



LEARNING IN FUTURE
ENVIRONMENTS

2.

Priority Areas & Frameworks

MANAGE MEASURE IMPROVE PROMOTE



Learning in Future Environments (LiFE) is a comprehensive performance improvement and benchmarking system developed specifically to help colleges and universities to manage, measure, improve and promote their social responsibility and sustainability performance.

LiFE has been developed with generous support from our funding partners Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE), Higher Education Funding Council for Wales (HEFCW), Scottish Funding Council (SFC) and the Department for Employment and Learning in Northern Ireland (DELNI), as well as direct input from people across the sector.

Priority Areas & Frameworks

One of the key challenges universities and colleges face is how they can better embed social responsibility and sustainability throughout their institution. It is no longer good enough to isolate this responsibility to the estates department - high performing institutions must look to embed these agendas within every area of their institution.

In order to develop a system that would be right for all colleges and universities, it was important that we recognise the unique nature of the sector, as well as the inherent differences that exist between different institutional types. LiFE does not seek to put all institutions into the same mould. Instead, we have developed a system that recognises the difference between different institutions and supports them on their own journey of improvement.

We have done this by developing flexible frameworks within four key institution priority areas:

1. Leadership and Governance
2. Partnership and Engagement
3. Learning Teaching and Research
4. Estates and Operations

THE FRAMEWORKS

The flexible frameworks are at the heart of how institutions interact with LiFE. Each framework provides guidance on how your institution can improve your performance within a specific area. As you read the frameworks, you will understand what good practice in each area looks like, and how your institution can better embed these practices throughout the organisation.

The flexible frameworks within LiFE are:

Leadership & Governance	Partnership & Engagement
Leadership	Community and Public Engagement
Staff Engagement and Human Resources	Business and Industry Interface
Estates & Operations	Procurement and Supplier Engagement
Biodiversity	
Sustainable ICT	
Utilities	
Travel and Transport	
Sustainable Construction and Renovation	
Resource Efficiency and Waste	
Learning, Teaching & Research	
Learning & Teaching	
Research	
Student Engagement	



FLEXIBLE APPROACH

We understand that each institution is different and will approach social responsibility and sustainability in different ways.

The frameworks have been designed to be flexible for each institution. They have been designed to guide you towards embedding sustainability and social responsibility throughout your institution, and not simple as a box-ticking exercise. We have also written detailed guidance within each framework, so you will always have a roadmap of how you can improve.

The types of activities you will expect to undertake will include:

- Developing and putting in place relevant policies
- Undertaking effective communications activities
- Developing and implementing action plans
- Putting in place effective training mechanisms
- Effective stakeholder engagement
- Linking activity to curriculum development

SELF ASSESSMENT

It's important that you can benchmark

your performance so that you can get a better understanding for the areas you can improve. On each framework you are able to assess the level you believe you are performing at and how much activity you have completed. This gives you a good overview for each area of your institution and the areas you need to focus on.

This self-assessment is also important if you chose to sign up for our LiFE Accreditation Programme, as the accreditation team will benchmark your performance against the sector - letting you see how you are truly performing.

ACCREDITATION

If you chose to participate in the LiFE Accreditation Programme, you will submit evidence of your activity each year. Our independent assessment and accreditation team will score the evidence award your institution with an accreditation award. This scoring takes the differences between different types of institutions into full account - you are assessed on your own merits

Unlike some published league tables, the results of the LiFE accreditation are a positive reflection of your effort across the year. The accreditation award reflects your achievements and successes across all four key priority areas and can be used widely as a positive promotion tool.

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An Introction to LiFE Benefiting Your Institution Integrating with Your Institution Promoting Your Efforts Investing in LiFE

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