

Higher Education and Sustainable Development: a networking event in the East Midlands

Rutland Square Hotel, Nottingham
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Welcome and Introduction

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Programme

10.45 *The East Midlands Initiative so far*

11.00 *Panel:*

- *The regional context*
- *Teaching SD within higher education*
- *The student perspective*
- *The community perspective*

12.00 *Discussion groups and networking:
- where do we want to be in 5 years time*

1.00 *Lunch*

1.45 *The European perspective*

The East Midlands RCE application

2.15 *Discussion groups and networking:
Brainstorming: ideas for future activities*

3.30 *Closing session: ways forward*

Housekeeping

- Fire exits
- Refreshments
- Toilets
- Taxis
- Mobile Phones

Why “Education for Sustainable Development”? – ESD in context

- A multiple international policy mandate is in place, which emphasises the importance of integrating sustainable development into education systems at all levels:
 - *Agenda 21*, the outcome of the *UN Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED, Earth Summit, Rio, 1992)*, signed by 170 countries including the UK;[1]
 - The *Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) in Johannesburg (2002)*, endorsed by the UK;[2]
 - The United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (2005-2014), unanimously adopted by the United Nations General Assembly.[3]

- [1] *Agenda 21: Earth Summit - The United Nations Programme of Action from Rio (1993)* (New York, United Nations), §36.3 [www] <http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/documents/agenda21/english/agenda21chapter36.htm> (accessed 04/11/04)
- [2] WSSD (World Summit on Sustainable Development) (2002), *WSSD Plan of Implementation*, §121; emphasis added [www] http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/documents/WSSD_POI_PD/English/POIToc.htm (accessed 04/11/04)
- [3] Resolution 57/254 (2002), see UNESCO, *United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development 2005-2014: Draft International Implementation Scheme* (2004) (Paris, UNESCO), p. 25, 33 [www] http://portal.unesco.org/education/en/file_download.php/03f375b07798a2a55dc39db7aa8211Final+IIS.pdf (accessed 04/11/04)

The initiative from the Higher Education Academy (1)

- Formation of an ESD Planning Group (2004/5)
 - 17 of 24 Subject Centres participating
 - Academy-funded ESD work-packages (2005/6)
- Commissioned Research Report (2005/6)
 - To raise the profile of the ESD agenda within the sector and more specifically in the Subject Centres;
 - To produce readily useable resources for the sector as a whole;
 - To communicate best practice models in easily understandable and context sensitive ways so that they meet Subject Centre needs.

The initiative from the Higher Education Academy (2)

- Engagement with the community
 - Working in partnerships
 - Organisation of events/workshops
 - Production of resources
- Dissemination to stakeholders
 - Managers in HE
 - Employers, professionals
 - Students

ESD Research Report (1)

[\[http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/misc/sustdevinHEfinalreport.pdf\]](http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/misc/sustdevinHEfinalreport.pdf)

- **Results from Subject Centre Questionnaires, Focus Groups, and Emerging Good Practice**
- Defining Sustainable Development
- Delivery of Sustainability: Teaching Methods Employed
- ESD Teaching Approaches
- ESD Curricula Orientation
- Emerging Good Practice
- Barriers and Solutions to Embedding ESD
- The Student Experience and ESD
- Requirements from a Generic ESD Toolkit

ESD Teaching Approaches

Techniques for Embedding Education for Sustainable Development (ESD)

The Personal

[Pedagogic approaches: (1) Educators as role models; (2) Teachers as learners, learners as teachers; (3) Lifelong learning.]

Re-connecting to Reality

[Pedagogic approaches: (4) Relationships with local community; (5) Real life problems and experiences; (6) Re-connecting people to people and nature; (7) Developing capacity for enacting (non-prescribed) change; (8) Links with university EMS / SMS.]

Holistic Thinking

[Pedagogic approaches: (9) Interdisciplinarity, and critical thinking; (10) Systems thinking; (11) Respect / sensitivity for all subject areas.]

Barriers and solutions to embedding ESD

[\[http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/4074.htm\]](http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/4074.htm)

Barrier	Solution
Overcrowded curriculum	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Create space through a rigorous review of existing curricula• Audit existing curricula to ascertain what is already there in terms of the development of identified ESD skills and knowledge
Irrelevance	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop credible teaching materials which are fully contextualised and relevant to each subject area. This will help ensure that ESD is integral to the curriculum and not a 'bolt on' element
Limited staff awareness and expertise	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Invest significantly in staff development and capacity building through institutional staff development units and Academy Subject Centres
Limited institutional commitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop a credible business case for HE institutions, setting out triple bottom-line benefits• Review and amend institutional mission and policy statements

Current and Future work - the Academy's ESD Working Group

- Institutional events (pilot at UEA, Norwich)
- Interdisciplinary seminars (Leeds, York, Birmingham)
- Regional Conference (pilot at Nottingham)
- Community projects (pilot in Gloucestershire)
- Working with others:
 - StudentForce
 - F4F
- Small-Grant projects (12 funded in 2006/7)
- Staff development (workshops, networking)