



Times Higher Education
**Sustainability
Impact Ratings**

SDG

12

Responsible
Consumption and
Production





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Responsible Consumption and Production

Why we measure

Much of the world's economy is based around producing things for consumption. This drives the engine of industry. If we want the world to develop sustainably, we need to understand how to be more responsible at both ends of this cycle.

This means promoting resource and energy efficiency, having a sustainable infrastructure, and providing access to basic services for all.

We are exploring how universities are working towards an efficient use of resources and the minimization of waste.

<https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-consumption-production/>

Links to other SDGs

Responsible production and consumption will help to achieve development plans, reduce future economic, environmental and social costs, strengthen economic competitiveness and reduce poverty. (SDG1, SDG2, SDG8 and SDG9) It helps to protect the environment by minimising the impact of production and consumption. (SDG13, SDG14 and SDG15)

Metrics and indicators

12.1 Research on responsible consumption and production

12.1.1 Responsible Consumption and Production: 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).

12.1.2 Responsible Consumption and Production: FWCI

This indicator explores the quality of a university's output in the area of responsible consumption and production 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)

12.1.3 Responsible Consumption and Production: publications

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



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This indicator is normalised and is worth 7% of the score in this SDG (equivalent to 1.82% of the overall score)

12.2 Operational measures

Universities need to demonstrate actions towards responsible consumption and production.

There are a total of 26 points that could be gained from meeting the criteria in this metric, worth 26.70% of the score in this SDG (equivalent to 6.94% of the overall score).

This metric and indicators relate to the UN Targets 12.1, 12.4, 12.5 and 12.7.

#	Indicator	Maximum score
12.2.1	Ethical sourcing policy Year: in place by 2024 Have a policy on ethical sourcing of food and supplies Up to four points based on: • Existence of policy – one point • Evidence provided – up to one point • Is the evidence provided public – one point • Is policy created or reviewed in period 2020-2024 – one point	4.80% in SDG (1.25% Overall)
12.2.3	Policy waste disposal - hazardous materials Year: in place by 2024 Have a policy, process or practice on waste disposal - Covering hazardous materials Up to four points based on: • Existence of policy – one point • Evidence provided – up to one point • Is the evidence provided public – one point • Is policy created or reviewed in period 2020-2024 – one point	4.80% in SDG (1.25% Overall)



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#	Indicator	Maximum score
12.2.4	Policy waste disposal - landfill policy Year: in place by 2024 Have a policy on waste disposal - to measure the amount of waste sent to landfill and recycled Up to four points based on: • Existence of policy – one point • Evidence provided – up to one point • Is the evidence provided public – one point • Is policy created or reviewed in period 2020-2024 – one point	4.80% in SDG (1.25% Overall)
12.2.5	Policy for minimisation of plastic use Year: in place by 2024 Have policies around use minimisation of plastic Up to four points based on: • Existence of policies – one point • Evidence provided – up to one point • Is the evidence provided public – one point • Is policy created or reviewed in period 2020-2024 – one point	4.80% in SDG (1.25% Overall)
12.2.6	Policy for minimisation of disposable items Year: in place by 2024 Have policies around use minimisation of disposable items Up to four points based on: • Existence of policies – one point • Evidence provided – up to one point • Is the evidence provided public – one point • Is policy created or reviewed in period 2020-2024 – one point	4.80% in SDG (1.25% Overall)



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12.2.7	Disposable policy: extensions to services Year: in place by 2024 Ensuring these policies extend to outsourced services and the supply chain Up to three points based on: • Existence of extension – one point • Evidence provided – up to one point • Is the evidence provided public – one point	1.35% in SDG (0.35% Overall)
12.2.8	Minimisation policies extended to suppliers Year: in place by 2024 Ensuring these policies extend to outsourced suppliers and the supply chain - (for example suppliers of equipment, stationery, building contracts) Up to three points based on: • Existence of extension – one point • Evidence provided – up to one point • Is the evidence provided public – one point	1.35% in SDG (0.35% Overall)

Data submission guidance

Guidance: Ethical sourcing (12.2.1)

This is the process of ensuring the products being sourced are obtained in a responsible and sustainable way, that the workers involved in making them are safe and treated fairly and that environmental and social impacts are taken into consideration during the sourcing process.

Guidance: 12.2.2

This metric has been withdrawn.

Guidance: Hazardous materials (12.2.3)

This covers any item or agent (biological, chemical, radiological, and/or physical), which has the potential to cause harm to humans, animals, or the environment, either by itself or through interaction with other factors.

Guidance: Disposable items (12.2.6):

This will usually refer to single use items.

Definition: outsourced services (12.2.7)

This refers to contracted services on campus (e.g. food catering/canteens, cleaning, security guards, etc.).



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Definition: outsourced suppliers (12.2.8)

This refers to suppliers of goods, including but not limited to equipment, stationery, and building contracts.

12.3 Proportion of recycled waste

Year: 2024

It is vital that universities maximise recycling and minimise waste sent to landfill. The metric relates to the UN Targets 12.5.

This metric is worth 27% of the score in this SDG (equivalent to 7.02% of the overall score).

This year's approach will see two indicators feeding into this metric.

The first question (indicator 12.3.1 Waste tracking) is generally asking whether your university measures the amount of waste generated and recycled. If you do, we will ask you to provide evidence for it.

If you do not measure this amount you cannot score for the second question.

#	Indicator	Maximum score
12.3.1	Waste tracking Year: 2024 Measure the amount of waste generated and recycled across the university Up to three points based on: • Existence of measurement maximum of one point for whole university, 0.5 for partial measurement • Evidence provided – up to one point • Is the evidence provided public – one point	13.50% in SDG (3.51% Overall)

The second question (indicator 12.3.2 Proportion of waste recycled) asks for the amount of waste created in the university, and the amount recycled and sent to landfill. These values will only be scored where universities have indicated that they are measuring waste across the whole university.

This indicator is normalised and is worth 13.50% of the score in this SDG (equivalent to 3.51% of the overall score).



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12.3.2 Indicator: Proportion of waste recycled

Data Collected	Definition
Amount of waste generated	Amount of waste (metric ton) generated in 2024
Amount of waste recycled	Amount of waste (metric ton) recycled in 2024. This is a subset of amount of waste generated.
Amount of waste sent to landfill	Amount of waste (metric ton) sent to landfill in 2024. This is a subset of amount of waste generated.

Data submission guidance

Definition: units of measurement

Waste should be measured in metric tonnes.

Definition: Waste

This is defined as waste of a material, substance, or by-product eliminated or discarded as no longer useful or required after the completion of a process.

Guidance: Recycling of waste

This is the process of converting waste materials into new materials and objects. It can be thought of as a recovery operation by which materials are reprocessed into products, materials or substances whether for the original or other purposes.

Guidance: Waste recycled

In our context this refers to the university's implementation of waste diversion or utilising recycled waste collection services to collect and recycle items such as paper, glass, organics, construction material, appliances and electronics.

This could also include waste that is "recycled" into energy.

Guidance: Composting

Waste recycled includes composting.

Guidance: Incineration

Incineration is not counted as recycling. If the waste is incinerated to convert it into energy, you could include this in waste recycled.



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12.4 Publication of a sustainability report

Regular publication of progress towards sustainability is an important action for all organisations, including universities. This metric asks if the institution published a university sustainability report between 2020 and 2024 and whether this was a standalone document or part of a larger annual report.

Publication of a sustainability report is a direct requirement of SDG 12 by the United Nations.

This metric and indicators relate to the UN Targets 12.6.

A maximum score is worth 19.30% of the score in this SDG (equivalent to 5.02% of the overall score).

#	Indicator	Maximum score
12.4.1	Publication of a sustainability report Year: 2024 Up to three points based on: • Existence of report – one point for annual, 0.6 points for bi-annual only, 0.3 points for less frequent • Evidence provided – up to one point • Is the evidence provided public – one point	19.30% in SDG (5.02% Overall)

Data submission guidance

Guidance: Sustainability report

An example of a sustainability report for institutions that have signed the global SDG Accord (<http://www.sdgaccord.org/>) would be the public Annual Report that the Accord requires.

Another example would be AASHE STARS Reports.