Green-Campus Ireland

Smarter Sustainable Campus Communities

The Green-Campus Programme is an evolution of Green-Schools (known internationally as Eco-Schools) which is a programme developed by the Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE). An Taisce – the National Trust for Ireland is the Irish National Operator for all programmes of FEE. FEE is a non-governmental, non-profit organisation promoting sustainable development through environmental education. Established in 1981 FEE was originally a European initiative primarily active in environmental education through internal meetings, external seminars and conferences, and in a number of publications. Today FEE operates globally and is mainly active through its five environmental education programmes: Blue Flag, Eco-Schools, Young Reporters for the Environment, Learning about Forests and Ecosystems and Green Key.

The Green-Campus Programme has been in operation in Ireland since 2007. At present sixty-five campuses and teaching hospitals are formally registered on the Programme and twenty-six of these have been awarded the Green Flag. The Programme encourages practical environmental education and the empowerment of campuses to become exemplar in environmental stewardship. Throughout the pilot research and subsequent work with tertiary education providers it was found that the environmental impact of the tertiary education sector is significant, yet rates of campus uptake of traditional environmental management systems are low. Stakeholder driven, bottom-up approaches to environmental management as facilitated by Green-Campus has delivered benefits to the environment, campus management, students and learning, and to local and wider communities. It must be noted that the Green-Campus Programme does not reward specific environmental projects or implementation of a new technology instead it rewards long term commitment to continuous improvement from the campus community.

Green-Campus Programme Structure

The seven steps of the programme are:

1. Establishing a Green-Campus Committee incorporating student and staff representatives.
2. Undertaking an environmental review.
3. Implementing an action plan.
4. Monitoring and evaluating actions carried out.
5. Linking the programme to learning on campus.
6. Informing and involving the campus and wider community.
7. Developing a Green Charter.

The Green Flag Award

The assessment phase of the Green-Campus Programme culminates in both a written and demonstrative application. An assessment panel reviews the written and oral submissions of the applicant campuses, with the decision to award the Green Flag being made following the implementation of recommendations from the panel. The Green-Campus Programme is not stand alone; it compliments and is complimented by many additional environmental projects and programmes. Participant campuses have benefitted from using the Green-Campus Programme as a method to amalgamate environmentally themed groups and projects to work towards common and shared goals.

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Campus	Year(s) of award	Green Campus Themes
University College Cork	2010, 2013, 2016, 2019, 2023	Litter and Waste, Energy Conservation, Water Conservation and Protection, Biodiversity, Travel & Transport, Green Procurement, Climate Change
ATU Mayo Campus	2011, 2014, 2017, 2022, 2025	Litter and Waste, Energy Conservation, Water Conservation and Protection, Biodiversity, Travel & Transport
Ballsbridge College of Further Education	2013, 2016, 2019, 2023, 2026	Litter and Waste, Energy Conservation, Travel and Transport
Trinity College Dublin	2013, 2016, 2019, 2023, 2026	Energy and Climate Change, Waste Management, Water Conservation and Protection, Sustainable Transport, Resource Use and Sustainable Food, Biodiversity and Green Procurement
Dublin City University	2014, 2017, 2020, 2023	Litter and Waste, Energy Conservation, Biodiversity, Water Conservation and Protection, Travel & Transport
Cork University Hospital	2014, 2018, 2021, 2025	Litter and Waste, Energy Conservation, Sustainable Transport, Biodiversity, Procurement, Health and Wellbeing
Maynooth University & St Patrick's College Maynooth	2018, 2023	Biodiversity, Energy, Travel and Transport, Litter & Waste, Water Conservation and Climate Justice
University of Galway	2019, 2022, 2025	Litter and Waste, Energy, Travel and Transport, Biodiversity
Letterfrack & Clifden FEC	2019, 2023	Litter and Waste, Biodiversity
Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland	2019, 2024	Litter and Waste, Energy, Biodiversity, Green Procurement, Greening Laboratories, Green Surgery
Cork College of FET Kinsale Campus	2020, 2023	Litter and Waste, Biodiversity
Sligo University Hospital	2020, 2024	Litter and Waste, Energy, Biodiversity
ATU Sligo	2021, 2025	Litter and Waste
Mary Immaculate College (Thurles Campus)	2021, 2024	Litter and Waste, Energy
Technological University of the Shannon and Midlands (Tipperary Campuses)	2021, 2025	Litter and Waste
Dunboyne College of Further Education	2022, 2025	Litter & Waste, Biodiversity
Stillorgan College of Further Education	2023	Litter & Waste and Biodiversity (minor theme)
TU Dublin	2023	Litter & Waste, Energy (major themes), Biodiversity, Transport & Travel (Minor themes)
Marino Institute of Education	2024	Litter & Waste, Biodiversity
Cork College of Further Education & Training Tramore rd campus	2024	Litter & Waste, Biodiversity
Cloverhill Prison CDETB	2025	Litter & Waste, Energy
St James's Hospital	2025	Transport & Travel, Waste, Energy (major themes) Water (minor theme)
Bonnington, Horizons Training Centre, Cork	2025	Litter & Waste and Biodiversity
TUS Athlone	2025	Litter & Waste
ATU Connemara	2026	Litter & Waste and Biodiversity (major themes) Climate Action (minor theme)
National Orthopaedic Hospital, Cappagh	2026	Litter & Waste, Energy (major) Water Conservation & Sustainable Travel (minor)

Get Involved

In order for a Campus to participate in the Green-Campus Programme a committee representative of the campus community must be formed. This committee must then register its intent to implement the Green-Campus Programme with the Environmental Education Unit of An Taisce. The Green-Campus Office then facilitates each registered campus through the programme. Depending on the structure of the college and the Green Campus Committee, a multi-themed or single themed approach can be adopted. The committee consult with the Green Campus Office before choosing an approach. Themes include: Litter and Waste Prevention and Management, Water Conservation and Protection, Energy Conservation, Travel and Transport, Biodiversity and sub themes include Climate Action/Climate Justice, Air Quality, Green Procurement and Greening Laboratories. New campuses must take on the theme of Litter and Waste Prevention and Management.

The criteria and other scheme materials are solely for the use of third level educational institutions wishing to join the Green Campus Programme. Copying or use of the criteria or other programme material for any other purpose will be subject to approval by the Foundation for Environmental Education. An Taisce is the sole authorised advisory and assessment body for the Green-Campus Programme. Only officers trained and appointed by An Taisce are authorised to advise or assess a Campus on their performance under the Eco-Schools/Green-Campus criteria. Non-appointed officers may not represent the Green-Campus Programme and should not claim to understand the details of the assessment requirements or awards as they relate to any site. Information regarding the Green-Campus Programme will only be sent directly to Campuses and not via a third party or advisor. All applications/registrations to the Green-Campus Programme must be made by the Green-Campus Committee and not through a third party or advisor.