

2025—  
—2030  
**CLIMATE  
ACTION  
PLAN**





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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Griffith University acknowledges the people who are the traditional custodians of the lands on which we learn and work and pays respect to the Elders, past and present, and extends that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Griffith University campuses sit on the lands of the Yugarabul, Yuggera, Jagera, Turrbal, Yugambeh and Kombumerri peoples. We acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders' unique relationship with and understanding and ongoing stewardship of these lands. Through collaboration with staff, students and community members we are committed to embedding Indigenous cultures and diverse knowledge systems in our learning and teaching, research, operations, and partnerships. Griffith acknowledges Elders past and present who guide the way to a more sustainable future for all. Under the guidance of the Griffith University Elders and First Peoples Knowledge Holders Advisory Board we seek to ensure sustainability actions are aligned with First Peoples' knowledges and cultural practices.





## CONSULTATION

In developing this plan, Griffith University engaged a diverse range of experts across disciplines central to climate action, including climate science, engineering, aviation, risk management, finance, and sustainability. Consultation extended to Traditional Owners/Custodians and First Nations community members through workshops held at the Gold Coast, Logan, and Brisbane South (Nathan) campuses, ensuring place-based insights and cultural knowledge were meaningfully integrated. Over 240 students contributed via an online survey and a Co-Design Lab at Nathan Campus, where they voted on their top five action areas across the three pillars of the Climate Action Plan, embedding student perspectives into its foundation. The University's Environmental Sustainability Committee and Climate Risk Assessment Working Group played key roles as coordinating stakeholder bodies throughout the process. Broader stakeholder consultation on the draft Plan was undertaken prior to its consideration by the Executive Group and the Vice Chancellor. By harnessing this collective expertise and input, the Plan is grounded in leading research, best practices, Indigenous knowledge, and innovative approaches—enhancing its relevance, effectiveness, and long-term sustainability.

In accordance with Griffith University's commitment to continuous improvement and community engagement, this Climate Action Plan is considered a living document. We recognise the importance of stakeholder and community feedback in shaping our approach to climate management. As such, this plan will be regularly reviewed and adjusted based on input received from stakeholders and the community to ensure its relevance, effectiveness, and alignment with evolving needs and priorities.

This plan was prepared by Mark Grant, Environmental Manager (Strategy, Policy & Planning) and Bridget McNeill, former Environmental Sustainability Project Officer, on behalf of Griffith Sustainability, Office of the Vice Chancellor, Griffith University. Photographs by Nicolas Rakotopare, William Petit and Economic Development Queensland. Design by Angela Goh

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

*Griffith University is committed to acting in line with the recommendations of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), which calls for transformative change across all aspects of society, to rapidly decrease greenhouse gas emissions.*

Griffith University has a role in leading this transformation through our research, learning, engagement and operational activities.

This Climate Action Plan creates a clear, coordinated, and accountable response to the challenge of anthropogenic climate change as it relates to Griffith University's operations, facilities and services.

It provides prioritised implementation of the University's strategic priorities for climate change action through to 2030 by drawing on recommendations from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) 6th Assessment Report; data from the Griffith University 2023 Climate Baseline Risk Assessment; and existing climate mitigation work by the University.

Recognising the need for urgent climate action, and the critical role universities play in the transition to a climate positive future, Griffith University has committed to implementing this Climate Action Plan which incorporates three pillars for priority action:

- 1. Net Zero Emissions by 2029 (scope 1, 2 and partial scope 3)**
- 2. Climate Knowledge Empowerment**
- 3. Climate Resilient University**

Actions under Pillar 1 are aligned with the mitigation hierarchy (avoid and reduce emissions). Actions under Pillar 2 will be designed to incentivise and enable behavioural and policy change to drive emissions avoidance and reduction. Actions under Pillar 3 will draw on insights from Griffith's Baseline Climate Risk Assessment.

Through action under these pillars, the Plan provides a framework for the coordination, prioritisation and implementation of climate action across Griffith University to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, adapt to climate risks, plan for the climate future and harness emerging opportunities.

Griffith is transitioning to a low-carbon future, while also considering the risks and opportunities that climate change brings. We will seek to build climate resilience internally and externally through enhanced climate knowledge, improved governance frameworks and incorporation of climate considerations into campus planning and asset management.







**Professor Carolyn Evans**  
Vice Chancellor and President

## VICE CHANCELLOR'S FOREWORD

*Climate change is not a distant threat—it is a present reality that demands urgent and coordinated action.*

At Griffith University, we are responding with purpose, guided by science and grounded in our values of sustainability, inclusion, and social justice.

This Climate Action Plan sets out our pathway to 2030, shaped by the latest IPCC recommendations, Griffith's Climate Baseline Risk Assessment, and the work already underway across our campuses. It focuses on three pillars: achieving net zero emissions by 2029, empowering climate knowledge, and building climate resilience.

This year, Griffith celebrates its 50th anniversary as our beautiful campus at Nathan, surrounded by the Toohey Forest, opened its doors to students in 1975. The initial offerings of the university were focused on interdisciplinary, purpose-driven degrees. Australian Environmental Studies was a flagship program from day one and, ever since, Griffith has been a leader in environmental research and teaching.

That is why this Plan goes beyond many institutional climate strategies. By embedding Climate Knowledge Empowerment and Climate Resilience as core pillars, we are committing to equipping our community—not just with facts, but with the tools, systems, and understanding needed to navigate and shape a climate-positive future. This is about more than reducing emissions; it's about preparing our students, staff, and partners to lead change in a complex and rapidly evolving world.

I want to thank the many contributors to this Plan. Your insights and energy are helping Griffith build a more resilient university and a better future for all.

**Professor Carolyn Evans**  
Vice Chancellor and President



### 3.0 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

Addressing climate change requires coordinated action across different timeframes and scales. Griffith University's Climate Action Plan outlines measurable actions to tackle short-, medium-, and long-term climate challenges and build a more sustainable future.

Sustainability is a core value at Griffith and a key factor for prospective students. The Climate Action Plan demonstrates the University's commitment to reducing its climate impact, aligning with global climate efforts and enhancing sustainability rankings.

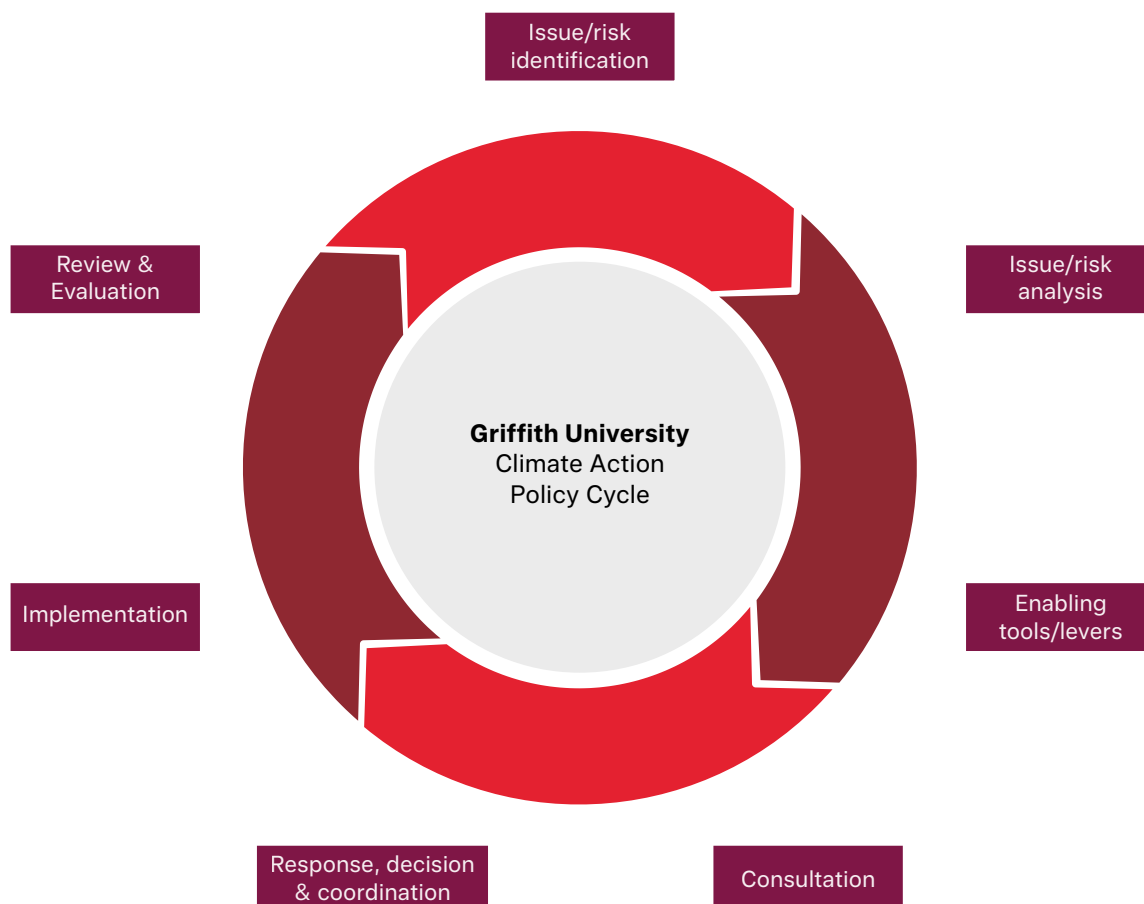
#### **The Plan provides the framework, benchmarks, and key actions to:**

1. Reduce carbon emissions to achieve net zero by 2029 (Scope 1, 2, and partial Scope 3).
2. Coordinate climate knowledge across teaching, research, operations, and engagement.
3. Build climate resilience by addressing physical and transition risks, while remaining adaptive to avoid maladaptation.

#### **The Plan does not:**

1. Fully resolve all climate risks but offers strategic direction and prioritised actions.
2. Include detailed project planning or cost modelling, though financial considerations will be factored into new commitments.
3. Serve as a static document; it is designed to be flexible and responsive to evolving risks, regulations, and opportunities.

Given the complexity of climate policy and shifting expectations, the Plan will follow an adaptive policy cycle with ongoing review and evaluation, as shown in Figure 1. While climate action is an ongoing need, clear priorities will help Griffith focus resources for maximum strategic impact.



**Figure 1. Griffith University's climate action policy cycle.**





## 4.0 POLICY AND LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT

### 4.1 International

#### 4.1.1 The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)

The IPCC's Sixth Assessment Synthesis Report (2023) builds on five years of research, highlighting rising fossil fuel emissions and climate impacts. It warns that global warming is likely to exceed 1.5°C between 2030 and 2050, with this threshold already reached in the 12 months from July 2023 to June 2024. Limiting warming to below 2°C requires urgent, deep emissions cuts and systemic transformation by 2030.

#### 4.1.2 The Paris Agreement

Adopted in 2016, the Paris Agreement aims to:

- Limit global temperature rise to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels.
- Pursue efforts to cap warming at 1.5°C.

Countries submit Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) outlining emissions targets. Australia ratified the agreement in 2016, with an updated 2022 NDC committing to a 43% emissions reduction (from 2005 levels) by 2030 and net zero by 2050.

#### 4.1.3 The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals

The 2030 Agenda, adopted in 2015, outlines 17 SDGs to promote prosperity, equity, and environmental sustainability. Griffith University aligns its Climate Action Plan with key SDGs, especially:

- **SDG 13 (Climate Action):** Through emissions reduction, climate resilience, renewable energy adoption, and sustainability-focused research and engagement.
- **SDG 7 (Affordable and Clean Energy):** By improving energy efficiency, investing in solar and clean technologies, and fostering partnerships for broader impact.

The Climate Action Plan serves as a strategic framework to measure and advance Griffith's contribution to global sustainability goals.

#### 4.1.4 Inclusive Knowledge Integration

Griffith University acknowledges the United Nations' recognition of Indigenous Peoples as custodians of 80% of the planet's remaining biodiversity and key actors in climate resilience. In line with the UN's "State of the World's Indigenous Peoples" report (2025), this Plan recognises Indigenous knowledge systems—viewed as time-tested, method-driven, and deeply ecological—alongside Western science. By harnessing this collective expertise and input—including place-based insights and cultural knowledge shared by Traditional Owners/Custodians and First Nations community members through workshops held at the Gold Coast, Logan, and Brisbane South (Nathan) campuses—the Plan is grounded in leading research, best practices, Indigenous knowledge, and innovative approaches, enhancing its relevance, effectiveness, and long-term sustainability.



## 4.2 National and State

### 4.2.1 Climate Change Act 2022

Australia's Climate Change Act 2022 legislates the national targets of a 43% emissions reduction (from 2005 levels) by 2030 and net zero by 2050. It requires the Minister for Climate Change and Energy to deliver an annual climate change statement, informed by the Climate Change Authority. The accompanying Consequential Amendments Act updated 14 other laws to align government institutions with these goals.

### 4.2.2 National Climate Resilience and Adaptation Strategy 2021-2025

This strategy outlines three key objectives to strengthen Australia's climate resilience:

1. Foster collaboration to drive investment and action.
2. Enhance climate data and services.
3. Monitor progress and improve adaptation over time.

### 4.2.3 Queensland Energy Roadmap (to be published in 2025)

The Queensland Energy Roadmap, expected to be released in late 2025, outlines a strategic five-year plan to guide the state's energy transition through to 2030. Developed by the Crisafulli Government, the roadmap focuses on delivering affordable, reliable, and sustainable energy while supporting economic growth and regional development. While the roadmap supports the growth of renewable energy, it makes clear that coal and gas will continue to play a role in Queensland's energy mix well beyond 2035 to ensure energy security and reliability.

The focus is not on achieving net zero by a fixed date, but rather on managing a balanced and pragmatic transition. Emissions reduction targets are also currently under review by the Productivity Commission, and is expected to prioritise affordability, reliability, and investment certainty over decarbonisation timelines.

This plan may detract from continued adoption of the *Queensland Climate Action Plan 2020-2030*, described below.

### 4.2.4 Queensland Climate Action Plan 2020-2030

The Queensland's plan targets:

- Net zero emissions by 2050
- 50% renewable energy by 2030
- 30% emissions reduction (from 2005 levels) by 2030

It prioritises action across five sectors: electricity, transport, agriculture, buildings, and land. Departments have also developed individual plans—for example, the Department of Environment, Science and Innovation aims for carbon neutrality in national parks and net zero emissions by 2030.

### 4.2.5 Queensland Climate Adaptation Strategy (Q-CAS) 2017-2030

The Queensland Climate Adaptation Strategy (Q-CAS) 2017–2030 provides a long-term vision for building a climate-resilient Queensland through a collaborative, whole-of-community and whole-of-government approach. It recognises the vital role of universities like Griffith in co-developing solutions and sharing research and data. While there is no university-specific Sector Adaptation Plan (SAP), several SAPs—particularly those focused on education, research, and public governance—are directly relevant to Griffith's climate adaptation efforts.

Griffith University, through the Climate Action Beacon, collaborated with the Queensland Government to develop the Climate Risk Management Guideline for Queensland Government Departments. This practical, four-step framework supports departments in assessing and managing climate risks and aligns with Q-CAS objectives. Griffith will adopt this framework to enhance its own climate risk management, inform future climate-related financial disclosures, and demonstrate leadership in sustainable public sector governance.





### 4.3 The higher education sector

As a values-driven institution, Griffith University integrates the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) across its teaching, operations, and community engagement. This commitment is embedded in the university's Strategic Plan, which uses the SDGs as a framework to articulate and measure impact.

Griffith is a signatory to the UN Global Compact and the Sustainable Development Solutions Network since 2017. It is also a member of:

- Higher Education Sustainability Initiative (HESI)
- Australasian Campuses Towards Sustainability (ACTS)
- Association of Commonwealth Universities (ACU), collaborating with over 500 universities across 50 countries.

### 4.4 Griffith University

Griffith's performance on the SDGs is assessed through the Times Higher Education Impact Rankings (THE-IR). In 2025, Griffith was ranked 20th globally for SDG 13 Climate Action and 7th for SDG 7 Affordable and Clean Energy. This Climate Action Plan significantly supports Griffith's continued strong performance in sustainability rankings.

Griffith University is entering a new chapter under its 2025–2030 Strategy: Creating a Brighter Future for All. This Climate Action Plan builds on the momentum of the new strategy and positions the University to lead with purpose in the face of the climate crisis. It enables Griffith to:

- Execute the new strategic commitment to “a more sustainable world: working towards a thriving environment and a just transition to a more sustainable future.” It ensures that Griffith's climate response is not only environmentally sound but also socially equitable—empowering the University community and its partners to lead transformative change locally and globally.
- Deliver on and extend the commitments made in the 2020–2025 Strategic Plan, including:
  - Implementing a clear and accelerated pathway to net zero emissions by 2029 (Scope 1, 2, and partial Scope 3), advancing from the original goal of halving emissions by 2030.
  - Establishing an expert advisory group to explore energy solutions aligned with the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) targets.
  - Achieving a top 100 global ranking for progress on the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)—an ambitious leap from the initial top 200 target.
  - Embedding ethical and social responsibility into core operations by aligning policies on procurement, responsible investment, and travel with Griffith's values.
- Deliver the commitments of the Sustainability Strategy 2023–2030.
- Meet the Sustainability Operating Framework (Figure 2).
- Coordinate climate risk mitigation measures in response to the 2023 Baseline Climate Risk Assessment.

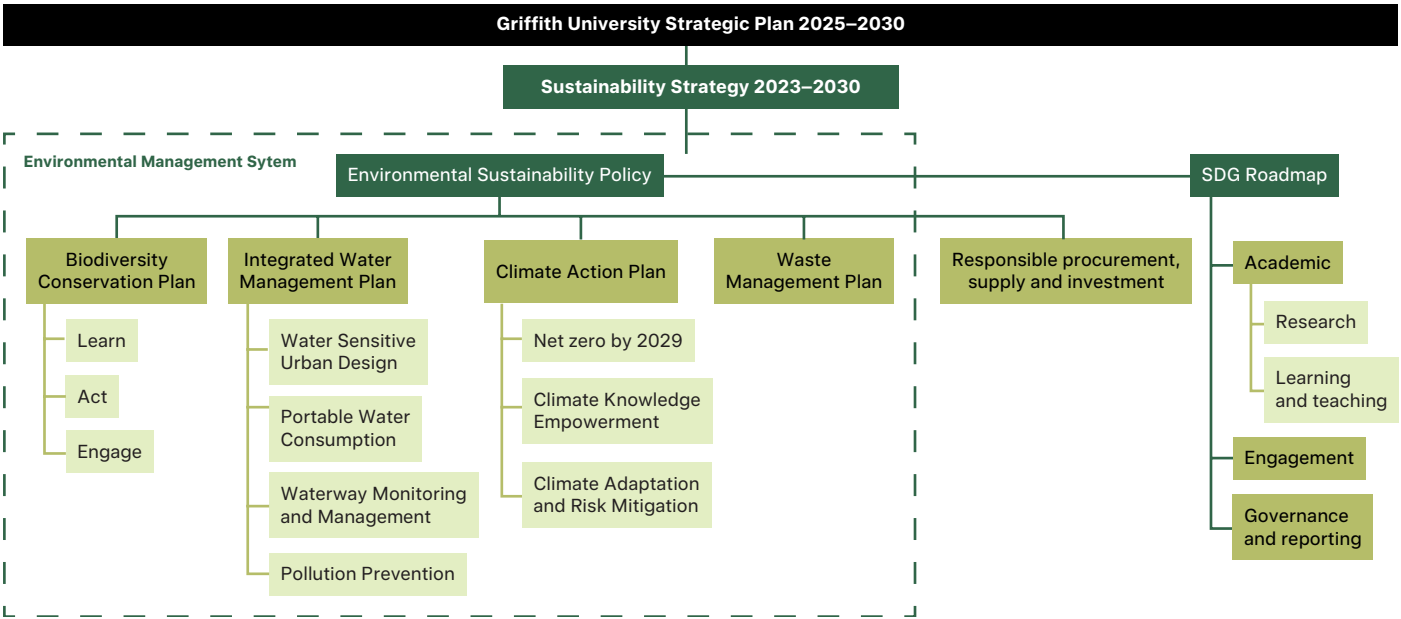


Figure 2. Griffith University Sustainability Operating Framework.





Chiller plant at Brisbane South (Nathan) Campus

## 5.0 PLAN DEVELOPMENT

The development of the Climate Action Plan has been guided by IPCC recommendations, the Times Higher Education Impact Ranking (THE-IR) Methodology, and benchmarked against the best practice of other relevant universities and organisations.

### The development of this Plan drew on:

- Data and insights from existing University emissions reduction, climate mitigation and climate research initiatives, including but not limited to:
  - Annual Carbon Management Reports
  - Aviation Emissions Reduction Plan
  - Net Zero Sprint Reports
- Outputs and recommendations from the Griffith University 2023 Climate Baseline Risk Assessment.
- IPCC recommendations.
- THE-IR metrics and criteria.
- Industry best practice and comparative benchmarking.
- Technical advice from the Environmental Sustainability Committee.
- Consultation with internal stakeholders.

## 5.1 Commitments

Griffith University launched its first Carbon Management Plan in 2012, updated in 2019 to align with IPCC recommendations to halve emissions (from 2010 levels) by 2030 and reach net zero by 2050. In 2023, this target was accelerated to net zero by 2029, in response to the IPCC's Sixth Assessment Report and Australia's updated national target.

### Through its Sustainability Strategy 2023-2030 and Climate Action Plan, Griffith commits to a climate-positive future by:

- Achieving net zero emissions by 2029 (based on a defined emissions boundary).
- Addressing organisational climate risks and adaptation.
- Preparing students across all disciplines for the impacts of climate change.
- Advancing climate research and engagement with local and global relevance.

### The University will track its progress towards these commitments using these measures of success:

- By 2029, Griffith University will achieve net zero emissions, based on the defined emissions boundary.
- From 2025, Griffith University will progress towards being a climate-resilient university through the implementation of prioritised measures to adapt to climate risks, plan for the climate future and harness emerging opportunities.





Waste management facilities at Brisbane South (Nathan) Campus

## 5.2 Emissions Boundary

Griffith University's greenhouse gas emissions boundary, established in 2008/09 using the Greenhouse Gas Protocol, includes:

- **Scope 1 emissions:** Direct emissions from on-campus activities, including fuel use in university-owned vehicles, natural gas, LPG, and refrigerant gas leaks.
- **Scope 2 emissions:** Indirect emissions from purchased electricity or energy supplied by third parties.
- **Partial Scope 3 emissions:** Indirect emissions from goods and services used by the University. Griffith currently reports on five relevant categories:
  - Purchased goods and services (e.g. IT equipment, paper, food services)
  - Capital goods
  - Fuel- and energy-related activities (not included in Scope 1 or 2)
  - Waste generated in operations
  - Business travel (e.g. flights)

Excluded from the boundary are emissions from construction, remote work, commuting, and international education-related travel.



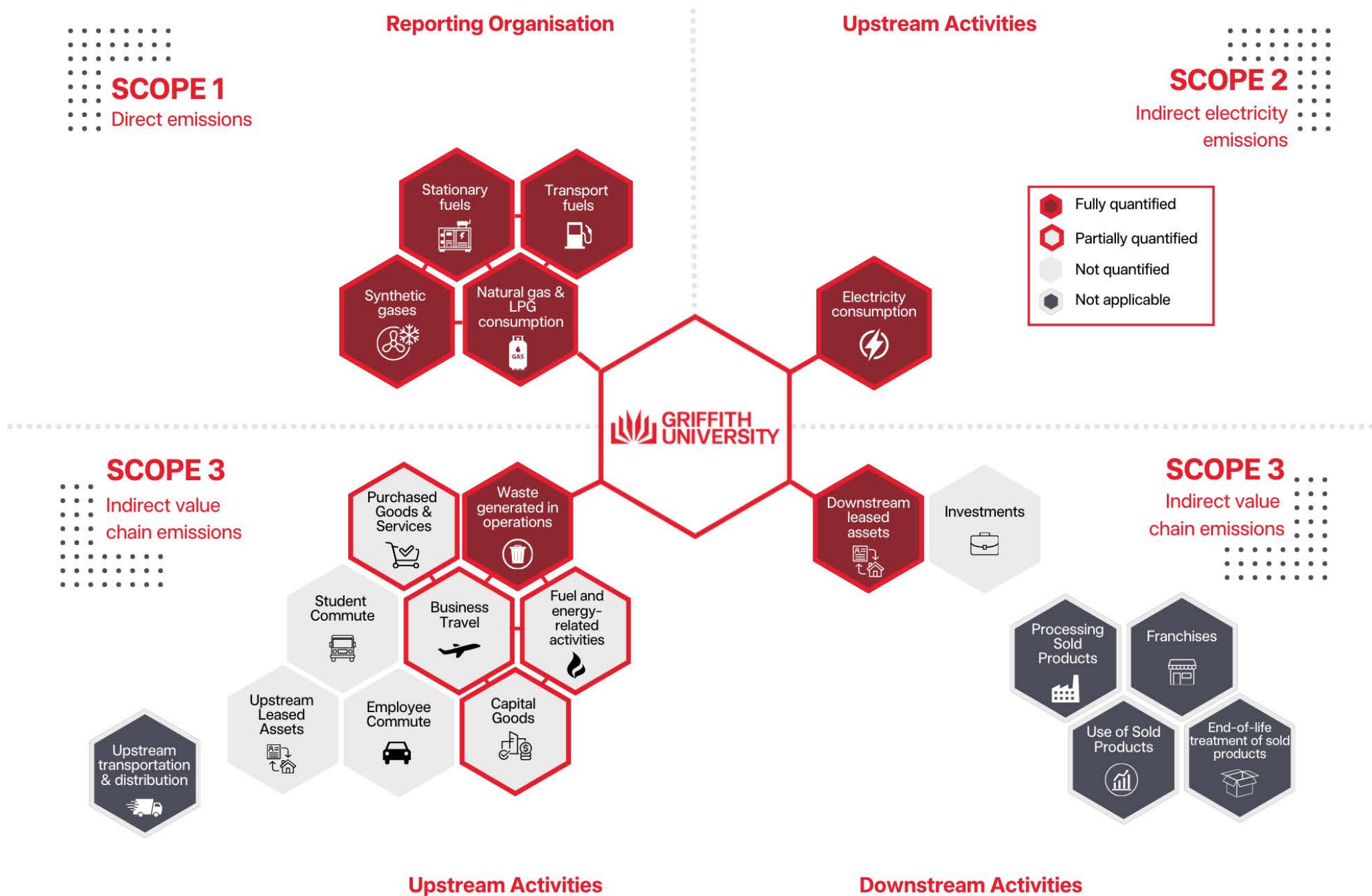


Figure 3. Griffith University's emissions boundary.





End-of-trip facility at Brisbane South (Nathan) Campus

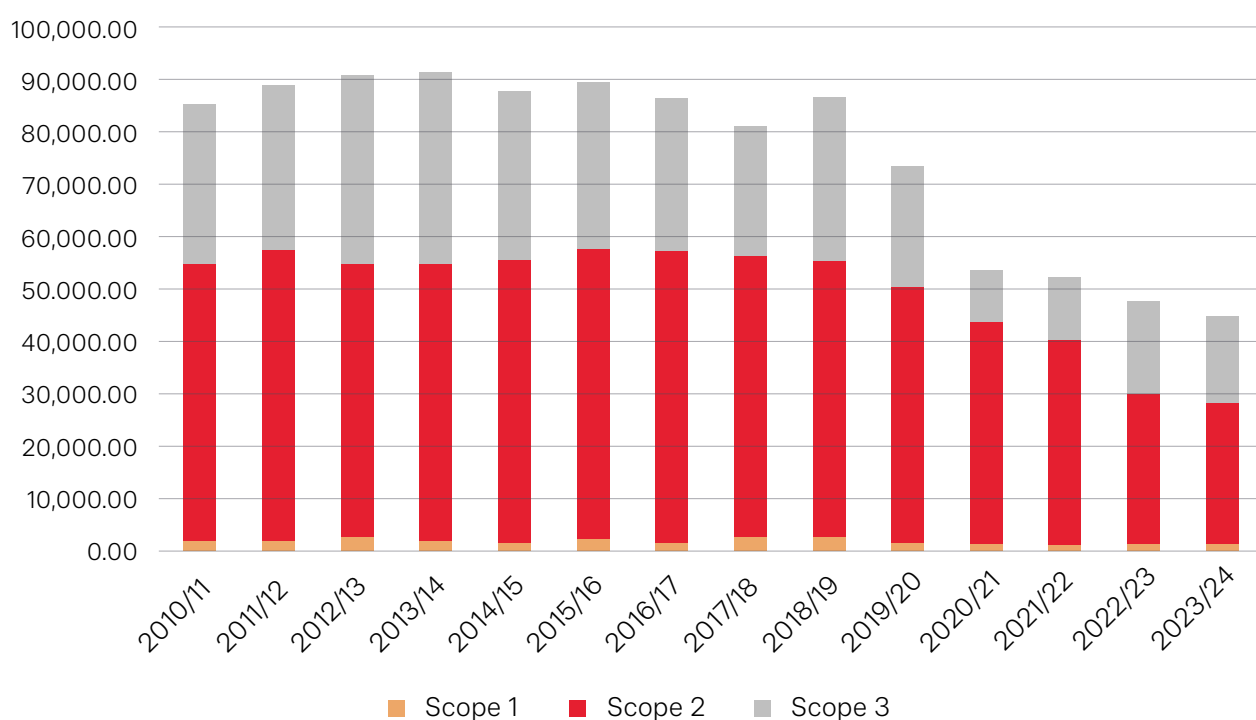
### 5.3 Carbon Footprint

Griffith University's total carbon emissions for the 2023/24 financial year were 44,724.9 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (tCO<sub>2</sub>-e), representing a 47.6% reduction from the 2010/11 baseline and a 6% decrease from the previous year.

Scope 1 emissions accounted for 3.1% of total emissions, with 2023/24 emissions at 1,407.8 tCO<sub>2</sub>-e—a slight reduction from the previous year due to lower gas use and reduced fuel consumption by the University's vehicle fleet, and a 33% decrease from 2010/11.

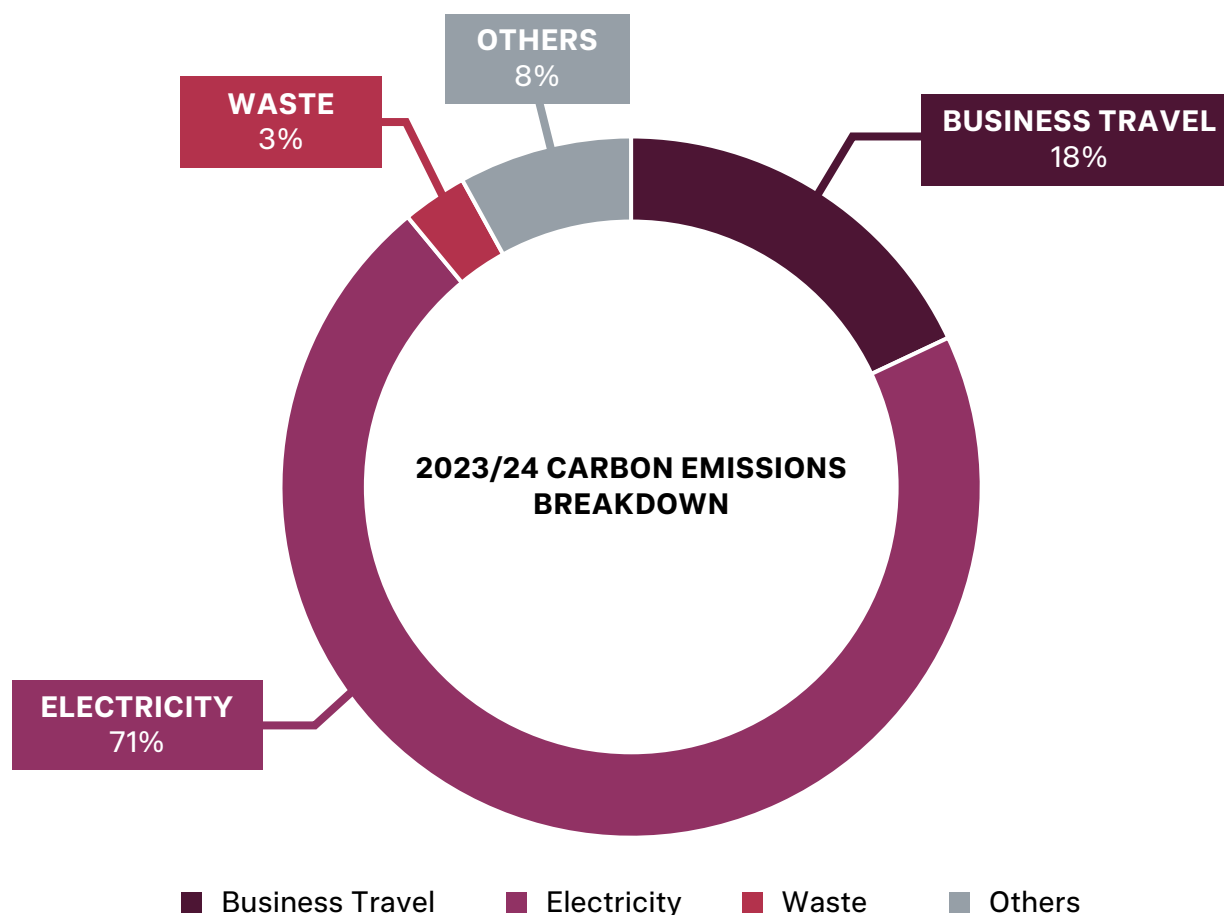
Scope 2 emissions, from electricity consumption, made up 60.1% of the total footprint. These fell to 26,872.1 tCO<sub>2</sub>-e, 6% lower than 2022/23 and 49% below 2010/11 levels. Contributing factors included renewable power supplied by the Columboola Solar Farm, expanded rooftop solar, and energy efficiency upgrades and system optimisations.

Scope 3 emissions form the remaining 37% of our emissions at 16,445 tCO<sub>2</sub>-e—a slight decrease from the previous year and 46% below 2010/11. Flight emissions, at 8,104.2 tCO<sub>2</sub>-e, made up nearly half of this category and have decreased compared to 2022/23, reaching Griffith's 2029 target level.



**Figure 4. Griffith University's Scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions by year.**





**Other emissions includes:**

Food & Beverage	0.1%	Stationary fuels	0.9%
ICT Equipment	2.4%	Synthetic Greenhouse Gasses	1.8%
ICT Services	1.2%	Transport fuels	0.7%
Office supplies & services	0.6%		

**Figure 5. Griffith University's 2023/24 carbon emissions breakdown.**

**Griffith University's contribution to global net zero emissions (NZE)**

Net zero emissions (NZE) has various meanings depending on scale and context. On a global scale and from a scientific perspective, NZE will be reached when total anthropogenic emissions (the sum of fossil fuel and land use emissions) are reduced to levels that match the removal capacity of the natural sinks (i.e., terrestrial ecosystems and oceans). At sub-global scales (i.e. at a national or organisation level) NZE is commonly used when referring to achieving a 'net zero' result in inventory accounting terms. At an organisation level, this is typically achieved through a combination of avoiding and minimising emission reductions and purchasing carbon offset credits.

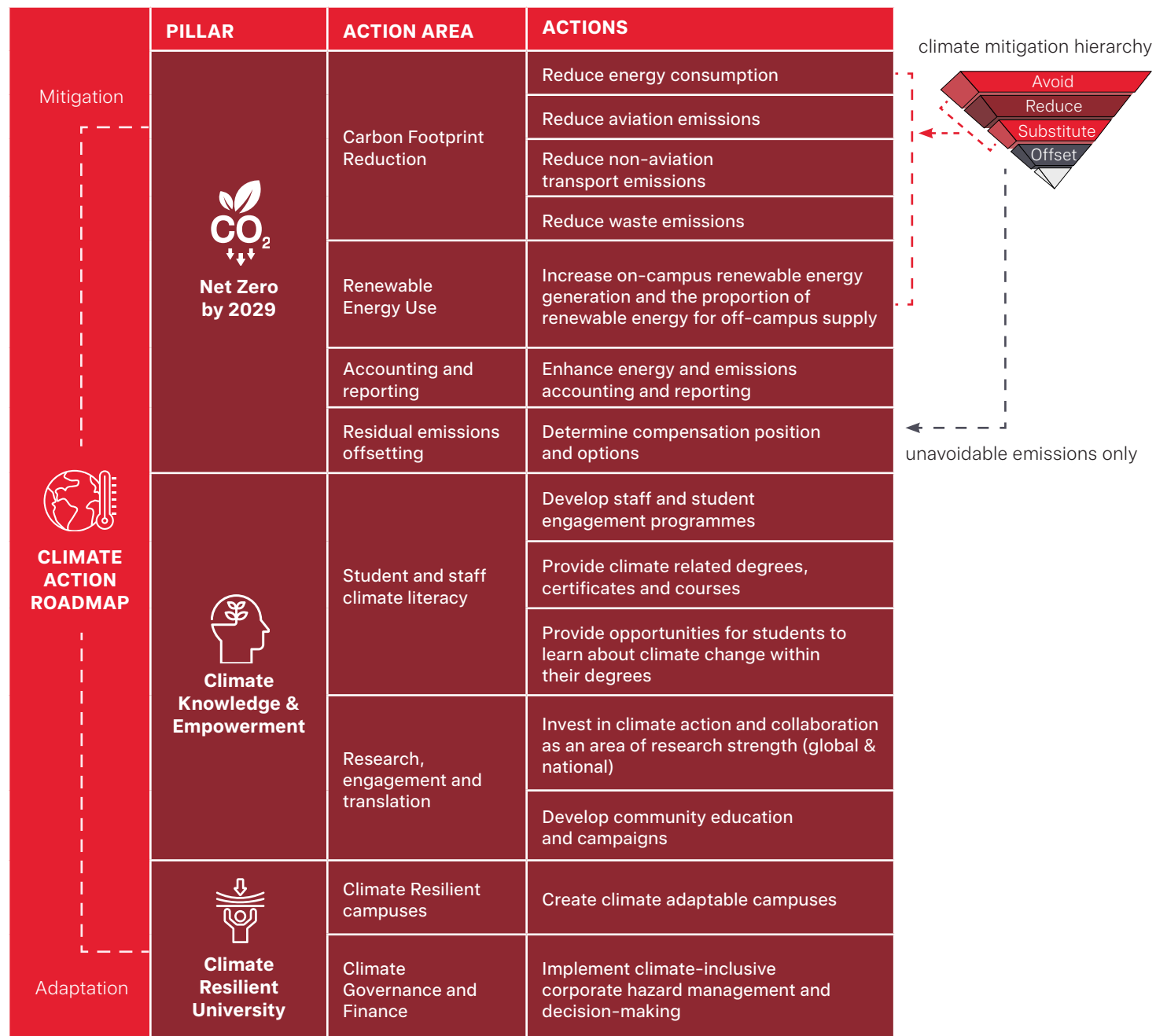
Recognising this, Griffith University is doing the uttermost to contribute to national and ultimately global targets, above and beyond its NZE commitment. It is working to ensure that only residual emissions will be compensated to meet its NZE 2029 commitment and that any use of offsets is progressively reduced over time as solutions for hard to abate emissions are realised. A position of compensating a maximum 5% residual emissions (5% of the 2010/11 baseline year excluding aviation emissions) plus any remaining aviation emissions<sup>1</sup> by 2029 has been agreed, with further detailed work required, especially with relation to aviation emissions, to develop a detailed compensation plan to ensure environmental and social integrity.



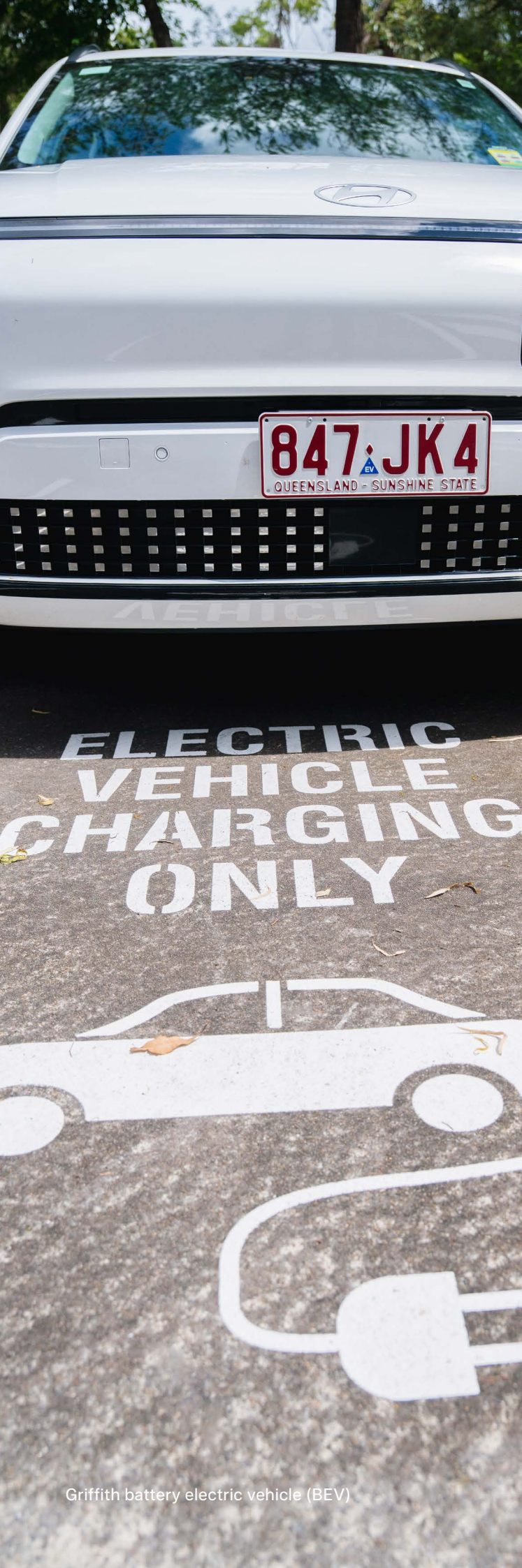
## 5.4 Framework for Action

The University has already committed to several climate actions to meet its strategic priorities. The Plan framework establishes a clear structure for coordinating existing climate action while ensuring that new actions are integrated and aligned with the University's existing climate action landscape. Under the framework, actions are grouped into "action areas" under three overarching "pillars". As Figure 6 illustrates, each pillar represents the University's strategic climate action goals:

- Pathways to achieving net zero (scope 1, 2 & partial scope 3) emissions by 2029 by first **avoiding emissions**, then **minimising emissions** that cannot yet be avoided, and finally by **compensating residual emissions** with carbon offsets.
- How climate change knowledge is **shared** through our **academic and engagement activities** to deliver meaningful action on climate change internally and externally.
- Actions to address **key climate change mitigation, adaptation and associated transition challenges** towards a climate resilient university.





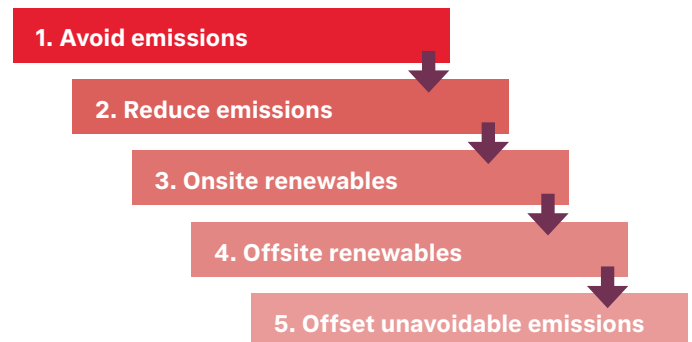


## 6.0 ACTION PLAN

### 6.1 Pillar 1 – Net Zero by 2029

In 2022 Griffith University committed to achieving net zero emissions by the end of 2029 based on the defined emissions boundary (see 3.2).

In considering measures to manage emissions the University will continue to follow the established **mitigation hierarchy** (Figure 7). Strategies must follow this hierarchy, be transparent and additional to existing strategies. Actions that avoid emissions will be prioritised wherever feasible (Action Area 1.1 Carbon Footprint Reduction), followed by those that minimise emissions that cannot yet be avoided (Action Area 1.2 Renewable Energy Use). Onsite renewables (e.g. rooftop solar) will be prioritised over the purchasing of offsite renewable energy. There will be a quantum of residual emissions which will then need to be compensated for by purchasing carbon offset credits (Action Area 1.3 Residual Emissions Offsetting).



**Figure 7. Griffith University's established emissions mitigation hierarchy.**



## Pillar 1 Action Plan – Net Zero by 2029

The pathway towards achieving the goals of Pillar 1 employs the following action:

ACTION AREA		ACTION	KPI	PROJECTS	
1.1	Carbon Footprint Reduction	1.1.1 Reduce energy consumption	Annual % reduction in Scope 2 emissions from 2011 baseline, aligned with net-zero target	1.1.1.1	Upgrade buildings to higher energy efficiency, including installing energy efficient equipment (heating & cooling, IT, lighting) and occupancy sensors and review temperature set points.
				1.1.1.2	Partner with offsite IT services (i.e. server providers) with low emission credentials.
				1.1.1.3	Include plans to improve energy efficiency in annual carbon reports.
				1.1.1.4	Continue to conduct energy consumption reviews to identify energy wastage.
				1.1.1.5	Regularly review and update the Design Guidelines as required to ensure they incorporate current energy efficiency standards for all renovations and new construction projects.
				1.1.1.6	Reduce gas consumption on campuses (e.g. kitchens, Bunsen burners etc).
	1.1.2 Reduce aviation emissions	Annual % reduction in Scope 3 emissions (business travel) from 2011 baseline, aligned with net-zero target		1.1.2.1	Develop tools to address existing gaps in travel policies and processes, including systems architecture to include travel justification, centralised communications and emissions dashboards and calculators.
				1.1.2.2	Establish and commit to university and element key performance indicators (e.g. total emissions, % flight reduction, emissions per FTE) and consider strategically informed internal carbon pricing and flight caps.
	1.1.3 Reduce non-aviation transport emissions	Annual % reduction in Scope 1 emissions (transport fuels) from 2011 baseline, aligned with net-zero target		1.1.3.1	Electrify the Griffith vehicle fleet and provide on-campus charging stations.
				1.1.3.2	Publish an updated Sustainable Transport Strategy (inc. actions on shared & public transport, inter-campus bus, micromobility, walking & cycling etc.).
1.2	Renewable Energy Use	1.1.4 Reduce waste emissions	Annual % reduction in Scope 3 emissions (waste) from 2011 baseline, aligned with net-zero target	1.1.4.1	Develop a waste management plan to refine targets and deliver practical and measurable improvements in waste management.
				1.1.4.2	Analyse waste management performance and, alongside waste contractors, identify opportunities to improve performance in accordance with the waste hierarchy.
		1.2.1 Increase on-campus renewable energy and the proportion of renewable energy for off-campus supply	Annual % reduction in Scope 2 emissions from 2011 baseline, aligned with net-zero target.	1.2.1.1	Install rooftop solar panels on all feasible campus buildings.
				1.2.1.2	Commit to a renewable power purchasing agreement (Columboola Solar Farm) to provide a significant percentage of the university's offsite energy needs.
				1.2.1.3	Publish a pledge to commit to 100% renewable energy and advocate for others to move towards renewable energy sources.

### KEY:

Established project

New or in-development project

New projects required to address Griffith commitments, mitigate climate risks, meet THE-IR or best industry best practice.



## Pillar 1 Action Plan – Net Zero by 2029 (cont...)

ACTION AREA	ACTION	KPI	PROJECTS
1.3 Accounting and reporting	1.3.1 Enhance energy and emissions accounting and reporting	Reporting and disclosures aligned with or exceeding recognised climate reporting frameworks (e.g. TCFD, ISSB, ASRS)	1.3.1.1 Produce and publish annual Carbon Management and Sustainability reports that includes reporting on climate actions and progress against indicators.
			1.3.1.2 Continue to review the Scope 3 emissions boundary, considering feasibility, offsets, rankings and reputation.
			1.3.1.3 Complete annual climate-related financial disclosure reporting, when advised to by the Queensland Government, to comply with the Australian Sustainability Reporting Standards (ASRS), with particular reference to mandatory requirements under AASB S2.
			1.3.1.4 Make energy production and consumption data dashboards, including renewable energy generated and purchased, publicly available online.
			1.3.1.5 Make aviation emissions data dashboards publicly available online, at a useful level of organisation, such as groups.
1.4 Residual emissions offsetting	1.4.1 Determine compensation position and options	Publication of a university-wide carbon compensation plan aligned with best practice standards and certification pathways	1.4.1.1 Confirm and publish Griffith offsetting position.
			1.4.1.2 Determine position on the pursuit of third-party Net Zero certification (e.g. Science Based Targets initiative (SBTi) Net-Zero Standard, Climate Active, Clima Net Zero Certification).
			1.4.1.3 Develop a detailed carbon compensation plan to ensure environmental and social integrity, with consideration of nature-based solutions and partnerships with First Nations enterprises for stewardship and co-benefits.

### KEY:

Established project

New or in-development project

New projects required to address Griffith commitments, mitigate climate risks, meet THE-IR or best industry best practice.





## 6.2 Pillar 2 – Climate Knowledge Exchange and Empowerment

Griffith University recognises that addressing climate change is not a peripheral concern, but a defining challenge of our time—one that intersects with every aspect of society, economy, and environment. As such, the University's commitment to climate knowledge exchange and empowerment is central to its purpose as a public institution. **In 2023, the University completed a Baseline Climate Risk Assessment** as a proactive measure to better understand its exposure to climate-related risks, rather than in response to mandatory climate reporting requirements. It identifies the future provision of climate-relevant education and research as not only a reputational imperative but a strategic necessity for the University's long-term resilience and relevance.

### This pillar focuses on two critical areas:

1. enhancing climate literacy among students and staff to build a university-wide culture of informed action, and;
2. expanding research engagement and collaboration beyond the university to drive real-world impact.

Griffith's legacy in this space is long-standing—it was the first Australian university to offer an Environmental Science degree in 1975. Today, its programs span renewable energy, carbon management, sustainable design, environmental law, and more, equipping graduates with the interdisciplinary skills needed to lead in a rapidly changing world.

Beyond formal education, Griffith empowers its community through targeted engagement programs that enable students and staff to become agents of change. This is not just about awareness—it is about building capacity to act. As a leader in climate research, Griffith plays a vital role in advancing global climate science and solutions. The actions outlined here are designed to deepen partnerships with industry, government, NGOs, and communities—including First Nations partners—ensuring that Griffith's expertise contributes meaningfully to local, national, and global climate resilience.



## Pillar 2 Action Plan – Climate Knowledge Exchange & Empowerment

The pathway towards achieving the goals of Pillar 2 employs 5 key actions:

ACTION AREA		ACTION	KPI	PROJECTS	
2.1	Student & staff climate literacy	2.1.1 Develop staff & student engagement programmes	At least 5 staff and student engagement initiatives delivered annually that promote climate action, awareness, and recognition	2.1.1.1	Support staff to apply for external awards that recognise environmentally and socially sustainable innovations within the organisation (e.g. Green Gown Awards).
				2.1.1.2	Implement tools for staff and students to share climate actions and achievements from research, learning and teaching, projects, operations, partnerships, and more (e.g. SDG Files).
				2.1.1.3	Review and develop climate change specific events, campus activations and strategic communication packages that seek to prioritise key social changes that integrate with existing university events.
				2.1.1.4	Refine existing climate-related onboarding and professional development materials for staff (inc. benefits of reduced air travel).
	Annual % reduction in Scope 1 emissions (transport fuels) from 2011 baseline, aligned with net-zero target	2.1.2	Annual delivery of climate-related academic programs and professional learning opportunities.	2.1.2.1	Provide climate related degrees and certificates.
				2.1.2.2	Deliver micro-credential courses that respond to industry needs and are funded by industry.
	2.1.3	Provide opportunities for students to learn about climate change within their degrees	Climate-related learning opportunities integrated across curricula and frameworks.	2.1.3.1	Increase access for all students to climate-related courses already provided by the university.

### KEY:

Established project

New or in-development project

New projects required to address Griffith commitments, mitigate climate risks, meet THE-IR or best industry best practice.



## Pillar 2 Action Plan – Climate Knowledge Exchange & Empowerment (cont...)

ACTION AREA		ACTION	KPI	PROJECTS
2.2	Research engagement & translation	2.2.1 Invest in climate action and translation as an area of research strength (global & national)	Advancement of climate-focused research, partnerships, and translation activities that support a low-carbon economy as measured by contributions to THE IR metrics	2.2.1.1 Continue to invest in areas of research and research partnerships that align with our strengths and deliver action on climate change, including research that supports local industry to improve energy efficiency and utilise clean energy.
				2.2.1.2 Collaborate with government and industry to achieve a sustainable Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games.
				2.2.1.3 Continue to collaborate with the Queensland Government on clean energy and energy-efficient technology policy development via the Decarbonisation Hub.
		2.2.2 Develop community education and campaigns	At least 2 climate-related community events/initiatives delivered annually	2.2.2.1 Continue to conduct local community outreach for climate action and energy efficiency.
				2.2.2.2 Investigate opportunities to enhance NGO partnerships and collaboration (e.g. via the Solving Plastic Waste CRC for waste management and Firesticks Alliance and Ngarang-wal for cultural fire practice and Country care).

### KEY:

Established project

New or in-development project

New projects required to address Griffith commitments, mitigate climate risks, meet THE-IR or best industry best practice.





## 6.3 Pillar 3 – Climate Resilient University

While Griffith University is undertaking climate mitigation action through our net zero emissions and education and engagement work, the impacts of climate change will still be felt across the University's operations bringing **direct and indirect risks**. These include emergency response planning for physical events, the impact of climate change on students and University funding, campus master planning and impact on academic courses and research.

Not only does climate risk have to be considered along with disaster management and financial risk, but climate risk must also be considered across corporate policies and procedures, programs and projects and service delivery. Climate risk management is needed to make future-focused, science-informed, and financially and legally sound decisions that grow the economy, protect the environment, and create safer, more resilient communities. The nature of climate risk differs from many traditional risks as it requires considerations over a longer timeframe and higher levels of uncertainty.

The findings and summary of the potential key climate risks for the University, as identified in the 2023 Baseline Climate Risk Assessment, have been consolidated by members of a Core Oversight Group into two themes—physical and transition risk—and prioritised as "now", "soon", or "later". These themes and priorities have been used to:

- Highlight existing action areas or actions that address or mitigate key risks.
- Identify "gaps" that require the development of new actions to address or mitigate key risks.
- Direct action prioritisation based on risk to the University.

The risks have been represented on the University's Material Risk Register.

The Climate Action Plan seeks to coordinate action to address the priority risks through building a Climate Resilient University which considers both **physical and transition risks**. This will build resilience at an institutional level through systems, processes, and policies; however, it will still be incumbent on individual areas to address climate risk for their activities within the framework.



## Pillar 3 Action Plan – Climate Resilient University

The pathway towards achieving the goals of Pillar 3 employs 2 key actions:

ACTION AREA		ACTION	KPI	PROJECTS	
3.1	Climate Resilient Campuses	3.1.1	Create climate adaptable campuses	Environmental Management System (EMS) framework published and environmental management plans reviewed at least every 2 years	Identify and document an appropriate Environmental Management System (EMS) framework that reflects existing strategies, policies, plans and reporting processes and is adaptable to future legislative and regulatory trends.
					Review environmental management plans (biodiversity, water, waste) on a regular basis to adapt to the changing environment and avoid maladaptation in the natural campus environment, incorporating First Nations ecological knowledge and place-based indicators.
					Incorporate climate change adaptation and maladaptation risks into master planning processes and consider climate resilience costings in project cost models.
3.2	Climate Governance & Finance	3.1.2	Implement climate-inclusive corporate hazard management & decision-making	Refined Baseline Climate Risk Assessment published and climate risk assessments and resilience strategies incorporated into key policy documents and risk registers	Update and publish the Baseline Climate Risk Assessment with expanded climate scenarios and quantified risks, and embed climate risks into established university element Risk Registers.
					Incorporate climate risks and resilience in the University's key risk and hazard management corporate frameworks and policy documents (e.g. Risk Management Handbook, Risk & Resilience Management Policy, Resilience Standard and Crisis and Incident Response Plan).
					Continue to advocate for measures to divest investments from carbon-intensive energy industries by continuing to collaborate with other Queensland universities to work towards affordable, clean energy investment options to be made available under Queensland Law within the Queensland Investment Corporation.

### KEY:

Established project

New or in-development project

New projects required to address Griffith commitments, mitigate climate risks, meet THE-IR or best industry best practice.





Brisbane South (Nathan) Campus

## 7.0 EMISSIONS TRACKING AND REPORTING

### 7.1 Emissions Reporting

Global climate disclosure regulations are evolving. The Task Force on Climate-related Financial Disclosures (TCFD) released its recommendations in 2017, which were adopted into the International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) by the International Sustainability Standards Board (ISSB) in 2023. In Australia, legislation passed in 2024 mandates climate-related financial disclosures for large entities under the Corporations Act, starting January 2025. These align with the Australian Sustainability Reporting Standards (ASRS), issued by the Australian Accounting Standards Board (AASB) in 2025.

Griffith University, as a statutory body and charity, is not currently required to report under ASRS. However, future inclusion is possible, especially as states like New South Wales introduce disclosure requirements for public agencies. This reflects a broader move toward transparent climate reporting for non-corporate entities.

Under the National Greenhouse and Energy Reporting Act 2007 (NGER), Griffith has reported annually since 2011, having exceeded the emissions threshold for Scope 1 and 2. Reporting will continue until emissions fall below the threshold, at which point Griffith must demonstrate it will remain below for up to two years. Once eligible, Griffith may report voluntarily through the Corporate Emissions Reduction Transparency (CERT) initiative.

Environment, Social and Governance (ESG) reporting is also gaining importance as a framework for addressing non-financial climate risks. While not yet mandatory, reputational and contractual pressures are driving adoption.

Griffith's carbon reporting is managed with an external consultant. Emissions data and progress are published in annual Carbon Management Reports on the Griffith Sustainability webpage. Reporting is coordinated by Campus Life, Griffith Sustainability, and Corporate Governance, with oversight by the Environmental Sustainability Committee and the Executive Group.

### 7.2 Emissions forecast

Thanks to a number of already implemented emission reduction initiatives (documented in section 4), Griffith's annual total carbon emissions have been steadily decreasing since 2018/19. Total emissions in 2023/24 were 47.6% lower than the 2010/11 baseline and 6% lower than the previous year (see Figure 8). Significant reductions in scope 2 emissions offset increases in scope 1 and 3 emissions.

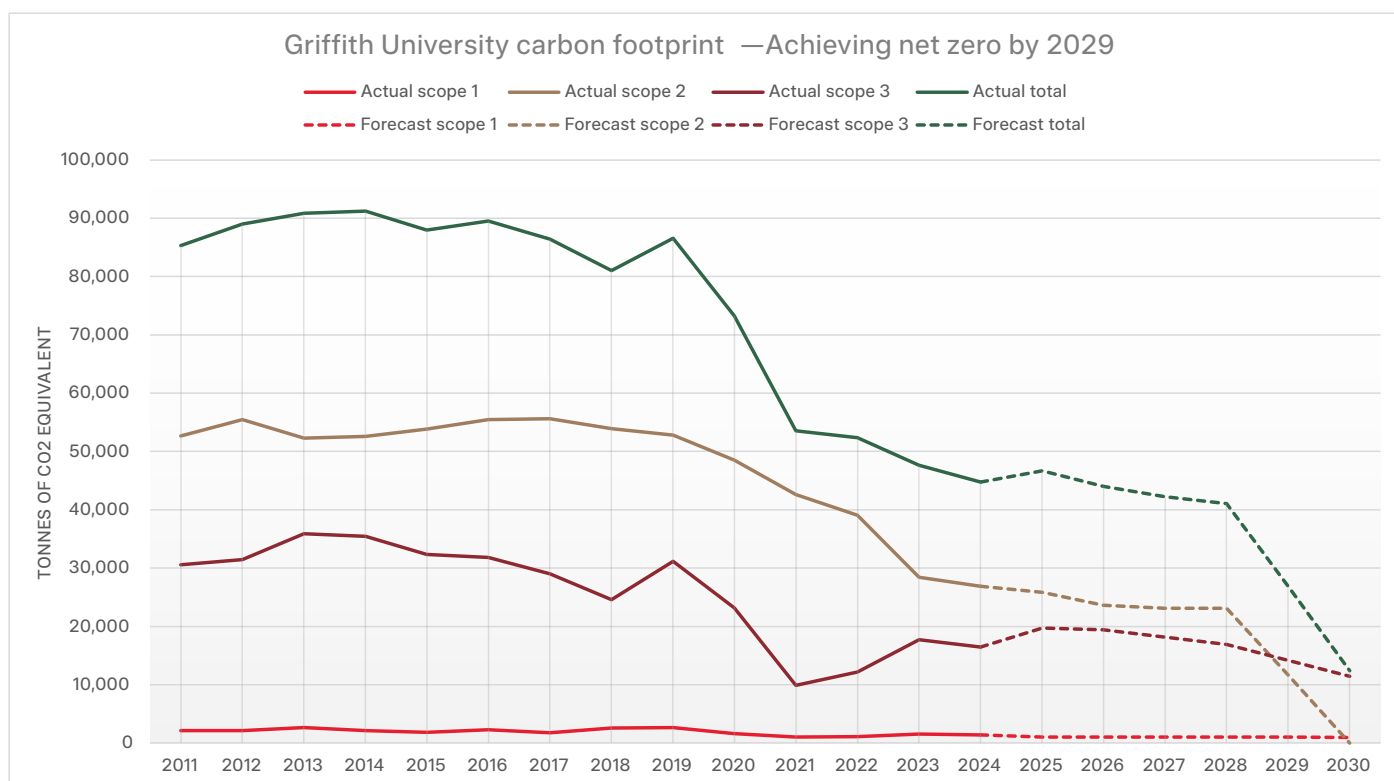
An annual reduction of around 2.5% is forecast to continue until 2028/29 when the university renews its electricity purchasing contract and can commit to 100% renewable energy for all campuses and leased premises. At that point its scope 2 emissions will reduce to zero. The 2029/30 emissions forecast (see Figure 9) also assumes that the university will meet its target of a 25% reduction in aviation emissions by 2029 based on the 2010 baseline, and that a detailed offsetting plan to ensure environmental and social integrity will be in place to account for 5% of the 2010/11 baseline year (excluding aviation emissions) plus any remaining aviation emissions (see section 3).





	Total emissions tCO <sub>2</sub> -e	% change relative to 2010/11 baseline	% change relative to prior year (2022/23)
Scope 1 direct emissions	1,407.80	-33%	-8%
Scope 2 indirect emissions associated with the use of grid (offsite generated) electricity	26,872.10	-49%	-6%
Scope 3 emissions as a consequence of use of goods/services (partial)	16,445	-46%	-7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>44,724.90</b>	<b>-47.6%</b>	<b>-6%</b>

**Figure 8. 2023/24 emissions and year-on-year performance comparisons.**



**Figure 9. Griffith University's emissions forecast.**





## 8.0 CONCLUSION

Griffith University's Climate Action Plan represents a bold and coordinated commitment to addressing the urgent challenge of climate change. Grounded in the latest science from the IPCC, insights from the 2023 Baseline Climate Risk Assessment, and the University's own mitigation efforts—including the Net Zero Sprint Report which informed targeted emissions reduction strategies—this Plan sets a clear pathway to 2030 through three pillars: Net Zero Emissions, Climate Knowledge Empowerment, and Climate Resilience.

This is not a response to regulatory obligation—it is a proactive, values-driven initiative that reflects Griffith's role as a leader in climate action through research, education, engagement, and operations. By integrating Indigenous knowledge, student perspectives, and expert input across disciplines, the Plan ensures a holistic and inclusive approach to climate action.

Importantly, this Plan goes beyond many institutional climate strategies by embedding Climate Knowledge Empowerment, and Climate Resilience as core pillars. As an educational institution, Griffith recognises the transformative power of climate literacy and the need to build adaptive capacity—not only within our campuses but across the communities we serve. These pillars reflect our commitment to equipping people with the understanding, tools, and systems needed to navigate and shape a climate-positive future.

Griffith is transitioning to a low-carbon future while actively preparing for the risks and opportunities that climate change presents. Through strengthened governance, informed planning, and empowered communities, we will build resilience and drive meaningful change—on our campuses, in our communities, and beyond.



