Sustainability Policy

Section 1 - Preamble

(1) Charles Darwin University (‘CDU,’ 'the University') is committed to sustainability and acknowledges its responsibility to lead by example in protecting and enhancing the environments and communities in which it operates. The University strives to uphold best practices, comply with relevant legislation, and align with prevailing community expectations.

(2) CDU is dedicated to integrating environmental sustainability principles across its curriculum, research, and operations. Through continuous improvement in environmental management, the University seeks to reduce its environmental footprint and promote responsible practices that drive a more sustainable future.

(3) As a recognised leader in sustainability education, research, and community engagement, CDU addresses the environmental and social challenges of human activity, fosters positive outcomes for people and communities, and advocates for responsible business and governance.

(4) The University recognises that sustainable development requires balancing three interconnected elements: environmental protection, social inclusion and justice, and economic growth.

Section 2 - Purpose

(5) This policy provides a framework for the development and implementation of the University’s Sustainability Plan. This policy is directly aligned to Goal 5: prioritise environmental and organisational sustainability of the CDU Strategic Plan 2021 - 2026.

(6) This policy provides a framework for embedding sustainability principles and practices across the University, ensuring meaningful and lasting positive outcomes. CDU is a member of Australasian Campuses Towards Sustainability (ACTS) and a signatory to the United Nations University Commitment to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The University’s Sustainability Policy and Sustainability Plan are aligned to the SDGs, which serve as a reference for key performance indicators to track progress and impact.

Section 3 - Scope

(7) This policy applies to all members of the University community across all campuses and locations. It applies at all times while individuals are engaged in University business or representing the University.

(8) The scope also includes affiliates, contractors, and consultants appointed or engaged by the University to perform duties or functions, as well as those formally recognised for their contributions.

Section 4 - Policy

(9) The University is committed to advancing sustainability across all aspects of its operations. The University will improve its sustainability performance in the following areas:

a. Leadership and Governance: foster a culture of sustainability by embedding sustainability initiatives into leadership and governance frameworks, empowering all members of the University community to contribute to CDU's sustainability goals.
b. Learning and Teaching: equip students and educators with the awareness, knowledge, and skills needed to contribute to a sustainable world.
c. Research: conduct research in a sustainable manner while advancing knowledge on sustainable development, documenting the sustainability impact of research, and engaging with communities and industry on sustainability challenges.
d. Property and Facilities: minimise CDU's environmental impact through sustainable infrastructure, design, procurement, transport, resource use, and biodiversity protection.
e. Community Engagement: serve as a model for sustainability in the Northern Territory by actively contributing to community sustainability initiatives.

(10) The Charles Darwin University Sustainability Committee is responsible for overseeing and implementing this policy through the development of the Sustainability Plan.

Section 5 - Non-Compliance

(11) Non-compliance with Governance Documents is considered a breach of the Code of Conduct - Employees or the Code of Conduct – Students, as applicable, and is treated seriously by the University. Reports of concerns about non-compliance will be managed in accordance with the applicable disciplinary procedures outlined in the Charles Darwin University and Union Enterprise Agreement 2025 and the Code of Conduct – Students.

(12) Complaints may be raised in accordance with the Complaints and Grievance Policy and Procedure - Employees and Complaints Policy - Students.

(13) All employees have an individual responsibility to raise any suspicion, allegation or report of fraud or corruption in accordance with the Fraud and Corruption Control Policy and Whistleblower Reporting (Improper Conduct) Procedure.

Status and Details

Status	Current
Effective Date	31st July 2025
Review Date	31st July 2028
Approval Authority	Vice-Chancellor
Approval Date	31st July 2025
Expiry Date	Not Applicable
Responsible Executive	Penny Szybiak Vice-President Corporate
Implementation Officer	Anthony Hornby Director Property and Facilities
Enquiries Contact	Penny Szybiak Vice-President Corporate --- Finance

Glossary Terms and Definitions

"University community" - Officials and individuals carrying out University business. This includes, but is not limited to, all employees, researchers, peer reviewers, adjuncts, students, volunteers, consultants, agents and contractors.

"Sustainability" - Sustainability refers to living within the planet's resources without causing irreversible environmental harm, ensuring ecological, social, and economic well-being for present and future generations.

"Sustainable Development" - Sustainable Development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

"Environmental Management" - Environmental Management involves the systematic approach to reducing environmental impacts through policies, practices, and processes that promote resource efficiency, biodiversity protection, and sustainability best practices.

"Sustainability Plan" - Sustainability Plan is the strategic framework guiding the University's sustainability initiatives, aligning with this policy and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to set measurable key performance indicators (KPIs) for sustainability progress.

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