

Top tips for higher education institutions responding to the climate crisis

Iain Patton, CEO at the EAUC: Universities must lead on a sustainable recovery and accelerate the transition to be a net-zero sector. Students are increasingly demanding a more just and inclusive society and universities have a civic responsibility to lead in their communities, as they have done through the health crisis. We will be presenting the critical role that the education sector has in the Race to Net-Zero at COP26 and universities can publicly display their acts to their students, staff and wider community. The climate crisis is here and the time to act is now.”



Due to the pandemic, 2020 has seen unparalleled disruption to the UK and its higher education institutions, reinforcing the need to act now and drive a green recovery for a more sustainable, economically stable future.

Salix and Higher Education Institutions

Salix enables organisations to deliver on their energy efficiency ambitions by providing interest-free loans and technical expertise across the public sector.

Over £142m of interest-free funding has been invested in around 4,000 energy efficiency projects across 100 higher education institutions since Salix began working with universities in 2006.

Salix's top tips to a successful green recovery:

Top Tip 1 - Work closely with your Estates and Finance Departments.

Top Tip 2 - Identify quick energy saving wins

Top Tip 3 - Have a governable Carbon Management Plan.

Top Tip 4 - Encompass student and community interests into climate crisis response.

Top Tip 5 - Align the university's research and innovation and experience.



Turn over to see Salix's top tips to develop a successful recovery strategy.

Five Tips for Responding to the Climate Crisis

TOP
TIPS



Work closely with your Estates and Finance Departments

- Align your strategy with senior management and highlight the key benefits of an integrated approach.
- Discuss sustainable measures to invest in your estate and assess savings through cost benefit analysis.
- Monitor changes such as energy costs and associated tax rises and have a unit of measurement of energy cost per student.



Identify quick energy saving wins

- Set-up a Building Energy Management System (BEMS) to monitor energy consumption and identify where savings can be made.
- Simple replacements will pay for themselves and immediate savings can be re-invested into the university or estate as a whole.
- Take a holistic approach and look to implement several measures at the same time.



Have a governable Carbon Management Plan that is embedded across all departments

- Integrate sustainability and carbon targets into all aspects of your strategic plans.
- Showcase resilience against climate change, looking at the benefits for people, buildings and financial stability in the long-term.
- Consider the core values of your organisation in relation to environmental and energy projects.



Encompass student and community interests into climate crisis response

- Communicate sustainability plans to students and stakeholders to encourage participation and collaboration.
- Participate in higher education green rankings to demonstrate emissions and campus-wide sustainability programmes.
- Find creative ways to engage with students during their search for a green, sustainable campus.



Align the university's research and innovation and implement within the estate campus

- Lead the way by showcasing ongoing research and knowledge being undertaken and feature these in your estates, for example through innovative technologies.
- Discover and engage with other higher education estate teams for project opportunities.
- Set up a group of dedicated staff to develop a business case, giving ownership to different people throughout the organisation.

For more information...

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