

Nottingham Trent University Courses and Learning Food for Thought - Sustainability in Practice



The University of
Nottingham

UNITED KINGDOM · CHINA · MALAYSIA

Profile

- HEI
- 25,000 students (includes full and part time students)
- 3000 staff
- 3 campuses- Urban and Rural

Section 1 About the project

Summary

Nottingham Trent University have developed and delivered an online course available to students to explore the basic concepts of sustainability and recognise the links to sustainability within their area of study. Through the theme of food the course aims to enhance student skills and employability within their future working sector. In the launch year of the certificate around 3200 students viewed the content.

Project partners

The Sustainability In Practice (SIP) certificate has been part of a wider HEA Green Academy Project run within Nottingham Trent University.

Section 2 The results

The problem

Raising awareness of sustainability impacts relating to a variety of disciplines and sectors within one course.

The approach

The development of an online optional Certificate with limited time commitment required from students. The Certificate provided them with the opportunity to improve their employability as well as build upon and add to their course knowledge and skills through sustainability literacy, critical thinking and presentation skills.

Our goals

The goals of the Sustainability in Practice course were to provide students from across the University with an opportunity to develop their understanding and knowledge of sustainability. The long term goal is that this will support the development of a number of graduate attributes (particularly through raising awareness of sustainability).

Obstacles and solutions

- Engaging students from the broad scope of schools and courses: Threading the theme of food throughout the certificate to highlight the three pillars of sustainability allowed students to explore all levels of the food supply chain which linked into each of the wide variety of schools. The theme of food also encouraged interdisciplinary work.

Finalist's case study

- Technology: Support from internal Information System teams enabled the leading team to develop the course smoothly and use the available systems to the maximum potential. Using in-house facilities to host the course enabled flexibility in the content thus making the course tailored to NTU's needs.
- Having students from every university school take part in the course required an engaging the assessment method. Successful students produced a short video as their coursework submission and these were shared online for further promotion of the project.

Performance and results

94 students completed the course within the first year, this included tasks for each of the weekly sessions and the final assessment of a video demonstrating the students' learning outcomes relating to their area of study. The course is being repeated in 2014/15.

Section 3 The future

Lessons learned

Collaborative working across the institution is key to success to ensure that all students are catered for in their course and the promotion of the course is maximized. The Student Union and Estates staff also contributed to the overall success and popularity.

Sharing our project

The project has been communicated via the Food for Thought social media Twitter account that has 166 followers. Nottingham Trent University have hosted a Higher Education Academy (HEA) conference sharing the project with a number of external parties and other institutions. Details of the project as a whole and the certificate are available on the NTU webpages.

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

Being a Green Gown 2014 Award finalist is a great achievement. The listing demonstrates that the Sustainability In Practice Certificate is a positive example of a scheme that successfully reaches out to students and ensures that sustainability is embedded into their academia for their future employability.

Further information

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