (SCR)

The sustainable curriculum and research sub-group is a cross-institutional group comprising academic, research and professional services staff. Its core responsibility is delivering on our key commitment to sustainability in education related to the following activities:

- Curriculum
- Research
- Student projects and dissertations
- Employability
- Internationalisation activity

The group must develop targets and objectives related to achieving our core strategic objectives and report regularly on progress towards these via the sustainability dashboard.

Sustainability Partnerships, Engagement and Student Experience (SPESE)

The sustainability partnerships, engagement and student experience sub-group is a cross-institutional group. Its core responsibility is delivering on our key commitment to sustainability in partnerships and engagement related to the following activities:

- External partnerships/Civic Mission
- Staff and student engagement
- Communications, Marketing and Recruitment
- Right to Food/Sustainable food
- Events and conferencing
- Student experience
- Kent Community Oasis garden (COG)

The group must develop targets and objectives related to achieving our core strategic objective and to report regularly on progress towards these via the sustainability dashboard.

Net Zero and Climate Change Working Group

The function of this working group is to coordinate and drive activity towards achieving the University's Net Zero target and in identifying and adapting to climate change risks. Specific activities include:

- Develop a carbon accounting methodology procedure for all Scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions
- Implement the carbon accounting methodology to collect data across Scope 1, 2 & 3 emissions
- Collate emissions data using the Standardised Carbon Reporting Framework
- Develop interim targets for all Scope 3 emissions towards net zero by 2050.
- Develop delivery plans across all scopes in conjunction with relevant departments and groups (ERMG, Procurement)
- Annually review the climate change risk register and adaptation plan, ensuring risks are embedded into relevant University departmental plans.

Biodiversity Working Group

The function of this working group is to coordinate and drive activity towards achieving biodiversity net gain. Specific activities include:

- Develop the methodology procedure for calculating biodiversity net gain
- Develop targets for biodiversity net gain
- Develop delivery plans of biodiversity projects across all habitat types
- Support the integration of teaching, learning and research into using the external spaces
- Provide a forum for feedback and development of biodiversity project
- Engage with external partners that we can work with and learn from e.g. Kent Wildlife Trust, Canterbury District Biodiversity Network.