



Times Higher Education
**Sustainability
Impact Ratings**

SDG

6

Clean Water
and Sanitation





SDG 6

Clean Water and Sanitation

Why we measure

Without water we can't live. Water supports out agriculture and aquaculture. Clean water is vital. However, due to bad economics or poor infrastructure, millions of people including children die every year from diseases associated with inadequate water supply, sanitation and hygiene.

We are exploring how universities ensure access to water and sanitation for all.

<https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/water-and-sanitation/>

Links to other SDGs

SDG 6 relates widely to other SDGs - safe water and sanitation are key foundations for good health (SDG3). By managing our water sustainably, we are also able to better manage our production of food and energy (SDG6 and SDG7) and contribute to decent work and economic growth (SDG8). Moreover, we can preserve our water ecosystems, their biodiversity (SDG14), and take action on climate change (SDG13).

Metrics and indicators

6.1 Research on water

6.1.1 Clean Water and Sanitation: 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 2.6% of the overall score).

6.1.2 Clean Water and Sanitation: FWCI

This indicator explores the quality of a university's output in the area of water (services) and sanitation 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).

6.1.3 Clean Water and Sanitation: publications

The number of publications looks at the scale of research output from a university around water (services) and sanitation. 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 (equivalent to 1.82% of the overall score)

SDG 6

Clean Water and Sanitation

6.2 Water consumption per person

Year: 2024

This metric looks at the volume of water used per person (including students, staff and faculty) on campus per year. The number of students and employees are collected as full-time equivalents and they are summarised as campus population.

The metric relates to the UN Targets 6.1 and 6.4.

This metric is worth 19% of the score in this SDG (equivalent to 4.94% of the overall score).

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

The first question (indicator 6.2.1 Water consumption tracking) asks if your university measures the total amount of treated and extracted water used. If you do, we will ask you to provide evidence.

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

#	Indicator	Maximum score
6.2.1	Water consumption tracking Year: 2024 Measure the total volume of water used in the university that is taken from mains supply, desalinated, or extracted from rivers, lakes, or aquifers? Up to three points based on: • Existence of measurement – maximum one point for measurement across the whole university, 0.5 points for partial measurement • Evidence provided – up to one point • Is the evidence provided public – one point	9.50% in SDG (2.47% Overall)

Data submission guidance

Guidance: Water sources

This is designed to evaluate the volume of treated water (mains water or desalinated water) or extracted water (from rivers, lakes, aquifers) used in the university. Both of these water sources have wide ranging environmental impacts.

The second question (indicator 6.2.2 Water consumption per person) asks for the volume of water used in the university. These values will only be scored where universities have indicated that they are measuring water consumption across the whole university.

The indicator is normalised and a maximum score is worth 9.50% of the score in this SDG (equivalent to 2.47% of the overall score).



SDG 6

Clean Water and Sanitation

Data Collected	Definition
Volume of water used in the university: Inbound (treated/ extracted water)	Volume of water used (in cubic metre) in the university sourced from treated/ extracted water, referring to year 2024.
Campus population	This is the sum of the FTE (Full Time Equivalent) number of students and the FTE number of employees, referring to year 2024.

Data submission guidance

Definition: units of measurement

The unit of measurement is cubic metre (m³).

We expect these figures (Volume of water used) to be a rounded figure.

Guidance: Campus population

Campus population should include all people who are regularly resident or working on campus, including employees, academics, and students.

It may also include families of employees, staff or students where they live on campus.

Campus population does NOT include:

- campus visitors
- summer school population
- remote students / staff

Definition: Employees

see 2.2

Definition: Students

see 1.2

6.3 Water usage and care

Universities need to show how they conserve, appropriately use and protect the quality and quantity of water sources.

There are a total of 15 points that could be gained from meeting the criteria in this metric, worth 23% of the score in this SDG (equivalent to 5.98% of the overall score).

This metric and indicators relate to the UN Targets 6.1, 6.3, 6.4 and 6.5



SDG 6

Clean Water and Sanitation

#	Indicator	Maximum score
6.3.1	Wastewater treatment Year: in place by 2024 A process in place to treat wastewater. Up to three points based on: • Existence of process – one point • Evidence provided – up to one point • Is the evidence provided public – one point	4.60% in SDG (1.20% Overall)
6.3.2	Preventing water system pollution Year: in place by 2024 Processes to prevent polluted water entering the water system, including pollution caused by accidents and incidents at the university. Up to three points based on: • Existence of processes – one point • Evidence provided – up to one point • Is the evidence provided public – one point	4.60% in SDG (1.20% Overall)
6.3.3	Free drinking water provided Year: 2024 Provide free drinking water for students, staff and/or visitors (e.g. drinking water fountains). Up to three points based on: • Existence of provision – one point • Evidence provided – up to one point • Is the evidence provided public – one point	4.60% in SDG (1.20% Overall)
6.3.4	Water-conscious building standards Year: in place by 2024 Apply building standards to minimise water use Up to three points based on: • Existence of standards – one point • Evidence provided – up to one point • Is the evidence provided public – one point	4.60% in SDG (1.20% Overall)

SDG 6

Clean Water and Sanitation

#	Indicator	Maximum score
6.3.5	Water-conscious planting Year: in place by 2024 Plant landscapes to minimise water usage. (e.g. use drought-tolerant plants) Up to three points based on: • Existence of those landscapes – one point • Evidence provided – up to one point • Is the evidence provided public – one point	4.60% in SDG (1.20% Overall)

Data submission guidance

Guidance: Building standards

These are requirements, regulations and technical guidance, to ensure buildings are safe, efficient and sustainable. They can vary by country but the mutual aim is to ensure that policies set out in a relevant area are carried out.

Guidance: Processes

Processes do not need to be created in the indicated year but need to be in place during that year.

6.4 Water reuse

Universities need to demonstrate that they encourage or mandate the reuse and recycling of water wherever possible.

There are a total of 7 points that could be gained from meeting the criteria in this metric, worth 12% of the score in this SDG (equivalent to 3.12% of the overall score).

The metric relates to the UN Targets 6.4

#	Indicator	Maximum score
6.4.1	Water reuse policy Year: in place by 2024 Have a policy to maximise water reuse across the university? 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	6% in SDG (1.56% Overall)



SDG 6

Clean Water and Sanitation

6.4.2	Water reuse measurement Year: in place by 2024 Measure the reuse of water across the university? Up to three points based on: • Existence of measurement – one point • Evidence provided – up to one point • Is the evidence provided public – one point	6% in SDG (1.56% Overall)
--------------	---	-------------------------------------

Data submission guidance

Definition: Water reuse

This is a method of recycling treated wastewater for beneficial purposes, such as agricultural and landscape irrigation, industrial processes, toilet flushing, and groundwater replenishing. Recycled/reused water can include wastewater from sinks, showers, dish washers, washing machines that is reused at least one time. Harvesting rainwater and use it for flushing toilets would count as water recycling / re-use.

6.5 Water in the community

Universities need to outreach directly and demonstrate engagement initiatives to address the community's water management and/or water usage.

There are a total of 15 points that could be gained from meeting the criteria in this metric, worth 19% of the score in this SDG (equivalent to 4.95% of the overall score).

This metric and indicators relate to the UN Targets 6.6 and 6.B.

#	Indicator	Maximum score
6.5.1	Water management educational opportunities Year: 2024 Provide educational opportunities for local communities to learn about good water management. Up to three points based on: • Existence of opportunities – maximum one point for both, free and paid opportunities, one point for free opportunities only, 0.25 points for • paid for opportunities only • Evidence provided – up to one point • Is the evidence provided public – one point	3.80% in SDG (0.99% Overall)



SDG 6

Clean Water and Sanitation

6.5.3	Off-campus water conservation support Year: 2024 Support practical water conservation off campus Up to three points based on: • Existence of support – one point • Evidence provided – up to one point • Is the evidence provided public – one point	3.80% in SDG (0.99% Overall)
6.5.4	Sustainable water extraction on campus Year: in place by 2024 Where water is extracted (for example from aquifers, lakes or rivers) utilise sustainable water extraction technologies on associated university grounds on and off campus. Up to three points based on: • Existence of applicable technologies – one point • Evidence provided – up to one point • Is the evidence provided public – one point	3.80% in SDG (0.99% Overall)
6.5.5	Cooperation on water security Year: 2024 Cooperate with local, regional, national, or global governments on water security. Up to three points based on: • Existence of cooperation – 0.25 points for each of local, regional, national and global cooperation • Evidence provided – up to one point • Is the evidence provided public – one point	3.80% in SDG (0.99% Overall)
6.5.6	Promoting conscious water usage on campus Year: 2024 Actively promote conscious water usage on campus, Up to three points based on: • Existence of promotions – one point • Evidence provided – up to one point • Is the evidence provided public – one point	1,90% in SDG (0.49% Overall)
6.5.7	Promoting conscious water usage in the wider community Year: 2024 Actively promote conscious water usage in the wider community Up to three points based on: Existence of promotions – one point Evidence provided – up to one point Is the evidence provided public – one point	1,90% in SDG (0.49% Overall)



SDG 6

Clean Water and Sanitation

Data submission guidance

Guidance: Water extraction

The process of taking water from any source, either temporarily or permanently, be it for flood control, irrigation or for the use as drinking water.

Guidance: Water security

Water security as defined by the United Nations is the “...capacity of a population to safeguard sustainable access to adequate quantities of acceptable quality water for sustaining livelihoods, human well-being, and socio-economic development, for ensuring protection against water-borne pollution and water-related disasters, and for preserving ecosystems in a climate of peace and political stability.”

However, diverting river water or groundwater through built infrastructure at campus or associated university grounds alters the surface water quantity and quality and thereby disrupts the natural flows through streams, rivers, and lakes. Therefore, technologies need to be designed and applied sustainably, so they meet the needs of a particular community / location.

Guidance: Water conservation off campus (6.5.3)

This refers to any activity that is not on campus. Examples could be in a local community or elsewhere.
