



GreenEd Framework

Commission for Academic Accreditation & National Qualifications Centre
United Arab Emirates



مفوضية الاعتماد الأكاديمي
Commission for Academic Accreditation

المركز الوطني للمؤهلات
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Introduction

With global concern about climate change and the increasing pressure to achieve sustainability targets, the higher education sector in the UAE is aligning with the governmental effort to enhance the UAE’s National Determined Contribution (UAE-NDC) toward climate resilience and sustainability. The GreenEd Framework aim to provide a guidance for Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) systems to play an active role in this national effort. A task force committee formed by the Commission for Academic Accreditation (CAA) and National Qualification Centre (NQC) was tasked with authoring the GreenEd Framework for Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and TVET united in alignment with UAE’s efforts to promote sustainability in all sectors. The committee worked with representatives from a group of higher education institutions to develop the framework document and its implementation plan in higher education sector to enhance the sustainability performance among all institutions.

The GreenEd initiative aligns with major UAE and global efforts to promote sustainability in higher education sector. Main references include the UAE Vision 2021 and 2030, the UAE Centennial 2071, and the Net Zero 2050 initiative, which aims for climate neutrality. The UAE Net Zero Strategy 2050 aligns with the Paris Agreement, making the UAE the first MENA country to announce this long-term goal. The directive from His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan extends the “Year of Sustainability” into 2024. The COP28 Declaration and the Greening Education Partnership (GEP) emphasize sustainable educational systems. UNESCO’s Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) roadmap and the UNESCO Strategy for TVET 2022-2029 also provide guidance for integrating sustainability into education. By following the framework, UAE institutions can ensure their sustainability initiatives meet both national and global standards

The first draft of the GreenEd Framework was shared with the HEIs, TVET and sustainability stakeholders on November 21, 2024, during a one-day workshop for feedback and comments. The combined feedback of the participating institutions, stakeholders, NQC and CAA were reviewed and integrated by the Committee to produce a final draft of the GreenEd Framework that is applicable for UAE and aligned with the country’s vision toward sustainability and climate neutrality.

The CAA and NQC endorsed the final draft of the GreenEd Framework on 31 December 2024 (anticipated).

The Purpose of GreenEd Framework

The GreenEd framework, introduced by the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research (MoHSER) is designed to serve as a roadmap for higher education and TVET institutions to operationalize sustainability initiatives. By outlining clear frameworks and actionable steps, this Framework aligns with the UAE’s commitment to climate neutrality (NZE) and empowers institutions to contribute to the UAE’s sustainability strategies and Net Zero 2050 goals. The UAE

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leader's vision for extending the Year of Sustainability 2024 was the driving force to accelerate the country's commitment to create sustainability practices in all sectors. The proposed framework would provide the Higher Education and TVET Education stakeholders including universities, research institutions, awarding bodies, and training providers with guidance to enhance their contribution to the UAE's National Determined Contribution (UAE-NDC) for achieving Net Zero (NZE) by 2050 through greening Higher Education and TVET systems, and excel across the 17's United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (17's SDGs).

Strategic Objectives

The GreedEd initiative key strategic objectives aim to:

1. Align the UAE's higher education and TVET systems with national sustainability goals: specially the country's 2030, 2050 and 2071 sustainable development goals.
2. Establish consistent sustainability framework: that support higher education and technical and vocational institutions, as well as learners, staff and other stakeholders in enhancing their sustainability practices.
3. Advance sustainability through integrated strategies: facilitate and develop strategies, policies, curricula, academic programs, research, collaboration and innovative initiatives with measurable Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).
4. Equip future leaders with sustainability competencies: by preparing students with the knowledge, skills, and the mindset required for sustainability to be a key determinant of business success and employability in a sustainable economy and society.
5. Enhance global recognition of UAE higher education institutions: strengthen current sustainability practices within the higher education and TVET systems will boost the visibility and global recognition of UAE's higher education institutions and showcase the nation's commitment to sustainability.

Integrating Sustainability across Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) Dimensions

Higher Education and TVET institutions are required to integrate the three pillars of sustainability Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG), in alignment with united nation environmental program (UNEP) for sustainable university published in 2021, into their planning processes to enhance sustainability practices and demonstrate comprehensive excellence in contributing to global sustainable development goals. Below are details on each ESG-pillar and some key expected practices associated with them.

Environmental: promoting environmental sustainability strategies in educational institutions is essential to reduce the institutional carbon footprint, sustain resources and enhance the green practices among students, faculty and staff. These strategies would include energy efficiency within campus related activities, addressing green mobility, using renewable energy to decrease the

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dependence on fossil fuels, campus design and technology deployment, and waste minimization and management to reach zero waste emissions.

Social: social sustainability would focus on the campus society, the institution's partners and the community. It should ensure equal opportunities for all students to access services, resources and high quality of education. Furthermore, social sustainability would provide opportunities for students, faculty and staff for community engagement to ensure institutional inclusion in its community.

Governance: sustainable governance and commitment of senior HE leaders ensures accountability and transparency decision making within the educational institution's academic and non-academic operations. The commitment of HE senior leaders toward ESGs strategies and initiatives would help the institution in retaining students, faculty and staff. It would improve the work environment and promote innovation among institutional governance. The institutional leadership should provide strategies, policies and initiatives with measurable Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) that promote sustainability among the institution and beyond its community and all stakeholders. Involvement of students, faculty and staff in the decision-making process, developing policies and communicating and reporting the action plans transparently and openly. Moreover, community-oriented sustainability education could be enhanced as educational institutions should play a role in upskilling their communities in sustainable practices through, for example, offering public workshops, certifications, and community events that promote sustainable living, such as solar panel installations or urban farming projects.

GreenEd Framework

The proposed Green Education (GreenEd) framework for the Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and Technical Educational and Vocational Training (TVET) Institutions helps to assess and benchmark sustainability performance, facilitates communication with stakeholders, supports continuous improvement, aids in strategic planning, and promotes stakeholder engagement. This structured approach integrates sustainability into the core functions of HE and TVET institutions, fostering long-term environmental, social, and economic sustainability.

The GreenEd framework was benchmarked against The United Nations Environmental Program (UNEP) for Sustainable University Framework and UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as main references. Additionally, it is aligned with a couple of the international sustainability frameworks that represent the good practices and sustainability performance ranking for the higher education institutions such as The Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating System (STARS) Framework, Impact Rankings-THE Times Higher Education, QS-Ranking or others. Each institution has the freedom to create its own sustainability strategies and initiatives, using this framework as a primary guide, alongside the UAE's national sustainability framework and the cultural values of Emirati society.

The GreenEd framework consists of the following main pillars: academics and research, community engagement, operations and resources, planning and administration, and innovation and leadership, Figure 1. The higher education and TVET institutions are expected to develop their

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own sustainability framework based on this framework to reflect the country's social, cultural, economic and ecological development. The depth in the framework would be flexible and based on the institutional engagement and scope of sustainability.

Firstly, the academic and research pillar would cover the curriculum development and research components to incorporate sustainability and climate change, embedding green skills in HE and TVET to promote a sustainable environment, society and economy, and research should focus on sustainable solutions and climate change adaptation. This pillar should keep the institution and its academic programs well informed about the emerging sustainability knowledge and skills to better prepare the graduates to meet the market needs. Secondly, the community engagement pillar would promote sustainable practices, climate awareness and resilience among higher education and TVET stakeholders including students, faculty, staff, industrial and community partners. Thirdly, institutional operations would cover the campus building to priorities sustainable and climate-resilient designs, renewable energy and reducing carbon footprints, food and waste management, and transportation to reduce the greenhouse gas emissions. Fourthly, the planning and administration to integrate sustainability and climate change adaptation into university and college strategies, goals and action plans. Finally, the leadership commitment to sustainability and embed sustainable innovation to leverage technology and science for sustainable solutions and foster a culture of innovation. The later may include deployment of innovative Artificial Intelligence (AI) solutions in academic and non-academic operations and leadership. The presence of Monitoring and Reporting System within the institution to monitor and report on the sustainability practices within would assist the institutional continuous improvement. More detail for each pillar is discussed below in Figure 1.

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Pillar 1: Education & Research	Pillar 2: Community Engagement	Pillar 3: Operations & Resources	Pillar 4: Planning, Administration & Risk	Pillar 5: Innovation, Leadership & Accountability
Curriculum: Incorporate sustainability and climate change, embedding green skills in HE and TVET to promote a sustainable environment, society and economy. Emphasise “applied learning”. Scholarly activities: Focuses on applied research on sustainability solutions and climate change adaptation. Examples: Programs, curricula, cocurricular, extracurricular: Depending on the program type and level, a course relevant to the learners, such as Eco-friendly design or sustainable resource management, may be included. Scholarly activity: research project on Climate-Adapted Agriculture for the UAE Desert Climate	Internal Engagement: Promotes sustainable practices and climate awareness among higher education and TVET internal stakeholders. Public Engagement: Fosters sustainability and climate resilience in the community and industry partners. Examples: Green campus day, Environmental Club, Community Climate Resilience workshops on farming techniques, food production.	Buildings & Grounds: Prioritizes sustainable and climate-resilient designs. Energy & Climate: Focuses on renewable energy and reducing carbon footprints. Food & Dining: Emphasizes sustainable sourcing and waste reduction. Procurement & Waste: Aims for sustainable procurement and zero-waste goals. Transportation: Promotes sustainable transportation and reduces emissions. Examples: Eco-friendly campus infrastructure, solar energy integration, energy management system, waste-free cafeteria, electric shuttle transportation, carpooling, cycling	Coordination & Planning: Integrates sustainability and climate action into strategies, goals, and action plans. Investment: Prioritizes sustainable and climate-resilient investments. Social Objectivity: Focuses on social sustainability and climate justice. Wellbeing & Work: Supports health, wellness, and climate resilience. Monitoring & Reporting: Create a system to monitor and report on sustainability. Risk Assessment: institutional resilience, and climate risk assessment. Examples: Sustainability embedded strategy, green investment portfolio sustainability	Leadership commitment: Drives sustainability and climate adaptation initiatives. Sustainable Innovation: Embed environmental, social and economic considerations in the innovation process to leverage technology and science for sustainable solutions and foster a culture of innovation. Examples: Executive sustainability pledge, Green innovation lab. Transparency in reporting. Awards, incentives to departments or individuals who demonstrate leadership in sustainability.

Figure 1. Pillars of the GreenEd Sustainability Framework

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Core GreenEd Practices

- **Focus on core sustainability sectors in UAE:** UAE Net Zero 2050 strategy covers six core sectors, including power, industry, transport, buildings, waste and agriculture. HE and TVET education systems should take into consideration of the development of proficient manpower through education and apprenticeship programs, microcredentials, training and courses that would contribute to deployment of renewable energy and energy efficiency technologies, nature-based solutions and carbon dioxide removal (CDR) solutions.
- **Curriculum Integration:** infusing the Environmental and Sustainable Development (ESD) aspects, integrate environmental skills and awareness into HE and TVET systems such as developing programs, microcredentials, training and courses that address sustainability skills in various fields, including renewable energy, energy efficiency, waste management, green buildings, sustainable transportation, eco-friendly fuels, etc. The curriculum should be developed in close collaboration with industry and environmental experts to design programs that meet both the good practices in environmental standards and the industry needs.
- **Applied Research and Innovation:** HE and TVET systems should focus on applied research, finding innovative solutions and generating new knowledge for sustainability that covers the main six areas/sectors including power, industry, transport, buildings, waste and agriculture. They should allocate funding and develop related research policies and procedures to encourage learners and faculty to explore green innovation and tackle sustainability problems to find innovative solutions and explore new knowledge. The research funding can be generated from governmental commitment, collaboration with industry and/or environmental agencies.
- **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):** Universities and other Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), and TVET institutions should promote the SDGs through academic and non-academic operations among their institutions and communities.
- **Creating a proficient workforce for sustainable energy:** HEIs and TVET systems should play a crucial role in creating a pool of proficient local manpower to support the expansion of the sustainable energy sector in the UAE. They can work on upskilling and reskilling aspects by promoting the use of renewable energy technology solutions such as hydrogen energy, solar energy, geothermal energy and other green energy practices aiming to increase energy efficiency and its green use for minimising emissions. Therefore, current and new education and training programs should focus on the development of renewable energy and energy efficiency knowledge, skills and attitudes.
- **Improving sustainability hands-on skills:** HEIs and TVET systems should provide resources at curriculum, research, and students' engagement and build capacities to enhance the hands-on training on sustainable technologies such as hydrogen energy process plants, batteries and energy storage systems, training on solar systems setup and panel installations, energy efficiency in HVAC-systems, eco-friendly construction materials,

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goods lifecycle and eco-friendly design and other practices such as green buildings and green campuses.

- **Capacity building and training:** higher education institutions should clearly outline their plans to train faculty and staff, empowering them to become change agents. These training plans should focus on reskilling and upskilling faculty and staff to ensure their continuous learning and enhance their capabilities in meeting the emerging skills in sustainability. Faculty should be empowered with training programs that are aligned with current employability trends to keep updated curriculum and better prepare students for the job market.
- **Stakeholder engagement and Communication:** HEIs are encouraged to outline their strategies for engaging the various stakeholders and feedback mechanisms. This is key in building trust.
- **Collaboration and partnerships with Industry:** TVET education and training system encourages internship (On Job Training) and apprenticeship programs in collaboration with green industries that provide the students with opportunities to develop their skills and attitudes toward more sustainable practices. Additionally, international collaboration in higher education would promote the exchange of ideas and benchmark to good practices and monitor progress. The institutions are encouraged to be a part of the global sustainability networks or partnerships.
- **Qualifications, certifications and credentials:** NQC would facilitate the qualifications, certification, and micro-credentials that contribute to building green skills for individuals who are trained to implement eco-friendly practices and technologies in various industries and economy sectors and enhance their employment. Certification in Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design for sustainable building, Energy auditor for assessing energy efficiency, and green technicians are good examples.
- **Green campus concepts and practices:** HEI and TVET campuses should adopt the green/sustainable campus in their operation, such as zero campus emissions, lighting and efficient energy use, green landscaping with native plants, waste minimization and segregation, parking privileges for green practices for faculty and students, zero-paper campus (digital campus), etc. Also, utilizing AI in campus operations as SMART systems would enhance energy efficiency in lighting, cooling, heating and other energy uses.
- **Life-Long Learning Toward Green Ed:** HEIs and TVET system should, as appropriate, design and update training programs for alumni and members of the community to reskilling and upskilling toward green and sustainability practices and technologies employment.
- **Awareness campaigns:** HEI's and TVET system should provide opportunities for various stakeholders to raise the awareness for climate change and its consequences, biodiversity in UAE, conversation of nature and endangered flora and fauna through workshops, awareness campaigns, discussion panels, trips, green internships and other activities that would engage students to be a part of the transition toward a more sustainable community. Also, including faculty training on sustainability, or student-led environmental projects, to foster deeper engagement across all levels.

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- **Road map to NZE:** HEIs and TVET stakeholders should provide their road map toward zero emissions by setting their baselines and defining incremental goals to reach NZE by 2030 and 2050. This can be achieved by development of NZE-strategy, policies, and procedure. Action plans should be developed with clear KPIs that should be reported annually on the institutional achievements. The NZE-goals and action plans should be well communicated within the institution to assure the commitment of the various departments, faculty, staff and students.
- **NZE-Recognition:** NQC and CAA will develop a recognition criterion for the green achievers in collaboration with the initiative's strategic partners including MOCCA, MOHRE, EAD, etc. This recognition will place a ranking scale for the AWD, HEIs, ATPs to reflect their achievements toward NZE-2050.
- **General Education:** HEIs and TVET should add at least one course to general education that covers the learning outcomes related to greening education and sustainability or include them explicitly in other courses. The learners should be at least able to identify the global SDGs, major global and local sustainability challenges, apply sustainable practices in their disciplines and act in their professional or personal lives, taking sustainability into consideration in the social, economic, and environmental aspects.
- **Recognition and Rating:** Higher Education and TVET institutions are encouraged to seek national and international recognition of their good practices in sustainability, including the academics, engagement, operations, and governance, either by rating or ranking criteria.
- **Integrating Artificial Intelligence (AI):** Higher Education institutions Higher Education institutions are encouraged to incorporate AI into both academic and administrative functions. For instance, AI can enhance personalized student learning experiences, making them more efficient, effective, and appealing. By optimizing resource use, AI can improve student outcomes. It can analyse large datasets, such as grades, survey results, and employment statistics, to provide insights into student performance and resource utilization. This enables institutions to make informed decisions that promote sustainability across all operations. Additionally, AI can be integrated into Learning Management Systems to ensure ethical and inclusive practices by monitoring and addressing biases, promoting fairness, and supporting diverse learning needs. AI also supports research and innovation by analysing complex data sets, identifying patterns, and generating new insights, thereby accelerating research in sustainability-related fields and fostering the development of innovative solutions.
- **Reporting on Sustainability:** it is suggested to develop a platform to capture the good practices at the HEIs and TVET. The data can be used for rating of performance on sustainability practices among the HE and TVET institutions in UAE.

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Governance Model of Sustainability

The Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) institutions are expected to develop their own sustainability governance model that aligns with their strategies and goals. The Governance Model should consider the environmental, social and economic pillars of sustainability and align it with institutional goals. It should at least include leadership commitment to sustainability, vision, mission and goals supporting institutional-wide sustainability, and well-defined roles and responsibilities to assure the proper implementation, monitoring, reporting and continuous improvement of sustainability measures at the institutional level. The creation of an accountability and compliance framework by the institutions, enabling transparent reporting on sustainability performance. Figure (2) summaries main components of the sustainability model at institutional level. The educational institutions are required to develop their own mechanisms for monitoring, reporting, and accountability including performance metrics and reporting structures that would ensure that the Framework can be more rigorously enforced. The key performance indicators (KPIs) should be aligned with the SDGs and UAE's sustainability initiatives such as UAE Vision 2030, UAE Net Zero 2050 goals, and UEA’s Centennial 2071.

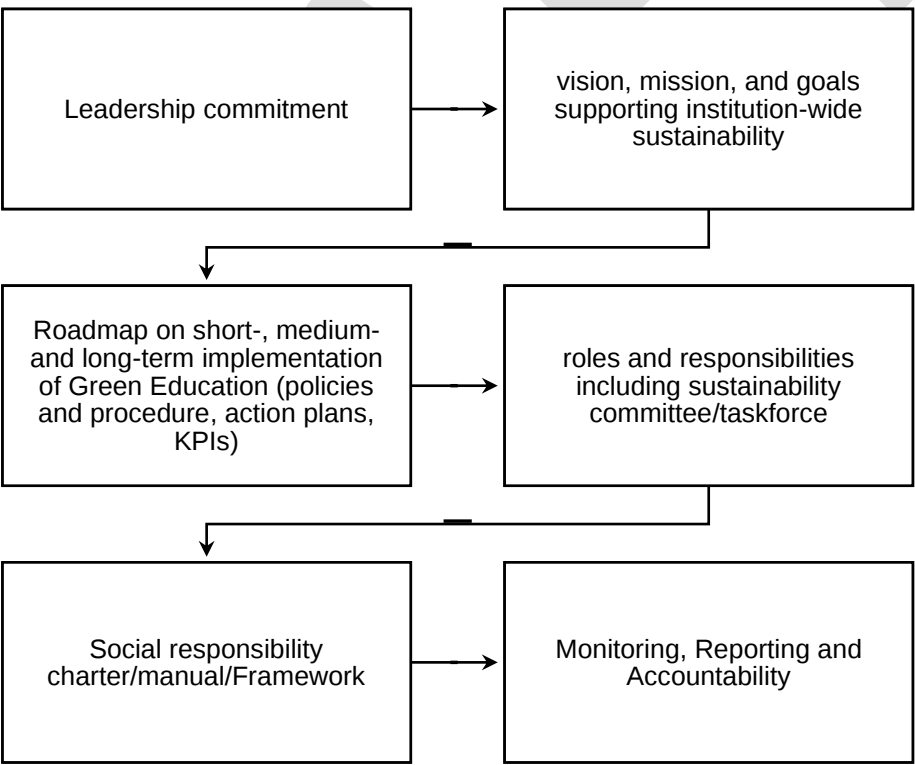


Figure 2. Governance Model for Institutional Sustainability

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Institutional Rating on Sustainability Performance

The United Nations Environmental Program (UNEP) Framework published in 2021 defines the concept of a sustainable university. It provides a roadmap for achieving this goal across four key areas of a university: 1) environment and climate, 2) teaching and research, 3) people and society, and 4) administration and governance. The framework introduces a 4-step process for becoming a sustainable university and offers practical tips for quick wins and starting the journey, Figure 3.

Moreover, the UNEP Framework identifies the institution's level of sustainability performance in four levels. These levels increase in sustainability ambition starting at: Emerging, Progressing, Established and ending with an institution's performance being recognized as Leading (sustainable campus). The institutions might design their initiatives and plans to be placed on the rating scale (Tier 4-1). The beginners would be expected to achieve Tier 4. Actions to attain Tier 4 are listed in table 2. institutions that have established a well-defined sustainability system with continual improvement process will achieve Tier 1 which is the sustainable campus, Figure 4. More details on activities for each level are listed in table 1. This rating system can be utilised to develop an institutional rating system in UAE for HE and TVET institutions in future.

Institutions can assess their sustainability performance using a checklist of KPIs, including reductions in carbon emissions, percentage of renewable energy use, waste reduction rates, integration of sustainability into curricula, people and society engagement, and institutional administration and governance. These KPIs will be used to assign institutions a sustainability tier, from Emerging to Leading, with regular self-assessments to track progress. It is expected within the GreenEd initiative that all HE and TVET institutions to meet at least Tier 4 performance criteria.



Figure 3. UNEP Framework 2021.

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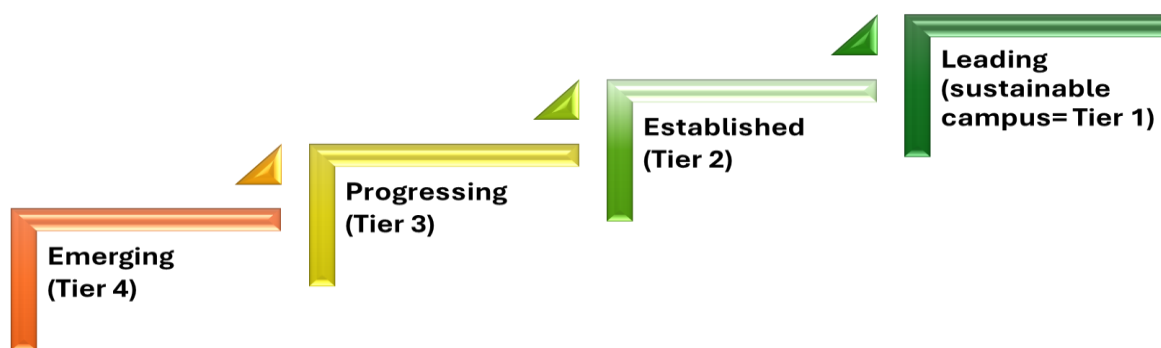


Figure 4. UNEP institutional levels on sustainability performance (UNEP, 2021).

Table 1. Level descriptor on sustainability performance.

Tier	Tier Description
Emerging (Tier 4)	Emerging Institutions that engage students and staff, disseminate sustainability and its understanding, recruit sustainability champions, establish sustainability committee/taskforce, provide top management commitment, draft plans for sustainability integration.
Progressing (Tier 3)	Progressing Institutions that formalize framework, plans and policies, agree on roles and responsibilities, provide training to staff and students, and start some scatter activities related to sustainability.
Established (Tier 2)	Established Institutions that integrate and align sustainability with clear framework, policies, goals and objectives, and measurable KPIs. Start measuring and review performance and communicate review outcomes with students and staff. Sustainability became a part of the quality assurance audit and institution recognition.
Sustainable Campus (Tier 1)	Sustainable Institutions that routinely report on performance and improvement of sustainability within academic and non-academic operations with measurable KPIs, be a model institution to others and share their experience among the community and stakeholders, revise the institutional ambition and vision of sustainability, establish continual improvement process for sustainability, sustainability is embedded in teaching and learning, research, curriculum and offered academic, or technical, or vocational programs, and are well recognized internationally for their sustainability performance.

Table 2 Minimum requirements to meet Tier 4 (Emerging) sustainability performance, institutions should aspire to be higher than Tier 4.

Minimum Requirements Tier 4
Establish a sustainability committee which includes members from academics, facilities, students and senior management with recorded minutes
Appoint a head of sustainability for the University who leads the development of sustainability within policies.
Carry out a baseline sustainability review of practice at the institution and develop draft policies guiding the development of sustainability practices. This can be a single policy, but the best practice is to incorporate sustainability across institutional policies. These should be reviewed by the sustainability committee.
Develop a draft sustainability action plan with measurable KPIs outlining the institutional goals relating to sustainability.
Establish regular events for staff and students relating to sustainability topics raising awareness and engagement.

Implementation Roadmap

The taskforce committee held the main workshop on 21 November 2024 at University of Sharjah to collect the higher education institutions feedback on the framework and its implementation road map. The participants have suggested the following timeframe for adopting the sustainability framework at the higher education institutions:

3 Years implementation plan

Phase	Timeline	Activities	Progress
Initial Preparation	July – December 2024	- Establish Taskforce Committees - Develop Guidelines/framework - Obtain feedback from HEIs - Develop Communication Strategy	70%
Dissemination Plan	Jan-March 2025	Dissemination Materials- Conduct Information Session(s)	
Pilot Phase	March 2025 - August 2025	- Select 2-3 Pilot Institutions - Monitor and Evaluate (Self-Monitoring) - Roll Out Framework	
Full-Scale Implementation	September 2025 - August 2026	- Integrate into Curriculum & Research - Enhance Infrastructure and green campus operation	
Performance Measurement and Reporting	September 2026 - Ongoing	- Develop Metrics and Indicators - Regular Reporting - Continuous Improvement	

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Phase	Timeline	Activities	Progress
Stakeholder Engagement and Communication	July 2027- Ongoing	- Engage Stakeholders - Promote Awareness through training and capacity building - Annual conference on Sustainability to announce the HEI rating and share Best Practices among the HEIs	

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Key Definitions

Sustainable Development (SD)	SD can be defined as the development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the future generation's ability to access their own needs.
Sustainability in HE	It can be defined in the context of higher education as the integration of environmental, social and economic sustainability aspects and practices within the curriculum, research, operations, and engagement in higher education institutions.
Sustainability Vision:	a concise, high-level statement that articulates the institution's long-term commitment to achieving sustainability goals.
ESG	Environmental, Social and Governance are main pillars of sustainability establishment, promotion or implementation.
Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)	The 17 global goals set by the United Nations to address global challenges, including poverty, inequality, climate change, and environmental degradation by 2030.
Sustainable University	inspiring and empowering students, faculty and staff to be carbon net-positive actors. Sustainable University would enhance learners and educator's role in supporting sustainable development in their lives, careers and life-long options.
Sustainability Rating or Ranking	a rating or ranking system evaluates institutional performance in sustainability and recognizes its level based on environmental, social, and governance (ESG) indicators.
UAE Vision 2030	This vision emphasises sustainable economic growth, quality education, healthcare, and access to clean energy. It aligns with the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and aims to ensure a balanced approach to development and environmental conservation.
UAE Net Zero 2050 Strategy	This strategy aims to achieve net zero emissions by 2050, focusing on enhancing efficiency, expanding renewable energy sources, implementing sustainable transportation and green building practices, and employing carbon capture technologies.
Carbon Neutrality	Achieving net-zero carbon dioxide emissions through balancing emissions with carbon offsets or reducing emissions to near zero.
Circular Economy	An economic system focused on minimising waste and making the most of resources by recycling, reusing, and repairing products.
Zero Waste Campus	A campus that aims to divert all waste from landfills by reducing, reusing, recycling, and composting materials.
Carbon Footprint	The total amount of greenhouse gases (GHG) emitted by an institution, event, or activity, typically measured in CO2 equivalent
Sustainable Building (Green Building)	A building designed, constructed, and operated to minimise environmental impacts, enhance occupant health, and reduce resource use over its life cycle.
Green Campus	A campus that integrates sustainable practices into all aspects of its operations, reducing its environmental impact through energy, water, waste, and transportation management.

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UAE's National Framework for Sustainable Development, Ministry of Climate Change and Environment (MOECC). <https://u.ae/en/about-the-uae/strategies-initiatives-and-awards/strategies-plans-and-visions/environment-and-energy/the-national-framework-for-sustainable-development>

United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) – United Nations, 2015. Describes the 17 global goals aimed at achieving a sustainable future by 2030, applicable to education, governance, and environmental practices. <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>

The Paris Agreement – United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), 2015. An international treaty focusing on climate change mitigation, adaptation, and finance, encouraging national commitments to carbon neutrality. <https://unfccc.int/process-and-meetings/the-paris-agreement>

UNESCO Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) for 2030 Framework – United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), 2020. A roadmap guiding education

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systems to integrate sustainability, addressing climate change and promoting environmental education. <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000374802>

ISO 14001: Environmental Management Systems – International Organization for Standardization (ISO), 2015. An internationally recognized standard providing requirements for an effective environmental management system, applicable to organizations including educational institutions. <https://www.iso.org/iso-14001-environmental-management.html>

Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) Standards – Global Reporting Initiative, latest edition. A comprehensive sustainability reporting framework providing standards for transparency on environmental, social, and governance (ESG) impacts. <https://www.globalreporting.org/standards/>

COP28 – The UAE as Host of the UN Climate Change Conference 2023 – UNFCCC. Focuses on global efforts in climate change mitigation and adaptation, with the UAE's emphasis on sustainable energy and climate resilience. <https://www.cop28.com/>

Ellen MacArthur Foundation: Circular Economy in Education – Ellen MacArthur Foundation, latest edition. A guide on implementing circular economy principles in educational institutions, focusing on reducing waste and maximizing resources. <https://ellenmacarthurfoundation.org/>

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