



Finalist's case study



Nottingham Trent University Employability category Future-proof Your Career



Profile

- Higher Education
- 28,000 students (full & part time students)
- 3000 staff
- Urban

About the project

Summary

Encouraging students at Nottingham Business School (NBS/NTU) to appreciate that an understanding of sustainability in its broadest sense, will aid their employability. Starting with level 6, we introduced the core 'Leadership & Employability' (L&E) module in 12/13 across all degrees. L&E incorporates personalised Continuing Professional Development (CPD) activity, plus reflection on their whole degree (including work-based learning) and their capacity to be a Responsible Leader in the future. (Also at level 7 since 14/15.)

Project partners

NTU's Green Academy, The Hive (NTU's Centre for Enterprise & Entrepreneurship) and the Employability Team. Over the 5 years, external partners have included Nottingham City Homes, Nottingham Energy Partnership, Investors in the Environment, Nottingham City Council and Nottingham Post.

The results

The problem

To ensure NBS graduates are employable, understand sustainability and develop into responsible leaders.

The approach

Since 12/13, all NBS final year undergraduates have had to assess themselves against NTU/NBS Graduate Attributes (including Global Citizenship and Sustainability), identify personal gaps, set up personal development plans and carry out relevant CPD to fill the gaps. A wide range of CPD is available and includes NTU's Sustainability in Practice Certificate, volunteering, Enactus and AIESEC. Level 7 now have equivalent module.

Our goals

To help our students to be more self-aware and develop a deeper understanding of issues relating to sustainability and responsible leadership. Enable them to transition more successfully into their future careers.

Obstacles and solutions

Student resistance to reflection	Personal & Professional Development modules now in levels 4 & 5 too
'What has sustainability to do with me?'	Needs to be seen as 'Business as usual' – embed throughout
Huge unwieldy module (1200 in 12/13)	L&E now split into 8 versions, tailored by discipline



Green Gown
Awards 2017



Dissemination
supported by:



Finalist's case study



Performance and results

According to the 2017 DLHE survey, in 2015/16 'Graduate Prospects' of NBS graduates was at almost 87%, an increase from 81% in 2014/15, having been at 71% three years earlier.

Anecdotally, students have found themselves in a strong position at interview, both from being self-aware (and therefore understanding their own strengths and weaknesses), and because they were able to discuss issues relating to sustainability and responsible leadership.

The future

Lessons learned

You need to start early (level 4) and ensure students (and staff!) understand that the degree alone is no longer enough. The messages relating to employability and sustainability (in its broadest sense) need to be embedded throughout (at undergraduate and postgraduate levels), and need to be all pervasive.

Top 3 learnings from implementing your project

- 1 Be patient - we have found that results take time to materialise
- 2 Be persistent - colleagues and students may find these activities difficult and may resist
- 3 Seek synergy - linking employability to sustainability allows for efficiencies

Sharing your project

- Presented at various conferences internally and externally, as well as the Chartered Institute of Management partner day at London Metropolitan University (2014).
- Contributed to 3 publications, e.g. chapter on 'Sustainability & Employability' in the 2nd edition of 'The Business Student's Guide to Sustainable Management' (2017).
- Worked closely with counterparts in all NTU schools and added a case study and supporting materials to the NTU Employability (intranet) site, to assist NTU colleagues to develop their own synoptic assessment.
- Published blog articles (aimed at students and beyond) and NBS Link magazine articles.

As a consequence of NTU's Strategic Plan, the whole university is undergoing Curriculum Refresh. One outcome is that many of NBS's initiatives relating to employability, sustainability and personalisation are being extended throughout the institution.

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

This is further recognition that NBS and NTU are travelling in the right direction. We have added the news to this year's 'Leadership & Employability' module handbooks, which acts as a great endorsement. See also article on [NTU website](#).

Further information

Fiona Winfield, NBS School Employability Manager

fiona.winfield@ntu.ac.uk; 0115 848 4350; <https://www.linkedin.com/in/fionawinfield/>

NTU website: <https://www.ntu.ac.uk/> NTU Sustainability: <https://www4.ntu.ac.uk/sustainability/index.html>

NBS Employability Twitter: @NTUYouFirstNBS NTU's SDG blog: <https://ntu-sdgs.blog/blog/>