



Green Gown
Awards 2013

Finalist's case study

Dissemination supported by:



Anglia Ruskin University Courses MSc Sustainability

Section1 About the project

Summary

This interdisciplinary MSc aims to develop students who become catalysts of change towards more sustainable living and doing business. Students *learn* through participation in face-to-face and e-learning classes; *experience* the visionary Eden Project and *practice* in a supported work placement.

Project partners

This course is a unique partnership between ARU, Eden Project and Change Agents UK. This MSc utilises the academic and research expertise of the GSI, the transformative ideas and experience of Eden Project and employment and skills development opportunities offered by Change Agents *in order to effect positive change in our society.*

Section2 The results

The problem

There are a number of MSc courses about sustainability, almost all have their origins within a single academic discipline or perspective. In order to gain a deep understanding of the interrelationships, pressures and implications of sustainability and to use this understanding to encourage positive changes it is essential to step outside this narrow focus.

The approach

The course is delivered as a 'learning journey' which begins through students' gaining a critical understanding of the conceptual frameworks of sustainability, how these can be applied to key sustainability challenges the metrics used for measuring and monitoring them. It moves on to consider where the points of intervention for change occur, the actions which can create change and critically, the skills required to facilitate these changes. During the work placement students gain an opportunity to practice these skills and reflect on the outcomes of this experience.

Staff from across ARU and Eden Project, plus external 'guests' contribute to face-to-face workshops in Cambridge and Cornwall. Change Agents provide specific employability skills, training support and manage the work placement. Reflective learning and formative feedback allows students to analyse their strengths and weaknesses and ensure they develop a range of employability skills.

Our goals

We designed the curriculum to achieve four key objectives;

Global
Sustain
ability
Institute

eden project

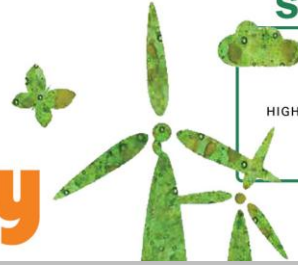
CHANGE
AGENTS
UK
Working and learning for a
sustainable future

Profile

- HEI
- 31,000 students (full and part time students)
- 4000 staff
- Campuses in Cambridge, Chelmsford and Peterborough

www.greengownawards.org.uk

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Finalist's case study

- engage students with a wide range of topics and issues supported by experts and resources from diverse backgrounds,
- use a systems approach to help students gain a critical understanding of the interactions between different components of sustainability,
- make explicit the academic and co-curricular skills that enable students to become effective agents for change,
- provide an opportunity for students to demonstrate their competence as change agents through work experience.

Obstacles and solutions

Operating a multidisciplinary course with strong links between modules, which may be in different Faculties	Create Strong Course level Learning Outcomes which are mapped through to individual modules
Accepting students from a wide range of backgrounds	Providing support to ensure students are able to engage with the multidisciplinary nature of the course
Delivery by 3 partners in Cambridge and Cornwall plus online learning	A dedicated Course Director to ensure coherence and pastoral care
Ensure students gain the 'Skills for Change' alongside their academic learning	Specific skills mapping across modules and a work placement to evaluate their skills development

Performance and results

We have recruited a group of students from a range of backgrounds who intend to return to the workplace as catalysts of change. There has been significant interest from within Anglia Ruskin and internationally in embedding 'skills for change' alongside academic requirements of a course.

Section 3 The future

Lessons learned

It is possible to work collaboratively, in the spirit of sustainability, to create and deliver an innovative multi-disciplinary Master's level course which gives students the agency for positive change.

Sharing your project

Via our website www.mscsustainability.org, and through the International Sustainable Campus Network where ARU were awarded the 2012 prize for Integration of Sustainability.

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

Invaluable exposure and external recognition of the course.

Further information

<http://www.mscsustainability.org>

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