

This information was provided by the Sustainability Office (see below for contact details).

Sustainability has emerged as one of the largest challenges of the 21st century, with the agenda gaining prominence across the tertiary sector. Unsustainable practices mean that we are increasingly confronted with examples of deepening environmental degradation, social inequality, and restricted quality of life.

The University of Otago is committed to developing leadership through our response to the sustainability challenge, and will act in an ethically, socially and environmentally responsible manner. We are taking a holistic approach to sustainability, embedding it as part of the core ethos of working and studying at the University. Every person has a part to play in helping to ensure that the University operates in a way that is environmentally sound, socially just and economically viable.

The University's vision of excellence extends to sustainability. We recognise that as a research-led university we are uniquely placed to take a leadership role, not only by applying our research nous and responding appropriately to complex challenges posed by sustainability, but through educating future leaders who will be equipped to manage such challenges effectively.

The University has recently launched the initiative, Green Impact which enables staff and students to actively take on sustainable practices in their workplace and residential college. This programme ensures teams are recognised for their efforts and are supported along the way.

A number of groups across the University are already working to identify and progress context-specific goals relating to sustainability. Some questions are listed below to assist you in considering not only the current and future impact of your research, teaching and learning, engagement, and operational activities, focusing on the unique contribution that you can make to support the University's sustainability transition. Further support is available, so please do not hesitate to make use of it (refer to Resources & Key Contacts List).

## Sustainability Prompts for Reviews

1. Do you know what the University's commitment to sustainability is?
2. Have you considered the relationship between your core activities and the broader commitment?
3. Beyond considering the sustainability impact of your current and future activities, have you established goals and begun measuring progress towards them?
4. What initiatives, projects or activities currently exist within your department that directly support the University's sustainability transition?
5. Are you aware of the Green Impact Programme that has launched here at the University to help you and staff integrate sustainable practices into your workplace?
6. Is it obvious to (new & current) staff and students that you support the University's sustainability initiative, and their involvement in sustainability-related activities?
7. Can you identify other opportunities for your department to contribute to the sustainability transition across the University's seven key strategic imperatives<sup>1</sup>:
  - a. excellence in research
  - b. excellence in teaching
  - c. outstanding student experiences
  - d. outstanding campus environments

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<sup>1</sup> As outlined in <http://www.otago.ac.nz/otago053226.pdf>

- e. commitment as a local, national and global citizen
  - f. strong external engagement
  - g. sustaining capability?
8. Have you contacted the Sustainability Office, or divisional ESAC member for further support and advice?

Sustainability Office (Head to be confirmed) ext. 8002 [sustainability@otago.ac.nz](mailto:sustainability@otago.ac.nz)  
Emeritus Professor Carolyn Burns (Chair, ESAC) ext. 7971 [carolyn.burns@otago.ac.nz](mailto:carolyn.burns@otago.ac.nz)

Refer also to [www.otago.ac.nz/sustainability](http://www.otago.ac.nz/sustainability) and  
<http://www.otago.ac.nz/administration/committees/esac.html>

## Resources and Key Contacts List

The Sustainability Office is responsible for providing direction, investigating initiatives, and developing processes that advocate and embed sustainability into the University's portfolio and environment, as well as monitoring and reporting on progress. Members of the Environmental Sustainability Advisory Committee (ESAC) also play a critical role in nurturing a culture of sustainability at the University, both within their own divisions, and through the provision of advice to the Vice Chancellor. Please don't hesitate to contact the Sustainability Coordinator, or members of ESAC for assistance in considering your role in supporting the University's sustainability transition.

*Sustainability key contact details:*

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