

Climate Commission for UK Higher and Further Education



Progress to date

Since the launch of the Climate Commission for UK Higher and Further Education, the Climate Commissioners have reviewed feedback from the initial meeting. They are pleased to share with you the below update and next steps for the Climate Commission and how you can get involved in the process.

Updates:

- Student Commissioners have been appointed to work alongside the institutional Commissioners. This reflects equality within the Climate Commission and the determination to listen to students and ensure we have clear and cohesive actions. You can see who the Climate Commissioners are [here](#).
- We are delighted to announce more institutions have now joined the Climate Commission Council – we have 85 in total with 61 institutional leaders and 24 students making up the Council.
- We have provided free Carbon Literacy training to students from the Council. They are now empowered and equipped to influence their fellow students as well as senior management within their institution.
- We have agreed the vision and mission as well as a Target Statement for the Climate Commission so we have a clear way ahead.
- We have listed the top priorities for the Climate Commission.
- We will have 5 virtual evidence gathering events over the coming 6 months for the sector to input into. [Please book your place now](#).
- Progress continues on our Scope 3 work and you can find out more about this [here](#).
- We will soon be launching a sector wide programme for Carbon Literacy training.
- We will soon be launching a travel tool to assist with conscious travel decisions.

Climate Commission Vision

Across the Further and Higher Education sectors, to address the climate crisis, the Climate Commission will:

- Challenge, unite and enable action
- Demonstrate leadership and provide a strong and authoritative voice

Climate Commission Mission

To achieve rapid and positive change that enables universities and colleges to contribute fully to tackling the climate crisis, recognising the different approaches which may be taken and in the context of delivering the Sustainable Development Goals.

Empowering higher and further education to have a strong voice nationally and internationally in addressing the climate crisis.

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Climate Commission Target Statement

Further and higher educational institutions should aim for net-zero Green House Gas (GHG) emissions for Scope 1 and 2 by 2030, as per IPCC recommendations, as a minimum.

There should be significant sector action towards reducing Scope 3 emissions within this timeframe. A first step should be to understand sector Scope 3 emissions and develop a framework that can be used as a basis for understanding the current baseline and establishing a meaningful target that is in line with the ambition set out above.

Scope 3 net-zero GHG emissions should be achieved no later than 2050 (or as per devolved Government targets).

Climate Commission Priorities

The Climate Commission has identified five areas that the sector needs focused support on to ensure there is a clear and feasible pathway to reach targets. Other related areas, such as Scope 1 and 2 emissions, are already well resourced for the sector and it is felt that focus is not required. The top five priorities the Climate Commission will focus on and develop enablers for are:

1. Mobilising the Further and Higher Education voice for influence and impact
2. Research and innovation– the funding and scope of research and innovation and maximising its impact
3. Scope 3 – profiling work underway, developing sector understanding of Scope 3 emissions, and supporting the sector to make significant progress in addressing these
4. Deep adaptation – including governance, risk, mitigation and adaptation for the future of our campuses and operations
5. Education and the student experience – curriculum development and the climate emergency

Student Climate Commissioners

The Climate Commission partners have each invited a student to be a formal member of the Climate Commission and will work closely with them. We will confirm the details of these shortly. You can find more details of who the Climate Commissioners are [here](#).

Next Steps

The Climate Commission will hold virtual evidence gathering events over the next 6 months focusing on each of the priorities. The Climate Commission will invite relevant Expert Witnesses and Observers for each particular focus area. The Climate Commission Council are invited to attend all events. The Climate Commission will be seeking wider views and engagement from the sector and further details will be sent out in due course.

The Climate Commission Evidence Gathering Events are:

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- Friday 6th March 1300-1430: Priority 1 - Mobilising the Further and Higher Education voice for influence and impact – [Book here](#)
- Tuesday 24th March 1300-1430: Priority 2 – Research and Innovation – [Book here](#)
- Wednesday 29th April 1300-1430: Priority 3 – Scope 3 – [Book here](#)
- Tuesday 19th May 1000-1130: Priority 4 – Deep Adaptation – [Book here](#)
- Tuesday 2nd June 1500-1630: Priority 5 – Education and Student Experience – [Book here](#)

The Commissioners and Steering Group will provide updates following each of the key meetings identified above.

We look forward to working with the sector on this vital work.

Further background information on the [Climate Commission can be found here](#).