



The SDG Accord

The University and College Sector's Collective Response to the Global Goals

Integration of SDGs in

- Institutional governance/strategic level
- SDGs in research
- SDGs in campus operations
- SDGs in curriculum development
- SDGs in student engagement activities
- SDGs into community activities
- SDGs at a whole-institution level

Focus on

- Goal 1 - No poverty
- Goal 2 - Zero hunger
- Goal 3 - Good health and wellbeing
- Goal 4 - Quality education
- Goal 5 - Gender equality
- Goal 6 - Clean water and sanitation
- Goal 7 - Affordable and clean energy
- Goal 8 - Decent work and economic growth
- Goal 9 - Industry, innovation and infrastructure
- Goal 10 - Reduced inequalities
- Goal 11 - Sustainable cities and communities
- Goal 12 - Responsible consumption and production
- Goal 13 - Climate action
- Goal 14 - Life below water
- Goal 15 - Life on land
- Goal 16 - Peace, justice and strong institutions
- Goal 17 - Partnerships for the goals

SDG Accord Reporting 2021 CASE STUDY

Sustainability in Action: an online course introducing the SDGs

Sustainability in Action is a short course designed by students for student at the University of Liverpool to introduce the UN's SDGs. It formed a component part of a revised 2020/21 [Foundation Week](#) of online activities open to new and returning students (49,000) designed to support students to make connections, create friendships and embrace new opportunities. As a collaborative project between the University's [Careers and Employability](#) and [Centre for Innovation in Education](#), the project started with the recruitment of a small team of student interns to develop the course over six weeks in the summer of 2020 ensuring we had an active student voice in the course development.

The course was designed to be asynchronous, sit within the University's VLE, and be flexible, interactive and fun. The interns developed the course content with input from academic and professional services staff, city region partners and online sources. By splitting the seventeen SDGs in to five bite size chunks – the '5 Ps' of Prosperity, Peace, People, Planet and Partnerships - we could simplify the learning experience. Each chunk was different and engaged the students in a different task; self-assessment quizzes, a virtual escape room (framed as a beach clean), discussion forums and researching the sustainability policies of large companies. Students developed awareness of the SDGs, reflected on their lifestyle choices, and developed employability, research and digital fluency skills. Additional resources for further opportunities to engage with sustainable development whilst at the University were presented. Students had their participation recognised by being awarded [HEAR accreditation](#).

Student feedback:

"I learned so much from this course...I will be sharing my learned experiences with many friends and family!"

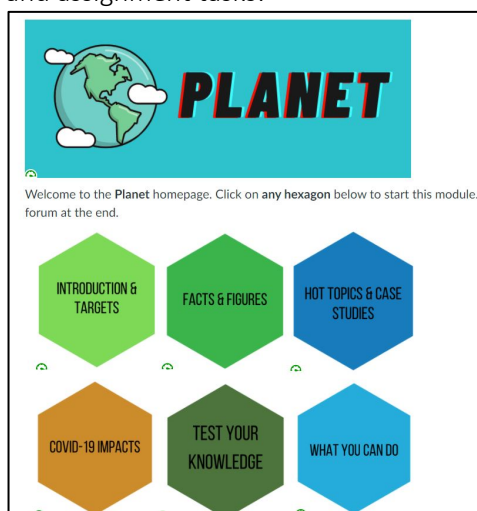
"Amazing!!!! The perfect mix of information, interactive activities and assessment."

BARRIERS

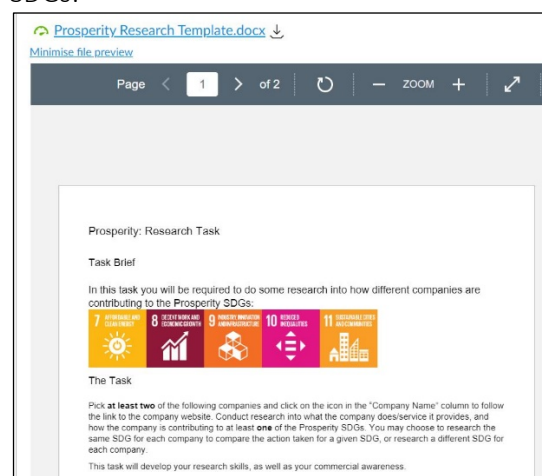
No significant barriers in the course development, but the VLE (Canvas) struggled with so many users (49,000) in a single course – this caused problems extracting learner analytics as the course was delivered. This technical challenge wasn't overcome, but some terminal student user and assessment data was successfully extracted for course evaluation.

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Screenshot of a sample section illustrating how the interns designed the course content, learning activities and assignment tasks:



An example of the one of the course assignments – research task that required students to explore how different companies and organisations support the SDGs:



CONCLUSIONS

Project managing the student interns through the course design process did require regular staff input and careful facilitation. The interns were provided with introductory support on the SDGs, course design, learning activity design, digital content creation and accessibility in online environments. Overall, the process was hugely rewarding for all involved and many of the interns have used this experience to gain careers in sustainable development.

The course was very successful providing all interested students with an introduction to the SDGs. Student engagement was greater than originally anticipated for a voluntary week long course:

- 14,000+ students engaged at least once with the content.
- 3000+ discussion forum posts.
- 5000+ self-assessment quiz submissions.
- 700+ students completed all assignment tasks and requested HEAR accreditation.
- 94% of students enjoyed the course.
- Student continued to engage with the discussion forums months after the foundation week!

Academic staff with expertise in specific SDGs and external partners were very supportive of the project. The success of the course has resulted in a positive view of student co-creation projects and has acted as a catalyst for the planning of additional opportunities for students to engage with the SDGs and education for sustainable development – supporting university's [sustainability strategy objectives](#).