

UWE, Bristol Learning and Skills 'Raising the Baseline'

About the project

Summary

This project delivered a range of staff development initiatives, student consultation activities and curriculum development projects to raise the baseline standard and to improve consistency of delivery of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) UWE Bristol.

Project partners

This was a collaborative involving academic, professional and service staff and our student body.

The results

The problem

The impetus for this project was a desire to engage a larger number of staff across the institution in delivering ESD to enable us to progress towards our goal of delivering a coherent and comprehensive offer of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) across the formal, informal and extra curriculum discipline of study.

The approach

This project has taken a systematic, consultative and target-led approach to engaging with staff and students to enhance our ESD provision.

Our goals

To increase the number of staff including ESD in teaching and learning beyond our 'circle of the committed'.

To raise the baseline level and scope of ESD provision across UWE to incorporate all aspects of sustainability.

To increase the sense of staff ownership in contributing to UWE's sustainability goals.

To develop KPIs to enable monitoring of progress towards institutional goals.

Obstacles and solutions

Obstacle

- A need to expand staff conceptions about the scope of sustainability
- A need to grow staff confidence in relation to sustainability engagement
- A need for more explicit data on sustainability content in our curriculum

Solution

- Simple printed resources and face-to-face awareness raising activities
- Individual discipline-specific support
- Inclusion of ESD as a focused question in annual monitoring processes



Profile

- HEI
- 27,250 students (includes full and part time students)
- 3,380 staff
- Urban

Performance and results

This project has clear direct benefits to the institution, specifically it:

- Enables us to demonstrate the institutional scale and reach of our ESD engagement and impact;
- Facilitates greater coordination across the institution which has led to more efficient use of resources for ESD, and indirectly for other cross-institution agenda and activities;
- Enables to our institutional ISO14001 accreditation to include our curriculum; and,
- Enables us to ensure that we are providing the most holistic range of opportunities for students to develop in line with ESD knowledge, attitudes and attributes.

The future

Lessons learned

- Combining top-down regulatory approach with a people-oriented individual approach is effective
- Consistency of message is critical
- Actions must match words
- Keep it simple and make it easy and fun!

Sharing your project

UWE's ESD work has been shared at many national and international conferences over the past two years. Further, there are a number of journal and less formal publications which can be found via the UWE Research Repository. UWE staff have delivered invited staff development sessions at other UK HEIs and been consulted on ESD developments with the HE sector more generally, including as part of the recent development of both the QAA-HEA ESD Guidance and the HEFCE Sustainable Development Framework. Information on our ESD can be found on the UWE website.

What has it meant to your institution to be a Green Gown Award finalist?

Being a Green Gown Award finalist provides external verification that the work we are doing is innovative and sector-leading.

Further information

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