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# What is teaching sustainability and why is it important?

Teaching and Learning can develop individuals' knowledge, skills and values needed to act sustainably for the environment, society, and the economy. Universities must urgently adapt how and what we teach to enable the large-scale behaviour change needed for a safe and socially just world.

IPCC predicts 40-70% of global greenhouse gas reductions down to individual behavior change.  
[www.bi.team/blogs/the-role-of-behaviour-change-in-the-race-to-net-zero](http://www.bi.team/blogs/the-role-of-behaviour-change-in-the-race-to-net-zero)

A sustainable University of Edinburgh graduate should have...

Competencies for sustainable development:

- **Knowledge** of the sustainable development goals and how to meet them.
- **Skills** to act most sustainably in their personal and professional life.
- **Values** for people and planet.

UNESCO competencies

UNESCO summarised eight competencies for sustainable development that educators should incorporate into learning outcomes to develop these knowledge, skills and values.

1. Systems thinking competency
2. Anticipatory competency
3. Normative competency
4. Strategic competency
5. Collaboration competency
6. Critical thinking
7. Self-awareness competency
8. Integrated problem-solving competency

## SRS Support for Teaching Climate and Sustainability

### Direct your students to existing learning opportunities

<p>Programmes</p> <p>There are a wide range of degree programmes focused on aspects of sustainability to point current and prospective students toward for future study.</p>	 <p><a href="https://edin.ac/3BT5yVx">edin.ac/3BT5yVx</a></p>
<p>Training</p> <p>Carbon Literacy is an externally verified one day workshop open to all staff and students for free, ending with a pledge to take a significant action to reduce your footprint.</p> <p>Introduction to Sustainability is a one hour online course raising awareness of the Universities sustainability strategy and suggesting actions for learners to take themselves.</p>	 <p><a href="https://edin.ac/2WLwsNz">edin.ac/2WLwsNz</a></p>
<p>Elective modules</p> <p>There are dozens of elective modules at the University focusing on aspects of sustainability. To see them all visit the link.</p>	 <p><a href="https://edin.ac/3oj8l1L">edin.ac/3oj8l1L</a></p>
<p>Students as Change Agents</p> <p>These 4–12 week challenges set by organisations who want to implement sustainable changes are solved by interdisciplinary groups of students.</p>	 <p><a href="https://edin.ac/3mcJJb2">edin.ac/3mcJJb2</a></p>

## SRS Support for Teaching Climate and Sustainability

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<p>Career support</p> <p>The Careers Service offers guidance on careers for a sustainable future.</p>	 <a href="https://edin.ac/3JriKoW">edin.ac/3JriKoW</a>
<p>Entrepreneur support</p> <p>Edinburgh Innovations offer additional support for startups that contribute to the sustainable development goals in the form of funding and mentorship.</p>	 <a href="https://edin.ac/40zyagY">edin.ac/40zyagY</a>
<p>Teaching Climate and Sustainability Community of practice</p> <p>This group of staff and students with a shared vision of embedding sustainability in teaching practice at the University can be a good source of opportunities for students and expertise to answer questions.</p>	 <a href="https://edin.ac/39XLSFa">edin.ac/39XLSFa</a>
<p>Student Organising for Sustainability</p> <p>SOS-UK have a variety of initiatives for students to engage with.</p>	<a href="https://www.sos-uk.org">www.sos-uk.org</a>

Deliver sustainability in your learning and teaching

**All programmes should enable Edinburgh graduates to act sustainably.**

Educators can access support for embedding climate and sustainability in their practice to ensure this.

Join our teaching community of practice

The University's Teaching Climate and Sustainability community of practice is a group aimed at staff with a role delivering or supporting teaching.

Through a Teams channel and quarterly forums, it celebrates good practice, shares resources, offers advice and expertise and motivates to embed climate and sustainability through curriculum and pedagogy.

Join using the link.



[edin.ac/39XLSFa](https://edin.ac/39XLSFa)

Incorporate living lab projects

Living Lab projects allow students' work to make meaningful change here at the University. The Department for Social Responsibility and Sustainability can offer projects relevant to your course that are of mutual benefit to our strategy.



[edin.ac/35saAeD](https://edin.ac/35saAeD)

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<p>Join the EAUC</p> <p>The alliance for sustainability leadership in tertiary education (EAUC) are a membership organisation sharing knowledge between universities and colleges across the UK and Ireland. All University of Edinburgh staff can join for free to attend events, access resources and more. There is a dedicated education for sustainable development network.</p>	<p><b><a href="http://www.eauc.org.uk">www.eauc.org.uk</a></b></p>
<p>Sign up to the Learning for Sustainability Scotland newsletters</p> <p>LFSS is Scotland's United Nations recognised regional center for expertise in education for sustainable development (and they're based here at University of Edinburgh). They work across the education sector and are at the forefront of policy change.</p>	<p><b><a href="http://LearningforSustainabilityScotland.org">LearningforSustainabilityScotland.org</a></b></p>
<p>Read education for sustainable development guidance</p> <p>The QAA and Advance HE consulted the sector to produce guidance that is applicable to all disciplines.</p>	<p><b><a href="http://www.advance-he.ac.uk/teaching-and-learning/education-sustainable-development-higher-education">www.advance-he.ac.uk/teaching-and-learning/education-sustainable-development-higher-education</a></b></p>

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### Training

Both Carbon Literacy and Introduction to Sustainability are open to staff as well as students, free of charge.

There are also short online courses on environment and sustainability such as **climate solutions**, and **learning for a sustainable future** which can build your knowledge and confidence for teaching sustainability.



[edin.ac/2WLwsNz](https://edin.ac/2WLwsNz)

### Become a Sustainability Champion

Our Champions are staff and students from across the University community that want to make positive change in their area of study, residence or work.

A great place for educators to connect with initiatives for teaching purposes or out of personal interest.



[edin.ac/3nqPuUK](https://edin.ac/3nqPuUK)