What is Green Impact?

Green Impact is an environmental accreditation scheme that brings together our staff and students into teams to play an active role in making the workplace more sustainable. It is an NUS initiative and Leeds have been involved for 7 years, with the last two years on the Independent Programme, meaning we can tailor the scheme to our university.

Teams work on sustainability actions and criteria, and the more criteria are completed, the higher the award!

The workbook is an online tool which outlines specific and measurable criteria, covering the themes of the University’s Sustainability Strategy:

*Embedding Sustainability through Collaboration*

*Making the Most of Resources*

*Building Knowledge and Capacity*

*Being a Positive Partner in Society*

Each team works through the workbook, completing the criteria and giving evidence as to how they have achieved the action. The workbook includes a variety of criteria, ranging from increasing student and staff engagement with sustainability, technical changes to improve resource efficiency and requirements to share best practice.

We have a huge range of laboratories at the University and the Green Impact labs workbook has been altered to try to accommodate all types of labs and workshops. There is no mandatory and optional criteria for labs, it simply works by completing as many criteria as possible. The workbook is divided into sections:

- Water
- Chemicals
- Cold storage
- Equipment
- Purchasing
- Energy
- Communications/networking
- Other
- Additional actions

Why get involved? What’s in it for you?

Some of the feedback from this year included comments on getting to work with colleagues on something different, improving their workplace, making a difference to other people, and contributing to the sustainability of the University!
The Green Impact scheme provides a structured way to improve the sustainability of your department, and you should be safe in the knowledge that the Sustainability Service is there to support you throughout the year.

At the end of the Green Impact year, the University’s annual Sustainability Awards provide an opportunity to celebrate the achievements of the Green Impact teams, as well as wider Sustainability initiatives across the University.

**Want to start a new team?**

Great! You’re on your way to a more sustainable workplace!

Firstly, please let us know if you want to set up a team and we can talk you through it!

The Sustainability Service has an intern every year who coordinates Green Impact and is there to support you – so contact sustainability@leeds.ac.uk and they will get back to you.

Having a team around you will make it more fun (and easier!) so we recommend finding some colleagues who are interested and willing to help you out. If possible, it’s worthwhile talking to senior management about Green Impact as soon as you can to show them the benefits of your area completing the scheme.

Then go to register on the Green Impact online workbook (run by NUS) [see below!].

**How to use the online workbook:**

Registering:

http://www.greenimpact.org.uk/leeds/register

You need to think of a team name [think carefully as this is hard to change!]

Each team member needs to register individually if you all want access to the workbook.

Login:

http://www.greenimpact.org.uk/leeds/login

And login with your email address and the password you set during registration.

Once you register/log in you can look at the criteria for each level.

**TOP TIPS**

The best way to become familiar with the workbook is to explore it and understand where and how to upload evidence.
The Green Impact structure:

Green Impact is structured through an online workbook. Each criteria works towards the aims of the Sustainability Strategy and will result in a sustainability action or improvement in your department. You will need to action these criteria and provide evidence of having done so, be it through uploading emails, action plans, posters created, photos etc. You can also write comments in the online workbook explaining how you have achieved or implemented the criteria.

Award Levels:

After the feedback received in the 2015/16 year, the workbook has been improved, and the requirements for each level are as follows:

So, you’re:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Criteria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Going for Bronze!</td>
<td>Complete 10 criteria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Going for Silver!</td>
<td>Complete 16 criteria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Going for Gold!</td>
<td>Complete 22 criteria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Going for Platinum!</td>
<td>Complete 28 criteria</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Platinum Plus!

Normal or Labs Green Impact teams can apply for this! Platinum Plus aims to encourage mentoring between Green Impact teams. To achieve the Platinum Plus award you need to complete the Platinum Level award and then show evidence of mentoring a new or struggling team.

Requirements: There should be at least 3 meetings with the team in the year and the new team must at least reach a Bronze Award level.

Project!

If you have a specific interest or area which you want to improve with regards to sustainability, you can conduct a project.

You complete the Bronze award level and submit a Project Proposal to the Sustainability Service. This must receive approval before the Project can go ahead – to check it is working towards the University’s Sustainability Strategy.

The Project option is especially recommended for those teams who have done Green Impact for a few years and feel they have embedded sustainability into their department, and they want to work on something specific. However, anyone can submit ideas which they think would work towards improving the sustainability of the University! You just need to chat to Sustainability about your ideas!
Completing the workbook:

Here is some how-to information for completing the criteria and the workbook.

**TOP TIPS**

Make sure you read all the information in the criteria tab as well as in the ‘Further Information’ tab and the ‘How you will be audited’ tab. This tab is especially useful as it tells you what information the auditors will want to see, and be aware there may be several elements of evidence that the auditors will need to see.

**Uploading evidence:**

Upload your evidence (photos, documentation, communications etc.) using the ‘upload a file’ button.

Write your supporting comments/explanation in the comments box.

You need to make sure that the evidence you upload is either new or updated from previous years and is accurate.
TOP TIPS

REMEMBER: Press ‘save changes’ every time you upload evidence

Importing from previous workbooks:

Some criteria (if nothing has changed) can be directly upload from the previous year’s evidence:

Click ‘Archive workbook’.
A pop-up window will open with your completed workbook from last year.

‘Migrate comments and evidence’ function enables you directly move over evidence from previous years.

This could be used for criteria such as documentation which has not changed as is still used and relevant. Do not use this for time-limited criteria. You can add new comments but cannot edit imported comments.
**FINAL CHECK!**

**TOP TIPS**

*You MUST ensure when you are ready to submit the workbook you click on the red SUBMIT button on the tabs at the top.*

*If you don’t your workbook will not be audited!!*

---

**Auditing**

At the end of the Green Impact year (April), each team is audited by IEMA-accredited student auditors. This process ensures that the actions that teams have completed are recognised and ensures that there is some standardisation across teams. It is also a great way to equip our students with valuable skills!

Auditing takes place over two days and you will be able to select your availability a few weeks before the auditing.

The audits usually take about an hour (depending on what level you’re going for), and depending on your evidence, you may be issued with a Further Evidence Request (additional evidence for a criteria) which you will have 5 working days to provide. Following this, the Sustainability Service will confirm your Green Impact award.
**Timeline:**

By Christmas, you should have:

- Had at least one meeting with your team and the Sustainability Intern (and Project Assistant where applicable).
- Allocated roles within your team.
- Where applicable, delegated tasks to your Green Impact Project Assistant.
- Begun working on the criteria and collecting evidence.

By February, you should have:

- Completed and uploaded the evidence for approximately half of what you’re aiming for this year.
- Attended a drop-in session or workshop.
- Discussed with the Sustainability Intern any problems you may have had.

By April, you should have:

- Uploaded all your evidence to the online workbook in advance of the final deadline!
- Had your final meeting with your Project Assistant.
- Let the Sustainability Intern know your availability for auditing.

By May, you should have:

- Auditing!
- Submit Further Evidence Request information as applicable.
- RSVP to the Sustainability Awards and nominate a person/group for an award!

By June:

- Sustainability Awards!
- Teams receive their feedback reports.
Resources available:

- The Sustainability Intern and the Service more generally are there to answer your queries and help you get the most out of the Green Impact scheme (sustainability@leeds.ac.uk).
- The Sustainability Service website – specifically the Green Impact section (http://sustainability.leeds.ac.uk/green-impact/), and the ‘Green Impact Resources’ page has all the templates and examples you could ever need! (http://sustainability.leeds.ac.uk/green-impact/green-impact-resources/)
- Sustainability events/workshops/drop in sessions -
- And finally, each other!! Collaboration is one of our key themes, and peer to peer learning is a great way to discuss any queries and share ideas! If you have an idea for a Green Impact workshop or discussion, please let the Sustainability Service know!

The ‘Additional Actions’ tab is new for 2016/17 and enables you to be recognised for additional sustainability actions you implement for Green Impact (not as part of your day to day work). This criteria enables you to tailor your sustainability actions to your lab or workshop specifically. One action equals one criteria point, up to a maximum of 5 points.

Your additional actions will be audited and criteria points are awarded at the discretion of the Sustainability Service.

The template for the Additional Actions Spreadsheet is on the Resources page of the Sustainability Website.

There is significant potential to create a Green Impact labs community, please join the Sustainable Labs Yammer Group here: https://www.yammer.com/leeds.ac.uk/
Green Impact Project Assistants

Green Impact Project Assistants are students who are selected and trained on Green Impact, and who volunteer to work with a team. When collaborated with effectively, the students can be a huge asset to the team and every year they receive great feedback.

Project Assistants can be assigned to both office and lab teams, and can be especially effective if you are conducting a project this year.

The Green Impact Project Assistant handbook has all the details for students and teams, with suggestions for criteria which would be suitable for GIPAs. This is a new feature of Green Impact, to help both your team and the Project Assistant get the most out of working together – there is a Project Assistant record now for the students to monitor the tasks completed and skills developed.

The students are volunteers therefore there is an expectation that the students meet the team at least once a month and that they are allocated specific criteria (or a task within a criteria). This develops their project management skills, communications skills and a whole range of other professional skills.

FAQs

Can I use the same example for more than one criteria?

- Evidence for the criteria must be distinct. The criteria should be completed (where relevant) in the current year (evidence of communications/events etc. from previous years will not be counted). This is to ensure real actions are being implemented every year and we are continuing to improve our sustainability performance year on year!
- However, a good example of time saving is linking the sharing knowledge and communications criteria with the events-related or volunteering criteria (e.g. linking your Creative Challenge with your writing of a blog/item for the newsletter).

What do I do if a criteria doesn’t apply to my department?

- All the mandatory criteria should now be applicable to all teams, minimising the likelihood of this happening. The more flexible system with the Criteria Bank enables teams to tailor the criteria completed to the specific area and needs, but if there are instances where a mandatory criteria is not applicable, you can select ‘n/a’ on the online workbook.

Case Studies

Cohen laboratories – School of Earth and Environment

This was the first year our labs went for the Green Impact award. As part of the School of Earth and Environment we already had an eye to our environmental footprint but this gave a real focus to our efforts. Using the workbook as a guide we looked around the labs for areas to improve and got to work: we saved energy by encouraging users to shut sashes in fume cupboard; we created system to allow reuse of plastic sample bottles; and we
rethought our purchasing to reduce waste and harm to the environment. We made these and many other small changes to the way we work and through that raised the environmental awareness of our users.

Laboratory work produces a lot of waste from plastic tubes to cuvettes. Much of this we can do nothing about; however, Green Impact gave us a frame work to make changes where we could and showed us just how much we had already achieved. We will be doing it again next year, hopefully finding some new ways to reduce our laboratories impact on the planet.

School of Healthcare

It was new to me, as was my role, and I enjoyed the chance to marry the two. It helped me develop an understanding of how my department does things as I needed to look at them to see if they worked and if they were sustainable. As someone who finds Green issues interesting it was good to get involved.

Changes for 2016/17:

After taking your feedback on board throughout the year, we have now made the workbook more user friendly! You wanted a streamlined workbook, so criteria now have a more tangible impact, while reducing the repetition between levels. The number of criteria have been reduced, while not taking away from the real impact the actions have across campus – we have not made it less ambitious – we have simply made the criteria worth more.

The workbook is divided into more relevant sections and there has been a reduction in the less ambitious criteria, and criteria relating to lifetime-costs, purchasing, as well as a whole new section on communications and networking has been added, as sharing best practice is crucial to improving the sustainability of labs.

As outlined above, the Additional Actions Spreadsheet has been introduced to capture sustainability actions not covered in the Green Impact workbook, but also to enable you to tailor the sustainability work you do to your lab.

NEW PLATINUM AWARD!

There is now capability for labs and workshops to receive a Platinum Labs Green Impact award! This new award level reflects the ambitiousness of the new workbook and aims to recognise those who are truly embedding sustainability into their lab.
For more information:

- **Sustainability@leeds.ac.uk** or the Sustainability Intern
- Sustainability.leeds.ac.uk
- [https://www.facebook.com/UoLSustainability/](https://www.facebook.com/UoLSustainability/)
- [https://twitter.com/UoL_Sus](https://twitter.com/UoL_Sus)