SUSTAINABILITY POLICY

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1.0 PURPOSE

1.1 In creating this policy, Skills Group recognises the impact of carrying on its business on the environment. To manage and reduce this impact and to ensure its services are provided in a sustainable manner, Skills Group commits to examining and assessing the environmental effects of its activities, products and services.

1.2 This policy sets out Skills Group's approach to sustainability and identifies the key principles, which Skills Group will apply to ensure both compliance with regulatory frameworks and the promotion of an ethos of sustainability.

2.0 SCOPE

2.1 Skills Group will comply with all applicable legislative requirements with regard to sustainability and the environment. Further, Skills Group will seek to apply best practice over and above any statutory minimum.

2.2 This commitment applies to all aspects of the organisation and should be seen as an integral part of Skills Group's undertakings, including procurement, construction and estates management, teaching and learning, and delivery of support services.

3.0 KEY PRINCIPLES

3.1 Skills to Group Ltd. recognises the need to manage our operations on a sustainable basis and that creating a more sustainable future is the responsibility of us all. It is with this in mind that this policy has been formulated.

It will be reviewed annually, made available to the public and communicated to all staff and learners.

We accept our obligation as a training provider to set a good example of sustainable practice by adopting, as far as possible, recognised good practice across all our operations.

This is particularly pertinent to our operations in respect of the Construction and Engineering trades.

We will seek to reduce our carbon footprint in line with national targets as an organisation and we will raise the awareness of our staff and learners by embedding and promoting the principles of sustainability in training across all trade sectors. This will help to achieve a significant cultural change within Skills Group both by staff and learners.

We will meet our commitment under the Skills Funding Agency Funding Rules that require all training providers to have a sustainable development policy in place.

We will use the Sustainable Development Policy Evaluation Toolkit and the resources

available on the OCED website. Actions arising will be recorded in an action plan and progress towards these actions will be monitored.
We have identified a Sustainability Champion, Stephen Jeffery to look at further actions to reduce environmental impact with our good and services and to lead on raising awareness of sustainability working closely with the Construction and Motor Vehicle leads.

We will ensure we comply with all relevant environmental legislation and regulations.

As per our Internal Quality Assurance policy, we review our sustainable development priorities on an annual basis.

This process has the full commitment of the Board of Directors, not only to meet requirements but to continually improve.

We have systems in place that enable both staff and learners to be involved with the implementation of this policy.

The scope of this policy is at a minimum, legal compliance with waste regulations, waste minimisation, energy conservation, transport and staff awareness covering the whole of the organisation.

3.2 The key principles that Skills Group use in embedding sustainability in its activities are as follows: -

Sustainability in Procurement
While the overarching principle employed in Skills Group's procurement strategy is value for money, there are also considerations with regard to sustainability which must be considered: -

Environmental Impact
Skills Group recognises that procurement of goods and services has an environmental impact in addition to the direct contribution of the actual goods and services themselves.

This may include the impact of transportation or manufacturing of those goods and services. It will therefore consider such impacts when appraising procurement options. Particularly in large projects or procurement exercises, Skills Group will consider the sustainability of solutions, taking into account the source of materials, use of natural resources, and stability of economic growth.

Corporate Social Responsibility
Skills Group recognises its position in the community as a partner to businesses and voluntary organisations throughout the South West and further afield. Its relationships are not simply as a training provider, but also as a supplier and consumer of goods and services. To develop and maintain such relationships, Skills Group will also consider the local economy when appraising procurement options.

Sustainability in Construction and Estates Management
Skills Group will manage its current estates in such a manner so as to minimise environmental impact. Similarly, it will seek to assess and minimise the environmental impacts of any future construction projects. It will support

these principles in a range of ways: -

a) Energy Management
Skills Group will set annual targets for energy use and actively monitor these throughout the year. It will seek to reduce energy usage and educate staff and learners in best practice in reducing energy consumption. Skills Group procures its energy through utility providers and ensures the best value and takes advantage of energy from sustainable sources in those contracts.

b) Waste Management
Skills Group will set annual targets for waste and actively monitor these throughout the year. It will seek to reduce waste materials and educate staff and learners in best practice in reducing wastage. Skills Group will segregate waste materials to maximize recycling opportunities and, wherever possible, a cost benefit to Skills Group. Controlled or hazardous waste will be monitored and minimised. All such waste will be disposed of in accordance with applicable legislation. Waste disposal will be managed in such a way so as to minimise the number collections through compacting and utilising appropriate sized containers.

c) Construction
Skills Group will ensure that all major capital works will achieve a high rating for refurbishments and for new buildings in respect of design and procurement and post construction. For all major works, Skills Group will also engage in Post Occupancy Evaluations (POE) to assess the effectiveness of project delivery, as well as a review of the operational, functional and strategic performance of the building during operation.

d) Maintenance and Lifecycle Costs
For all new build and refurbishment projects, Skills Group will assess the full lifecycle costs of the project and ensure that it is affordable and that future budgets are created and maintained to ensure funding is in place to meet these costs.

In addition, full planned and preventative maintenance programmes will be implemented and funded. To support the development, management and funding of maintenance programmes, condition surveys will be commissioned.

3.4 Sustainability in Teaching and Learning
Skills Group will ensure that teaching staff members and learners are aware of the issues involved in sustainability and that they understand how Skills Group approaches these and also how they, as individuals, can have a positive impact. It will do this in a number of ways: -

a) Curriculum Development
Skills Group will develop curriculum streams specifically aimed at sustainable development, such as solar power, ground source heating and rainwater harvesting installations.

b) Learner Awareness
Skills Group will raise awareness of sustainability issues with learners and

encourage participation in activities, which support this.

3.5 Sustainability in the delivery of Support Services

In addition to key services such as Facilities/Estates, Skills Group acknowledges that all support services must all contribute to the sustainability agenda. It will support this in the following ways: -

a) Senior Management

Through meetings with Senior Managers, staff members will be able to represent views and give feedback. They will have the opportunity to broaden their own understanding and to share their knowledge with others.

b) Communications

Through a programme of regular communications, all staff and learners will be made aware of how they can personally take responsibility for their own environmental impact and how they can contribute to Skills Group's plans.

c) Training

Through membership of organisations such as the Association of Training Providers, Skills Group will source, promote and support training opportunities for staff from across Skills Group.

d) Departmental Initiatives

Skills Group will, wherever possible, support departmental initiatives which promote positive outcomes in sustainability and the environment. This may include initiatives specific to one department or those, which have cross-Organisation benefits such as the installation of "power-down" software by the ICT Department.

e) External Commitments

Skills Group will, wherever possible, support external initiatives which promote positive outcomes in sustainability and the environment. This will include commitments to national initiatives to reduce negative environmental impact and also local initiatives such as the hosting and promotion of events.

4.0 Responsibilities

4.1 The Directorship is responsible for overseeing compliance with the policy's principles.

4.2 The Managing Director is responsible for ensuring appropriate procedures are in place to facilitate this policy.

4.3 All Skills Group staff members are responsible for understanding and adhering to this policy.

Document Control

This policy will be reviewed annually or earlier if deemed necessary

Date Last Reviewed: January 2025
Date to be Reviewed: January 2026

Authorised By

Signed



Mark Boulting
Managing Director