

Quick Guide: Energy Module

The Energy Module helps a school understand energy consumption and how to improve energy efficiency.

This guide helps a school to work through the Energy Module. Where activities link to module actions, the action number is noted in brackets.

To get Energy Module certified, 7 compulsory actions and at least 24 of the 39 optional actions in the Module checklist need to be completed.

Kickstart Energy Module

- Speak to your ResourceSmart Schools (RSS) Facilitator about ways to undertake your energy audit and use the audit template for support. Upload a summary of your audit to RSS Online. (A1.1)
- Establish a baseline and monitor energy consumption by entering energy bills into your RSS Online account. (A1.2)
- Discuss any gaps in the findings of the audit and potential solutions with your team
Could your school:
 - check the heating and cooling settings are correct?
 - design a campaign to remind staff and students to switch off lights and appliances?
- Prepare an Energy Efficiency Annual Action Plan using the template available. You could use the Energy Module checklist as suggestions to develop actions for your plan. Have it endorsed by your oversight group e.g. school council/board. (A2.1)

Progress Energy Module

- Work through actions in the Energy Efficiency Annual Action Plan and record them as you go. Use this plan, as well as the mandated curriculum, to develop activities that link energy education to your school's education program. (B1.1, B1.2, B1.3, B1.5)
- Describe how your student action and sustainability teams are achieving the goals and actions of the Energy Efficiency Annual Action Plan. (C2.2, C2.3, C3.2)
- Link up with your local environment groups or the local council to develop or participate in energy related projects such as Earth Hour. (B1.3, C3.1, C3.2)

- Learn about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives and strategies for energy use. (B1.4)
- Encourage staff to attend energy efficiency or climate change related professional development. The RSS newsletter contains information about professional development opportunities. (A2.2)
- Apply for grants to support your school's efforts to reduce energy such as funding the installation of renewable energy alternatives and retrofitting options. (A2.3)
- Create and display interpretive signs to educate students about using energy wisely. This is a fantastic learning activity for students. (A2.4)
- Ensure your Green Purchasing Policy is current and has been endorsed by your oversight group. Refer to the template available. (A7.2 and Core A1.8)
- Install a data logger to monitor energy usage. (A3.1)
- Document school wide procedures used to manage energy usage. This could involve developing procedures for:
 - maintenance of light fittings and air conditioners, heating and cooling system management and cross-ventilation. Refer to the template available. (A2.5, A2.6, A2.7, A2.9, A2.10)
 - whole school switch off procedure. Refer to the templates available. (A2.8)
- Consider adopting mid to long term energy efficiency strategies such as:
 - lighting efficiency improvements such as de-lamping and re-lamping, using light reflector panels, installing movement sensor lights, timers and auto settings for security lights in school improvement or building plans (A4.1, A4.2, A4.3)
 - maximising heating and cooling efficiency such as using passive heating and cooling systems, weather stripping or draught excluders, using ceiling fans correctly for the season and installing insulation and window films (A5.1, A5.2, A5.4, A5.5, A5.6)
 - investigating renewable energy technologies such as solar panels, wind generators, solar hot water systems and solar powered water pumps where possible (A7.1)
 - including passive solar design principles that could be used within your school. (A5.3)
- Use natural light as much as possible. (A4.4)
- Use appliances with a high energy efficiency rating. (A6.1)

- Plant, and maintain existing, native trees on the school grounds and in the local area so they act as a carbon sink (to accumulate and store carbon-containing chemical compounds to remove carbon dioxide from the atmosphere). (A7.3, A7.4)
- Investigate how you can offset your travel-based carbon emissions. (A7.5)
- Share tips and ideas with your school community to encourage them to be more energy smart at home. (C3.3)
- Review RSS Online Tips section throughout the module for ideas on creating school learning story content. (C1.2).
- Share your school learning story about energy module achievements with your community by:
 - utilising the school newsletter, website, social media platforms and local media (C1.1, C3.2, C3.3)
 - sharing it with the wider community through networks and environment groups. (C1.2)

Reach out for assistance

RSS Facilitators can help you:

- plan or promote your program
- locate additional resources that will assist you to complete the module
- conduct audits with students
- organise activities for your student action team
- find networks of like-minded staff and students to support your work
- progress your RSS module completion and certification.

To connect with your local facilitator email schools@sustainability.vic.gov.au

For support with RSS Online email help@resourcesmartschools.vic.gov.au

ResourceSmart Schools is a free program offered by Sustainability Victoria that supports Victorian schools to embed sustainability across the school facilities, community and curriculum, while saving resources and money for the school.

To register to become a ResourceSmart School, visit:

<https://my.resourcesmartschools.vic.gov.au/>

or email schools@sustainability.vic.gov.au