

Education: Environment and Climate Emergency (Ed: E&CE)

ongoing activities and action plan 2023-24

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Accountability and reporting

This action plan aims to address issues outlined in the E&CE white paper (2019) and the E&CE policy statement paper:

[https://www.exeter.ac.uk/media/universityofexeter/campuservices/sustainability/docs/Environment and Climate Emergency Policy Statement.pdf](https://www.exeter.ac.uk/media/universityofexeter/campuservices/sustainability/docs/Environment%20and%20Climate%20Emergency%20Policy%20Statement.pdf)

This action plan will inform the Academic Climate Taskforce who will work alongside the Professional Services Task Force, and report to the Carbon Net Zero Delivery Group and the E&CE Board. The E&CE Board have overall accountability for progress and delivery of Carbon Net Zero and Environmental Net Gain targets.

Partnership

This action plan has been developed in partnership with the sustainability aspect of the transformative education project (sustainability, inclusivity, racial and social justice)

<https://www.exeter.ac.uk/about/vision/successforall/transformativeducation/>

Themes – Education and Sustainability

There are four themes under which the actions and activities for education and sustainability are grouped: 1) curriculum; 2) employability and student success; 3) engagement; 4) operations.

1. Curriculum

Strategic aims:

- *To raise the profile of sustainability across our education offerings*
- *To provide accessible and inclusive learning opportunities to learn about the Environment and Climate Emergency*

Actions:

- **Graduate Business Partner (GBP):**
To recruit a graduate business partner on a 1 year 100% FTE contract. The role will support the Responsible Futures (RF) and the Curriculum Mapping (CM) initiatives. Currently the RF and CM are managed and supported in an unsustainable manner which prevails on the good nature of staff. To ensure the success of these initiatives it is important to focus staff resource to manage and support these. The role will be managed by the ACT education advocates.
- **Travel Emissions:**
 - Educational field trips “task and finish” group established:
 - Chair Ewan Woodley: E.J.Woodley@exeter.ac.uk
 - Develop approach for existing benchmarking - how they can inform education decisions
 - Develop a tool kit/guidelines to support change
 - deliver draft ethic of practice in September 2023

- **Responsible Futures:**
 - Whole institution change programme and accreditation mark for universities and their student unions to embed sustainability across all aspects of student learning. The accreditation criteria encourage partnership working for sustainability between students and staff at the university and are assessed through a student-led audit. They cover all aspects of what is required to make sustainability core to university life. They require not only evidence of sustainability in the curriculum, but also that sustainability is promoted at all levels of the university, through, e.g., (i) support from senior individuals and in the strategy of the university and students' unions; (ii) student and staff feedback; (iii) regular curriculum auditing; (iv) staff development opportunities; and (v) appropriate staffing levels and student internship and employability opportunities.
 - Rollout of Responsible futures: <https://www.sos-uk.org/project/responsible-futures>
Cost implication: £5000 inc VAT per year. Plus funding for student internships and incentives to support accreditation objectives. **Cost implication: circa £12,000 per year.**
 - Establish recommendations for programme/module specification through student surveys and focus groups
 - Encourage co-creation of sustainability learning content and events with students
 - Encourage student involvement in other Environment and Climate Emergency work
 - Add student voice on sustainability into professional development workshops through adopting “teach the teacher” approaches, e.g., through continued use of student facilitators in the Transformative Education for Sustainable Development workshops
 - Incorporate sustainability into QA and student feedback processes (programme/module review, mid-module review, one-to-ones, dedicated sessions, SSLCs, accelerate)
 - Enhance the TQA with reference to sustainability

- **Curriculum Mapping:**
 - Mapping the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) teaching and learning approaches across the formal curriculum through a student-led mapping exercise.
 - Pilot study prior to September 2023
 - ESE: Geography, Business School, Renewable Energy
 - HLS: Neuroscience, Clinical Psychology
 - HASS: Politics, Modern Languages and Cultures
 - Rollout – 2023-2034 academic year. Supported via SOS curriculum mapping subscription <https://www.sos-uk.org/project/sdg-global-goals-curriculum-mapping>
 - Intended to be supported through SCP roles – one per department at the university.

- **Development of Online Learning Resources:**
 - ‘Sulitest’ (<https://www.sulitest.org/>) Sustainable Literacy Test:
 - Carbon literacy modules
<http://www.marshallacm.co.uk/ClientScorm/Exeter/CarbonLiteracy/v2/story.html>
 - Environment and Climate Emergency Induction: Learnupon (plans to further develop and make mandatory) <https://exeter.learnupon.com/catalog/courses/1280107>
 - Learnupon access for UG/PGR students Up to 3,000 accounts - £5,000 per annum
 - [SDG podcasts](#)

- University of Exeter FutureLearn MOOCs on sustainability (access may be lost in 2023 owing to the university changing its relationship with the FutureLearn platform):
 - [Understanding Gender Inequality](#)
 - [Technology Metals for a Green Future](#)
 - [Climate Change: Solutions](#)
 - [Grand Challenges: Food for Thought](#)
 - [Transforming Energy Systems: Why Governance Matters](#)
 - [Future Food: Sustainable Food Systems for the 21st Century](#)
 - [Invisible Worlds: Understanding the Natural Environment](#)
 - [Climate Change: The Science](#)
 - [Tipping Points: Climate change and society](#)
 - [Valuing Nature](#)
- **Teaching Excellence Action Plan TEAP** – include a focus on the three pillars of transformative education: Inclusive Education, Racial and Social Justice, Sustainability
 - Propose that all programmes have at least 1 module overtly focused on environmental sustainability
 - ELE badging (see above activity of curriculum mapping)
- **NSS survey data:** B16. Environmental sustainability
 - Analyse survey data from 2023 NSS survey
 - Report back to ACT on insights from this

Ongoing activities

- Linking Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) within the curriculum (SDG teach in), including programme-based discussions of how to do this
- Promote Climate Companion Packs and Climate Literacy Modules
- Promote climate-related taught programmes and to explore additional programmes that can be offered ‘with proficiency in Sustainability’. E.g. Flexible Combined Honours (Sustainability pathway)
- Future17 <https://www.exeter.ac.uk/about/transforming-education/without-borders/future17/>
- Planetary health: <https://www.exeter.ac.uk/study/summer/exetersummit2021/planetaryhealth/>
- Grand challenges: <https://www.exeter.ac.uk/students/grandchallenges/>
- Green consultants: 2 curricular based modules

2. Employability and Student Success

Strategic aims:

- *To raise the profile of the E&CE agenda in measures of student success and employability*
- *To develop ways to effectively measure the impact of our work*

Actions:

- **Scale up the green consultants initiative:**
 - cost implication
- **Grand challenges:**
 - Incorporate debate training in the Grand Challenges activities (staff and students)
 - Develop student
- **Funded student placements:**
 - For funding from the E&CE budget we need to develop business plans stating the cost and resource requirements, what it'll be spent on and what benefits will be realised
 - Are we opening this up to ACT as a whole?

Ongoing activities

- Grand challenges
- There is a huge range of activities lead by the Student Employability and Academic Success (SEAS) team. E.g. Green consultants <https://www.exeter.ac.uk/careers/employability-schemes/greenconsultants/>
- [‘Dip, Dabble, Dive and Thrive’ framework](#) in SEAS
- Leading work in SEAS on mapping provision against SDG's and embedding sustainability into [Create Your Future](#)
- [The Exeter Award Sustainability Theme](#)
- [Future17](#)
- [Grand challenges](#)
- [Green Consultants](#)
- [Career mentor scheme](#)
- Student and graduate jobs in sustainability via [Handshake](#)

3. Student engagement

Strategic aim:

- *To develop an effective approach for student engagement for the E&CE agenda*

Actions:

- **Engage with SOS-UK sustainability mapping programme** to audit all modules of taught programmes (see above under curriculum)
- **SSLC:**
 - Running Sustainability agenda item in SSLC meetings
 - Training for SSLC committee members
 - Sustainability SSLC rep
 - Termly forum for SSLC sustainability reps
- **Development of a whole-university approach to student engagement:**
 - via an app or digital solution
 - Student Societies
 - Sustainability Alliance re-launch and engagement
 - Student advocates for change
 - Induction development activities for showcasing sustainability at Exeter

- **Showcase student involvement via conference in summer term:**
 - links to Climate EXPO events
- **Establish a student initiative fund (placements, projects)**

4. Operations

Strategic aim:

- *To support the delivery of our education priority actions in the curriculum, employability & student success, and student engagement*

Actions:

- **Policy review** for review of sustainability implications arising from education policies (e.g. data requirements, 24 access policies, internationalization)
- **Enhance data granularity** to support benchmarking and decision making
- **Extend membership and scope of Education Thematic Forum**
- **Develop links** to enable curriculum, employability and student engagement with civic initiatives within place-based contexts (e.g. Exeter, Falmouth and county-based climate emergency teams)
- **Develop the ethos of a “civic university”** with county scale engagement e.g. Devon climate emergency, Cornwall CC etc

Ongoing activities:

- E&CE task force
 - Advocates for Education
 - Ed Exec and its role in the Environment & Climate Emergency (E&CE)
 - Carbon scorecards for Education and Colleges
- Education thematic forum (additional members welcome)
- Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) Impacts from graduate outcomes
- Digital and VR alternatives
 - Additional benefits beyond sustainability: Equality Diversity and Inclusion (EDI), cost savings

Appendices

Appendix A: Completed actions

- Establish an education incubator theme for sustainability (actioned academic year 2022-23)

- Surveys: Include optional Sustainability questions in NSS (actioned for NSS 2023)
 - <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/media/703530d2-1c8f-48fc-a62d-23b278b8b799/nss-2021-core-questionnaire-optional-banks.pdf>
 - B16. Environmental sustainability
 - 1. My institution encourages good environmental practice.
 - 2. My course has encouraged me to think about environmental sustainability.
 - 3. I have had opportunities to take part in activities supporting environmental sustainability.