

University of the West of Scotland

Courses and Learning

Using Green Impact as a learning tool to embed Sustainability into teaching.



Profile

- HEI
- 15,000 students
- 2150 staff
- Urban

Section 1 About the project

Summary

Green Impact Education is an innovative new application of the NUS Green Impact Programme. It demonstrates best practice in embedding sustainability into students learning in a meaningful context. The wide spread adoption of Green Impact by UK Universities means that, with the adaptations made by UWS, this is a highly replicable project.

Project partners

The project is funded by the Scottish Government Climate Challenge Fund as part of a wider behaviour change programme. The Events Management academic staff were actively involved in the development and delivery of this programme. The students were fully engaged with delivery and implemented a significant number of actions over and above the initial requirements. NUS, who manage the Green Impact scheme, were also involved in workbook development.

The problem

Academic colleagues required a straightforward method of embedding sustainability into their subject area that could easily slot into teaching, be tailored and relevant to the course in question.

The approach

The Events Management academic staff were engaged with the Green Impact Programme and recognised its potential to be adapted as a teaching resource. The Course Leader worked with the UWS Green Impact Co-ordinator and NUS to adapt the workbook in order for it to be used by events students to audit and improve the environmental sustainability of events venues across UWS. Forty eight students participated, covering nine event locations. The groups compiled environmental impact reports for an event, and worked closely with UWS staff in each venue to encourage 'greener' actions through the use of the Green Impact tool kit. The project ran for a trimester with 129 Green Actions achieved.

Our goals

- To provide a straightforward, tailored toolkit to increase Education for Sustainable Development at UWS.

- To increase sign up to the Green Impact Programme.
- To reduce carbon emissions at UWS.

Obstacles and solutions

Obstacle	Solution
Academic staff in non-traditional environmental disciplines implementing education for sustainable development.	Provide a tailored toolkit to facilitate implementation.
Engaging with students on implementation of sustainability actions.	Increase engagement through making activity relevant to areas of study and also to provide experience that will enhance CVs.
Increase the number of Green Impact Teams.	Student activity is carried out on site at UWS, using the campus as a learning environment. In delivering sustainability activity the students work closely with UWS staff at events venues, many of whom have signed up to be separate Green Impact teams.

Performance and results

Education Outcomes

- 48 students participated
- 129 Green Actions achieved
- 88% of students said they now felt confident sharing their knowledge of environmental issues with others
- 80% of students said the experience gained by Green Impact was beneficial to their future employment and career

Carbon Reduction Estimates

Energy	10.5 tonnes CO ₂ e
Travel	0.4 tonnes CO ₂ e
Waste	1.3 tonnes CO ₂ e
Total	12.2* tonnes CO₂ e

*lifetime equivalent figures showing the impact of behaviour change over 5 years.



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Section 3 The future

Lessons learned

- Some of the students commented that the Green Impact workbooks should be a graded part of the coursework. The Event Management Course leader is currently working with the UWS Green Impact Coordinator to adapt the workbook further so that it can be implemented with two year groups. When progressing into second year it will be developed to be part of the assessment on managing external events.
- This pilot was limited to one subject area. The project will be replicated for other courses in the next academic year. We are currently working on the Green Impact Toolkit to tailor this for nursing, which has one of the largest intakes of students at UWS.

Sharing our project

- Green Impact Education was successful in winning a National Green Impact Award.
- We have produced a Green Impact video, with this project being a key element; the video can be found at www.uws.ac.uk/sustainability
- A Green Impact Awards ceremony was held with UWS staff and students and staff from other Universities; the education project was a highlight of the day.
- The project will be replicated for other subject areas in the next academic year. We are currently working on the Green Impact Toolkit to tailor this for nursing, which has one of the largest intakes of students at UWS. Once the toolkit has been tailored to different subject areas we are happy to share this with other universities participating in Green Impact.
- We held a launch for this year's Green Impact at the start of the Academic Year. The team involved in the Education Project shared their experiences with other academic departments and those attending from other Universities.

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

The University of the West of Scotland is proud of the achievements of our Green Impact Education Programme and believe that it's a valuable tool that can be replicated in other Universities and Colleges. As well as receiving recognition for our achievements being a Green Gown Award finalist will help to promote Green Impact as an education tool and further the implementation of Education for Sustainable Development in non-environmental disciplines.

Further information

www.uws.ac.uk/sustainability

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www.green gown awards.org.uk

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