

Sustainability and net zero policy

Approval date	8 December 2023
Approved by	<i>Charlotte Bonner</i> Charlotte Bonner, CEO
Responsibility structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsible – CEO • Accountable – The Board of Trustees/directors • Consulted – Staff • Informed – Members and stakeholders
Document location	Public: https://www.eauc.org.uk/sustainability Internal: Sustainability and Net Zero Policy
Related policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EDI policy • Travel and subsistence policy
Review history	2023 – rewrite (CB)
Next scheduled review due	2026

Purpose

This policy is our public ‘statement of intent’ that reflects our commitment to carry out our activities in line with our vision, mission and values.

We want to be a role model, exemplifying what it means to be a sustainable, purpose-led organisation. We commit to using the best sustainability practices we can, supporting a just transition to a sustainable future where we achieve not just environmental stability and regeneration but social justice and economic prosperity for all too. We will regularly review our ways of working to continually improve.

Accountability and transparency

We publicly report our sustainability and net zero performance on an annual basis, including a year-by-year comparison, through our trustees’ report and [AGM](#). This ensures accountability for our sustainability performance sits with our highest decision-making body and enables transparency about our sustainability efforts and impacts with our members and stakeholders. Our senior leadership team are responsible for ensuring the organisation has the capacity and other resources necessary to deliver this policy.

We're also the secretariat for a number of organisational commitments such as the [Race to Zero](#) and the [SDG Accord](#). Where we encourage to sign commitments, we also commit to working in adherence with these.

We've been reporting our organisational equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) practice through the [Race Report](#) since its inception and commit to continuing to report openly about our EDI practices and performance.

Reducing our negative impacts

We recognise the direct negative sustainability impacts of the EAUC's activities, including those that arise from transport, waste, procurement, hosting events and the resources our staff use whilst working from home. As well as meeting or exceeding all relevant legal requirements and voluntary commitments we have made, we will:

- ensure that social, ethical and environmental scrutiny of products and services is integrated into our procurement processes, purchasing recycled, recyclable, refurbished or ethical products and materials wherever possible and providing plant-based catering at EAUC events;
- promote efficient use of materials and resources throughout our operations, processes and behaviours;
- ensure that environmental, social and ethical factors are integrated into our management processes and that objectives are set for continual improvement;
- maximise resource efficiency and facilitate repair, reuse and recycling;
- promote sustainable travel and actively promote and encourage virtual working where possible.

Maximising our positive impacts

The EAUC recognises the potential positive impacts we can have on sustainability through our work – indeed, everything we do is in support of our vision to create a world with sustainability at its heart. In particular we have the ability to positively impact our members, supporting and challenging them to embed sustainability in everything they do; and to create a more enabling environment for sustainability action across the tertiary education sector and wider society.

We work with our stakeholders to share examples of innovation and effective practice and raise sustainability and ethical standards. We centre equity, diversity and inclusion in everything we do.

We recognise the importance of banking and investing in line with our vision, mission and strategy so will also regularly review our bank(s) and investments to ensure we're working with companies who align with our work.

Net zero

Since 2014, EAUC has operated as a 'net zero organisation'. We report our carbon emissions each year, including year on year comparisons. Whilst working to reduce our absolute emissions we use an accredited program to offset our residual emissions from scopes 1, 2, and 3 and promote "net zero" along our value chain. We work to 'report then refine' principles, recognising that data quality is likely to improve over time. Therefore, our reported emissions may increase as well as decrease.

Sustainability is everyone's job

We're committed to our team's continued professional development (CPD). We encourage our staff, board and volunteers to conduct their work in a sustainably responsible manner whilst also seeking to be an accessible and inclusive organisation. We'll work with colleagues to build annual development plans, encouraging various CPD mechanisms including training where needed.