

Green League 2010 consultation event

Student Engagement & Curriculum Discussion Group Write-up

Key Agreement: People felt curriculum should be separated from behaviour change.

Curriculum

Danger of annoying some academics, but positive experiences in general, in places where it has been used. With academics finding that there are often parts of their courses which are already relevant to sustainability, that just need developing.

Key Agreement: People wanted the curriculum to be included in the Green League this year.

Alumni chase up to see if they have gone into jobs in sustainability.

Suggested ways to include curriculum:

- Teaching and learning policy
- Do you quantify the amount of sustainability in the curriculum? (Good way to bring staff on board)
- Link environmental reporting to curriculum (ISO2001 – Teaching and learning as criteria)
- Link to Every University that Counts questions:

Proposed Questions:

Based on Universities that Count questions. Group liked these.

Engagement

Some felt it was easier to engage with admin staff than students & academics.

Students can be radical drivers of change, self generating behaviour change.

To engage students drive from SU and other students is important. However, SU's can have other priorities.

Some universities have been engaging with their psychology departments, to look at who they could change behaviour.

One university said that they had done nothing on this so far.

Types of student and staff engagement currently be in used:

- Eco-champions (staff & student)
- Joint venture with Sustrans around cycling
- Invite students to carbon management strategy meetings
- Inter-halls energy saving & recycling competitions
- Removing bad examples of practice i.e. VC's car.
- Informal ways of engagement of students to get input other than through formal meetings.
- Students taking part in auditing process.
- Courses doing projects for estates (Students involved in designing/building anaerobic digester for university)
- Points for volunteering contribute to degree (should shift towards not just environment)
- Students representation (with env role) on all university committees concerned with estates, planning, finance and resource allocation.
- Monitoring behaviours as well as needs and expectations.
- Focus groups.
- Sub-groups for sustainability committee.
- Removing bins from offices.
- Awareness raising campaigns.

What did attendees think of proposed questions:

- Student union/association awards

People were agreed that these were good criteria, as engaging with SU is important.

- Incentives for energy saving for departmental or halls based competitions

Student switch off – people felt you should be able to effect student behaviour in other ways than offering prizes. Although they do run the project and have seen reductions. They are also starting to look at competitions between departments. Questioned what cultural influences are in play. Most people have energy champions.

- Funds for student/staff led sustainability projects

One university has provided participatory budgeting.

Proposed Questions:

1. Can you evidence that any of the following activities have taken place at your institution in the past 12 months?

Activity	Yes/ No	Evidence
Eco-champions		
Students feed into carbon management strategy		
Inter-halls energy saving competition		
Inter-halls recycling competition		
Students representation on all university committees concerned with estates, planning, finance and resource allocation.		
Student union/association took part in Sound Impact Awards		
Environmental competition between university departments		
Funds for student/staff led sustainability projects		
Awareness raising campaigns		
Course work linked to sustainability projects for estates		