

# The University of Bristol Courses

## Embedding ESD across the curriculum

### Section 1 About the project

#### Summary

In January 2012 two student interns were employed with the brief to embed ESD in the formal and informal curriculum utilising existing University systems and processes. The project has enabled the creation of an ESD strategy; a baseline review of all taught units; the development of training initiatives; the generation of open access online resources and the implementation of monitoring procedures.

#### Project partners

The project has involved a number of partnerships across the institution including: Sustainability, the Education Support Unit, the Students' Union, schools, faculties, the Academic Directors of Postgraduate and Undergraduate Studies, the Pro Vice Chancellor (Education), as well as numerous individuals across schools and faculties.

### Section 2 The results

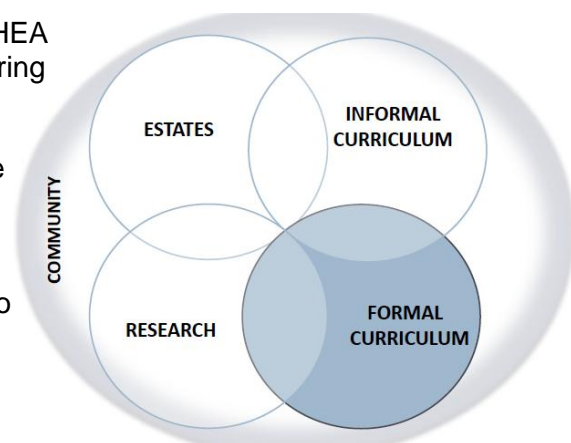
#### The problem

University academics and members of Estates participated in the first HEA Green Academy in 2011. The Green Academy team developed a five ring model reviewing the University's sustainability activities. The review established that much activity was undertaken on the physical estate through the estates department, in research through the Cabot Institute as well as in the informal curriculum through the Students' Union, the Bristol Hub and other opportunities such as Sustainability run energy and waste audits. Although an award winning Sustainability open unit has been running since 2005, the opportunity to reach more students through the formal curriculum was identified. It was also observed that the formal and informal curriculum could be better integrated.



#### Profile

- HEI
- 17,000 students (includes full and part time students)
- 5721 staff
- Urban



*The University of Bristol's five ring model*



## The approach

Two student interns were utilised to develop strategies to embed ESD. The use of student interns was a low cost model aiming to create a long term sustainable project and not rely on extensive unsustainable financial inputs. All activities employed existing University systems and teams to embed ESD in these processes rather than create new practices.

## Our goals

Our goal was to assess current ESD provision and to extend the embedding of ESD in the formal and informal curriculum using a non-prescriptive approach.

## Obstacles and solutions

- The significance of 'gatekeepers' failing to engage and facilitate attendance of a meeting
- An initial lack of perceived relevance
- Alternative routes were sourced through the identification of interested academics
- Tools were developed to demonstrate the relevance to academics using a non-prescriptive approach

## Performance and results

Project activities included: an ESD Strategy; the creation of mapping tools; a contextualised baseline review of all taught courses through the in-house Unit and Programme Catalogue (3,215 units); the baseline being used as an engagement tool and reviewed by schools resulting in a more accurate reflection of ESD; training at an individual, school and faculty level through visits and online modules; a teaching and learning guide and open access online resource bank; schools and faculties including ESD statements in their handbooks demonstrating their commitment; the implementation of an ESD monitoring process through Annual Programme Reviews; the launch of a best practice ESD Network and the full institutional accreditation including learning and teaching of ISO14001. All of these activities have led to engagement of staff across the institution and have had an impact on the learning and teaching experience of students.

## Section 3 The future

### Lessons learned

All faculties were approached with the same framing of ESD. It was quickly established that this did not engage some academics, schools or faculties. In order to engage a wide variety of staff, language used by the team was refined to ensure local relevance.

### Sharing your project

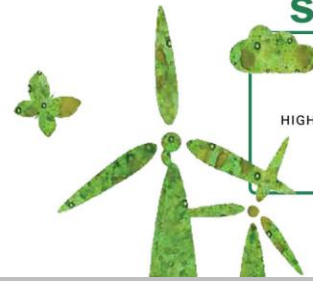
All resources from the project are available on an open access platform ensuring easy access. The ESD team has presented to 10 institutions at the second HEA Green Academy. This has led to interns working with a number of institutions.

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

It has provided external recognition of ESD activity at the University of Bristol creating the opportunity to share the Bristol model. It has also increased awareness of work internally spurring those academics who are engaged to deepen their involvement and feel part of a team that is rewarded.

# Highly commended case study

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## Further information

Email: [esd-team@bristol.ac.uk](mailto:esd-team@bristol.ac.uk) - Phone: 0117 331 7110

Web: [www.bristol.ac.uk/environment/esd](http://www.bristol.ac.uk/environment/esd) - Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/BristolESD>

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