
Unis action on climate change urged

4 days ago

Students want their universities to take more action to tackle climate change, a survey has found.

Three quarters of students (74%) would like their university to have the Carbon Trust Standard to prove it has taken action.

Almost half (47%) would like their institution to do more to help them reduce their own carbon footprint, according to the survey, which was commissioned by the Carbon Trust.

The Carbon Trust Standard is an independent body that certifies organisations that have genuinely taken action on climate change.

Five universities have been awarded the mark so far, after collectively reducing their carbon footprint by 6%. More universities are now applying for accreditation, the Trust said. It marks a step change for the sector, with universities now keen to show they are reducing their emissions year on year.

Harry Morrison of the Carbon Trust Standard, said: "Climate change is one of the great challenges for modern society and students clearly want universities to be part of the solution. Carbon footprint reduction is a key priority for universities and higher education institutes and we're seeing a growing number able to prove they are taking action.

"Year on year targets would ensure that the HE sector has a defined pathway towards achieving the UK target of an 80% reduction in emissions by 2050. Every sector can help lessen the impact that climate change will have on people both in the UK and around the globe by measuring, managing and reducing their carbon footprint."

Universities and other higher education institutions emit 3.2 million tonnes of carbon dioxide every year - the equivalent of heating over a million average households a year.

The sector spends more than £2 million on energy each year - around 2.5% of the average university's annual budget is spent on energy, the Trust said.

The online survey by opinionpanel research questioned 1,033 full time undergraduates between October 15-21.