

EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT CHANGEMAKERS

Partnering students and staff to co-create ESD
approaches to teaching and learning

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Education for Sustainable Development (ESD): “is the process of equipping students with the knowledge and understanding, skills and attributes needed to work and live in a way that safeguards environmental, social and economic wellbeing, both in the present and for future generations.” *Higher Education Academy & Quality Assurance Agency guidance on ESD (2014)*

1. Background and context

Through the process of active engagement with the learning process and experience, Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) Changemakers supports students and staff to co-create approaches in teaching and learning of their discipline that can support the development of knowledge, skills, competencies and attributes to contribute to shaping a just, sustainable world in the context of their academic discipline. The programme supports students and staff to lay the foundation to deliver this work, as well as students and staff in already existing partnerships to enhance and progress their co-creation.

The programme aims to address student concern about climate change, supporting them to turn concern into agency, and address student demand for sustainable development in their tertiary education courses.

- 90% of university and college students in the UK are very or fairly concerned about climate change.¹
- 88% say they agree their place of study should actively incorporate and promote sustainable development.²
- 79% would like to see sustainable development actively incorporated and promoted through all courses.³

SOS-UK advocates for student leadership and students as co-creators in implementing Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) curriculum design and innovation. This is an integral part of the latest QAA and Advance HE [Education for Sustainable Development \(ESD\) Guidance](#). We have seen first-hand the impact of empowering students to collaborate on addressing sustainability challenges in their institutions. This has been seen through our [Responsible Futures](#) accreditation programme, a pairing model for Responsible Futures audits between institutions and the [British Academy SHAPE Sustainability Impact Projects](#) led by SOS-UK in 2020-21. This programme also complements and our [SDG curriculum mapping intervention](#). We have also taken learnings from a comparable initiative, the [University of British Columbia climate teaching connectors](#).

The 3rd year of the programme will continue to support student-staff partnerships for a co-creation approach to embedding ESD in teaching, learning and research. The support offered in the programme can enhance the role of course/faculty student representatives, or other students, to shape and influence course development and review processes. [We are open to adapting the programme to your institutional context.](#)

2. Students

SOS-UK provides training and support through workshops, webinars and regular check-ins with students throughout the programme cycle. It may be necessary for the institution to highlight level of commitment they are expecting from students depending on the type of project they are working on.

Students will:

- Gain skills and understanding for innovating curriculum content and pedagogies for climate justice learning
- Become partners in progressing institutional change to embed climate justice with ESD pedagogies at your institution
- Work with peers and course representatives (or equivalent) to gain perspectives and input
- Support academic and professional services staff to work together in developing whole-institution engagement with learning for climate justice
- Join multidisciplinary teams of students and academics working across their institution to ensure a joined-up approach, shared learning and creation of interdisciplinary opportunities for curriculum enhancement

¹ Climate change tracker: <https://www.sos-uk.org/research/climate-change-tracker>

² Sustainability skills survey: <https://www.sos-uk.org/research/sustainability-skills-survey>

³ Sustainability skills survey: <https://www.sos-uk.org/research/sustainability-skills-survey>

OUTPUTS: Students will work with academics to make both short term and long-term changes to their own academic disciplines, set a plan to do so Student understanding of ESD and student leadership for sustainability learning will also be enhanced.

Depending on capacity/interests, student and staff collaboration for ESD approaches can look like:

- Analysing the impacts of reading lists on supporting learners to contribute to a sustainable, just world
- Examining reading lists to explore reading material that can support learners to develop knowledge and skills to contribute to a sustainable, just world
- Planning webinars/discussions/seminars centred around module or course specific opportunities to contribute to sustainability
- Using case studies to understand opportunities/barriers to climate justice through your discipline
- Planning regular discussions amongst students and lecturers on how course content relating to climate justice
- Mapping how different assessment methods can support learners to develop skills to contribute to a sustainable, just world
- Exploring how lived/formal knowledge is valued in your discipline and its impacts on realising a sustainable, just world
- Plan experiential learning opportunities (i.e., fieldtrips, placements) related to sustainability
- contribute to course validation processes and course review cycles to ensure a sustainability lens is included at course and whole-institution levels

Advised resource provisions: Institutions are advised to ensure a central member of staff is allocated capacity to support the coordination of ESD changemakers internally.

3. Academics

ESD changemakers recognises the need for staff and educators in universities and colleges to have access to relevant support, training and knowledge exchange to progress this meaningfully for their specialisms and academic disciplines.

Academics will:

- Develop an understanding of student demand and expectations for sustainability in their institutions, and specifically their curricula
- Engage with students on relevant courses/programmes for curriculum design and enhancement
- Academics will be expected to provide regular check-ins and support for students alongside SOS-UK's support

4. Accompanying SOS-UK support

SOS-UK offers [student-led SDG and sustainability curriculum mapping support](#), training students to map how sustainability is embedded into teaching and learning. Curriculum mapping can provide a helpful evidence-base for students and staff - guiding them to explore strengths and challenges in current teaching and learning that can be addressed in the ESD Changemakers.

opportunity to co-create approaches to ESD. Institutions participating in ESD Changemakers are offered a reduced curriculum mapping cost for tier 1 curriculum mapping. More information in the costings below.

Institutions are encouraged to take part in Responsible Futures* framework and accreditation programme to identify, track and celebrate progress made through ESD changemakers. This co-creation approach to ESD will actively support an institution and students' unions' progress towards achieving Responsible Futures accreditation.



[Responsible Futures](#) is a whole institution supported change programme and accreditation mark to embed sustainability across all aspects of student learning. It is an externally assessed accreditation mark (audited by students) to assist tertiary education institutions in helping students gain the skills and experience needed to thrive as global

citizens. We actively support partnerships between students' unions and institutions through a structured framework of criteria to encourage action on embedding sustainability, inclusive of climate justice, into formal and informal learning. This is the only framework of its kind that maps out the organisational innovation and enhancement required, spanning top down, middle out and bottom-up level change, to achieve whole institution engagement with sustainability learning.

**Responsible Futures partnerships are offered a reduced rate to make use of this support package as a means of progressing their Responsible Futures accreditation. Students involved with this programme at participating Responsible Futures partnerships will be invited to join regular 6 weekly cohort catch-up calls with student leaders and staff from across the Responsible Futures network.*

5. Sample Schedule of Support

Institutions and students' unions may be in different places in their journey with ESD processes. Below is a suggested schedule of support for participating institutions and their staff and students. To ensure the programme is relevant and beneficial to participating institutions, we will adapt the programme in consultation with participating institutions at the beginning of the programme. **The suggested schedule of support follows the academic year, although there is potential to run the programme with a different timeframe depending on institutional context.**

Please note: throughout the year, students and staff are expected to independently set up meetings and mechanisms to collaborate on their work whilst benefiting from the below support schedule.

When?	What?	Who?
September	Institution signs up to ESD Changemakers	Institutions with buy-in from students' unions. This may be led by SLT, Education enhancement team, sustainability team, students' union and/or academic schools/faculties.

September - October	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Student recruitment 2. Staff recruitment <p><i>It is advised institutions aim to recruit students to represent their range of programme/course offerings, this may fit well with targeted recruitment through course representative systems. Institutions are encouraged to gain academic staff buy-in to partner with students from their academic areas.</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Students as co-creators, to express interesting in participating for the academic year 2. Academic staff introduced to the programme
Early November	<p>Launch event: Afternoon event including workshop (below)</p> <p>WORKSHOP - Introduction to ESD Changemakers and Education for Sustainable Development</p> <p>Workshop introducing the programme, ESD and supporting staff and students to plan next steps.</p>	Organised by SOS-UK. Successful student applicants and participating academics/ staff and SU officers to participate (national network).
Late November	<p>WORKSHOP - How to influence change at your institution</p> <p>Supporting staff and students to explore intervention points within their institution to understand how to effect change.</p>	Organised by SOS-UK for participating students, however staff are welcome to join.
Mid to late December	<p>WORKSHOP - Student Leadership for climate justice</p> <p>Exploring how students can contribute to ESD and D3 for climate justice, particularly in their institutions and in collaboration with staff.</p>	Open to all.
January	Student check-ins	Group calls with students from each institution, facilitated by SOS-UK.

Late January	WORKSHOP - Staff and student co-creation for climate justice through ESD. Detail and action-focused workshop on the various ways students and staff can work together to progress ESD through processes including D3.	Open to all.
February	Student and staff review day	Organised by SOS-UK. A facilitated review afternoon where participating students and staff come together to peer review progress/reflect on learnings
March	Student check-ins	Group calls with students from each institution, facilitated by SOS-UK.
April	Closing event: Celebration of progress made, and lessons learned. Students and staff to co-present the learnings, outcomes and outputs of their co-creation approach to curricula transformation for sustainability.	Organised by SOS-UK. Successful student applicants and participating academics/ staff and SU officers to participate (national network).

6. Pricing

Programme	Cost
ESD Changemakers	£5,850 + VAT
*Student-led curriculum mapping bolt-on	£1,505 + VAT

Support included	
Recruitment support	✓
Pre-launch staff introduction (includes prep)	✓
Guidance on how best to support your student ESD co-creators	✓
Launch event (including prep)	✓
Planning and preparatory workshops	✓

Student and staff review day (event and prep)	✓
Closing conference (including prep)	✓
Student check-ins	✓
Support for students with learning resources & reflective learning journal	✓
Travel (for launch & closing event)	£150
TOTAL COST	£5,850 + VAT
Responsible Futures members, reduced cost	£5,500 + VAT
Student-led SDG and sustainability curriculum mapping bolt-on	£1,505 + VAT

For more information and to sign up

To sign up to ESD changemakers for 2022-23 academic year, please complete the online form [here](#).

To discuss this offering further, [please contact Sonya Peres](#), Senior Project Manager- Education.

See our ESD changemakers web page [here](#).