***Report to ULTC on Education for Sustainability activity 2015-16***

1. ***Background***

The overall approach to Education for Sustainability at Keele is one of integration, making sustainability part of the activities and operations of the university, with the aim of making sustainability a key part of the experience for all of our students at Keele.

In relation to the education element of Keele’s sustainability activity it has been agreed with the Vice Chancellor that these activities should encompass more than an ‘environmental’ sustainability focus, as expressed in the University’s strategic plan. Therefore the QAA’s (2014) definition of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) is used, which shows that ESD 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. It should be noted that during this time a significant reduction in the available staff resource for this activity has been seen, with the departure of the three part-time (2 x 0.4 and 1 x 0.8 FTE) Sustainability Project Officers. Agreement has been given by the Budget and Resources Group for replacement staffing, which is currently being progressed.

1. ***2015/16 Activity***

Some highlights of Education for Sustainability activity during 2015/16 are given below:

1. *Green Gown Awards*

A major achievement in 2015/16 is to have been shortlisted for four awards in the sector’s high profile ‘Green Gown’ Awards which celebrate sustainability progress in the higher and further education sector. The shortlisted awards are:

Sustainability Champion – Staff: Dave Emley, for Dave’s 40 years of enhancing the biodiversity of the university campus and the dissemination of this to staff, students and visitors at Keele

Sustainability Champion – Student: Ulrich Pohanka (BSc Environment & Sustainability); for his work leading student sustainability initiatives including the successful local and organic veg box scheme, and the awarding of the World Student Environmental Summit annual conference to Keele

Learning and skills: ‘The Trojan Mouse of Sustainability: ‘Dropping’ sustainability into education’ – which outlines our integrative approach to education for sustainability through many different entry points (or ‘mouse holes’!).

Carbon reduction*:* For Keele’s continued work in reducing carbon through a range of different Estates-based initiatives

1. *Be More...*

As part of the Be More weeks four new sustainability-related activities were held, including ‘Be More Sherlock’ – a sustainability-themed murder mystery at the Sustainability Hub; Be More Wild and Free – a foraging workshop around the University Campus; Be More Womble – a litter pick activity; Be More Green – a workshop looking at how individual choices affect a person’s carbon footprinting, using the ‘How Bad are Bananas’ game, an interactive carbon footprinting game purchased this year for sustainability outreach activities.

1. *World Student Environmental Summit*

Keele will be hosting (jointly with Sussex University) the annual World Student Environmental Summit in July 2016. This is the first year that this will be held in the UK, and is an entirely student-run organisation and student-led event. The Summit will see around 100 delegates from Universities from around the world take part in five days of workshops aimed at inspiring a new generation of sustainability-and globally-literate future leaders from across the globe

1. *Keele Food Co-operative ‘veg bag’ scheme*

In November 2014 a student-led group created, organised and delivered a ‘Veg- and Fruit Bag’ initiative (the Keele Food co-op), providing organic food to staff, students and the Keele village community. Over this time they have sold 1114 bags of vegetables and 1150 bags of fruit, to 190 unique staff and student customers, increasing awareness of food and sustainability issues in the process.

1. *‘Dissertations for Good’*

Dissertations for Good is a National Union of Students scheme which aims to partner students with organisations to collaborate on dissertations into economic, social and environmental sustainability. As a small pilot, two of our environmental undergraduate programmes signed up to this scheme. Although there was no uptake from students this year, this scheme could provide a useful scheme for the University to consider to increase engagement with socially valuable undergraduate research projects. Currently several students do carry out dissertation projects which directly contribute to the sustainability activities of the university, for example a student calculated the carbon footprint of international travel of students, which was presented to the Environmental Manager in Estates. However the Dissertations for Good scheme provides the framework for students to carry out meaningful research with a range of external partner organisations.

1. *Green Week*

The University’s annual Green Week took place in March 2016. Activities included ‘green-themed’ talks, films, volunteering, quizzes, and food and drink, all aimed at increasing awareness of sustainability issues

1. *‘Green’ induction*

In 2015/16 a concerted effort was made to embed sustainability into the induction process. This was achieved through inclusion of a ‘Green Zone’ at the welcome festival, a page on Keele’s sustainability ethos incorporated into the Welcome Guide, a range of sustainability-themed welcome activities, advice on sustainability issues available through stalls for off-campus students, and incorporation of sustainability-activities into the Halls Life project.

1. *Website and staff development*

The Green:Keele website ([www.keele.ac.uk/greenkeele](http://www.keele.ac.uk/greenkeele)) includes a series of dedicated Education for Sustainability pages which include resources aimed at supporting staff to embed sustainability into their teaching activities. In addition to this Sustainability continues to be a core session in the Teaching and Learning in Higher Education programme, and features as workshops in the Learning and Professional Development centre programme of workshops, as well as an online course on ‘[Embedding Sustainability in Your Teaching: an Introduction to Higher Education for Sustainable Development](http://keele.learningpool.com/course/view.php?id=95)’ through the online Learning Pool.

1. *Study abroad and pre-sessional language inclusion*

In 2015/16 Sustainability considerations were embedded into the ‘Intercultural Communications modules for students studying abroad and as a core session in the pre-sessional English language course.

1. *Independent subject developments*

Sustainability is an area which is being driven independently by several subjects within the University. Medicine are taking part in a National project exploring sustainability in Medicine education, and the sustainability developments in the Chemistry programme have been identified by the National Union of Students for one of the their 26 case studies of sustainability linkages with different disciplines

1. *Sustainability electives*

There are several sustainability-focussed free standing electives available to students including: Greening Business – employability and sustainability; Global Warming or a new ice age; and Environmental Ethics. Module evaluations have shown that modules can be very effective in raising awareness of sustainability issues. Approaches to increase uptake on these modules could be explored.

1. **Future developments**

With the decrease in staff resource in 2015-16 progress in developing work in the curriculum where there are clear gaps in sustainability provision has been slow, nor has the education for sustainability team been successful in working with Marketing to improve the communication of sustainability activities on the estate. However, the last few years have seen a significant increase in interest in embedding sustainability within the curriculum, with several pockets of good practice developing. It is timely therefore to bring together those individuals and teams working in this area, to create both a clearer community of education for sustainability practitioners (and researchers?) and to celebrate the successes made, and through this drive further activity. This provides the perfect opportunity to work closely with the LPDC in developing a teaching and learning event linked to a special issue of JADE.

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