

# HEFCE corporate social responsibility action plan 2010-12

1. Corporate social responsibility (CSR) for HEFCE means that we take account of the impact our work has on the economy, society and the environment. Our stakeholders include Government and the universities and colleges we fund, as well as our employees, suppliers, communities and society as a whole.
2. This plan highlights the key actions we plan to undertake by March 2012 to work towards achieving the objectives and targets set out in 'HEFCE corporate social responsibility policy 2008-2014'<sup>1</sup>. It is not intended to be a comprehensive account of everything we will do to promote CSR.

## Monitoring and review

3. Our plans for regularly monitoring and reviewing our CSR performance are set out in our CSR policy. This action plan will be monitored quarterly as part of this process. We will review this action plan in March 2012 and subsequently publish a revised plan.

## Managing our environmental impacts

4. This section sets out our actions to meet our objectives in relation to managing our environmental impacts. We will undertake these actions to work towards achieving our targets in relation to carbon emissions, water consumption, waste minimisation and recycling, and transport.

Action 1: Maintain certification to the ISO14001 standard, first achieved in April 2008.

### To support our targets of reducing carbon emissions and water consumption

Action 2: Upgrade the windows by September 2010 to improve levels of natural ventilation and daylight.

Action 3: Work with our maintenance contractor to optimise the use of our Building Management System.

Action 4: Continue the review of IT and communications equipment to rationalise equipment and reduce energy consumption.

Action 5: Consider the energy rating of all electrical equipment purchased with the aim of only purchasing the most efficient equipment, for example A-rated.

Action 6: Maintain certification to the Carbon Trust Standard, first achieved in April 2008.

Action 7: Investigate how we can obtain a better understanding of our energy consumption at Northavon House and Centre Point by March 2011.

Action 8: Identify and implement further cost-effective energy and water conservation measures.

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<sup>1</sup> Available at [www.hefce.ac.uk](http://www.hefce.ac.uk) under About us/Corporate Social Responsibility.

Action 9: Continue to improve collection, analysis and interpretation of our data to enable more effective and accurate management of emissions and consumption data.

Action 10: Encourage the embedding of sustainable development in the organisation of HEFCE events through our internal good practice guidance and venue database.

Action 11: When tendering for our electricity contract, seek to procure at least 10 per cent from renewable sources for both Northavon House and Centre Point.

**To support our targets to reduce the amount of waste produced and sent to landfill**

Action 12: Ensure all printers and photocopiers continue to be set to print double-sided as default.

Action 13: Continue to reduce the number of printed documents produced and distributed by HEFCE by moving to web-only publications. All printed documents to be printed double-sided on recycled paper or paper sourced from sustainable forests and totally chlorine-free.

Action 14: Continue to encourage recycling by providing banks of recycling bins alongside a general waste bin.

Action 15: When our current contract for waste disposal comes to an end, seek to procure an integrated waste management contract. This will enable us to work with the contractor to further minimise our waste sent to landfill.

**To support our targets to reduce carbon emissions from transport**

Action 15: Provide incentives for staff to commute to work via sustainable modes. These incentives include the continued provision of:

- bike sheds, showers and changing facilities at Northavon House
- a salary-sacrifice scheme for the purchase of bicycles
- interest-free loans to purchase season tickets for trains and buses
- cycle training
- ‘Doctor Bike’ sessions to help staff ensure that their bicycles are roadworthy
- support for the Bicycle Users’ Group
- guaranteed lift home scheme
- commuter buddy database to help staff identify potential partners for car-sharing, cycling, walking and travelling by public transport
- dedicated car share parking spaces at Northavon House.

Action 16: Continue to implement our policy on business travel that staff should normally travel by public transport unless there are reasons why this is not practicable or if there are other circumstances that would impede efficiency or effectiveness.

Action 17: Further promote the use of video- and telephone-conferencing to reduce the need to travel to meetings. This will include the provision of internet meeting software.

## **Biodiversity**

Action 18: Through our contract for grounds management ensure that they are managed in an environmentally sensitive manner that enhances biodiversity.

Action 19: Consider the installation of two bee homes in the grounds by autumn 2010 to help conserve bees.

Action 20: Consider options for creating a wildlife garden onsite based on staff designs.

## **Procurement**

5. We will undertake the following actions to meet our objectives and targets in relation to procurement.

Action 21: Use the Sustainable Procurement Action Plan Flexible Framework<sup>2</sup> annually to evaluate procurement practice.

Action 22: Publish our sustainable procurement policy by August 2010.

Action 23: Keep our procurement guide under review to ensure it includes all relevant aspects of CSR and the Energy Services Directive<sup>3</sup>. Communicate any changes to all relevant staff.

Action 24: Review tender evaluation criteria and elevate CSR considerations. Communicate these changes to all relevant staff.

Action 25: Provide fair trade tea and coffee for meetings held at Northavon House and Centre Point.

## **Our people**

6. In order to achieve our objectives and targets in relation to HEFCE staff we will undertake the following actions.

Action 26: Implement our People Strategy, which aims to outline explicitly our approach to people within the organisation and be clear about how the management of our people resource is key to the achievement of our strategic objectives. It articulates our aspirations as an employer, including our approach to CSR.

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<sup>2</sup> Set out in 'Procuring the Future – The Sustainable Procurement Task Force National Action Plan', available at [www.defra.gov.uk/sustainable/government/publications/procurement-action-plan/index.htm](http://www.defra.gov.uk/sustainable/government/publications/procurement-action-plan/index.htm). The Flexible Framework identifies five key themes: people; policy, strategy and communications; procurement process; engaging suppliers; and measurement and results. These are in effect the key behavioural and operational change programmes that need to be delivered in each public sector organisation to deliver sustainable procurement.

<sup>3</sup> Further information is available at [www.decc.gov.uk](http://www.decc.gov.uk) under What we do/supporting consumers/ saving energy and CO2/Energy Services Directive.

Action 27: Through our High Performance Culture Project, further develop the culture of the organisation – in particular explore how we can better support people in working to the best of their ability and deriving real satisfaction from their role, corporate contribution, and prospects.

Action 28: Review our approach to performance management including the performance review process and how we reward people, with a view to elevating CSR issues and making changes for the 2010-11 review year.

Action 29: Continue our awareness-raising campaign to encourage staff to contribute to our CSR initiatives. This includes regularly updating the information available on our intranet, posters and staff forums. Look for ways to transform increased awareness into behavioural and cultural change at individual and organisational level.

Action 30: Include CSR in the induction session for new staff so that they are informed of our commitments to CSR and their roles and responsibilities.

Action 31: Hold an annual CSR week to raise staff awareness of CSR issues and how individual action can make a positive difference.

Action 32: Maintain our long-standing Investors in People status and our membership in the Positive about Disabled People Two Ticks scheme.

Action 33: Through our Diversity Steering Group and Action Group drive our equality and diversity agenda forward.

Action 34: Contribute to staff well-being by, for example, providing a fully equipped on-site gym, access to a personal trainer, offering health screening for all staff once every two years, covering the costs of a home cholesterol test, flu vaccinations and annual eyesight tests. Provide a confidential employee assistance programme which is available free to all staff.

Action 35: Promote work-life balance through flexible working including part-time working, flexible working hours, the ability to work from home and other external locations, as well as compassionate, maternity, paternity and parental leave.

## **In the community**

7. We will undertake the following actions to meet our objectives in relation to the community.

Action 36: Encourage further volunteering, and actively support colleagues if they need to flex their working hours in order to undertake voluntary work.

Action 37: Support HEFCE's Sports and Social Club and staff in voluntary fundraising activities by giving them the time and opportunity to participate in charitable events.

## **Working with the sector**

8. We will undertake the following actions to make sustainable development a central part of our strategy for the future development of the higher education sector.

Action 38: Undertake sector impact assessments on all our developing policies, initiatives and significant projects. The assessments will aim to: identify potential negative impacts; take mitigating actions where possible and appropriate; and use opportunities to promote sustainable development and equality and diversity.

Action 39: Continue to embed our approach to sustainable development and equality and diversity throughout our strategic plan, which is due to be reviewed in 2010.

Action 40: Continue to implement our strategy for supporting sustainable development in higher education<sup>4</sup>. Review the strategy and action plan in autumn 2010, and through consultation with the sector develop an approach for 2011 onwards.

Action 41: Through the carbon reduction strategy<sup>5</sup>, published in partnership with Universities UK and GuildHE, support institutions to reduce carbon emissions and meet the sector-level reduction targets.

Action 42: Develop a new equality scheme in 2010 to reflect new legislative developments and the changing priorities of the sector and HEFCE. Undertake an annual review of this scheme and update where necessary. Publish an annual report on this scheme.

Action 43: Promote equality and diversity within the staff and student bodies in higher education<sup>6</sup>.

## **Benchmarking and reporting**

9. We believe it is important to report publicly on our performance and benchmark ourselves to judge the effect of our initiatives. Therefore we will take the following actions.

Action 44: Publish an annual CSR report<sup>7</sup> in the summer of each year, which includes progress towards targets and other commitments set out in our CSR policy.

Action 45: Participate in Business in the Community's Corporate Responsibility Index<sup>8</sup> and aspire to year-on-year improvements.

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<sup>4</sup> Further information is available at [www.hefce.ac.uk](http://www.hefce.ac.uk) under Leadership, governance & management/Sustainable development.

<sup>5</sup> Carbon reduction target and strategy for higher education in England (HEFCE 2010/01). Available at [www.hefce.ac.uk](http://www.hefce.ac.uk) under Publications.

<sup>6</sup> Information on how we will meet this commitment is available at [www.hefce.ac.uk](http://www.hefce.ac.uk) under Leadership, governance & management/Equality and diversity.

<sup>7</sup> This report is published online at [www.hefce.ac.uk](http://www.hefce.ac.uk) under About us/Corporate Social Responsibility.

<sup>8</sup> Further information is available at [www.bitc.org.uk](http://www.bitc.org.uk)