

# Engaging Students in Sustainability at UC: A Plan for 2019-2021

Sustainability Office

University of Canterbury

2019



## Executive summary

This Plan sets out how student engagement for sustainability will be carried out 2019-2021. It assumes little change to the current resourcing and suggests focusing primarily on these areas:

- Separate waste appropriately to reduce contamination
- Use fewer disposable items to reduce landfill
- More students cycling to UC
- Understand the importance of fair trade
- More students involved in growing food on campus
- Reward and recognise students for their sustainability efforts

It more systematically explains exactly what engagement techniques will be used to progress each of these areas, and how this progress will be monitored.





## Introduction

The University of Canterbury has adopted a Sustainability Framework, which establishes the areas of focus for UC regarding sustainability. In addition to highlighting the role of the formal curriculum in seeking “to inspire students, and create graduates prepared to make a difference - tangata tū, tangata ora”, it notes that UC will:

- Actively encourage students and staff to consider sustainability in their everyday lives;
- Continue to foster the success of external and internal sustainability initiatives on Campus;
- Promote and support the use of environmentally responsible transportation modes such as public transport, ride sharing, cycling and walking.

The UC Sustainability Office employs a Sustainability Engagement Coordinator, who is responsible (with other Sustainability Office team members) for developing, overseeing and implementing the Sustainability Engagement Plan.

In developing this Plan, the Learning in Future Environments (LiFE) Index has been utilised, drawing on best practice from universities throughout Australasia and beyond. The relationship between the UC Sustainability Framework and LiFE, and where the present Student Engagement for Sustainability Plan fits in, is outlined in Figure 1.

UC has been engaging students and staff in sustainability for many years (probably 20 years), but this is the first high-level strategic plan relating to this topic. It builds on a decade of monitoring data that has been collected mainly by the Sustainability Office.

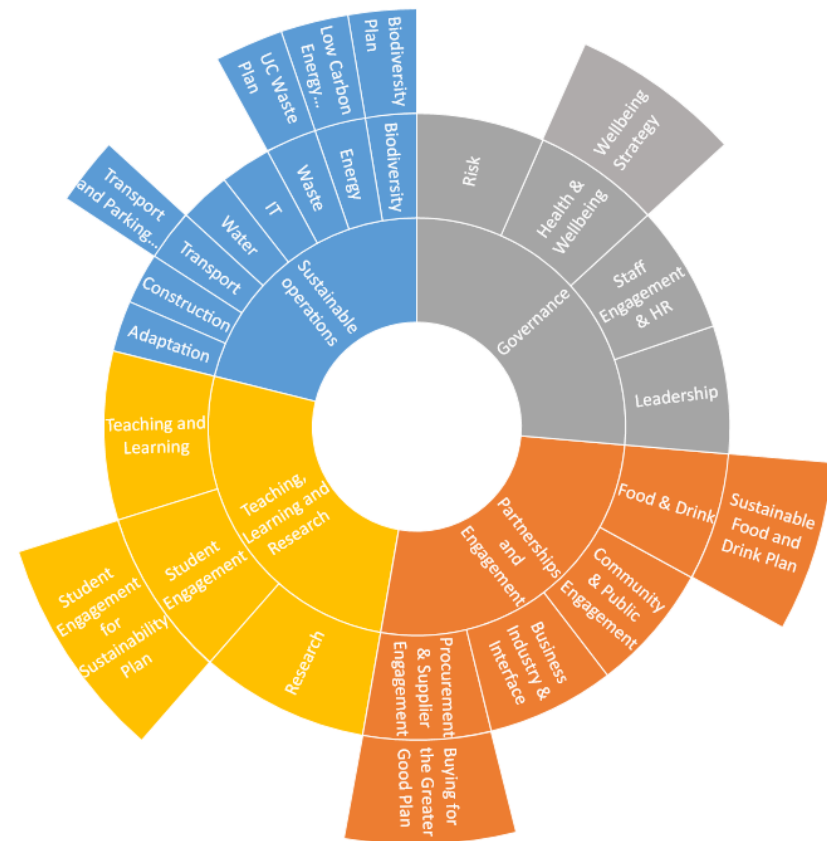


Figure 1: UC Sustainability Planning Framework

## Approach

The UC Sustainability Office has approached the issue of student engagement from a range of directions over the years. These include:

- Large and small scale events
- Newsletters
- Social media (including Facebook, Instagram and blogs)
- Student media (including Canta)
- UC media channels (including Insiders' Guide)
- Website
- Posters and pamphlets
- Direct contact with students, including workshops.

Each of these channels suits different audiences at different times and has different outcomes.

This blended approach targets both those students who are highly engaged, and provides a pathway for them to further their enthusiasm and knowledge, and it also targets those who are moderately interested. Those who are highly engaged have sometimes become sustainability leaders on campus, assisting the Sustainability Office with delivering its programme of activities.

While we know that students have always been highly engaged around sustainability, we have lacked key KPIs, and in some cases metrics, to ascertain success. This has been remedied in the present Plan, as summarised in the table below (following the LiFE Index):



Policy and Strategy	Action Planning	Stakeholder Engagement	Measurement (including KPIs)	Communications	Training and Support	Implementation	Links to Curriculum Support
<i>Sustainability Framework</i>	<i>Engaging Students in Sustainability – A Plan for UC, 2019-2024</i>	<i>Coordinated by the Sustainability Engagement Coordinator</i>	Number of events run throughout year and total attendances	<i>Plans relating to this are hosted on the UC website</i>	<i>Support from Communications and Events, with these represented on the Sustainability Reference Group.</i>	<i>Strong connections maintained with UCSA and relevant clubs.</i>	
Actively encourage students and staff to consider sustainability in their everyday lives  <b>Primary engagement focus:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Separate waste</b></li> <li>• <b>Use fewer disposable items</b></li> <li>• <b>Bike more</b></li> <li>• <b>Understand the importance of fair trade</b></li> </ul>	Student attitudes		Student survey	Instagram, Facebook, Blogs (Insiders' Guide)			Sustainability guest lectures. Numerous courses with content relating to climate change.
	Carbon	General comms	Reach and engagement stats through Facebook and blogs	Video Website Posters LCD Screens			
	Waste	Clothes Swap	# attending				
			Media stats				
		Plastic Free July	Media stats	# attending			
	Cup Library	Feedback from café staff		Canta, UCSA media channels, UC Sustainability media channels, Insiders'			
		Usage stats					
	Transport	Bike Breakfast	# attending			Instagram, Facebook, UCSA (UC Bike) Blogs (Insiders' Guide) Video Website Posters LCD Screens	
			Media stats				
		Biketober	# attending				
			Media stats				
	Fair Trade	Fair Trade Fortnight	# attending			Instagram, Facebook, Blogs (Insiders' Guide) Video Website Posters LCD Screens	
Media stats							
Fair Trade Steering Group		Student involvement					
					Regular meetings with UCSA Sustainability Rep on waste.	Sustainability guest lectures.	
					Inclusion of UCSA rep on Transport Advisory Panel		
					Inclusion of UCSA Rep on Fair Trade Steering Group		

<p>Continue to foster the success of external and internal sustainability initiatives on Campus</p> <p><b>Primary engagement focus:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>More students involved in growing food</b></li> <li>• <b>Reward and recognise students for their efforts</b></li> </ul>	Edible Campus	Waiutuutu Community Garden	# attending	Instagram, Facebook, Blogs (Insiders' Guide) Video Website Posters LCD Screens			
			Media stats				
	Edible Campus Tour	# attending					
		Media stats					
	Sustainability Awards	Sustainability Awards	# entries				
			Media stats				
	Waste	Rubbish Cops	Media stats				
		Rubbish Trip	# attending				
		Plastic Free July	Media stats				
	Biodiversity	No action in 2019 Renewed attention in 2020 (especially around monitoring)					
Community	Eco Volunteers	# Eco volunteers # CCR applications	Support from Careers office	Part of BAU of Sustainability Office			
<p>Promote and support the use of environmentally responsible transportation modes such as public transport, ride sharing, cycling and walking.</p> <p><b>Primary engagement focus:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>More students cycling</b></li> </ul>	Public Transport	No action in 2019		Instagram, Facebook, Blogs (Insiders' Guide) Video Website Posters LCD Screens		Inclusion of UCSA Rep on Transport Advisory Panel.	
	Cycling	Bike Breakfast	# attending				
			Media stats				
			# attending				
			Media stats				
	Dr Bike	Media stats					
		# attending					
Ride Sharing	No action in 2019						
Walking	No action in 2019						



## Assumptions

The foregoing outline assumes that

- Resourcing for the Sustainability Engagement Coordinator will remain unchanged and
- Similar capacities with UC and UCSA student engagement teams to support this work will prevail.

## Reporting

Reporting on progress against this Plan will be contained in the annual UC Sustainability Report.

