'Learning in Future Environments (LiFE) Steering Committee - Membership and Terms of Reference

Section 1 - Establishment

Background

(1) The Learning in Future Environments (LiFE) framework is a structured process for evaluating current practices that support or impede good sustainability practices and for developing improvement plans via cross-organisational participation.

(2) The implementation of LiFE at Charles Sturt University (the University) contributes towards the United Nations' 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), underpins the University's commitments under the Talloires Declaration and the Principles of Responsible Management Education, and aligns with the University's Sustainability Statement.

(3) It is recognised that further improvements in organisational sustainability will lead to reputational benefits and an increased public profile.

(4) The organisational improvements anticipated through the adoption of LiFE will complement the intent of the Sustainable Practices dimension of the Graduate Learning Outcomes initiative and the University's Research Strategy. It will enhance external credibility for the work done in these areas.

(5) LiFE incorporates the four following priority areas (and 16 frameworks under these themes):

   a. Leadership and governance
   b. Partnerships and engagement
   c. Learning, teaching and research
   d. Facilities and operations

Purpose

(6) The LiFE Steering Committee will oversee progress towards stated LiFE outcomes and support active participation by key representatives from across the University. It will draw on methodologies that are consistent with the University's approach to good practices in change management.

(7) Proposed outcomes for the University resulting from the implementation of the LiFE framework include:

   a. enhancing the University's approach to delivering against the United Nations' SDGs
   b. improved literacy in sustainability principles and practices among University graduates
   c. new knowledge that addresses local and global sustainability challenges while focusing on the University's research strengths
   d. improved cooperation with, and visibility to, our communities in the actions we take
   e. minimised environmental footprint of the University
   f. improved cross-organisational communication and reduced duplication of effort associated with progressing common goals, and

g. improved knowledge, attitudes, skills and aspirations around sustainability, leading to behavioural change in students and staff.

(8) The LiFE Steering Committee will provide organisational direction to Campus Environmental Working Groups to help these campus-based groups support LiFE in an effective manner, and will receive feedback from these committees as appropriate.

Section 2 - Glossary

(9) For the purpose of this document:

a. Committee - means the Learning in Future Enviroments (LiFE) Steering Committee.
b. LiFE - refers to the Learning in Future Environments Framework.
c. Sustainability - is defined by the University as a process that integrates environmental, social and economic considerations into decision making with the goal of creating a thriving and healthy society. Its focus is on improving the quality of life for all citizens without increasing the use of natural resources beyond the capacity of the environment to supply them indefinitely.
d. Sustainable development goals (SDGs) - mean the United Nations' recognised 17 goals adopted on 25 September 2015 under the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
e. Champions - means proactive facilitators and leaders who will act as conduits of information and catalysts for change between their networks and the Committee.

Section 3 - Membership

(10) The regular members of the committee shall be:

a. Chief Operating Officer as the Executive Leadership Team member, with delegated organisational responsibility for Sustainability
b. Chief Financial Officer
c. Pro Vice-Chancellor Research (Performance and Governance), or nominee
d. Pro Vice-Chancellor (Learning and Teaching), or nominee
e. Head, Communications and Government Relations, or nominee
f. Executive Director, Gulbali Institute, or nominee
g. Executive Director, Student Experience
h. Chief of Staff, or nominee
i. Director, Facilities Management
j. Manager, Sustainability
k. A nominated Director, External Engagement
l. A nominated representative from each faculty

(11) Right of audience and debate:

a. Project Officer, Sustainability, Facilities Management
b. Campus Environmental Working Group presiding officers
c. Executive Officer, Facilities Management to provide secretariat support.

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Section 4 - Functions and responsibilities

Member responsibilities

(12) The LiFE Steering Committee will provide strategic advice, support the escalation of issues to the Executive Leadership Team, via the Chief Operating Officer on the following items:

a. Recommendations to ensure the delivery of the University's [Strategic Plan](#) leverages opportunities to foster the University's organisational commitment to sustainability as outlined in its [Sustainability Statement](#).
b. Strategic leadership and guidance associated with the implementation of the LiFE framework.
c. The adequacy of participation by key stakeholders in the LiFE framework and provision of advice on strategies for increasing engagement.
d. Risks and opportunities to the achievement of the University's strategic objectives relating to sustainability.
e. Strategic advice to ensure key business processes, policies and procedures promote positive sustainability outcomes.
f. Feedback on the extent to which key organisational planning instruments, such as operational plans, and the Employee Development and Review Scheme are being utilised to support sustainability objectives.
g. Emerging best practices in sustainability and recommendations for adoption, where appropriate, within the University.

Section 5 - Meetings

Quorum

(13) A quorum will be achieved when six regular committee members are present.

Meetings

(14) The meetings should be conducted in accordance with the following:

a. The committee shall meet at least four times per year.
b. The presiding officer shall be the Chief Operating Officer.
c. The committee will report to the Executive Leadership Team.
d. Sub-committees or working parties may be formed as required to report or make recommendations to the committee on particular matters.

Agendas and minutes

(15) Minutes and agendas will be managed via administrative support from the Executive Officer, Facilities Management.

Conflicts of interest

(16) Where a member has a perceived or material conflict of interest, they must declare this to the chair and at the committee meeting prior to discussion to the item of business.

Variations

(17) Variations to the terms of reference and/or membership of the committee must be approved by the Chief Operating Officer.

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