UNIVERSITY POLICY NO. 025, SERIES OF 2025

POLICY ON SUSTAINABLE CAMPUS LANDSCAPING, WATER-EFFICIENT GREEN SPACES, AND GROUNDS MANAGEMENT

SECTION 1. POLICY DECLARATION

Quezon City University (QCU), in pursuit of its commitment to environmental sustainability, climate resilience, responsible resource utilization, and sustainable campus development, hereby adopts this Policy on Sustainable Campus Landscaping, Water-Efficient Green Spaces, and Grounds Management.

The University recognizes that sustainable landscaping plays an essential role in conserving water resources, enhancing biodiversity, improving environmental quality, mitigating urban heat, and creating healthy and resilient learning environments.

Consistent with Sustainable Development Goal 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation), QCU shall institutionalize water-efficient landscaping practices in the planning, development, rehabilitation, and maintenance of its campuses, gardens, landscaped areas, and other green spaces.

The University shall prioritize planting and maintaining native, climate-adapted, drought-tolerant, and low-water-demand plant species suitable for local environmental conditions and requiring minimal supplemental irrigation once established.

QCU shall further promote sustainable landscape design through efficient irrigation systems, rainwater utilization, soil moisture conservation, responsible grounds maintenance, and other environmentally sound practices that minimize unnecessary water consumption.

This policy serves as the institutional framework to ensure that campus landscaping and grounds management contribute to water conservation, ecological sustainability, and climate-resilient infrastructure development.

SECTION 2. LEGAL AND POLICY BASES

This policy is anchored on the following national and international frameworks:

2.1. The 1987 Philippine Constitution. Article II, Section 16 recognizes the people's right to a balanced and healthful ecology in accordance with the rhythm and harmony of nature.

2.2. Presidential Decree No. 1067, or the Water Code of the Philippines. Provides the legal framework for the utilization, conservation, development, and protection of water resources.

2.3. Republic Act No. 9275, or the Philippine Clean Water Act of 2004. Establishes measures to protect water quality and promote responsible water resource management.

2.4. Republic Act No. 9729, or the Climate Change Act of 2009. Provides the national framework for integrating climate change adaptation and mitigation into government policies and development programs.

2.5. Republic Act No. 10121, or the Philippine Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Act of 2010. Promotes disaster risk reduction and resilience, including measures that address climate-related environmental vulnerabilities.

2.6. Republic Act No. 9147, or the Wildlife Resources Conservation and Protection Act. Provides for the conservation and protection of wildlife resources and their habitats, including relevant protections for regulated plant species.

2.7. Presidential Decree No. 1096, or the National Building Code of the Philippines. Establishes building and site development requirements relevant to the planning and maintenance of campus facilities.

2.8. Quezon City Ordinance No. SP-3439, Series of 2025, or the Quezon City Green Building Code of 2025. Establishes local green building requirements addressing site sustainability, water and wastewater management, and related environmental considerations for covered developments.

2.9. Department of Environment and Natural Resources Guidelines on Urban Greening. The DENR Forest Management Bureau's *Philippine Guidebook on Plant Species Suitable for Urban Greening* provides technical guidance on appropriate plant selection and sustainable urban greening.

2.10. United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 6. Promotes the availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all, including improved water-use efficiency.

2.11. United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 11. Promotes sustainable cities and communities, including environmentally responsible urban development and accessible green spaces.

2.12. United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 15. Promotes the protection, restoration, and sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems and biodiversity.

SECTION 3. OBJECTIVES

3.1. General Objective

To institutionalize sustainable, climate-resilient, and water-efficient landscaping practices across Quezon City University campuses, thereby minimizing landscape-related water consumption while enhancing biodiversity, environmental quality, and campus sustainability.

3.2. Specific Objectives

This policy specifically aims to:

1. Ensure that campus landscaping plans prioritize native, drought-tolerant, climate-adapted, and low-water-demand plant species.
2. Minimize the consumption of potable water for landscape irrigation and grounds maintenance.
3. Establish water-efficient landscape design, planting, irrigation, and maintenance standards.
4. Promote the use of rainwater and other safe, legally permissible nonpotable water sources for landscape irrigation.
5. Improve soil moisture retention and reduce unnecessary water loss through appropriate landscaping techniques.
6. Protect and enhance campus biodiversity through responsible plant selection and sustainable green space management.
7. Establish monitoring mechanisms to assess the implementation and effectiveness of water-efficient landscaping practices.

8. Strengthen environmental awareness and participation among students, faculty members, employees, and other University stakeholders.

SECTION 4. SCOPE AND COVERAGE

This policy shall apply to all campuses, facilities, and outdoor spaces owned, operated, or directly managed by Quezon City University.

It shall cover:

4.1. Existing Landscaped Areas

Campus gardens, ornamental planting areas, lawns, courtyards, landscaped pathways, and other maintained green spaces.

4.2. New Landscape Development Projects

All proposed landscaping, campus beautification, greening, and outdoor development initiatives.

4.3. Campus Rehabilitation and Improvement Projects

Renovation, rehabilitation, and enhancement of existing landscaped areas and outdoor facilities.

4.4. Grounds Maintenance Activities

Plant watering, irrigation, pruning, mulching, soil improvement, vegetation management, and other landscaping maintenance activities.

4.5. University Contractors and Service Providers

Landscape designers, contractors, suppliers, grounds maintenance personnel, and other service providers engaged in campus landscaping activities.

4.6. University Community

Faculty members, administrative personnel, students, and recognized University organizations involved in campus greening, environmental protection, and sustainability initiatives.

SECTION 5. GENERAL POLICY GUIDELINES

5.1. Mandatory Integration of Water-Efficient Landscaping

All new campus landscaping projects and major landscape rehabilitation activities shall incorporate water conservation principles into their planning, design, implementation, and maintenance.

The University shall prioritize landscape designs that minimize long-term irrigation requirements while maintaining appropriate environmental, functional, aesthetic, and safety standards.

Landscape development proposals shall identify the proposed plant species, anticipated water requirements, irrigation methods, and maintenance arrangements.

5.2. Prioritization of Native and Drought-Tolerant Plants

QCU shall prioritize planting native, locally adapted, drought-tolerant, and low-water-demand species suitable for Quezon City's climatic and environmental conditions.

Plant selection shall consider:

1. Adaptability to local rainfall patterns and seasonal dry periods.
2. Water requirements during establishment and maturity.
3. Suitability to existing soil conditions and available planting space.
4. Resistance to common local pests and diseases.
5. Contribution to biodiversity and ecological stability.
6. Maintenance requirements and long-term sustainability.
7. Compatibility with campus buildings, utilities, pathways, and safety requirements.

The University shall avoid introducing invasive plant species and shall minimize the use of ornamental plants that require excessive irrigation.

Native species shall be preferred where they are appropriate for the intended site and demonstrably suitable for low-water landscaping. Native status alone shall not be considered sufficient evidence of drought tolerance.

5.3. Water-Efficient Landscape Design

Campus landscaping shall incorporate appropriate design strategies that reduce water consumption.

Such strategies may include:

- Grouping plants according to similar water requirements;
- Selecting plants suited to existing sunlight, shade, and soil conditions;
- Reducing unnecessary high-water-demand turf areas;
- Incorporating appropriate ground covers and mulching;
- Preserving existing healthy vegetation where feasible;
- Utilizing permeable surfaces and suitable rainwater infiltration features; and
- Designing landscaped areas to minimize irrigation losses.

Landscape designs shall balance water conservation with campus accessibility, pedestrian safety, drainage requirements, and ecological considerations.

5.4. Efficient Irrigation Practices

The University shall implement efficient irrigation practices for campus gardens, lawns, and landscaped areas.

Irrigation shall be based on actual plant water requirements, soil moisture conditions, seasonal rainfall, and prevailing weather conditions.

Where technically and financially feasible, the University shall prioritize:

1. Drip irrigation or other efficient low-volume watering systems;
2. Rainfall-responsive irrigation controls;
3. Soil moisture monitoring devices;

4. Timers or controlled irrigation schedules;
5. Regular inspection and maintenance of irrigation equipment; and
6. Irrigation methods that minimize evaporation, overspray, and runoff.

Avoid unnecessary watering during rainfall or when soil moisture is sufficient.

5.5. Rainwater Harvesting and Alternative Irrigation Sources

QCU shall encourage the use of harvested rainwater for campus landscaping where appropriate collection and storage facilities are available.

The University may incorporate rainwater harvesting systems into suitable campus buildings and landscape development projects.

The University may also consider treated and appropriately managed nonpotable water for irrigation, provided its use complies with applicable health, environmental, and technical requirements.

All alternative water sources shall be managed to prevent contamination, mosquito breeding, and other health or safety risks.

5.6. Soil Moisture Conservation and Sustainable Grounds Maintenance

The University shall promote landscaping practices that improve soil health and reduce moisture loss.

These may include:

1. Application of suitable organic mulch around trees, shrubs, and planting beds.
2. Incorporation of appropriate soil amendments to improve moisture retention.
3. Reduction of unnecessary soil disturbance and compaction.
4. Maintenance of suitable vegetation cover to minimize soil erosion.
5. Use of compost and other environmentally appropriate organic materials.
6. Avoidance of excessive watering that may result in waterlogging, runoff, or nutrient loss.

Grounds maintenance activities shall be undertaken in a manner that supports long-term plant health and efficient water utilization.

5.7. Sustainable Lawn and Turf Management

The University shall evaluate the necessity and extent of grass-covered areas, particularly where maintaining turf requires substantial irrigation.

Where appropriate, consider low-water-demand ground covers, native vegetation, mulched planting beds, or other suitable landscape alternatives.

Maintain existing lawns using efficient irrigation and responsible grounds management practices.

5.8. Protection of Existing Trees and Vegetation

QCU shall promote the preservation and proper maintenance of healthy existing trees and vegetation.

The removal, relocation, or replacement of trees shall be subject to applicable laws, local regulations, and appropriate University authorization.

Replacement planting shall prioritize suitable species that provide shade, support biodiversity, enhance climate resilience, and support water-efficient landscaping.

5.9. Sustainable Procurement of Landscaping Materials

The University shall incorporate environmental sustainability and water-efficiency considerations into procuring plants, irrigation equipment, soil amendments, and landscaping materials.

Plant procurement shall prioritize species suitable for local environmental conditions and that do not require excessive irrigation or intensive maintenance.

All procurement activities shall comply with applicable government procurement regulations and institutional procedures.

5.10. Campus Environmental Education and Stakeholder Participation

QCU shall promote awareness of water-efficient landscaping and responsible environmental stewardship.

The University may organize tree-planting activities, campus greening programs, environmental awareness campaigns, and student-led sustainability initiatives.

Such activities shall be consistent with approved landscape plans, appropriate species selection, and long-term maintenance arrangements.

SECTION 6. IMPLEMENTATION MECHANISMS

6.1. Campus Sustainable Landscaping Program

QCU shall establish a Campus Sustainable Landscaping Program to coordinate the implementation of water-efficient landscape planning, planting, irrigation, and grounds management.

The program shall form part of the University's broader environmental sustainability and campus facilities management initiatives.

6.2. Campus Landscape Assessment

The designated facilities management unit shall conduct an initial assessment of existing landscaped areas.

The assessment shall identify:

1. Existing plant species and their estimated water requirements.
2. Areas requiring frequent or excessive irrigation.
3. Existing irrigation systems and their operational conditions.
4. Opportunities to introduce drought-tolerant and low-water-demand plants.
5. Areas suitable for rainwater harvesting and alternative irrigation.
6. Existing landscape maintenance practices and improvement requirements.

The findings shall provide the basis for developing a Campus Sustainable Landscaping Action Plan.

6.3. Sustainable Landscaping Action Plan

The designated facilities management unit, in coordination with relevant University offices, shall prepare an action plan identifying priority landscaping improvements.

The plan shall specify proposed planting activities, recommended species, irrigation improvements, implementation schedules, resource requirements, responsible offices, and performance indicators.

6.4. Plant Selection and Approval

All major campus landscaping and planting initiatives shall be reviewed by the designated facilities management unit or an appropriately qualified technical adviser.

Plant selection shall consider water efficiency, environmental suitability, biodiversity, maintenance requirements, and long-term sustainability.

6.5. Irrigation and Maintenance Schedule

The University shall establish appropriate irrigation and maintenance schedules based on plant requirements and prevailing environmental conditions.

Adjust watering frequency during rainy periods and other conditions when additional irrigation is unnecessary.

6.6. Landscape Monitoring and Documentation

The designated facilities management unit shall maintain appropriate records of planting activities, irrigation systems, landscape maintenance, and water conservation measures.

These records shall support periodic assessment and continuous improvement.

SECTION 7. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

7.1. Office of the University President

The Office of the University President shall provide overall institutional leadership and oversight in implementing this policy.

7.2. Office of the Vice President for Administration

The designated administrative office shall oversee integrating sustainable landscaping requirements into campus facilities management, infrastructure development, and institutional operations.

7.3. Facilities Management and Grounds Maintenance Unit

The designated facilities management unit shall:

1. Conduct campus landscape assessments.
2. Prepare and implement sustainable landscaping plans.
3. Recommend appropriate drought-tolerant and low-water-demand plants.
4. Oversee irrigation and grounds maintenance activities.
5. Monitor compliance with water-efficient landscaping practices.
6. Maintain records of landscaping improvements and conservation measures.
7. Prepare periodic implementation reports.

7.4. Planning and Infrastructure Development Unit

The office responsible for campus planning and infrastructure development shall integrate sustainable landscaping requirements into relevant site development and improvement projects.

7.5. Procurement Unit

The Procurement Unit shall ensure that appropriate water-efficiency and environmental sustainability specifications are incorporated into landscaping-related procurement activities.

7.6. Sustainability or Environmental Management Focal Office

The designated sustainability focal office shall coordinate environmental awareness initiatives, monitor relevant sustainability indicators, and consolidate documentation for institutional sustainability reporting.

7.7. Academic Departments and Student Organizations

Academic departments and recognized student organizations shall be encouraged to participate in campus greening, biodiversity conservation, and water conservation initiatives, subject to University approval and technical guidance.

SECTION 8. MONITORING, EVALUATION, AND PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

QCU shall establish a monitoring and evaluation mechanism to assess the implementation and effectiveness of water-efficient landscaping practices.

The following performance indicators shall guide institutional monitoring:

Performance indicator	Measurement or monitoring requirement
Drought-tolerant and low-water-demand plant coverage	Percentage of landscaped planting area occupied by verified drought-tolerant or low-water-demand species
Native and climate-adapted species	Number and proportion of suitable native and climate-adapted plant species
Water-efficient irrigation systems	Percentage of irrigated landscape area served by efficient irrigation systems
Landscape water consumption	Volume of water used for irrigation, where measurable
Rainwater utilization	Volume or documented use of harvested rainwater for irrigation, where applicable
Landscape maintenance	Number of inspections, maintenance activities, and corrective actions

Sustainable landscaping initiatives	Number of approved and implemented landscape improvement projects

The designated facilities management unit shall prepare periodic monitoring reports for submission to the appropriate University office.

The results shall be used to identify areas for improvement, recommend conservation measures, and guide future landscape development.

SECTION 9. DOCUMENTATION AND RECORDKEEPING

To demonstrate institutional implementation and support continuous improvement, QCU shall maintain appropriate records of sustainable landscaping initiatives.

Relevant documents may include:

1. Approved institutional sustainable landscaping policy.
2. Campus landscaping plans and planting layouts.
3. Inventory of existing and newly planted species.
4. Technical documentation identifying drought-tolerant and low-water-demand plants.
5. Photographs of landscaped areas and planting activities.
6. Irrigation system specifications and maintenance records.
7. Water consumption records related to landscape irrigation, where available.
8. Campus Sustainable Landscaping Action Plan.
9. Inspection, monitoring, and evaluation reports.
10. Reports on environmental awareness and campus greening initiatives.

Records shall be maintained in accordance with applicable University records management policies.

SECTION 10. COMPLIANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY

All concerned University offices, departments, personnel, contractors, and service providers shall comply with the provisions of this policy.

Campus landscaping projects shall be reviewed for consistency with water conservation principles and applicable environmental requirements.

Document identified deficiencies and address them through appropriate corrective measures.

SECTION 11. POLICY DISSEMINATION AND PUBLIC ACCESS

Upon approval, this policy shall be disseminated to all concerned University offices, faculty members, administrative personnel, students, and relevant service providers.

The policy shall be made publicly accessible through the official Quezon City University website and other appropriate institutional communication platforms.

The University shall promote awareness of its sustainable landscaping commitments and encourage participation in campus water conservation initiatives.

SECTION 12. POLICY REVIEW AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

This policy shall be reviewed at least once every three (3) years, or earlier when warranted by changes in applicable environmental regulations, campus development requirements, climatic conditions, or institutional sustainability priorities.

The review shall consider landscape monitoring reports, water consumption data, plant survival rates, maintenance records, and stakeholder recommendations.

Proposed amendments shall be submitted through the appropriate University approval processes.

SECTION 13. SEPARABILITY CLAUSE

If any provision of this policy is declared invalid or unenforceable by competent authority, the remaining provisions shall remain in full force and effect.

SECTION 14. REPEALING AND AMENDING CLAUSE

All existing University policies, memoranda, guidelines, and procedures inconsistent with this policy shall be reviewed and, where appropriate, amended or superseded in accordance with applicable institutional procedures.

SECTION 15. EFFECTIVITY

This policy shall take effect upon approval by the University President, subject to any additional approval requirements under applicable laws, University governance rules, and institutional procedures.

All concerned University offices shall undertake the necessary measures for its dissemination, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation.

APPROVED BY:

DR. THERESITA V. ATIENZA
University President

Date Approved: April 7, 2025

Cc: Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs
Office of the Vice President for Administration and Finance
Records Management Office