

# UNDERSTANDING SCOPE 1, 2 AND 3 EMISSIONS

Scope 1, 2 and 3 Emissions are a categorisation system by which you can measure a business's carbon emissions through its own operations as well as across its wider activities. First appearing as a term of categorisation in 2001, the Scopes are now the basis for mandatory greenhouse gas reporting within the UK.

## SCOPE 1

Scope 1 emissions are the greenhouse gas emissions that a business makes directly through their operations. For example; the emissions created by the running of company vehicles.

## SCOPE 2

Scope 2 emissions are the greenhouse gas emissions that a business makes indirectly through their operations. For example; the emissions created in the production of energy that is later used by the business (ie: the electricity they use).

## SCOPE 3

Scope 3 emissions are the greenhouse gas emissions that a business is associated with via its own supply chains and activities. For example; buying products from suppliers, or services for marketing, etc.

## WHAT YOU CAN DO

For the most part, Scopes 1 and 2 are within a business's control. The data will likely be available to understand how to convert these purchases of gas and electricity into a value in tonnes of greenhouse gases.

With Scopes 1 and 2, we are lucky to have many options to help us counter these through active changes that reduce or even eliminate the emissions, or to deliver net zero emissions through other activities. For example; renewable energy sources can be chosen, or electric vehicles could be purchased. Not all solutions will be available to all businesses but many will.

For a business to be able to reach net zero across all three Scopes, tackling Scope 3 will likely have the biggest impact. Scope 3 often accounts for the majority of a business's carbon footprint. If your business manufactures products, there will likely be a significantly high level of carbon emissions in the process of extraction, manufacture and processing of raw materials.

The options for what a business can do to address Scope 3 emissions are currently not as numerous as the options available to tackle Scopes 1 and 2 emissions. However, though the solutions may not be as simple to achieve, a business can utilise its influence over suppliers and consider Scope 3 emissions when contemplating supplier choices, purchase decisions and design of their products.

While the existing definitions for what constitutes net zero ambition can be ambiguous, businesses looking to adopt best practice will commit to tackling Scope 3 emissions as part of their plans. For more information on going Net Zero, please watch our workshop on the subject [here](#).

## USEFUL LINKS

- Net Zero Workshop: <https://thebetterbusiness.network/workshop-net-zero-ben-thorne/>
- The Difference Between Scope 1, 2 And 3 Emissions: <https://compareyourfootprint.com/difference-scope-1-2-3-emissions/>
- Understanding Your Scope 1, 2 And 3 Emissions (With Diagrams): <https://www.anthesisgroup.com/scope-1-2-3-emissions/>

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