Sustainability and Net Zero Policy	
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Policy prepared by	Director of Quality, Compliance & Excellence
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Purpose

Educationwise is committed to operating responsibly and reducing unnecessary environmental impact.

As a predominantly online education and training provider, much of our teaching, learner support and business activity is delivered digitally.

This policy sets out how Educationwise will:

- Use resources responsibly
- Reduce unnecessary travel and waste
- Make sensible purchasing decisions
- Consider environmental impact when making business decisions
- Raise awareness among staff and learners
- Support the wider transition towards Net Zero
- Meet environmental commitments made through contracts and tenders

Educationwise will focus on actions that are relevant to its activities and that can reasonably be delivered and evidenced.

Scope

This policy applies to:

- Employees
- Directors
- Associates and contractors
- Learners where relevant
- Subcontractors and suppliers where appropriate
- Business and delivery partners

It applies to:

- Online and remote working
- Business travel
- Procurement
- Equipment
- Digital systems
- Waste

- Education and training
- Employer and partnership activity
- Contract and tender commitments
- Any office or shared workspace used by Educationwise

Our approach

Educationwise will take a proportionate approach to sustainability.

We will consider:

- The environmental impact of our activities
- What we can reasonably influence
- Cost and value for money
- Quality and operational needs
- Learner and staff requirements
- Contractual requirements
- Available evidence and data
- The impact of any proposed change

Educationwise will avoid making environmental claims or setting targets that cannot reasonably be measured or evidenced.

Net Zero

Educationwise supports the wider UK ambition to reach Net Zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 and will work to reduce the environmental impact of its own activities over time.

Any organisation-wide carbon reduction target will be based on:

- An appropriate emissions baseline
- An understanding of the main sources of emissions
- A clear method for measuring progress
- A realistic and achievable target
- Clear responsibility for monitoring progress

Where a public sector contract requires a formal Carbon Reduction Plan or specific Net Zero commitment, Educationwise will follow the requirements that apply to that contract.

Remote and online working

Educationwise's predominantly online delivery model provides opportunities to reduce some environmental impacts associated with regular commuting, travel, office use and printing.

Educationwise will:

- Continue to use online teaching and meetings where they work well
- Use digital systems for learner and business records where appropriate
- Avoid unnecessary printing
- Use electronic signatures where appropriate
- Avoid unnecessary travel
- Consider energy and resource use when selecting systems and equipment

Remote delivery will not be used simply to meet an environmental objective where face-to-face activity would provide a clear benefit to learners, employers or the organisation.

Business travel

Travel remains necessary for some Educationwise activity, including:

- Employer engagement
- Learner support
- Quality assurance
- Staff development
- Events
- Partnership activity
- Business development

Staff should consider whether travel is necessary before arranging it.

Where suitable, alternatives may include:

- Online meetings
- Combining meetings or visits
- Public transport
- Car sharing
- Other practical lower-impact options

The aim is to reduce unnecessary travel rather than prevent appropriate face-to-face activity.

Energy use

Educationwise will encourage responsible use of energy within the areas it can control.

This may include:

- Switching off equipment when it is not required
- Using energy-saving settings
- Avoiding unnecessary use of lighting or heating
- Selecting energy-efficient equipment where practical
- Extending the useful life of equipment where it remains secure and fit for purpose

Where Educationwise uses serviced or shared office accommodation, some building-level energy arrangements may be controlled by the premises provider.

Educationwise will focus on the areas it can reasonably influence.

Equipment

Educationwise will aim to use IT and other equipment responsibly.

This may include:

- Purchasing equipment that is suitable for its intended use
- Considering energy efficiency where appropriate
- Maintaining equipment to extend its useful life
- Repairing equipment where practical and cost-effective
- Reusing suitable equipment
- Securely wiping equipment before reuse or disposal
- Using appropriate recycling or disposal routes
- Avoiding unnecessary replacement

Information security and data protection requirements will be considered when deciding whether equipment can be reused.

Waste

Educationwise will aim to reduce unnecessary waste.

Practical measures may include:

- Using digital records
- Reducing unnecessary printing
- Reusing materials where suitable
- Recycling where appropriate facilities are available

- Avoiding unnecessary single-use items
- Disposing of electronic equipment responsibly
- Purchasing only what is reasonably required

Staff working remotely are encouraged to use local recycling arrangements where practical.

Educationwise will not monitor individual employees' household waste or energy use.

Paper and printing

Educationwise operates a digital-first approach where practical.

Staff should:

- Avoid unnecessary printing
- Use electronic documents where suitable
- Use electronic signatures where appropriate
- Avoid keeping unnecessary duplicate paper and digital records
- Dispose of confidential paper securely

Paper documents may still be used where required for:

- Assessment
- Accessibility
- Awarding Organisation requirements
- Legal or contractual reasons
- Learner needs
- Business continuity

Procurement

Environmental considerations may form part of purchasing decisions where they are relevant to the product, service or contract.

Educationwise may consider:

- Product lifespan
- Energy efficiency
- Packaging
- Waste
- Repairability
- Reuse

- Disposal
- Supplier environmental information
- Location and transport where relevant
- Value for money

Environmental considerations will be balanced against:

- Quality
- Cost
- Security
- Data protection
- Availability
- Service requirements
- Operational need

Educationwise does not require every supplier to complete a sustainability assessment.

Additional checks may be appropriate where:

- The purchase has a significant environmental impact
- The supplier is delivering a major contract
- Environmental requirements form part of a customer contract
- Significant quantities of physical goods are being purchased
- A specific environmental risk has been identified

Suppliers and subcontractors

Educationwise expects suppliers and subcontractors to comply with relevant environmental requirements.

Where appropriate, Educationwise may:

- Ask about environmental arrangements
- Include environmental requirements within contracts
- Review relevant policies or certifications
- Ask for evidence required by a customer contract
- Agree actions where an environmental issue is identified

The level of assurance will reflect the nature and risk of the relationship.

Educationwise will not require extensive environmental reporting from routine low-risk suppliers where this would provide little value.

Public sector contracts

Some public sector procurement exercises may require suppliers to provide specific environmental or carbon information.

Where these requirements apply, Educationwise will:

- Check the requirements before bidding
- Make commitments that can reasonably be delivered
- Establish any required emissions baseline
- Produce or maintain a Carbon Reduction Plan where required
- Record relevant environmental measures
- Monitor agreed commitments
- Publish information where required
- Report against the contract as required

A Carbon Reduction Plan will not automatically be produced for every Educationwise contract where it is not required.

Contract and tender commitments

Environmental commitments included in a successful tender may become contractual requirements.

Before Educationwise commits to a specific:

- Carbon reduction target
- Net Zero date
- Travel reduction
- Waste reduction
- Recycling target
- Environmental project
- Number of environmental activities
- Other measurable environmental outcome

the commitment must be checked to make sure it is realistic and can be evidenced.

Relevant commitments will be included within the contract handover process and monitored where required.

Digital technology

Educationwise relies heavily on digital technology and cloud services.

Digital delivery can reduce some physical activities but also uses energy and resources.

Educationwise will take a sensible approach which may include:

- Avoiding unnecessary duplication of digital files
- Reviewing unused systems and licences
- Selecting suitable systems rather than unnecessary technology
- Using equipment for a reasonable lifespan
- Considering environmental information about major technology suppliers where relevant
- Using secure cloud systems appropriately
- Disposing of technology responsibly

Security, accessibility, quality and data protection will remain key considerations when selecting technology.

Artificial intelligence

Artificial intelligence may support Educationwise activity but also requires computing resources.

Educationwise will focus on using AI:

- Where it provides a clear business, learning or quality benefit
- Through approved systems
- In line with data protection and security requirements
- Without unnecessary duplication or use

Environmental impact may be considered alongside the wider benefits and risks when adopting significant new technology.

Offices and workspaces

Educationwise may use offices, serviced workspaces, meeting rooms or other locations.

Where Educationwise controls the arrangements, reasonable environmental considerations may include:

- Energy efficiency
- Waste and recycling facilities
- Accessibility by transport

- Equipment efficiency
- Use of space
- Environmental standards of the building

Where accommodation is leased or provided as a serviced workspace, Educationwise may have limited control over building-level arrangements.

Educationwise does not commit to specific building standards or technologies for future premises unless these have been formally agreed.

Environmental claims

Educationwise will take care when making public claims about:

- Carbon reduction
- Net Zero
- Carbon neutrality
- Environmental benefits
- Sustainability
- Recycling
- Reduced emissions

Environmental claims should be clear and supported by reasonable evidence.

Educationwise will not claim that an activity is carbon neutral or has achieved a particular reduction unless suitable evidence is available.

Carbon offsetting

Educationwise will focus first on reducing avoidable emissions within the areas it can reasonably influence.

Carbon offsetting may be considered where:

- There is a clear reason for doing so
- Relevant emissions have been appropriately measured
- Reduction opportunities have been considered first
- The scheme has suitable assurance
- The approach supports an agreed organisational or contractual objective

Carbon offsetting will only be considered where it forms part of a clear and evidenced approach to reducing environmental impact.

Learners and curriculum

Educationwise will support appropriate awareness of sustainability where it is relevant to the programme and learner.

This may include:

- Responsible use of resources
- Environmental awareness
- Sustainability within the learner's occupational sector
- Professional responsibilities
- Sustainable workplace practices
- Relevant employer expectations

Sustainability will be included where it adds value to learning and is relevant to the programme.

Employer engagement

Where relevant, Educationwise may discuss sustainability through employer engagement.

This could include:

- Sector developments
- Skills needed for changing industries
- Sustainable workplace practices
- New technologies
- Employer priorities
- Emerging career opportunities

These discussions may help inform curriculum planning where sustainability is relevant to the occupation.

Staff awareness

Staff will be made aware of the main expectations within this policy.

This may be through:

- Induction
- Policy updates
- Staff communications
- Relevant training
- Team meetings

- Guidance linked to particular roles

Separate annual sustainability training is not required for every member of staff unless there is an identified need.

Individual responsibility

Staff are expected to:

- Use resources responsibly
- Avoid unnecessary waste
- Avoid unnecessary printing
- Consider whether travel is required
- Use equipment appropriately
- Follow relevant recycling arrangements
- Support agreed environmental actions relevant to their role
- Provide accurate information where environmental data is being collected

Learners will be encouraged to act responsibly when using Educationwise resources.

Measuring progress

Educationwise will use proportionate information to understand its environmental activity.

This may include:

- Business travel information
- Use of digital processes
- Equipment purchasing and disposal
- Environmental actions
- Supplier information where relevant
- Contract-specific measures
- Environmental commitments made through tenders
- Carbon information where this has been formally calculated

Educationwise will use information already available wherever possible rather than create unnecessary reporting.

Carbon measurement

Educationwise may develop more detailed carbon measurement where there is a clear need, for example:

- A public sector tender
- A major customer requirement
- Development of a Carbon Reduction Plan
- An agreed organisational target
- A significant change to operations

Where emissions are measured, Educationwise will use an appropriate recognised method and clearly record:

- The reporting period
- The organisational boundary
- The emissions included
- The baseline used
- The calculation method
- Any estimates or limitations

A numerical reduction target will only be set once a suitable baseline and measurement approach are in place.

Roles and responsibilities

Senior Leadership Team

The Senior Leadership Team is responsible for:

- Overall oversight of this policy
- Considering significant environmental commitments
- Approving organisation-wide targets where appropriate
- Making sure significant tender commitments are realistic
- Reviewing relevant environmental risks

Directors and managers

Directors and managers are responsible for:

- Applying this policy within their areas
- Making proportionate environmental decisions
- Supporting agreed actions
- Monitoring relevant contract commitments
- Escalating significant issues

Staff involved in procurement and tenders

Staff involved in procurement or tender activity should:

- Consider relevant environmental requirements
- Check commitments before they are made
- Involve the appropriate operational team
- Record commitments included within successful contracts
- Ensure these are handed over for delivery and monitoring

All staff

All staff should:

- Use resources responsibly
- Follow agreed arrangements
- Avoid unnecessary waste
- Provide accurate information where monitoring is required
- Raise environmental concerns where appropriate

Governance

Environmental matters will normally be managed through Educationwise's existing governance arrangements.

Depending on the issue, this may include:

- Senior Leadership Team
- Relevant risk committees
- Master Risk Committee
- Board
- Contract reviews
- Quality Improvement Plan

Significant environmental or contractual risks will be escalated through the appropriate route.

Related policies

This policy should be read alongside:

- Social Value and Corporate Responsibility Policy
- Ethics and Anti-Bribery Policy

- Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Privacy Policy
- Security Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Contingency and Adverse Effects Management Policy
- Relevant procurement and contracting arrangements

Monitoring and review

Educationwise will review its sustainability arrangements annually to ensure they remain appropriate and reflect any significant changes to legislation, procurement requirements, contractual commitments or organisational activity.

The annual review will consider:

- Changes to relevant environmental or procurement requirements
- New Net Zero or carbon commitments
- Whether a Carbon Reduction Plan is required
- Environmental commitments included within contracts or tenders
- Changes to Educationwise's operating model
- Any significant environmental risks or improvement opportunities

This policy will be fully reviewed every two years, or sooner where there is a significant change in legislation, contractual requirements, organisational activity or environmental risk.