

# Sustainability Strategy



ROYAL  
HOLLOWAY  
UNIVERSITY  
OF LONDON



# Strategy Summary

## One minute read

### Our Vision

Royal Holloway recognises that the world faces a climate emergency. Through our actions and expertise in Research and Education, we will generate positive and inclusive change that supports significant progress towards the UN Sustainable Development Goals on campus and beyond for all our stakeholders.

### Strategic objectives

#### 1. Research and Education

To leverage our expertise in Research and Education to encourage, equip and empower our students and staff to be leaders in Environmental Sustainability. We will target our collective intellectual capacity on the most pressing Environmental Sustainability challenges and form powerful collaborations with partners to maximise our influence and impact.

#### 2. Student Leadership

To engage our students to create and achieve our shared vision for Environmental Sustainability, ensuring all our students are informed about our actions so that they in turn can influence our activities to the enhancement of the student experience.

#### 3. Our wider community

To facilitate community engagement and learning on Environmental Sustainability.

#### 4. Operations

To reduce our energy use and our emissions, enhance biodiversity, promote environmentally and socially responsible transport and travel, and pursue ethical procurement and investment strategies. We will do this by responsible management of our operations, and through our actions as custodians of our parkland estate. In so doing, we will achieve ambitious targets for the efficient and cost effect management of our resources and waste.

# Our Sustainability Strategy 2022

## Our Vision

Royal Holloway recognises that the world faces a climate emergency. Through our actions and expertise in Research and Education, we will generate positive and inclusive change that supports significant progress towards the UN Sustainable Development Goals on campus and beyond for all our stakeholders.

## 1. Research and Education

### Strategic objectives

To leverage our expertise in Research and Education to encourage, equip and empower our students and staff to be leaders in Environmental Sustainability. We will target our collective intellectual capacity on the most pressing Environmental Sustainability challenges and form powerful collaborations with partners to maximise our influence and impact.

### To achieve our Research objectives

1. We will invest in our research expertise to ensure the College has a positive impact on Environmental Sustainability through research.
2. We will increase the number of collaborative challenge-led grants we achieve related to Environment Sustainability by strengthening peer-to-peer review of grant proposals, increasing the number of grant workshops, and by exploiting the expertise of the Research and Innovation Directorate to support early-stage development of larger grants.
3. We will enable new research and knowledge exchange-related Environmental Sustainability projects by promoting our Living Sustainably research Catalyst, and by establishing a Policy Network for it to ensure the currency and utility of its work.
4. We will develop a broad-based network of prestige partnerships with academic institutions and other organisations demonstrating intellectual leadership and/or expertise in practise on Environmental Sustainability, to extend the impact of our research and knowledge exchange activities.
5. We will evidence increased policy leverage on Environmental Sustainability by supporting our early and mid-career colleagues to engage when opportunities present themselves.
6. We will increase the number of PhD students active in Environmental Sustainability fields.
7. We will develop and support a micro-website which advertises research project areas to help recruit PhD and Masters-level students in Environmental Sustainability-related areas, and student-led Environmental Sustainability related projects.

*We will agree deadlines and measures for the above objectives by the end September 2022.*

### To achieve our Education-related objectives

1. We will champion student engagement with Environmental Sustainability through degree-related learning, extending the number of degree programmes with an Environmental Sustainability content, at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels.
2. We will increase the number of employment-related placement opportunities with an Environmental Sustainability emphasis.
3. We will increase opportunities for all students to access extra-curricular activities that are environmentally focused, including the number of volunteering placements available to students. We aspire to 20% student engagement by 2025/26, 50% by 2028/29, and 75% by 2032/33.
4. We will ensure all students have opportunities to do carbon literacy training; and will monitor participation rates on an annual basis. We aspire to 20% of graduating students being climate literate by 2025/26; 50% by 2028/29, and 100% by 2032/33.

*We will agree deadlines and measures, where they do not currently exist, for the above objectives by end September 2022.*

# Our Sustainability Strategy 2022

## 2. Student Leadership

### Strategic Objectives

To engage our students to create and achieve our shared vision for Environmental Sustainability, ensuring all our students are informed about our actions so that they in turn can influence our activities to the enhancement of the student experience.

### To achieve our student-leadership objectives

1. We will work in partnership with the Students' Union to establish a leadership scheme to promote student initiatives on Environmental Sustainability issues.
2. We will establish a student engagement process which supports transparent and accountable reporting on key Environmental Sustainability metrics to our students in ways that are accessible to them.
3. We will support a student-led community hub for waste education, repair, swap, re-filling and recycle to facilitate sustainable lifestyles.
4. We will target improved scores in the Green Gowns and People & Planet league tables knowing these public surveys especially matter to students.

*We will agree deadlines and measures for the above objectives by end September 2022.*

## 3. Our wider community

### Strategic Objectives

To facilitate community engagement and learning on Environmental Sustainability.

### To achieve our community objectives

1. We will make available relevant climate literacy training to community members, as our resource base allows.
2. We will run an annual Environmental Sustainability festival where the local community is invited to showcase Environment Sustainability initiatives and, in turn, learn about our work, from 2025.

## 4. Operations

### Strategic Objectives

To reduce our energy use and our emissions, enhance biodiversity, promote environmentally and socially responsible transport and travel, and pursue ethical procurement and investment strategies. We will do this by responsible management of our operations, and through our actions as custodians of our parkland estate. In so doing, we will achieve ambitious targets for the efficient and cost effect management of our resources and waste.

### To achieve our operations targets and objectives

1. We will meet all UK national targets for decarbonisation, notably full decarbonisation of operations by 2050, including a 78% decarbonisation target by 2035. We will achieve any interim targets for decarbonisation set for the higher education sector by the Department for Education and/or The Office for Students.
2. We will set and meet our own ambitious decarbonisation targets. We will achieve Net Zero carbon for Scopes 1 and 2 by not later than 2035, without offsetting, for all campus operations, excluding our Grade 1 listed heritage estate. We will aim for Net Zero carbon by 2040 for our Grade 1 listed heritage estate, recognising we may need to offset due to the complexity of our historic buildings.

# Our Sustainability Strategy 2022

3. To achieve our Scopes 1 and 2 carbon targets, we will:
  - a. ensure our (new) Capital Evaluation Framework governing the future development of the physical estate is informed by externally sourced Environmental standards for all future buildings work.
  - b. address metering and other consumption controls across the entirety of the physical estate and use these to reduce consumption. 95% of our water, gas & electric is now monitored, helping us to reduce waste. Our deadline for achieving full metering is 2025/26.
  - c. replace all lighting to LED by 2035, with rolling opportunities for replacement significantly ahead of that. Currently, 45% of our lights are energy efficient LED lighting.
  - d. complete all planned window improvements by 2030, with rolling opportunities for replacement significantly ahead of that.
  - e. ensure our internal fleet vehicles are all electric powered by 2030, with rolling opportunities for replacement significantly ahead of that.
4. We will take concerted, pro-active measures to reduce our Scope 3 carbon emissions. We will:
  - a. define a new longitudinal waste management reporting process and continue to progress our supplier Sustainability code of conduct, contract terms and waste mapping among our top 25 suppliers by the end of 2024.
  - b. engage with our top 25 suppliers on their carbon reduction plans and be able to present data on their actions by the end of 2024.
  - c. achieve a fully integrated Sustainable Travel & Transport plan by the end of 2025. We will build on recent progress from joining 'Surrey Lift share', which helps colleagues make environmentally sustainable choices for their commute, and the College's work in partnership with Runnymede Borough Council on a local cycling strategy.
  - d. progressively set more exacting investment targets for the reduction of future emissions across our investment portfolio, reducing exposure to carbon intensive companies, and making investments in sustainability-themed products; for example, climate change mitigation, low carbon technology, social housing, sustainable infrastructure, and energy efficiency, from 2022/23. We will:
    - (i) ensure that no more than 5% of holdings in our investment portfolio are with fossil fuel reserves, less than half of the Morgan Stanley Capital International World benchmark indicator, by 2026. The portfolio's potential emissions will be regularly benchmarked against the MSCI World indicator and are targeted to remain less than half of it.
    - (ii) achieve a portfolio Weighted Average Carbon Intensity score of 120 across our investments, by 2026.
    - (iii) ensure that at least 95% of holdings are in categories that positively act to avoid harm as mapped against the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, with 15% categorised as 'contributes to solutions' by 2026. The portfolio will achieve at least 15% of holdings in category C ("contributes to solutions") within 3-5 years from August 2021.
    - (iv) reduce future emissions focuses on absolute potential emissions (tons of CO<sub>2</sub>e). This is a reserves-based measure that focuses on emissions that could be generated if the proven and probable fossil fuels owned by the companies in our investment portfolio were burned.
5. We will ensure the responsible management of our operations to reduce our water consumption and our waste.
  - a. Our water use has reduced by 25% from a baseline of 298,322m<sup>3</sup> in 2005/6, notwithstanding the College's growth. We will reduce water consumption by 20% by the end of 2025.
  - b. Recycling rates reached 44% pre-Covid (end 2019). We will become a Zero Waste to Landfill campus by the end of 2023.
  - c. 4 tonnes of food waste a month is turned it into energy and nutrients pre-Covid (end 2019). The College has achieved Sustainable Restaurant Association accreditation. We will set ambitious future targets for food recycling (dates and measures under consideration).
  - d. We will reduce dependency on single use plastics wherever used on campus on 25%, by the end of 2025.
6. We will take advantage of our parkland estate to achieve a 'living lab' approach to our external estate with ongoing milestones to be determined.

# Governance

## To support the delivery of our objectives

1. We will agree long-term senior-level leadership for the Sustainability agenda in 2022/23.
2. We will establish an Environmental Sustainability committee to oversee our actions and develop the Environmental Sustainability Governance Structure to enable annual reporting in 2022/23.
3. We will achieve clear ownership and governance structures for Environmental Sustainability, which demarcate Sustainability portfolios in Schools and Professional Services by the end of 2022/23.
4. We will report on our annual progress and engage with our stakeholders on our progress by the end of 2024.
5. We will develop a public presence highlighting the College's strategy by the end of 2022/23.
6. We will ensure Environment Sustainability issues are embedded into relevant policies by the end of 2023.
7. We will launch the second iteration in 2024/25. We will use the process of re-iteration to broaden the strategy to encompass our response to the United Nations 17 Sustainable Development Goals.

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