This document is both a progress report and a consultation on an updated strategic statement and action plan on sustainable development in the higher education sector.

Sustainable development in higher education

Consultation on 2008 update to strategic statement and action plan

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Sustainable Forests

Totally Chlorine Free

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Purpose

1. This is both a progress report and a consultation on sustainable development in the higher education (HE) sector.

Key points

2. In July 2005 we published 'Sustainable development in higher education' (HEFCE 2005/28)[1] which set out our approach to promoting the sustainable development agenda. It contained a strategic statement, a 10-year vision and an action plan until the end of 2007.

3. We want to make sustainable development a central part of our strategy for the future development of the higher education sector. We still consider our vision set out in 2005 to be valid, namely that: within the next 10 years, the HE sector in this country will be recognised as a major contributor to society's efforts to achieve sustainability – through the skills and knowledge that its graduates learn and put into practice, and through its own strategies and operations.

4. This is a challenging agenda and there is a strong perception that society is not moving forward fast enough, particularly where climate change is concerned. There is now widespread agreement in the sector that sustainable development is important and it is a growing political priority both nationally and internationally. HE makes an important contribution to the UK's Sustainable Development Strategy, updated in 2005. We are currently in the UN Decade for Education for Sustainable Development, which runs until 2014.

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[1] All HEFCE publications mentioned in this document can be found on our web-site www.hefce.ac.uk under Publications.

5. Higher education institutions can make a substantial, sustained and exemplary contribution to the challenge of sustainable development through teaching and research, as campus managers, as employers and as protagonists in their local communities. Publications such as our strategic review and Universities UK's 'Greening spires: universities and the green agenda'[2] show that there is already substantial good practice and this is supported by the Estates Management Statistics which indicate that some institutions are reducing the environmental impact of their estates. Between 2004-05 and 2006-07, for example, energy consumption per student full-time equivalent (FTE) reduced by 7 per cent for the median institution[3]. However, the momentum for change needs to continue and increase if HE is to play its full part in helping society meet the challenge of sustainable development.

6. This is a consultation on an updated strategic statement and action plan to support HE's contribution to sustainable development. It is structured around the four roles we identified for HEFCE in our first sustainable development strategy (HEFCE 2005/28):

• engaging with stakeholders to bring about policy synergies on sustainable development

• building the capacity of people to manage sustainable development

• sharing good practice, or supporting the development of good practice where none exists

• rewarding more sustainable behaviour.

7. We are also reporting on progress against the actions we set ourselves in 2005. In most cases these actions were just the first steps on a long journey and not an end in themselves. Nevertheless, we believe that implementing these commitments is resulting in lasting benefits and the continuation of this work is reflected in our updated action plan, for example facilitating the development of good practice.

Action required

8. Comments are invited on the proposed strategic statement and action plan, using the response form at Annex D. Electronic versions of the document and response form can be found on our web-site, www.hefce.ac.uk under Publications. Responses should be e-mailed to **sustainabledevelopment @hefce.ac.uk** by Friday 5 September 2008.

9. Institutions responding to this consultation are asked to involve all those responsible for strategic management in both academic and non-academic functions. Collaborating across the institution to develop an holistic response will provide feedback that addresses all aspects of our strategy, as well as helping to embed sustainability issues within the institution.

10. As part of the consultation exercise we are holding three consultation seminars. We hope that all institutions will be represented at a senior level at these events. Further details are given in paragraphs 18 and 19. Please register for these events using our online form, at www.hefce.ac.uk under News & events.

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[2] Available at www.universitiesuk.ac.uk under Publications.

[3] Data from Estates Management Statistics, www.opdems.ac.uk.

Introduction

11. This consultation paper is both a progress report and an updated strategic statement and action plan on sustainable development in the higher education (HE) sector.

12. In 2005, HEFCE set out a vision for how universities and colleges could contribute to sustainable development. This recognised how individual universities and colleges could play their part as centres of teaching and research, as campus managers, as employers and as major protagonists in their local communities.

13. Graduates will occupy future management and leadership roles and will need the knowledge and skills to make informed decisions taking account of complex social, economic and environmental issues. Our researchers can help society find social and technical solutions to these challenges and our campuses can lead by becoming more sustainable and efficient, for example reducing consumption of fossil fuels.

14. Three years on from our original strategy it is time to take stock. We want to support individual institutions and the HE sector as a whole in meeting the challenges of sustainable development. The strategic review – conducted for HEFCE by independent researchers[4] – found that while a great deal has been done, the momentum for change needs to continue and increase if HE is to maximise its role in improving the environment, preserving natural resources and making a positive and sustainable economic and social impact. The review aimed to create a baseline of sustainable development in the sector, against which to measure future progress and highlight what the sector is already doing.

15. The review confirmed that continuing with our non-prescriptive approach remains the best way to help institutions find the most appropriate way forward, rather than seeking to dictate or impose an artificial consistency across the sector. In doing this we recognise the diversity of universities and colleges[5] and the diversity of the contribution each can make: for example, an agricultural college will make a very different contribution than a large civic university with a wide range of faculties.

16. During 2008-09 we wish to finalise, following consultation, a revised strategy for sustainable development in HE which features a realistic target for carbon reduction, sufficient to ensure satisfactory progress towards the government targets of reducing carbon emissions by 60 per cent against 1990 levels by 2050 and at least 26 percent by 2020.

17. We are very grateful to our steering group on sustainable development[6], chaired by Geoffrey Copland, formerly Vice-Chancellor of the University of Westminster, for their valuable advice and support in developing this strategy and overseeing the work of the strategic review.

Consultation seminars and responses

18. This is a consultation document, so we want to hear institutions' views about the appropriateness of our revised strategy and action plan. As part of the consultation we will be holding a number of seminars to help inform this process and to offer the sector the chance to discuss the details further. These will be taking place as follows:

•   4 July 2008 in London

•   8 July 2008 in London

•   16 July 2008 in Manchester.

19. We invite institutions to send several representatives to these events. We would suggest that they include a governor and two individuals with senior management responsibility for academic and non-academic activity. Please register for these events using our online form at www.hefce.ac.uk under News & events.

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[4] 'The strategic review of sustainable development in higher education in England' was commissioned by HEFCE from the Policy Studies Institute, PA Consulting Group and the Centre for Research in Education and the Environment at the University of Bath and published in January 2008. Available at www.hefce.ac.uk under Publications/Research & evaluation.

[5] References to 'universities and colleges' in this document include all higher education institutions, universities, colleges of higher education, and further education colleges offering higher education courses.

[6] See Annex A for the group's membership.

20. Comments are invited on the proposed strategy and action plan using the response form at Annex D. We would particularly welcome responses on the following:

- Do you agree that our vision (paragraph 21) is still appropriate and that the proposed objectives are sufficient to achieve this vision?

- Is the proposed action plan fully aligned with, and sufficiently complete to deliver, the vision?

- Which actions should take priority?

- Do you feel that there are any other sustainable development activities which HEFCE could help support?

- Are there any other ways in which you feel HEFCE could help promote sustainable development, in particular the non-environmental elements of the agenda? Views expressed need not be in the form of fully worked-up ideas.

- Should there be a sector strategy for carbon management? If so what should it look like?

- Could the sector reduce carbon emissions earlier than the government target for 2050, for example 60 per cent by 2030-2040? How should we deal with interim targets?

- Do you have any other comments on the strategy or action plan?

Strategic statement on promoting sustainable development in higher education

21. Our overriding vision in 2005 was both simple and challenging: 'Within the next 10 years, the higher education sector in this country will be recognised as a major contributor to society's efforts to achieve sustainability – through the skills and knowledge that its graduates learn and put into practice, and through its own strategies and operations.' We include research, knowledge transfer and business and community engagement, and we believe this vision is shared by most universities and colleges.

22. We recognise that this is a challenging agenda. There is a strong perception that society is not moving forward fast enough, particularly where climate change is concerned. Sustainable development is a growing political priority both nationally and internationally. HE makes an important contribution to the UK's sustainable development strategy, updated in 2005[7]. The United Nations' Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has concluded that warming of the climate system is unequivocal and that human activities make a substantial contribution[8]. Sir Nicholas Stern's review of climate change[9] concluded that the benefits of strong and early action will far outweigh the economic costs of not acting. We are currently in the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development[10] which runs until 2014.

23. Of course we recognise the diversity of institutions, and the different contributions each can make. We are keen to use the enthusiasm for sustainability that exists in the sector to facilitate increased activity to meet the urgent need for real change.

24. There is now widespread agreement in the sector that sustainable development is important. Many universities and colleges have told us that there has been a fundamental change in how they engage with this agenda. We are keen to learn more from different institutions about what has worked and what has not. In this way we can ensure that our primary role as a catalyst and facilitator for increased action enables us to make significant progress towards our vision.

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[7] The UK sustainable development strategy, 'Securing the future: the UK's sustainable development strategy', available at www.sustainable-development.gov.uk under Publications.

[8] 'Climate change 2007: the physical science basis' available at www.ipcc.ch under IPCC Reports/Assessment reports.

[9] 'Stern Review on the Economics of Climate Change' available at www.hm-treasury.gov.uk under Independent reviews.

[10] For more information see www.unesco.org/education/desd

HEFCE's aims and objectives

25. In the 2005 plan, we set ourselves five objectives. We have updated these to reflect the results of the review and current political context and now have six new objectives. They are to:

a. Continue to raise the profile of sustainable development, with the aim that it should become a mainstream part of university and college activities.

b. Seek 'win-win' opportunities for the sector to engage in this agenda by helping to identify sector-wide business cases and benefits for individual institutions.

c. Promote sustainable development by integrating it into our policy-making through our approach to sector impact assessment and being open about the reasons for policy choices.

d. Demonstrate to stakeholders that HEFCE and higher education institutions (HEIs) are making genuine efforts to promote sustainable development and to extend good practice.

e. Support sector-led capacity building to pursue this agenda across all of an HEI's functions. This will be based on existing frameworks and activity and through supporting innovative and novel projects.

f. Facilitate a carbon reduction culture to significantly reduce carbon emissions across the sector.

26. In this updated strategy, we review how these objectives can be taken forward, using the structure set out in our 2005 policy statement. We divide the objectives into three parts:

• the impact HEFCE has on the sector

• supporting change sought by universities and colleges

• HEFCE's own operations as an organisation.

The impact of HEFCE on the sector

Mitigating potential negative impacts

27. HEFCE measures the impact of its policies on areas such as the financial stability of universities and colleges, and the administrative and bureaucratic impact of its programmes. Working with the sector, we have been able, for example, to reduce bidding and cut paperwork. It is just as important that we assess the impacts of our policies, initiatives and significant projects on sustainable development.

28. This is why we have embedded our approach to sustainable development throughout our strategic plan[11], and this approach will continue in our next strategic plan (to be published in 2009). Our sector impact assessment process allows us to assess the impact of our policies in terms of sustainable development, equality and diversity, and regulatory burden. Using this approach we hope to mitigate any potential negative impacts of our policies on sustainable development and to make the most of opportunities to promote it positively. We also seek to make clear the social, environmental and economic impact of policy proposals in our advice to the Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills (DIUS) and other bodies.

Encouraging positive impacts

29. We integrate sustainability within our existing special funding initiatives, which are building and disseminating good practice in sustainable development. We are using the following programmes to encourage the positive impacts promised in our 2005 statement:

• Leadership, Governance and Management Fund

• Strategic Development Fund

• Higher Education Innovation Fund

• Centres for Excellence in Teaching and Learning

• Revolving Green Fund.

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[11] For more information see 'HEFCE strategic plan 2006-2011: updated May 2008' (HEFCE 2008/15), available at www.hefce.ac.uk under Publications.

30. Our **Leadership, Governance and Management (LGM) Fund**[12] provides £10 million over three years from 2007 to support projects which deliver clear outcomes and a positive impact on current practice, value for money, sustainability and effective dissemination. Funded projects included work with Leeds Metropolitan University to pilot the use of Business in the Community (BiTC) environmental and corporate social responsibility indices in universities.

31. The **Strategic Development Fund (SDF)**[13] supports change and innovation in HE. An example of a sustainable development project funded through the SDF is the Sustainable Energy Centre at London South Bank University. This will provide a high quality teaching resource in sustainable energy technology and building design, construction and management. It will also offer facilities to test and demonstrate sustainable energy technologies. The project brings together London South Bank, City and Kingston Universities who will share this resource and develop common modules at the centre.

32. The **Higher Education Innovation Fund (HEIF)**[14] is designed to support and develop a broad range of knowledge transfer activities which result in economic and social benefit to the UK. It has funded two sustainability projects including the £4.8 million Carbon Connections programme with the University of East Anglia and two Regional Development Agencies designed to support low carbon technologies and encourage behavioural change by helping with the marketing and production of innovative ideas. A fourth round of HEIF, from 2008-2011, will see funding rising to a final-year allocation of £150 million for 2010-11.

34. We fund 74 **Centres for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETLs)**[16] to reward excellent teaching practice and to invest in that practice. This

Case study: Recycling plastic in East London

Barely a tenth of the UK's five million tonnes of plastic waste is recycled. A partnership between Knowledge East[15] – which was funded through the Higher Education Innovation Fund – and Express Plastics and Recycling, a company based in Rainham, Essex, has helped to ensure that the plastic in children's toys, storage boxes, wheelie bins and packing crates can be used again. Express can process up to 60,000 tonnes of waste plastics a year, which it sells on to be turned into new products.

But when its customers needed help selecting the right materials, the company was guided by KnowledgeEast, one of a number of HEFCE-funded Centres for Knowledge Exchange, to the laboratories at London Metropolitan University's Polymer Centre.

The Centre quickly set up a process to test materials before and after they go through the Express recycling plant and report on the findings batch-by-batch, enabling its customers to make an informed choice about which recycled raw materials to use for their products. Express has gained several new contracts as a direct result, and university students have gained first-hand experience by visiting the plant.

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[12] For more information see www.hefce.ac.uk under Leadership, governance & management/LGM Fund.

[13] For more information see www.hefce.ac.uk under Finance & assurance/Finance and funding/Strategic Development Fund.

[14] For more information see www.hefce.ac.uk under Business & community.

[15] Knowledge East is the business-facing network of eight universities and colleges in East London and the Thames Gateway. The universities and colleges involved are Goldsmiths, London Metropolitan University, Queen Mary University of London, Ravensbourne College of Design and Communication, Rose Bruford College, Trinity Laban, University of East London, University of Greenwich. See www.knowledgeeast.net For more information see www.hefce.ac.uk under Learning & teaching/Teaching initiatives.

[16] For more information see www.hefce.ac.uk under Learning & Teaching/Teaching initiatives.

initiative is HEFCE's largest ever single funding initiative in teaching and learning, totalling £315 million over five years from 2005-06 to 2009-10. Among them are the Centre for Sustainable Futures[17] and The Centre for Sustainable Communities Achieved through Integrated Professional Education (C-SCAIPE)[18] which both focus on sustainable development. The former has developed approaches to sustainability for thousands of students at the University of Plymouth, developed a university-wide sustainability policy, introduced fellowships and Masters' courses, and supported changes to the curricula of local schools. C-SCAIPE at Kingston University aims to produce graduates with an holistic understanding of sustainable communities who are able to work towards their creation.

35. We will also continue to develop a good business case for sustainable development initiatives with the help of the sector, seeking funds for HE that promote either efficiency or the public interest. We are establishing a **Revolving Green Fund**[19] in partnership with Salix Finance, a publicly funded company set up to accelerate public sector investment in energy-saving technologies through 'invest to save' schemes. The fund is expected to offer £30 million in repayable grants for projects that reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Funding will be available over three years from 2008, both for small institutional and larger transformational projects. We will continue to include sustainable development in future government spending review submissions.

Supporting change sought by higher education institutions

36. We will continue to use the definition of sustainable development set out in the 2005 strategy, based on the Government's 'Securing the future' document[20]. By doing so, we can enable universities and colleges to concentrate on practical action.

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[17] For more information on the Centre for Sustainable Futures, see www.csf.plymouth.ac.uk

[18] For more information on C-SCAIPE, see www.kingston.ac.uk/surveying

19 For more information see 'Revolving green fund: consultation on the aims and operation of a revolving green fund' (HEFCE 2008/03), available at www.hefce.ac.uk under Publications.

[20] The UK Sustainable Development strategy, 'Securing the future: the UK's sustainable development strategy', available at www.sustainable-development.gov.uk under Publications.

How 'Securing the Future' defines sustainable development

'The goal of sustainable development is to enable all people throughout the world to satisfy their basic needs and enjoy a better quality of life, without compromising the quality of life of future generations.

For the UK Government and the Devolved Administrations, that goal will be pursued in an integrated way through a sustainable, innovative and productive economy that delivers high levels of employment; and a just society that promotes social inclusion, sustainable communities and personal well-being. This will be done in ways that protect and enhance the physical and natural environment, and use resources and energy as efficiently as possible.

Government must promote a clear understanding of, and commitment to, sustainable development so that all people can contribute to the overall goal through their individual decisions.

Similar objectives will inform all our international endeavours, with the UK actively promoting multilateral and sustainable solutions to today's most pressing environmental, economic and social problems. There is a clear obligation on more prosperous nations both to put their own house in order, and to support other countries in the transition towards a more equitable and sustainable world.' *Securing the Future, 2005*.

This purpose is complemented by a set of five guiding principles used to achieve it, which should underpin all future policies:

• living within environmental limits

• ensuring a strong, healthy and just society

• achieving a sustainable economy

• promoting good governance

• using sound science responsibly.

37. Each HEI can contribute through its:

• role as educator

• generation and transfer of knowledge

• leadership and influence in local, national and international networks

• business strategy and operations.

38. Through knowledge transfer and local leadership, universities and colleges can use what might be called their 'brain-print' to contribute greatly to the reduction of carbon emissions in addition to reducing their own direct carbon 'footprint'.

39. In our first sustainable development strategy (HEFCE 2005/28) we identified a support role for HEFCE in four key areas:

• engaging with stakeholders to bring about policy synergies on sustainable development

• building the capacity of people to manage sustainable development

• sharing good practice, or supporting the development of good practice where none exists

• rewarding more sustainable behaviour.

Our next action plan is organised around the same four support roles and includes details of the ways in which support for change is available from HEFCE and our partners. We will review our approach again at the end of 2010. A list of our proposed actions is at Annex C of this document.

40. In the 2008 update to the HEFCE strategic plan for 2006-2011[21] we revised our key

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[21] 'HEFCE Strategic Plan 2006-11 updated May 2008' (HEFCE 2008/15), available at www.hefce.ac.uk under Publications.

performance target (KPT) relating to sustainable development. Our new KPT is: to finalise during 2008-09 in consultation with stakeholders a revised strategy for sustainable development in HE, which features a realistic target for carbon reductions which are sufficient to ensure satisfactory progress towards the government targets of reducing carbon emissions by 60 per cent against 1990 levels by 2050 and at least 26 per cent by 2020. Through this consultation we wish to seek the sector's view on setting a carbon reduction target. We remain committed to undertaking another strategic review in 2011 to demonstrate progress in line with our previous KPT and this forms part of this action plan.

41. We believe sustainable development should be adopted in ways that respect individual institutions' aspirations, needs and priorities while recognising the imperative of bold, long-term commitments to performance improvement. Our agenda is not about making sustainable development the overarching priority for every institution, although some may choose to make it so; but it is about practical, effective and often money-saving actions that can support a wide range of policies and priorities.

HEFCE's own operations

42. We are also keen to demonstrate to stakeholders that HEFCE, as well as individual universities and colleges, is making genuine efforts to promote sustainable development, so we are continuing to improve our own operations at HEFCE. We have achieved certification to ISO14001, an environmental management standard. We monitor our carbon emissions, water use, travel and waste production and set targets in these areas. Progress against our Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) policy and these targets is set out in an annual CSR report[23]. CSR is one strand of our use of the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) excellence model. The action plan includes a section on what we are doing to improve our own performance as a medium-sized business employing about 250 people.

Case study: Ecoversity

The University of Bradford's Ecoversity programme has promoted a major change in attitudes to the environment on campus, among students and staff, and with the wider community. It has been awarded £3.1 million from HEFCE's Strategic Development Fund for a project in partnership with Yorkshire Forward called Ecoversity StuDent.

The money will be spent on seven strands of work, including: academic pioneers who will enthuse staff; student engagement activities such as events, volunteering and student ambassadors; a standing exhibition on campus; and a research programme which will include action research that helps inform the development of the programme[22].

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[22] For more information see www.brad.ac.uk/ecoversity

[23] Available at www.hefce.ac.uk under About us/Corporate Social Responsibility.

Action plan

Support role 1 – Engaging with stakeholders to bring about policy synergies on sustainable development

43. Universities and colleges do not exist in isolation. They are increasingly engaged with their communities and local employers, and with their towns, cities and regions. They are a part of local regeneration and form partnerships with local schools. Their own communities include a growing number of students from the UK and abroad. Their lecturers and researchers are a source of ideas, innovation and imaginative pedagogy. Likewise, for HEFCE, universities and colleges are a source of ideas and evidence of what can be done. This is why we made stakeholder engagement our first support role. Our 2005 action plan promised seven actions. Here is a summary of progress:

What we promised	What has happened
Building on the work of the Higher Education Academy (HEA) in identifying, sharing and augmenting good practice in curricular and pedagogical developments, we will:	a. The strategic review looked at the requirements of employers, professional bodies and students and this action plan reflects that further work needs to be undertaken in this area to understand their requirements and explore how we can facilitate and meet these (see paragraph 50).
a. Build links to employers, professional bodies and students, encouraging these groups to view sustainable development as a desirable component of higher education (HE) courses.	b. We support the HEA's Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) project in order to help institutions and subject communities develop curricula and pedagogy that will give students the skills and knowledge to live and work sustainably.
b. Ask the HEA to be alert to anything in the Quality Assurance Agency precepts or codes that might work against the inclusion of sustainable development in the curriculum.	c. HEFCE works with the LSC and has reciprocal arrangements on sustainable development advisory groups to integrate policy development across higher and further education.
c. Continue to work with the Learning and Skills Council (LSC).	
We will continue to work with partners, including the Treasury and the Department of Trade and Industry, and through initiatives including the Transparent Approach to Costing (TRAC), to promote the adoption of full economic costing and to pursue financial sustainability for English institutions.	We work across Government. There has been widespread implementation of and increased Government funding that relies on TRAC[24].

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[24] More information is available at www.hefce.ac.uk under Finance & assurance/Finance and funding/TRAC.

What we promised	What has happened
We will work with the Treasury, the Department of Trade and Industry and the Department for Education and Skills to secure improved longer-term capital planning by HEIs and improved capital monitoring systems, while providing institutions with greater flexibility.	The capital investment framework (CIF)[25] was implemented to encourage institutions to manage their physical infrastructure as an integral part of their strategic and operational planning. Institutions that have satisfied the requirements of the CIF will receive their capital without the need to apply for the funds; the grants will be paid on a profile. Institutions still working towards meeting the CIF requirements need to follow specific application requirements. Environmental sustainability was one of the assessment criteria. In the future this is likely to be strengthened in order to support continuing reductions in carbon emissions.
We will work with other stakeholders committed to sustainable development to co-ordinate any associated reporting requirements.	HEFCE does not require reporting on sustainable development. We are supporting the development of voluntary reporting mechanisms through Business in the Community (BiTC). A pilot project in which 25 institutions participated concluded that the benchmarking tools developed by BiTC are appropriate and offer much to the HE sector[26]. We are funding a further project to make these tools available to the sector (see paragraphs 92 to 94).
We will work with stakeholders, in particular the Higher Education Regulation Review Group, to ensure our reporting requirements continue to be consistent with the five principles of good regulation.	We are not imposing a requirement to report on sustainable development. We have implemented new accountability arrangements for institutions which will promote better regulation, and hold HEIs to account for the funds we distribute to them, through a new accountability process linked to our assessment of institutional risk[27].
We will work with the Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) to bring about policy synergies around sustainable development.	We work with the RDAs to facilitate projects which build good practice and jointly fund projects through our Strategic Development Fund such as Ecoversity at the University of Bradford (see case study). We are also engaging with the RDAs on regional initiatives and provide support where appropriate, for example, the East Midlands Regional Centre of Expertise in ESD (see paragraph 46).
We will explore with the Research Councils and other research funders whether research could be strengthened to build the new skills, knowledge and tools needed for sustainable development in all subject areas.	The strategic review engaged with the Research Councils in developing a baseline of sustainable development-related research. Research Councils UK is represented on HEFCE's Sustainable Development Steering Group (see Annex A) and this will enable future dialogue with the Research Councils as part of this action plan.

25 More information is available at www.hefce.ac.uk under Finance & assurance/Finance and funding/Capital funding.

26 'Universities that count' is available at www.eauc.org.uk under Resource Bank/Resources/Publications/HE Benchmarking Report.

27 More information is available at www.hefce.ac.uk under Leadership, governance & management/Accountability.

Celebrating achievement

44. Good practice in sustainable development is widespread across the sector and this should be publicised. The scoping study[28] for the strategic review found support for a major conference on sustainable development in HE as a landmark and focus. Informal discussions about the role of HE in meeting this challenge suggest that it is right to hold a number of events that identify and celebrate success, provide learning opportunities and challenge HEIs, staff, students and society to achieve more.

Action: We will support development work with Universities UK and GuildHE to identify ways in which the sector can make a public commitment to sustainable development.

Developing curricula and pedagogy

45. The greatest contribution HE can make to sustainable development is by enabling students to acquire the skills and knowledge that allow them to make a lasting difference. What they learn and what they are taught are therefore critical.

46. This view is supported by the United Nations, which has established 2005-2014 as the Decade of ESD. The goal of the Decade is to integrate the principles, values and practices of sustainable development into all aspects of education and learning. The UK National Commission for UNESCO is monitoring the implementation of the Decade in the UK and HEFCE is a member of its ESD working group. The East Midlands was the first UK region to be designated by the United Nations as a Regional Centre of Expertise (RCE) in ESD[29]. An RCE is defined by the UN as a network of existing formal, non-formal and informal education organisations aiming to deliver ESD to a regional/local community. Universities are at the centre of these initiatives and there are now two other RCEs in the UK: in the North-east, led by the University of Newcastle, and in the West Midlands, led by the University of Gloucestershire.

47. HEFCE recognises that it is not our job to influence the curriculum and that there will continue to be those who take differing views on the issues involved. But we have a responsibility to support universities and colleges in producing graduates with the awareness, skills and knowledge to address sustainable development. This is important for all graduates, not just those engaged in fields directly connected to sustainability. Many will, for example, be managing or leading businesses or services where they will need to make decisions that impact on the environment or social justice.

48. Equally, we recognise the danger of bolting what some might see as the latest fad onto courses; doing so is more likely to create resentment than real change. So we will support shared curriculum ideas, content and assessment methods that help to develop teaching and learning. Different institutions will have different approaches. We want to encourage and incentivise engagement (including through our Strategic Development Fund) but recognise that there will be those who find it hard to engage because of their discipline base, the focus of their mission or the size or level of student interest. Our approach is therefore one of encouragement and support.

Actions:

a. We will review the work of the HEA, sustainable development-related Centres for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETLs) and the teaching baseline produced by the strategic review to investigate the effectiveness of existing curricula and pedagogy, and how HEFCE can best support education for sustainable development.

b. We will consider how we can support and/or work with United Nations initiatives including the UN Decade for ESD and Regional Centres of Expertise in ESD.

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[28] 'Scoping study for a strategic review of sustainable development in higher education', available at www.hefce.ac.uk under Publications/Research & evaluation.

[29] For more information see www2.le.ac.uk under Projects/RCEEM.

Employer engagement

49. HE makes the country more competitive by supporting a knowledge economy. By supporting workforce development, universities and colleges develop skills and qualities needed for economic productivity and growth. Through research, they can develop innovations that meet business needs, and an increasing number of spin-out companies are being created in areas related to sustainable development. HE is already engaged with the world of work and is itself a big employer. The sector needs to work effectively in partnership with employers to maximise the benefits. We are currently developing our strategy for engaging employers with learning.

Action: We will promote sustainable development during the expansion of the employer engagement agenda.

Demand for sustainable development

50. A growing public awareness of environmental issues is increasing the importance of sustainable development for employers and students. Initiatives such as the Future Leaders survey[30] and People and Planet's Green League[31] suggest that students will increasingly want their universities to leave a smaller carbon footprint. Businesses will want solutions that enable them to reduce their own impact on the environment as well as demonstrate ethical practices and social responsibility, in response to consumer demand and more demanding legislation. Students and employers can help drive the agenda by asking universities and colleges about their contribution to sustainable development, and through the courses they choose. Although the strategic review aimed to look at requirements of employers, professional bodies and students, further work needs to be done in this area to understand their requirements and explore how we can facilitate and meet these.

Action: We will work with employers, students and Sector Skills Councils to understand their requirements in relation to sustainable development and explore what is needed to meet them.

Regional level

51. Universities and colleges are major players in their regions, and an important source of the higher-level skills that are crucial to regional development. As such, they can play a big part in helping regions to improve their economic performance in ways that are sustainable. HEFCE is also working to improve access to HE in parts of the country with no universities thus helping the sustainability of those areas.

Action: We will work with RDAs and other regional bodies to facilitate collaboration between HEIs and their local communities to promote sustainable development.

Research

52. HEFCE provides funds to underpin research infrastructure, including the salaries of permanent academic staff, premises, libraries and central computing costs. These funds are the basis for initial 'blue skies' research and project work. They are spent at institutions' discretion: HEFCE does not normally actively encourage particular forms of research. However, research can make an important contribution to sustainable development through its work in a wide range of subjects and disciplines. So we will continue exploring with the Research Councils and other research funders, including those that actively fund sustainable development, whether these research efforts could be strengthened. The creation of the Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills (DIUS) will help facilitate this because all research funding now falls under a single government department.

Action: We will work with existing and potential funders of sustainable development research to explore how the role of research can be strengthened to help meet the challenges of sustainable development.

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[30] For more information see www.forumforthefuture.org.uk under Projects/Future Leaders Survey 07/08.

[31] See http://peopleandplanet.org/greenleague

Case study: How researchers are making the world greener

From hydrogen-powered cars to technology that reduces the harmful effects of carbon, researchers at England's universities are working to solve many of the problems that threaten the sustainability of the planet.

A team from Newcastle and Liverpool universities are developing the safe storage of hydrogen that could enable them to power cars, while the University of Greenwich's Carbon8 programme is working to capture carbon dioxide from the environment, an important breakthrough in bringing contaminated land back to beneficial use.

A recent Universities UK publication, 'Greening spires', contains a host of ideas and innovations that show the breadth of higher education's contribution to sustainability. These include efforts to harness the energy from the sea in Cornwall and pay-as-you-go cycling in East London. 'Greening spires' is available at www.universitiesuk.ac.uk under Publications.

Support role 2 – Building the capacity of people to manage sustainable development

53. Capacity-building is crucial in the introduction of sustainable development policies. In this section, we look at leadership and management issues, construction and refurbishment, space management and procurement. First, here is a summary of progress since 2005.

What we promised	What has happened
As catalysts towards sustainable development, we will: a. Allocate funds through the Rewarding and Developing Staff initiative. b. Support the implementation of the self-assessment tool for people management. c. Support the Equality Challenge Unit.	a. During 2000-2006 we invested £888 million in Rewarding and Developing Staff special funding initiatives. b. Through a process of self-assessment of HEIs' own people management, conditions are being removed and the funding mainstreamed[32]. In April 2008, 67 institutions had undertaken self-assessment and it is expected that all institutions will have been through the process by the end of summer 2008. c. We work in partnership with the Equality Challenge Unit[33] in promoting and embedding equal opportunity practices in higher education, and have committed funding to it until 2010.
In partnership with representative HE bodies, we will fund activity aimed at building the sector's capacity to manage more sustainable buildings.	We are funding projects to build and disseminate good practice in this area. For example: • the Higher Education Environmental Performance Improvement project (HEEPI) • development of an Association of University Directors of Estates (AUDE) estates management good practice self-assessment tool • 'The Legacy of the 1960s University Estate': an assessment of good practice in relation to the reuse or replacement of 1960s buildings • GreenBuild, which includes a Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM) scheme for the higher education sector. Details of all projects are contained in Annex B.

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[32] For more information see www.hefce.ac.uk under Leadership, governance & management/Human resources management/Rewarding and developing staff.

[33] Equality Challenge Unit, www.ecu.ac.uk/

What we promised

We will work with the sector procurement bodies to develop sustainable procurement policies and guidance. In doing this we will draw on any guidance developed by the Cabinet Office following the recommendations on improving public sector efficiency from the Gershon Review of public sector efficiency[34].

What has happened

There is a changing climate on sustainable procurement and its importance, which has had impact in specific areas of tendering and contracting such as information and communication technology infrastructure. Sustainable procurement is one of the areas of efficiency on which the sector reports each year. In the future we need to build on these elements of good practice.

We are working with the Universities UK (UUK) Procurement Group and the Association of University Procurement Officers (AUPO) Sustainable Purchasing Group to promote sustainable procurement. The UUK Group has a work programme that includes a sustainable procurement strand. We have funded administrative support for this activity.

The Leadership Foundation for Higher Education[35], with the support of AUPO, runs a development programme for senior procurement professionals working in HE which includes elements of sustainable procurement.

Through membership of the steering group we supported the project by the Environmental Association for Universities and Colleges (EAUC), 'Sustainable production and consumption', which is helping universities and colleges to integrate sustainability into their procurement practice.

[34] 'Releasing resources for the frontline: Independent review of public sector efficiency.' Sir Peter Gershon, HM Treasury 2004.
[35] Leadership Foundation for Higher Education, www.lfhe.ac.uk

Leadership

54. University and college leaders have a crucial role to play in supporting the transition to sustainable development. The Leadership Foundation for Higher Education provides a dedicated service of support and advice on leadership, governance and management for all the UK's universities and higher education colleges. Having placed sustainable development in its strategic plan, the Leadership Foundation has a valuable role in helping leaders to integrate the principles of sustainable development into established processes. This agenda also features on several of the Foundation's courses. We will help them do more in the future.

Action: We will continue to support the Leadership Foundation in embedding sustainable development in its courses and programmes.

Learning from other countries and sectors

55. Sustainable development is an international challenge and so we will look to other countries and sectors in order to learn from their experiences. The Revolving Green Fund, for example was based on the experience of Harvard University, and we should look for other opportunities.

Action: We will undertake research to identify examples of good practice from other countries and sectors. Following this we will implement appropriate policy responses.

Construction and refurbishment

56. Not only can universities and colleges reduce their impact on the environment by improving the quality of existing and new buildings, they can also reduce their own running costs. The annual Estates Management Statistics[36] contain information about environmental sustainability and provide invaluable benchmarking data. This data shows substantial variations between institutions in their consumption of energy, water and emissions of carbon dioxide (CO_2). As the table shows, in the lower quartile institutions consume just 2,288 kilowatt hours (kWh) per student, whereas in the upper quartile they consume over twice as much: 6,449 kWh. There are also big variations in the extent to which institutions have changed their consumption patterns in recent years. There are genuine reasons for these variations, including building type, subject mix and research intensity, but it would be useful to understand more about the reasons for variation and the extent to which HEIs use this benchmarking data and act on it. If some do not find it useful, knowing why may help us to improve the quality of information provided.

Table 1 **Energy and water consumption and waste indicators for English HEIs, 2006-07**

	Lower quartile	Median	Upper quartile
Energy consumption per student FTE*	2,288 kWh	3,201 kWh	6,449 kWh
Percentage change 2004-05 to 2006-07	-7%	-7%	-11%
Water consumption per student FTE*	7.6 m^3	11.5 m^3	25.0 m^3
Percentage change 2004-05 to 2006-07	4%	1%	2%
CO_2 emissions per student FTE*	643 kg	863 kg	1,593 kg
Percentage change 2004-05 to 2006-07	-4%	-12%	-15%

* FTE: full-time equivalent

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[36] Available at www.opdems.ac.uk

57. Sustainable methods of construction and refurbishment make sense both on environmental and value-for-money grounds. Any savings will be achieved throughout the life of a building, so they should be considered alongside up-front capital costs: moreover, where design and delivery teams are well briefed and understand the design objectives from the outset, there is no reason why capital costs should be higher. A recently published report from HEEPI[37] shows that buildings which are good for the environment are also good for business. For example, bright, airy buildings are good to work in, enhance learning and reduce energy bills. Flexible buildings cut replacement costs and natural ventilation avoids costly equipment and air conditioning bills in summer.

58. Universities and colleges will also need to consider the more stringent legal requirements that now exist in Building Regulations. All public buildings will need to have Display Energy Certificates showing the actual energy usage of buildings from 1 October 2008. The certificates are intended to help the public see the energy efficiency of a building, as recorded by gas, electricity and other meters. In addition, the 2008 Budget[38] set out the Government's ambition that all new non-domestic buildings be zero-carbon from 2019.

Action: We will continue to develop the Estates Management Statistics to support HEIs in benchmarking their sustainable development performance and drive improvement. As part of this we will refine the metrics relating to waste and others as opportunities are identified.

Space management

59. Universities and colleges have become more efficient in their use of space. Good space management not only benefits the environment, it also frees up resources that can be used for teaching and research. The Estates Management Statistics provide benchmarks that institutions can use – the median institution has $8.1m^2$ of non-residential space per full-time student, but the lower quartile has $5.8m^2$ whilst the upper quartile has $11.2m^2$. There are many reasons for the variations, including building age and the needs of particular subjects, but it is clear that efficient use of space is both good for the environment and good value for money.

60. The UK Higher Education Space Management Group[39] produced a report on the role of design in space efficiency[40]. Among the findings were the importance of designing spaces capable of being used for different activities and making active use of common areas. This work will be continued through LGM Fund projects at Loughborough[41] and Lincoln[42]. We will seek to understand better how institutions are performing and to maintain focus on space management through the capital investment framework.

Action: We will communicate the link between efficient use of space and environmental sustainability, seek to understand better how institutions are performing, and promote good practice.

Information technology

61. Universities and colleges are major users of information and communications technology (ICT) and have opportunities to lower the environmental

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[37] Higher Education Environmental Performance Improvement, 'High performance buildings: the business case for universities and colleges', available at www.heepi.org.uk under High performance building reports.

[38] Available at www.hm-treasury.gov.uk

[39] UK Higher Education Space Management Group, www.smg.ac.uk

[40] 'Promoting space efficiency in building design' (March 1996) available at www.smg.ac.uk/resources.html

[41] 'Innovative, effective, enjoyable? Creating the evidence base to deliver productive academic workplaces.' Further information is available at Annex B.

[42] 'Learning landscapes: clearing pathways and making space – involving academics in leadership, governance and management of estates in higher education.' Further information is at Annex B.

impact of that part of their activities. This encompasses not just the electricity consumed and the carbon produced by the use of the ICT, but the contribution that technology can make to more efficient use of the estate, to reducing travel, to improving productivity and in the environmental impact of the procurement and disposal of equipment.

62. Information technology accounts for around 2 per cent of global carbon emissions, similar in scale to aviation, but growing more quickly. A study of a typical US data centre found that every watt of electricity saved by more efficient computing created additional savings of 1.84 watts from the consequent reduction in power and cooling requirements. The Joint Information Systems Committee (JISC) is running a project on managing environmentally sustainable ICT (Sust-IT)[43] and is also funding some large-scale 'institutional exemplar' projects which address aspects of the green ICT agenda. For example, automatic powering-down of networked desktops at the University of Oxford will lead to estimated annual savings of 1,621 tonnes of CO_2.

63. Sust-IT is working with the University of Sheffield to develop a tool for measuring the footprint of ICT energy and carbon consumption in a higher education body. The team anticipate being able to deliver an average reduction in computer energy consumption of around 50 per cent and a reduction in CO_2 emissions of up to 1,500 tonnes per year and expect to save the university around £250,000 per year. They will make the methodology available to the sector and the software they are developing available to download free, so other UK institutions could follow suit, leading to nationally significant CO_2 emission reductions.

Action: We will continue to support the work of JISC and others to minimise the environmental impact of ICT use and to maximise the contribution that ICT can make to sustainable development more widely.

Procurement

64. A university's procurement policy is one of its strongest ways of supporting sustainability. English higher education spends over £4 billion a year on non-pay costs. How that money is spent can have a great social and environmental impact.

65. The Government published its strategy for sustainable procurement, 'Procuring the future'[44], in 2006. 'Procuring the future' is designed to help the UK become a European leader in the field, with a flexible, five-stage framework setting out the actions that public sector organisations should adopt to improve the sustainability of their procurement policies. HEFCE and the sector have a key role to play as public sector procurers. We encourage and support institutions' adoption of the principles of the flexible framework as an approach to sustainable procurement.

66. HEFCE also participated in the steering group for the EAUC's sustainable procurement project[45]. The project, funded by the Department for the Environment, Farming and Rural Affairs (DEFRA), worked with 17 universities and colleges which are introducing sustainable procurement within their institutions. We will continue to work with sector bodies to support sustainable procurement, in particular through UUK's Procurement Group, which provides strategic direction, and AUPO's Sustainable Purchasing group.

Action: We will work with UUK's Procurement Group and AUPO's Sustainable Purchasing group to encourage sustainable procurement.

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[43] For more information see www.jisc.ac.uk under What we do/Projects/Sust-IT.

[44] Available at www.sustainable-development.gov.uk under Publications/2006.

[45] For more information see www.eauc.org.uk under Projects.

Case study: Hull's procurement checklist

The University of Hull issues an Environmental Purchasing Guide to assist purchasers in the university in understanding how their decisions impact on the environment. Among the issues that purchasers are asked to consider are:

- Is it essential that the product is bought?

- How efficiently will the product use resources during its lifetime?

- Is it rechargeable, repairable, refillable or reusable?

- Can the product be recycled at the end of its useful life?

- Are recycled materials used in the product? Is it made from properly managed, renewable resources?

- Is the product likely to emit toxic or polluting substances?

- Is the product over-packaged? Is the packaging made from recycled materials? Can the packaging be recycled after use or reused?

Support role 3 – Sharing good practice, or supporting the development of good practice where none exists

67. In this section, we consider the value of universities and colleges learning from each other, and how HEFCE can support them in doing so. We look at the holistic approach to sustainable development, curriculum and teaching issues, spreading existing good practice and developing new good practice, and best practice in carbon management. First, here is a summary of actions since 2005.

What we promised	What has happened
We will support the HEA in identifying, sharing and augmenting good practice in learning about sustainable development.	We support the HEA's ESD Project[46] in order to help institutions and subject communities develop curricula and pedagogy that will give students the skills and knowledge to live and work sustainably. Its work includes providing grants for 12 small-scale projects in ESD, action research on labour market evidence for student demand in sustainable development and an interdisciplinary ESD discussion series held over three days at three HEIs.
We will build and maintain a section of our web-site dedicated to raising the visibility of existing good practice on sustainable development, in partnership with other bodies.	This site is now online at www.hefce.ac.uk/susdevresources.
We will invite applications to the Leadership, Governance and Management Fund aimed at developing good practice in sustainable development.	We are funding projects to develop good practice in sustainable development. Full details are contained in Annex B.
We will work with the Carbon Trust in supporting a pilot group of institutions to develop, test and refine a carbon management programme for higher education.	HEFCE is a member of the steering group for the HE Carbon Management (HECM) programme. Forty-eight universities participated in the first three phases of its programme with over 185,000 tonnes CO_2 savings identified per year and associated financial savings of over £22 million per year (see paragraph 83).
We will commission research and evaluation projects exploring the barriers to sustainable development in higher education and how these might be overcome.	The strategic review identified several barriers to sustainable development. As part of this action plan we are looking to take actions where possible to help overcome these barriers and are considering whether further research needs to be undertaken in some areas. One example is the implementation of the Revolving Green Fund to provide additional capital to undertake projects which reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

[46] For more information see www.heacademy.ac.uk under Our work/Supporting learning/Sustainability.

Whole institution approach

68. Some universities have adopted an holistic approach to sustainable development, embedding it across the board, from teaching and research, through campus facilities to work with the wider community.

The strategic review found different attitudes to the inclusion of sustainable development in university or college missions. There does not appear to be any systematic relationship between the existence of such plans and policies and the strength of sustainable development activity within an individual university or college; some without such plans were relatively active, while others were not. However, where an institution promoted a sustainable development plan across its activities, that activity was more likely to have a greater coherence[48]. We feel that further research is needed to investigate the mechanisms and benefits of incorporating sustainable development in institutional missions, strategic plans and policies.

Action: We will explore with the sector the mechanisms and benefits of incorporating sustainable development in institutional missions, strategic plans and other policies.

Developing curricula and pedagogy

> 'Sustainable development principles must lie at the core of the education system, such that schools, colleges and universities become showcases of sustainable development among the communities that they serve.'
>
> **Securing the future: delivering the UK's sustainable development strategy, p38**

69. It remains our view that the greatest contribution that universities and colleges can make to sustainable development is through the skills and knowledge that their graduates learn and put into practice. The HEA's ESD Project[49] aims to help institutions and subject communities develop curricula and pedagogy that will give students the skills and knowledge to live and work sustainably.

Action: We will continue to support the work of the HEA's ESD Project and encourage the Academy and its Subject Centres to recognise education for sustainable development as a cross-cutting and priority programme area.

Case study: All-round environmental success at Bristol

A cut in CO_2 emissions of 18 per cent over four years helped the University of Bristol win the Times Higher Education Award for Outstanding Contribution to Sustainable Development in 2007[47] for a 'whole institution' approach. The university's holistic approach has seen even bigger reductions in water use and landfill waste. Its undergraduate unit in sustainable development is open to students in all faculties, and the university's work with Bristol communities has helped make the city a greener place.

Case study: Mini-grants for sustainability from the Higher Education Academy

The Higher Education Academy is offering mini-grants of up to £2,500 for projects which:

- explore the links between employability and sustainability in the curriculum

- link sustainability with careers advice and student volunteering

- critique, develop and explore the notion and substance of sustainability literacy skills and how best to embed this area in the curriculum

- support student outreach programmes and integrate off-campus activity.

47 For more information see www.timeshighereducation.co.uk under Events/THE Awards 2007.

48 'HEFCE strategic review of sustainable development in higher education in England' (2008), p74. Available at www.hefce.ac.uk under Publications/Research & evaluation.

49 For more information see www.heacademy.ac.uk under Our work/Supporting learning/Sustainability.

Building and sharing good practice

70. A substantial body of good practice already exists. But we are keen to ensure that the sector has the opportunity to develop new ideas and approaches. So we will continue to promote relevant good practice from other sectors and facilitate the development of effective practice where none exists. We will also continue to help institutions explore how sustainable development can be embedded holistically within their management systems.

71. We work with the government and higher education bodies which are promoting sustainable development. DIUS has made sustainable development an important part of our grant letter.

72. Among our other partners are AUDE, which has published research on the legacy of the 1960s estate, with a particular focus on sustainability, and AUPO which helps its members to realise the benefits of sustainable procurement through provision of guidance and toolkits to aid implementation on sustainable purchasing policies and practice. We also work closely with EAUC[50], the sector body and champion for sustainable development.

73. We are already funding several sustainable development projects through special funding initiatives, such as the Leadership Governance and Management (LGM) Fund, the Strategic Development Fund (SDF), Centres for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETLs) and the Higher Education Innovation Fund (HEIF). We welcome further applications to the LGM Fund and SDF for projects related to sustainable development.

Action: We will continue to work with sector bodies to facilitate the building and dissemination of good practice by funding projects related to sustainable development through SDF, LGMF and other appropriate funding streams.

74. HEFCE has also developed a Sustainable Development Resource Guide on its web-site with links to hundreds of existing resources and good practice from universities and colleges. It can be accessed at www.hefce.ac.uk under Leadership, governance & management/Sustainable development/Resource guide. We will continue to maintain this site but recognise that sector bodies provide similar resources and we will periodically review the need for our site and explore alternatives with sector bodies.

75. We received a database containing information about sustainability teaching and research, as part of the strategic review. We recognise that these provide only a snapshot of activity in the sector. However, they could provide valuable resources for institutions to learn from each other in these areas.

Action: In partnership with sector bodies, we will consider updating the teaching and research databases. We will investigate an effective method for institutions to learn from each other in these areas.

Case study: Better landlords and better student accommodation in Sheffield

Sheffield Hallam University won a vocational curriculum Green Gown Award in 2006-07 for its Landlords for Excellence Programme.

The 25-hour course over 10 weeks helps landlords to deliver a more effective business by showing them how to improve the safety and sustainability of their rented property in Sheffield.

At the same time, it is improving conditions for the many students who are private tenants. The course is targeted at private landlords, especially those from black, minority and ethnic backgrounds and those with properties in areas of regeneration.

Successful participants receive a certificate and a logo to use in their marketing. The course is partly financed by a grant from Transform South Yorkshire. Its first six courses, with 132 students, raised £75,000 for the University.

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50 For more information see www.eauc.org.uk

76. The Green Gown Awards, organised by the HEFCE-funded HEEPI project[51], recognise positive actions to achieve sustainable higher and further education, with particular emphasis on environmental improvement. The awards recognise work by further education and smaller HE colleges, continuous improvement, course content (both degrees and vocational skills), energy and water efficiency, student initiatives and sustainable construction.

77. The Sound Impact Awards scheme[52], organised by NUS Services, has been successful in reducing the environmental impact of students' unions. The scheme facilitates new, collaborative relations between students' unions and their institutions that will play an important role in wider environmental initiatives.

Action: We will continue to support the Green Gown Awards and Sound Impact Awards.

Case study: Zero student waste at the LSE

Students could have no negative impact on the environment if a project funded by HEFCE's Leadership, Governance and Management Fund is successful. The London School of Economics project, developed with the National Union of Students, EAUC and the Association of Student Residential Accommodation, aims for zero waste in student halls of residence. By donating unwanted items or through selling on secondhand goods and books to others, product reuse is being encouraged. Students and the university save money too.

Carbon management

78. Climate change is at the heart of national and international concerns about sustainable development. The UK Stern Review and the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change have both pinpointed the importance of reducing carbon emissions to mitigate the effects of climate change on the planet. Energy use in English universities currently results in 1.6 million tonnes of CO_2 with energy bills totalling £250 million a year[53]. Without action, these figures will grow as the sector grows.

79. The UK government has set a goal to cut CO_2 emissions by at least 60 per cent by 2050. We believe that universities and colleges should take a lead in this area. Doing so would bring environmental benefits, financial savings, and enhance the sector's reputation. The government's 2008 grant letter[54] also expects more from the sector to help meet this target. Aiming to meet the national target early would make a strong case for further infrastructure funding, and provide real kudos for the sector. We plan to assess how performance can be measured, how quickly this target can be achieved and what will be required to do this with the sector. We welcome views on these issues.

80. There are other imperatives, too. Financial instruments are being used to reduce carbon emissions. Some universities are required to participate in the European Union Emissions Trading Scheme[55], enabling them to sell surplus tonnes of CO_2. Up to 80 universities and colleges are likely to be within the scope of the Carbon Reduction Commitment[56], a lighter-touch programme to reduce emissions from energy use by large organisations whose annual half-hourly metered electricity use is above 6,000 MWh.

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[51] For more information see www.heepi.org.uk

[52] For more information see www.nussl.co.uk under Ethical & Environmental.

[53] Figures are from Estate Management Statistics, which can be read at www.opdems.ac.uk

[54] This can be read at www.hefce.ac.uk under Finance & assurance/Finance and funding/Grant letter from Secretary of State.

[55] For more information see www.defra.gov.uk under Climate change/Emissions trading.

[56] For more information see www.defra.gov.uk under Climate change/Action in the UK/Business.

81. Few institutions fully understand the nature of their carbon emissions. A couple of HEIs have expressed an interest in undertaking a project exploring carbon footprinting by institutions with the aim of developing an appropriate model for the sector. We wish to support a project of this type to enhance the sector's understanding, resulting in more effective management of its carbon emissions. It would be possible to build on work of this kind through a model predicting the level of carbon that individual HEIs would be expected to produce, based on their student numbers, subject mix and other relevant factors.

82. A Revolving Green Fund will provide repayable grants to HEIs in England for projects that reduce greenhouse gas emissions, including CO_2. The £30 million fund is a partnership between HEFCE and Salix Finance Limited. We consulted on the proposed fund between January and April 2008 and intend to release an invitation to apply for funds in summer 2008.

Actions:

a. We will explore how we can create a carbon reduction culture and take action to assist the sector to play its part in meeting national climate change targets.

b. We will establish a Revolving Green Fund to increase the implementation rate of energy efficiency projects and facilitate innovation in the management of greenhouse gas emissions.

83. The Carbon Trust has recruited universities and colleges to take part in its HECM programme[57], which is designed to help universities manage their carbon emissions better. Forty-eight universities participated in the first three phases of the programme. There is a particular focus on reducing emissions in academic, accommodation and leisure buildings, and vehicle fleets. Participants receive consultant support to help analyse their carbon footprint and identify ways of managing their carbon emissions.

Action: We will continue to support the Carbon Trust's HECM programme through participation on its steering group.

Case study: Cutting carbon at Oxford Brookes

Oxford Brookes University worked with the Carbon Trust to cut the 29,000 tonnes of carbon that it is responsible for emitting each year. With the Trust, it agreed 50 ways in which it could improve the university's sustainability. The £75,000 cost will be self-financing: for example, introducing movement-sensitive lighting on the university's older campus will pay back its £21,000 cost within three years.

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[57] For more information see www.carbontrust.co.uk under Solutions/Public sector carbon management.

Support role 4 – Rewarding more sustainable behaviour

84. In this section, we examine the business case for sustainable development; consider how sustainability can be built into estate management; discuss the need for better reporting; look at the role of research; and report on HEFCE's own in-house work to improve sustainability. First, here is a brief update on progress since 2005.

What we promised	What has happened
We will develop a set of metrics for institutions' community activities. If suitable metrics can be identified, they will be used to drive funding allocations under HEIF.	We continue to explore additional metrics, impact studies and evaluations to describe fully community work (including through Beacons of Public Engagement), though these need to be developed to balance benefit with burden. The metrics used to drive HEIF allocations reflect benefits from HE to society and community through the inclusion of income from public services, third-sector organisations and regeneration. HEIF funding continues to support HEIs to undertake all forms of engagement and Knowledge Transfer (KT) work, including community engagement, and most HEIs will see a significant increase in funding during the period 2008-2011.
We will support the development of good practice for estates, from which the self-assessment methodology will derive. The methodology will be developed to enable institutions to give the necessary assurance to stakeholders, and will incorporate suitable arrangements for verification.	The LGM Fund project, 'Development of an AUDE estates management good practice self-assessment tool', is complete. This was used as part of the Capital Investment Framework and includes questions relating to sustainable development.
We will support the testing of different review and reporting methodologies for sustainable development, to help us identify a mechanism or mechanisms to recommend to the wider sector.	We funded the HE benchmarking project by Leeds Metropolitan University, Business in the Community and the EAUC.
We will benchmark key performance indicators on environmental management against similar organisations and pursue year-on-year improvements in all categories. Our aspiration is to become recognised as a leader in environmental management among organisations of this size and function.	We have published annual environmental performance indicators (EPIs) since 2002. In 2007 we published HEFCE's first Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Report, which is an annual report and includes our EPIs and progress towards targets contained in our CSR policy. We have substantially met our targets for 2008.
We will publish an holistic action plan for internal sustainable development.	We have published a CSR policy. This policy and associated targets are being reviewed in summer 2008.

Business case

85. Helping the environment can also be good for business. Rewards for adopting sustainable practices will often come directly. For example, carbon management initiatives often result in direct financial savings and allow further benefits through carbon trading.

86. Environmental policies also affect student choices. Students increasingly ask their chosen universities about their sustainability performance and for some this is a factor in their choice of institution. In the Future Leaders Survey of 25,000 university applicants in 2007, 41 per cent thought personal carbon quotas would be good for them personally, and nearly half thought these would benefit society as a whole[58]. However, the rewards for adopting sustainable practices are not always so clear-cut. Institutions say they would value more explicit information on the benefits.

Action: We will explore and publicise the benefits of dealing with financial and reputational issues. Following this we will consider how HEIs can effectively exploit any reputational advantage.

More sustainable approach to managing the estate

87. Universities and colleges can cut their carbon emissions through better management of their estates. The 2008 grant letter[59] was clear that this is now expected by government. The Secretary of State, John Denham, wrote: 'Over the spending review, all institutions in receipt of capital funding should have plans to reduce carbon emissions, and performance against these plans should be a factor in future capital allocations.' HEFCE will work with the sector to assist in fulfilling this requirement, with a report back to the Secretary of State later this year.

88. The link between capital funding and environmental performance is already an important consideration with new buildings, when refurbishing existing ones and in the procurement of new equipment. A Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM)[60] can be used to assess the environmental performance of any type of building. Using this methodology, a building can be rated based on its environmental impacts, including management, health and wellbeing, energy, transport, water, waste, land use and ecology and pollution.

89. Together with AUDE and the other funding councils, we are funding the development of a BREEAM template specific to higher education. The 'GreenBuild' project is being funded through our LGM Fund and managed by HEEPI. This project has two strands: developing an environmental assessment model for higher education buildings and encouraging energy-efficient laboratories. The environmental assessment model will be based on the BREEAM industry standard and be completed by May 2009. It will facilitate the assessment of most types of university building, reducing the cost of assessments and providing more certainty about the performance standards that need to be achieved. The laboratory strand recognises the resource intensity of laboratory buildings and their wide variations in environmental performance. It will concentrate on design, management practices and user awareness.

Action: Once the higher education BREEAM scheme is available we will consider requiring specific levels of performance for all capital projects (new builds and refurbishments) which we fund. We will make this decision by the end of 2009 for implementation in any subsequent round of capital funding.

90. HEFCE's Capital Investment Framework[61], which was the basis for the distribution of capital funds in 2008, promoted sustainable development. The expectation was that projects should support environmental sustainability through the efficient use of space, reduced environmental impact and the

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[58] For more information see www.forumforthefuture.org.uk under Projects/Future Leaders Survey 07/08.

[59] This can be read at www.hefce.ac.uk under Finance & assurance/Finance and funding/Grant letter from Secretary of State.

[60] For more information see www.breeam.org

[61] For more information see HEFCE Circular Letter 21/2007, available at www.hefce.ac.uk under Publications.

promotion of biodiversity. The framework relied on high-level metrics, self-assessment through strategic questions and the AUDE self-assessment tool which contained extensive coverage of sustainable development. However, if the Capital Investment Framework process is repeated, sustainable development requirements could be strengthened to reflect progress being made and rising expectations. We will evaluate the exercise to consider how it can be improved and what we can learn from it.

Action: We will review the Capital Investment Framework process to determine how we should strengthen the sustainable development requirements.

91. There are many examples of good practice in the sector. These are increasing but we know from the Strategic Review of Sustainable Development that this is not widespread and often relies on the enthusiasm of individuals rather than being embedded within institutional planning and management processes. A survey of practice and case studies may help institutions to identify opportunities.

Action: We will explore the potential for a survey and comparative study of sustainable development practice in operational management.

Reporting on sustainable development

92. In our last strategic statement, we explained the value of reporting on sustainable development:

a. It allows comparison with other organisations, which is motivating – whether because of a sense of achievement or by providing a clearer sense of the opportunity for improvement.

b. It enables us to demonstrate to stakeholders that the sector is making progress in this area.

c. It may help promote strategic change at the institutional level.

93. These reasons remain important. We funded the Higher Education Benchmarking Project[62] which piloted one benchmarking methodology provided by Business in the Community (BiTC). It benchmarked 25 universities on their environmental and corporate responsibility performance. While universities with a history of benchmarking achieved a high environment index score, most universities were not as strong as the best UK businesses. However, the project showed that the BiTC Environment and Corporate Responsibility indices offer much to the HE sector. We support this voluntary scheme because it is consistent with the aspirations set out in our 2005 action plan[63].

94. We are also interested in the extent to which universities and colleges publicly report their sustainability performance on issues such as carbon reduction, waste management, water use and biodiversity in their annual or sustainable development reports, or on their web-sites. We will discuss these issues with the sector to help offer good examples that others may follow, and to discover whether and why some institutions don't use benchmarking.

Action: We will work with the EAUC and BiTC to support the development of Universities that Count, a UK-wide, sector-specific version of the BiTC indices.

95. The strategic review provides a picture of sustainable development activity in the sector. We will undertake another strategic review in 2010-11 to demonstrate progress. We will also review the methodology to ensure that it is appropriate and effective at the time.

Action: We will undertake another strategic review in 2010-11 to demonstrate progress by the sector.

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[62] 'Universities that count' is available at www.eauc.org.uk under Resource Bank/Resources/Publications/HE Benchmarking Report.

[63] Specifically paragraph 60 of the 2005 Plan: 'Our aspirations for any mechanism are that it must be transparent and generate consistent and auditable results, but at the same time be consistent with our principles of engagement. In particular it should respect institutional autonomy and diversity, complement institutions' existing systems and structures, and facilitate a process of genuine reflection and improvement – not one of secrecy and competition.'

Research

96. Over two-thirds of universities are engaged in sustainable development research, ranging from the work of a few researchers to multi-disciplinary programmes involving hundreds of researchers. The strategic review concluded that the structure of the Research Assessment Exercise did not encourage submissions relating to sustainable development, because it was not explicitly identified[64]. HEFCE is developing new arrangements for quality assessment and funding to be introduced after 2008 – the Research Excellence Framework (REF)[65]. There is an opportunity to consider how the REF can be used effectively to support interdisciplinary research.

97. The review also noted the difficulties of measuring research activity in sustainable development, suggesting that new mechanisms may be needed. We will explore whether we can measure research activity in sustainable development cost-effectively as part of the 2010-11 strategic review.

Action: When designing the REF, we will consider how it can be used to support interdisciplinary research of relevance to major world challenges.

Actions for HEFCE

98. We believe that we should lead by example. So we will continue to improve HEFCE's own performance through initiatives such as maintaining certification to the ISO14001 environmental standard[66], reviewing and implementing our CSR policy and targets and publishing an annual report on our work in this area[67].

Action: We will continue to improve HEFCE's own performance in CSR and report publicly on our progress.

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[64] See 'Strategic review of sustainable development in higher education in England', section 3.4.1, available at www.hefce.ac.uk under Publications/Research & evaluation.

[65] For more information see www.hefce.ac.uk under Research.

[66] ISO14001 specifies the requirements for an environmental management system, and applies to those environmental aspects over which the organisation has control and influence.

[67] Available at www.hefce.ac.uk under About us/Corporate Social Responsibility.

List of abbreviations

AUDE	Association of University Directors of Estates
AUPO	Association of University Procurement Officers
BiTC	Business in the Community
BREEAM	Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method
CETL	Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning
CIF	Capital Investment Fund
CO$_2$	Carbon dioxide
CSR	Corporate social responsibility
DEFRA	Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
DIUS	Department of Innovation, Universities and Skills
EAUC	Environmental Association for Universities and Colleges
EFQM	European Foundation for Quality Management
EPI	Environmental performance indicator
ESD	Education for Sustainable Development
HE	Higher education
HEA	Higher Education Academy
HECM	Higher Education Carbon Management programme
HEEPI	Higher Education Environmental Performance Improvement project
HEFCE	Higher Education Funding Council for England
HEI	Higher education institution
HEIF	Higher Education Innovation Fund
ICT	Information and communications technology
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
JISC	Joint Information Systems Committee
KPT	Key performance target
KT	Knowledge transfer
kWh	Kilowatt-hours
LGM Fund	Leadership, Governance and Management Fund
LSC	Learning and Skills Council
MWh	Megawatt-hours
QAA	Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education
RCE	Regional Centre of Expertise
RDA	Regional Development Agency
REF	Research Excellence Framework
SDF	Strategic Development Fund
TRAC	Transparent Approach to Costing
UUK	Universities UK

Annex A
Membership of HEFCE's Sustainable Development Steering Group

Dr Geoffrey Copland (Chair)	Formerly Vice-Chancellor, University of Westminster
Jamie Agombar	Ethical and Environmental Manager, NUS Services Limited.
David Allen	Registrar and Secretary, University of Exeter Association of Heads of University Administration
Roger Bond	Director of Estates, University of East Anglia Association of University Directors of Estates
Iain Cameron	Head of Research Careers, Research Councils UK
Phil Case	Assistant Director, Sustainability and Climate Change, PricewaterhouseCoopers
Elaine Clarke	Policy Adviser, GuildHE
Polly Courtice	Director, Cambridge Programme for Industry
John Ellison	Head of Formal Learning, Eden Project
Andrew Farrell	Director of Finance and Facilities, London School of Economics British Universities Finance Directors Group
Olivia Grant	Pro-Chancellor and Chairman of Council, University of Newcastle Deputy Chair, Committee of University Chairmen
Ann Finlayson	Commissioner for Education, Sustainable Development Commission
Alex McFarlane	Head of Purchasing, Nottingham Trent University Association of University Procurement Officers
Sheri-Leigh Miles	Ecoversity Student Engagement Co-ordinator, University of Bradford Environmental Association for Universities and Colleges
Sara Parkin	Founder Director, Forum for the Future
Professor Gerald Pillay	Vice-Chancellor and Rector, Liverpool Hope University
Professor William Scott	Director, Centre for Research in Education and the Environment, University of Bath
Chris Shiel	Head of Learning and Teaching, Institute of Business and Law, Bournemouth University
Dr Stephen Stirling	Schumacher Reader in Education for Sustainability, Centre for Sustainable Futures, University of Plymouth Senior Advisor for Education for Sustainable Development, Higher Education Academy
Professor Elaine Thomas	Rector, University College for the Creative Arts
Solitaire Townsend	Managing Director, Futerra Sustainability Communications Ltd

Annex B
Sustainable development projects funded by HEFCE

Centres for Excellence in Teaching and Learning

Centre for Sustainable Futures – University of Plymouth

Aims to transform the University of Plymouth from an institution characterised by significant areas of excellence in education for sustainable development into an institution modelling university-wide excellence and, hence, able to make a major contribution to Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) regionally, nationally and internationally. Students across the university and its network of partner colleges will be provided with opportunities to engage critically with sustainability agendas and their social, ethical, professional and personal implications. The impact on student learning will be reinforced through opportunities for action research projects into the 'greening' of the campus and into community and regional sustainability initiatives.

www.plymouth.ac.uk/cetl/esd

Centre for Sustainable Communities Achieved through Integrated Professional Education (C-SCAIPE) – Kingston University

C-SCAIPE aims to produce graduates with an holistic understanding of sustainable communities and who are able to work towards their creation. Built environment professionals have a crucial role to play as buildings provide the context for economic and social activity. Building on the School of Surveying's experience and working with the Centre for Education in the Built Environment subject centre and the professions, C-SCAIPE will produce the professionals of the future through the students of today by:

- embedding sustainability principles within the curriculum
- stimulating students' commitment to sustainability by project-based learning that fosters communication with and understanding of disciplines beyond their own
- enhancing students' connections with professional practice to develop active learning.

www.kingston.ac.uk/surveying

Higher Education Innovation Fund

UrbanBuzz: Building Sustainable Communities – University College London and University of East London

This project aims to establish an innovative knowledge exchange programme which will create a network of professionals, practitioners and academics. They will work together on projects which will develop new ways of delivering sustainable forms of development and community in London and the wider south-east region.

www.urbanbuzz.ucl.ac.uk

Carbon Connections – University of East Anglia

Carbon Connections aims to tackle our reliance on fossil fuels, with the aim of exploiting low-carbon technologies and encouraging behavioural change for environmental, social and economic benefit. An international network of academic and commercial partners will use the Carbon Connections project to turn innovative ideas into commercial reality. Sustainable building and renewable energy are two areas of particular interest to the project.

www.carbon-connections.org

Leadership, Governance and Management Fund

A guide to managing and enhancing biodiversity on campus – University of Hertfordshire

The outcome of this project is a guide to promote biodiversity management and good practice in the higher education sector. The guide includes sections on biodiversity and its importance, benefits of managing biodiversity, legal issues, planning and setting targets, implementing changes, awareness and communication monitoring. The guide has been praised by the United Nations.

www.eauc.org.uk under Resource Bank/Biodiversity

Development of an Association of University Directors of Estates (AUDE) estates management good practice self-assessment tool – University of Bradford

AUDESAT is a self-assessment toolkit and web-site, launched in April 2007, comprising:

- a good practice estates management knowledge base, with web pages and hyperlinks to relevant documents and web-sites

- a good practice self-assessment model against which AUDE members can measure the estates management capabilities of their organisation, and benchmark their organisation against peers.

www.aude.ac.uk under Info Centre/Good practice

EcoCampus

EcoCampus is an environmental management system designed for the further and higher education sectors. It encourages and rewards universities and colleges for moving towards environmental sustainability, and therefore good operational and management practices. It is closely aligned to ISO14001 and BS8555 standards and has been designed to be achievable through a phased approach, enabling institutions to achieve progress and implement a full environmental management system in 'bite-sized chunks'. It also benchmarks environmental improvement so an organisation can, subject to external verification, be given an EcoCampus award for achieving a certain level of environmental improvement.

www.ecocampus.co.uk

GreenBuild – University of Bradford

This project has two strands: the development of a standard Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM) scheme to cover most higher education buildings; and GreenLab, a subsidiary project which will focus on the use of the scheme and other measures to develop more sustainable laboratories. Laboratories are among the most energy-intensive and water-intensive of higher education facilities and have other environmental impacts, too. They are also important factors in the daily experience of science

and technology students and researchers, and can therefore have great potential impacts on their attitudes and behaviour.

www.heepi.org.uk

Higher Education Environmental Performance Improvement Project (HEEPI) – University of Bradford

HEEPI aims to stimulate strategic change and operational improvements by working with estates and other departments with energy and environmental responsibilities. It is helping the higher education sector to improve building design, minimise energy and water consumption and waste generation, and reduce transport impacts. It rewards good practice through the Green Gown Awards, runs courses and events, collates benchmarking data, and publishes case studies, guidance documents, and online materials.

www.heepi.org.uk

Innovative, effective, enjoyable? Creating the evidence base to deliver productive academic workplaces – Loughborough University

With a view to creating more productive office-based research environments, evidence will be gathered on the performance of recently built academic research settings, together with learning from relevant commercial settings. It will investigate:

- the design team, stakeholder engagement, procurement and delivery process

- physical outcomes (buildings and layouts)

- the subsequent effect the spaces have on the academic community.

Learning landscapes: clearing pathways and making space – involving academics in leadership, governance and management of estates in higher education – University of Lincoln

The project is intended to promote closer collaboration between academics and estates professionals in the development of new learning landscapes, so that the strengths of the traditional academic environment are not lost when new spaces are developed to foster innovative approaches. It

aims to develop a high-level framework, pathways and toolset to facilitate the dialogue between higher education institutions' senior academic managers and their estates directors concerning the future direction of teaching and research practice and its implications for the built estate. Process tools will be piloted at steering group institutions and a training programme developed.

Moving towards zero-waste in student halls of residence by providing reuse schemes for real use – London School of Economics

The project aims to contribute to sustainable development by diverting from landfill reusable items disposed of by university students in halls of residence, by moving them up the waste hierarchy towards reuse. Items are donated, stored and sold back at low cost to new students. This reduces demand on natural resources and saves money both for the university (waste disposal costs) and students, releasing funds for future student-led environmental projects. The items can also be donated to local community organisations, enhancing relationships and supporting low-income groups. The project increases student and staff leadership capacity for sustainable development because it requires a collaborative team effort. It also encourages an holistic management approach and effective governance structures.

www.lse.ac.uk/collections/environment

The global university: the role of senior managers – Bournemouth University

Aims to translate current debates in UK universities on internationalisation, globalisation and sustainable development into challenges for strategic leadership and change management. Senior managers reflect on and share their experiences of shaping 'a global university', in a publication to resource good practice, illustrating the value of 'global perspectives' to the vision and purpose of higher education institutions as global institutions. Through the process of developing the publication and disseminating it, the project will contribute to the sector's knowledge on how to discharge a university's corporate and social responsibilities within the context of a global society and economy.

www.dea.org.uk/sub-556208

The legacy of the 1960s university estate – AUDE

There is a 'refurbish or replace' dilemma for the sector in relation to the continued use of buildings constructed or planned in the 1960s. Using case studies and research on how other sectors address similar issues, the project has provided a set of tools and advice to assist institutions make appropriate decisions concerning sustainability options for this type of property.

www.aude.ac.uk under Info Centre/1960s estate project

Testing the appropriateness of the Business in the Community corporate responsibility and environment indices for the higher education sector – Leeds Metropolitan University

This project benchmarked universities from across England on their environmental and corporate responsibility performance. It then revealed how they rate against UK businesses. The project concluded that the Business in the Community environment and corporate responsibility indices are appropriate and offer much to the higher education sector.

www.eauc.org.uk under Resource Bank/Resources/Publications

Universities that Count: Environment and Corporate Responsibility benchmarking programme for the higher education sector – EAUC and the University of Gloucestershire

Building on a successful pilot project at Leeds Metropolitan University, this project will establish a voluntary benchmarking programme for the higher education sector using Business in the Community's Environment and Corporate Responsibilities indices. A publicly reported, higher education sector-led benchmarking programme with sector-specific guidance material will help institutions measure, manage and report on their positive contribution to sustainable development, gauge performance improvement and share this information with their stakeholders.

Strategic Development Fund

Ecoversity StuDent– University of Bradford
See case study on p11.

Centre for Efficient and Renewable Energy in Buildings – London South Bank University, City University and Kingston University

The Centre for Efficient and Renewable Energy in Buildings will be a unique resource for teaching, research and demonstration of low-carbon energy technologies in the built environment. The Centre is the result of a partnership between London South Bank, City and Kingston Universities.

Annex C
Proposed actions contained in our revised action plan

Support role 1 – Engaging with stakeholders to bring about policy synergies on sustainable development

a. We will support development work with Universities UK and GuildHE to identify ways in which the sector can make a public commitment to sustainable development.

b. We will review the work of the Higher Education Academy sustainable development-related Centres for Excellence in Teaching and Learning and the teaching baseline produced by the strategic review, to investigate the effectiveness of existing curricula and pedagogy, and how HEFCE can best support education for sustainable development.

c. We will consider how we can support and/or work with United Nations' initiatives including the UN Decade for Education in Sustainable Development and Regional Centres of Expertise in Education for Sustainable Development.

d. We will promote sustainable development during the development of the employer engagement agenda.

e. We will work with employers, students and Sector Skills Councils to understand their requirements in relation to sustainable development and explore what is needed to meet them.

f. We will work with regional development agencies and other regional bodies to facilitate collaborations between higher education institutions (HEIs) and their local communities to promote sustainable development.

g. We will work with existing and potential funders of sustainable development research to explore how the role of research can be strengthened to help meet the challenges of sustainable development.

Support role 2 – Building the capacity of people to manage sustainable development

a. We will continue to support the Leadership Foundation in embedding sustainable development in its courses and programmes.

b. We will undertake research to identify examples of good practice from other countries and sectors. Following this we will implement appropriate policy responses.

c. We will continue to develop the Estates Management Statistics to support HEIs in benchmarking their sustainable development performance and drive improvement. As part of this we will refine the metrics relating to waste and others as opportunities are identified.

d. We will communicate the link between efficient use of space and environmental sustainability, seek to understand better how institutions are performing, and promote good practice.

e. We will continue to support the work of the Joint Information Systems Committee and others to minimise the environmental impact of information and communications technology (ICT) use and to maximise the contribution that ICT can make to sustainable development more widely.

f. We will work with the Universities UK Procurement Group and Association of University Procurement Officers' Sustainable Purchasing group to encourage sustainable procurement.

Support role 3 – Sharing good practice, or supporting the development of good practice where none exists

a. We will explore with the sector the mechanisms and benefits of incorporating sustainable development in institutional missions, strategic plans and other policies.

b. We will continue to support the work of the Higher Education Academy's Education for Sustainable Development Project and encourage the Academy and its Subject Centres to recognise education for sustainable development as a cross-cutting and priority programme area.

c. We will continue to work with sector bodies to facilitate the building and dissemination of good practice by funding projects related to sustainable development through the Strategic Development Fund, Leadership, Governance and Management Fund and other appropriate funding streams.

d. In partnership with sector bodies, we will consider updating the teaching and research databases. We will investigate an effective method for institutions to learn from each other in these areas.

e. We will continue to support the Green Gown Awards and Sound Impact Awards.

f. We will explore how we can create a carbon reduction culture and take action to assist the sector to play its part in meeting national climate change targets.

g. We will establish a Revolving Green Fund to increase the implementation rate of energy efficiency projects and facilitate innovation in the management of greenhouse gas emissions.

h. We will continue to support Carbon Trust's Higher Education Carbon Management Programme through participation on its steering group.

Support role 4 – Rewarding more sustainable behaviour

a. We will explore and publicise the benefits of dealing with financial and reputational issues. Following this we will consider how HEIs can effectively exploit any reputational advantage.

b. Once the higher education Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method scheme is available we will consider requiring specific levels of performance for all capital projects (new builds and refurbishments) which we fund. We will make this decision by the end of 2009 for implementation in any subsequent round of capital funding.

c. We will review the Capital Investment Framework process to determine how we should strengthen the sustainable development requirements.

d. We will explore the potential for a survey and comparative study of sustainable development practice in operational management.

e. We will work with the Environmental Association for Universities and Colleges and Business in the Community to support the development of Universities that Count, a UK-wide, sector-specific version of the Business in the Community indices.

f. We will undertake another strategic review in 2010-11 to demonstrate progress by the sector.

g. When designing the Research Excellence Framework, we will consider how it can be used to support interdisciplinary research of relevance to major world challenges.

h. We will continue to improve HEFCE's own performance in corporate social responsibility and report publicly on our progress.

Annex D
Issues for consultation and response form

1.   Respondents should complete the electronic version of this form, which can be downloaded from the HEFCE web-site (www.hefce.ac.uk). It can be found with this document under Publications.

2.   Responses should be e-mailed to sustainabledevelopment@hefce.ac.uk by **Friday 5 September 2008.**

3.   We will publish an analysis of responses to the consultation. Additionally, all responses may be disclosed on request, under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act. The Act gives a public right of access to any information held by a public authority, in this case HEFCE. This includes information provided in response to a consultation. We have a responsibility to decide whether any responses, including information about your identity, should be made public or treated as confidential. We can refuse to disclose information only in exceptional circumstances. This means responses to this consultation are unlikely to be treated as confidential except in very particular circumstances. Further information about the Act is available at www.informationcommissioner.gov.uk.

Respondent's details

Are you responding: •   On behalf of an organisation
(Delete one)   •   As an individual

Name of responding organisation/individual ....

Contact name ....

Position within organisation (if applicable) ....

Contact telephone number ....

Contact e-mail address ....

Consultation questions
(Boxes for responses can be expanded to the desired length)

Consultation question 1: Do you agree that our vision (paragraph 21) is still appropriate and that the proposed objectives are sufficient to achieve this vision?

Consultation question 2: Is the proposed action plan fully aligned with, and sufficiently complete to deliver, the vision?

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Consultation question 3: Which actions should take priority?

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Consultation question 4: Do you feel that there are any other sustainable development activities which HEFCE could help support?

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Consultation question 5: Are there any other ways in which you feel HEFCE could help promote sustainable development, in particular the non-environmental elements of the agenda? Views expressed need not be in the form of fully worked-up ideas.

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Consultation question 6: Should there be a sector strategy for carbon management? If so what should it look like?

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Consultation question 7: Could the sector reduce carbon emissions earlier than the government target for 2050, for example 60 per cent by 2030-2040? How should we deal with interim targets?

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Consultation question 8: Do you have any other comments on the strategy or action plan?

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