

Board Meeting

Date of Meeting	Monday 20 June 2022
Paper Title	Environment and Sustainability Strategy
Agenda Item	15
Paper Number	BM6-L
Responsible Officer	Sue Roberts
Status	Disclosable
Action	For Decision

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 The regional environment and sustainability strategy has been developed from the draft strategy presented to the board in November 2021, and with the input and agreement of the regional environment and sustainability group.
- 1.2 Our broadest aims remain similar and some of our planned activities have been amended to optimise opportunities and focus on ambitious – though achievable – objectives.
- 1.3 This strategy aligns with the Scottish Government’s Fairer and Greener Scotland priorities and with the Glasgow region’s priorities.
- 1.4 It is also flexible enough to support our colleges’ activities on the environment and sustainability and is not meant, at this stage, to be exhaustive.
- 1.5 The regional strategy is based on the FE climate Change Roadmap and seeks to help our colleges reach its milestones collaboratively and individually. The Roadmap also supports the United Nations Goals for Sustainable Development.
- 1.6 This strategy extends beyond the Roadmap to develop further work on changing people’s behaviours to be more sustainable, and on the circular economy.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 The board is recommended to **approve** the environment and sustainability strategy.

3. Risk and Compliance Analysis

- 3.1.** This strategy mitigates the risk that GCRB and the Glasgow college system is unable to take the coordinated action to deliver and progress regional environment and sustainability strategy in line with Glasgow's commitment to the Scottish Colleges' Statement of Commitment on the Climate Emergency and associated climate action road map.

4. Financial and Resource Analysis

- 4.1** The implementation of this work requires the commitment of staff resources and some additional expenditure. This is contained within the GCRB operational budgets for 2022/23.

5. Equalities Implications

- 5.1.** There are no equalities implications arising from this report.

6. Learner implications

- 6.1.** This strategy contributes to the effective working environment of GCRB and the delivery of the Strategic Plan for the Glasgow college region.
- 6.2.** This environment and sustainability strategy supports learning and teaching for sustainability.

Glasgow Colleges' Regional Board

Environment and Sustainability Strategy 2022-2023



Introduction

Colleges have always sought to equip learners with the knowledge and skills to succeed in a changing world. Now, as we face the Climate Emergency, a post pandemic society, and a global economic crisis, the need for that knowledge and those skills has never been more acute.

College learners have the potential to make a powerful impact on the Glasgow region's Green Recovery and Just Transition. They are local learners who are likely to become local workers in sectors that must respond quickly to achieve Scotland's Net Zero Target.

College communities reflect Glasgow's social and economic diversity and our learners will have impact and influence as citizens and consumers.

Glasgow's colleges will play a vital part in reaching Net Zero, in building a sustainable future, in strengthening communities and in developing the regional economy.

This strategy will help our college network to take a leadership role, working in together and with partners to build a better future.

Aims

We will deliver more positive change than could happen without a regional approach; harnessing regional scale, efficiency and vision while supporting each college's specific strategy and activities by:

- Helping to reduce the Glasgow College Region's environmental footprint
- Aligning with the regional strategic curriculum review, contributing to Glasgow's Green Recovery, and offering learning that will help meet the Fairer, Greener Scotland priorities.
- Offering a college experience that motivates and enables its learners, staff and partners to change their policies, ways of working or behavior to reduce climate change, consumption and waste and support global sustainable development.
- Developing partnerships that help shape, deliver and fund actions.
- Contributing to regional and national environmental discourse, research and momentum.
- Optimising collaboration in the Glasgow College Region.

Strategy

This strategy is structured to align with the Further Education Climate Action Roadmap because it offers a complete approach to meeting our colleges' commitments to the Scottish Colleges Statement of Commitment on the Climate Emergency. Our colleges have signed that commitment and are using the Roadmap whose themes are: Leadership and Governance, Learning and Teaching, Estates and Operations, Partnerships and Data Sharing.

While the Roadmap offers sound structure, prioritisation and measurement of progress on the environment and sustainability, it is far from exhaustive. We are ready to work with colleges on activities that support, but are not included in the roadmap.

To help effect changes in our people's understanding and behaviours around the environment and sustainability, we have added a sixth workstream to deliver communications that will inform, motivate and enable change and support our colleges' activities

Our wider sustainability activities align with the United Nations Goals for Sustainable Development. This aligns with the Scottish Government's commitment.

We have added activities that promote the Circular Economy. Again, this aligns with Scottish Government and Glasgow City Council strategies. It also supports teaching and learning for a sustainable future.

1. Leadership and Governance

Our aim

Leadership and Governance for sustainable development aims to support Glasgow’s colleges, collectively and individually, as they integrate a wide range of environmental and sustainability priorities into their values, culture, learning, teaching, research and other business activities.



Glasgow Colleges’ Regional Board offers strategic direction and support.

Glasgow College Group works in partnership to implement this strategy

The Regional Environment and Sustainability Group provides operational leadership and delivers activities.

Our deliverables

Milestone

Gather colleges' views on sustainability.
Emerging college milestone.

Establish Sustainability Committee
Emerging college milestone

Hold workshop with leaders to set Net Zero target.
Emerging college milestone

Incorporate net zero ambitions in strategic plan and establish a ring-fenced budget
Established college milestone

Incorporate sustainability into governance arrangements
Leading college milestone

Action

Research the views of staff and students using questionnaires and focus groups.

Continue to develop the work of the Regional Environmental and Sustainability Group to drive all deliverables.

Hold workshop with leaders to understand their ambitions.

Incorporate environment and sustainability priorities into the regional strategy.

Include environmental and sustainability considerations in the regional and college governance arrangements.

Our objective by July 2023

GCRB will have reached the Leadership milestones in the Climate Action Roadmap

2. Learning and Teaching

Our aims

This strategy takes a holistic approach to learning for a sustainable future. It aims to inform, motivate and enable our learners to make sustainable choices as citizens. It is also designed to support the Just Transition and Green Skills agenda and promote the UN's Sustainable Development Goals. We recognise the importance of the whole college experience: the formal and informal curricula, staff development, life on campus and extra-curricular activity.

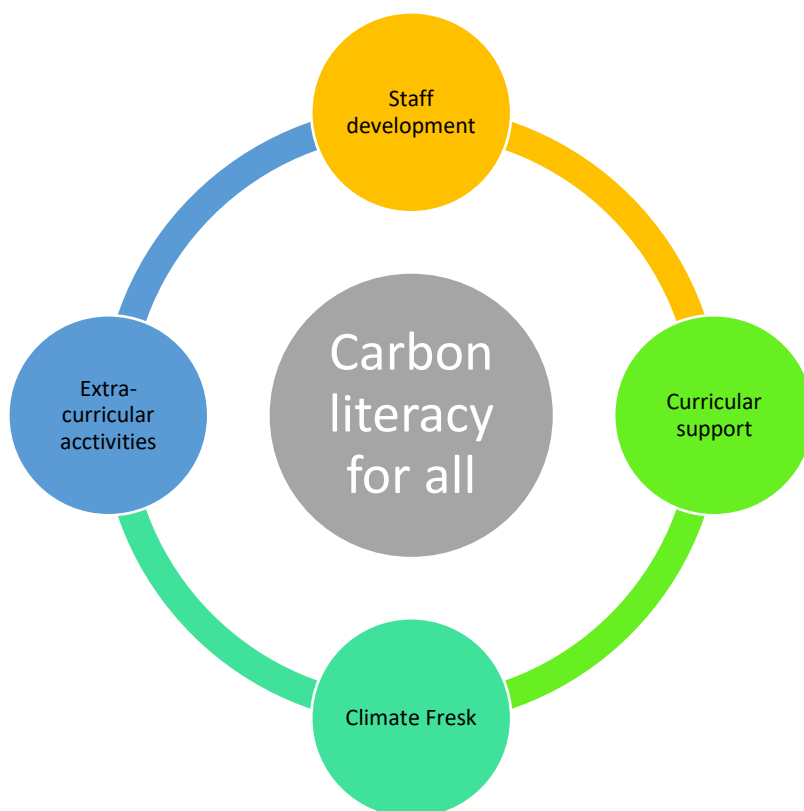
Carbon literacy for all: A regionally-produced online learning module will offer core carbon literacy training to all students and staff. Colleges will be able to brand the module and add their own content.

Staff development: We will offer on-demand support to staff seeking training on sustainability themes or vocationally-relevant topics.

Curricular support: We will offer on-demand support to learners in any faculties and courses with an identified need or interest in sustainability. We will also include environmental and sustainability considerations in the regional curricular review.

Climate Fresk: We will deliver at least one Fresk/ month to students and staff with an interest in climate change.

Extra-curricular: We will work with the colleges and students' associations encourage engagement through campaigns, events and initiatives on sustainability themes.



Our deliverables

Milestones

Deliver carbon literacy training to staff and students.

Emerging college milestone

Build climate literacy capacity in all colleges

Participate in Global Goals Teach-In

Leading College milestone

Actions

Collaborate to produce core regional online carbon literacy module for all staff and students.

Train at least on Climate Fresk facilitator in each college

Offer integrated campaign to promote the Sustainable Development Goals, encourage staff to sign up to Teach Ins, support Teach-ins and report to organisers.

Our Objectives by July 2023

30% of our learners and staff will have received core climate literacy training

We will have delivered 20 Climate Fresks

Collectively, the Glasgow colleges will have submitted 20 case studies on SDG Teach-Ins

Collaboratively, we will have delivered 3 initiatives on extra- curricular sustainability themes

3. Estates and operations

Our Aims

Our colleges are working individually to meet the agreed Net Zero target and, in doing so, are working towards the estates and operations milestones. Our regional aims are to support their activities with communications that encourage sustainable behaviours and to help identify funding for changes in estates and operations.

Our deliverables

Milestone

Ensure recycling/signage is available in every building
Emerging college milestone

Action

Offer campaign signage and communications assets to all colleges. Messaging will include recycling and encourage further sustainable behaviour such as reducing use of disposables, energy and food waste.

Our objective by July 2023

To have supported at least two on-campus behaviour change initiatives and measured and shared their results

4. Partnerships

Our Aims

The Glasgow colleges have met most of the Roadmap's milestones in partnership working. We will continue to work with Skills Development Scotland and regional partners on the Just Transition and Green Skills agenda. We will also work closely with the Students' Associations, supporting their individual activities and channelling regional work through them

Our regional aim is now also to develop ambitious partnership activities that broaden our influence and impact on the region's sustainability.

Our deliverables

Milestones

To support the Scottish Government's and Glasgow City Council's commitment to the circular economy.

To add to the further education sector's understanding of its students' and staffs views on the environment and sustainability.

Actions

We will deliver an event, in partnership with Bridge to Business, to promote the values and possibilities of the circular economy to young people.

We will work with the College Development Network and the EAUC to deliver, share results and further develop our research.

Our objectives by July 2023

At least 100 young people and 50 staff will have attended our circular economy event

We will have delivered Scotland's first survey of college students' and staffs' attitudes to the climate emergency

5. Communications, engagement and behaviour change

Our Aims

While not a theme in the Climate Action Roadmap, this work stream aims to:

- deliver communications that engage learners, staff, our partners and our communities in the fight against the climate emergency and for the Sustainable Development Goals.
- support the delivery of the other five workstreams.
- support each college’s environmental and sustainability strategies and activities.
- develop a regional college culture that motivates and enables people to change their beliefs and behaviours that help to address climate change.
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Our messaging will move our students and staff through the stages of behaviour change.



Our deliverables

Milestones

To support the Estates and Operations milestones by encouraging sustainable behaviour on campus

To build engagement with the Sustainable Development Goals

To nudge changes in behaviours

Actions

We will create and offer consistent, branded communications collateral, encouraging behaviour changes that increase recycling, reduce energy use, reduce the use of disposables, reduce food waste and encourage responsible consumption.

We will offer communications collateral, in advance of the Global Goals Teach-in, that explains and encourage alignment with each of the goals.

We will issue a newsletter each term and a Christmas edition. From these, we will spin out content that colleges can share via social media and their own communications channels.

Our Objectives by July 2023

We will have delivered communications that promote 17 Sustainable Development Goals and 1,000 of our learners will receive or engage with our content and or Teach-Ins.

We will have issued 3 newsletters and at least 50 pieces of shareable content on sustainability themes. At least 1,000 people will have engaged with our messaging.

6. Data Sharing

Our Aim

Our colleges fulfil their carbon reporting obligations and meet the Roadmap’s milestones in data sharing. Our regional aims, in addition to supporting that work, are to add data and research findings to the sector’s knowledge.

Our deliverables

Milestones

Upskill on measuring emissions
Emerging college milestone

To add data and, knowledge to the sector

To share experience and data with the sector

Actions

We will offer training in measuring emissions and carbon footprints to colleges’ key staff

We will share data from our survey of staff and students’ views on sustainability with the EAUC and the College Development Network

We will share our evaluations of communications, SDG and Climate Fresk activities, and initiatives on reducing disposables, etc with the sector and the organisers of initiatives.

Our objectives by July 2023

We will have helped to upskill key college staff on carbon reporting

We will have shared at least three reports with the further education and environmental sectors

References

Deliverable	Deadline
Research the views of staff and students using questionnaires and focus groups.	October 2022
Continue to develop the work of the Regional Environmental and Sustainability Group to drive all deliverables.	Ongoing
Identify, share and support funding opportunities Offer on-demand training in funding applications	Ongoing
Hold workshop with individual leaders to understand their ambitions	March 2023
Environment and sustainability priorities are incorporated into the regional strategy.	December 2022
Incorporate sustainability into governance arrangements	December 2022
Collaborate to produce at core online carbon literacy training module	October 2022
Train at least one Climate Fresk facilitator in each college	July 2023
Offer integrated campaign to promote the Sustainable Development Goals, encourage staff to sign up to Teach Ins, support Teach-ins and report to organisers.	February 2023
Offer campaign signage and communications assets to all colleges.	September 2022
Stage circular economy event	February 2023
Offer consistent communications campaign to encourage sustainable behaviours on campus	August 2022
Produce five regional newsletters and spin-off shared content on environmental and sustainability themes.	June 2022 September 2022 December 2022 March 2023 June 2023

Scottish Colleges' Statement of Commitment on the Climate Emergency February 2021: 10 key actions

- 1 Support Scotland's efforts to achieve net-zero climate emissions by 2045 or earlier if possible, with Scotland's colleges aiming to achieve net-zero by 2040 or earlier.
- 2 Embed environmental sustainability in our institutional strategies and set measurable targets.
- 3 Address the UN's Sustainable Development Goals in our strategies.
- 4 Share best practice within and beyond the college/university sector.
- 5 Deploy our expertise and experience to combat climate change.
- 6 Contribute to public debate on climate change and use the power of our example to encourage others.
- 7 Work with Scottish industry, employers, public sector bodies and others to improve working practices and find practical solutions to climate change and to make our planet safe for future generations.
- 8 Encourage, where appropriate, colleges to adopt the UK HE/FE Climate Commission's 'Climate Action Roadmap for FE Colleges'.
- 9 Each college will publish action plans to address on-campus and supply chain emissions, setting out what steps they will take over a five-year horizon and beyond where possible, and what they aim to achieve to address the climate emergency.
- 10 Educate staff, students, employers and communities on the impact their daily lives and working practices have on the environment/climate. While working with our partners, local employers and communities to ensure everyone is aware of their personal responsibility to our planet.

[Read the document](#)

A climate action roadmap for FE colleges	
Emerging colleges	
Gather colleges' views on sustainability	Leadership and governance
Establish Sustainability Committee	Leadership and governance
Hold workshop with leaders to set Net Zero target	Leadership and governance
Deliver carbon literacy training to students and staff	Learning and teaching
Ensure recycling signage is available in every building	Estates and operations
Implement strategies to reduce energy use	Estates and operations
Sign the Global Climate letter	Partnerships
Negotiate with supplier re sustainable food options	Partnerships
Measure colleges' carbon footprint using existing data	Data collection
Upskill on measuring emissions	Data collection
Established colleges	
Incorporate net zero ambitions into strategic plan and establish ring-fenced budget	Leadership and governance
Modify estates strategy inline with net zero target	Estates and operations
Set and implement targets to reduce waste on campus by 50-75%	Estates and operations
Implement new travel policy to reduce long-haul aviation travel	Estates and operations
Sign the SDG Accord	Partnerships
develop fossil fuel divestment plan	Partnerships
Establish climate action network with GCC	Partnerships

Develop and implement plan to measure Scope 3 emissions	Data collection
Train teaching staff to incorporate sustainability into curriculum for all courses	Learning and teaching
Audit curriculum against SDGs using Responsible Futures Framework and accreditation	Learning and teaching
Leading colleges	
Develop climate adaptation/climate risk mgmt. approach	Leadership and governance
Incorporate sustainability into governance arrangements	Leadership and governance
Embed climate responsibility into staff development	Leadership and governance
Expand travel policy to reduce emissions from commuting to/from campus	Estates and operations
Implement renewable energy on a part of/all of the estate	Estates and operations
Work with local community/council /businesses to improve local biodiversity	Partnerships
Apply for Green Gown or AoC Beacon award	Partnerships
Share carbon footprint data collection approach as model to other colleges	Data collection

[See the Roadmap](#)

United Nations Sustainable Development Goals

Goal 1. End poverty in all its forms everywhere

Goal 2. End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture

Goal 3. Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages

Goal 4. Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all

Goal 5. Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

Goal 6. Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all

Goal 7. Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all

Goal 8. Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all

Goal 9. Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation

Goal 10. Reduce inequality within and among countries

Goal 11. Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable

Goal 12. Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns

Goal 13. Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts*

Goal 14. Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development

Goal 15. Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss

Goal 16. Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels

Goal 17. Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development

* Acknowledging that the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change is the primary international, intergovernmental forum for negotiating the global response to climate change.

[Visit the website for information on context, purpose, actions, targets, events and progress](#)

Climate Emergency Skills Action Plan 2020-2025

Priority Areas for Skills Action to Support the Transition to Net Zero

1. Supporting a green labour market recovery from COVID-19
2. Building better understanding and evidence of future skills needs to support Scotland's transition to net zero
3. Developing the future workforce for the transition to net zero
4. Driving awareness and action to support reskilling and upskilling for the transition to net zero
5. Ensuring fairness and inclusion in the skills system as part of a just transition to net zero
6. Taking a collaborative approach to ensure a skills system responsive to changing demands.

[Read the full document](#)

[A Fairer, Greener Scotland: Programme for Government 2021-22](#)