



## ***Education for Sustainability strategy***

### **What is ESD?**

Drawing on the QAA Education for Sustainable Development guidance document published in 2014, Education for Sustainable Development (ESD), also known as Education for Sustainability (Efs), is defined as the process of equipping students with the knowledge and understanding, skills and attributes needed to work and live in a way that safeguards environmental, social and economic wellbeing, both in the present and for future generations.

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.

### **Aim**

Our aim is that all students graduating from Keele will have had the opportunity to engage in activities and learning that will help them view decisions in their personal and professional lives from a social, environmental and economic perspective. This strategy sets out Keele's aims, objectives and strategy to embed ESD across the formal, informal and hidden curricula between academic years 2014-15 and 2020-21 when the strategy will be reviewed for the 2021-22 academic year onwards.

### **Approach**

Our aim will be achieved through a multi-stranded approach using the formal curriculum, co-curriculum, hidden curriculum (the surroundings in which students live and study) and overall ethos of the university. Sustainability learning opportunities must not just be stand-alone, but must be integrated throughout the learning and co-curriculum opportunities that students experience. Synergies between other enhancement agendas such as interdisciplinarity, internationalisation/global citizenship and employability and entrepreneurship must also be maximised. Sustainability is embedded as one of three themes within the Distinctive Keele Curriculum, and embedded in Keele's graduate attributes. Effective communication is at the heart of developing a culture of sustainability, and forms part of the overall student experience.

Education for Sustainability is at the heart of Keele's sustainability ambitions, reflecting the core educational purpose of a university. Education for Sustainability activities therefore must link to the whole university community, including links with the sustainability of the estate, sustainability in research, and sustainability issues within the university's wider community. Ensuring that these linkages are optimised, alongside the embedding of sustainability within the curriculum and student experience, is a core component of Keele's Education for Sustainability strategy.

The Education for Sustainability 'team' (comprising the Director of Education for Sustainability, and a number of Sustainability Project Officers) is responsible for driving forward the EfS work of the university, in conjunction with other staff where appropriate, in recognition of the need to embed aspects of EfS across many institutional roles and responsibilities.

## Targets

The following Education for Sustainability targets are found in the University's Sustainability strategy:

2017-18:

- Sustainability is embedded in all taught programmes
- 75% of academic-related staff have engaged in some form of ESD professional development activity
- A suite of learning opportunities about sustainability throughout the curriculum and co-curriculum are clearly signposted to students and are integrated into, and maintained within, existing activities (for example Green Stars, Sustainability stripes)
- Opportunities for sustainability learning using the Keele campus are formalised

2020-21:

- All students are able to articulate engagement with sustainability during their time at university when they graduate, showing an overall improvement in student sustainability awareness against a 2015 baseline

## Areas of work

**1) Undergraduate curriculum.** To ensure that every undergraduate student encounters sustainability within their formal curriculum.

*Objectives:*

- Embed sustainability within the core curriculum of every programme, through discipline-sustainability linkages, in a manner appropriate for the discipline
- Provide sustainability-focussed electives available to any student
- Provide a sustainability-focussed undergraduate degree programme
- Use sustainability as the context to deliver curriculum objectives, such as in 'Away Days'
- Provide free 'consultancy-style' support for staff seeking support in embedding sustainability in their teaching

**2) Postgraduate Taught (PGT) Curriculum.** To ensure that all students undertaking postgraduate taught courses engage with sustainability issues as part of their Keele experience

*Objectives:*

- Ensure that PGT students are aware of the university's sustainability commitments and provided with support to improve their own sustainability practices through a formal induction process
- Embed sustainability within the core curriculum of every PGT programme through discipline-sustainability linkages
- Use sustainability as the context to deliver curriculum objectives, such as in 'Away Days'
- Provide sustainability-focussed PGT programmes

**3) Postgraduate Research (PGR).** To ensure that all PGR students engage with sustainability issues as part of their time at Keele

*Objectives:*

- Ensure that that PGR students are aware of the university's sustainability commitments and provided with support to improve their own sustainability practices through a formal induction process
- Use sustainability as a context for generic training courses for PGR students within the LPDC workshop programme
- Use sustainability as a context for generic training for PGR students run from Faculty Research Offices
- Ensure PGR students consider sustainability-issues in relation to their research practices

**4) Co-curriculum.** To work in partnership with the Students' Union, where appropriate, to ensure that students at any stage of their education, and with any background and interest can engage with sustainability through co-curriculum opportunities

*Objectives:*

- Ensure that that students are aware of the university's sustainability commitments and provided with support to improve their own sustainability practices through a formal induction process
- Embed sustainability activities into the personal development weeks
- Run an annual 'Green Week' engaging staff and students in a range of sustainability-related activities
- Provide support for student sustainability-related societies (e.g. Student Eats, Think:Green)
- Provide support for student-led projects (e.g. the sustainable student bungalow)
- Provide support for the careers service in embedding sustainability considerations in their work
- Provide support for enterprise initiatives embedding sustainability considerations into their activities
- Develop 'green themes' aligned with other co-curriculum events (such as the World Festival, Money Week)
- Provide support to the Students' Union in developing sustainability initiatives, including sustainability support for the SU environmental representative
- Develop sustainability activities associated with the development strand of the Distinctive Keele Curriculum

**5) Staff development.** To enhance the capacity for all staff to embed sustainability in their teaching activities through training and support.

*Objectives:*

- Ensure that staff are aware of the university's sustainability commitments and provided with support to improve their own sustainability practices in relation to their personal and professional roles through a formal induction process
- Embed training on Education for Sustainable Development in the Teaching and Learning in Higher Education Programme for all new academic staff
- Provide opportunities for staff to receive funding to develop sustainability-related teaching innovations
- Deliver training on ESD through the Learning and Professional Development Centre workshop programme
- Provide bespoke training to individuals and groups when required, and ensure staff are aware of this available support
- Develop online training for ESD
- Provide web-based resources aimed at supporting staff embed sustainability in their teaching

- Assess every three years, staff attitudes towards sustainability and training requirements, and make results publicly available

**6) External engagement.** To enhance Keele's external reputation for Education for Sustainability.

*Objectives:*

- Encourage participation of Keele staff in external sustainability-related organisations (such as EAUC, local groups, partnerships, government, NUS, HEA)
- Gain recognition for Green:Keele activities through sustainability-related awards and league tables
- Participate in generic and discipline-related sustainability organisations where appropriate (eg. The United Nations Principles of Responsible Management Education (PRiME), Sustainability in Higher Education Developers network)
- Work in partnership with Keele's Marketing and Publicity units to maximise external profile in Education for Sustainability
- Disseminate externally Green:Keele activities through conference, papers, reports and workshops
- Disseminate Green:Keele activities through the Green:Keele website, social media and video with support from Marketing

**7) Communication.** To create a culture of sustainability through the communication of university sustainability activities to all university stakeholders.

*Objectives:*

- Produce an annual sustainability report covering all areas of Keele's sustainability activities
- Produce a Green:Keele newsletter three times a year covering all areas of Keele's sustainability initiatives, circulated to all university stakeholders
- Hold a twice yearly sustainability forum for staff and students
- Maintain a physical noticeboard of sustainability-related announcements

**8) Links to Estates.** To foster a two-way relationship between the University Estate and the curriculum and student experience, ensuring the full learning potential from the University Estate and using learning to support Estates developments.

*Objectives:*

- Ensure that the environment in which staff and students live and work aligns with the University's sustainability commitment and educational messages, appreciating the role of the estate as another form of education for sustainability, through the 'hidden curriculum'
- Use Green Impact or other Estates initiatives to foster Education for Sustainability work
- Ensure student projects using the estate are appropriately supported by estates and academic staff and that such projects feed back into Estates developments
- Support student-facing activities around students' use of the estate
- Link work placement opportunities in the curriculum with sustainability aspects of Estates and Grounds operations

**9) Links to the Sustainability Hub.** To ensure that EFS work is linked effectively to the work of the Sustainability Hub.

*Objectives:*

- Ensure that Education for Sustainability opportunities for staff and students are effectively marketed and sign-posted through the Hub
- Link work placement and volunteering opportunities with the community and outreach work of the Sustainability Hub

**10) Links to Research.** To ensure that sustainability is integrated into research, through the way that research is carried out and through research *for* sustainability.

*Objectives:*

- Ensure a vibrant sustainability research culture, in which EfS research is also supported
- Maximise the use of sustainability developments on the University campus as a vehicle for research by staff and students, and ensure research feeds into these Estates developments
- Ensure sustainability considerations are embedded in how research is carried out, supported by training and support structures and processes
- Ensure that sustainability-related research underpins the embedding of sustainability in the curriculum and wider student experience

**11) Governance of Education for Sustainability.** To ensure that EfS work is fully integrated into the systems of University governance.

*Objectives:*

- Establish and maintain an Education for Sustainability steering group that meets twice a year
- Ensure clear reporting lines of the Education for Sustainability steering group through ULTC and ESSG, and that progress is reported formally at higher levels
- Ensure that EfS is integrated as appropriate into University-level strategies, for example the University's Learning and Teaching strategy, and over-arching strategic plan
- Embed EfS considerations in appropriate Quality Assurance processes reflecting sustainability as an institutional priority
- Ensure EfS is considered annually by School Learning and Teaching Committees
- Ensure adequate resourcing to ensure the continued success of EfS work

**12) Monitoring and evaluation.** To regularly monitor and evaluate the impacts of the EfS work, and to make the results of such evaluation publicly accessible.

*Objectives:*

- To carry out an internal survey of student attitudes towards sustainability every three years
- To maximise the response rates to external sustainability-related surveys
- To carry out an audit of sustainability in the curriculum every three years
- To carry out an audit of staff attitudes towards sustainability every three years
- To collate annually the Education for Sustainability activity being carried out at Keele through the annual Sustainability Report

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*11<sup>th</sup> November 2014*