Embedding Education for Sustainable Development at Glasgow Caledonian University

GCU Glasgow Caledonian University
University for the Common Good

Strategy **2030**

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT G🔵ALS

World leading in **social innovation**

delivering **transformative education**

and **impactful research**

through **purposeful partnerships**

as a **globally connected University**

with an engaged **University Community** committed to the **Common Good**

Led by our values of Confidence Responsibility Integrity Creativity and the Sustainable Development Goals

Embedding SDGs in the Curriculum working group

- Established autumn 2020, one of several focussed working groups as part of overall SDG steering group, led by PVC Research.

- Chaired by myself, representatives from each of the Academic Schools, Academic Quality, Strategy & Planning, Student Association

- Agreed action plan:
  - **Completed-** influence development of the University's new Strategy for Learning 2030
  - **Early stages of implementation-** Mapping existing activity i.e. curriculum, identifying champions etc; embedding in academic quality processes; staff and student CPD
  - **Ongoing-** external engagement e.g. discipline networks, QAA, AdvanceHE, EAUC, Ellen MacArthur Foundation, PRME etc; student-led activities (societies, student representatives, wider student body)

Strategy for Learning 2030

Delivered across Campuses, Schools, Partnerships and Professional Services

Common Good Attributes

Learner Agency is at the centre of: Active global citizenship; Entrepreneurial Mindset; Systems Thinking; Responsible Leadership; Resilience, Compassion and Empathy; Confidence

Pedagogic Principles

Our pedagogic principles drive the design of our curricula, its delivery and assessment
Underpinned by our values: Confidence, Responsibility, Integrity, Creativity

Priority areas for action

1. Equality of participation and attainment	2. Excellence in learning, teaching and the student experience	3. Enhance employability, knowledge and skills	4. Research-led, globally-aware curriculum	5. Flexible, accessible provision

Key intentions

We will champion equality of participation and attainment for all students.	We will deliver excellence in teaching and the student experience, underpinned by our holistic approach to student support.	We will enhance the employability, knowledge, skills and attributes of our students through collaborative and active learning.	We will embed a commitment to the Sustainable Development Goals to deliver positive impact for societal challenges.	We will facilitate innovative learning which supports flexible provision and a blend of on and off campus experiences.

Delivering our new L&T strategy: priority intentions and actions

4. We will embed a commitment to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) within our research-led, globally aware curriculum to deliver positive impact for the societal challenges of inclusive societies, healthy lives and a sustainable environment.

- Embedding our enhanced Common Good Attributes across our provision.

- Mapping our provision and learning outcomes explicitly to the SDGs.

- Providing our students with opportunities to deliver positive impact on societal challenges throughout their studies and the co-curriculum.

- Ensuring all of our programmes assess students' relevant sustainability competencies.

- Supporting our students to succeed as active global citizens and responsible leaders committed to furthering the Common Good.

- Strengthening our research-teaching nexus, ensuring our curricula are informed by leading developments in research and professional practice.

- Developing an inclusive, enquiry-based and research-led learning approach to curriculum design and student engagement.

Current provision

- Provision explicitly focused on SDGs already e.g.
  - BSc (Hons) and MSc Environmental Management
  - MSc Climate Justice
  - BSc Environmental Civil Engineering
  - MSc in International Economic and Social Justice
  - A range of modules e.g. Poverty, Inequality and wealth; Luxury Branding and Sustainable Marketing; International Marketing Concepts for Ethical and Sustainable Practice; International Management Governance and Sustainability; Resource Management and Circular Economy

- Need for systematic mapping:
  - SDGs are *explicit* in the module (clear from words and narrative used)
  - SDGs are *implicit* in the module (unclear from words and narrative used)
  - SDGs are *not covered* in the module (neither explicit not implicit)

Teaching and Assessing Sustainability Literacies
Case Study 1- MBA Luxury Brand Management

Luxury's social & environmental impact

Sustainable Development in context

Circular Economy

Luxury x Social Enterprise

Sustainability Leadership

Case Study 2– Coursework – MSc Resource Management and Circular Economy Students

- **Online classes, 50 students.**

- **Students were assigned key topics** where practical application of the sustainable development goals is required. For example:
  - Gender, peace and natural resources. What are the issues and risks for women in tackling conflict over natural resources?
  - The beauty industry and sustainability. How does the beauty industry tackle sustainability issues?
  - Is gender equality in the energy sector a means for transformation in sub-Saharan Africa?

- **Students wrote a blog article** (1200 words with references)

- **Students undertook two short reviews** of other class member's blogs assessing in particular the literature sources.

- **Presentation** using recorded videos and a short reflective report of 200 words.

- **Module and assessment design received high appreciation** from students and external examiners.

How to measure 'sustainability literacy' of students ?

Use The Sustainability Literacy Test (Sulitest) www.Sulitest.org
Endorsed by UN Higher Education Sustainability Initiative

1. Use for formative or summative assessment.

2. Use randomly
(e.g. at induction sessions or on a relevant module)

3. Use systematically: for degree programmes
(Administer and assess progress through the years)

Free of charge; easy to use; plenty of online support and tools
Instant results; confidential; standard and tailored packages…
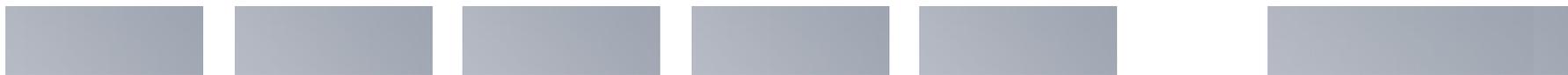
Quality systems and processes

o   Our core framework at the School level covers Enhancement-led Internal Subject Review (discipline level), Programme Approval, Programme Review and Annual Monitoring.

o   Strategy for Learning 2030 requires *'Mapping our provision and learning outcomes explicitly to the SDGs'.* Alignment with UNESCO competencies- fairly straightforward.

o   This will include narrative evaluating and reflecting where alignment is in the subject discipline supplemented through our processes of internal and external peer review.

o   Enhancement-led Internal Subject Review will be the predominant vehicle for integration and unit of review for SDG mapping positively creating a baseline of SDG alignment against current curriculum and act as an enabler for future development and enhancement.
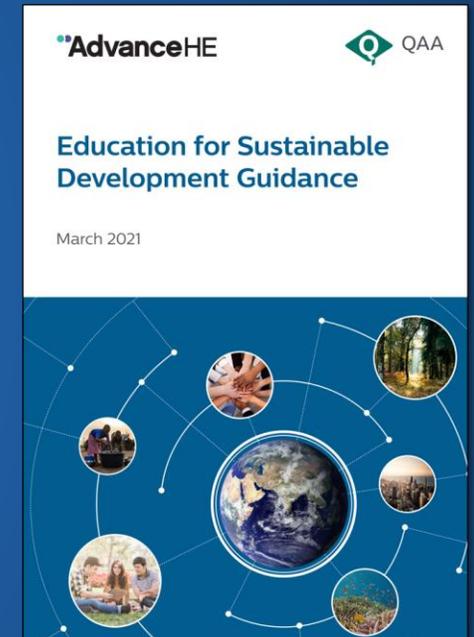
Student-led activities

o Students as change agents and co-creators of their curricula

o Involving students in mapping our curricula against SDGs

o Student groups/societies (especially academic societies) complementing SDG in the course with speakers and events

o Equality and Diversity reps activities/campaigns to spread awareness and/or campaign for action on an SDG-related issue.

o Student-led training on SDGs, carbon literacy training etc

o NUS SOS SDG Teach-in: pledges from staff and students to embed SDGs in the curriculum (https://www.sos-uk.org/project/global-goals-teach-in)

Be part of something...
Bigger

Conclusions

o Until now, emphasis has been on research aligned to SDGs but new opportunities with Strategy for Learning 2030, new Common Good Attributes to fully embed across all aspects of the student learning experience.

o Strong engagement at the more local level (individuals, various disciplines)

o SDG engagement aligns with institutional mission and aims (vital)

o Need to empower the student body as well as academic staff

o Academic quality systems and processes provide a powerful driver to embed SDGs within curricula

o Explicit and implicit alignment with SDGs- important differentiation- complexities of mapping