***Report to ULTC on Education for Sustainability activity 2014-15***

1. **Background**

In 2011 Keele was one of eight HEIs that took part in the HEA’s pilot change programme ‘Green Academy’. This programme aimed to support HEIs to embed sustainability in the curriculum, and make whole institutional change. As a result of this an Education for Sustainability (EfS, also referred to as Education for Sustainable development, ESD) team was established with the remit to support the embedding of sustainability in the curriculum and wider student experience, and to support wider university sustainability initiatives. The overall approach, is one of integration, making sustainability part of the activities and operations of the university, rather than through the delivery of discrete sustainability projects.

The QAA definition of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) published in 2014 shows that it is about more than just the environment, incorporating social, economic and ethical issues as well. According to the QAA (2014):

Education for sustainable development means working with students to encourage them to:

* consider what the concept of **global citizenship** means in the context of their own discipline and in their future professional and personal lives
* consider what the concept of **environmental stewardship** means in the context of their own discipline and in their future professional and personal lives
* think about issues of **social justice, ethics and wellbeing**, and how these relate to ecological and economic factors
* develop a **future-facing** outlook; learning to think about the **consequences** of actions, and how systems and societies can be adapted to ensure **sustainable futures**.

This wider understanding of sustainability is reflected in Keele’s Graduate Attribute Five: An appreciation of the social, environmental and global implications of your studies and other activities, including recognition of any ethical implications.

This report summarises the work of the Education for Sustainability team at Keele throughout 2014/15.

1. **Baseline data**

*2a. Module and programme analysis*

For the past three years data has been collected on the inclusion of sustainability within modules. This has been carried out through an analysis of module aims and intended learning outcomes available through module specifications published online, and has not been verified by programme teams. The findings of this module analysis are presented in Appendix 1. This analysis has been continued to programme level to determine programmes where students do not have the opportunity to engage with sustainability issues as part of their course, based on whether modules with ESD coverage are included within the core or optional programme. Table 1 below identifies programmes where (based on an analysis of module information provided online) students do not have an opportunity to engage with sustainability issues as part of their course, or only as an optional part of their course. Full details of the programme analysis are shown in Appendix 2. Programmes within the Faculty of Health are not included in this analysis as their module information is not available online in a format to allow this analysis to be completed.

**Table 1.** Programmes where students have no or limited (option module only) opportunity to engage with sustainability issues as part of their programme (full analysis in Appendix 2).

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **No ESD content** | **Optional modules only** |
| **Faculty of HumSS (Dual Honours)** | Finance | Accounting |
| Music Technology | Economics |
| Music | History |
|  | Criminology |
|  | English |
|  | Law |
|  | American Studies |
|  | Politics |
| **Faculty of HumSS (Single Honours)** | Music Technology | American Studies |
| Music | Business Economics |
|  | Criminology |
|  | English |
|  | English and American Literature |
|  | English with Creative Writing |
|  | History |
|  | Law |
| **Faculty of Nat Sci (Dual Honours)** | Forensic Science | Astrophysics |
| Mathematics | Biochemistry |
| Medicinal Chemistry | Biology |
| Neuroscience | Chemistry |
|  | Human Biology |
|  | Physics |
| **Faculty of Nat Sci (Single Honours)** | Information technology Management for Business | Applied Biomedical Science |
| Mathematics | Biomedical Science |
| Forensic and Analytical Investigation |  |

*2b. Student attitudes to sustainability*

During Green Week in March 2015 an online survey was carried out to evaluate the impact of the work at Keele on students’ attitudes towards sustainability. The results of the survey are based on an average 268 student responses per question (not every student answered every question) and are summarised in Appendix 3. Almost 100% of students responding to the survey believed that sustainability is something which universities should actively incorporate and promote and almost 90% of students agreed (strongly agree, agree, moderately agree) that sustainability is something which all university degree courses should actively incorporate and promote. Over 70% of students felt that they i) knew more about sustainability issues, ii) cared more about sustainability related issues, iii) believed that their day-to-day behaviour is more sustainable, and iv) believed that they will act more sustainably in their future careers, due to their time at Keele.

1. **2014/15 Activity**
   1. *Accreditation and awards*

Responsible Futures: In 2014/15 Keele took part in the NUS pilot ‘Responsible Futures’ accreditation which aims to recognize whole institution approaches to embedding sustainability in the student experience. Keele was awarded the accreditation receiving more than double the threshold number of points needed for accreditation. The Responsible Futures logo can now be used on any marketing material by the University.



Green Gown Awards: In November 2014 Keele was awarded Highly Commended in the highly competitive ‘Continuous Improvement: Institutional Change’ category of Green Gown Awards. Patrick Bailey, then PVC for Environment and Sustainability, won the new ‘Leadership’ category at these awards.

* 1. *Curriculum developments*

Away days:

Following the piloting in 2013/14 of the use of Away Days to embed sustainability into programmes through using sustainability-discipline linkages to deliver core skills, this approach was continued in 2014/15 for Chemistry at years 1 and 2, Media, Communications and Culture and Physics, engaging approximately 120 students. Feedback suggested an increase in student awareness of Environmental and Ethical issues within their subject area, and an increased likelihood of taking these issues into consideration in their personal and professional decision making (Table 2).

**Table 2.** Summary of student feedback from sustainability-linked Away days in 2014 and 2015 (E+E = environmental and ethical)

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | | Students were asked to rate these before and after the session out of 5. The results below show the increase in these numbers due to the session. | | |
| **Subject** | Overall rating (out of 5) | Increased awareness of E+E issues within subject area | Likelihood of taking into account E+E implications within personal decisions | Likelihood of taking into account E+E implications within future professional life |
| **2014 Yr1 Chemistry** | 3.55 | 1.1 | 0.9 | 0.9 |
| **2014 Yr1 Politics** | 3.86 | Low Response Rate | Low Response Rate | Low Response Rate |
| **2014 Yr1 Physiotherapy** | 3.81 | 1.7 | 1.1 | 1.2 |
| **2015 Yr 1 Chemistry** |  | Low Response Rate | Low Response Rate | Low Response Rate |
| **2015 Yr 2 Chemistry** | 4.4 | 1.8 | 1.7 | 1.7 |
| **2015 Yr1 MCC** | 3.6 | 0.8 | 0.8 | 0.7 |

*‘Whilst putting together a plan for our three meetings, my awareness was raised of the business costs of sustainable development’* **1st Year Chemistry Student feedback**

*‘As physios, we never usually know about environmental implications relating to healthcare’* **1st Year Physiotherapy Student feedback, 2014**

Additional curriculum support: Additional work to integrate sustainability into different programmes includes a session run for 30 Midwifery students as part of their core programme, a tour of sustainability features of the university for 25 Chemistry students, and the development of a resource about sustainability and Nursing, to support integration of sustainability into the Nursing programme.

* 1. *Be More*

Three sustainability-related events were run as part of the Be More weeks. These were ‘Be More Visionary’ looking at future visions of society, ‘Be More Tasty’ looking at food waste issues and foraging around the Keele campus, and ‘Be More Resourceful’ looking at environmental decision making and resource use models in business. Attendance at these events was low with only 8 students in total, although feedback was positive.

* 1. *Student Engagement Activities*

There are many co-curriculum opportunities for students to becoming involved in sustainability activities which are supported by the EfS team. Some of these are student-led, others led by the Students’ Union, and others led by the EfS team. The University’s annual Green Week was run in March, later in the year than the national People and Planet Green Week, in order to increase the chance of better weather. The week of events, lectures, workshops and campaigns involved 15 student volunteers, contributing around 100 hours, with around 60 people attending events. Sustainability-related film screenings were included in Refugee Week and through the Chapel, and other sustainability activities included in Fairtrade Fortnight and the World Festival. The EfS team worked with the Students’ Union on another ‘Blackout’ campus-wide energy audit event involving over 30 student volunteers. Over 25 students have regularly taken part in the Student Eats food-growing initiative, which has led to the development of the student-led Veg Box scheme. Two students from Keele have been invited (as the only UK representatives) to the World Student Environmental Network, and as a result of this Keele has been awarded the 2016 annual conference, which will be held jointly between Keele University and Sussex University. Two students have also been invited by the prestigious Tongji University, China to attend a sustainability summer school in China in 2015.

Over 50 students have received training in aspects of sustainability as part of professional projects or activities, including training as part of the sabbatical officer handover, Halls reps, Green Impact Project Assistants and Auditors, and Responsible Futures student auditors. In addition, the Students’ Union piloted a university-wide ‘Green StARs’ project, and the EfS team provided training in sustainability for Student Academic Representatives interested in including sustainability issues in their role.

* 1. *Communications*

A significant role of the EfS team includes communication internally and externally of sustainability developments at Keele through a range of media. The ‘Green:Keele’ Twitter account has the greatest number of followers, with ~630 followers, of any of Keele’s Twitter accounts, outside of some individual staff members. There is also a regularly updated Green:Keele Facebook page and Green:Keele webpages (including specific ‘learning’ pages). A Green:Keele newsletter is circulated to all staff, students and campus residents three times a year summarising sustainability activity, including curriculum and co-curriculum developments. Videos of various sustainability initiatives, particularly those which are student led, have been made to further market the different activities at Keele.

* 1. *Staff training*

Staff training in various forms is an important part of the work of the EfS team. Two separate LPDC workshops on sustainability are run 1) Introduction to Green: Keele and 2) Introduction to Education for Sustainability. Four members of staff attended each of these workshops in 2014/15. A two hour session on Education for Sustainability is embedded in the TLHEP programme, the session was attended by 18 students in 2014/15. Two new online learning modules of about 30 minutes duration have been completed using the Staff Online learning package Learning Pool. These modules are 1) ‘Introduction to Environmental Sustainability’, an introduction to sustainability issues, developed by two student project assistants working with the Human Resources Green Impact team, and 2) ‘[Embedding Sustainability in Your Teaching: an Introduction to Higher Education for Sustainable Development](http://keele.learningpool.com/course/view.php?id=95)’. Both courses have been undertaken by 10 members of staff. In addition, individual consultations with members of staff (for example in 2014/15 Music and Medicine) take place to discuss the opportunities for embedding sustainability, in addition to invitations to specific meetings to talk to groups of staff.

* 1. *Summary of engagement*

A summary of engagement with different sustainability activities over 2014/15 is included in Appendix 4 and in Table 3 below. In total a conservative estimate of people engaged is 650, with over 1580 hours of engagement, not including conferences, social media following, research-related engagement, or meetings/committees.

**Table 3.** Summary of numbers of people directly engaged with sustainability related activities

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Type of Event** | **Number Engaged** | **Hours of Engagement** |
| **Student Training** | 55 | 160 |
| **Curriculum Delivery** | 203 | 392 |
| **Student Engagement and Awareness** | 114 | 326 |
| **Student Project Support** | 31 | 200 |
| **Staff Training** | 46 | 78 |
| **Staff Engagement** | 192 | 397 |
| **External Projects** | 7 | 33 |
| **Total** | **648** | **1586** |
|  |  |  |
| **Conferences (2014)** | 111 |  |
| **Research Engagement (KU Sustainability Research Network)** | 850 |  |
| **Social Media Following** | 676 |  |

1. **Future developments**

The EfS activity in 2014/15 has continued to increase the engagement with sustainability issues by both staff and students. However, with a target of all students engaging with sustainability issues at some point during their degree by 2012, further developments are needed. This includes plans for 2015/16 for sustainability to be a key part of the student induction process, ranging from the information provided to students, to specific events, to integration into the Halls Life project; and for further developments in integrating sustainability issues into the curriculum particularly where there are currently gaps, this will involve further work with the Curriculum Support and Development group and work with School Learning and Teaching Directors. In addition, sustainability issues will be integrated into the Intercultural Communications module for students Studying Abroad. Working with Marketing to improve the communication of sustainability activities on the Estate will also be undertaken, along with a Sustainability themed issues of JADE for 2017. However, all this activity takes place under a threat to staffing, with one key member of the EfS team leaving in September 2015, and currently no longer term commitment to EfS staffing currently in place, beyond the contract of the two remaining Sustainability Project Officers.

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