

# Quarterly Policy Briefing: Environmental Sustainability

## July 2021

This document outlines the main policy changes seen in the last quarter that will affect EAUC-Scotland and Scottish institutions.

### Scottish Policy Updates

- The Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) is set to be scrapped and replaced. This is based on the findings of a review by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. Education Scotland will also be significantly reformed. There is no current timeline for this but the government has said changes will take some time. The report also asks for more digital resources and reduced contact time, from 22.5 hours per week to 20 hours per week by 2030. Full details are [here](#)
- The Scottish Government have launched the new [Green Public Sector Estate Decarbonisation Scheme](#). They have opened 2 funding calls; one for capital support and one for resource support for those public bodies that are not at project commencement/delivery stages.
- Climate Ready Clyde has developed Glasgow City Region's first Adaptation Strategy and Action Plan. The plan was officially launched on the 29<sup>th</sup> of June. Climate Ready Clyde is a cross sector initiative made up of 15 organisations - including University of Strathclyde and University of Glasgow - and backed by the Scottish Government. Plan can be viewed [here](#).

### UK Policy Updates

- The Committee on Climate Change (CCCuk) have published an update on climate risk. The Adaptation Committee's Independent Assessment of UK Climate Risk sets out the priority climate change risks and opportunities for the UK. The report draws on an extensive programme of analysis, consultation and consideration by the Committee involving over 450 people, 130 organisations and more than 1,500 pages of evidence and analysis. The key findings are:

- Alarmingly, the new evidence shows that the gap between the level of risk we face and the level of adaptation underway has widened. Adaptation action has failed to keep pace with the worsening reality of climate risk.
- The UK has the capacity and the resources to respond effectively to these risks, but it has not yet done so. Acting now will be cheaper than waiting to deal with the consequences. Government must lead that action.
- The Committee identifies eight risk areas that require the most urgent attention in the next two years. They have been selected on the basis of the urgency of additional action, the gap in UK adaptation planning, the opportunity to integrate adaptation into forthcoming policy commitments and the need to avoid locking in poor planning, especially as we recover from the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The Committee also reports on the full set of 61 risks and opportunities. These must be considered in the next set of national National Adaptation Plans, due from 2023.
- The Committee recommends ten principles for good adaptation planning that should form the basis for the next round of national adaptation plans. These are intended to bring adaptation into mainstream consideration by Government and business.

Full report can be found [here](#)

## Other Updates

- The next quarter will feature [COP15](#), which is the UN Biodiversity conference between the 11-24<sup>th</sup> of October. It will also feature [COP26](#) which is the Global Climate Conference happening in Glasgow from the 1<sup>st</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> of November. Both of these conferences are huge opportunities to shape global policy and there should be significant policy changes coming after these conferences.