



UNIVERSITY
OF WOLLONGONG
AUSTRALIA

Environmental Awareness and Engagement Action Plan 2022-2024

University of Wollongong

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Acknowledgement of Country

We Acknowledge that Country for Aboriginal peoples is an interconnected set of ancient and sophisticated relationships.

The University of Wollongong spreads across many interrelated Aboriginal Countries that are bound by this sacred landscape, and intimate relationship with that landscape since creation.

From Sydney to the Southern Highlands, to the South Coast.

From fresh water to bitter water to salt. From City to Urban to Rural.

The University of Wollongong Acknowledges the Custodianship of the Aboriginal peoples of this place and space that has kept alive the relationships between all living things.

The University Acknowledges the devastating impact of colonisation on our campuses' footprint and commit ourselves to truth-telling, healing and education.



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1.0 Introduction

This Environmental Awareness and Engagement Action Plan has been developed to support the university community to reduce the environmental impacts of their practices and behaviours while undertaking work or study at UOW and while living on campus facilities.

The UOW Sustainable Futures Committee (SFC) oversees the pursuit and delivery of UOW sustainability objectives as well as the integration of Sustainable Development Goals and sustainability initiatives and targets across all aspects of University activities.

The Environment Unit's focus is on the environmental sustainability of UOW operations, implements initiatives and actions to reduce impacts and address relevant UN Sustainable Development Goals. The Environment Unit is working with the Sustainable Futures committee to achieve common objectives.

Environmental awareness and engagement activities are required in all of the Environment Unit's Action Plans. The Environmental Awareness and Engagement Action Plan provides a framework to implement these activities to support and enable change.

This action plan addresses the environmental awareness and engagement activities associated with implementing the following UN Sustainable Development Goals:

- SDG 2 Zero hunger
- SDG 6 Clean water and sanitation
- SDG 7 Affordable and clean energy
- SDG 11 Sustainable cities and communities
- SDG 12 Responsible consumption and production
- SDG 13 Climate action
- SDG 14 Life below water
- SDG 15 Life on land
- SDG 17 Partnerships for the goals

2.0 Background

UOW is committed to reducing the environmental impacts of its operations. Achievement of our goals and aspirations relies on organisational action, as well as individual (staff and student) action to change practices and behaviours.

To support change by individuals, this action plan focuses on:

1. **improving knowledge and awareness** of environmental issues, UOW goals and achievements. This is important to:
 - establish the need for change.
 - highlight that these are desirable goals to achieve.
 - demonstrate UOW's progress.
2. **building capacity and engagement** with staff and students (individuals and groups) to enable participation and involvement and support change in practices. This involves:
 - removing barriers by providing supportive infrastructure and technologies and reference documents (e.g. guidelines/policies).
 - lowering risks to undertaking action by trialling initiatives.
 - generating interest and enabling positive actions to spread throughout the campus community via networks.

The following methods will be used:



- **Communication** – providing a one way communication to get a message across. This involves using available communication channels such as website/ social media/ MyUOW app/ staff and student newsletters/ direct emails/ meetings and presentations.
- **Education and training** – providing theoretical knowledge and skill development opportunities.
- **Infrastructure/technological improvements** –removing barriers and enabling participation.
- **Consultation**– providing a two way communication method to involve stakeholders in the implementation of actions and gain their feedback.
- **Policy, Guidelines, Resources** – developing documents and reference materials to guide, motivate and enable change.
- **Establishing and supporting a community of practice** – create and support networks so that people are part of a purposeful group working together, supporting and enabling each other through the sharing of ideas and experiences.

3.0 Key stakeholders

There are a number of key stakeholders that are important in the implementation of this action plan including:

- UOW Sustainable Futures Committee and associated working groups (in particular the Engagement Working Group).
- UOW Pulse.
- Faculties and Schools.
- Student clubs and societies.
- Strategic Marketing and Communications Division.
- Professional & Organisational Development Services.
- Governance Unit.
- Student Services and Accommodation.
- Current and future students.
- Academic and Professional staff.



4.0 Environmental awareness and engagement actions

4.1 Actions to improve knowledge and awareness

Table 4.1 – Actions to improve knowledge and awareness

Method	Activity Type
Provide information on UOW environmental programs to students and staff using available communication channels	Develop and implement communication plans to improve knowledge and awareness of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • management of UOW and achievements (such as energy and carbon, waste and recycling, water use and the campus environment) • the roles of Environment Unit and Sustainable Futures committee • environmental events, programs and initiatives • availability of guidelines and resources to support action • availability of environmental networks, development opportunities and training • consultation process for environmental governance documents and environmental programs and resources.
Connect and integrate with teaching and learning and research activities to improve awareness of UOW environmental initiatives with students	Connect with Faculties and Schools on internship and research project opportunities with the Environment Unit. Connect with Faculties and Schools about opportunities to utilise on campus examples in teaching and in assessment tasks.
Education and training opportunities available for students and staff	Environmental information available in staff and student induction and induction materials. Environmental training available and promoted in the staff professional development training calendar. Environmental workshops hosted or promoted for staff and students.



4.2 Actions to build capacity and engagement

Table 4.2 – Actions to build capacity and engagement

Method	Activity Type
Involve the campus community in events and initiatives	<p>Develop and implement an events calendar (based on existing environmental events such as Earth Hour, Clean Up Australia Day, Threatened Species Day, World Environment Day, National Recycling Week, Ride to Uni).</p> <p>Supporting students and staff to host their own events and initiatives.</p> <p>Host environmental initiatives such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Computer shut down and switch off campaign • Targeted program with high water and energy usage building users to improve their awareness and support change in practices • Food waste collection roll out • Waste avoidance and reduction campaigns (e.g. paper reduction, waste wise events, one less cup) • Green office and Green Labs program • Sustainable transport.
Involve the campus community in the development of governance documents and resources	<p>Staff and student consultation for the review of the environmental policy and planning documents.</p> <p>Stakeholder consultation in the development of programs and resources.</p>
Enable and support individual actions/practices by staff and students	<p>Create resources and guidelines (such as Green office tool kit, Green labs tool kit, sustainable events guide, significant tree register and guidance materials).</p> <p>Provide infrastructure improvements and monitor to reduce barriers to actions.</p> <p>Recognise and showcase good environmental practices by staff and students.</p>
Establishing and supporting a community of practice	<p>Provide and support networking opportunities for staff and students.</p>

5.0 Delivery

The prioritisation and implementation of tasks and actions defined in this Plan depends on feasibility, priorities, and the availability of resources. A structured approach will be taken to assess, develop and implement actions in consultation with relevant stakeholders and following UOW processes.











Environmental Awareness and Engagement action plan

Final Audit Report

2022-10-24

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