

Sustainability Services

SUMS
Consulting



SUMS offers sustainability consulting services expressly designed for the higher education and further education sectors. Any module can be tailored to your specific needs. Our sustainability services are delivered in partnership with EAUC, the sustainability champion for universities and colleges in the UK.



Working in partnership with



What Modules are Included in the Sustainability Service?



All of our modules can be tailored to your specific needs.

Your path to net zero

- Net zero plan (scopes 1 & 2)
- Net zero plan (scope 3)
- Using your estate more sustainably
- Capital plans stocktake
- Reducing your business travel emissions
- Getting on top of your emissions data
- Making sense of offsetting

Building sustainability at your institution

- Sustainability: Strategy to reality
- Governance for sustainability
- Full climate risks assessment
- Full climate opportunities assessment

Modules available

Talk to us about how we can help

sums@reading.ac.uk

0118 378 4304



working in
partnership with



Net Zero Plan: Scopes 1 and 2

Understand, model and plan your track to
net zero in scopes 1 and 2



No matter where you're starting from, you can build a plan for achieving net zero in scopes 1 and 2.

This module will help you to develop a high-level action plan and depending on your needs may involve:

- Analysis of your emissions data (with standardisation if required)
- Survey of your estate and energy usage
- Exploring your options around decarbonisation, estate usage and energy sources, with clear appraisals of benefits and costs
- Exploring your options around offsetting
- Review of your capital plans
- Developing realistic carbon targets appropriate to your institution's conditions and an approach setting out the main actions to achieve them.

What will you gain?

You will have clarity on where you are now and what you will need to do to achieve net zero carbon in scopes 1 and 2.

Each of the above can be taken as a standalone module. We strongly encourage institutions to develop plans for scope 3 as a core part of their net zero plans.

Your path to net zero

Talk to us about how we can help

sums@reading.ac.uk

0118 378 4304



working in
partnership with



Net Zero Plan: Scope 3

Understand your scope 3 emissions and start your journey to net zero



Scope 3 emissions are more difficult to measure and control than scopes 1 and 2, but reducing them is a crucial part of your journey to net zero. This module will help you to understand your scope 3 emissions and develop a clear approach to tackling them.

Depending on your needs, key elements may involve:

- Understanding the emissions in your supply chain, and how your approach to procurement and working with suppliers can reduce emissions over time
- Developing a plan to reduce your business travel emissions
- Developing approaches to reduce emissions related to staff and student commuting
- Review of your capital plans
- Exploring your options around offsetting
- Developing clear ambitions to start your net zero journey in scope 3, understanding that this area is more difficult to control than scopes 1 and 2

Each of the above can be taken as a standalone project.

What will you gain?

You will understand your scope 3 emissions better and be in a position to take action to reduce them.

Your path to net zero

Talk to us about how we can help

sums@reading.ac.uk

0118 378 4304



working in
partnership with



Using Your Estate More Sustainably

Learn how to make the best of your estate –
good for the climate and your energy bills



Your buildings and how you use them play a key role in reducing your emissions.

In this module, we will use your emissions data and work with you to identify key areas where emissions could be reduced through modified ways of working and behaviour change.

This can include engagement with staff and students around this process.

It can also include an audit of your estate, which will provide a granular assessment of the current sources of emissions and how retrofitting could improve these. We may refer you to more specialist consultancies for this, depending on complexity.

What will you gain?

You will understand how to achieve the biggest possible reductions from changes to the use of your estate.

If desired, this module can be included in the module Net Zero Plan: Scopes 1 and 2.

Your path to net zero

Talk to us about how we can help

sums@reading.ac.uk

0118 378 4304



working in
partnership with



Capital plans stocktake

Understand the carbon implications of your capital plans and your option space for long-term sustainability



Construction contributes an estimated 10% of global carbon emissions, and plans for developing your estate are significant due to both the construction and the subsequent life of the buildings.

This module brings together expertise from both estates and finance to review your capital plans for their future sustainability footprint.

We will help you to understand your option space and model the long-term costs and benefits of decisions; and will offer recommendations for minimising your footprint within your constraints.

What will you gain?

You will understand the full impacts of your capital plans, enabling informed choices about future developments for your estate.

If desired, this module can be included in the module Net Zero Plan: Scopes 1 and 2 or Net Zero Plan: Scope 3.

Your path to net zero

Talk to us about how we can help

sums@reading.ac.uk

0118 378 4304



working in
partnership with



Reducing your business travel emissions

Move the dial on your business travel emissions through a consultative approach



Business travel forms a significant plank of most institutions' carbon emissions. In some institutions, it is the largest component of scope 3 emissions.

Reducing business travel is extremely challenging, particularly in contexts which push towards greater international collaboration, mobility and career expectations of attendance at international conferences.

We will help you understand the footprint of business travel at your institution, and will work with key stakeholders to develop approaches to reducing your travel-related emissions, which are sensitive to the realities of your institution and its people, and manage the significant cultural challenges around this area.

What will you gain?

You will understand the profile of your business travel emissions, and develop workable means of reducing them which reflect the conflicting drivers on your institution.

If desired, the focused approach in this module can be applied to other individual strands of Scope 3 emissions such as staff/student commuting or your procurement and supply chain.

Your path to net zero

Talk to us about how we can help

sums@reading.ac.uk

0118 378 4304



working in
partnership with



Getting on top of your emissions data

Learn how to track, aggregate and work with your emissions data



Carbon emissions data is heterogeneous and complex, but understanding it is an essential part of your journey to net zero.

We will work with the relevant teams at your institution to aggregate and standardise your emissions data across all areas required (scopes 1, 2 and 3), enabling accurate reporting and informed planning.

If desired, this module can also include helping you to establish a single system for managing your data reporting, tailored as appropriate to the needs of your organisation.

What will you gain?

You will have clear sight of your emissions data, enabling easy and accurate reporting and informing your planning for reducing emissions.

This module can be also included in modules Net Zero Plan: Scopes 1 and 2 or Net Zero Plan: Scope 3.

Your path to net zero

Talk to us about how we can help

sums@reading.ac.uk

0118 378 4304



working in
partnership with



Making sense of offsetting

Understand your offsetting options
both now and in the future



The offsetting market is complex and developing rapidly, with a wide range of methods showing huge variations in cost, impact and quality.

While offsetting should be the last resort for compensating residual emissions which you cannot eliminate, it is likely you will consider it along your journey.

Understanding your options is critical.

This module will offer an up-to-date appraisal of the fast-moving offsetting market, and will work with you for an options analysis of solutions that may be suitable for you, taking account of your current circumstances and the likely track of your future aspirations.

What will you gain?

You will have a strategic understanding of the offsetting market and your options for the most effective position of offsetting in your net zero strategy.

If desired, this module can include exploration of the scope for developing carbon sinks on your estate.

Your path to net zero

Talk to us about how we can help

sums@reading.ac.uk

0118 378 4304



working in
partnership with



Sustainability: Strategy to reality

Embed sustainability in your planning and budgeting to ensure real progress



As with any complex agenda, acting on sustainability requires difficult decisions about prioritising conflicting demands in an environment with constrained resources.

Integrating sustainability into your planning and accounting frameworks will not only help you manage your emissions better, it will also allow for better scrutiny of expensive and long-term decisions.

We will introduce you to these rigorous techniques and work with you to explore how they can be embedded in your organisation, appropriately reflecting your ambitions and constraints.

These approaches may include:

- Carbon budgets
- Carbon pricing mechanisms
- Establishing a sustainability portfolio

What will you gain?

You will be equipped with the best tools for effective planning of your track to net zero, also enabling better control of your use of scarce resources.

Building sustainability at your institution

Talk to us about how we can help

sums@reading.ac.uk

0118 378 4304



working in
partnership with



Governance for sustainability

The ultimate key to being a truly sustainable organisation



To make your organisation truly sustainable, sustainability needs to be incorporated into governance and decision making.

In this module, we will introduce you to the means of doing this and work with you to tailor an approach which works for your organisation.

Depending on your needs, key elements may involve:

- Carbon literacy training (standard or advanced) for key staff.
- Working with you to develop structures which will allow sustainability to be governed in the right place and the right level, ensuring that the right people are involved.
- Applying and tailoring frameworks which will provide a consistent sustainability lens to your decision-making.

What will you gain?

You will understand how to make sustainability a core part of governance, paving your way to being a truly sustainable organisation.

Building sustainability at your institution

Talk to us about how we can help

sums@reading.ac.uk

0118 378 4304



working in
partnership with



Full climate risk assessment

Understand and manage the risks to your institution from climate change



The risks from climate change are material and growing.

For some institutions, this already includes flooding, overheating and disruption to power. Over time, we may expect more substantial impacts on normal operations, eventually becoming threats to business continuity.

Developments in the regulatory and economic environments may also pose risk over time if they are not anticipated and planned for.

In this module, we will work with your key staff and leadership to understand the risk profile for your organisation from the changing climate and the legal, regulatory and business environments.

This will set you in the optimal position to navigate future developments related to climate change.

What will you gain?

You will have a clear and analysed risk register of the risks to your institution from climate change and related developments.

Building sustainability at your institution

Talk to us about how we can help

sums@reading.ac.uk

0118 378 4304



working in
partnership with



Full climate opportunities assessment

Identify and seize the opportunities of a strong response to the climate crisis



Education institutions are key leverage points for knowledge and influence in society.

As such, there are substantial opportunities for universities and colleges to make positive impacts on the climate crisis, adaptation and the global transition to a green economy.

Early leadership in these areas can be expected to contribute positively to institutions' public and research profiles, and offer opportunities for recruitment of degree students as well as adult learners.

We will work with you to explore these with reference to your institution's status and profile.

This will put you in a strong position to move early on opportunities which are likely to be significant in the future.

What will you gain?

You will have a clear analysis of the opportunities for your institution in taking strong forward-thinking action around climate change.

Building sustainability at your institution

Talk to us about how we can help

sums@reading.ac.uk

0118 378 4304



working in
partnership with

