The Partnership: Experiences, Practices and Challenges Aligned with the SDGs

University of Worcester and

Worcester Students' Union

Ross Renton

Pro Vice Chancellor

University of Worcester

SUSTAINABLE UNIVERSITIES FOR A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE
University of Minho, Guimarães (Portugal)
22nd September 2020

University of Worcester

www.worcester.ac.uk

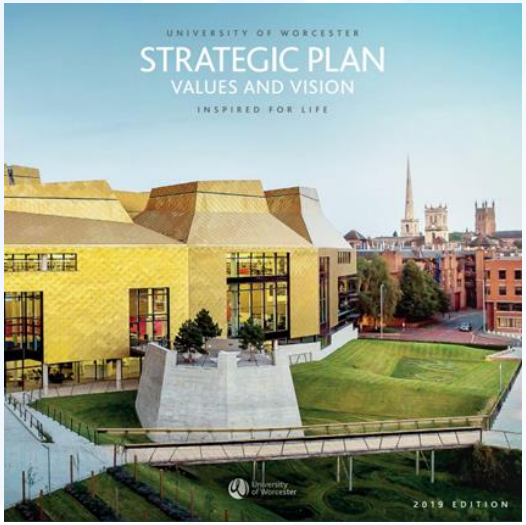
Presentation Outline

1. Context, Description and History
2. Sustainability Strategy
3. Reporting and Measuring
4. Green Impact at UW (Short Film)

Context







1 University: 4 Campuses
11,000 students
1,200 staff

Top three in the UK for Quality Education and number one for Gender Equality

Strategic Plan
Promote social inclusion
Practice sustainability and social responsibility

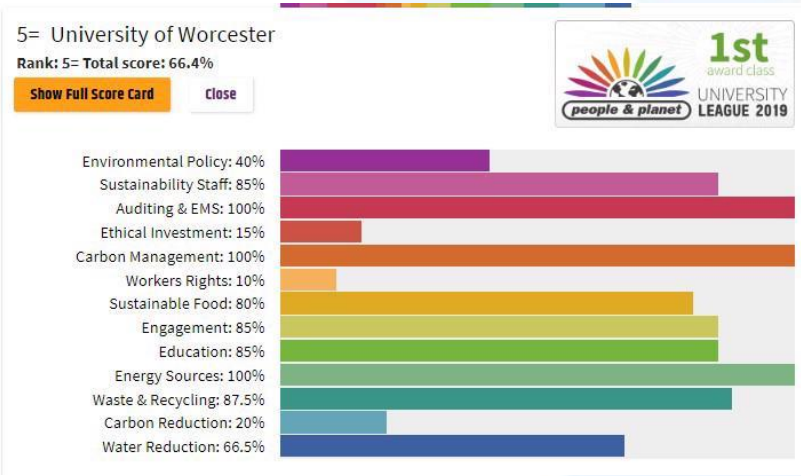
Awards



Green Gown Awards 2019
Sustainability Institution of the Year



International Green Gown Awards 2020
Sustainability Institution of the Year (Highly Commended)



People & Planet University League 2019
Ranked 5th out of 154 of the UK's greenest universities

University of Worcester

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University of Worcester

St John's Campus





City Campus

Halls of Residence





Severn Campus

History - Key Commitments

- Sustainability Policy Set targets 18 Feb 2008 including carbon reduction but always a holistic approach not just mitigating negative
- ISO14001 Awarded June 2010
- Responsible Futures NUS joint with SU 2015
- SDG Accord Signed Sept 2018
- Declared Climate Emergency July 2019
- New Strategy Approved September 2020

Strategy

- 4 themes
- 12 commitments
- Aligned to SDG's

SDGs relating to Theme 1: Promoting sustainability, social responsibility and wellbeing



1. Embed sustainability principles within our communities' working and social lives
2. Encourage active citizenship both locally and globally
3. Provide projects and programmes that directly enhance wellbeing

SDGs relating to Theme 2: Integrating sustainability through knowledge, skills and experience



4. Embed inclusion of sustainability principles in our formal curriculum and learning and teaching practice
5. Provide appropriate sustainability training for all our staff and students and encourage them to engage in sustainability practices
6. Ensure there are opportunities for students and volunteers to engage in applied sustainability projects

SDGs relating to Theme 3: Mitigation, adaptation and resource efficiency



7. Manage our estate to mitigate against climate change (through reduction of carbon emissions) and to ensure future resilience through engagement in adaptive strategies
8. Optimise resource efficiency and stimulate a shift to sustainable models of consumption amongst our stakeholders
9. Minimise campus pollution

SDGs relating to Theme 4: Global Sustainability Ethics, Partnerships and Leadership



10. To invest in pedagogic innovation, scholarship and research on sustainability with global impact
11. To enhance our positive social and environmental contributions by working with our supply chain
12. To build beneficial partnerships and collaborations through our sustainability activities and enhance our sustainability reputation internationally.

University of Worcester

Reporting Annually

United Nations SDG's

SDG Accord

Inspire, celebrate and advance the role that education has in delivering the SDG's

Report annually to share the learning with each other both nationally and internationally. Sector SDG reporting metrics are presented at the annual UN High Level Political Forum.

University of Worcester



* 17. We would now like to know more detail about your contribution to the SDGs.

Please give an example for each SDG that your institution has contributed towards. Answers must be in 20 words or less or can be a URL. (If you are not yet at a stage in which you are contributing to the Goals individually, please write 'not applicable' in the first box and move on to Question 18.)

No.1 - No Poverty	Regular donations to local food banks, including specific partnerships with the Co-op and Aramark catering
No.2 - Zero Hunger	Leading research in planting wildflowers below apple trees, encourages natural enemies which eradicate pests and encourages natural pollinators
No.3 - Good Health and Wellbeing	One of the first to have student mental health counsellors and leading partner with NUS cities 'suicide safer' through early intervention
No.4 - Quality Education	The leading University in the UK in THE Impact League, equal 26th in the World
No.5 - Gender Equality	The leading University in the UK in THE Impact League Ge
No.6 - Clean Water and Sanitation	Students work with Marine Conservation Society on the s
No.7 - Affordable and Clean Energy	CHP, PV and solar hot water systems throughout the univ
No.8 - Decent Work and Economic Growth	40th in the World in the THE Impact League and A top 10
No.9 - Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure	University of Worcester Arena - the country's first facility s
No.10 - Reduced Inequalities	Joint 39th in the World in the THE Impact League. Top 10
No.11 - Sustainable Cities and Communities	4th in the UK and 34th in the World in THE impact League
No.12 - Responsible Consumption and Production	17th in THE Impact League in the World. Created a procu
No.13 - Climate Action	6th in the UK and 35th in THE Impact League. Leading by
No.14 - Life Below Water	Leading research on the methods for measuring, mapping and monitoring the hydromorphology of streams and how this influences habitat hydraulics
No.15 - Life on Land	Developing, testing and implementing solutions that improve the health of the planet, including plant disease, atmospheric pollution and climate
No.16 - Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions	National Student Survey results for personal development are consistently outstanding and
No.17 - Partnerships for the Goals	Multiple awards for collaborative projects across industry and not for profits, with students as co-creators. Two silver Green Apples in 2018

INTRODUCTION

This is the eleventh Sustainability Report for the University of Worcester. Universities recognise their contribution in delivering a range of positive economic, social and environmental impacts, as well as their role in mitigating and reducing negative impacts, such as reducing direct and indirect carbon emissions. Equally, we recognise our role in fostering and empowering our students and staff as a force for change through critical academic engagement and the generation of new knowledge to support the United Nations Global Goals. This report describes the institution's most significant environmental aspects and how these are managed and mitigated, in order to fulfil our commitment to continual sustainability improvement. It also maps our projects and progress related to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's). Summarising our position enables the University to report our position annually to the SDG Accord which we do in partnership with the Students' Union. We signed up to the SDG Accord on 26 September 2018 and report our progress annually in April. The Sustainability Strategy Group oversees the strategic management of research, teaching and campus operations under the sponsorship of the Pro Vice Chancellor Students, and chaired by the Academic Lead for Sustainability and Deputy Head of the School of Science and the Environment, Dr Heather Barrett (reporting via Learning Teaching and Student Experience Committee, p20).

The Sustainability Strategy Group undertakes a series of workshops to ensure its work and this report continues to be:

- Transparent, accessible and stylish so attractive to read
- Identifies University of Worcester's risks, opportunities and materiality
- Sets out our clear governance for sustainability
- Ensures quality stakeholder engagement
- Uses various external accreditations to offer independent assurance

It also keeps under review the most useful metrics and benchmarking tools to ensure the University is reporting appropriately its sustainability journey. We were particularly proud to have had our Sustainability Annual Report 2015-2016, 2016-2017 and 2017-2018 as a finalist three years running in the Green Gown Awards.

Level of Assurance and Methodology

It is vital for the University that we have third party assurance of our data and our programmes, which is why we invest in partnerships to ensure others, have oversight in our work. We are also very committed to students learning these valuable auditing skills. Modules in Worcester Business School audit the University and students and others are invited to help with the ISO14001:2015 internal audits and to be observers on the external audit visits. This report is drafted to show the true picture of the University. We publish our historic data and show our failures to meet targets along with our successes. We welcome and encourage feedback and the student module is an excellent vehicle to make sure what we present is relevant to our students who are one of our key stakeholders.

Loreus Ltd have undertaken an independent verification for the University of Worcester's Annual Sustainability Report 2018-19, prepared in accordance with the core option of the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) Sustainability Reporting Standards. The scope of Loreus' verification covers the data and information associated with the University of Worcester's sustainability performance for the period 1 August 2018 to 31 July 2019. The statement covers the University's commitments, and progress towards the aims and objectives set. The evidence gathering process was designed to obtain a reasonable level of assurance as set out in the GRI external assurance of sustainability reporting guidance. Systems and processes for collecting, collating and reporting sustainability performance data were verified. The verification procedure included reviewing relevant documentation, interviewing responsible personnel with accountability for preparing the reporting contents, and verifying a selected representative sample of data and information. Raw data and supporting evidence of the selected samples were examined during the verification process.

INDEPENDENCE

Loreus Ltd was not involved in calculating, compiling, or developing the Sustainability Annual Report. Loreus' verification activities are fully independent from University of Worcester.

K. Belgasmi

Khaled Belgasmi
Principle Assessor

STRATEGY

The University has a long-standing commitment to act in a sustainable and environmentally responsible manner. In July 2019 the University Board of Governors declared a Climate Emergency giving clear leadership for the University to identify the step change measures required for carbon neutrality by 2030. The Strategic Plan 2019 includes a commitment to create possibilities, develop potential and increase community engagement. It clearly sets out our approach: 'We promote educational and social inclusion and equality. We behave with kindness and respect; we expect ethical and professional behaviour. We practice environmental sustainability and social responsibility'. This vision encapsulates our overarching aim to fully accept our broad responsibilities to society and develop our physical assets to provide excellent facilities and opportunities for students, staff and the wider community, but in ways that promote and champion sustainability and social responsibility.

An inclusive process engaging stakeholders on campus helped develop the new sustainability strategy supplemented by annual surveys of staff and students to measure attitudes, behaviours and material changes people have made both at work and at home. These surveys have been expanded during Go Green Week in Worcester to include residents. Analysis of the research shows remarkable synergy with all interested parties in to ways they would like the University to further promote sustainability and carbon neutrality and mirrors the findings of the NUS's longitudinal surveys of students. The University's new Sustainability Strategy aims to balance supporting the UN Global Goals and promoting positive societal impact while mitigating our negative impacts by reducing our net carbon emissions to zero by 2030. The University's Sustainability Strategy is structured around four core themes, which map to all 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals.

The University's new sustainability strategy is at the time of writing, in draft and under consultation with colleagues.



Theme 1: Promoting sustainability, social responsibility and wellbeing



Our key commitments are:

1. To embed sustainability principles within our communities' working and social lives
2. Encourage active citizenship both locally and globally
3. Provide projects and programmes that directly enhance wellbeing

Theme 2: Integrating sustainability through knowledge, skills and experience



Our key commitments are:

1. Embed inclusion of sustainability principles in the formal curriculum, learning and teaching practice
2. Provide appropriate sustainability training for all our staff and students and encourage them to engage in sustainability practices
3. Ensure there are opportunities for students and volunteers to engage in applied projects

Theme 3: Mitigation, adaptation and resource efficiency



Our key commitments are:

1. Manage our estate to mitigate against climate change (through reduction of carbon emissions) and to ensure future resilience through engagement in adaptive strategies
2. Optimise resource efficiency and stimulating a shift to sustainable models of consumption
3. Minimising pollution

Theme 4: Global sustainability ethics, partnerships and leadership



Our key commitments are:

1. To invest in pedagogic innovation, scholarship and research on sustainability with global impact
2. To enhance our positive social and environmental contributions through our supply chain
3. To build beneficial partnerships and collaborations through our sustainability activities and enhance our international sustainability visibility

Metrics and Targets

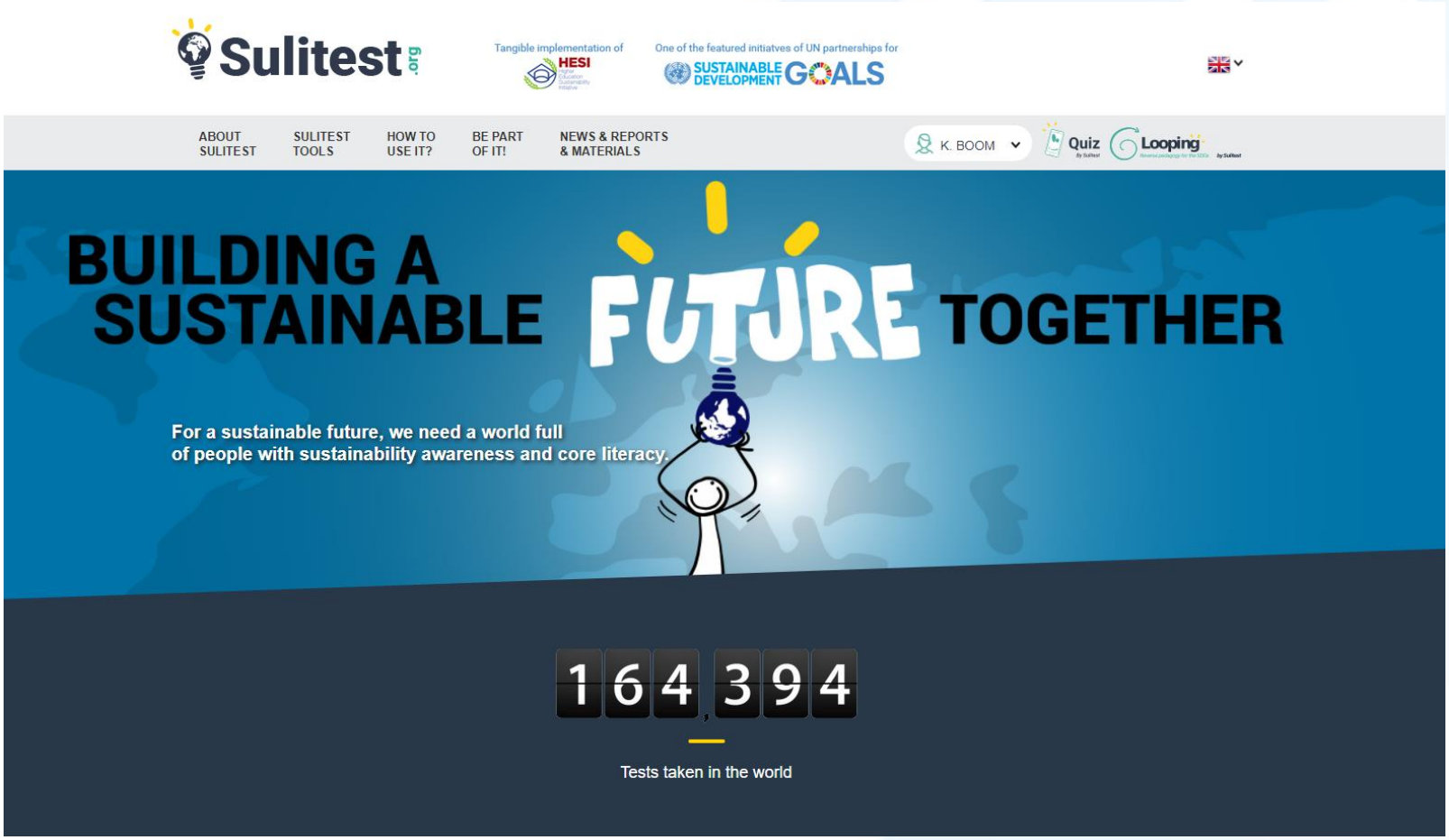
SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY 2020-2030

TARGETS

Theme 1: Promoting sustainability, social responsibility and welfare
Commitment 1: Embed sustainability principles within our communities' working and social lives
• By 2020, we will increase student awareness of the University's sustainability activities from 2016-17 baseline year of 47% to 65%.
• By 2020, we will increase student sustainability actions from 2016-17 baseline year of 64% to 75%.
• By 2023, we will have further developed our active calendar of community-based events as an exemplar of best practice model, collaborating with an even greater range of businesses, not for profit organisations, local authorities, and schools / colleges.
Commitment 2: Encourage active citizenship both locally and globally
• By 2020, we will further develop the 'Skills for Tomorrow' secondary schools-based sustainability conference, promoting sustainability career awareness across both Worcestershire and Herefordshire.
• By 2021, we will generate further opportunities for collaborative projects and programmes in the multi-award-winning HIVE library and history centre.
• By 2023, we will nurture further global sustainability partnerships supporting students flowing between countries doing city based experiential projects.
Commitment 3: Provide projects and programmes that directly enhance wellbeing
• By August 2020, we will Achieve level 3 standard of Worcestershire Works Well framework.
• By 2021, we will build on our best practice sector leading approach to enhancing wellbeing for students and staff e.g. 'Safer-Suicide' campus. We will aim to provide exemplar sustainable food choices, provision of facilities for exercise and relaxation, and increased biodiversity.
• By 2023, we will have strengthened sustainable travel options for students and staff, reducing the negative impacts of our growth on the city and alleviated pressures on campus car parking. We will build on our innovative award-winning bike share scheme Woo Bikes and helped to introduce this throughout Worcestershire.



Measuring Literacy



Measuring Knowledge of SDG's in Students

GLOBAL RESULTS | RESULTS PER CANDIDATE | RESULTS PER QUESTION | RESULTS PER TAG | RESULTS PER SDG

Results per SDG

Tag	Number of questions	% of expected answers	% of "I'm not sure"	% of not expected answers
Eradicating poverty and promoting prosperity in a changing world	15	53%	4%	42%
Transformation towards sustainable and resilient societies	16	57%	3%	40%
Empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality	23	53%	7%	42%
Partnerships for the Goals	5	66%	4%	30%



Working Together – Go Green Week



http://susthingsout.com/index.php/go-green-week-2020-2/

Links

Annual Report https://www.worcester.ac.uk/documents/Annual-Sustainability-Report-2018-2019.pdf

Sustainability Strategy https://www.worcester.ac.uk/documents/Sustainabilty-Strategy-2030-final.pdf

Worcester Student's Union https://www.worcsu.com/sustainability/

University of Worcester Strategic Plan https://www.worcester.ac.uk/about/university-information/strategic-plan.aspx

Sustainability magazine co-created with students http://susthingsout.com/

Questions and debate

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