



Developing a programme for reducing scope 3 carbon emissions

Oxford Brookes University engaged SUMS, in partnership with EAUC, to advise on a programme for reducing its scope 3 carbon emissions, building on its net zero agenda in scopes 1 and 2.

The University wanted to identify the key leverage points for managing scope 3 emissions, and

develop a framework for reduction with reference to specific actions, and the roles of overall governance and culture.

The brief included developing initial targets and an outline timeline for reducing scope 3 emissions. The University was also keen to use the opportunity to build awareness and momentum around the agenda.



“This was a key piece of enabling work for Oxford Brookes to further develop and future-proof our Carbon Reduction Strategy. Understanding our scope 3 impacts to develop robust plans and roadmaps will be key to successful delivery. We greatly value the insights and recommendations and learned a great deal during the process. The report will be used as a basis for developing a new strategy, ensuring integration within existing frameworks and the development or enhancement of robust governance structures.”

MICHELE MORLEY

Head of Environmental Sustainability
Oxford Brookes University



“What is interesting about working on reducing scope 3 carbon impacts is the relationships and alignments that can be drawn with other aspects of an institutions’ strategic aims. Addressing scope 3 emissions is best done by being creative, and finding different ways of operating that benefit many parties and ambitions – all of which the Oxford Brookes team were keen to explore. I look forward to seeing how OBU progress with this in the coming years.”

KIRSTI NORRIS

EAUC - SUMS Associate Consultant



Our approach

Our consultants undertook a review of the core documentation around the University's carbon management and sustainability agendas and its existing scope 3 emissions data.

They also conducted an engagement exercise of structured interviews with key stakeholders with responsibilities or influence around areas relevant to scope 3 emissions.

The team set the University's current status and approach in context through a comparison with global frameworks and leading practice approaches, and used these to develop a set of principles, targets and a proposed model for the University to move towards decisive reduction in scope 3.

These proposals were tested with the relevant stakeholders to build consensus and buy-in around the feasibility of the approach.



"The levers for reducing scope 3 emissions are quite different from scopes 1 and 2. Here the roles of policies, strategic decisions and ways of doing business are critical, as well as questions around cultural change. A long-term transformation programme is a useful way to view this agenda. Using that approach on this piece, our consultants helped to clarify the overall agenda and build momentum for change."

DR THOMAS OWEN- SMITH
SUMS Consulting



The outcomes

The report will be used as a basis for developing a new strategy for reducing carbon emissions at Oxford Brookes University. This will include:

- embedding scope 3 reduction across all operational areas
- integrating the approach into existing frameworks
- monitoring, measurement and interim target setting
- ensuring that robust governance structures are in place to oversee successful delivery.



"Understanding and reducing scope 3 carbon is a more complex and wide-reaching change piece than managing scope 1 and 2 emissions, over which an organisation has more direct control. But for a net zero trajectory to be credible it is vital to factor in these wider impacts, which are often much greater. By engaging with key parties across the university, this piece of work helped Oxford Brookes to develop its approach to incorporating scope 3 emissions management into its net zero delivery plan, and provided recommendations to establish governance processes that will maintain progress over the long term. It was a pleasure working with the passionate team at OBU and I trust that this project will pave the way for them to deliver impactful carbon reductions across their whole value chain."

PAUL ROBERTS
EAUC - SUMS Associate Consultant

