Sustainability - Procedures

1. Purpose of procedures

1.1 These procedures outline how the University will:

(a) support the creation of a sustainable future;

(b) make sustainability an organisational priority; and

(c) embed sustainability considerations in decision-making at all levels of the University.

2. Scope and application

2.1 These procedures outline the responsibilities of staff, students and contractors at the University in relation to sustainability.

3. Definitions

Please refer to the University's Glossary of Terms for policies and procedures.

Sustainability means ensuring inter- and intra-generational equity and justice. It means living within natural constraints and recognising the interconnected nature of environmental, social and economic systems. Sustainability seeks to support resilient communities by reducing or eliminating negative environmental impacts due to human activities, protecting human rights for the most vulnerable and working towards global sustainable development initiatives such as the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals.

ESD is Environmentally Sustainable Design. ESD principles are intended to guide building construction and retrofits to minimise negative environmental impacts and maximise environmental benefits while improving the health and wellbeing for the structure's intended users. ESD principles take all aspects of a building, from its construction through its operation to its decommissioning and disposal, into consideration.

Circular Economy is a system that is designed to eliminate waste by keeping materials in use as long as they have some function. This involves reusing materials where possible and repairing, refurbishing or recycling those materials where reuse is not an option. One benefit includes improved productivity of resources. Another benefit is the reduced need for disposal as materials are recovered in whole or as a component for use in another product.

Key Stakeholders, for the purposes of this policy, are groups or individuals that contribute to University projects and initiatives and primarily encompasses contractors and community and business partners.

The UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are a set of 17 integrated goals set out by the United Nations that serve as a call to action to end poverty, protect the planet and drive peace and prosperity. The goals are: (1) No Poverty; (2) Zero Hunger; (3) Good Health and Wellbeing; (4) Quality Education; (5) Gender Equality; (6) Clean Water and Sanitation; (7) Affordable and Clean Energy; (8) Decent Work and Economic Growth; (9) Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure; (10) Reduced Inequalities; (11) Sustainable Cities and Communities; (12) Responsible Consumption and Production; (13) Climate Action; (14) Life below Water; (15) Life on Land; (16) Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions; and, (17) Partnerships for the Goals.

4. Governance

4.1 Members of the USC Executive will actively champion the embedding of sustainability into the University's strategic and operational planning processes by ensuring that all Cost Centre Managers nominate and report on sustainability actions and performance in their Department/School Annual Operational Plan.

4.2 Members of the USC Executive will embed consideration of sustainability risks (reputational, competitiveness, supply chain, regulatory, litigation and physical) and the risk of inaction where relevant alongside standard business risks in decision-making processes.

4.3 Cost Centre Managers will ensure sustainability actions are implemented by including those actions in operational budgets and incorporating responsibility to undertake key sustainability initiatives into job descriptions and role statements.

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4.4 The University will lead its community (including students, staff, industry partners, and key stakeholders) in initiatives and actions that create sustainability transformations beyond the University. This section relates to the UN Sustainable Development Goal #17.

4.5 The University will make an annual submission to the Times Higher Education Impact Rankings as a means of spurring systemic action and benchmarking performance towards achieving relevant UN Sustainable Development Goals. This section relates to the UN Sustainable Development Goal #17.

4.6 The University will develop and maintain an open and accessible repository of sustainability related operational initiatives, research, teaching and outreach for use in reporting, proposals, engagement, project development, teaching and promotional activities.

4.7 Heads of Schools will ensure staff submit relevant information on sustainability related actions into the sustainability repository.

4.8 The University will form partnerships with external organisations and individuals to leverage knowledge and minimise the environmental impacts of operations and enhance the mental and physical health and wellbeing of staff and students. This section relates to the UN Sustainable Development Goal #17.

4.9 The University will share sustainability learnings with industry and local, state and federal governments to influence action within and beyond the University. This section relates to the UN Sustainable Development Goals #16 & 17.

4.10 The University will produce publicly available reporting against sustainability KPIs in the USC Annual Report, consumption and carbon emissions in the annual Tertiary Education Facilities Management Association (TEFMA) report and across a broad range of environmental and social indicators in the University's bi-annual Sustainability Report. Where applicable, linkages between the KPIs should be made to the relevant UN Sustainable Development Goals. This section relates to the UN Sustainable Development Goals #12 & 17.

4.11 The Sustainability and Engagement Forum, open to all staff and students, will be held at least three (3) times per year to learn from, work towards and advance sustainability efforts at the University and the wider community.

5. Teaching

5.1 Teaching of sustainability will be encouraged in undergraduate and graduate programs through application of the University's Graduate Attribute of Sustainability-Focussed and in line with sustainability values and priorities identified in the Strategic Plan. This section relates to the UN Sustainable Development Goal #17.

5.2 Each School/Academic Organisational Unit will encourage the inclusion of sustainability and the UN Sustainable Development Goals into course projects and Work Integrated Learning offerings by building relationships with individuals and organisations working in the sustainability field, including researchers, the Sustainability Officer, local businesses and councils. This section relates to the UN Sustainable Development Goal #17.

5.3 Facilities Management, and its partner organisations, shall make reasonable levels of data from the University's operational sustainability initiatives available to courses for the purpose of teaching real-world scenarios and modelling sustainable solutions. This will exclude information held in confidence. This section relates to the UN Sustainable Development Goal #17.

5.4 Academic staff will consider and take precautions to minimise negative environmental and social impacts of research and teaching activities, with particular focus on excursions in natural, cultural or heritage environments. This section relates to the UN Sustainable Development Goals #14 & 15.

6. Research

6.1 Research staff and higher degree by research students will incorporate consideration of relevant sustainability issues as integral to research design, implementation and dissemination. This includes, but is not limited to, consideration of travel for research and conferences and the utilisation of in-country research partners where applicable. This section relates to the UN Sustainable Development Goals #11 & 17.

6.2 Outreach and media (i.e. interviews, articles, press releases) related to research findings shall be focused on evidence-based outcomes, as related to environmental, social and/or economic sustainability. This section relates to the UN Sustainable Development Goals #16 & 17.

6.3 Research staff and higher degree by research students will be encouraged to share lessons and outcomes of their research with public audiences, in particular where that knowledge can lead to a stronger understanding of sustainability and how to encourage uptake of sustainable behaviours in the wider community. This section relates to the UN Sustainable Development Goals #4, 16 & 17.

7. Corporate practices

7.1 The Director, Facilities Management, and the General Manager, Strategic Infrastructure Developments – Capital and Commercial, will lead the enhancement of the environmental impact across the University's campuses and activities through ensuring that sustainability is central to the development and implementation of the Campus Master Plan, the Strategic Asset Management Plan, the

USC Carbon Management Plan and other resource-related planning. This section relates to the UN Sustainable Development Goals #6, 7, 11, 12, 14 & 15.

7.2 The Director, Facilities Management, and the General Manager, Strategic Infrastructure Developments – Capital and Commercial, will ensure that major projects, where applicable, include a circular economy and, where applicable, a product supply chain analysis that results in recommendations for the University and relevant contractors. This section relates to the UN Sustainable Development Goals #12 & 17.

7.3 The Chief Financial Officer will ensure that the Financial Management Practices Manual (FMPM) addresses assessment of whole-of-life value for money on all contracts for goods and services providers, including materials, food and equipment purchases. This section relates to the UN Sustainable Development Goal #12.

7.4 Cost Centre Managers will promote an awareness of resource use (including energy, water and other natural and manufactured resources) in their relevant areas of activity, and those areas they service, and implement actions to reduce resource use where possible and source sustainably produced, transported and packaged materials. This section relates to the UN Sustainable Development Goals #6, 7 & 12.

7.5 All staff are encouraged to adopt a process of rethink/avoid, reduce, reuse, recycle, recover in purchasing decisions wherever possible. This section relates to the UN Sustainable Development Goal #12.

7.6 Procurement will review any significant purchases according to the process of rethink/avoid, reduce, reuse, recycle, recover in purchasing decisions. This section relates to the UN Sustainable Development Goal #12.

7.7 Cost Centre Managers will support diversity and inclusion outcomes through implementation of practices that facilitate authentic student, staff and, where relevant, community engagement in decisions-making and governance processes. This section relates to the UN Sustainable Development Goals #5, 10 & 16.

7.8 Director, People and Culture will embed sustainability across inductions, professional development opportunities and ongoing training initiatives. The Sustainability Officer will provide content and materials on the University's sustainability initiatives and update relevant presentations and training materials. This section relates to the UN Sustainable Development Goal #17.

7.9 Cost Centre Managers will encourage staff to participate in University-wide environmental sustainability and health and well-being initiatives and actions. This section relates to the UN Sustainable Development Goals #3 & 17.

7.10 Cost Centre Managers will encourage staff across all areas of the University (administration, teaching, research and operations) to serve as Sustainability Champions, communicating sustainability information and helping to encourage wider staff participation in sustainability initiatives in their work areas.

7.11 The Director, Facilities Management, and the General Manager, Strategic Infrastructure Developments – Capital & Commercial, will incorporate ESD-related costs into project budgets and require the use of contractors with the ability to report on environmental performance and impacts. Consideration will be given to ESD both in the construction and operational phases of any natural and physical infrastructure projects. This section relates to the UN Sustainable Development Goals #11, 12 & 17.

8. Engagement

8.1 Director, Facilities Management, and the Sustainability Officer will develop and maintain external partnerships to embed sustainability in University operations. This section relates to the UN Sustainable Development Goals #7, 11, 12 & 17.

8.2 Staff and Marketing & External Engagement will communicate about sustainability-related activities and progress towards sustainability at the University via the University's website, email, newsletters, posters and other media. Links will be made to the UN Sustainable Development Goals and Talloires Declaration commitments where possible or relevant. This section relates to the UN Sustainable Development Goal #17.

8.3 The Sustainability Officer, in conjunction with key teaching, research and operational staff, will prepare and publicly disseminate a bi-annual Sustainability Report on the University's sustainability performance, including case studies, benchmarking and reporting on progress towards carbon neutrality and linkages to the UN Sustainable Development Goals. This section relates to the UN Sustainable Development Goals #13 & 17.

8.4 The University will host events that highlight the University's teaching, research and/or operational sustainability initiatives, inform the wider community about key issues within sustainability and encourage action. This section relates to the UN Sustainable Development Goal #4 & 17.

8.5 Schools and departments/units across the University will promote their sustainability work and learnings through events and presentations to University-wide audiences. This may include, but is not limited to, brown bag lunches, panel discussions and presentations at the Sustainability and Engagement Forums.

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8.6 Student Services & Engagement, associated Student Ambassadors and the Sustainability Officer will embed sustainability into engagement activities with regional schools to build on their understanding of the importance of sustainability in preparing students for their future careers. This section relates to the UN Sustainable Development Goals #4 & 17.

8.7 Facilities Management staff will engage with surrounding schools and their students to build respect and appreciation for the local environment and biodiversity. This section relates to the UN Sustainable Development Goals #4, 11, 15 & 17.

8.8 Staff engage in genuine and close partnerships with Indigenous and transcultural communities, through university-wide recognition and appreciation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, culture, knowledge and protocols. This section relates to the UN Sustainable Development Goals #10 & 11.

END

RELATED DOCUMENTS

• Sustainability - Operational Policy

LINKED DOCUMENTS

• Sustainability - Operational Policy

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