



Northern College

Policy Title	Environment & Sustainability Policy 2025-26
Who does the policy apply to?	This policy and its underpinning guidance applies to all students, staff, governors and College partners (including contractors).
Aims	To set out Northern Colleges commitment and process for the delivery of sustainable practice, operations and Net Zero in line with local, national legislation and good practice by 2045.
To be read in conjunction with	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Northern College Strategic Plan 2023-2026• Net Zero Pathway and Action Roadmap• Estate Strategy 2023-2026• Health & Safety Policy
Further advice may be sought from	Assistant Principal Student Experience
Review arrangements	<p>This policy will be reviewed annually in line with Northern College annual review cycle.</p> <p>This policy may be reviewed outside of this cycle should operation and/or legislative guidance dictate it.</p> <p>The policy, guidance and review arrangements can be viewed on the Northern College website, staff and student inductions and within the student handbook.</p> <p>The review date is set out in paragraph 6 and 7 below.</p>

1. Scope

- 1.1 This policy underpins the College's activities in relation to the environment. These include the activities of all members of the College Community and therefore this policy applies to College students, staff, contractors and stakeholders.

2. Aims and Objectives

- 2.1 Northern College commits to a net zero target by 2045 through embedding sustainability within its Strategic Plan 2023-2026, the Estate Strategy 2023-2026 and within key policies.
- 2.2 To adopt practices that enable the environmental impact of the College's activities to be measured, controlled and monitored.
- 2.3 To manage environmental impact by following best practice guidelines and government initiatives; Climate Action Roadmap for FE colleges (Climate Commission and NOUS Management Consultancy), The Green College Commitment (Association of Colleges), the pledge to the Race to Zero for Universities and Colleges campaign (the Alliance of Sustainability Leadership in Education) and Barnsley Council Positive Climate Change Partnerships.
- 2.4 To promote awareness of the need to comply with the legislation, and to adopt sustainable practices
- 2.5 To develop an awareness throughout the College community of the roles and responsibilities of individuals, departments and services to safeguard the environment.

3. Policy

- 3.1 Leadership and Governance
- The College is committed to continuously improving our sustainability approach, through the promotion of environmental awareness and responsibility and embedding sustainability principles across key policies, strategies and governance structures.
 - Committing funds to, and re-investing any savings back into, environmental improvements within the College, within budgetary constraints.
 - Ensuring compliance with any legal requirements concerning the environment and working towards meeting government initiatives for a sustainable environment.

- The College will ensure that Net Zero remains a priority by means of a Sustainability Committee, chaired by a member of the Executive Team, a Net Zero Pathway and associated Action Plan.
- The College will be ambitious and ensure that specific targets for short-, medium- and long-term aspirations are produced and monitored.
- Sustainability is at the heart of decision making particularly in response to procurement and performance monitoring.
- Ensuring new initiatives are sought to prevent any negative impact on the local and global environment and that the College Sustainability Policy is reviewed annually
- Include environmental and energy management issues in staff and student induction and development to ensure that all are staff are aware of their responsibilities, particularly related to energy savings and recycling.
- The College will nominate sustainability ambassadors both within student and staff cohorts to drive forward communication, aspiration and practice.

3.2 Estate and operations

- Monitor and manage energy consumption and set annual targets for improvements in energy consumption and utilisation with a view to reducing costs and emissions.
- Remove waste material from general waste, which can viably be recycled and make use of recycled materials where practicable to do so.
- Ensure the correct disposal of materials and equipment with reference to the Environmental Protection Act 1990, and regulations enabled under the Act.
- The College will ensure that sustainability is key within all catering contracts and operations.
- Use and purchase materials and equipment which minimise harm to the environment and avoid use of non-renewable resources where feasible.
- The College will develop plans to mitigate climate-based risk in line with net zero targets.

3.3 Teaching and Learning

- Embed carbon literacy within the curriculum to support students to understand climate change, its impact and how they can take individual action through social responsibility.
- Ensure student voice is key to the delivery of this strategy through our student representative structures
- Reduce the use of paper by critically appraising the requirement of paper-based practice, alongside the use of electronic mail, intranet and other technology as far as practicable.
- Encouraging the users of the College to seek environmentally acceptable economies in the use of transport, i.e. share of lifts, public transport.

- The College will offer carbon literate courses to all students as part of continuing professional development.
- In line with good practice and showcasing opportunities, the College will encourage the application of awards for sustainable practice.

3.4 Partnership and Engagement

- The College will work together with professional agencies in promoting the sustainability and net zero aspirations: Barnsley Positive Climate Partnership, Climate Education Task & Finish Groups (Barnsley College partnership), The Association of Colleges, Brook Specialist Consultants (Barnsley Net Zero Accelerator programme), Enterprising Barnsley and the South Yorkshire Colleges Sustainability Network.
- Work closely with the National Trust to ensure the campus is a bio-diverse environment with opportunities for wild habit.
- Be clear about our net zero expectations with our partners including due diligence with our suppliers, contractors and supply chain in order to reduce our collective carbon footprint.
- The College, where appropriate, will use its voice to advocate for net zero emissions within education and share its own journey as best practice.
- The College will work with its catering provider to ensure that a sustainable, plant-based, food mile offer is within the contract.
- Apply for awards to showcase the Colleges commitment and best practice in its Net Zero Pathway.

3.5 Data Collection

- Measure and collate emissions to ensure that the College is able to track its progression towards its targets.
- The College will ensure that appropriate staff are skilled to undertake and monitor scope 2 and 3 emissions plans (scope 2 and 3 are indirect emissions such as electricity, purchased goods, services, waste management).
- The College will share relevant data with other providers, contractors and colleges to ensure good practice.

3.6 It is expected, that where possible, all staff should endeavour to apply the aims of this policy in all aspects of the College's operations, its delivery of the curriculum, estate management and associated services.

4. Responsibility

4.1 The overall responsibility to oversee sustainability lies with the governing body who will ensure that the College is compliant with legislative requirements in this area alongside providing support and challenge to the Executive Leadership Team.

4.2 The College Executive Leadership Team shall:

- Ensure that the Environment & Sustainability Policy is in place and implemented across the College.
- Ensure that necessary resources are made available for the implementation of the policy.
- Receive an annual report on environmental performance

4.3 The College Leadership Team shall be responsible for managing the implementation of this policy within their departments and assist with the auditing of their departments when requested.

4.4 The Head of Estates and Facilities has a responsibility to co-ordinate and monitor the implementation of this policy any associated guidance and approved standards to departments and working parties.

5. Monitoring and Audit

5.1 The Assistant Principal Student Experience will be responsible for ensuring that an environmental audit is carried out in line with the College Performance review cycle and that data is presented to Executive Leadership Team as part of College Performance meetings. All audit actions will be added to the Net Zero Action Plan.

5.2 The College Sustainability Group which will oversee the implementation of the Environment & Sustainability Policy. Environmental issues to appear on Team and Management meetings as required.

5.3 The Catering contractor will give quarterly updates to ensure environmental sustainability is at the heart of their offer and is monitored effectively.

6. Policy sign off and ownership details

Document Name:	Sustainability Policy
Version Number:	3.0
Effective from:	August 2025
Next scheduled review date:	July 2026
Policy owner:	Assistant Principal Student Experience
Approved by:	Board of Governors

7. Revision history

Version No	Effective date	Revision description/summary of changes	Author
2.	Sept 2024	Significant revisions in line with Net Zero Aspirations.	Diane Lawson: Assistant Principal Student Experience
3.	August 2025	Revisions: 3.2 Additional line regarding contract. 5.2 Amendment to wording. 5.3 additional line regarding monitoring. Minor amends to format.	Diane Lawson: Assistant Principal Student Experience