



UNIVERSITY OF
GLOUCESTERSHIRE

at Cheltenham and Gloucester



Learning for Sustainable Futures:

Supporting pedagogical and professional development



Learning for Sustainable Futures is an initiative to develop the capabilities of teaching staff, extend dialogue on sustainability in the curriculum and build a community of thinking and practice in Education for Sustainability across academic and professional teams.

This Guide introduces the scheme and its aims and achievements, providing examples of projects carried out through different subject areas and to benefit student learning across the University.

Education for Sustainability at the University

The *Learning for Sustainable Futures* scheme fulfils an important role as part of the University of Gloucestershire's 'whole-of-institution' approach to sustainability. The University has a long history of strategic innovation in Education for Sustainability (EfS) and has formal commitments to embedding EfS principles into student learning experiences right across the curriculum.

Rather than learning 'about sustainability' and providing expert knowledge on sustainability problems, our approach to EfS is focused on changing how we 'do' education: how we empower our students to respond to sustainability imperatives personally and professionally, to improve prospects for people and planet worldwide.



Our EfS Vision and Strategy

We see the core educational value of sustainability as a stimulus for questioning social priorities, structures and change, as part of the role of Higher Education in society. This approach is guided by the ambition that our education and learning in all subject areas is supporting the move towards more sustainable futures by:

- *Encouraging students to envision and work towards alternative futures*
- *Working collectively towards positive and democratic change*
- *Challenging the mindsets and priorities that drive unsustainable development*
- *Engaging with others to explore shared and divergent interests and needs*
- *Supporting graduates to understand professional responsibilities in this area*

Our commitment and efforts are directed to the use of EfS principles in rethinking our teaching methods, revising our courses, recasting our education priorities and reorienting our academic communities.

The Learning for Sustainable Futures Scheme

Learning for Sustainable Futures was launched in 2012 as a collaborative initiative between the University's Sustainability Team and Academic Development Unit. It provides grants for staff to lead and develop new projects that help to embed EfS approaches into the curriculum and student learning experiences.

Projects established through this scheme support the University's EfS ambitions and the implementation of its Learning and Teaching Strategy. This is part of our institutional approach to enhancing the quality of learning and teaching across all subject areas.

Grants are awarded through an annual call for project proposals and award holders receive funds from the scheme as well as additional guidance to develop their projects over the course of the following academic year.

Support provided by the Sustainability Team includes 1-1 advice and mentoring for project leaders, as well as informal gatherings of colleagues working on projects across faculties, to share ideas, make connections and provide peer support through the process.

Supporting Staff Development

Project leaders in the LFSF scheme benefit from:

- *Development funds to release time from teaching duties and focus on curriculum innovation*
- *Tailored guidance on EfS and expert mentoring from external specialists in their area*
- *CPD Opportunities for professional exchanges and through internal and external events*



Professional Exchange and External Involvement

Learning for Sustainable Futures has been replicated by other universities and has engaged in collaborative activities with other Higher Education institutions, to share thinking and best practice on EfS, curriculum innovation and institutional change.

Visiting scholars and EfS experts regularly take part in the scheme, bringing fresh perspectives, subject-specific guidance and professional support to project leaders.

Project leaders are able to showcase and reflect on their work by contributing to an annual national teaching and learning event at the University. This brings together colleagues and students, regional partners and a range of EfS experts and participants from HE institutions across the UK.

Malawi and Beyond: Transformative Global Learning in Sports for Development

This project draws on the sustainability-related learning and skills that are developed through the University's successful Sports Malawi project and seeks to transfer these insights and learning processes into the Sports Development curriculum using EfS approaches.



Project Leader: Ben Moreland
Lecturer in Placements and Outreach – School of Sport and Exercise

"Collaborating with the Education for Sustainability team has surpassed my expectations. It has enabled the module to develop in unexpected directions, facilitating innovative and challenging learning environments for both students and staff."

Project Summary:

What is the intention of this project?

The ambition of this project is to develop an integrated pedagogical framework and linked assessment process for the Sports Development curriculum. It uses EfS approaches to help students to analyse global-social structures and power dynamics, stakeholder values and interests, and to build capabilities for change and for critically reflective practice. It aims to draw out insights and learning opportunities for EfS from the University's award-winning Sports Malawi outreach initiative that provides students with real experience of sustainability through working on projects in Malawi.

How does the project work?

The project process involves the development of a set of pedagogical principles that connect EfS skills and

capabilities into the Sports Development subject area. This EfS framework then forms the basis for the development of module content, learning processes and the design of an assessment activity that focuses on the application of EfS in real community projects and professional scenarios, informed by the experiences gained in the Sports Malawi initiative.

What is significant about the project?

This project is developing a distinctive EfS approach within the sports curriculum, based on an adaptable framework that has real potential for transfer more widely within sports disciplines and also in many subject areas, particularly those with professional and community focus. It is also unique in the attempt to connect EfS with existing University outreach projects, using EfS principles to bring co-curricular learning effectively into the formal curriculum.

ESD in EDS: Building Competencies for Future-Facing Education Systems

This is the second phase of a successful 12-13 LFSF project in Education Studies, which aims to develop a portfolio for students to demonstrate and validate the development of EfS competencies, drawing on a UNECE European educator competences framework in EfS.

Project Leaders: *Institute of Education and Public Services*



Richard Millican
Subject Group Leader -
Young Peoples Service
in Education

"The project has been a great opportunity to sit back and think about what we do on the course and how the threads of sustainability and social justice are woven into it. It has also been a chance to engage with the UNECE competence statements and to reflect on what it is we really want to try to achieve with the students with respect to ESD."



Tim Morgan
Senior Lecturer, Primary
Education

Designing Sustainable Futures

This project is embedding EfS principles in the new BA/BSc Product Design, to ensure that students develop sustainability capabilities throughout the curriculum, reflected in specific skills and expertise as well as the professional responsibilities of graduates.



Project Leader: Dr Michelle Williams
Senior Lecturer in Product Design - School of
Computing and Technology

"The future holds great challenges for new designers and this project will help to shape the curriculum to support graduates in meeting these challenges. Product Design students will learn about cutting edge approaches for sustainable design and to critique existing products. They will also be given rewarding opportunities to create innovative commercial solutions for a profession in a sustainable future."

Project Summary:

What is the intention of this project?

It uses an EfS competence framework for educators developed by European member states, to embed EfS into the teaching and learning process in Education Studies. Phase 1 in 12-13 mapped and systematically embedded the principles across the Education Studies programme and formalised the changes through the annual review and assurance process. Phase 2 is focused on the creation of a portfolio for students to track the development of competencies that aligns with the formal assessment process and supports their ongoing professional reflection.

How does the project work?

The course team is using the core EfS competences to develop an approach to portfolio-based assessment that has

relevance to real professional scenarios for Education Studies graduates. The process will be tested with students during 13-14 and presented to staff for evaluation and development of the evidence needed and the learning and reflection that underpin the competencies.

What is significant about the project?

The project is one of the first to attempt to use the newly released UNECE competence framework to bring EfS principles into the HE curriculum at programme level. It also takes the unique step of transferring the framework into a professional portfolio for students, creating a tool that will be applicable and usable across a wide range of subjects and professions.

Project Summary:

What is the intention of this project?

This project is attempting to integrate an EfS approach into the development of the new Product Design curriculum at the University. In this subject area, sustainability considerations are prominent, reflecting holistically on the whole of the design process, throwaway culture, product repair, material selection, the manufacture process and the wellbeing of people. This project seeks to extend graduate capabilities to connect this type of expertise with deeper understanding of how sustainability informs design thinking, human factors, responsible sourcing, professional practice, strategic vision, accountability and change leadership in this industry.

How does the project work?

The project involves the course leader in developing a subject-specific approach

to EfS through the validation and curriculum design phases, with attention to overarching programme outcomes, learning processes and assessment practices at each level of the course, culminating in live industry projects for companies. Professional development work and pedagogical inquiry will provide the basis for sharing this approach with relevant departmental colleagues and the creation of appropriate learning tools and guidance briefs for students.

What is significant about the project?

This project takes a subject area where sustainability might be assumed to already be fully embedded and seeks to extend the critical educational and professional learning dimensions of this curriculum, to truly reflect an EfS approach, taking broad perspective on the purposes, benefits and impacts of design, international contexts, and the reorientation of professional and industry practices and priorities.

Online Learning for the Future through Islamic Philosophy

This project seeks to engage students in Philosophy and Religion with EfS to support learning processes associated with the move towards alternative and more sustainable futures, using new learning technologies and the creation of virtual classes and digital resources linked to the teaching of Islamic ethics and philosophy.



Project Leader: Roy Jackson
Reader in Philosophy of Religion – School of Humanities

“Working on this project has allowed me the luxury of time, not only to reflect upon my own teaching, but to make use of technologies and other resources that would not have otherwise been possible. Most importantly, it has provided me with a focus to my field of research in terms of engaging with sustainability issues and producing material that questions traditional mindsets.”

Fashioning a new curriculum through Education for Sustainability

This project aims to embed EfS approaches into the design and development process for the new Fashion Design curriculum, creating a programme-wide approach to EfS in Fashion.

Project Leaders: School of Art and Design



Satyen Patel
Senior Lecturer in Fashion Design

“Fashion Design is a new subject area for the University. Right from the start we were aware that we should build on our University expertise in Sustainability so that students can explore this area more deeply and both creatively and theoretically. Efs has helped focus our attention on this and has enabled us to market the new course with Education for Sustainability very much to the fore as a USP of study at Cheltenham.”



Nick Sargeant
Subject Group Leader, Design

Project Summary:

What is the intention of this project?

The project seeks to bring EfS principles into Philosophy and Religion, to support students in understanding and critically engaging with the ways that different worldviews, values, assumptions and ideals contribute to possible socio-political futures. The project also explores ways to bring EfS approaches to life in flexible learning environments, through a programme geared to distance learning and the use of digital technologies.

How does the project work?

It focuses on the specific example of Islamic philosophy as part of the design process for a new Masters programme in Philosophy and Religious Thought. The creation of digital ‘classes’ with new online learning activities are framed using EfS pedagogies suited to the subject area,

focusing on how EfS helps to engage students with alternative moral, social and political viewpoints as well as the potential for the construction of different and more sustainable futures.

What is significant about the project?

The project is bringing EfS into connection with Philosophy and Religion, which is an unusual and new step in the development of teaching and learning in this discipline. It is also unique in its aim of locating EfS approaches in the flexible learning arena and finding meaningful ways to engage in EfS using remote and online learning tools.

Project Summary:

What is the intention of this project?

The project aims to create a unique approach to EfS within the new Fashion Design curriculum under development at the University, which responds to the need for skills and leadership in sustainability within the industry. The ambition is to ensure that EfS approaches inform the learning process at all levels, from creative expression and design skills, to industry experience and professional skills, as well as self-direction and professional responsibilities. The process will connect widely across important entry points for the learning process such as ethical trade, supply chain and labour rights issues, cultural values, identity and consumer choices, brand power and corporate social responsibility.

How does the project work?

The project works closely with the new course leader as well as the subject group leader and relevant departmental colleagues, to develop a specific approach to EfS in Fashion Design and ensure this

is articulated and framed coherently through key stages in the validation and recruitment process. Curriculum design and development will focus on anchoring the approach through activities and assessments appropriate to each level of the course, connecting the professional responsibility concerns of EfS with industry frameworks for sustainability in fashion, and integrating the learning process into the development of final year collections and projects, as well as career and business development.

What is significant about the project?

It provides an opportunity to engage with EfS from initial stages of curriculum development, through the vision, rationale and market positioning of the new programme, as well as the design of learning activities and assessments. This brings insights into how EfS can support the industry focus, creative ethos and values of HE programmes, as well as identifying the kinds of support and resources needed to ensure staff capacity for the delivery of effective EfS.

Hearing student voices to help shape the future

This project supports the creation of Open Voice, a 'Public Square' initiative, led by students and facilitated by Chaplaincy, to hold interactive debates on issues of life, faith and meaning that are important to students and connect with sustainability values and concerns.



Project Leader: Bruce Goodwin
Senior Chaplain - Student Services

"Trying to establish a space in the public domain for student engagement with deeper issues has been an exciting, challenging, frustrating and fascinating experience, but a vitally important one. If we can give students a chance to share their views in a conducive environment where they will be listened to and respected, and some go away thinking differently, we will feel we have succeeded."

Envisioning Tourism Futures

This is the second phase of a successful 12-13 LFSF project that developed a framework for EfS in Tourism Management, covering values, knowledge, skills, competencies, delivery and methods. Phase 2 aims to bring the framework into the routine teaching practices and curriculum development of the department, taking account of connections with partners and industry.



Project Leader: Angela Kalisch
Senior Lecturer in Tourism Management – School of Leisure

"This process has made me think more about my approach to teaching and my relationship with students, in bringing the complexities of sustainability to them. It has helped to develop my clarity and a constructive process - and has given me a buzz and an enthusiasm, as well as valuable opportunities to connect with other colleagues."

Project Summary:

What is the intention of this project?

The ambition is to create new spaces and activities at the University for informal and social learning among the student body, holding discussions that connect with the work of the Sustainability and Chaplaincy teams. The University straddles three campus communities and has few shared spaces for students to engage with one another informally to explore their views and priorities around their life choices, spirituality, motivations and professional pathways, as well as their engagement with issues such as social change, poverty, justice, addiction, wellbeing and creativity.

How does the project work?

A working group brings together representatives of the student body, Christian Union and Student Union with members of the Chaplaincy and

Sustainability team, to devise, plan and deliver events on issues and themes decided by the student group. Involvement and contributions will be invited from external speakers, honorary graduates and student societies – and the project connects with ongoing work around the extension of the University's Anglican community and identity.

What is significant about the project?

The project is an important initiative for the University in extending informal and social learning opportunities and bringing EfS into the wider student experience. It is also a significant step in bridging the faith and sustainability agendas in the HE setting, to identify common points of focus and shared values, in helping to improve the lives of students, their communities and prospects.

Project Summary:

What is the intention of this project?

It aims to build capacity and deepen engagement with EfS principles across the teaching team in the Tourism Management department, moving from individual innovations to a shared approach that informs the wider thinking and development of the curriculum in this subject. A skeleton framework has already been developed and the aim is to test and develop the model so that it informs teaching and learning practices across the department and through different entry points such as tourism impacts, eco-tourism and poverty tourism, responsible practices and accountability, cross-cultural dynamics and diversity, and global-local socio-economic issues.

How does the project work?

The project works with the department through development meetings and CPD workshops to refine and integrate the EfS in Tourism Management framework that was developed in 12-13. The process will lead to more explicit shared approaches and an action plan for departmental-level curriculum development efforts as well as strategic work with industry stakeholders.

What is significant about the project?

Very few innovations in EfS in specific subjects manage to achieve the translation of principles into the disciplinary context, as well as the engagement of the entire team. This project seeks to scale up EfS past the level of the lone pioneer, by working on the adoption and refinement of an explicit and shareable approach that becomes part of the vision and practice of Tourism Management teaching.

Changing the Game: education and learning for sustainability in sport

This project seeks to meet the growth in industry professional development needs around sustainability in sport, by building the capacity of staff in the Sport and Exercise department, to enable them to respond to sustainability in the HE curriculum, placement activities and outreach work.



Project Leader: Dr Abbe Brady Course Lead, MSc Sports Coaching – School of Sport and Exercise

“The project team are excited about the many opportunities we have to extend our own awareness of EfS and share this with other staff and students in the School. Via the project we intend to embed key messages and practices around sustainability into our T&L activities and we focus especially on the placement modules. We know via their placement experiences our students gain much and make an enormous contribution to the local community and we hope to enhance such outcomes through engagement with sustainable practices.”

‘But what do students want?’ Education for Sustainability in the Business School

This project aims to strengthen how the student voice informs the development of EfS in the curriculum at the University, with specific focus on new plans for the Business School and the place of EfS in future academic strategy and curriculum development in business subject areas.

Project Leaders: Student Union



John Abell
General Manager

“The Students’ Union is delighted to be involved in such significant research. Students’ views are vital to developing a relevant curriculum and dealing directly with Business School students is very rewarding. We are really looking forward to the outcomes of this project making a tangible difference to teaching and learning.”



Megan Baker
Research Co-ordinator

Project Summary:

What is the intention of this project?

This development project aims to introduce effective educational, practical and training-based responses to sustainability across the sports subject area at the University. It will provide teaching staff with relevant frameworks, approaches and tools to support the development of new curriculum offerings and training provision informed by EfS.

How does the project work?

The project involves CPD workshops for teaching staff, to develop their understanding of, and engagement with, EfS in relation to sport, generating several strands of ongoing activity. One strand will focus on enhancement work in both the UG and PG curriculum, to reframe assessment practices in line with EfS and develop placement experiences that

engage students in applying their learning in context. Another key strand involves an exploration and development process to create professional training opportunities for industry partners, to be offered through the University.

What is significant about the project?

This is a new wave of activity to introduce learning for sustainability to the sports subject area, through the curriculum, outreach and training, drawing on the University’s existing strengths and diverse range of partnerships. This initiative seeks to embrace sustainability as a cross-cutting agenda connected with areas of existing work in the department including health and wellbeing, community-building and social change, responsible business practice, inclusivity and equality, global connectivity and local engagement.

Project Summary:

What is the intention of this project?

The project aims to effectively position the student voice within the renewal of the Business School, to reflect the motivations, expectations and aspirations of Business School students around EfS as an important priority for their learning experiences and professional development. This will build on the national findings and university-wide data on student demand for EfS in the curriculum, emerging from research carried out by the NUS and HE Academy across the HE sector over the past three years as well as internal inquiries and consultations.

How does the project work?

The inquiry is informed by previous EfS development work and curriculum projects in the Business School and will focus on the interests and needs of students

across its range of programmes. It will explore the channels for students to inform future thinking and academic strategy in the Business School through student representation systems as well as through engagement with senior staff and key meetings linked to the development of the Business School, as well as the University’s local enterprise partnership and social enterprise ventures.

What is significant about the project?

This project will provide important outcomes to inform academic strategy and priorities in the development of one of the University’s core curriculum areas, focusing on the ways in which students can be positioned ‘at the heart of the system’ and how they can influence the ways in which their learning experiences are shaped and planned.

HE Sector Context for EfS

In the UK and worldwide, with impetus from the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (2005-2014), commitment to EfS (also known as ESD) has been steadily growing across the Higher Education sector. There is an increasing recognition that EfS is best understood as part of the civic responsibility of universities, to act as beacons for societies in their efforts to respond to complex global challenges.

The key UK sector agencies have embraced EfS in their core priorities and are incentivising universities to engage effectively with this education agenda, encouraging innovation in the sector and connecting EfS with developments in flexible learning, outreach, internationalisation and research.



UK Higher Education Agencies and EfS

The Higher Education Academy:

- Adopted Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) as a priority in its Strategic Plan 2012-16 as important 'contemporary challenge' for HE teaching and learning.
- Has invested in ESD since 2005, including the Green Academy change process; annual student surveys with NUS; and a range of specific curriculum development projects within specific disciplines and for inter-disciplinary teaching and learning.

The Quality Assurance Agency:

- ESD is a QAA priority research and development theme included in the teaching and learning chapter (B3, p8) of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education.
- Released national guidance on ESD in 2014 with the Higher Education Academy, outlining how ESD can inform curriculum development and graduate outcomes.

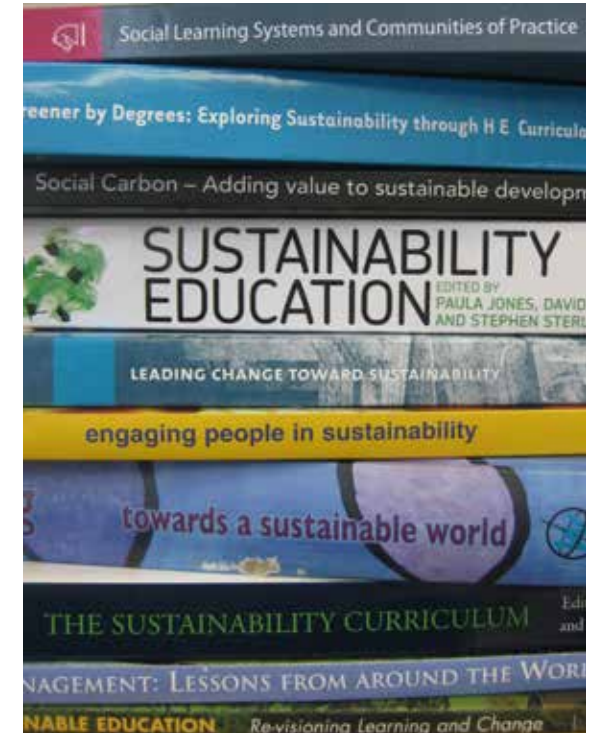
The National Union of Students:

- Worked with HEA to research student interest in ESD over 3 years (2011-13), showing student demand for reframing curricula using ESD and expectations that experience in this area will be key to their future employment prospects.
- Supports projects across UK universities through its Students Green Fund initiative, including activities to develop skills and capabilities linked to sustainability.



The *Learning for Sustainable Futures* scheme won the Highly Commended award in the UK 2013 national Green Gown Awards. The Judging Panel commented:

"A comprehensive and strategic approach to CPD in sustainable development using a modest investment to develop a high impact approach with wide potential transferability."



Further Information:

Learning for Sustainable Futures Scheme:

<http://insight.glos.ac.uk/sustainability/Education/learningforsustainablefutures>

Education for Sustainability at the University:

<http://insight.glos.ac.uk/sustainability/Education>

Academic Development Unit:

<https://infonyet.glos.ac.uk/DEPARTMENTS/ADU>

Education for Sustainability Guides:

<http://insight.glos.ac.uk/sustainability/Education/Pages/EducationforSustainabilityGuides.aspx>

Education for Sustainability Resources:

<http://insight.glos.ac.uk/sustainability/Education/Pages/EfSResources.aspx>

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Learning for Sustainable Futures:

Scheme web pages can be viewed at <http://insight.glos.ac.uk/sustainability/Education/learningforsustainablefutures>

This brochure can be downloaded in PDF format at: <http://insight.glos.ac.uk/sustainability/Education/Pages/EfSResources.aspx>



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