Environment Policy

Section 1 - Purpose / Objectives

(1) Victoria University acknowledges that University operations contribute towards climate change and other impacts on our environment. We are committed to taking actions which ensure activities undertaken by the University are consistent with best environmental practice and that the University is seen as a leading organisation working towards environmental sustainability.

(2) The University established an 'Environment Charter' in 2005 and recently included in its Values statement a Green Value, 'Sound environmental stewardship for future generations', as part of Making VU 2016: A Statement of Purpose. In Making VU it is stated that VU will 'show strong community values, underpinned by a commitment to social, cultural, environmental and economic sustainability'. This commitment will be supported by the Environment Policy.

(3) In July 2009 an Environment Committee was established with representation from all Faculties and Departments to provide leadership and advice on strategic approaches to reducing the environmental impacts of University operations. The Committee reports to the VC through the Finance and Infrastructure Committee, under the Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Capital and Management Services.

(4) In conjunction with the establishment of the Environment Committee, an Education for Sustainability (EfS) Committee with representation from all Faculties and related Departments has been formed to provide advice on a strategic approach to enacting the National Action Plan for Education for Sustainability. The key purpose of the EfS Committee will be to determine how best to incorporate Education for Sustainability into all VE, FE and HE courses, in line with the National Action Plan. The EfS Committee reports to the VC through the Education Students Management Advisory Committee (ESMAC), under the Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Research and Region.

(5) Victoria University's environmental objectives are listed within the Environment Management Plan. This plan outlines specific objectives and targets for environmental performance in a range of environmental fields.

(6) This policy demonstrates Victoria University's commitment to environmental responsibility and provides an impetus for achieving best practice in accordance with environmental legislation and principles. This policy will support action plans, procedures, environmental objectives and reporting, and will ensure environmental responsibility is integrated in all aspects of University activities.

Section 2 - Scope / Application

(7) Nil

Section 3 - Definitions

(8) Climate Change - Climate Change refers to the changes in the Earth's climate systems, resulting from human induced (anthropogenic) global warming.

(9) Ecologically Sustainable Development - Ecologically Sustainable Development is a pattern of resource use that aims to meet human needs in the present whilst ensuring that the health, diversity and productivity of the

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environment is maintained or enhanced for the benefit of future generations.

(10) Environmentally Sustainable Design - Environmentally Sustainable Design refers to the architecture and engineering principles that minimise the impact of a building on the local environment, taking advantage of natural resources such as sunlight, wind patterns, and geographic location, and maximise overall efficiency with the surrounding resources.

Section 4 - Policy Statement

(11) Victoria University will strive for best environmental practice by:

a. Implementing environmental objectives and targets for all aspects of the University to minimise our environmental impact in line with operational best practice and the National Action Plan for Education for Sustainability. Objectives and targets are outlined in the Victoria University Environment Management Plan which will be updated every three years;
b. Minimising consumption of energy, water and natural resources and reducing the production of greenhouse gas emissions;
c. Actively promoting environmental awareness and responsibility among all members of the University community, by fostering and targeting positive and specific behaviour change actions across all areas of operation and communications, and by sharing knowledge and experience with our key stakeholders;
d. Reducing consumption of manufactured products including paper, office supplies, building materials and furniture;
e. Maximising reuse and recycling of all consumables;
f. Ensuring environmental targets and standards are embedded in all initiatives including teaching, learning, research and community engagement, in line with the National Action Plan for Education for Sustainability;
g. Protecting and enhancing biodiversity on all campuses;
h. Identifying, monitoring and reporting on the University's environmental footprint, ensuring compliance with legislative requirements and relevant government and University standards;
i. Integrating ecologically sustainable development principles and practices into all institutional activities; and
j. Implementing environmentally sustainable design guidelines that ensure all new buildings and significant refurbishments are rated a minimum of 5 stars, based on the Green Building Council of Australia Green Star rating tools and aspiring to higher ratings.

Section 5 - Procedures

(12) Procedures will be enacted in line with the Environment Management Plan, its associated action plan and through the Environment Committee and Education for Sustainability Committee.

(13) The following groups hold responsibilities under this Policy:

a. Environment Committee
    i. The purpose of the Committee is to bring together key stakeholders in the University to identify and address strategic environment and sustainability issues. The Committee will advise the Vice Chancellor via the Director, Finance, Finance and Infrastructure Committee (FIC) and the Vice Chancellor's Planning Advisory Committee, on the initiatives and recommendations that will lead the University to reduce its operational impact on the environment.
b. Education for Sustainability Committee
    i. The purpose of the Committee is to bring together key stakeholders in the University to identify and

implement a strategic approach to incorporating Education for Sustainability (as defined in the National Action Plan for Education for Sustainability) into all FE and HE courses. The Committee will advise the Vice Chancellor via the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Research and Region) Education & Student Management Advisory Committee (ESMAC), and the Vice Chancellor's Advisory Committee.

c. Co-ordination between Committees
    i. The activities of the Environment Committee and Education for Sustainability Committee will be co-ordinated through the Chairs of ESMAC and the FIC, to ensure maximum effect of VU's efforts to reduce our environmental impacts and foster Education for Sustainability in all courses, programs and operations.

d. Facilities Environment Staff
    i. The Environment Co-ordinators and Sustainability Officer will be responsible for initiating, implementing and reporting on projects that reduce the University's environmental footprint, and provide support and advice to staff/students and the wider University community to assist them in improving the University's environmental performance.

e. Managers and Supervisors
    i. Managers and supervisors will be responsible for facilitating and supporting the development of programs and initiatives that assist the University in reducing its environmental footprint in line with the Environment Policy.

f. Staff
    i. All staff will be encouraged to actively participate in environmental initiatives through a 'Green Office' type program. This program will support all staff in developing an understanding of how they can assist the University in reducing its environmental impacts through positive and specific actions in their daily workplace environment. This program will be implemented in line with the Environment Policy and Environment Management Plan.
    ii. It is the responsibility of staff to provide students with opportunities to access information on ways they can reduce their environmental footprint. Staff will be trained in the appropriate systems where relevant.

g. Students
    i. All students will be encouraged to engage in University environmental initiatives.

Section 6 - Guidelines

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Status and Details

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