Sustainability Symposium 2021:
Facing Forward with Sustainability: Principles, Progress and Partnership

25 March 2021

Session abstracts

Parallel session 1, 1.1a, Oral presentation (20 mins)
Introducing students to sustainability: From school to university
Professor Debbie Willison, University of Strathclyde
This presentation will provide details of two distinct activities designed to introduce students to the UN's Sustainable Development Goals: the first for students in secondary education and the second for students in higher education. The activities focus on the development of competencies as well as learning objectives, and pedagogies best suited to learning about sustainable development, such as action-oriented learning and transformative learning pedagogies. The activities aim to develop students’ knowledge and understanding of sustainable development from multidisciplinary perspectives. The ideas presented will provide inspiration for participants attending who are planning their own outreach or educational activities.

Parallel session 1, 1.1b, Oral presentation (20 mins)
Pedagogies of purpose: Sustainability for everyone
Cathy d'Abreu, Oxford Brookes University
This talk explores lessons learned from applying ESD pedagogy on Foundation modules at Oxford Brookes University. ‘Pedagogies of purpose’ distils core pedagogical insights, drawing on transformative learning theory (Mezirow, 2008), and presents a simplified, pedagogical toolkit, adapted from Pashby and Sund’s (2018) inspirational research on Global Issues pedagogy and the UNECE competencies. It suggests a shift from ‘what’ we teach, to focusing on ‘how’ we engage students with learning for sustainability. It offers examples of activities, assessments and course design to stimulate social, environmental and cultural critical thinking, and a takeaway toolkit to encourage reflection on ESD pedagogy.

Parallel session 1, 1.1c, Oral presentation (20 mins)
Promoting sustainability literacy among TU Dublin Business students through the UN Sulitest platform
Dr Olivia Freeman, Alacoque McAlpine, Dr Lucia Walsh, Dr Deirdre Duffy, Dr Cormac McMahon and Dr Ciara Nolan, Technological University Dublin
This presentation reports on a National Forum T&L IMPACT funded initiative taking place in TU Dublin which seeks to influence Faculty to embrace education-for-sustainability. We focus on the utilisation of the UN-supported Sulitest toolkit (www.sulitest.org) informed by the SDG framework, as an aid to embedding sustainability literacy (knowledge, skills and mind-sets) within our TLA practices. Engagement is measurable against the AASHE-STARS
Our presentation will include a walk through our shared experiences in incorporating sustainability literacy into our existing modules and authentic assessment strategies, some discussion on our progress to date and our university-wide next steps.

**Parallel session 1, 1.2a, Oral presentation (20 mins)**

**Partnerships in sustainability: Examples and discussions of staff and students (or other groups) working together**

Dr Marc Duffy, Jo Watts, Rukhsaar Amin, Ben Ainsworth and Lydia Jones, Sheffield Hallam University

This presentation will describe a case study from Sheffield Hallam University based on the process and outcomes of working with and listening to students when teaching sustainable and responsible business practice. We will elicit how elements of a Business Studies Course concerned with S&R support employability and consider how modules can be adapted to further this agenda. This responds to the shifting expectation of students, as future business leaders and managers with the potential to shape the orientation of business to S&R. Presenting with students, we will demonstrate the application of co-creation in module development. Attendees will gain a better understanding of the learner perspective for S&R education, add value in curricula development, and replicate co-creative practice in their own contexts.

**Parallel session 1, 1.2b, Oral presentation (20 mins)**

**T-Extinction: A co-created fashion and textiles sustainability awareness project that takes a long time approach**

Professor Carolyn Hardaker and Sally Gaukoder-Cowan, De Montfort University

Climate change activism and the widespread acknowledgement of the polluting impact of Fashion and Textiles industries inspired this novel co-creation sustainability awareness project that takes a long-term approach. Promoting long-term, cathedral-style thinking contrasts sharply with current fast fashion practice. Saltmarshe and Pembroke (2018) of the Long Time Project state, “Short termism is rapidly becoming an existential threat to humanity”, while Fletcher (2010) proposes slow culture as an opportunity to develop system change within the fashion sector. Inspired to adopt this approach, Fashion Buying academics and students set themselves the challenge to identify products or processes that would be extinct or taboo in the year 2090. Named T-Extinction, a project was launched to get staff and students thinking alike. This presentation outlines the aim and approach taken in running the project. Co-creation was key, with student-led graphic design input and a dedicated social media account incorporated to promote T-Extinction ahead of a co-created physical exhibition. Delayed for a year by the Covid 19 pandemic, the Instagram account is now live and the co-created exhibition, featuring a range of responses from denim products, hosiery, trainers and sizing is due to go on display for 8 weeks from 31st March 2021. This presentation will outline how T-Extinction has developed into an innovative sustainability awareness strategy providing a conduit for staff and students to share their skills and learn from each other. It provides a framework for similar projects in other design disciplines as well as highlighting the unintentional benefits of co-creation.

**Parallel session 1, 1.2c, Oral presentation (20 mins)**

**Transnational education: Towards principles and practices to address the UN Sustainable Development Goals**

Dr Andrew Reeves, Manjeet Ridon and Simon Bradbury, De Montfort University
Transnational Education (TNE) is a significant and growing area of activity for UK higher education. To date little research has explored how TNE can positively contribute to the sustainability agenda embodied in the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This presentation seeks to address this gap by identifying principles for how TNE can address the SDGs and build capacity for all partners involved, based upon practices at De Montfort University from a range of subject areas. Participants will gain a better understanding of the opportunities inherent in TNE to drive achievement of the SDGs and to address educational inequalities.

Parallel session 1, 1.3a, Oral presentation (20 mins)
Shaping Initial Teacher Education students’ understanding of sustainability
Miss Victoria Tait, Anglia Ruskin University

In 2018, Primary Education Studies course leader, Dr Nicola Walshe, and Education for Sustainability Coordinator, Victoria Tait, worked in partnership to design an intervention aimed at transforming Primary Education Studies students’ understanding of Environmental and Sustainability Education pedagogies. This presentation will explore the process of designing this intervention and the subsequent outcomes, including the creation of a new module, and (most recently) an interdisciplinary collaboration between a lecturer on the Primary Education Studies course and a Fine Art student.

Parallel session 1, 1.3b, Oral presentation (20 mins)
Slow it down: Personalising education for sustainable development
Professor Natascha Radclyffe-Thomas, GCU London, Glasgow Caledonian University and Haleh Moravej Manchester Metropolitan University

Taking a systems perspective of the global food and fashion industries, this presentation introduces two case studies of staff, students and communities embracing a transformative agenda, showing how sustainability literacies can be achieved through purposeful teaching, learning and assessment. The first case “MetMUnch” introduces a student-led social enterprise delivering sustainable, healthy and nutritious food information and education to students, staff and local communities. The second case “My Sustainability Manifesto” uses the framework of the SDGs and World Values Day in the context of the global luxury industry, exploring how personal values intersect with positive social, environmental and cultural sustainabilities.

Parallel session 1, 1.3c, Oral presentation (20 mins)
Embedding enquiry-based ESD in undergraduate curricula and beyond
Dr Scott Strachan and Dr Louise Logan, University of Strathclyde

This presentation will give an overview of the University of Strathclyde’s Vertically Integrated Projects for Sustainable Development, a programme that enabled enquiry-based and interdisciplinary ESD across the institution. We will discuss the practicalities, challenges and opportunities of embedding such a programme in undergraduate curricula, and describe our aims to extend this model to schools and colleges in order to create a joined-up approach to embedding enquiry-based ESD at all levels of education.

Parallel session 2, 2.1a, Staff-student workshop (30 mins)
SHAPE sustainability impact projects: Social Sciences, Humanities & the Arts for people and the environment/economy
Ms Rachel Soper, Students Organising for Sustainability and Charise Johnson, the British Academy, joined by SHAPE student project leaders.

During a turbulent period for students and universities, SOS-UK and the British Academy successfully launched SHAPE Sustainability Impact Projects with three universities. SHAPE refers to Social Sciences, Humanities & the Arts for People and the Economy/Environment. This project adopted Education for Sustainable Development pedagogies to empower students on SHAPE-related programmes to actively contribute to real-world sustainability challenges through interdisciplinary, collaborative teams. This workshop will share learnings from the project whilst creating space for exploration of how such a model for embedding ESD in the Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences could be built on and applied elsewhere in higher education.

Parallel session 2, 2.1b, Staff-student workshop (30 mins)
Climate leaders: Making an impact
Dr Steve Cayzer, Karen Angus-Cole, Monique Clarke and Clare Power, University of Bath
Following their climate literacy induction, University of Bath undergraduate and taught postgraduate students can self-select to join our ‘Climate Leaders’ programme. This workshop will share the experience of the first event that our Climate Leaders take part in. Like them, you will reflect on a provocative thought piece in relation to your own knowledge and experiences of climate change, and consider how best to make a meaningful response to the challenges identified. You will leave the workshop with your own personal pledge, plus ideas on how to work with students to support them to take action against climate change.

Parallel session 2, 2.2a, Staff-student workshop (30 mins)
Introducing SDGs to HDR students’ scope of research interest
Dr Louise Fitzgerald, Anindita Roy Bannya, Roxanne Llamzon and Huaizhou Li, University NSW, Sydney
In this session we will showcase three research students' innovative and embracing response to a responsible business research initiative. Each student has integrated SDGs in their research areas, including financial decisions by firms on green products; enhancing the efficacy of employment equity programmes and the role strategic Information Systems alignment in acheiving the SDGs 2030.

Parallel session 2, 2.2b, Staff-student workshop (30 mins)
Operationalising sustainability (eco-literacy) in higher education
Dr Mayen Cunden and Sam McPhee, De Montfort University
This workshop will address present needs of operationalising sustainability in higher education, with the view of sustainability being for everyone. A co-operative enquiry approach is adopted to enable students, academics and other participants, to jointly move through a cycle of action and reflection on the transdisciplinary nature of sustainability (integration in all disciplines) to create a sustainable society grounded in ecological principles. Participants will gain a keener insight into how they may achieve the goal of education, as envisaged by Orr, not as masters of the subject matter but as masters of their persons.

Parallel session 2, 2.3a, Staff-student workshop (30 mins)
Promoting sustainability in an online environment
Miss Antonia Lindsay, Vicki Grimshaw, Sue Lowe and James Doyle University College of Estate Management (UCEM)
This session emphasises the role of online education in enabling and empowering students
to tackle pressing global issues beyond their studies into (and through) their workplace. Working in conjunction with industry, UCEM is tackling sustainability challenges in the built environment, a sector which produces around 40% of the UK’s total carbon footprint (UK GBC, 20202). In their commitment to meeting the Sustainable Development Goals, as an institution and through the formal curriculum, UCEM are preparing the next generation to provide the solutions to these problems adopting supported online learning (UCEM, 2020).

**Parallel session 2, 2.3b, Staff-student workshop (30 mins)**

**Democracy in the development of a climate emergency curriculum for Initial Teacher Education**  
Ms Elena Lengthorn and Megan Ashbury, University of Worcester

Our urgent state of “Climate Emergency”, as declared by the UK Government in 2019, has done little to change our secondary education system. As we collectively begin to move into acceptance of the irreversible nature of a portion of the environmental damage and its long-term consequences, we need to explore the purpose of education in climate emergency. How can we prepare teachers to support and develop young people in a time of climate crisis? This workshop invites your reflections on a student co-created action research project to build a climate emergency curriculum for teacher education democratically.

**Zoom link one, Special Workshop (45 mins)**

**Launching the QAA / Advance HE Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) Guidance**  
Professor Jim Longhurst, University of the West of England and Professor Simon Kemp, University of Southampton

This workshop will introduce the new Guidance on Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) produced by QAA and Advance HE. The guidance is structured around the role of higher education in creating a sustainable future; engaging with ESD; (and) related approaches to teaching, learning and assessment. Participants in the workshop will discuss:

- How the Guidance might be used in different disciplinary contexts and
- The conditions necessary for its adoption with institutions of different sizes and missions.

**Parallel session 3, 3.1, Staff-student workshop (30 mins)**

**Towards a Sustainable University – Assessing the effectiveness of www.susthingsout.com for embedding culture of sustainability within and beyond the institution**  
Ms Katy Boom, Joe Toft, Phoebe West, Julius Aleksa and Ira Spiridonova, University of Worcester

The focus of this workshop is to look at how interactivity fosters deeper engagement and how this then facilitates learning – as a cross-university project there is scope for wide ranging benefits. We will be inviting participants to assist in assessing the effectiveness of www.susthingsout.com for embedding a culture of sustainability within and beyond the institution. We will invite commentary on identifying potential methods to drive forward greater discourse and engagement with sustainability across students, staff, practitioners and the wider community.

**Parallel session 3, 3.2, Staff-student workshop (30 mins)**

**Linking curriculum, campus and community: The challenges of moving from innovation to transformation in education for sustainability (EfS) practice**  
Dr Heather Barrett and Naomi Goldman, University of Worcester

This workshop will explore how students are working as change agents and as co-creators to improve their educational experience in relation to sustainable futures. It considers a
student-centred partnership project exploring the potential for a city-wide electric bike hire scheme in Worcester. It explores the benefits and challenges of developing a collaborative sustainability project linking curriculum, campus and community, and the issues around sustaining these collaborative projects and in translating the model of practice developed into a broader framework for curriculum change.

**Parallel session 4, 4.1a, Oral presentation (20 mins)**  
**Sustainability and the university law clinic**  
**Professor Richard Owen Ritika Vig and Rhiannon Smith, Swansea University**  
This session will look at how Swansea Law Clinic has been working within the legal framework of the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, which has been described by the United Nations as world-leading legislation, in order to address sustainability issues. It requires rethinking how students work with other disciplines to create innovative solutions to the major challenges faced by the communities the Clinic serves. This presentation will evaluate progress to date including reflection on action taken by the Clinic’s Student Board, such as a takeover of the Clinic’s Twitter account.

**Parallel session 4, 4.1b, Oral presentation (20 mins)**  
**Inspiring students to become ‘Change Agents’: An evaluation of an undergraduate sustainability assessment at the University of Worcester**  
**Dr Sian Evans and Kaylan Airey, University of Worcester**  
Share in 10 years of experience integrating ‘Go Green Week’ as a powerful assessment in a 30-credit Level 4 module. Students design, deliver and evaluate the effectiveness of a week-long range of activities and reflect on the soft skills required to become an effective ‘Change Agent’.

**Parallel session 4, 4.1c, Oral presentation (20 mins)**  
**A values-led, bottom-up approach to building sustainability across a specialist Arts institution**  
**Mrs Alice Stevens, Arts University Bournemouth**  
This paper presents how a values-led, bottom-up approach has developed a deeper engagement with sustainability at a specialist Arts institution and has successfully acted as a catalyst for numerous activities, collaborations and symposia. AUB Human will be presented as a case study of how an institution can put sustainable development at the forefront of a campus community to celebrate and inspire work in this area and promote a commitment to the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

**Parallel session 4, 4.2a, Oral presentation (20 mins)**  
**The paradox model: A framework for action**  
**Dr Nicola Kemp and Dr Stephen Scoffham, Canterbury Christ Church University**  
In this presentation we will present a conceptual framework, the ‘paradox model’, for thinking about possible educational responses to the global crisis. We will explore two key paradoxes facing those seeking to engage with sustainability in higher education: (1) How to develop authentic sustainability responses within the context of existing higher education structures (the resistance-alignment paradox) and (2) How to reconcile the demand for immediate action with the much more gradual processes of education (the fast-slow paradox). We will offer the model as an original and inclusive tool for reflection to evaluate past action and a
guide future thinking.

Parallel session 4, 4.2b, Oral presentation (20 mins)
Ruskin modules: Using the SDGs within a critical and active curriculum framework
Dr Alison Greig, Elaine Brown and Beatriz Acevedo, Anglia Ruskin University
In this presentation we will outline the process and challenges of developing and implementing a major educational initiative. From September 2021, all undergraduates will study at least one ‘Ruskin Module’ which brings together students from different disciplines around global and societal challenges. The SDGs provide a convenient framework through which to increase awareness and understanding of these challenges plus an opportunity to develop the critical, creative and reflexive mindsets which underpin ARU’s Educational Strategy.

Parallel session 4, 4.2c, Oral presentation (20 mins)
Internationalisations and sustainability education in sustainable Electrical Engineering
Dr Salma Alarefi, University of Leeds
The inevitable transition towards Engineering Education for Sustainable Engineering Development has made it important to prioritise sustainable literacy and competency as key learning objectives. The latter requires challenging sustained unsustainability practises to ensure that future engineers are responsibly empowered to lead the transition. UK higher education has the potential to accelerate a global transition. Existing efforts remain limited to environmental sustainability and overlook social and economic dimensions. This presentation identifies opportunities for sustainable curriculum integration of sustainability education into the teaching of Sustainable Electrical Engineering through the concept of co-design through critical problem solving.