

Annual Report on HCA's progress towards net zero carbon target and environmental goals

Draft September 2022 (finalisation subject to presentation to Board committee by end of December 2022)

Introduction

HCA adopted the Climate Commission roadmap for FE colleges in 2020 www.eauc.org.uk/fe_roadmap.

From Board level to Student Union, sustainability is a concern to students, staff and stakeholders across the college community. As a small college, with an ageing estate in very variable condition, we face some major challenges but have made significant progress this year in several areas.

We are strengthening our data gathering and targets for the coming year and are committed to pursuing our sustainable objectives despite the immediate financial pressures and turbulence in the wider economy.

Key areas of progress:

- Governance and leadership commitment
- Embedding teaching and learning around environmental sustainability in the curriculum across all main qualifications
- Securing a Stronger Towns grant to pilot the refurbishment of a small area of the estate to achieve net zero carbon emissions in that area.

Key areas for development:

- Establishing our baseline data for Scope 1 and Scope 2 emissions
- Developing an estates strategy
- Completing the roll-out of carbon literacy training for staff and students within the timescale of our pledges.

We have completed the majority of actions identified for colleges in the 'emerging' area of the roadmap and are setting targets in our action plan to move us to 'established' by the end of 2023/24.

The following sections of this report align with the roadmap targets and demonstrate progress to date:

Governance and Leadership

- Sustainability statement approved by Board and published
- Carried out College-wide survey on sustainability
- Established a Sustainability Committee and appointed a student Sustainability Officer in the Student Union
- Signed the Global Climate Letter – Race to Zero
- Announced pledges for 2021/22 including ending use of disposable cups, introducing a weekly meat-free day in the cafe and introducing carbon literacy training to all students by the end of 2022.
- Set ambitious net zero target (2030).

Additionally, we have begun to embed sustainability reporting into a range of regular reports to Board.

We have successfully completed all the Emerging College Goals for Governance and Leadership.

Data Collection

We have upskilled on measuring emissions with two members of the Finance team attending training over the summer of 2022.

Next steps 2022/23

We need to measure our existing Scope 1 and 2 emissions, then we will have completed all the steps to be an Emerging College on Climate Action Roadmap.

2023/4

Produce an estimate of Scope 3 emissions and identify ways to reduce them.

Teaching, Learning and Research

- Surveyed teaching staff, course leaders and workshop staff and students to gather baseline opinions on how sustainability is embedded currently at HCA
- Created sustainable practice codes for students, that are displayed in all workshops and teaching and learning spaces
- Held Fashion Revolution Week with talks on sustainability and clothes swaps
- Held a series of events to mark COP26 with the Sustainability Committee working with Student Union including talks, exhibitions, pledges and clothes swap events
- Announced a pledge to offer Carbon Literacy Training to all students by the end of 2022
- Held Staff Carbon Literacy training for 39 members of staff in July 2022
- Participated in the Global Goals Teach-in on a small scale
- Gathered case studies of good practice from FE and HE – on an ad hoc basis
- FE College Showcase reduced the repainting of exhibition walls and replaced foam board and spray mount with laser-cut QR codes and cardboard
- HE projects included integrating sourcing from charity shops and scrap stores into Textile Design BA (Hons) module delivery and making sustainable practice a key part of several project briefs
- Students led Fashion Revolution Week, thinking about the ethics and environmental consequences of fast fashion
- HCA workshops have led multiple activities encouraging and informing students on sustainable practices, promotion of recycling and reusing and reducing use of any harsh chemicals
- We introduced a new college sustainability prize in the Degree Show awards.

Next steps

We need to fulfil the pledge and roll out Carbon Literacy training to all students in 2022 and put in place more robust monitoring of the sustainable practices within each area of teaching and learning in the college.

Estates and Operations

- We are about to submit planning permission for the refurbishing of a dilapidated area of the estate as modern digital studio that meets net zero targets, with grant funding from the Stronger Towns fund
- Student designed sticker campaign to remind everyone to switch off appliances and minimize energy use
- Introduced one-meat free day each week in the campus cafes
- Stopped use of disposable cups in cafes on campus and reusable cups are available to buy
- Made a new Beryl Bikes station to promote cycling
- Launched a recyclable materials store on the College Road
- Improved recycling with more pure paper only bins
- We are introducing 100% recycled A4 paper for most operational use
- We planted 10 trees at Folly Lane from Herefordshire Council's City Trees scheme
- We established a wildflower bank at Folly Lane.
- We commissioned an ecological survey of both HCA campuses
- We offer free reusable sanitary products to students
- We have radically reduced printing of the college prospectus by moving to postcards with a QR code to digital format
- Introduced Ecosia as default web search engine on college student machines

Next steps

- We need to continue to improve and expand our recycling points
- Begin a series of regular management energy walk-arounds to log energy use across the college and spot places for improvement
- Monitor heating and cooler timers
- Explore viability of switch to 100% renewable electricity supplier
- Extend Ecosia to college's staff computers

At that point we will have completed all the steps to be an Emerging College on Climate Action Roadmap.

To become an Established College, the next goal will be to set and implement a target to reduce waste in the college by 50-75%.

This will involve collecting data on the college's use and waste of plastic and paper in order to develop a strategy to reduce waste using the waste hierarchy: prevention, reusing, recycling, disposal.

We also need to ensure sustainability is a key consideration in a new estates strategy that we are commissioning.

2023/24

Apply for grant funding (e.g. Salix Loan) to improve the sustainability of the estate.

Partnership and Engagement

- Signed the Global Climate Letter
- Publicised sustainability at HCA with website page, newsletters, articles in Herefordshire Wildlife Trust magazine and in Hereford Times
- Held workshops with local groups for COP26
- Joined Herefordshire Council's Greener Futures Initiative
- Worked with the local General Further Education College to organise tree-planting
- Launched HCA Sustainability Instagram page
- Facilitated local ornithological group monitoring swifts.

We have successfully completed all the Emerging College Goals for Partnership and Engagement.

Next steps to becoming an Established College:

- Sign the SDG Accord to promote the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) and embed teaching and learning around the SDG goals across the curriculum
- Play a more active role in supporting Herefordshire Council's Climate Action Network.

2023/24

- Explore development of a fossil fuels divestment plan

Monitoring

College progress on sustainability is reported to the Board through several reports including The Principal's Report throughout the year and in an annual report. The Senior Leadership Team currently monitors progress against the action plan with a goal in 2022/23 to embed more local monitoring across other college meetings.