

# UWE Bristol

## Sustainability communication and engagement framework



This document describes the framework for the communication and engagement activity that support 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 communications and engagement.

## Rationale for effective communications and engagement

The prime sustainability impact of UWE Bristol is the degree to which our graduates acquire the sustainability "literacy" that underpins social, economic and environmental responsibility now and in their futures.

There are strong *operational* rationales for communicating and engaging to promote pro-environmental behaviors, and there are equally strong rationales around engendering positive *student outcomes and attributes* as outlined in the Graduate Attribute framework, that our graduates be "globally responsible and future-facing". This framework aims to capture both.

This framework aligns to the following strategies and drivers:

- UWE Bristol's core business strategies including Strategy 2030
- UWE Bristol's values: ambitious, inclusive, innovative, collaborative and enterprising
- Making sustainability progress more visible thereby increasing overall awareness and contributing to the education of our students
- To promote civic engagement and a sense of community within our student body
- Consideration of the most effective timings in the staff and student "lifecycle"

## Aims and objectives

Our key aim is to embed sustainability into UWE Bristol's ways of working across all faculties and services and in so doing to create a positive and empowering culture. Through the application of this framework we aim 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 practice 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
- ensure managers are informed and able to engage their staff on the topic of sustainability
- ensure that key stakeholders are engaged in the development of new sustainability policy and strategy

The aim of this document is to describe the approach to communications and engagement that will most effectively deliver against the above aims, and to map the likely interest and influence of key target audiences / stakeholders.

- to consider the messages and desired behaviours of such stakeholders
- to consider the level of information to be communicated and its timing
- to consider the appropriate method of engagement/communication

## Over-arching principles

Certain principles will govern communications and engagement activity around sustainability, as follows:

- to be evidence-based
- to be solutions focused
- to offer and promote positive action
- to link to wider “big picture” challenges and opportunities
- to ensure compliance with external requirements
- to use the United Nations SDGs to unify communication activity
- to provide opportunities for students and staff to help set the sustainability agenda
- to encourage students and staff to engage in improving the University’s environmental sustainability performance
- to provide opportunities for students and staff to engage in the study of sustainability within the curriculum

## Supporting sustainability action plans

TF:CASS (UWE sustainability strategy) is supported by a series of Action Plans providing the shorter term engagement with the ambitions of the CASS. These plans include:

- Landscape and Biodiversity
- Carbon and Energy Management
- Circular Economy
- Education for Sustainable Development
- Sustainable Food
- Travel action
- Water Management
- Scope 3 action
- Plastics action

Many of these plans will require effective communications and engagement activity to promote the behaviour change that contributes to meeting the stated objectives.

The sustainability engagement coordinator assists in facilitating engagement activities throughout the academic year, using the framework timetable shown below (Appendix A).

## Responsibilities and Resources

The sustainability engagement coordinator is responsible for maintaining a programme of events and engagement opportunities that contribute to the aims set out in this framework, and for promoting these engagement opportunities to staff, students and external partners.

The UWE Students' Union is a key partner in this approach, and ongoing joint working is vital to the success of this framework. In particular the sustainability engagement coordinator will liaise closely with the relevant elected presidents, student reps and the Green Team.

Thematic lead professionals are responsible for developing of other relevant content for the detailed engagement and communications activities relevant to their areas; supported by the engagement coordinator and working with other appropriate university teams (including UWE strategic communications & marketing, The Student Union marketing team, Accommodation Services and others as appropriate).

The sustainability engagement coordinator shall ensure that opportunities are available in support of the theme areas. The approximate split of this will be as follows:

- Resource efficiency (Energy and carbon reduction, water reduction, waste and resources management/circular economy) 20%
- Sustainable/active travel 20%
- Wellbeing/biodiversity via the university /surrounding environment 20%
- Wellbeing/sustainability via the food system 20%
- Other related ongoing emerging key issues such as inequality, a just transition, climate justice, climate anxiety 20%

Education and Sustainable Development (ESD) and practice-based opportunities cross-cut the above themes and all theme professionals will find opportunities for student involvement and learning within their services, with the assistance and support of the sustainability engagement coordinator. ESD spans all the thematic areas and is led by Professor Georgie Gough. All thematic leads have a responsibility to promote opportunities for student involvement that contribute to the university's core purpose of being an educator i.e. in this context being sustainably literate.

The engagement coordinator will promote such opportunities to all relevant parties as appropriate.

ESD is embedded within the university curricula and is promoted at various levels throughout the academic community. This includes the annual ESD conference, the teaching and learning conference, and via the Knowledge Exchange for Sustainable Education (KESE) network.

Specific roles and responsibilities will from time to time be required to fulfil campaigns or work programmes. These will be arranged in such a way to avoid unnecessary duplication of effort. One such programme will be UWE Bristol climate action programme, outlined in the following section.

Resource requirements to support such programmes have also been considered and while a significant proportion of resource will be drawn from the Sustainability and Energy teams currently working on leading these campaigns, a university wide approach will require additional support. Key teams for this will include:

- Accommodation Services
- Internal Communications
- Information Technology Services

- Learning and Development Team
- Human Resources

The input of expertise and time from these teams will be essential to ensure that the campaigns can be effectively delivered and a University-wide approach taken.

## Overarching campaigns – climate action programme

Climate change mitigation is the overarching theme year-to-year with clear links to individual behaviours students and staff can take while at UWE and at home, to contribute to reduced environmental impacts.

The **Climate Action Programme** describes the programme of works to support the changes that are necessary in pursuit of UWE Bristol’s net zero carbon commitment. Particularly relevant action plans are:

- Carbon and energy reduction,
- Travel plan,
- Circular economy and waste prevention, including plastics
- Water management
- Food and drink consumption.

The CAP will be a key strand of the university’s sustainability work for the next two years, at which point it will be reviewed alongside reviews of the relevant action plans.

Focus areas will be agreed and planned for each academic year going forward. The outline plan for the CAP for 2021/22 and 2022/23 along with roles & responsibilities are shown in Appendix B.

### Note on external partners

Some communication and engagement is more appropriately delivered by external parties and service providers. Where information is subject to change it is more effective to link directly to the information source rather than attempt to replicate it and then have to maintain accuracy.

Where possible and appropriate we will engage external partners to deliver face-to-face engagement activities on our campuses, both by way of external speakers for lectures as well as stalls and pop-up activities.

## Appendix A: Annual engagement timetable

This section details the engagement and communications activities and where they fit into the student and staff lifecycle and/or to the academic year, and the communication/engagement methods or channels which are most appropriate for each stakeholder group

Subject to change in 2020/21 period due to Covid-19 effects

| Engagement - timing critical activity   | September | October | November | December | January         | February | March | April | May | June | July | August |
|---|-----------|---------|----------|----------|-----------------|----------|-------|-------|-----|------|------|--------|
| Training of student ambassadors   |           |         |          |          |                 |          |       |       |     |      |      |        |
| Student welcome and induction<br>Newly enrolling / Students   |           |         |          |          | Glenside intake |          |       |       |     |      |      |        |
| Accommodation induction talks<br>New resident students  |           |         |          |          |                 |          |       |       |     |      |      |        |
| Freshers' Fair<br>Newly enrolling students  |           |         |          |          |                 |          |       |       |     |      |      |        |
| Staff welcome fair<br>New staff   |           |         |          |          |                 |          |       |       |     |      |      |        |
| Easter and Christmas shut down messaging<br>All staff   |           |         |          |          |                 |          |       |       |     |      |      |        |
| Targeted stalls/pop-up shops/campaign<br>All staff and students   |           |         |          |          |                 |          |       |       |     |      |      |        |
| Welcome week for International students<br>International students   |           |         |          |          |                 |          |       |       |     |      |      |        |
| Sustainability fortnight<br>All staff and students  |           |         |          |          |                 |          |       |       |     |      |      |        |
| Feel Good February<br>All staff and students  |           |         |          |          |                 |          |       |       |     |      |      |        |
| Fairtrade fortnight<br>All staff and students   |           |         |          |          |                 |          |       |       |     |      |      |        |
| City Challenge / Festival of Nature<br>Students / Staff/ Public   |           |         |          |          |                 |          |       |       |     |      |      |        |
| UWE Teaching and Learning conference<br>Academic staff  |           |         |          |          |                 |          |       |       |     |      |      |        |
| UWE staff awards - stall and activities<br>All staff  |           |         |          |          |                 |          |       |       |     |      |      |        |
| UWE Education for Sustainable Development conference<br>Academic staff  |           |         |          |          |                 |          |       |       |     |      |      |        |
| Big Give campaign<br>Residential students (off and on site)   |           |         |          |          |                 |          |       |       |     |      |      |        |
| Climate action programme and climate action cafes with staff ongoing throughout the year PLUS campus Biodiversity tours and sustainable Travel events |           |         |          |          |                 |          |       |       |     |      |      |        |
| Carbon literacy training ongoing  |           |         |          |          |                 |          |       |       |     |      |      |        |

## Appendix B: Climate Action Programme – 2-year plan

| Type                 | Action   | Resources                                   | Measure / target   | Responsibility  | Notes (with role/responsibility in blue)   |
|----------------------|--|---|--|---|--|
| <b>Year one</b>      |  |   |  |   |  |
| Information          | Update website content including actions that people can take to achieve change              | Time and data, technical support            | All intranet and website content updated                                   | Energy and Sustainability teams<br>ITS / webeditors and Marketing for support         | Completed and to be reviewed on annual basis. VH working with SU and academics to coordinate New photographic and video content to be requested. |
| Information          | Launch of climate action programme online or otherwise                                       | Time, technical support                     | General launch of programme  | Energy and Sustainability teams<br>Abbie Basketter to lead                            | Abbie Basketter to lead. Ist module on carbon literacy launched in 2021/22, more to follow   |
| Information          | Creation of carbon metrics database  | Time and data, tech support                 | Database built and data sourced from relevant UWE teams                    | E&F technologies team with data sourced from Energy, Sustainability, Finance & Travel | E&F Technologies Team  |
| Information          | Production of intranet page outlining what is available through the climate action programme | Time and web team support                   | Produce page to align with launch of first carbon literacy training module | Energy and Sustainability teams, Abbie Basketter to lead                              | Abbie Basketter to lead  |
| Performance feedback | Launch of carbon performance data by faculty/building (as data allows)                       | Time, data availability                     | Quarterly updates  | As above, and internal comms (intranet hosting)                                       | Abbie Basketter Energy Team  |
| Performance feedback | Sharing of carbon performance data by faculty/building (as data allows)                      | Time, data availability                     | Provided to teams as data available  | Energy team   | Abbie Basketter Energy Team  |
| Performance feedback | Preparing data for potential use in carbon budget/cap scheme. Identifying gaps               | Time, budget for installation of sub meters | Provided to teams as data is available                                     | Energy Team   | Abbie Basketter Energy Team  |



|                       |   |                         |   |   |  |
|-----------------------|---|-------------------------|---|---|--|
|                       | in data and filling/estimating these as possible  |                         |   |   |  |
| Training              | Carbon literacy training - for all staff and students   | Time, technical support | Production of e-module available to all staff and students – ideally to be introduced into induction and mandatory training | Energy and Sustainability teams<br>Students Union sustainability team<br>Learning & Development | Training launched in 2021/22 to all staff – optional at present – and to be reviewed on an ongoing and annual basis<br>Abbie Basketter to lead   |
| Social norms          | Creation of a language and branding to adopt across all communications that fits with Transforming Futures and sustainable culture shift          | Time                    |   | Energy and Sustainability teams<br>Comms<br>HR  | VH: Coordination of comms via range of internal comms channels working with Anthony Poploski Internal Communications manager<br><br>KN/PR - develop set of slides with cohesive content<br><br>SDGs to be more widely used – making use of the Good Life Goals as an accessible option<br><br>PR/JL – via ISO14001 sustainability exchanges with faculties and services. |
| Community development | Creation and launch of a central bank of sustainability actions and ideas already implemented by individual teams or groups for others to access. | Time                    | Completed and launched by end of year one.  | Energy and Sustainability teams   | CAC teams group set up but not being accessed<br><br>Keeping track of all the ideas being implemented would be challenging but possible for the key ones and can be included in the crib sheet. Vicki Harris and Louise Hart to lead<br><br>Identify mechanism to encourage and capture student ideas in addition to ad hoc approach at present                          |

|                       |  |                         |   |   |   |
|-----------------------|--|-------------------------|---|---|---|
| Community development | Rolling out series of Climate Action cafés for groups across UWE   | Time                    | Minimum 1 per month   | Energy & Sustainability Teams Comms   | Doable initially in Teams or Zoom. Tie in with #buildbackbetter VH to coordinate. |
| Year two              |  |                         |   |   |   |
| Training              | Focused training for managers and team leaders in key areas<br>Focused training for academic programme leaders   |                         | Development and trial of tailored training sessions for specific groups or teams – with at least one academic and one professional service. | Energy & Sustainability teams<br>Students Union sustainability team                               | AB responsible for coordinating in liaison with LDC and relevant stakeholders     |
| Training              | Roll out of general e-module training to increase carbon literacy across UWE   | Time, technical support | Training of 100% of staff and 100% of new intake students (Undergraduates).   | Energy & Sustainability teams<br>Students Union sustainability team<br>Learning & Development ITS | AB responsible for coordinating in liaison with LDC and relevant stakeholders     |
| Information           | Roll out of control information for buildings where users have primary control – equipment, heating controls, how to use buildings most efficiently etc. | Time                    |   |   | Abbie Basketter Energy team   |
| Social norms          | Case studies released in a variety of forms e.g. blogs, vlogs, pops ups, internal newsletters etc. giving personal stories of change.                    | Time                    | Minimum 1 per month   | Energy & Sustainability Teams Comms   | All . Using Green Gown submissions possible. VH in liaison with internal comms.   |

|                       |  |      |                     |                                     |   |
|-----------------------|--|------|---------------------|-------------------------------------|---|
| Community development | Rolling out series of Climate Action cafés for groups across UWE | Time | Minimum 1 per month | Energy & Sustainability Teams Comms | VH to coordinate, and including members of Sustainability Energy Travel and other teams as appropriate, |
|                       |  |      |                     |                                     |   |

## Appendix C: Audiences and methods for engagement and communication

Key stakeholder groupings have been identified as such:

### Internal stakeholders

- Students' Union Staff including particular key groupings e.g. community section staff
- UWE staff, including key people e.g. service champions and academic subject area staff
- Elected Student Representatives, including key people e.g. sustainability officer and green team elected representatives
- Green team student supporters
- Staff sustainability supporters network
- Undergraduate and postgraduate students
- Resident students i.e. that are living in UWE halls of residence
- University senior management team
- Wider staff and students

### External stakeholders

- Visitors and customers (i.e. conference organisers, attendees, CPD attendees etc)
- Regional communities of interest such as Bristol Green Capital Partnership, Bristol Sustainable Food city, Bristol Natural History Consortium
- Neighbouring local authorities
- Suppliers and contractors in our supply chain
- EAUC, HESA
- Our partners
- Other HEIs
- Prospective and future students
- Parents/carers of students
- Prospective employers and industry bodies
- NUS People and Planet
- Neighbouring residential communities

## Appendix D: Methods of communication and engagement – internal stakeholders

This list describes the channels of communication and engagement with our internal stakeholders (students and staff).

- The sustainability webpages (Link)
- Internal communications: pop-ups, weekly internal news emails, intranet and Bower Ashton blog
- Social media: Green Uwe Facebook, Travel Twitter, SU twitter and Facebook accounts
- Posters and signage
- Internal Audit cycle
- Meetings and working groups
- Student Newsletter, Accommodation emails and Accommodation handbook
- Through events and activities such as the staff welcome fair, Students Fresher's fair or 'Big Green week'
- Written case studies and evidence – use Green Gowns applications
- Teaching and learning within the curriculum
- Online learning platforms for presentations and training - Blackboard Collaborate, Microsoft Teams
- Online discussions apps – Microsoft Teams, Yammer

## Methods of communication and engagement – external stakeholders

- Prospectuses
- Press releases
- Website
- University tenders
- Pre-event information (e.g. ECC customers, CPD events)
- External speaking engagements
- Door-knocking activity (e.g. Love where you live campaign, Big Give)
- Email
- Written case-studies

UWE Bristol will produce an Annual Sustainability Report, which will be a means of communicating progress towards the targets set out in the CASS and supporting action plans. This builds on the regular internal reporting framework within the UWE Bristol sustainability governance structure (i.e. Sustainability Board and its supporting sub-groups).

We aim to also report on a series of environmental performance metrics via a dashboard of environmental indices, to include quarterly updates on: energy consumption, water consumption, waste and recycling tonnage and recycling performance, paper usage.

## Appendix E: 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                   |           |        |                           |                               |                   |  |                          |            |
| Sustainability Board                 | *         |        |                           |                               |                   |  |                          |            |
| 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 approved by Directorate via Sustainability Board.