MINUTES:
ESD Topic Support Network Meeting

Attendees:

Sharon Boyd	University of Edinburgh
Beth Brownlee	West Lothian College
Christine Calder	Dundee and Angus College
Ryan Carr	West Lothian College
Paula Duffy	University of St Andrews
Joao Paulo Estevam de Souza	University of Edinburgh
Wayne Hutt	Electrocomponents Plc
Besty King	LFSS
Paul Krogh	West Lothian College
Ian Lewis	SRUC
Louise Logan	University of Strathclyde
Suzanne Marshall	College Development Network
Uche Okere	University of Derby
Scott Strachan	University of Strathclyde
Scott Thomson	EAUC Scotland
Rehema White	University of St Andrews

Apologies: Laura Cristea   SOS

	SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS	ACTIONS
1	**Welcome, Apologies and Introductions** *Rehema White, Co-Convener, University of St Andrews* Welcome and new co-convenors introduced. Scott Strachan from the University of Strathclyde and Christine Calder from Dundee and Angus College.	
2	**Why we need to evaluate** *Rehema White, University of St Andrews/ESD Co-Convenor* SD always needs adaptive support and is always a process. How do we assess ESD? It is not just about counting numbers, it is about going beyond participation in courses to the development of abilities and what	

their impact its. Competence and competency have different meanings and care should be taken about which we use. Learning for sustainability is not about students simply learning facts as it is a constantly evolving discipline; instead students need to be developing adaptive capacities. Essentially, we want to facilitate problem solvers. SD is about imagining what kind of future we want and then exploring how we get there and students are key to this.

There have been several competency frameworks developed in the past for ESD and our team explored how we might apply these to assess progress towards the SDGs and the wider agenda. We identified that intra as well as interpersonal competencies were important. We have to be in touch with our own values and emotions, realize what we are doing, manage ourselves effectively and reduce the incidence of burnout.

The proposed competency framework for measuring ESD could be one way of effectively evaluating ESD and standardizing this process across programmes and even sectors. How do we practically implement the proposed competency frameworks? Possibly we can use a form of self-questionnaire. This helps students to think about what they have learned and makes them critical thinkers, which is one of the goals we are trying to achieve.

Sustainability competencies and employability

Wayne Hutt, Electro Components Plc

Grass Roots Scheme: Help young people build the skills they need and empower them to reach their full potential

Do this through four initiatives:

Superskills: RS Soft skill modules for students that will enhance their employability skills

Internships: Global internship programme spanning across all ECM brands and departments

FAB15: A unique volunteering opportunity for young professionals to be a part of a "think-tank"

RS Student Ambassadors: global network of volunteers representing RS at Uni - Students will be given training opportunities and deliver technical and business workshops to fellow students

Do align to the SDGs, mainly 4.4: "By 2030, substantially increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship" Also with 4.7: "By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development"

Lots of research done with universities and other partners. Really trying to move away from "command and control" mentality into a "coaching" theme. Supports employees by asking questions - rather than providing answers, and encouraging problem solving. Recognition of the fact that we can control teaching but not learning and everyone is unique so needs supported in different ways.

Biggest thing that sets students apart when applying for jobs is volunteering. Really important to develop their own skills in this way. RS do have Learning Module Workshops that are run by RS and also in partnership with other organisations. Currently have 8 workshops all of which are about 1-1.5 hours long and teach useful employability skills. Can also adapt workshops and do bespoke courses if required.

Some institutions are better than others at teaching employability skills but always happy to work with those that need support.

Professional Standards

Suzanne Marshall, College Development Network

Scottish Government developed professional standards a long time ago but needed updated in light of the changes in colleges and also with the external changes of government priorities. Steering group set up with a variety of groups. This group developed the current standards. The standards are important for reviewing where you are and planning for the future. They also encourage people to be self-critical and think about what they can improve on in terms of teaching.

Sustainability is important for giving citizens a place in society along. 3 areas in the standard are: Professional Values, Knowledge and Understanding and Professional Practice. Students very much in the centre of all 3 of these.

Professional standards have a role in professional learning. The National Joint Negotiation committee has decided that all colleges should be working towards a point where all lecturers have a recognized teaching qualification in further education (TQFE) as colleges typically had a very mixed group of teaching staff with different backgrounds and qualifications. TQFE is currently offered by 3 universities in Scotland, Dundee, Aberdeen and Stirling. Can be done virtually or in person. TQFE is mainly about ongoing professional learning.

All college lecturers will be required to register with General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS), part of this is due to professional updates, CPD and keeping up to date with teaching. Two new groups have been set up: College Registration Working Group who are working on a bespoke registration model for colleges. A professionalism group has also been set up which aims to reflect the diversity and variety of the college sector in any registration. As lecturers are required to be part of GTCS it also means they can be de-registered if they don't uphold professional standards so it is a way of ensuring teaching quality.

Useful resources for this would be the Education Scotland website which very useful as it is involved in college inspection and review. GTCS website is also extremely useful for finding resources.

Is there a shared understanding of what sustainability means in the sector? Some lectures have a narrow focus of what that means or don't really understand the term. Lots of work needed to expand understanding. Important to get them to think about what is being done already as they may already be doing things but without the label of "sustainability". Also need to explain at the term "leadership of learning" as this is mentioned in the standard. Essentially it is about, what do we want lectures to do? To get them to ask themselves, "what do I understand", "can I meet the standards", "what is most challenging", "what support is needed"?

It is important as well to recognize the support staff as well, more happens in colleges than just in the classroom and the overall team is very important in sustainability as well.

What are the priorities? There are multiple drivers at the moment, economic drivers, social, legislation and Scottish government are all pushing this forward. Useful resources can be found at Scotdec and in the STRIDE newsletter.

	Teaching is not just about information, we need to think about what we do and what technologies we use in teaching. Student pathways are important. Not sustainable to have students do HNC/HND then go to university and cover the same courses as they are unable to skip ahead. This is a sustainability issues as it is a waste of time and money. Improving the pathway between college and university is important in continuing the student journey.	
	Also, important to find a way to evaluate how well sustainability is embedded in a course. How do we know how good it is without evaluating it?	
	Professional practice - really about engaging students as partners, many students know more about it than the staff as it is a much bigger issue nowadays than when staff were learning. Students will ask questions like "why?" and it's important to have them involved and work with them to solve problems. A big part of the standard is seeing students as partners and creating a curriculum around this aim. We should also be looking at digital technologies and reflecting on what is currently done. Professional standards do include a definition of what they mean by sustainability. This definition covers the course design, content, delivery and the classroom environment (e.g. lighting, heating etc).	
3	**How to implement across institutions** *Beth Brownlee, West Lothian College* Initially sustainability was very much an estates driven approach relating to lighting and heating. Most of the energy and infrastructure work has been done so now taking a wider approach and looking at things like travel and education for sustainability. Currently they do have a sustainability related ERASMUS project but awareness is still relatively low. Climate Emergency though has raised awareness and expectations. Still a certain amount of resistance and lack of interest from students "why does it affect us?". One of the main issues is a lack of staff capacity to push the issue. West Lothian only gives it 3 hours a week due to other commitments, but it is a requirement for SFC so is higher on the agenda than previously. Forest Classroom has been created for the men in childcare course and has been shortlisted for the Green Gown Awards. Hopefully initiatives like this raise sustainability awareness more internally. Have changed the assessment process to take online submissions to save travel and paper from students handing in work.	

		Currently piloting a programme with Wasteswitch who are a waste management company who have developed a SCQ4 level 5 course on Waste in the Circular Economy. This is being delivered in the business and construction class at West Lothian College. Really had to sell it to students and present it as an employability skill as they didn't initially see the value it could bring. Currently looking to redo the carbon management plan but wanting it to be more holistic and not just about estates. Period poverty has been a surprising issue that has come up and developed a fair amount of interest in reusable products and also raised the issue of period poverty. Principle is really behind sustainability and has arranged a College Summit in March. CDN is currently trying to get principles on board to stop using single use plastic by August 2020 so that will be a focus for next year. There are issues to overcome as single use plastic items are sold as a source of income. There is still a lot of work to be done relating to the understanding of the SDGs and what sustainability means. Still seen as simple things like recycling rather than being seen as a broad and wide-ranging discipline.	
4	**ESD in the Veterinary Curriculum** *Sharon Boyd, University of Edinburgh* Veterinary medicine does not have elective subjects so embedding ESD was easier as it meant everyone had to learn about it and couldn't miss out on it. Used existing work on campus to help raise awareness as that was what people understood already. For example, people already understand recycling, green spaces, planting for wildlife etc and so these ideas and understandings could be built on rather than presenting sustainability as a new concept. Social responsibility was easier for staff to grasp than sustainability as a term. As professionals they could see what it meant more easily and got on board with the idea more quickly. It's important to take a positive approach "well done for what you are doing" rather than "here is something else to do". Really highlighted where it was integrated already and praised what was already being done. One challenge is that staff and students in this discipline are very high achieving and find it hard to say "we don't know" which is often the answer to sustainability related questions.		

	Students are asking for more sustainability, so why are we not doing more? Edinburgh have started doing more so do have an answer when challenged by students and are constantly working to do more.

Veterinary curriculum is controlled by the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons, and it is difficult to add new things into it. It can only really be done when they are asked to change the curriculum and they can then use that change to embed sustainability. Often a question of having the ideas but waiting for the right moment to roll them out.

Edinburgh are also creating sustainability champions to broaden awareness. They have also launched the Vet sustain program on 14/11/19 which is all about sustainability at a broader level and features staff and students at all levels.

One of the key challenges is that the curriculum is slow to change, and it is often about waiting for the opportunity.

Edinburgh have made use of the COM-MAND tool which maps sustainability in the curriculum. This tools is open source and can be used by anyone. It is not a perfect tool by any means but it is useful.

Key message is to look at where we can do it better and not just where do we start. Highlight where we are already doing it well, promote it, gain allies and then expand. | |
| **5** | **Discussion**

Key Points Raised:

- Should there be a future session on embedding ESD looking at tools and frameworks specifically?

- Resources, should they be tailored for students and staff? Are we using class reps and student associations enough? College students find it hard to engage with student associations due to work/life balance.

- Involvement with employers is important, keep them involved and get them to come and speak about what they are looking for. Maybe also develop working groups to explore pedagogies. | |

	- Idea of an expert mentor coming in to look at your course in terms of ESD, and critically evaluate what is currently being done. - There are lots of resources, but they are from so many places it is hard to keep track. Maybe this group should have an event to come together and discuss case studies and approaches to help form one comprehensive guide. - Should we have FE and HE specific workshops or continue to share overall, or include both formats? - Should we go to a different location for future meetings and see some interesting things at other campuses? Combining experiential leanring with knowledge exchange.	
	EAUC Scotland Update *Scott Thomson, EAUC Scotland Programme Administrator* - EAUC Scotland Funding bid is due shortly and will let everyone know about the future aims of EAUC Scotland after we hear about funding. - EAUC has launched a Climate Commission comprised of senior staff from many institutions. More updates on this will be released once the first event has taken place. - EAUC Scotland will be getting a new manager in for maternity cover who is expected to start in December/January. - EAUC Scotland conference is sold out! Green Gowns is on the same day and many institutions in the room are finalists so congratulations to all of them!	

| 6 | **Thanks and close** | |

Minutes prepared by Scott Thomson, EAUC-Scotland Programme Administrator, 14/11/19