

Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2021-30



9 years to save the planet

 **Hammersmith
& Fulham
College**

 **Ealing
Green
College**

 **Southall
Community
College**

 **Park
Royal
College**

 **West London
Construction
Academy**


**West
London
College**
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1.0 Executive Summary

This strategy provides for a whole college approach to environmental sustainability, which endorses and aligns with the FE Climate Action Roadmap. It has been informed by stakeholder engagement events with staff, leaders and Governors and a learner survey conducted in the summer term 2021.

The Strategy specifies actions for the first calendar year 2021, realising 'emerging' status by December 2021, 'established' by 2022-23 and 'leading by 2025'. The College has set a target to become net carbon zero by 2030.

2.0 Introduction

2.1 Global context

Across the UK and internationally, pioneering colleges are developing new organisational models to lead and implement their sustainability and net zero ambitions. Historically, activity has been limited to environmentally focussed activities based in Estates and Facilities Departments, primarily driven over recent years by legislation. However, it is widely recognised that sustainability encompasses a broad scope of issues beyond environmental impacts.

Colleges have an important role to play in working towards the achievement of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG)¹ (Figure 1), introduced in 2015, colleges should seek to lead agendas that build social and economic sustainability through partnerships with local communities and beyond.



Figure 1: UN Sustainability Goals (SDG)

The College will contribute to the development of new and innovative sustainability solutions, while also ensuring that our educational programmes are equipping learners with an appropriate understanding of and engagement with sustainability and climate change which they can apply within their future careers.

2.2 Nine years to save the Planet

It is widely recognised that the moment to act is now, and that the global community has nine years remaining in which to reduce carbon emissions² and limit the earth's temperature increase to 1.5%. This will limit the impact of more extreme weather events and climate inequality impacting on the world's poorest communities.

The College shares this sense of urgency and has set an ambitious target to achieve its net zero carbon plan by the end of 2030.

¹ United Nations [Sustainable Development Goals](#)

² [Nine Years to Save the Planet](#) – The Breakdown (Earthrise Studio's)

3.0 Goals and Ambitions

3.1 Race to Zero

To meet the UK's target to be carbon neutral by 2050, all buildings and transport will have to be decarbonised, this means the elimination of all Carbon Dioxide emissions from all processes within the UK by 2050. The 'race to zero' as it is often referred to, will drive the Colleges ambitious plans which are set out in Section 5.0. Ultimately the College has set a target of 2030 to become net carbon zero.

3.2 Global Climate letter

To demonstrate the College's commitment to climate action and increase the growing pressure on governments to act in response to climate change, we will sign the Global Climate Letter³ by December 2021. The letter is linked to the SDG Accord and recognises the important role of education in responding to climate change.

3.3 Learner engagement

It is clear from surveys⁴ of West London College learners that there is significant interest and wiliness to engage in this area. We want to harness this enthusiasm to ensure learners are central to decision making and are highly influential in how to implement actions to reduce the College's carbon footprint.



62% of learners are already taking steps to reduce their carbon footprint



42% of learners would like to see more plant-based food options in the canteen



38% of learners want to be involved in the Climate Committee to help inform decision making



59% of learners feel informed or very informed about climate change



46% of learners are already acting as ambassadors encouraging others to be kinder to the environment



67% of learners want the college to do more to increase recycling and decrease paper use

³ UN Global [Climate Letter](#)

⁴ WLC Learner Climate Survey (May 2021)

Leaner engagement will be central to the delivery of the strategy; this will be through:

- Representation on, and engagement with the Climate Committee
- Student Union Sustainability rep
- Enrichment activities linked to the sustainability theme
- Tutorial programme with a focus on sustainability
- Regular focus groups and surveys to inform direction and decisions

4.0 Key principles

4.2 Environmental, Social Governance (ESG)

The strategy is aligned to a wider set of principles that ultimately inform the measures and goals that the College will work towards.

- **Environmental.** The impact that we have on the environment and on climate change, including its energy consumption, waste disposal practices, and carbon emission levels.
- **Social.** The promotion of inclusivity, diversity, and equality within the College, and the treatment and safety of employees. Social factors include the impact the College has on the communities around it or in which it does business, and include volunteer schemes, sponsorships, and partnerships.
- **Governance.** The manner in which the College governs itself, makes ethical decisions, deals with conflicts of interest, meets the needs of stakeholders, and complies with the laws of its jurisdiction.

4.1 Climate Action Roadmap

The Climate Commission for UK Higher and Further Education was established in November 2019. Its goal is to develop a strategic, sector-wide approach to tackle the climate emergency. The Commission went on to develop a 'road map' for further education colleges to reach the net zero target. The College will adopt the Climate Action Roadmap⁵ as a framework to drive this strategy. The roadmap includes three 'levels' to approach sustainability, organised by different levels of maturity:

- **Emerging:** colleges just beginning to address sustainability
- **Established:** colleges with an established approach to sustainability and structures in place to support it
- **Leading:** colleges which are models to others on sustainability

Each 'level' contains a series of initiatives that will inform the actions we will take to reach net zero emissions and improve their environmental impact.

A key aspect of the roadmap is to ensure that the college community, learners in particular, are fully involved in the decision making and influence the way in which actions are implemented.

⁵ AoC Climate Action [Roadmap](#)

Goals



- To become an **Emerging** College by Dec 2021
- To become an **Established** College by Dec 2022
- To become a **Leading** College by 2025

4.3 Sustainability Leadership scorecard

The initiatives in the roadmap are categorised into a ‘Sustainability Leadership Scorecard’ illustrated in Figure 2.

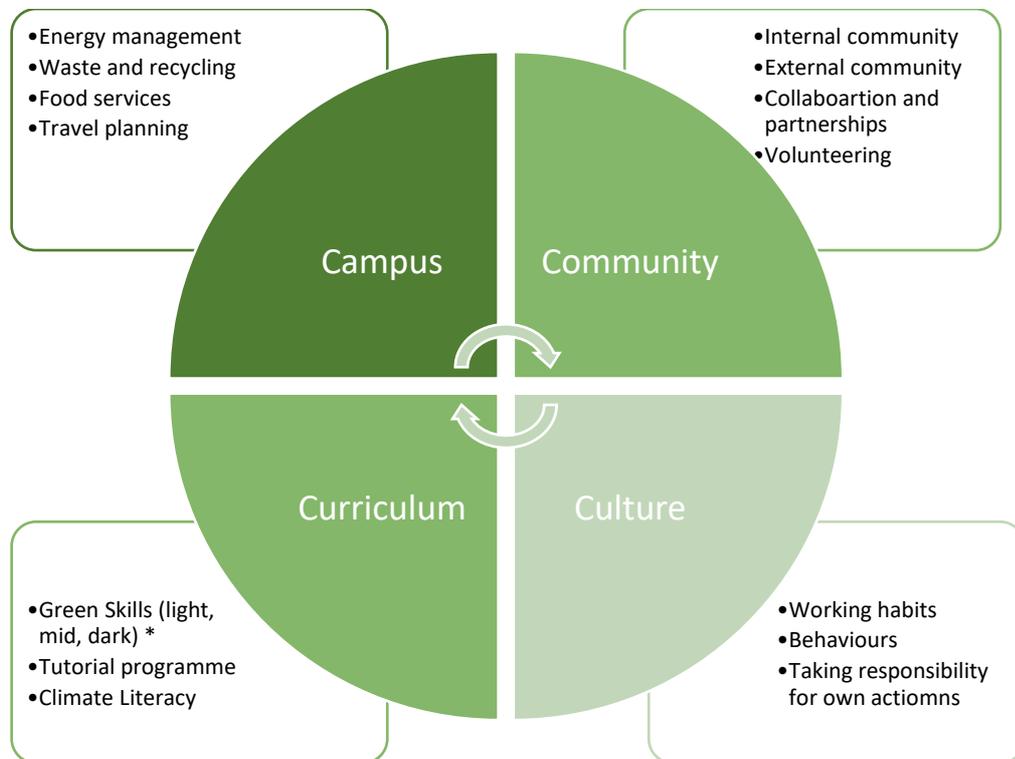


Figure 2:

***Light Green:** Jobs where green skills form a component of that short, eg Management, consultancy, data analyst. **Dark Green:** Where green skills form the whole job eg, insulation, construction, renewables, carbon capture. **Mid Green:** Jobs that fall somewhere in between.

Business management skills such as lifecycle analysis/costing; carbon literacy for procurement; planning, impact assessment and risk management; leadership and management; sustainable procurement; resource efficiency skills; financial management etc • Scientific and technical skills such as modelling, interpreting, using and disseminating climate change projections and impacts etc

Each area of the leadership scorecard will be led by a member of the College’s Executive team:

- **Campus** Director of Infrastructure Services
- **Curriculum** Deputy Principal of Curriculum and Quality
- **Community** Deputy Principal of Strategy, Planning and Communications
- **Culture** Director of People and Organisational Development

They will be responsible for convening the Climate Committee sub-groups, championing the goals and ambitions of each category and having oversight of the implementation of actions and decisions.

5.0 Campus

5.1 Energy efficiency

There are likely to be several, low or no-cost initiatives the College can implement to reduce its energy use before we begin to explore higher cost options to increase energy efficiency and eventually explore renewable energy. Focusing on these 'quick wins' first will reduce the College's carbon footprint straight away and build momentum for future initiatives.

Redesigning heat systems and setting specific targets on energy usage, with the varying College estate, will require access to significant funding to make systemic change.

5.2 Circular Economy (Waste and recycling)

Reducing waste through recycling schemes and re-using materials that would otherwise go to waste, following the mantra of Remove, Reduce, Replace, Recycle, Reuse and Refill.

This would include initiatives to reduce and eliminate single use plastics across all campuses, having the right bins available and guidance for what to put in them. We will also educate staff and learners about recycling and encourage positive behaviour towards waste.

5.3 Carbon reduction / decarbonisation

A Heat Decarbonisation Plan (HDP) outlines a route map for how the reliance on fossil fuelled heating systems in a building can be replaced with low carbon alternatives, such as Air Source Heat Pumps, Ground Source Heat Pumps and connectivity to District Heat Networks. A HDP is intended to assist organisations to understand how they can plan ahead to decarbonise their buildings and work towards Net Zero Carbon

5.4 Renewable energy

Retrofitting facilities to utilise greener fuel and installing renewable energy sources across the College estate.

5.5 Water efficiency

Reducing waste through water saving schemes and water recycling.

5.6 Sustainable movement

Reviewing ways to reduce carbon emissions from the College's vehicle fleet, including electric vehicles and alternative methods of transport. The review would extend to ways in which staff and learners travel to and from college to encourage greater use of public transport.

Learner bursary funds can be used to fund bikes as well as bus or train passes, to encourage a healthier travel option.

5.7 Food services

A significant proportion of carbon emissions come from food we produce, eat, and waste; and some foods – like beef, lamb, cheese, and chocolate – have higher carbon footprints than others. Other factors, like how far away food comes from and whether it is in season, also affect its environmental

impact. Offering sustainable food options allows learners and staff the choice to reduce their personal environmental impact and contributes to positive behaviour change.

We will negotiate with campus food suppliers to supply sustainable food options, gaining a greater understand of how sustainable the food options are. (Including the number of vegetarian/vegan options available, food miles, and seasonality)

We will develop a set of criteria for more sustainable food, including procurement options to ensure more sustainable options are available, based on criteria.

Goals

- Upskill key staff on measuring emissions and carbon footprint by Oct 2021
- Measure the College's carbon footprint by individual campus by Nov 2021
- Establish targets for carbon reduction, recycling, and sustainability by Dec 2021
- Implement a 'Green Travel Plan' by Sept 2022.
- Negotiate with food suppliers' sustainable food options

Executive Lead: Director of Infrastructure Services

6.0 Curriculum

6.1 Carbon Literacy

The College community must have a good understanding of climate change, what causes it, and how it is likely to affect us if we are to take action in response. The **Carbon Literacy Project** delivers this foundational understanding and shows individuals actions they can take to reduce their individual environmental impact.

The Carbon Literacy Project is based on the key aim that if we are to cut our carbon emissions by the kind of reductions demanded of us by science, then we will need to change culture alongside technology.

Awareness of climate and sustainability issues will be raised through the tutorial programme for those on study programmes. Curriculum planning, including intent and implementation statements, lesson plans and schemes of learning will also feature sustainability themes.

6.2 Green Skills

It is estimated in London that its 'Green Economy' is worth £40b and will employ nearly 250,000 people by 2030, many of which will be in the construction sector. The Mayor of London's retrofitting plan alone will require over 150,000 new qualified workers, which current construction industry does not have.

The College will work with employers and sector bodies to identify skills gaps, provide new training programmes, building on the Mayor's Construction Academy to develop a Green Skills Academy in collaboration with other West London providers.

Green skills are often defined by different occupation types:

- **Light green occupations** - where the nature of the occupation is unchanged by sustainable or green requirements but there may be additional duties that are done differently or in a consciously sustainable way. For example, the core Knowledge, Skills & Behaviours for a care assistant will always be recognising care needs and addressing them. They may however be expected in future to consider sustainability aspects in how they source and dispose of Personal Protective Equipment.
- **Mid-green occupations** - remain the same but there might be a need for new knowledge, skills and behaviours to be embedded to enable the use of new technologies and approaches. For example, an engineer using basic engineering principles, will likely be expected to move away from petrol and carbon-based technologies to alternative technologies and approaches over time.
- **Dark Green occupations** – Embedded within the green occupational landscape and delivering sustainable outcomes. Examples of dark green occupations: • building energy management systems (BEMS) controls engineer • junior energy manager • dual fuel smart meter installer • power engineer- wind turbine engineer option • sustainability business specialist 17 • waste resource operative • metal recycling general operative for trailblazers:

6.3 Education for Sustainable Development (ESD)

Ensuring that all staff and learners have the knowledge, skills, values and attributes to create a more just and sustainable world is a key component of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals. The College will engage with the Education Training Foundations' ESD programme to promote learning skills that are resilient to change and are future-proofed.

Goals

- All staff and learners to engage with the Carbon Literacy Project by Dec 2021
- Embed Environment sustainability into tutorial provision and curriculum planning throughout 2021-22
- Lead on a Green Skills Academy as part of the Mayor's Sector Skills Academies
- Include a 'Green' Award in the 2021-22 Learner Awards
- Engage with the ESD programme including CPD and learning resources

Executive Lead: Deputy Principal Curriculum and Quality

7.0 Community

7.1 Climate Committee

This group will give a face to, and help to drive forward the sustainability agenda in the college. Including a member of the leadership team will ensure the group has clout. Including learners will make sure it is representative of the whole community.

The Committee will act as the key sounding board for decisions relating to the goals set out in this strategy, making recommendations on key decisions to the Executive and the Board as required.

Four sub-groups will be established, led by members of the Executive, all of which will include learner representation. They will be:

- **Campus**
- **Curriculum**
- **Community**
- **Culture**

7.2 Community collaboration

We will work with local communities groups, local authorities and other stakeholders to share best practice and learn more about wider strategies to reduce carbon emissions.

The College will co-chair the West London FE/HE group on Green Skills, working collaboratively with FE and HE partners on bids and projects connected to the strategic intensions set out here.

7.3 Supply chain procurement

Working collaborating with our supply chain to reach Net Zero will be integrated into procurement strategies and decision making.

Goals

- Establish a Climate Committee with representation from learners, staff, leaders and Governors by July 2021.
- Include environmental sustainability criterion into supply chain procurement contracts from 2021-22 onwards.
- Create an engagement plan for staff, learners and local communities by Nov 2021.
- Sign the Global Climate letter by Dec 2021.

Executive Lead: Deputy Principal Strategy, planning and communications

8.0 Culture

8.1 Embedding core values

Many of the initiatives outlined in the strategy align to the core values of the college:

- Being **ambitious** in our carbon reduction targets and timeline for achieving net zero
- Being **innovative** in ways to cut emissions and adapt to new ways of working
- Being **accountable** for our own actions and behaviours that can contribute to climate change
- Being **inclusive** in our thinking to ensure actions do not disproportionately impact on certain groups

8.2 Climate change behaviours

Developing a culture of changing behaviours among the whole College community will be integral to the success of achieving the net zero targets, this will include, but not limited to:

- The ways in which staff and learners travel to work
- How and where staff work and learners learn
- Behaviours for powering down work stations, lights etc.

Goals

- Survey staff and learners on climate behaviours by Dec 2021.
- Host a roundtable on fostering a climate change culture within the college

Executive Lead: Director of People and Organisational Development

9.0 Summary of Actions

Key Principles

Goals



- To become an **Emerging** College by Dec 2021
- To become an **Established** College by Dec 2022
- To become a **Leading** College by 2025

Campus

Goals



- Upskill key staff on measuring emissions and carbon footprint by Oct 2021
- Measure the College's carbon footprint by individual campus by Nov 2021
- Establish targets for carbon reduction, recycling, and sustainability by Dec 2021
- Implement a 'Green Travel Plan' by Sept 2022.
- Negotiate with food suppliers' sustainable food options

Curriculum

Goals



- All staff and learners to engage with the Carbon Literacy Project by Dec 2021
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- Include a 'Green' Award in the 2021-22 Learner Awards
- Engage with the ESD programme including CPD and learning resources

Community

Goals



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Culture

Goals

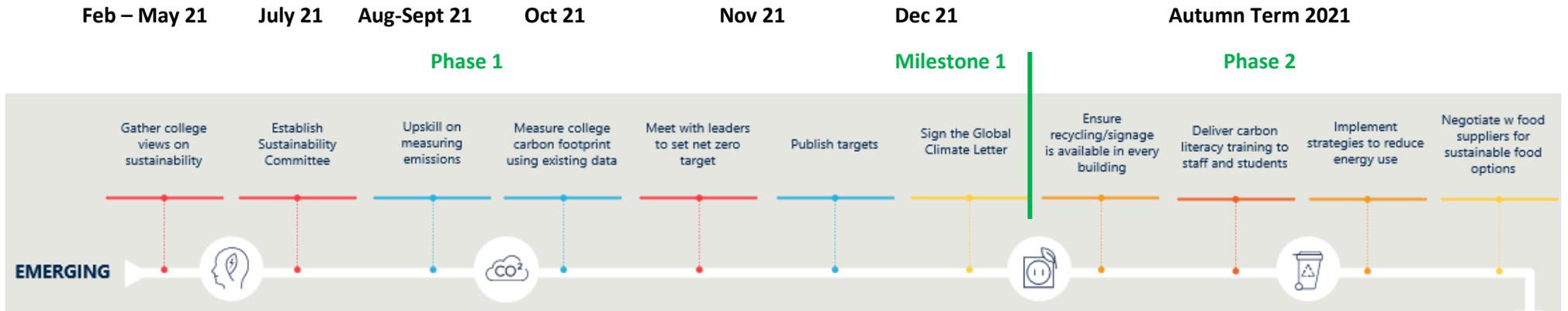


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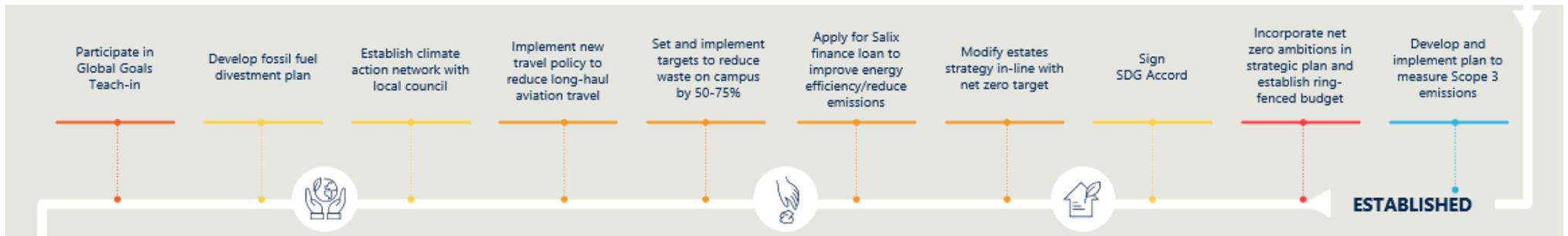
Appendix 1: Key events 2021

Date	Event
15 th September	Climate Education Summit
18 th – 26 th September	Big Green Week 2021
31 st Oct – 12 th Nov	Cop26

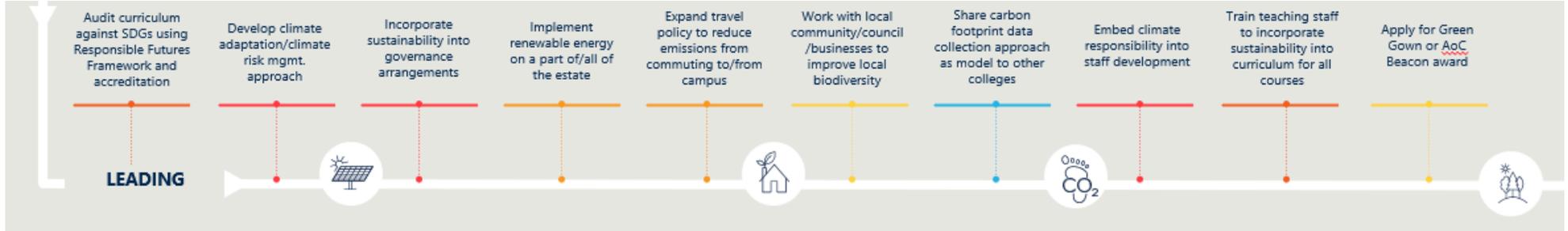
Appendix 2: Timeline



					Sept 21	Sept 21	Dec 21	Sept 21	Jan 22



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Appendix 3: Glossary

Term	Definition
Climate change	Changes in the large-scale, long-term shift in the planet's weather patterns and average temperatures
Climate emergency	he situation in which urgent action is needed to reduce or halt climate change to avoid catastrophic environmental damage, and its effects on people and communities.
Carbon footprint	The amount of carbon dioxide released into the atmosphere as a result of the activities of an individual, organisation, or community. 'Carbon' is used as a shorthand to also include other greenhouse gases (e.g. methane and nitrous oxide) which cause climate change.
Net zero	Achieving an overall balance between emissions produced and taken out of the atmosphere.
Biodiversity	The variety of life on Earth in all its forms and interactions. Biodiversity on earth is being lost at an alarming rate. This loss of species and natural systems threatens the food we eat, the water we drink, and the air we breathe.
Environmental sustainability	Maintaining or 'sustaining' the environment by protecting natural resources and preventing damage through climate change.
Scope 1, 2, and 3	Scope 1, 2, and 3 are different categories of emissions. Scope 1 emissions are those directly under a college's control (e.g. from cars owned by the college). Scope 2 are indirect emissions (meaning the college does not directly control them) from electricity purchased by the college. Scope 3 emissions are all other indirect emissions from activities of the college, including travel to and from college, emissions from waste and water, and emissions from investments. Scope 3 is usually the largest category of emissions.
ESG	Environmental Social Governance
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals as defined by the UN
ESD	Education for Sustainable Development