



Green Gown
Awards 2016



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Finalist's case study

University of Brighton

Student Engagement

c-change: Creating a sea change at the University of Brighton

About the project

Summary

c-change is our bespoke carbon reduction campaign, especially designed to engage, inspire and support University of Brighton staff and students to cut carbon, both whilst on campus and in their personal lives too.

The c-change campaign uses fun and innovative ways of engaging with students, co-designing projects with students, based upon in-depth research (to ensure a full understanding of student behaviours and attitudes) often undertaken by students as part of their final year dissertations.

Project partners

The c-change campaign works across all its departments and schools to embed sustainability, and runs several initiatives in collaboration with the Accommodation and Hospitality Services department, and the Students' Union. External project partners who are involved in events and projects throughout the year include Brighton and Hove City Council, the Brighton & Hove Food Partnership, Sustrans and local charity 'Now!'.

The results

The problem

The university is a multi-site university with campuses stretching across Brighton, Eastbourne and Hastings. One of the key challenges we face is engaging with staff and students across all campuses.

The approach

The c-change campaign is very successful in engaging with staff and students across all 5 of our campuses, through interactive, face to face engagement, encouraging staff and students to reduce their carbon emissions and consider sustainability in their working lives. We always ensure that we visit all campuses with our face-to-face 'roadshows', and make good use of social media and internal communications channels to reach students through e-communications in addition to this. A particular focus is given to engaging new students in their first year – through Freshers week activities, course inductions, and highly visible competitions in halls of residences – to ensure that students have a high level of awareness of the campaign and our key messages, throughout their time as a student here.



Profile

- Multi-site urban HEI
- 25,000 students (includes full and part time students)
- 3,500 staff
- 5 campuses over 3 cities/towns

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Scottish Funding Council
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Our goals

Ambitious sustainability goals include cutting carbon emissions by 50%, and achieving a 75% recycling rate.

Obstacles and solutions

Obstacle	Solution
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engaging with students and staff across five individual campuses. Challenging and changing 'business as usual' behavior. Understanding what will motivate students to adopt more sustainable behaviours, and make them want to engage with our campaign. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Having an engaging and recognisable campaign is a great tool which fosters engagement from staff and students and spans all the campuses. Use of social media and e-communications also help with this. Using fun activities, competitions and challenges, including offering rewards and prizes to those adopting sustainable behaviours. Use of 'social marketing' practices (including surveys and focus groups) to get an understanding of students attitudes and behaviours around sustainability, including the use of students undertaking dissertations to carry these out.

Performance and results

This year, a student's dissertation research showed excellent engagement levels among our students, finding that 69% of students across all campuses are aware of the c-change campaign, with 79% aware at Moulsecoomb, the largest campus. Most importantly, 69% of all students said the campaign had had some influence in changing their behaviours. Evaluation of standalone projects also shows excellent results in c-change initiatives of bringing about behaviour change. For example, evaluation of our halls recycling competition found 0% of halls residents recycling 'nothing', and 93% recycling either 'everything' or 'a lot', compared to 4%, and 83% respectively in 2014-15 (pilot year), and 10% and 61% in 2013-14 (before launch).

The future

Lessons learned

- The importance of undertaking research to better understand our target audiences attitudes and behaviours.
- The importance of evaluating our projects so we can see the effect they are having, and make improvements.
- Incentivising sustainable behaviours through competitions and rewards is an effective way of engaging students.

Sharing your project

The Environment Team work closely with our Marketing and Communications department to disseminate, encourage involvement, raise awareness and share the success of our projects within the university community, as



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well as the local press. We have also shared the findings of our more successful campaigns, such as the halls recycling competition, within the EAUC network, with our neighbouring university, and with our local council.

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

Sustainability is, and will continue to be, a core value of the University of Brighton and as such a consideration in all we do. Being a finalist recognises the commitment and continuing success of our students and staff in reducing our carbon emissions from all areas of the university.

Further information

Website: www.brighton.ac.uk/sustainability

Facebook: [unibrightonchange](https://www.facebook.com/unibrightonchange)

Twitter: [@_cchange_](https://twitter.com/_cchange_)