



POLICY: ENVIRONMENT AND WASTE MANAGEMENT

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Da Vinci Institute (The Institute) is an accredited private higher distance education provider offering qualifications on NQF levels five to ten, which are registered on the Higher Education Qualifications Sub-Framework (HEQSF). This Policy forms part of the institutional Integrated Quality Management System and details the principles for ensuring that programme offerings adhere to academic standards and empower students to contribute to the transformation of their communities, society, and the economy of the future. This approach is underpinned by the Business and Community-driven Action Learning discourse on the co-creation and distribution of relevant knowledge.

The Institute is committed to operating within the framework of applicable legislation and recognised good practice; in particular, to encouraging and enabling recycling, reducing landfill waste and, when disposal is the only option, disposing of materials in an environmentally responsible manner. The Institute is committed to disposing of waste responsibly through appropriate waste collection and disposal methods in accordance with this Policy, improving its recycling and waste management practices and promoting sustainable behaviour amongst members of the Da Vinci community.

A variety of waste is produced and collected, ranging from general waste to recyclable materials. The Institute has a duty to ensure that this waste is managed and disposed of responsibly, including through the use of appropriate waste contractors.

The Institute adopts the principle of recognised good practice in the delivery of its waste management services to reduce, reuse, and recycle waste products in preference to the disposal of waste to landfill. There is a legal requirement for all who produce, keep or dispose of waste to comply with applicable environmental and waste management legislation. The Institute applies the waste management hierarchy to ensure that waste is managed in the preferred order of:

- a. Reduce – the best approach to waste is to reduce it at source
- b. Reuse – if waste cannot be reduced, then endeavour to re-use it
- c. Recycle – if waste cannot be reused, then recycle it.

2. DEFINITIONS

Term	Definition
Environment	The surroundings in which The Institute operates, including air, water, land, natural resources, flora, fauna, humans and their interrelationships.

Sustainability	The integration of social, economic and environmental factors into planning, implementation and decision-making to meet present needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.
Waste	Any substance, material or object that is unwanted, rejected, abandoned, discarded or disposed of, or that is intended or required to be discarded or disposed of.
Recyclable Waste	Waste materials that can be collected and processed for reuse or conversion into new materials or products.
Hazardous Waste	Waste that contains substances or has characteristics that may have a harmful effect on health or the environment and therefore requires appropriate handling, storage and disposal.

3. LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

The Environment and Waste Management Policy is benchmarked against and should be read in the context of the relevant legislation underpinning the principles against which institutional policies, processes and standard operational procedures are developed, implemented, and maintained. These include:

- I. Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996
- II. Hazardous Substances Act 15 of 1973, as amended
- III. National Environmental Management Act 107 of 1998, as amended
- IV. National Environmental Management: Air Quality Act 39 of 2004, as amended
- V. National Environmental Management: Waste Act 59 of 2008, as amended
- VI. National Water Act 36 of 1998, as amended
- VII. Occupational Health and Safety Act 85 of 1993, as amended

Applicable Institutional Policies:

- I. GC8: Procurement Policy
- II. TM10: Records Management Policy

4. SCOPE

This Policy applies to all activities undertaken by, or on behalf of, The Institute and to all persons involved in or affected by its environmental and waste management practices, including:

- a. Staff members
- b. Students
- c. Suppliers
- d. Contractors
- e. Visitors.

5. PURPOSE

The aim of the Environment and Waste Management Policy is to provide a framework for responsible environmental and waste management and the promotion of environmental sustainability at The Institute.

6. OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this Policy are to:

- a. Ensure that waste management practices are undertaken in accordance with applicable legislative requirements and mitigate the potential adverse effects of waste on people and the environment.
- b. Minimise waste generation at source and facilitate repair, reuse and recycling over the disposal of waste, where reasonably practicable.
- c. Provide clearly defined roles and responsibilities for environmental and waste management activities.
- d. Promote environmental awareness in order to encourage waste minimisation, reuse and recycling.
- e. Ensure the safe handling, storage, and disposal of waste on campus.
- f. Promote recognised good practice regarding environmental and waste management.
- g. Provide appropriate information and training for staff, students, and other relevant stakeholders on waste management matters.

7. RESPONSIBILITIES

Da Vinci is committed to adopting environmentally responsible practices and ensuring that responsibilities for environmental and waste management are appropriately assigned.

7.1. Executive: Operations

The Executive: Operations, as Policy Custodian, is responsible for:

- a. overseeing the implementation and review of this Policy
- b. ensuring compliance with applicable environmental and waste management requirements
- c. ensuring that appropriate arrangements are in place for the collection, storage and disposal of waste
- d. overseeing relevant waste management service providers, where applicable
- e. promoting environmentally responsible practices and continuous improvement, and
- f. addressing and, where necessary, escalating environmental or waste management issues.

7.2. Staff, Students, Suppliers and Contractors

Staff, students, suppliers, contractors, and visitors are responsible for:

- a. complying with this Policy and applicable waste management arrangements
- b. disposing of waste in the appropriate designated receptacles
- c. taking reasonable steps to minimise waste and prevent pollution, and
- d. reporting environmental or waste management issues to the Executive: Operations or designated staff member.

8. WASTE MANAGEMENT AND RECYCLING

- a. The Institute seeks to minimise the amount of waste disposed of to landfill by encouraging waste reduction, reuse, and recycling and, where appropriate, separating waste at source.
- b. Appropriate arrangements will be maintained for the collection and disposal of waste generated at The Institute's premises, including through the use of appropriate waste management and recycling service providers where required.
- c. Waste generated by The Institute may include:
 - I. general waste
 - II. recyclable waste, including paper, cardboard, plastics, glass and metal
 - III. electrical and electronic waste (e-waste)
 - IV. confidential paper and other records requiring secure destruction
 - V. furniture and other reusable or recyclable assets, and
 - VI. hazardous or other specialised waste, where applicable.
- d. Waste requiring specialised handling or disposal, including e-waste and hazardous waste where applicable, must be managed separately from general waste and disposed of through appropriate service providers in accordance with applicable requirements.
- e. Confidential records must be disposed of securely in accordance with The Institute's Records Management Policy and applicable requirements.

9. RESOURCE USE AND ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

- a. The Institute is committed to the responsible use of natural and other resources and to reducing the environmental impact of its operations, where reasonably practicable.
- b. The Institute will promote the efficient and responsible use of:

- I. electricity
 - II. water
 - III. fuel used for generators and other operational purposes, and
 - IV. other resources that may have a material environmental impact.
- c. The Institute will monitor its consumption of electricity, water, and generator fuel on a quarterly basis to identify consumption trends, significant variances, and opportunities for improved resource efficiency.
 - d. Consumption information will be reviewed by the Executive: Operations and appropriate actions will be considered where significant or unexplained variances are identified.
 - e. Staff and other relevant stakeholders are encouraged to support the responsible use of resources and to avoid unnecessary consumption.

10. **REVIEW OF THIS POLICY**

Regular review and any amendments of this policy will be done in line with the approved institutional policies. This will take place in consultation with the relevant quality assurance structures at departmental and institutional level, under the auspices of the official custodian of this policy, namely the Executive: Operations.