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# ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

**Board Approved: January 2019**

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**1. Scope of the Policy**

VLearning Network recognises and accepts its responsibility to minimise, wherever possible, its impact on the environment and to meet with all statutory environmental requirements. VLearning Network will aim to save natural resources and to prevent environmental pollution and promote this to its Partners.

VLearning Network is committed to reducing its environmental impact as far as practicable both directly and through influence on others. It is dedicated to maintain and whenever possible improve the quality of the environment for those studying or working within its partner organisations within the wider community. VLearning Network will encourage all partner organisations within its area of operation to understand the direct and indirect environmental impacts associated with their activities and to develop an ecologically sound approach to their provision.

VLearning Network will manage its operations in ways that are environmentally sustainable and economically realistic. In order to achieve this outcome VLearning Network has the following key objectives:

* Understand and balance the environmental, social and economic impacts of the decisions we make
* Live within environmental limits, ensuring the prudent use of natural resources and the prevention of pollution
* Take a long-term perspective in all that we do
* Ensure a ‘whole organisation approach’ to sustainable development
* Continual improvement through setting objectives and targets and monitoring and review

As a key institution within the Devon and Cornwall community, V Learning Net has a responsibility to be involved in delivering the sustainability message to the community, not only through the curriculum that we deliver but also in the way that we behave as a provider. We see it as essential that our actions as a provider help to transform the future lives of our students through brighter employment prospects, play a part in transforming all of our futures through responsible environmental management and support sustainable development within the community.

VLearning Network’s responsibility, therefore, is outlined in the following sections:

## 2. The V Learning Network Environment

VLearning Network adopts the following definition of the environment:

**“surroundings in which an organisation operates, including air, water, land, natural resources, flora, fauna, humans and their interrelation”**

*ISO 14001:2004 Definition*

VLearning Network recognises that the nature and scale of its activities impacts on the environment and that it has a responsibility to manage its activities in a way that reduces negative environmental impacts and increases positive impacts. V Learning Network is, therefore, committed to carbon reduction and improving its environmental performance through an environmental management system. The implementation of this policy will enable it to do so.

* promote environmental awareness among staff, member organisations and students
* minimise energy use
* minimise water use
* reduce non-recyclable waste
* reduce emission of pollutants
* promote a sustainable procurement policy and wherever possible use environmentally-friendly materials
* encourage environmentally friendly methods of working
* work with Government agencies and local authorities to achieve improvements in the environment and also achieve the requirements of all relevant legislation
* seek grants wherever possible to introduce energy efficient schemes which would otherwise not be cost effective
* promote recycling wherever possible.

VLearning Network will review its Sustainability Policy Statement on an annual basis and constantly monitor and review its environmental policies and practices.

## 3. SUSTAINABILITY POLICIES

**Energy**

VLearning Network will review and monitor its use of energy and seek to use the minimum quantities of energy possible within any of its buildings, to eliminate excessive or unnecessary consumption.

**Water**

VLearning Network will review its use of water to seek to use the lowest amount of water possible within its building.

**Transport**

VLearning Network needs to lessen the harmful effects of traffic on the environment and will introduce strategies to encourage those travelling to minimise their impact on the environment. When staff are visiting partner organisations they will be encouraged to share car journeys wherever possible. Every effort should be made to reduce the environmental impact by considering alternative modes of transport in advance of journeys and to ensure cost effectiveness

**Purchasing**

VLearning Network will work towards creating a sustainable procurement procedure VLearning Network will seek to purchase goods and services from local suppliers, as far as practicable. The effect of haulage distances of goods and services will also be taken into account.

**Waste Management**

VLearning Network aims to develop an effective waste management and recycling procedure to minimise waste arising from its operations, having the least impact on the environment and conforms to legal requirements. Paper is recycled through SITA.

**Environmental Education of Staff**

VLearning Network aims to increase awareness of sustainability issues and encourage input in the development of environmental policies for its staff. To achieve this VLearning Network:

* has established a manager responsible for the environmental sustainability of VLearning Network reporting to the Joint Chief Operation Managers.
* provide training in sustainability matters
* examine the functioning of the Environmental Policy and its performance.
* report results of energy reduction programmes to the trustees

**Implementation and Monitoring**

VLearning Network recognises that the implementation of the environmental policies and practices are dependent on an effective management system.

**Staff and Learners**

All staff, partner organisations and learners will be encouraged to actively support this policy and ensure the environmental performance of VLearning Network improves thus maintaining and enhancing the quality of the environment.