

Appendix 1: Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) Action Plan 2024/25

Introduction

1. Strategy 2030 contains a commitment to lead meaningful action against the climate emergency and ecological crisis. We are committed to achieving carbon net zero by 2030 and to pursue a policy of environmental net gain. We will do this by developing critical, creative and empowered people through our educational programmes and through advancing and disseminating knowledge.
2. 89% of students across the UK agree that their place of study should actively incorporate and promote sustainable development. 82% would like to see sustainable development actively incorporated and promoted through all courses and 67% say sustainable development is something they would like to learn more about ([NUS Sustainability Skills Survey 2023](#), sample size 9,000).
3. A survey as part of Responsible Futures showed that 88% of Exeter students believe it is important to learn about sustainability whilst at University, but only 33% believe their course teaches them enough about sustainability ([Responsible Futures Survey 2023](#), sample size 250).
4. The results of the sustainability questions in 2023 National Student Survey (NSS) were:
 - B16.1 My institution encourages good environmental practice: 68.7%
 - B16.2 My course has encouraged me to think about environmental sustainability: 53.7%
 - B16.3 I have had opportunities to take part in activities supporting environmental sustainability: 39.8%
5. This action plan sets out how we intend to continue to provide staff and students with opportunities to develop their sustainability skills, knowledge and experience and contribute as global citizens.

Key principles

6. Our efforts are based on the following principles:
 - Collaboration between students and staff at the core of activities and creation of new resources and activities. Ensuring this collaboration is empowering, accessible, and non-hierarchical.
 - Democratic decision making when discussing priorities and strategies.
 - Avoiding greenwashing by acknowledging and investigating the interconnectedness between sustainability and social/racial justice and inclusive education.
 - Providing opportunity for deep reflection of own and community practices and allowing critique of SDGs.
 - Supporting staff through this process to support students and teach ESD.
 - Focus on community/outreach opportunity in activities to increase problem-solving and real-world application of studies.

Strategic aims

7. Through this action plan we aim to:
 - a. Raise the profile of sustainability across our education offerings.
 - b. Provide accessible and inclusive opportunities to learn about the climate and environmental crisis and the UN Sustainable Development Goals.
 - c. Develop an effective approach for student engagement in the climate and environmental crisis and the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

- d. Provide opportunities for students to develop the knowledge, skills and experience required to be global citizens.
- e. Reduce the environmental impact of our education activities.
- f. Develop ways to effectively measure the impact of our work.

Action Plan

8. This plan sets out the actions we intend to take to meet our strategic aims. It is divided into the following themes:

- Formal curriculum (courses/ programmes)
- Staff training
- Employability and student success
- Engagement: informal curriculum (campus/community activities) and subliminal curriculum (via organisational policies and practices)
- Operations

CfC: Curriculum for Change Team

FCT&F: Field Course Task and Finish Group

GBP: Graduate Business Partner (Sustainability Education Project Manager)

GSI: Global Systems Institute

SEA: Sustainable Education Advocates

SEAS: Student Employability and Academic Success

SETF: Sustainable Education Thematic Forum

ST: Sustainability Team

TE: Transformative Education Team

	Activity	Delivery	Timescale	Contribution to strategic aims
	<i>Formal curriculum</i>			
1	Mapping the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the three pillars of Transformative Education across the formal curriculum through a student-led mapping exercise	SEA; GBP	At programme level in 24/25, and by module in 25/26	a, b, d
2	Further embed sustainability into the curriculum via Curriculum for Change	CfC; SEA; SETF	Ongoing	a, b, d
3	Use of Sulitest to assess student knowledge, skills and mindset on sustainability.	SEA	Ongoing	f

Activity	Delivery	Timescale	Contribution to strategic aims
Responsible Futures: Use the RF framework to further embed sustainability within our educational offerings and maintain accreditation.	GBP; SEA	Ongoing	a, b, c, d, f
Responsible Futures: Communicate outcomes from audit and disseminate best practice.	GBP; SEA	24/25	a, b, c, d
Education incubator: reinstate a recurring theme in the education incubator to encourage climate/ environmental literacy.	SEA	24/25	a, b, d
<i>Staff training</i>			
Development of a mandatory Climate Literacy Training module for all staff (accessed via LearnUpon).	SETF; GBP	To be completed in 24/25	b, d
Provision of in-depth CPD courses on Learn.Exeter .	SETF; GBP	To be completed in 24/25	b, d
<i>Employability and Student Success</i>			
Scale up Green Consultants to enable increased participation. Provide a £100 stipend for each student that successfully completes an on-campus project (target 75 students).	SEAS; ST	Ongoing	b, c, d
Delivery of Future 17 : the Sustainable development Goals Challenge Programme.		Ongoing	b, c, d
Delivery of Grand Challenges : a project week in which students work in interdisciplinary groups with other like-minded students to design innovative solutions to real world challenges.	SEAS	Annually	b, c, d
Provision of paid internships (SCP) within the sustainability team to support the delivery of this actin plan as well the University's wider commitments to sustainability.	ST	Annually	b, c, d
Provision of resources to support career development in sustainability .	SEAS	Ongoing	b, c, d
Sustainability Theme of the Exeter Award .	SEAS	Ongoing	b, c, d

	Activity	Delivery	Timescale	Contribution to strategic aims
	<i>Engagement</i>			
	Analyse the results of the sustainability questions within the NSS and use to drive further activity.	SEA	Annually	f
	Provision of sustainability information as part of student induction and Welcome Week.	ST; GBP	Annually	c
	Work collaboratively with UPP on their Student Sustainability Fund.	ST	24/25	c
	Develop a dialogue-based communications campaign to engage staff and students in exploring sustainability issues and co-developing solutions. This may include Climate Assemblies; debates; speakers etc.	SETF	24/25	c, d
	Sustainability representation on the Student Experience Partnership Board.	ST	Ongoing	c
	Regular engagement with the Guild and SU, and sustainability student societies such as Be the Change and Student Sustainability Board.	ST	Ongoing	c
	Invite student representatives to be members of all key sustainability governance groups .	ST	Ongoing	c
	Promote eco-anxiety resources developed by academics at the University of Exeter in partnership with the Exeter Science Centre and Responsible Futures.	GBP; ST	Ongoing	c
	Deliver Climate Fresk workshops to teach participants the fundamental science behind climate change and empower them to take action.	GBP; ST	Ongoing	c
	Promote the SDG Teach In.	GBP, ST	Annually	a
	Engage with the development and delivery of Faculty Sustainability Plans to ensure that activity is aligned and supported.	SEA	Ongoing	a, b, c, d
	<i>Operations</i>			

	Activity	Delivery	Timescale	Contribution to strategic aims
	Develop and promote Ethics of Practice for Field Courses that aims to reduce the environmental impacts of field courses.	FCT&F	To be completed in 24/25	e
	Production of case studies and examples that share learning from changing the location of field trips to avoid long-haul flights and demonstrate that the same learning outcomes can be achieved closer to home.	SETF; FCT&F	To be completed in 24/25	e
	Sustainability representation on Education and Student Experience Executive Committee (EdSEEC) through the Education Advocates for Sustainability.	SEA	Ongoing	a, b, c, d



Delivery

9. The delivery of this action plan is led by the Sustainability Education Advocates on the [Advocate Climate Taskforce \(ACT\)](#) and overseen by the Sustainability Education Thematic Forum. A Graduate Business Partner coordinates several of the projects including Responsible Futures, Curriculum mapping and staff training.
10. Several teams are involved in its delivery including Curriculum for Change, Student Employability and Academic Success, Sustainability Team and Transformative Education Team.

Governance and reporting

11. We will monitor the outcomes from delivering this plan through the NSS sustainability questions and Sulitest.
12. Progress against the action plan will be reported to ACT and the Climate and Environmental Crisis Board (CEC board) with highlights included in the University's Annual Sustainability Report.

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May 2024