

Sustainable Development Policy 2008 -2009

1. Sustainable Development and Further Education

The most widely used definition appeared back in 1987, in the Brundtland report, and was endorsed five years later at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro.

Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

It acknowledges a responsibility for, and a commitment to, protection of the environment at all levels.

More recently the Government's own definition was stated in *Securing the Future* (2005):

Sustainable development is about enabling people to satisfy basic needs and enjoy a better quality of life without compromising the environment.

Legislative change has come through a review of the UK Climate change Programme in 2006, an Energy Review in July 2006 and the Climate Change Bill of 2007. All of these commit public organisations to increasingly stringent targets in terms of energy consumption and efficiency.

The Learning and Skills Council (LSC) published its *From Here to Sustainability: The LSC's Strategy for Sustainable Development* (2005) outlining the measures it expects the providers it funds to adopt. The Strategy highlights the benefits, as well as costs, to colleges in adopting these measures and points to a significant amount of good practice within the FE sector in terms of sustainable development initiatives.

2. How the College will respond

At Rotherham College of Arts and Technology we recognise that college activities impact upon the environment both through its routine internal operations, its infrastructural development, and through its influence and effects on learners, staff and the wider community.

We believe sustainable operations are those that drive efficient resource use and provide a healthy environment, which in turn facilitates social progress and economic growth. As a college our vision is to provide a sustainable future for our environment and commit to continual improvement. Our commitment can be demonstrated under the three strands of *curriculum*, *campus* and *community*.

In line with our vision, the College will:

2.1 Curriculum

- increase awareness of environmental responsibilities among staff and learners;
- Develop curriculum in the growth sustainable energy sectors, as well as in other areas where sustainable development is growing within the economy (such as tourism, transport, construction and retail).
- Undertake an audit of its curriculum to identify sustainable development that is, or could, be covered;
- Incorporate sustainable development skills and knowledge into all FT students' programmes through the enrichment entitlement;
- Include discrete sustainable development qualifications as additionality where appropriate;
- Use the College's influence and knowledge to encourage awarding bodies to include sustainable development within the qualification content;
- Adapt resources (such as Moodle) to include sustainable development examples where possible;

2.2 Campus

- comply fully with environmental legislation;
- promote environmental management policies and practices at every level and in every area of the college;
- promote an environment which supports healthy eating and learning;
- minimise waste and pollution and develop and operate environmentally sound waste management procedures;
- continue to reduce the consumption of fossil fuels and to incorporate long term strategies for energy efficiency into planning and development;
- continue to encourage and facilitate modes of transport by learners and staff which minimise environmental impact, and to apply environmentally friendly principles to the operation of College owned vehicles;
- reduce water consumption;
- promote a purchasing policy which will give preference, as far as practicable, to those products and services which cause the least harm to the environment;
- avoid wherever practical the use of environmentally damaging substances, materials and processes;

- maintain the grounds and buildings of the College in an environmentally sensitive way, having regard to protection of local natural habitats and preservation of biological diversity;
- consider environmental factors in respect of changes to the College estate, seeking as far as is practical to reduce harmful environmental impacts and to integrate new developments into the local environment;

2.3 Community

- work with other local, national and other agencies as appropriate to promote environmental policies;
- Promote the College's work in terms of sustainable development to the community;
- In its work with employers, use its influence to promote sustainable practices and ideas;
- Encourage learners to volunteer in areas that promote sustainable development as part of their enrichment and personal growth.

3 Monitoring and Review

Progress in implementing this policy will be reviewed annually and monitored by the College Senior Management Team and reported to the Sustainable Development Curriculum Group. We will report our environmental performance via our website or portal on a regular basis.

We welcome comments and suggestions for improvements and will review this policy periodically in light of new knowledge, changing legislation, public concerns and the views of the Sustainable Development Group.