

Date: 17th April 2018
Time: 10-12:45
Venue: Room LG.06, University of Edinburgh
Resources: Available [here](#)



MINUTES:

Embedding Sustainability in Vocational Courses: ESD Topic Support Network Meeting

Attendees:

Jackie	Beresford	JB	Dundee and Angus College	
Sharon	Boyd	SB	The University of Edinburgh	
Alan	Britton	AB	University of Glasgow	
Elaine	Crawford	EC	Dumfries & Galloway College	
Monica	Green	MG	Federation University Australia	
Betsy	King	BK	Learning for Sustainability Scotland	
Jimmy	Louth	JL	Borders College	
John	MacDonald	JM	SRUC	
Suzanne	Marshall	SM	College Development Network	
John	McCarthy	JMc	Heriot-Watt University	
Severine	Monvoisin	Smo	Edinburgh College	
Mike	Pretious	MP	Queen Margaret University	Convenor
Andrea	Ross	AR	The University of Dundee	

Apologies:

Jenny	Jamieson	SFC
Laura	Cristea	NUS

SUMMARY OF RESOURCES

2. Embedding Sustainability education into core and elective routes in undergraduate teacher education, *Dr Alan Britton (University of Glasgow)*

- Presentation [here](#)

3. Launch of Workbooks to support Embedding Sustainability in College Courses *Elaine Crawford (Dumfries and Galloway College)*

- Presentation [here](#)
- Article of SFC's Outcome Agreement sustainability inclusion [here](#)
- Access to the workbooks [here](#) (Soon to be updated with new editions)

4. Embedding Sustainability within veterinary medical education, *Sharon Boyd (University of Edinburgh)*

- Presentation [here](#)
- Skills and attributes mapping tool [here](#)

5. Embedding Sustainability into core and specialist law modules and adding SD law into SD modules, *Professor Andrea Ross (University of Dundee)*

- Presentation [here](#)

6. An environmental awareness unit in practice, *John Macdonald (SRUC)*

- Presentation [here](#)
- Article on *Agriculture and the Environment: The generation of Responsibility* available [here](#)

	SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS	ACTIONS
1	<p>Welcome and Apologies <i>Mike Pretious, EAUC-Scotland Convener for ESD HE</i></p> <p>Everyone was welcomed to the event.</p>	
2	<p>Embedding Sustainability education into core and elective routes in undergraduate teacher education, Dr Alan Britton (University of Glasgow) <i>Presentation available here</i></p> <p>There are many contextual factors that are responsible for getting sustainability into learning. One of the key factors is a commitment and a disposition from academic staff. Other drivers are Global citizenship, professional standards and international and national policy around sustainability awareness and progress.</p> <p>The opportunity at the University of Glasgow for this specific project came from creating a new undergraduate ITE degree from scratch in 2014. This blank slate and the autonomy that came with it allowed for sustainability to be incorporated from the word go.</p> <p>ITE is a very crowded course with strong political pressure to focus more on literacy and numeracy, so finding space for sustainability is difficult.</p> <p>The themes associated with ITE such as futures education, biodiversity, heritage, citizenship and globalization allow for an easy framing of learning for sustainability. Professional dimensions for the course are essential to the inclusion of sustainability, such as outdoor learning. Included in the core provision of the course is a whole year interdisciplinary conference with cross university input about future optimism and ideas around utopia, globalization, poverty and inequality are included in years 1-4 of Education and society years of MEduc. The elective provision in year 3 of the MEduc focusses on Heritage, citizenship and sustainability.</p> <p>This balance of core and elective was a fair compromise and develop generalists as well as specialists. It is noted that they would not have been allowed to allow a block of environmental sustainability into the course, but as it was a multidisciplinary focus it can be made space for as it is relevant.</p> <p>The big challenge remaining is to include sustainability meaningfully in the 1 year postgraduate teaching qualifications, as the time is so condensed within the course this will be difficult.</p>	

	<p><u>Comments</u></p> <p><i>When did the accreditation change?</i></p> <p>This was in 2012. It is highlighted that schools through to college need to be given one message and highlight that they are already doing aspects of sustainability. The standards are currently being rewritten with BK on the working group.</p> <p><i>Is there an answer to getting around the postgraduate problem?</i></p> <p>As most postgraduate education students will go into secondary schools therefore the teaching in secondary schools is devoid of sustainability content. A transitional faze for secondary teachers needs to be worked on.</p> <p><i>Is there any data available for continued sustainability teaching when learned in initial training?</i></p> <p>Teachers leave education with enthusiasm but this can be quashed as the realities of school life kicks in. Scottish education is under-researched. If teachers arrive at the school and the school is already practicing this the agenda can be encouraged but when this is lacking the learning can be lost.</p>	
<p>3</p>	<p>Launch of Workbooks to support Embedding Sustainability in College Courses</p> <p><i>Elaine Crawford (Dumfries and Galloway College)</i></p> <p>Presentation available here</p> <p>Workbooks available here</p> <p>The main remit of the workbooks is to show how and where it is possible to embed sustainability within Scotland’s colleges. A few of the workbooks have been around for a few years but today we will be launching more topics and trying to share the knowledge from these to ensure colleges can use these to their full potential. Each specific topic workbook is accompanied by a teacher version with answers and guidance on the areas and exercises covered.</p> <p>There has been difficulties in embedding sustainability due to the huge changes with the Scottish college system in recent years. However, the appetite for sustainability has now has now found the space within the system to come through. This is especially driven by the inclusion of sustainability into the Scottish Funding Councils Outcome Agreements with colleges. EAUC-S worked with SFC to make this inclusion happen, new article here. This highlights that sustainability is now beyond solely satisfying the agenda with a few champions but that sustainability practitioners need to be prioritised.</p>	

Embedding sustainability within colleges is particularly important as there is great work going on within schools and there is a responsibility to enhance this learning at the next level, especially as most of the population will not go on to University to receive it there. In a sense, this is the final opportunity for embedding sustainability into education for most of the population.

It is noted that colleges are already doing a lot that is considered ESD but that this is not recognised properly or joint to the sustainability agenda within the institution as a whole. Some key areas for removing barriers for embedding sustainability are listed in the presentation.

The methodology behind the workbooks themselves is to provide a multidisciplinary approach for each course and to bring in exercises around numeracy, literacy, business skills, community and other transferable skills that can be beneficial for various areas of student development ,as well as emphasizing sustainability issues within their topic. They also touch on environmental justice, drawing on the SDGs to look at ethical issues.

Examples of exercises within the workbooks are:

- Lifecycle analysis of tools used (Scissors for hairdressing, hammers for construction)
- Electrical equipment calculations – this could also be fed into a carbon management plan
- Food impact analysis

These are available on the EAUC's Sustainability Exchange website [here](#), soon to be updated with the new editions. We are looking at making these more user friendly and adding the possibility to pick out relevant sections to tailor use, this is helpful as a lot of the exercises can be used across the curriculum. We want the resources to be versatile and be used widely in whatever way is suitable for their setting.

The currently available workbooks are:

- Introduction to Sustainability (credit rated)
- Hairdressing
- Beauty
- Construction
- Health and Social Studies
- Hospitality / Food Manufacturing

Workbooks that will be added soon are:

- Business
- Tourism

ALL: Any suggestions on ways to engage colleges with the workbooks are welcome to Scotland@eauc.

	<p>- Creative Industries</p> <p>Suggestions for new ways to engage colleges are always welcomed. EC has recently worked with SPARKS and will be presenting at the upcoming EAUC-S Smaller Institutions meeting.</p> <p><u>Comments</u></p> <p><i>Could the workbooks be adapted into easy read formats?</i></p> <p>Although this would take some time to edit the workbooks it is hoped that their open and accessible format means that practitioners can download and edit them to suit their learner's needs.</p> <p><i>Are there any tips on SM engagement?</i></p> <p>SFC OA are helping drive interest in SM. Education Scotland and other national bodies need to be driving this for a unilateral effort from colleges. EC give an example of Including ESD in the Dumfries and Galloway colleges' carbon management plan to take the agenda further.</p> <p><i>How many hours does a booklet take to go through?</i></p> <p>The Introduction to sustainability is about 30 hours and is SCQF credit rated. They are mostly used online.</p> <p>It is noted that making the Introduction to Sustainability a mandatory assessment for all staff to undertake would help drive the sustainability agenda within the organization.</p>	<p>org.uk.</p>
<p>4</p>	<p>Embedding Sustainability within veterinary medical education, <i>Sharon Boyd (University of Edinburgh)</i> <i>Presentation available here</i></p> <p>SB has been working with the University of Edinburgh vet school for 10 years, when she arrived there she presumed that everybody would understand sustainability and expected to come across it during her work there, as it is in the professional requirements, but this wasn't the case. The professional requirements from RCVS are listed within the presentation. UoE have goals for at least on sustainability-related course at the core of student programmes, SB looked into ways to highlight the work they were doing to satisfy the requirements in these standards.</p> <p>As veterinary undergraduates do not have a choice over course modules, all students will cover sustainability at some point if it is embedded.</p> <p>To open a dialogue with academics and course leaders around sustainability the team used appreciative enquiry, completing research before meeting each individual so they arrived with knowledge of what areas of sustainability they are already touching on within their work. The process was key to engaging staff as sustainability is not seen as an add-</p>	

	<p>on, rather something they are already doing that just needs to be pulled together and built on.</p> <p>As a visual illustration of the work, each course leader was doing around sustainability the team mapped course learning outcomes and skills to sustainable development attributes using a free programme called command, available here. The striking visual graph is featured in the presentation on slide 8.</p> <p>Sustainability pedagogies include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Student research component foundation (UG2) - Veterinary public health for sustainability - Conservation medicine: This online distance-learning course is a Master’s programme that can be done over a few years and therefore allows time to cover sustainability in-depth. - Sustainability in clinical skills – There is a survey of waste from clinical skills labs. They will increase awareness in business skills and is framed in this way. Educate about cost of waste - Campus wellbeing – this is student led and includes student research, Edinburgh teaching award and summer projects including campus sustainability projects. - On the induction ceremony of all students to the school they are each given an earthworm pot to care for and return weeks later to the estates grounds or projects. This provides engagement from the very beginning of a student’s career into sustainability. <p>All of these various activities within the school equate to quite an encompassing approach and embedding of sustainability, as the bubble chart on slide 17 in the presentation shows.</p> <p>Along with these practical and theoretical elements, it is important to the school that all students believe that they are leaders within their field and that they can change things within the practice for a better future.</p>	
5	<p>Embedding Sustainability into core and specialist law modules and adding SD law into SD modules, Professor Andrea Ross (University of Dundee)</p> <p><i>Presentation available here</i></p> <p>AR is an academic and teaches on the core curriculum. She is the leading UK expert on SD law.</p> <p>Justifying the integration into law required intense work as sustainability does not feature in the law societies professional accreditation criteria. The Scottish law society specifies ethics and moral actions but not sustainability. However, most of the areas a professional will work on will</p>	

been heavily involved with sustainability, such as; legal practice covers risks, insurance, property law, contaminated land, mitigation, negligence, rights and freedoms, divisions of power, administrative, licensing, immigration, refugees, land reform aid, tax laws, criminal law. Sustainability will undoubtedly be engaged with in students professional lives so this should be reflected in there learning.

Embedding sustainability within the law teaching is very easy due to its relevance and in most cases it already being done, just not acknowledged. AR lists the ways sustainability has been integrated in her work as:

- **Integration 1** – Using sustainability as a running theme in the core module (Foundations of law). This focuses on limits and long-term impacts. (I.e. maintaining resources to avoid conflict). Using SD language throughout this curriculum is a simple and effective change.
- **Integration 2** – Use of SD as an example in teaching substantive knowledge within a core module. This could look into addressing Climate change through different levels of government. Emphasizing that local government is highly important.
- **Integration 3** – The use of SD in an assignment of a core module to develop a skill. This provides skills to confidently research and present on specific areas.
- **Integration 4** – A whole seminar dedicated to SD in an optional related module. SD as the primary objective of development planning.
- **Integration 5** – SD as a separate module with or without other disciplines. To teach SD effectively a contribution is needed from all disciplines. This is a module for an MSc in sustainability. A key element of this is a field trip.
- **Integration 6** – Research led teaching. Began with a WWF query. This gave real experience with a real client.

The main advice from the experience of embedding sustainability in this setting is that It is possible to find room for it and finding a way to core reaches the greatest number of students. Conclusion points in presentation.

Comments

Is there resistance from students?

There can be. A response to this is to explicitly highlight the essential link to their degree and the value of the experience. Focusing on the value of learning about other disciplines and professions, as this will be essential for working life.

Is there a way of getting SD into the official accreditation?

	<p>They have and are still trying. Scotland's standards are quite relevant compared to others even though it is only the mention of ethical.</p>	
6	<p>An environmental awareness unit in practice, <i>John Macdonald (SRUC)</i> <i>Presentation available here</i></p> <p>SRUC is made up of four partner colleges. Sustainability is encompassed in the college's vision. The college offers a very broad range of topics.</p> <p>The welcome of including sustainability in the learning of the students is received with mixed attitudes. However, the college has a history of including sustainability. In the 1990s, they produced institutions environmental management and adopted environmental policy. In the 2000's they introduced the joint environmental unit. This was initially taught as group lectures.</p> <p>The current module is a 40-hour unit with all the lectures and resources being held on Moodle, along with Podcasts and varying resources. SDGs are a big part of the assessment criteria.</p> <p>Useful exercises from the course include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 'Sustainable Island' – Collects expertise from different course elements. - 'Sustainable Christmas, Easter' - 'Top 10 tips' <p>The specialized unit helps develop citizens of the world and help to build on their personal sustainability journey.</p> <p>The assessment platform is hosted by SQA. It allows for adjustment of different abilities. The assessment requires 90 questions to be loaded in by the assessor, which it then randomly allocates 15 questions for the student for two separate assessments. As this is a multiple-choice exam, it also needs to 300 wrong answers to be input! The platform provides instant results. The platform allows analysis of questions and answers.</p> <p>JM circulates document on Agriculture and the Environment: The generation of Responsibility, available here.</p>	
7	<p>AOCB <i>Mike Pretious, EAUC-Scotland Convener for ESD HE</i></p> <p>RP advises the group on the EAUC upcoming name change and rebrand.</p>	

	<p>MP enquires when a good time for the network would be for further meetings that is good for both universities, colleges, support and academic staff. It is noted that the first semester is not good but June and December could be suitable.</p> <p>MP welcomes ideas for a broad interest topic to bring into academics and professionals.</p>	<p>All: Advice on topics of interest for both academics and professionals.</p>
8	<p>Closing Remarks <i>Mike Pretious, EAUC-Scotland Convener for ESD HE</i></p>	
9	<p>Close</p>	

Minutes prepared by Samantha Hartley, EAUC-Scotland Programme Administrator, April 2018