

Guidelines for Environmental Protection for the University of Osnabrück

Sustainable Development

„Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.“

(World Commission on Environment and Development, Our Common Future (Brundtland-Bericht), 1987)

The University of Osnabrück feels obliged to follow this principle of sustainable development, due to the dramatic global environmental state.

With its over 14 000 members and consumption of energy and material, the University of Osnabrück is comparable to a large commercial concern. The running of the University causes considerable environmental damage, which is to be minimised. Furthermore, the University assumes a special societal responsibility, in that it educates and leaves its mark on the future decision-makers of our society. It takes on a multiplier function, and therefore significant responsibility. Moreover, it should not be forgotten that academic research also affects human beings and nature, and that universities are therefore particularly responsible for their research aims and results.

Environmental protection should be the responsibility of all students and employees, whilst at work and when travelling to and from the University. It is an executive duty for management personnel. The University will only fulfil this task if as many University members as possible identify themselves with the aims of environmental protection and sustainable development, and actively contribute to the implementation of such aims.

For this reason the University of Osnabrück has set itself the following guidelines, in accordance with the CRE-Charter for sustainable development (CRE-COPERNICUS). These guidelines should be adopted by all members of the University in their personal area of work or studies, and implemented with innovation.

Guidelines for the Concern

We believe that protection of the environment means preventing danger to people and the environment, the continual reduction in the use of resources and energy, and the minimisation of emissions and waste so that the University can make its contribution to sustainable development.

1. In order to achieve this, the University will determine environmental aims, with the involvement of University members, and will construct an effective environmental management system to put these aims into action. The senate will report regularly on the implementation of the system.
2. All University departments should be linked to the environmental protection programme so that administration and the faculties cooperate in matters concerning environmental protection. Moreover, the University cultivates interchange with other universities to promote the idea of environmental protection. It endeavours to give political and social

support in order to achieve the aim of an environmentally friendly University oriented towards the principle of sustainable development.

3. The University conducts open dialogue and undertakes to inform the public so that its environmental protection measures are transparent.
4. The University will provide education, training and encouragement to its employees concerning environmental issues.
5. Prior to purchase, the environmental effects of materials and equipment should be taken into consideration by the University. The most environmentally friendly variants should take precedence, if possible. The University influences its business partners in order to improve the goods and services offered with regard to the environment.
6. Legal and official requirements represent minimum standards which, if possible, should be implemented to an even higher level.

Guidelines for Research and Teaching

The University endeavours to give due weight to environmentally relevant issues in research and teaching.

7. A requirement for the guarantee of freedom in research and teaching is that lecturers and researchers need to be aware of their responsibility for the ensuing consequences. This includes the maintenance of natural resources for present and future generations. Academic staff and students alike therefore endeavour to minimise the negative consequences of their research and teaching.
8. The University's faculties and interdisciplinary institutions promote academic work in the environmental field, in addition to participation in courses that deal with environmental issues.
9. University members support the networking and interdisciplinary processing of environmentally relevant issues in research and teaching at the University, also in cooperation with other universities.

Adopted by the senate of the University of Osnabrück on 16 April 1997.