



## Sustainable Travel Policy

### Vision

The Sustainable Travel Policy is designed to improve the travel behaviours of the University of East London, reduce the need for travel, and encourage staff, students, and visitors to choose more sustainable travel modes. The policy aims to encourage more active, healthy and environmentally friendly travel decisions, and to assist the surrounding communities by reducing traffic congestion and the associated harmful effects on the environment from single car usage and higher carbon-emitting modes of travel.

The Sustainable Travel Policy forms part of the University's approach to tackling sustainability, as defined by our Sustainability Policy. The University is committed to reducing its carbon emissions in line with a Net Zero target of 2030, and aims to become the most sustainable university in London.

### Scope

The Sustainable Travel Policy encompasses the following areas of University-related travel:

- Commuting – travel to and from our campuses by students, staff, and visitors
- Business Travel – local, domestic, or international travel taken on behalf of the University
- Site Travel – travel undertaken within or between our campuses, including the Campus shuttle bus, security, pool vehicles, and deliveries

This policy sets out five objectives for transport-related emissions reduction, as well as the actions being taken towards these objectives. It then provides a framework for sustainability within business travel.

### Objectives

In order to decarbonise the commutes of our staff and students, the University commits to the following five objectives:

1. Reduce single-occupancy vehicle usage
2. Develop 'active campuses', encouraging walking and cycling
3. Develop partnerships with local authorities and Transport for London to improve and promote sustainable travel
4. Improve local and global air quality through sustainable business and site travel
5. Reduce the need to travel

#### *Objective 1: Single Occupancy Vehicle Usage*

High dependency on commuting to sites by car is increased by single-occupancy vehicle (SOV) commuting. This is particularly visible at our Docklands campus, where much of the site is utilised for the purpose of car parking. SOV usage adds to existing traffic and congestion within east London, and reduces the efficiency of public transport in the area. It also significantly adds to poor air quality and the harmful effects of carbon emissions on the local and global environment.

The Sustainable Travel Policy aims to incentivise alternative modes of travel, achieving modal shift from car travel wherever possible. In addition, the University will explore the following:

- Implementation of a 'liftshare' scheme
- Review of car parking permit criteria and usage

#### *Objective 2: Active Campuses*

The University has committed to the revitalization of its campuses through the ongoing Connected Campus project. Connected Campus seeks to improve the fabric of the University estate to encourage student and staff engagement, collaboration, and active travel. In addition to the Connected Campus upgrades, the University will explore the following actions:

- Increased provision of secure cycle storage, lockers, and changing facilities
- Implementation of a cycle-to-work scheme
- Introduction of a salary sacrifice scheme for bicycles and e-bikes
- Collaboration with local authorities and partners on cycling safety
- Development of an active travel campaign

#### *Objective 3: Public Transport*

The University recognises that its location in east London provides ample opportunities for the decarbonization of our staff and student commutes. Our Docklands campus is located adjacent to the Cyprus DLR station, while our Stratford and USS campuses are located within a 5 minute walk from the Maryland and Stratford Elizabeth Line stations, respectively. The University commits to exploring further collaboration with Transport for London and the local authorities to further develop and promote our public transport offerings, such as rail season ticket loans, improved signage, and on-campus promotional events.

#### *Objective 4: Business and Site Travel*

The University can target a reduction in carbon emissions through its business and site travel. To support this, the University has committed to the following actions:

- Installation of appropriate EV charging points
- Electrification of the University's vehicle fleet
- Electrification of the University's inter-campus shuttle bus
- Working with suppliers to consolidate deliveries to the University site

In addition, the University will implement the mandatory framework for business travel introduced later in this policy.

## Objective 5: Travel Reduction

In addition to the previous objectives, one of the primary ways to reduce the footprint of the University's travel is to reduce the demand for travel in the first instance. The University will continue to promote methods of online remote/hybrid teaching and working.

### Business Travel Framework

This policy sets out new standard practice for any business travel taken on behalf of the University by staff and students. This takes the approach of:

- Understanding the environmental impacts of travel and using lower-carbon methods of transport, where possible
- Minimising the overall number of journeys to reduce carbon emissions
- Sequestering the carbon emissions from travel

This practice applies to all permanent and temporary staff of the University, and to any students or visitors who travel locally, nationally or internationally on behalf of the University. This includes those paid under consultancy contracts, invited speakers, and those invited for the purpose of academic engagement.

#### 1. Pre-Booking

In order to minimise the environmental impact of travel, consideration should be given to the "travel hierarchy" (see Figure 1)

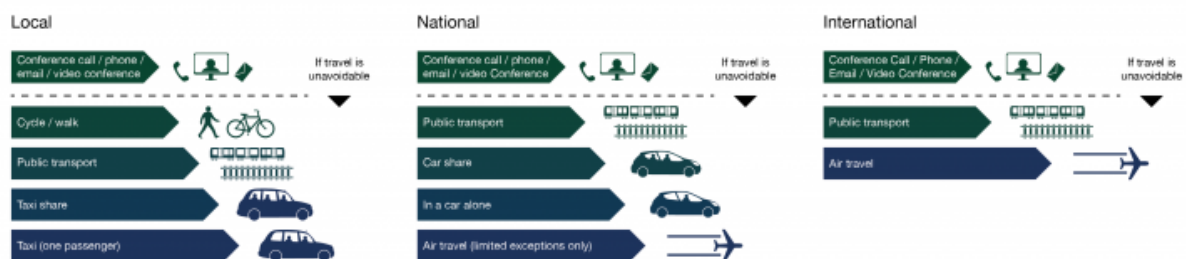


Figure 1. Sustainable Travel Hierarchy

Alternatives to international travel must be considered prior to booking travel. Examples of alternatives include use of virtual collaboration tools, as well as examining whether colleagues from across the University are attending the event and are able to carry out the same purpose.

#### 2. Booking

For all travel, the travel hierarchy should be followed wherever possible. This states that travel should be avoided where possible by utilising virtual services, such as Zoom or Microsoft Teams. Where travel is unavoidable, the lowest emission method of travel should always be selected.

#### Local Travel

The University supports active transport (walking and cycling) within London by providing access to relevant facilities for cyclists whilst on-campus. Staff may claim business mileage at the current HMRC rate if they are using their own bicycle for work purposes.

Where active transport is not practical, public transport should be taken. The University recognises that its campuses are all located adjacent to public transport stations, and encourages the use of these services.

Where public transport is not practical, taxis may be used. The University recognises that Transport for London are working to decarbonise the operation of taxis within London, and are supportive of this activity.

The use of private vehicles for University business is strongly discouraged and should be used only when no reasonable alternatives exist.

### ***National and International Travel***

Air travel is not permissible for travel within the United Kingdom, except for the following exceptions:

- For journeys to locations outside of mainland Great Britain, including to islands such as the Channel Islands, as well as to Northern Ireland
- For disability or other health-related reasons
- Where childcare or other caring responsibilities mean that flights are the only viable option to ensure the wellbeing of travellers and those they care for

In these limited exceptions, approval is required from the traveller's Head of School or Department Director prior to booking travel.

The usage of public transport, particularly rail, should be prioritised for travel within the United Kingdom. This extends to the use of "sleeper" train services, e.g. the Caledonian Sleeper and Night Riviera. When travelling by rail, first class travel is acceptable for journeys over 2.5 hours.

For international travel within Europe, usage of the Eurostar should be prioritised at all times. This includes, but is not limited to, travel to any destinations with a high-speed connection to the Eurostar, or to any destinations with a "sleeper" train connection. Air travel should only be considered if the use of Eurostar and connecting trains is deemed impractical.

For air travel, economy class should be used where possible. Premium Economy and Business Class may be allowable for disability or for other health-related reasons; the Head of School or Department Director must be notified of this prior to booking travel. First class travel is not accepted for any air journey.

### ***3. Carbon Offsetting***

The University has committed to undertaking direct carbon sequestration as part of our Net Zero Carbon 2030 target. As such, travellers do not need to undertake individual level carbon offsetting when booking travel.