Sustainability Policy

Section 1 - Background Information

(1) The pursuit of sustainability is directly related to the ACU Mission, Identity and Values as a Catholic University. It draws this pursuit from the Catholic Church's long history of social justice teaching on the need to address our impact on our natural environment, on the writings of St. John Paul II (Sollicitudo Rei Socialis), Pope Benedict XVI (The Environment and Ten Commandments for the Environment) and most recently in Pope Francis' Encyclical, Laudato Si (Our Common Home), which identifies how "inseparable the bond is between concern for nature, justice for the poor, commitment to society and interior peace (Laudato Si; No.10).

(2) Sustainable practice is also a sound management strategy that has impact by reducing the cost of the University's energy and water consumption and the expense of its waste management systems. Its application to the University's infrastructure can help to promote the health and wellbeing of staff and students through the delivery of better grounds and buildings.

(3) Moreover, as one of the world's leading Catholic universities, ACU has the ability to influence the global Catholic community to find solutions to environmental and social challenges. ACU is positioned to lead by example locally and globally through its own commitment to sustainable practice founded on Catholic principles.

(4) Consequently, ACU strives to be a leader in sustainable work practices, educational opportunities and research and a role model for responsible environmental corporate citizenship within Australia and abroad. In line with the ACU Mission, Identity and Values, the University also recognizes its responsible stewardship to conserve our natural environment while working to foster a focus on the connection between environmental stewardship, the Common Good and the Gospel.

Section 2 - Policy Statement

(5) Australian Catholic University animates the ACU Mission, Identity and Values through teaching, research and service, which occur within the framework of its commitment to promote the common good and uphold the dignity of all human life, with particular concern for the poor and vulnerable, who are most affected and least heard.

(6) This responsibility to care for creation is an integral part of the ACU Mission, Identity and Values, and applies to the challenges of social justice, sustainable development and the protection of the ecological systems that enable human life. ACU recognises its duty to minimise its ecological impacts as a vital way to uphold the dignity of human life.

(7) The following principles are intended to guide ACU's practice of sustainability:

Sustainability Principles

(8) The following principles are intended to guide ACU's practice of sustainability:

a. the University establishes objectives and targets to strategically reduce the University's environmental impacts, promote the wellbeing of its students, staff and the communities that it engages, and enhance its financial sustainability;

b. the University publishes sustainability objectives, targets and performance data in online channels accessible to students, staff and to the community, to enable open discussion and understanding of ACU's commitment to sustainability;
c. the University provides information and infrastructure to students and staff so that they can adopt sustainable practices at the University;
d. all ACU graduates understand how sustainability contributes to a world that protects the natural systems that support life and promote the dignity of all people; and
e. the development of ACU's campuses promotes the well-being of all staff, students and visitors to the University, and incorporates principles of sustainable design.

Sustainability Objectives

(9) ACU identifies the following objectives of its sustainability program:

a. to become and exemplar of the application of Laudato Si' within ACU and the Australian and global Catholic communities;
b. to apply resource efficiency, behaviour-change, building design and the application of new technologies to reduce environmental impacts;
c. to design, construct and refurbish buildings and grounds to minimise the lifecycle environmental impacts of their operation while improving the wellbeing and productivity of staff and students;
d. to integrate the theory and practice of sustainability into students' learning;
e. to enable research that helps to solve problems of social inequity and environmental degradation; and
f. to provide opportunities for students and staff to take action on campus to support ACU's sustainability goals.

Section 3 - Policy Purpose

(10) This Policy sets out the principles and responsibilities associated with the practice of sustainability to the plans, policies and procedures at the University.

Section 4 - Roles and responsibilities

Approval Authority

(11) The Vice-Chancellor and President is the Approval Authority for this Policy.

Governing Authority

(12) The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Corporate) is the Governing Authority for this Policy.

Responsible Officer

(13) The Chief Infrastructure & Properties Officer is the Responsible Officer for this Policy

Section 5 - Sustainability Implementation

(14) leaders have specific responsibilities for the implementation of sustainability:

a. The Provost is responsible for integrating sustainability principles into academic practices;
b. The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Corporate) is responsible for integrating sustainability principles into the design

and delivery of corporate services;

c. The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) is responsible for integrating sustainability principles into teaching and learning;
d. The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Enterprise) is responsible for the following:
    i. integrating sustainability principles into research; and
    ii. preparation of ACU submissions to the Times Higher Education Impact Ranking and the QS Sustainability Survey.
e. Director Properties is responsible for the following:
    i. integrating sustainability into the operation, maintenance and refurbishments of campus buildings and into the planning, design and construction of new buildings; and
    ii. preparation of the annual sustainability report.
f. The Chief Financial Officer is responsible for ACU's financial sustainability and the integration of sustainability principles into procurement policy and practice.

Section 6 - Policy Review

(15) This policy will be formally reviewed every three years.

(16) The University may make changes to this Policy from time to time. In this regard, any staff member or student who wishes to make any comments about this policy may forward their suggestions to the Chief Infrastructure & Properties Officer.

(17) Unless otherwise indicated, this policy will still apply beyond the review date.

Status and Details

Status	Current
Effective Date	17th March 2025
Review Date	17th March 2028
Approval Authority	Governance Officer
Approval Date	17th March 2025
Expiry Date	Not Applicable
Responsible Executive	Hjalmar Philipp Chief Infrastructure & Properties Officer
Responsible Manager	Hjalmar Philipp Chief Infrastructure & Properties Officer
Enquiries Contact	Properties and Facilities

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