

UWE Bristol

Sustainability communication and engagement framework

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Scope

This document describes the UWE Bristol strategy and plan for the communication and engagement activity that supports the university's environmental and sustainability commitments. The university is committed to some challenging environmental sustainability goals, as set out in Strategy 2030 and Transforming Futures: Climate Action & Sustainability Strategy (CASS). Achievement of these goals will not be possible without effective communication and engagement.

UWE Bristol has a strong civic mission and undertakes extensive sustainability related research, outreach and engagement with partners regionally, nationally and globally. While this is promoted via other means, and therefore not directly within the scope of this plan, there are strong overlaps.

The scope of this strategy and plan is concerned with promoting internal student and staff engagement in sustainability to drive successful outcomes across numerous measures.

Engagement Strategy

The prime sustainability impact of UWE Bristol is the degree to which our graduates acquire and exercise the sustainability "literacy" that underpins social, economic and environmental responsibility now and in their futures. This engagement strategy describes how we intend to actively promote this literacy across our staff and student body. Sustainability engagement entails active involvement and participation of individuals - in promoting and adopting sustainable skills, behaviors and practices. Our approach aims to raise awareness, encourage action and motivate individuals to adopt sustainable behaviors into their daily lives.

It's a collective endeavor; everyone has a role to play. Our approach to sustainability engagement is to celebrate this collaborative effort, and to bring students into the work where we can.

Aims and objectives

Our key aim is to embed sustainability into UWE Bristol's ways of working across all colleges and services - into the university culture - by making it inclusive, accessible, and relevant to all staff and students—regardless of background, discipline, or role—through inclusive engagement, diverse representation, and barrier-free participation.

Our objectives are to:

- provide and facilitate wide-ranging opportunities for all students and staff to engage in sustainability as a key part of their university experience;
- raise awareness and where possible showcase best sustainable practices to inspire staff, students and partners to make sustainable and pro-environmental choices;
- develop the skills and knowledge of staff and students to actively contribute to sustainability both at the university and in the wider world;
- ensure that UWE managers are fully aware of the university's environmental sustainability commitments and their responsibility to deliver against these, including engage colleagues and partners on the topic of sustainability;
- ensure that key stakeholders are engaged in the development of new sustainability policy and strategy; and
- utilise accessible language to ensure sustainability is easily comprehensible, inclusive, and open to participation for all staff and students.

The aim of this document is to describe the approach to communications and engagement that will most effectively deliver against the above aims and objectives.

Engagement Plan

This section details how we will implement the engagement strategy.

Roles and responsibilities

Staff and student engagement in various aspects of sustainability is often a requirement of other related university strategies and plans, most notably in Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) and research, carbon management, circular economy and waste management, travel planning and biodiversity management. Responsibilities for engagement and communication therefore often lie with the owners of these plans: “theme leads”. Staff and teams responsible include:

Theme area	Team/staff role responsible
Education for Sustainable Development	Professor of Education for Sustainable Development; Knowledge Exchange for Sustainability Education group/ESD leads
Sustainability in Research	PVC for Research and Knowledge Exchange; Research & External Engagement and Deans of Research and Knowledge Exchange.
Carbon management	Head of Carbon & Energy; Carbon & energy team
Circular Economy & waste management	Head of Circular Economy; Sustainability team
Travel planning	Travel & Access team
Biodiversity	Horticultural manager; Sustainability team

As well as via curricular outreach and civic activity, the following teams have important roles to play in sustainability engagement and communication.

- The Students’ Union at UWE
- FECS Procurement team (i.e. implementation of the Responsible Procurement and Social Value policies)
- Internal Communications
- Student Communications
- Learning and Development Team
- People Services

The above services are centrally funded apart from The Students’ Union at UWE, which receives block grant funding from the university to achieve their mission and purpose. The Students’ Union’s strategic plan articulated their commitment to sustainability as a core value and strategic goal. From time-to-time we will fund projects and/or bring in external partners, to enhance and strengthen the approach.

Delivery mechanisms

This section lists the areas through which the university engages or proposes to engage staff and students.

Staff Engagement

Induction	Inclusion of sustainability in new starter Induction check list Induction film – include in induction check list, send in MyLearning email Staff welcome fair sustainability stalls
Role-specific inductions	e.g. Lab inductions
Training	Carbon and You training Sustainability section in MyLearning
Events	Green week & Fairtrade fortnight, and other as and when appropriate
Staff recognition	Staff awards The Students' Union at UWE's Student Experience Awards (SEAs)
Governance	USEC representation; college committees
Strategy implementation	Departmental action planning sessions
General awareness	Website, intranet, weekly news, departmental newsletters

Student Engagement

Open Day and Offer holder days	Student ambassador's training The Students' Union at UWE is open across all campus sites on open days to promote its core offer, including the green team
Induction	Sustainability Induction film included as a component of all student inductions via Starting Block (SB); accommodation inductions; The Students' Union at UWE delivers comprehensive inductions to programmes across the university in SB (sustainability is a core element showcasing strategy and action at UWE Bristol and The Students' Union at UWE)
Training	Climate Education module
Events	Green week (November); Fairtrade Fortnight (February)
Governance	USEC representation; Responsible Futures auditing and accreditation, course ESD reps
General awareness	Website, intranet, weekly news, departmental newsletters, social media

We will look for ways to enable students to participate in and run sustainability related events and themed pop-ups, to enable peer-to-peer and practical skills-based learning opportunities, in line with a living lab approach, and to enhance skills development and employability.

Funded sustainability engagement projects (via The Students' Union at UWE)

The Students' Union at UWE is committed to empowering students to get involved in and lead on sustainability projects. Here's how funding supports this mission:

- £8,600 via SU Green Team to fund various student-led projects
- Change-for-change programme (£1,000 grants)
- £15,000 annually via the Student Experience Fund (applicants must identify how projects meet UN SDGs)
- Full time Student Sustainability Engagement Coordinator (staff role) to coordinate and facilitate an events programme and support student leaders and volunteers.

This budget has increased by £4,200 from 2021/2022, showing our commitment to resourcing our activity effectively.

Communications Plan

A communication plan is being established with the relevant student and staff communications teams to enable them to plan items into their schedule.

Sustainability Governance

The **University Sustainability Executive Committee (USEC)** ensures the implementation of the climate action and sustainable strategy and associated supporting plans and initiatives. Membership of the USEC reflects the constituent parts of the university and those involved in the delivery and influence of sustainability across teaching, research, community/civic partnerships, services and operations.

Student Union and Trade Union representation

The University has a strong partnership approach to sustainability governance - The President and Vice President of the Students' Union as well as the sustainability leads from the University and College Union (UCU), Unite and Unison are formally established as members of the USEC. The USEC is currently chaired by Pro-Vice Chancellor & Head of College of Arts, Technology and Environment through which the USEC has direct reporting line to the Vice Chancellors Executive.

Sustainability action planning

We will continue to embed sustainability via departmental action planning sessions. Members of the climate action and sustainability team will facilitate workshops with representatives of college and professional services departments. The aim of these workshops is to develop detailed locally-owned action plans that will be approved and resourced by departmental directors, that effectively translate strategy into practice, stimulating innovative practice and embedding environmental, social and financial sustainability into all operations. Actions will be tested for their relevance to strategic objectives, their degree of impact and the degree of control/influence the university is able to exert.

Delivery will be periodically checked via internal audit cycles and modified if necessary.

Measuring progress

Progress will be tracked against parameters outlined in the table below, aligned with our strategic ambitions and priority actions. Oversight of this process will be provided by reporting to the University Sustainability Executive Committee, ensuring that insights directly inform strategic decision-making.

Activity	Baseline Data	Target
Green Week (1st week November) - partnership with SU	Previous green fortnight (Nov 2024): 63 events delivered to 1400 attendees	Deliver Green Week November 2025 with new "steering group" delivery model; focus on impact evaluation.
Student induction film - partnership with SU	Academic year 2024/25: 840 plus 2300 on you tube	20% increase in views
Staff induction	Welcome fairs 2023/24: 5 fairs with sustainability stalls	Welcome fairs 2024/25 To include Sustainability stall at all fairs
Staff online training	2022/23: 244 completions of Carbon & You series	50% increase

Climate Education module	2023/24: 490 enrolments	20% increase
Sustainability action planning	2023/24: workshops on hold 2022/23: 7 departmental action plans developed	% of university covered by an action plan, with aim to cover 100%

Appendix 1: Strategy and policy development

From time to time it is necessary to refresh our sustainability strategy and develop new policy on emerging sustainability risks. Engagement and consultation will be conducted using the following framework.

Stakeholder group:	Authorise	Inform	Take early direction from	Consult via strategy workshop	Consult via event	Consult/inform via team meeting attendance	Aspects/impacts workshop	Curriculum
Board of governors/VCE								
Sustainability Executive Committee	*							
Senior management team (Directorate)	*							
Academic board								
Staff								
Academic staff								
Professional services staff								
Faculty management								
Unions								
Student Union								
Relevant student cohorts								
Students								

- Action/implementation plans under the Climate Action & Sustainability Strategy will be recommended for approval by the University Sustainability Executive Committee, and signed off by Vice Chancellor's Exec.