Environmental Sustainability Action Plan

2026–2030



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Acknowledgement of Country

TAFE NSW acknowledges Aboriginal Peoples as the Traditional Custodians of the lands on which our campuses are located and where we conduct our business. We pay our respects to elders past and present and we are committed to honouring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples' unique cultural and spiritual relationships to the land, waters and seas as well as their rich contribution to society.

We recognise that Aboriginal cultures and communities form the foundation of cultural diversity within New South Wales. Hundreds of cultures, languages and kinship structures have long been embedded in the lands of Aboriginal Countries throughout the state. We acknowledge and celebrate these diverse traditions, customs and cultures that have existed since the beginning of time.

We will continue to value Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and promote their rights and interests. In doing so, we acknowledge the wrongs of the past, respect the cultural diversity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and commit to embedding equality and equity throughout all areas of our organisations by integrating inclusive and innovative opportunities that will result in stronger relationships built on respect and trust.

© Amy Allerton, contemporary Aboriginal Artist of the Gumbaynggirr, Bundjalung and Gamilaroi nations.

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Message from the Managing Director



I am pleased to share the TAFE NSW Environmental Sustainability Action Plan 2026–2030, which sets out our commitment to building a more sustainable and resilient future for our students, staff and communities across New South Wales (NSW).

We recognise that sustainability is critical to achieving our vision of being the leading provider of lifelong learning and to meeting the evolving needs of industry and students in communities across NSW. We strive for a vocational education sector that equips students with the green skills needed to thrive in a rapidly changing world. Whether it's training in renewable energy, sustainable agriculture or low-emissions technologies, we are preparing a sustainability roadmap to ensure our students have the skills to lead the change.

TAFE NSW is committed to playing a leadership role in sustainability. We have a responsibility to lead by example, embedding sustainable practices into our operations, teaching spaces, educational delivery and partnerships. This plan reflects our values of Customer Focus, Collaboration, Integrity and Excellence, and aligns with broader government priorities to enhance climate action, support a circular economy and advocate for greater protection of our natural world.

The environmental challenges before us are complex and interconnected, demanding innovative approaches to sustainability. As a public training provider, we have an obligation to serve the people and communities of NSW by preparing for those challenges.

Through this plan, we will:

- progress action to transition to net zero across our campuses and facilities
- contribute to the protection and conservation of our natural world and ensure our campuses and communities are resilient to the impacts of our changing climate
- embed circular economy principles in the goods and services we procure and in the resources we use
- strengthen partnerships with industry and the community to drive local solutions and empower staff and students to be sustainability champions
- integrate sustainability into curriculum and training programs to meet industry needs.

Our Environmental Sustainability Action Plan 2026–2030 aligns with the TAFE NSW Strategic Plan, the TAFE NSW Charter and the TAFE NSW 20-Year Infrastructure Strategy (2022–2042).

We are making strong progress towards our targets and, thanks to the thousands of staff, students and community members committed to our vision, we have already launched a number of initiatives across our campuses and facilities.

This action plan will continue to build on these initiatives and help us address the issues that matter. I am proud to support the TAFE NSW Environmental Sustainability Action Plan 2026–2030 as we work together to build a more sustainable and liveable future for our students, staff and communities.

I invite you to engage with this plan, contribute your ideas and help us bring it to life. Together, we can ensure that vocational education not only builds the skills needed for the future but also equips and inspires our students to lead change in their industries and communities.



Chloe Read
Managing Director,
TAFE NSW

> "We recognise that sustainability is critical to achieving our vision of being the leading provider of lifelong learning and to meeting the evolving needs of industry and students in communities across NSW."

Message from the Executive Sponsor



As Executive Sponsor of our revised Environmental Sustainability Action Plan 2026–2030, I'm proud to stand alongside you as we continue to take bold steps to foster a more sustainable future together.

As Australia's largest provider of vocational education and training, TAFE NSW is committed to taking a leadership position by embedding sustainability in our operations. We recognise our responsibility to care for our environment and honour this commitment for the communities of NSW.

We acknowledge that sustainability is everyone's responsibility and must be at the core of our decision-making. At TAFE NSW, our Environmental Sustainability Action Plan 2026–2030 strives to embed sustainability into every facet of our organisation, from infrastructure and facilities management to supply chain management and education delivery operations.

This action plan will help us to adopt renewable energy and outline a roadmap to electrification to reduce our use of fossil fuels.

We aim to use energy and water more efficiently to meet our emissions and efficiency targets by:

- developing principles that place sustainability at the centre of the way we design, deliver and operate buildings and infrastructure
- recognising the value of nature, emphasising its intrinsic value and biodiversity as we commit to its care, protection and regeneration
- embedding circular economy principles in our systems and processes to help us tackle natural resource use and avoid waste via sustainable procurement of goods and services
- engaging and educating our staff and students to support an organisational culture that actively fosters sustainable and thriving campuses
- collaborating with our stakeholders to help fulfil our sustainability commitments.

We aim to deliver safe, sustainable and resilient spaces for our students to learn and thrive. We are committed to providing campuses and facilities that reflect the sustainability leadership our communities expect of a modern, future-fit educational institution.

Together, we are not just responding to global challenges; we are redefining what it means to provide a place to educate, empower and lead.



Susannah Le Bron
Chief Operating Officer,
TAFE NSW

> "Together, we are not just responding to global challenges; we are redefining what it means to provide a place to educate, empower and lead."

About this plan

Building on the success of the previous TAFE NSW Sustainability Strategy, this plan realigns and strengthens our commitment to achieving our 2030 commitments. The Environmental Sustainability Action Plan (ESAP) 2026–2030 will ensure we continue to embed environmental sustainability into how we operate, minimising our environmental footprint, demonstrating accountability and leading by example. Environmental sustainability needs a broad approach and strong leadership. As one of Australia's leading vocational education and training providers, TAFE NSW can set an example and lead the way.

Our five priorities are to:

1. shift towards net zero
2. understand climate risk and opportunities
3. embrace a circular economy
4. support a healthy environment and nature
5. educate and engage our staff, students and communities.

Our environmental sustainability targets include halving our emissions by 2030. We will comply with NSW Government policy, including NSW Net Zero Government Operations Policy, climate-related financial disclosures, and all relevant environmental legislation and regulations. We will provide our staff with engagement opportunities, training and information to support an organisational culture that actively participates in and values environmental sustainability.

The ESAP 2026–2030 aligns with broader strategies, including the TAFE NSW Strategic Plan and the TAFE NSW 20-Year Infrastructure Strategy (2022–2042). We recognise that safe and sustainable campuses are integral to TAFE NSW's offerings as a leading provider of lifelong learning and education. By building sustainable infrastructure, TAFE NSW delivers long-term value by creating learning spaces that are fit for the future and resilient to our changing climate. The ESAP 2026–2030 reinforces our commitment to continuous improvement by monitoring and reporting on environmental sustainability performance.

25%
reduction in TAFE NSW emissions*

*compared to 2018/19 baseline.

>1MW
Megawatt (MW) rooftop solar PV installed across TAFE NSW campuses



About TAFE NSW

TAFE stands for ‘Technical and Further Education’. Each year, around 400,000 students enrol in our courses. We aim to equip the workforce for the future through high-quality, personalised education and training.

We provide an extensive range of courses and qualifications to suit everyone from school leavers to career changers and businesses.

We offer short courses, apprenticeships, traineeships and qualifications ranging from certificates to diplomas and advanced diplomas. TAFE NSW is also a registered higher education provider and offers degree-level programs.

We provide a range of full-time and part-time study options in courses that are available in online, in-person or hybrid formats. TAFE NSW also offers the training and qualifications small businesses need to support growth. For larger businesses wanting to develop their workforce skill set, we deliver customised training and accredited qualifications anywhere, any time and in a range of delivery modes.

As the NSW Government’s public provider of vocational education and training, we:

- provide education and support services to meet the skills needs of individuals and the workforce
- consult with industry and communities to ensure that our learning programs and support services are relevant
- provide individuals, groups and communities that face barriers access to specialist services to support participation in education and other programs
- support students to undertake further studies at TAFE NSW or elsewhere.



Our journey so far

Launched TAFE NSW Sustainability Strategy and Environmental Sustainability Policy 2023

Developed Sustainability Design Standards for infrastructure projects, now known as Sustainability Design Guidelines

Conducted climate risk assessment of 154 campuses and introduced online Risk and Adaptation Platform to manage climate risk

Relaunched Sustainability Action Group and Sustainability Leadership Steering Committee to ensure effective governance of sustainability projects and issues

Developed Net Zero Pathway, outlining our emissions trajectory and what needs to be done to reach net zero

Developed Circularity Action Plan with eight targets and eight initiatives across procurement, infrastructure and ICT

Piloted Sustainability Library Hubs at eight campuses, establishing sustainability activations within TAFE NSW libraries

Developed Energy Management Plan, highlighting areas of opportunity for TAFE to improve energy management, reduce resource across our portfolio

Hosted Australasian Campuses Towards Sustainability (ACTS) Green Gown Awards 2025

Our commitment

TAFE NSW is committed to fostering a sustainable future. We recognise that sustainability is critical for achieving our vision of being a leading provider of lifelong learning and meeting the evolving needs of industries, students and communities across NSW.

Sustainability is integral to how we operate and serve NSW communities. We will continue to lead by example as we transition to net zero, support the circular economy, foster nature and biodiversity, reduce our carbon footprint, measure our impact and demonstrate accountability. Our students and industry partners are equally committed to supporting a safe, sustainable and resilient future.



Our 2030 targets

Priority Action Area	Targets				
Towards Net Zero	Halve Scope 1 and 2 emissions	Supply 20% of electricity with on-site solar	Reduce grid reliance by 40%	Reduce potable water use by 30%	Understand Scope 3 emissions
Climate Risk and Resilience	Increase climate risk maturity	Reduce climate risks to campuses			
Circular Economy	Embed sustainability into procurement	Divert 80% of waste from landfill	Decrease total waste by 10%	Comply with NSW EPA organics mandate	
Nature Positive	Meet Sustainable Design Guidelines in new builds	Maintain areas of significant ecological value	Manage environmental risks across campuses		
Education and Engagement	Lead in Sustainability Education	Action TPS Sustainability Roadmap	Cultivate a sustainable campus culture		

Guiding principles

This plan helps protect the environment and encourages everyone at TAFE NSW to take responsibility.

Together, students and staff can help care for our surroundings and build a safe, sustainable future.



Capability

We are committed to providing ongoing education and training to increase awareness, understanding and appreciation of environmental sustainability. By educating our staff and students about the importance of sustainability, we help our communities thrive as NSW transitions to a sustainable future.



Data

We are committed to following robust and scientific data practices that support us in reporting accurately on our environmental performance and progress towards our targets.



Education and innovation

We are dedicated to ensuring we have best-practice learning spaces that support sustainability and focus on future skills. We actively contribute to the green economy and have concentrated skills areas that support the transition to net zero.



Efficiency

We aim to maximise the value of our portfolio by improving asset utilisation, optimising building and land use, and managing lifecycle costs.

This reduces waste and strengthens sustainable resource management.



Empowering our people

We are dedicated to achieving sustainability by collaborating across all teams at TAFE NSW.

Our goal is to embed sustainability into everything we do. Inclusive and empowering stakeholder engagement is vital for co-designing and collaborating on projects, programs and initiatives.



Governance

We are dedicated to implementing and delivering sustainability initiatives that strengthen our reputation and attract students, employees, industries, partners and communities that value the environment. Following a robust governance structure will ensure we monitor and comply with legal and regulatory standards while ensuring alignment with the TAFE NSW Strategic Plan.



Healthy, safe and sustainable spaces

We are committed to creating sustainable campuses with resilient infrastructure and spaces that support the health and wellbeing of our students and staff.



Leadership

We are committed to leading by example. We are in a unique and valuable position to be a leader in achieving a sustainable future for NSW.

By implementing best-practice sustainability in our education, campuses and all our activities, we can help drive change across NSW.



Marketing and communications

We are committed to ensuring our marketing and communications materials on environmental sustainability are authentic and do not promote greenwashing.

We want to celebrate our sustainability successes and promote the great work staff and students are doing to support a sustainable future.



Policy

We are committed to embedding environmental sustainability in the co-design and consultation process of any policy we develop to ensure all policies meet environmental protection and sustainability requirements. This will ensure that our policies provide practical and sustainable solutions that align with our environmental sustainability commitments.



Safe and sustainable practices

We are dedicated to promoting safe and sustainable practices by fostering a culture that embraces safety and respects the environment.

Our campuses are spread across a number of unique natural environments, and it is our responsibility to protect and preserve these environments for future generations.

Priority Action Area 1: Towards Net Zero

Achieve emissions reduction targets in line with NSW Government policy, invest in renewable energy, transition away from fossil fuel use, and invest in high-integrity carbon projects.

Targets

- 50 per cent reduction in emissions of Scope 1 and Scope 2.
- 20 per cent of electricity needs to be met by renewable energy.
- 40 per cent reduction in grid electricity.
- 30 per cent reduction of potable water.
- Measure and understand material Scope 3 emissions.

Objectives

- Ensure our transition to net zero aligns with government policy and is accessible to our communities.
- Invest in resource-efficiency solutions that help lower electricity consumption, carbon emissions and operating (utility) costs while managing demand.
- Manage refrigerants responsibly to ensure systems are in place for handling, tracking and disposal.
- Transition away from fossil fuel use by electrifying buildings and assets.
- Deliver on-site renewable energy to meet 20 per cent of the campus electricity needs.
- Explore opportunities to invest in off-site renewable energy.
- Measure and report on material Scope 3 emissions.
- Ensure tenanted spaces are fitted out to support sustainability and reduce environmental impact.
- Promote sustainable transport options among staff and students to reduce environmental impact.
- Reduce water consumption by investing in solutions that lower costs and emissions.
- Reduce office paper consumption.
- Develop a strategic approach to managing carbon and carbon offsets.



Towards Net Zero Action Plan

Objectives	Actions		Measures of Success
1. **Ensure our transition to net zero aligns with government policy and is accessible to our communities.**	1.1	Review and update the TAFE NSW Net Zero Plan.	The plan aligns with the Net Zero Government Operations (NZGO) Policy and mandatory climate-related disclosure and is publicly available.
2. **Invest in resource-efficiency solutions that help lower electricity consumption, carbon emissions and operating (utility) costs while managing demand.**	2.1	Give preference to projects that support reductions in consumption, emissions and utility costs as part of total expenditure funding prioritisation.	Projects with a payback period of less than six years are given preference in the funding prioritisation matrix.
	2.2	Include the requirement to measure and report on energy efficiency outcomes, emissions reductions and cost savings in capital projects.	Capital projects are assessed for energy efficiency outcomes.
	2.3	Develop and implement an energy management plan to support resource efficiency and emissions reduction ambitions.	Energy management governance is established and formalised. Progress against energy targets and initiatives is reviewed and reported on quarterly.
	2.4	Embed sustainability requirements into relevant contract renewal pipelines for Facilities Management (FM).	FM maintenance contracts include sustainability criteria.
	2.5	Establish a utility monitoring system to track energy performance and identify opportunities for improvement.	The utility monitoring system captures more than 50 per cent of energy use.
	2.6	Develop energy action plans for high-impact and priority campuses, targeting base load and correction.	At least two high-impact campuses are audited each year.
	2.7	Investigate the feasibility of a demand response program at large sites using the assess, prepare, participate process.	A feasibility assessment is undertaken.

Towards Net Zero Action Plan (continued)

Objectives	Actions		Measures of Success
3. Manage refrigerants responsibly to ensure systems are in place for handling, tracking and disposal.	3.1	Update the asset register to include refrigerant type and charge (kg) for each relevant asset.	The asset register is maintained and updated annually by FM.
	3.2	Develop and implement a refrigerant management plan.	A refrigerant management plan is developed and implemented.
4. Transition away from fossil fuel use by electrifying buildings and assets.	4.1	Develop an electrification roadmap and target high-impact campuses for masterplan development.	A roadmap identifying priority campuses for masterplan development is complete.
	4.2	Investigate infrastructure that will be required to enable electrification.	Investigations as part of masterplan development are complete.
	4.3	Develop and implement a program to replace end-of-life gas assets.	A multi-year program is in place to replace end-of-life assets with electric alternatives.
	4.4	Transition fleet to electric vehicles (EVs) and hybrids for leased passenger and light commercial vehicles.	More than 85 per cent of owned and leased passenger vehicles are replaced by EVs. 30 per cent of new owned or leased light commercial vehicles are replaced by EVs.
	4.5	Build EV infrastructure requirements into new and existing buildings and campuses.	EV infrastructure is rolled out at each targeted campus in line with projected demand, load management and cost optimisation principles. 100 per cent compliance with the whole-of-government contract is achieved for EV charging software (Contract 211237).
	4.6	Develop and implement education and awareness to support NSW TAFE employees' transition to the EV fleet.	All TAFE NSW employees with access to the EV fleet have access to information and resources required to operate an EV.

Towards Net Zero Action Plan (continued)

Objectives	Actions		Measures of Success
5. Deliver on-site renewable energy to meet 20 per cent of the campus electricity needs.	5.1	Establish guidelines for the minimum requirements for installation of solar photovoltaic (PV) systems. Implement a consistent monitoring approach to capture and report on generation data.	Solar PV guidelines are implemented. All new and renewed solar PV systems are operational and connected via a remote access portal.
	5.2	Invest in cost-effective PV solutions that help ease reliance on the electricity grid, reduce electricity consumption and carbon emissions, and lower operating (utility) costs.	20 per cent of electricity needs are catered for by on-site solar (12 MW of solar installed).
	5.3	Maintain solar PV, inverters and battery systems on an ongoing basis.	All new, renewed and existing PVs, inverters and battery systems appear in the asset register and are maintained as per schedule.
	5.4	Investigate opportunities and develop a business case for a battery energy storage system (BESS).	A BESS pilot project with identified benefits is underway.
	5.5	Explore opportunities to host grid-scale renewable energy on suitable land, based on suitability criteria.	Grid-scale opportunities are explored.
6. Explore opportunities to invest in off-site renewable energy.	6.1	Explore opportunities to procure additional renewable energy via a whole-of-government contract or power purchase agreement.	Opportunities are explored and assessed, and a decision is made.
7. Measure and report on material Scope 3 emissions.	7.1	Understand and map targeted suppliers that have high potential impact for sustainability and circularity.	High-impact supply chain categories are understood and mapped.
	7.2	Assess material Scope 3 emissions (including on leased properties and in the supply chain).	Material Scope 3 emissions are assessed.
	7.3	Explore the opportunity to embed sustainability leasing requirements in long-term leases where appropriate.	Green lease clauses, including reporting, are embedded into long-term leases.
	7.4	Incorporate sustainability information into the onboarding process for new tenants.	Relevant sustainability information is provided as part of key information in new tenancy agreements.



Towards Net Zero Action Plan (continued)

Objectives	Actions		Measures of Success
8. Ensure tenanted spaces are fitted out to support sustainability and reduce environmental impact.	8.1	Develop fit-out guidelines for tenants regarding the renovation of leased commercial spaces for leases longer than three years.	Tenancy fit-out guidelines are developed and launched.
9. Promote sustainable transport options among staff and students to reduce environmental impact.	9.1	Measure emissions associated with staff travel.	Emissions associated with staff travel are included in the emissions profile.
	9.2	Develop a sustainable travel plan at targeted campuses to support the adoption of sustainable travel practices.	100 per cent of targeted TAFE NSW campuses have a sustainable travel plan.
	9.3	Promote the adoption of sustainable transport practices among staff and students.	Sustainable transport options are promoted and encouraged on campus.
10. Reduce water consumption by investing in solutions that lower costs and emissions.	10.1	Log water consumption data to enable remote monitoring and capture more than 80 per cent of consumption.	Over 40 per cent of campuses have loggers installed on water meters, accounting for more than 80 per cent of water consumption.
	10.2	Remotely monitor water consumption, including baseflow leaks, to identify high-impact campuses.	Loggers are connected to utility monitoring system and diagnostics.
	10.3	Support an audit, leak detection and rectification program.	A minimum of two campuses are audited per year.
	10.4	Develop water management action plans for high-impact and priority campuses and/or assets, targeting leak detection and correction.	Water management action plans are developed for high-impact campuses and/or assets.
	10.5	Identify sites where non-potable water (bore, river, recycled) is used to support campus operations and emergency response.	Sites using non-potable water are identified and captured on the asset register.
	10.6	Assess aging infrastructure and develop a program for pipe replacement in priority areas when capital works programs are delivered.	Sites are identified for rectification and included in the capital works program.

Towards Net Zero Action Plan (continued)

Objectives	Actions		Measures of Success
11. Reduce office paper consumption.	11.1	Understand baseline consumption and identify print reduction opportunities.	A print reduction action plan is developed.
	11.2	Measure and report on paper consumption quarterly.	Paper consumption is reported quarterly to the executive team.
	11.3	Upon contract renewal, assess the printer fleet to identify opportunities to optimise the size of the fleet to support business requirements.	The printer fleet is consolidated or reduced where feasible.
12. Develop a strategic approach to managing carbon and carbon offsets.	12.1	Develop a carbon offsetting strategy in line with NSW Government guidance.	A strategy is developed and implemented.
	12.2	Explore an external carbon partnership opportunity with a carbon land manager.	An external carbon partnership is identified.
	12.3	Embed the Treasury carbon price into internal decision-making tools and processes.	A carbon price is adopted and embedded.

Case Study:
Emissions reduction

In 2025 TAFE NSW worked with Novon Lighting to deliver a future-proof, energy-efficient lighting solution across our campuses, enhancing safety, comfort and sustainability for students and staff. Nearly 40,000 lights were installed statewide, with major upgrades at 10 campuses across NSW.

By replacing outdated fluorescent systems and inefficient ballasts, the upgrade reduced energy consumption and improved the power factor across all sites, reducing lighting loads on these campuses by more than 70 per cent on average.
The modular design and locally supported maintenance program ensure long-term cost predictability and align with the NSW Government's Net Zero Plan.

All fixtures were engineered and assembled at a Western Sydney facility using recyclable materials and powered by 100 per cent renewable energy.
AI-optimised laser cutting and robotic precision ensured minimal waste and consistent quality. High-efficiency LEDs and premium drivers were selected for their reliability and low power use in high-demand educational environments.

Designed for maintainability, the modular system enables replacement of light components in under a minute without disturbing ceilings. The company offers a swap-and-recondition program to refurbish returned modules, thereby reducing e-waste and supporting circular economy principles.

40,000
lights were installed statewide.

10
campuses across NSW.



Priority Action Area 2: Climate Risk and Resilience

Build TAFE NSW's climate risk maturity, embed climate risk management across the organisation, and strengthen climate resilience by identifying and responding to climate risks and opportunities, supporting informed decision-making and climate-related disclosures.

Targets

- Achieve a 'systemic' climate risk management maturity level.
- Reduce all 'high or very high' climate risks to an acceptable level.

Objectives

- Achieve systemic maturity by maintaining a climate risk profile for TAFE NSW, developing plans to reduce climate risk and increase resilience.
- Use climate scenario analysis to assess potential impacts on TAFE NSW operations, assets, and services and utilise data to inform decision making and response planning.
- Develop and implement adaptation and resilience plans to reduce climate risk exposure and improve the resilience of assets, operations and service delivery.

Climate Risk and Resilience Action Plan

Objectives	Actions		Measures of Success
13. Achieve systemic maturity by maintaining a climate risk profile for TAFE NSW, developing plans to reduce climate risk and increase resilience.	13.1	Embed climate risk into the TAFE NSW Enterprise Risk Framework.	Climate risk is established as a strategic enterprise risk.
	13.2	Integrate climate risk and resilience principles into campus cluster reviews and campus master plans.	Climate resilience is included in principles of master planning.
	13.3	Maintain a climate risk data platform and continually update it using the most current climate modelling.	A climate risk platform is adopted and fully operational.
	13.4	Identify, assess, prioritise and monitor climate risks to assets.	Climate risk assessments identify vulnerable, high-risk or very high-risk assets and campuses.
	13.5	Develop a program to address climate risk, targeting high-risk or very high-risk assets and campuses.	Treatment strategies prioritise high-risk assets and consider acceptable risk appetite.
	13.6	Use climate risk data and analytics to support decision-making and the prioritisation of assets that require maintenance, replacement and/or upgrades to mitigate climate risks.	Climate risk is adopted as a criticality score. Assets are assigned a vulnerability or at-risk ranking.
	13.7	Use Climate Risk Ready health check to reassess climate risk maturity annually.	Systemic maturity assessment is achieved.
	13.8	Explore external partnerships and funding to support resilient infrastructure projects.	Partnerships or funding is identified to support adaptation and resilience projects.

Climate Risk and Resilience Action Plan (continued)

Objectives	Actions		Measures of Success
14. Use climate scenario analysis to assess potential impacts on TAFE NSW operations, assets, and services and utilise data to inform decision making and response planning.	14.1	Capture data related to extreme weather via incident reports to assist with asset management, operational planning and emergency response.	Incident reports and work order data is used to understand how assets and operations are impacted by extreme weather.
	14.2	Use climate risk assessment data to inform the location risk assessment (LRA) and associated sub-plans.	LRA and sub-plans incorporate site specific climate risk data.
	14.3	Incorporate Emergency Planning Committee terms of reference into climate risk/adaptation measures.	Climate risks are reviewed by the Emergency Planning Committee.
	14.4	Ensure the Business Continuity Plan addresses climate risk and extreme weather as disruptors.	Climate risk is referenced in the Business Continuity Plan.
	14.5	Ensure the crisis team includes at least one extreme weather–related disruption (e.g. a power outage) in the annual desktop simulation.	A desktop simulation to test the effectiveness of the response is run at least annually.
	14.6	Explore opportunities to engage with external agencies to support incident and crisis management responses.	Networking with an external agency is established.
15. Develop and implement adaptation and resilience plans to reduce climate risk exposure and improve the resilience of assets, operations and service delivery.	15.1	Integrate climate risk data into all stages of each asset's lifecycle, from planning through to disposal.	Climate risk data is embedded into the Asset Management Framework.
	15.2	Embed climate risks and opportunities into the following long-term strategic asset planning and investment decision-making frameworks: • asset replacement, upgrade and disposal strategies • asset design, maintenance and construction standards • the Asset Management System • the Strategic Asset Management Plan • asset management plans (AMPs).	Strategic Asset Management Plan and AMPs reviewed annually to incorporate climate risk.

Priority Action Area 3: Circular Economy

Maximise the use and value of resources by designing assets for whole-of-life considerations, keeping products in use as long as possible, purchasing products with recycled content and harnessing purchasing power to stimulate markets and support circular design. Develop systems and processes to support the 10 Rs: **Refuse, Rethink, Reduce, Reuse, Repair, Refurbish, Remanufacture, Repurpose, Recycle** and **Recover.**

Targets

- Embed sustainability and circular economy principles into procurement processes.
- Divert 80 per cent of operational and construction waste from landfill.
- Decrease total waste generated by 10 per cent based on the FY19 baseline.
- Ensure 100 per cent of campuses with organics service offer collection to comply with the NSW Environment Protection Authority (EPA) organics mandate.

Objectives

- Embed the TAFE NSW Circularity Action Plan and sustainable procurement principles into procurement processes.
- Develop and embed circularity and sustainability principles into key strategic asset planning and construction processes.
- Embed circularity and sustainability principles into key information and communication technology (ICT) processes.
- Reduce the volume of operational waste generated by TAFE NSW.
- Reduce the volume of landfill waste generated by the Infrastructure Delivery program and track performance.

Circular Economy Action Plan

Objectives	Actions		Measures of Success
16. Embed the TAFE NSW Circularity Action Plan and sustainable procurement principles into procurement processes.	16.1	Integrate sustainability and circular economy principles into category strategies and incorporate into the plan, and source and manage phases.	Where applicable, circular and sustainable principles are considered when developing procurement categories, strategies and specifications for goods and services.
	16.2	Specify recycled content in the procurement of targeted good and services.	Recycled content materials are specified and procured on an 'if not, why not' basis for goods and services.
	16.3	Targeted contracts in high-impact categories are modified to include conditions for data collection and sustainability impact reporting (including recycled content, product traceability and carbon emissions).	Contract templates of high-impact categories are modified to include sustainability reporting. Data is submitted and reported on by suppliers in accordance with contract conditions.
	16.4	Undertake a gap analysis and consider opportunities to align our procurement processes to ISO 20400:2017 Sustainable procurement.	Gap analysis is complete.
17. Develop and embed circularity and sustainability principles into key strategic asset planning and construction processes.	17.1	Incorporate sustainability and circularity requirements into TAFE NSW Detailed Business Case (DBC).	Sustainability requirements are integrated into the DBC, such as: • emissions reduction and climate risk • circularity • nature and biodiversity.
	17.2	Incorporate sustainability and circularity into the Asset Management Framework and AMPs.	AMPs include sustainability requirements and are reviewed annually.
	17.3	Integrate sustainability and circular principles into building and campus design and strategic planning.	Strategic plans include sustainability and circular principles and are reviewed periodically.
	17.4	Preference products that contain recycled content in medium and large construction projects.	Recycled content materials are considered and piloted in medium and large construction projects with budgets of more than $5 million.
	17.5	Develop governance for data collection and reporting of circularity and sustainability outcomes for capital projects.	A governance process for data collection and reporting is developed.

Circular Economy Action Plan (continued)

Objectives	Actions		Measures of Success
18. Embed circularity and sustainability principles into key ICT processes.	18.1	Embed circularity principles into the procurement of end-user computer products, including the return of devices for refurbishing, redistribution or recycling.	100 per cent of end-user computer products are returned to the supplier for refurbishing, redistributing or recycling.
	18.2	Investigate extending the life of end-user computing beyond a four-year term.	The option to extend beyond four-year leases is investigated and implemented where feasible.
	18.3	Adopt and promote guidelines for the safe, sustainable and secure disposal of e-waste.	E-waste is included in materials recycling guidelines, which are shared via the staff Intranet.
	18.4	Include ICT and e-waste in reporting.	ICT and e-waste is included in waste reporting.
19. Reduce the volume of operational waste generated by TAFE NSW.	19.1	Develop and implement operational waste management plans for targeted campuses.	Operational waste management plans are developed for nominated campuses.
	19.2	Ensure a phased rollout of organics collection and source separation infrastructure, including for hospitality campuses, to align with the NSW EPA organics mandate.	Organics collection is implemented at 100 per cent of campuses with an organics service.
	19.3	Implement bin infrastructure to support tenants in achieving the TAFE NSW waste diversion targets.	By 2030, 80 per cent of operational waste is diverted from landfill.
	19.4	Conduct an education and awareness campaign on waste reduction and minimisation, with a focus on food waste.	Total waste generation is decreased by 10 per cent.
	19.5	Establish a system to track, repair and redistribute furniture and equipment to extend service life.	Furniture and educational assets are repaired, redistributed, sold or donated by 2030 (percentage based on baseline data from year one of the marketplace).
	19.6	Develop guidelines for safe, responsible and sustainable plant and equipment disposal.	Guidelines are developed.
	19.7	Streamline data collection and reporting for redistributed, sold, usefully donated or recycled plant and equipment.	Accurate data collection for disposed plant and equipment is demonstrating diversion from landfill.
	19.8	Explore the opportunity to establish an internal ‘reuse marketplace’.	Furniture and fittings at metro campuses are catalogued to enable cross-campus sharing.

Circular Economy Action Plan (continued)

Objectives	Actions		Measures of Success
20. Reduce the volume of landfill waste generated by the Infrastructure Delivery program and track performance.	20.1	Ensure all capital works projects require a waste management plan with embedded targets as a part of the Construction environmental management plans.	Construction Environmental Management Plans demonstrate how construction and demolition waste is managed and reported, and how it meets the target of 80 per cent diversion for medium and large projects.
	20.2	Collect waste data to report on construction and demolition waste for relevant building projects.	Waste reports for medium and large capital works projects demonstrate that diversion from landfill rates is met.

Case Study: Tackling food waste through education

TAFE NSW is committed to a circular economy to reduce waste and lower our carbon footprint. Recognising that the hospitality sector is the second-largest contributor to food waste sent to landfill, we partnered with the NSW EPA to develop a targeted Microskill. Our short, online Microskill course teaches best-practice food management techniques to current and future hospitality professionals.

NSW legislation requires all businesses that generate food waste over a certain threshold to separate such waste at the source and have it collected for recycling. Without the right skills, many hospitality venues struggle to adapt and continue sending valuable organic material to landfill. This inefficiency wastes resources and increases business costs.

Working in collaboration with NSW EPA and industry experts, we identified key food-waste challenges and opportunities across several settings, including kitchens, cafes and restaurants.

As a result, the Microskill course includes practical modules that address inventory planning, portion control, repurposing of leftovers and tracking food waste. It also includes real-world case studies, checklists and interactive quizzes to reinforce learning.

The Microskill course was launched in 2026, integrated directly into TAFE NSW cuisine and hospitality courses and made available on the Microskill platform for industry professionals seeking to upskill. This course gives students the knowledge, tools and tricks of the trade to apply waste-reduction tactics in real kitchens, cutting costs and reducing environmental impacts.

By equipping the next generation of hospitality professionals with practical skills, TAFE NSW is helping turn food waste from a costly burden into a resource. Every student has the power to drive real change in the kitchen, positively impacting our environment.



25%
of all waste in Australia sent to landfill is food waste.



1.2m
tonnes of food waste is generated annually by the Australian hospitality sector.



Priority Action Area 4: Nature Positive

Promote sustainable land management practices and protect and restore natural habitats to improve the condition of native vegetation on our campuses. Adopt sustainable design principles to make sustainability a central consideration in how we design, deliver and operate buildings and infrastructure.

Targets

- Ensure 100 per cent of new builds and refurbishments meet the requirements of the Sustainable Design Guidelines.
- Ensure no net loss of areas of significant ecological value.
- Develop environmental risk profiles for each campus with medium- and high-risk activities.

Objectives

- Embed ecologically sustainable development principles into building design.
- Ensure our campuses contribute to local biodiversity.
- Understand and manage the environmental risks and impacts of TAFE NSW operations.

Nature Positive Action Plan

Objectives	Actions		Measures of Success
21. Embed ecologically sustainable development principles into building design.	21.1	Implement the TAFE NSW Environmentally Sustainable Design Guidelines (SDGs) and assurance tool to guide the delivery of sustainable design outcomes in capital works projects.	100 per cent of new builds and refurbishment projects comply with the TAFE NSW SDGs.
	21.2	Embed sustainability requirements on renewal of the TAFE NSW Design Standards. **Service design standards** 1. Mechanical Standard (2022) 2. Smart Campus (2022) 3. Electrical (2021) 4. Hydraulic (2022) 5. Lighting Services (2022) **Equipment design standard** 1. Furniture (2021)	Targeted design standards incorporate sustainability requirements. A minimum of one standard is reviewed each year.
22. Ensure our campuses contribute to local biodiversity.	22.1	Undertake a biodiversity (ecology) survey to identify campuses with high ecological value.	Survey is complete.
	22.2	Develop and implement a biodiversity action plan for priority campuses to conserve and enhance the ecological value of sites.	Campuses with high ecological value are identified.

Nature Positive Action Plan (continued)

Objectives	Actions		Measures of Success
23. Understand and manage the environmental risks and impacts of TAFE NSW operations.	23.1	Understand material environmental risks in relation to TAFE NSW operations and implement processes and practices to mitigate medium and high risks.	Campus environmental risk profiles are developed for medium- and high-risk activities.
	23.2	Embed environmental risk assessment and management in continuous improvement processes and practices.	Priority risks are captured in a risk framework.
	23.3	Document priority risks in the TAFE NSW risk framework (branch, group, enterprise) together with mitigation actions and responsibilities.	A desktop simulation to test the effectiveness of the response is run at least annually.
	23.4	Monitor and report on environmental incident reports quarterly, including correct action close-out.	Environmental incidents are included in quarterly reporting.
	23.5	Collaborate with the Work Health and Safety (WHS) team to integrate procedures that align with WHS and environmental risk.	WHS procedures incorporate the environment upon renewal.
	23.6	Collaborate with the WHS team to undertake a hazardous substance review.	The hazardous substance review is undertaken and includes an environmental lens.

Priority Area 5: Education and Engagement

Develop and deliver TAFE NSW courses focused on sustainability best practices, equipping students with future skills while fostering a passionate culture dedicated to sustainability and driving positive change.

Targets

- Enhance the visibility of TAFE NSW as a leader in sustainability education across NSW.
- Develop and embed the Training Portfolio Strategy Roadmap.
- Cultivate a campus culture that encourages and celebrates sustainability.

Objectives

- Ensure the training offered by TAFE NSW aligns with the Training Portfolio Strategy Roadmap and meets current and emerging sustainability skills needs.
- Support the delivery of operational sustainability outcomes for learning and teaching faculties.
- Increase employee and contractor awareness and engagement to build a sustainable workplace culture.
- Enhance workforce sustainability capability across TAFE NSW.
- Raise the public profile of TAFE NSW as a recognised leader in sustainability.



Education and Engagement Action Plan

Objectives	Actions		Measures of Success
24. Ensure the training offered by TAFE NSW aligns with the Training Portfolio Strategy (TPS) Roadmap and meets current and emerging sustainability skills needs.	24.1	Develop and implement the **TPS Roadmap – Skills for the Green Economy (Sustainability)** to ensure TAFE NSW: 1. identifies and embeds emerging and future sustainability skills in its training portfolio over the short, medium and long term 2. leverages opportunities to grow delivery in existing courses through statewide and/or collaborative delivery. **Note:** Progress towards implementing the TPS Roadmap will be monitored on an ongoing basis and actions for the year ahead are determined as part of an annual **TPS Planning Matrix refresh.**	Roadmap is developed and implemented by 2030. TPS Planning Matrix is reviewed annually.
	24.2	Review the quality of sustainability-related educational content across existing TAFE NSW courses to ensure relevance, currency and alignment with emerging skills needs (as informed by our sustainability roadmap), based on industry best practice.	The quality review is complete.
	24.3	Reduce the operational environmental impact of training delivery by adopting sustainable delivery solutions; for example, the TAFE Digital Campus, QR codes and ebooks on renewal or for all newly developed training packages.	Sustainable delivery solutions are implemented for course development through the product pipeline.
25. Support the delivery of operational sustainability outcomes for learning and teaching faculties.	25.1	Engage with each faculty to identify sustainability opportunities and projects as part of annual planning.	At least one project per faculty is identified each year.
	25.2	Identify grants and funding to support the delivery of sustainability projects.	Funding is received to support project implementation.

Education and Engagement Action Plan (continued)

Objectives	Actions		Measures of Success
26. Increase employee and contractor awareness and engagement to build a sustainable workplace culture.	26.1	Support the implementation of the TAFE NSW Sustainability Engagement Plan.	Sustainability Engagement Plan endorsed and implementation commenced.
	26.2	Include sustainability in regular staff events, such as toolbox talks, Friday Five and all staff meetings, and communications, such as working at TAFE NSW, faculty and Chief newsletters.	Six communications are issued per year.
	26.3	Complete a research study of staff to ascertain baseline levels of sustainability awareness.	A measurable baseline is established.
	26.4	Develop a program or pathway to recognise and reward employees who champion, actively support or identify sustainability initiatives.	At least two recognition pathways are identified and enabled.
	26.5	Support and promote sustainability initiatives through collaborations among Diversity & Inclusion, Wellbeing, and Safety at TAFE NSW.	At least one collaboration per year with people group.
	26.6	Establish a baseline understanding of staff sentiment towards sustainability, focusing on operational staff and educational delivery.	A measurable baseline is established.
	26.7	Establish a TAFE NSW Sustainability Engagement Staff Network.	Network is established.
	26.8	Support and promote sustainability initiatives via the Aboriginal Engagement and Student Support team (e.g. recognising the connection and relationship between caring for Country and nature).	At least one collaboration per year with the Aboriginal Engagement and Student Support team.
	26.9	Embed sustainability into annual planning to promote and foster a sustainable campus culture.	Sustainability is embedded into team planning. Campus staff champion sustainability.



Education and Engagement Action Plan (continued)

Objectives	Actions		Measures of Success
27. Enhance workforce sustainability capability across TAFE NSW.	27.1	Diagnose the need and scope for professional learning at enterprise, team and individual levels.	Diagnosed needs are translated into actionable recommendations.
	27.2	Translate recommendations into a roadmap of defined actions and activities, taking a phased approach that spans from 2026 to 2030.	Implementation of actions from 2026–2030 roadmap.
28. Raise the public profile of TAFE NSW as a recognised leader in sustainability.	28.1	Collect targeted information in relation to the sustainability of the organisation to use to engage with selected external stakeholders.	Information is collated biannually to understand sustainability expectations.
	28.2	Establish a baseline understanding of public (industry, students, general public and government) sentiment towards sustainability at TAFE NSW.	Research completed and recommendations considered for action.
	28.3	Complete a study of external stakeholders to better understand their expectations of our organisation, products or services that are aligned to sustainability.	Research completed and recommendations considered for action.
	28.4	Promote the sustainability of the organisation, products or services across a range of channels to raise public awareness of the sustainability benefits of the education programs (or services) TAFE NSW offers and/or sustainability issues generally.	At least four good news stories are pitched for media coverage.
	28.5	Achieve Gold Certification in the NSW Sustainability Advantage Recognition Program.	Gold-level certification achieved.
	28.6	Explore opportunities to partner and collaborate with other government agencies and universities.	At least two external industry actions are undertaken per year.

Case Study: Cultivating cultural change and inspiring climate action

The TAFE NSW Sustainability Library Hubs education program has transformed library spaces across eight campuses into vibrant sustainability learning hubs. Launched as a pilot, the initiative promotes environmental literacy, fosters grassroots climate action and supports the TAFE NSW ESAP 2026–2030.

Co-designed by library sustainability advocates, the hubs engage students, teachers and local communities through themed displays, literacy sessions and sustainability-focused events. They showcase practical solutions, offer drop-off points for hard-to-recycle items and serve as catalysts for behavioural change across diverse campuses.

A central online resource guide was accessed nearly 400 times in the first three months, supporting standardised sessions and extending the hubs' impact. These inclusive spaces empower students and staff to take meaningful action while also building partnerships with local councils and community groups to amplify the message beyond campus walls.

Importantly, the hubs have helped divert hard-to-recycle waste streams from landfill and provided targeted support for disadvantaged students, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and students living with disability. The hubs have been promoted internally and through a national library network and continue to inspire sustainability action across NSW and beyond.

2025 Green Gown Awards Australasia Creating Impact award winner.

500 students engaged with the hubs during the pilot.



Measuring progress and accountability

The TAFE NSW Sustainability Compliance and Reporting Framework requires us to comply with all applicable environmental policies, legislation, regulations and NSW Government policy, including the Net Zero Government Operations Policy and climate-related financial disclosures. TAFE NSW will also develop additional systems to allow measurement and reporting.

We are committed to transparency, good governance and continual improvement. We pursue continual improvement by embracing feedback via our Sustainability Action Group and Sustainability Leadership Steering Committee, learning from experience and adapting to change to deliver long-lasting and sustainable value for our students, staff, communities, partners and stakeholders.





Transparency, Governance and Continual Improvement Action Plan

Objectives	Actions		Measures of Success
29. Monitor, review and report on greenhouse gas emissions and environmental performance.	29.1	Report environmental performance to the Executive Leadership Team (ELT).	Two ELT reports are completed per annum.
	29.2	Measure and publicly report on environmental performance metrics, including Scope 1 and Scope 2 emissions. Include Scope 3 emissions from FY28.	Data is validated. TAFE NSW annual report is completed. Annual Net Zero Government Operations Policy report is completed.
	29.3	Develop and implement a data management process, defining ownership of datasets and how to access them.	Data management procedure developed and implemented.
	29.4	Explore an environmental, social and governance reporting platform to support Scope 1, Scope 2 and Scope 3 emissions reporting.	Platforms are explored and adopted if fit for purpose.
	29.5	Prepare climate-related financial disclosures in alignment with the requirements of NSW Treasury Policy and Guidelines' Annual Reporting Requirements TPG23-10.	Climate disclosures are reported annually. Phase 2 entity requirement is met.
30. Ensure the sustainability framework is maintained and guided by best-practice governance and continual improvement.	30.1	Maintain and review the terms of reference for Sustainability Leadership Steering Committee and Sustainability Action Group.	Terms of reference are reviewed annually.
	30.2	Gather feedback and input from members to ensure there is opportunity for continual improvement.	Annual Sustainability Action Group and Steering Committee member survey is completed.
	30.3	Undertake an annual management team review to monitor progress towards implementing the ESAP 2026–2030 and identify areas for improvement.	Annual management review is completed.
	30.4	Review and update the Sustainability Policy Framework.	Framework is reviewed and updated.

Recognition of contribution

The TAFE NSW ESAP 2026–2030 was developed in consultation and collaboration with the TAFE NSW Sustainability Action Group, Sustainability Leadership Steering Committee and relevant stakeholders across the organisation.

It was peer reviewed with support from the NSW Government Sustainability Advantage Program.

We would like to recognise and acknowledge the expertise, time and contributions of all stakeholders who helped develop this plan and thank those who have committed to helping lead its implementation to deliver the TAFE NSW 2030 environmental sustainability commitments.



TAFE NSW

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