



Times Higher Education
**Sustainability
Impact Ratings**

SDG

11

**Sustainable Cities
and Communities**





SDG 11

Sustainable Cities and Communities

Why we measure

Cities and communities must themselves be sustainable. More and more of the world's population lives in urban centres, and this is often the home of our universities too. Cities can be places of great innovation and opportunity, but they can also be home to intense poverty and inequality. The interaction between universities and their communities, urban and rural, needs to be a positive one that can last for generations.

We are also exploring how universities act as custodians of heritage and environment in their communities, a sustainable community must have access to its history and culture in order to thrive.

<https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/cities/>

Links to other SDGs

Cities can be hubs of culture and also of industry and innovation (SDG9). They can also be places where hunger (SDG2) and poverty (SDG1) are most concentrated. Cities and communities are not separate from life below water (SDG14) or on land (SDG15), and the interactions between them will be further pressed by climate change (SDG13), unless action can be taken in a sustainable fashion.

Metrics and indicators

11.1 Research on sustainable cities and communities

11.1.1 Sustainable Cities and Communities: CiteScore

This indicator measures the proportion of a university's publications appear in the top 10% of journals according to the Citescore metric. It is intended to reflect on excellence of academic output.

The indicator is normalised and is worth 10% of the score in this SDG (equivalent to 2.60% of the overall score).

11.1.2 Sustainable Cities and Communities: FWCI

This indicator explores the quality of a university's output in the area of sustainable cities and communities research using the number of citations received as a metric.

This number is normalised by publication type (paper, review, conference proceeding, book, or book chapter), by year of publication, and by subject. Subjects are defined using Elsevier's ASJC classification.

This indicator is normalised and is worth 10% of the score in this SDG (equivalent to 2.6% of the overall score).

11.1.3 Sustainable Cities and Communities: publications

The number of publications looks at the scale of research output from a university around sustainable cities and communities. It is not scaled by the size of the institution – rather it looks at the overall impact.

This indicator is normalised and is worth 7% of the score in this SDG



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11.2 Support of arts and heritage

Universities need to show how they are supporting arts and heritage by strengthening and providing access to local cultural and heritage.

There are a total of 18 points that could be gained from meeting the criteria in this metric, worth 22.60% of the score in this SDG (equivalent to 5.88% of the overall score).

This metric and indicators relate to the UN Targets 11.4 and 11.7.

#	Indicator	Maximum score
11.2.1	Public access to buildings Year: 2024 Provide public access to buildings and/or monuments or natural heritage landscapes of cultural significance Up to three points based on: • Existence of access – maximum one point for free access to all significant buildings, 0.5 points for some free access, 0.25 points for paid access only • Evidence provided – up to one point • Is the evidence provided public – one point	3.75% in SDG (0.98% Overall)
11.2.2	Public access to libraries Year: 2024 Provide public access to libraries including books and publications Up to three points based on: • Existence of access – maximum one point for automatic free access to public, 0.75 points for access to all after application, 0.25 points for access in some circumstances • Evidence provided – up to one point • Is the evidence provided public – one point	3.75% in SDG (0.98% Overall)
11.2.3	Public access to museums Year: 2024 Provide public access to museums, exhibition spaces or galleries, or works of art and artefacts Up to three points based on: • Existence of access – maximum one point for free access to all museums and galleries, 0.5 points for free access to some, 0.25 points for paid access only • Evidence provided – up to one point	3.75% in SDG (0.98% Overall)



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#	Indicator	Maximum score
11.2.4	Public access to green spaces Year: 2024 Provide free public access to open spaces and green spaces Up to three points based on: • Existence of access – maximum one point for permanent free access, 0.5 points for occasional free access, 0.25 points for paid access only • Evidence provided – up to one point • Is the evidence provided public – one point	3.75% in SDG (0.98% Overall)
11.2.5	Arts and heritage contribution Year: 2024 Contribute to local arts, in terms of number of annual public performances of university choirs, theatre groups, orchestras etc.... either ad-hoc or as part of an ongoing programme Up to three points based on: • Existence of contribution – maximum one point for more than 30 performances, 0.75 points for more than 15, 0.25 points for ad-hoc only. • Evidence provided – up to one point • Is the evidence provided public – one point	3.8% in SDG (0.99% Overall)
11.2.6	Record and preserve cultural heritage Year: 2024 Deliver projects to record and preserve intangible cultural heritage such as local folklore, traditions, language, and knowledge. This can include the heritage of displaced communities. Up to three points based on: • Existence of projects – maximum 1 point for all three, 0.33 points for local or regional cultural heritage, 0.33 points for national cultural heritage, 0.33 points for heritage of displaced communities. • Evidence provided – up to one point • Is the evidence provided public – one point	3.8% in SDG (0.99% Overall)



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Guidance: public access (11.2.2)

This needs to be general access to members of the public. Residency might be a requirement, but not family membership etc.

Public access to libraries and collections can also take research inquiries or reader privileges into consideration. If members of the public can gain access after applying for reader privileges, without unreasonable requirements, then this can be regarded as public access.

11.3 Expenditure on arts and heritage

This measures the proportion of total university expenditure spent directly on arts and heritage, excluding spending on sports facilities.

The metric relates to the UN Targets 11.4.

This indicator is normalised and is worth 15.30% of the score in this SDG (equivalent to 3.98% of the overall score)

11.3.1 Indicator: Arts and heritage expenditure

Year: 2024

Data Collected	Definition
University expenditure	Total university expenditure in 2024 financial year
University expenditure on arts and heritage	University expenditure spent on supporting arts and heritage in 2024 financial year.

Data submission guidance

Definition: University expenditure

see 8.3

Definition: Expenditure on arts and heritage

This includes:

- operating expenditure on libraries, museums, galleries, exhibition spaces, theatres and open spaces provided there is some element of public access
- expenditure on conservation and maintenance of open spaces or historic buildings or artifacts
- expenditure on musical resources (e.g. instruments) also counts if there is some public benefit.
- regular costs of running buildings that are dedicated to arts and heritage

this does NOT include:

- sports facilities
- capital spending on new buildings



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Definition: Total university expenditure

This should also include non-faculty staff salaries and outsourced activities.

Expenditure on arts and heritage

Expenditure should not include money spent on purely academic research activities.

Expenditure on conservation of historic buildings can be included where this is required to maintain the structure, or to research how to maintain and preserve structures. However expenditure on modernisation should not. This may be difficult to assess as they can be linked (for example modernising a building supports its use and viability, therefore preserving the building).

11.4 Sustainable practices

Universities need to be active towards more sustainable transportation and housing.

There are a total of 27 points that could be gained from meeting the criteria in this metric, worth 35.10% of the score in this SDG (equivalent to 9.13% of the overall score).

This metric and indicators relate to the UN Targets 11.1, 11.2 and 11.A.

#	Indicator	Maximum score
11.4.1	Sustainable practices targets Year: in place by 2024 Measure and set targets for more sustainable commuting (walking, cycling or other non-motorized transport, vanpools, carpools, shuttlebus or public transportation, motorcycle, scooter or moped, or electric vehicles) Up to three points based on: • Existence of measures and targets – one point • Evidence provided – up to one point • Is the evidence provided public – one point	3.90% in SDG (1.01% Overall)
11.4.2	Promote sustainable commuting Year: 2024 Undertake actions to promote more sustainable commuting Up to three points based on: • Existence of actions – one point • Evidence provided – up to one point • Is the evidence provided public – one point	3.90% in SDG (1.01% Overall)



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11.4.3	Allow remote working Year: 2024 Promote or allow telecommuting or remote working for employees as a matter of policy or standard practice, or offer a condensed working week to reduce employee commuting Up to three points based on: • Existence of telecommuting – one point • Evidence provided – up to one point • Is the evidence provided public – one point	3.90% in SDG (1.01% Overall)
11.4.4	Affordable housing for employees Year: 2024 Provide affordable housing for employees Up to three points based on: • Existence of affordable housing – maximum one point for all three, 0.33 points for evaluating affordability, 0.33 providing housing directly, 0.33 providing financial support • Evidence provided – up to one point • Is the evidence provided public – one point	3.90% in SDG (1.01% Overall)
11.4.5	Affordable housing for students Year: 2024 Provide affordable housing for students Up to three points based on: • Existence of affordable housing – maximum one point for all three, 0.33 points for evaluating affordability, 0.33 providing housing directly, 0.33 providing financial support • Evidence provided – up to one point • Is the evidence provided public – one point	3.90% in SDG (1.01% Overall)
11.4.6	Pedestrian priority on campus Year: 2024 Prioritise pedestrian access on campus Up to three points based on: • Existence of prioritisation – one point • Evidence provided – up to one point • Is the evidence provided public – one point	3.90% in SDG (1.01% Overall)



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11.4.7	Local authority collaboration regarding planning and development Year: 2024 Work with local authorities to address planning issues and development, including ensuring that local residents are able to access affordable housing Up to three points based on: • Existence of working together – one point • Evidence provided – up to one point • Is the evidence provided public – one point	3.90% in SDG (1.01% Overall)
11.4.8	Planning development - new build standards Year: in place by 2024 Build new buildings to sustainable standards Up to three points based on: • Existence of standards – one point • Evidence provided – up to one point • Is the evidence provided public – one point	3.90% in SDG (1.01% Overall)
11.4.9	Building on brownfield sites Year: in place 2024 Build on brownfield sites, where possible Up to three points based on: • Existence of builds on brownfield sites – one point • Evidence provided – up to one point • Is the evidence provided public – one point	3.90% in SDG (1.01% Overall)

Data submission guidance

Guidance: Affordable housing (11.4.4 and 11.4.5)

The term 'affordable' can carry a different meaning for students and staff. The idea here is to see whether the university provides housing that is effectively subsidised. Is the price lower than students / staff would be paying when finding something equivalent? For staff we would expect this to be housing which is deemed affordable to those with a median household income or below as rated by the national government or a local government or by a recognized housing affordability index.

Guidance: Sustainable standards (11.4.8)

An example could be the 'LEED Green Building Certification'.

Definition: Brownfield sites (11.4.9)



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previously developed land—with or without any level of contamination—that is currently underused or unused. This is a less restrictive definition that is used in the US where it typically means a property, the expansion, redevelopment, or reuse of which may be complicated by the presence or potential presence of a hazardous substance, pollutant, or contaminant.

Evidence for sustainable standards and brownfield development (11.4.8 and 11.4.9)

The evidence needs to show that these standards have been used in building and development by at least 2024. This could be in the form of policies and practices that the university chooses to adhere to, or from evidence of prior development.
