

Student-led sustainability curriculum mapping

2024/25 Programme Overview



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Mapping formal curricula against the UN Sustainable Development Goals, education for sustainable development (ESD) methods and wider sustainability learning through a student-led audit

“[This project] helped me realise what I can bring to the table and how I can contribute in my future roles.” - Student auditor

About student-led sustainability curriculum mapping

In response to this institutional and student demand for embedding sustainability in learning, the University of Winchester and National Union of Students developed a training and support package for mapping the curriculum to the SDGs and wider sustainability learning through a student-led audit. This support package is now led and facilitated by [Students Organising for Sustainability \(SOS-UK\)](#).

In 2022-23, SOS-UK worked with the University of Liverpool Management School and Liverpool Guild of Students to pilot a year-long student-led methodology to map the SDGs and wider sustainability learning in teaching and learning (more details in section 2 “How it works”). [Read more about this methodology on our website.](#)

We know students want to learn more about sustainable development, but we also understand this knowledge needs to be translated into agency to take action and contribute to sustainable development. To support universities and colleges to deliver on this, our curriculum mapping methodology audits both content and pedagogies, adopting principles of [education for sustainable development \(ESD\)](#) as key criteria for students to map curricula against as well as [the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals](#).

To date, we’ve worked with over [400 students](#) from [16 institutions](#) to map over [6500 modules and/or lessons](#), as well as [over 3000 weeks](#) of teaching and learning.

Student-led curriculum mapping has led to:

- Student knowledge, understanding and transferable skill development - sustainability, auditing, team work, data analysis, critical thinking, global citizenship
- Linking the SDGs to other initiatives within the institution and/or students’ union
- Engaging students, teaching staff and senior leadership
- Reporting on the SDGs and other sustainability criteria
- Identifying areas of good practice, and areas for improvement

How it works - methodologies

We have developed two methodologies to support students to lead on mapping their curricula against the SDGs and other sustainability criteria.

Module descriptor methodology*

This methodology supports students to map module descriptors, course handbooks and reading lists against the SDGs, wider aspects of sustainability learning and ESD methods using a user-friendly online mapping form or spreadsheet.

The scope of the audit (i.e., number and type of modules mapped, deadlines etc.) will be determined in partnership with the institution and students' union and can vary based on needs, student engagement, and access to information.

The extent of the audit will need to be based on the number of student auditors and the agreed expectations of their time commitment for the audit. It is estimated that each trained student auditor will be able to map 5-10 individual modules per hour following the training, but this will vary depending on complexity and available information.

SOS-UK will adapt and prepare training materials to support the curriculum audit.

Student experience methodology*

This methodology supports students to map their weekly experiences of teaching and learning in their modules for either a semester, or the entire year using an online mapping form or spreadsheet.

The scope of the audit (i.e., number of students and modules mapped, deadlines etc.) will be determined in partnership with the institution and students' union and can vary based on needs and student engagement.

In 2023/24 SOS-UK worked with the Liverpool Guild of Students to develop decolonising statements in partnership with students. Students are including these statements as criteria in their current mapping project to see how their experience of teaching and learning aligns with their vision for decolonising education.

*** We work with institutions to adapt the methodology, including criteria and mapping form, where needed to best suit institutional context.**

Additional criteria for the audit review can be agreed in advance of the audit, in the past this has included an institution's values and ideals.

How it works - training student auditors

This is a student-led audit, for which students are trained and supported by SOS-UK staff. SOS-UK staff bring expertise on student engagement and training, sustainability and education to equip participating students with the necessary knowledge, skills and attributes to be empowered as auditors of formal curricula at your institution.

This 3-hour interactive training workshop is designed to enable student auditors to engage proactively in future initiatives relating to ESD (Education for Sustainable Development) and the UN SDGs. During the training students will be supported to explore key concepts and how to engage critically with them, and to understand the mapping process including their roles and responsibilities. **Training will be tailored to the institutional context and student experience, depending on the methodology being used.**



“Thinking about my modules in a different has been the best part of being involved in this project.” - Student auditor

How it works - student engagement

To ensure this opportunity is accessible for the greatest number of students, and to increase potential for sufficient number of auditors, it is advised the university, college or students' union provides remuneration or equivalent for the student auditors' time. In the past this has included:

- Paying students the real living wage for time spent auditing
- Book vouchers/tokens
- HEAR credits on transcript or points towards a volunteering award offered by the institution
- Embedding this work into course rep roles, or as part of an academic project
- Working with placement students

Through SOS-UK, students will receive a digital badge acknowledging their contribution to sustainability as an “Education for Sustainable Development Auditor.”

SOS-UK will advise you on how many students you will need to recruit, depending on:

- Your methodology
- How many modules/weeks of learning you'd like to map
- Your preferred timelines



How it works - audit output

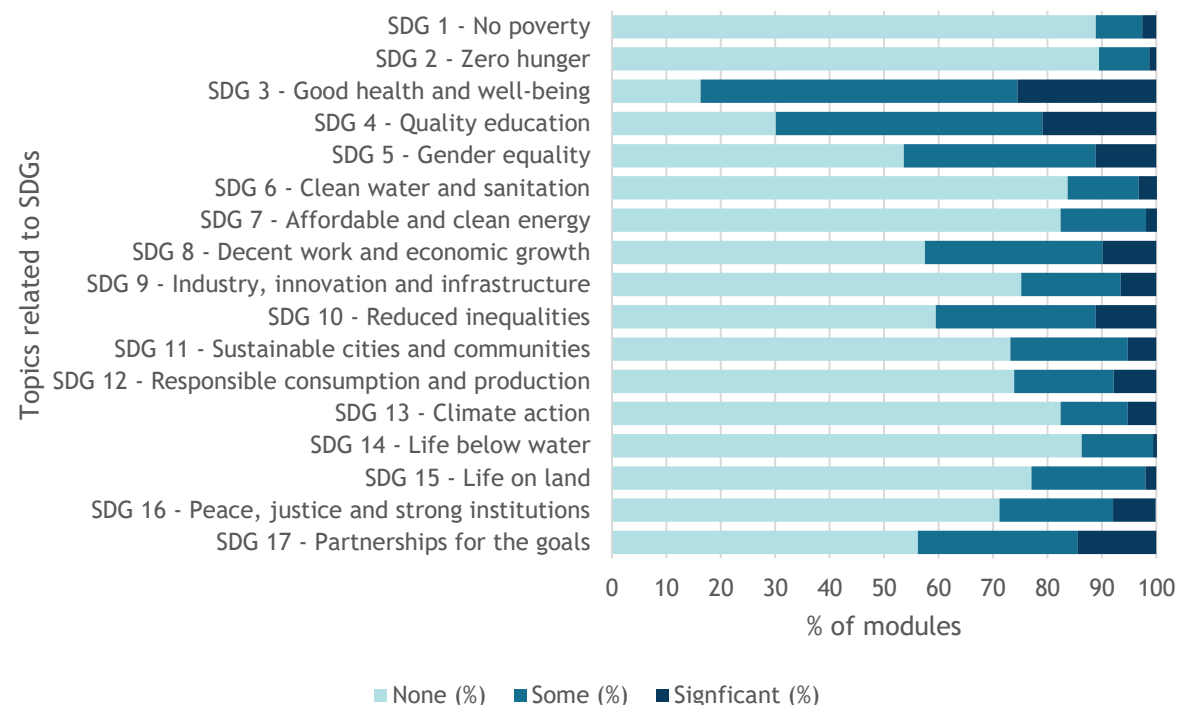
This curriculum audit will seek to identify where and how SDGs, ESD methods and pedagogies and any other variables agreed with the institution and students' union are currently embedded in formal curricula and to what extent.

See section 3 below for the three tiers of support offered by SOS-UK.

- For tier 1, institutions will receive raw data from the audit.
- For tier 2, data will be presented in the form of graphs and charts
- For tier 3, SOS-UK will produce a full audit report utilising the data produced by student auditors and present report to the institution.

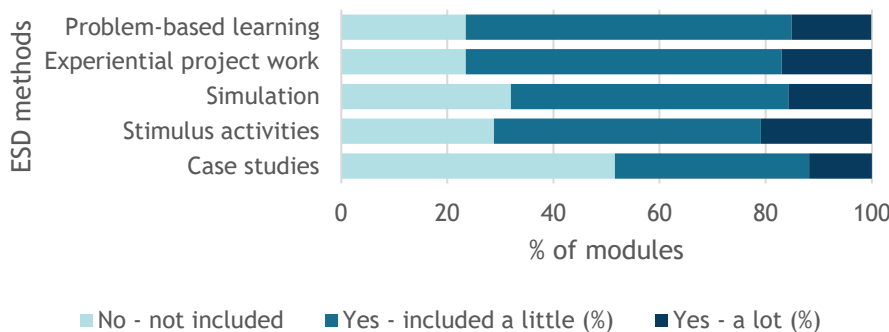
For the tier 3 audit report, results will be summarised through an engaging report which will share students' findings and provide an analysis of where and how the SDGs, ESD methods and pedagogies and any other variables agreed with the institution and students' union have been included in modules/programmes. This report will be fed into by student auditors and summarised by SOS-UK.

Example SDG output:

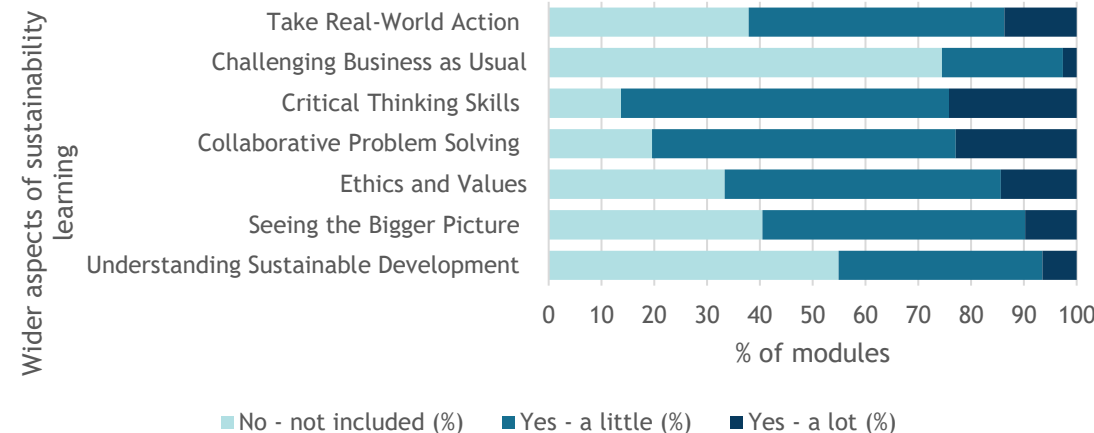


How it works - audit output

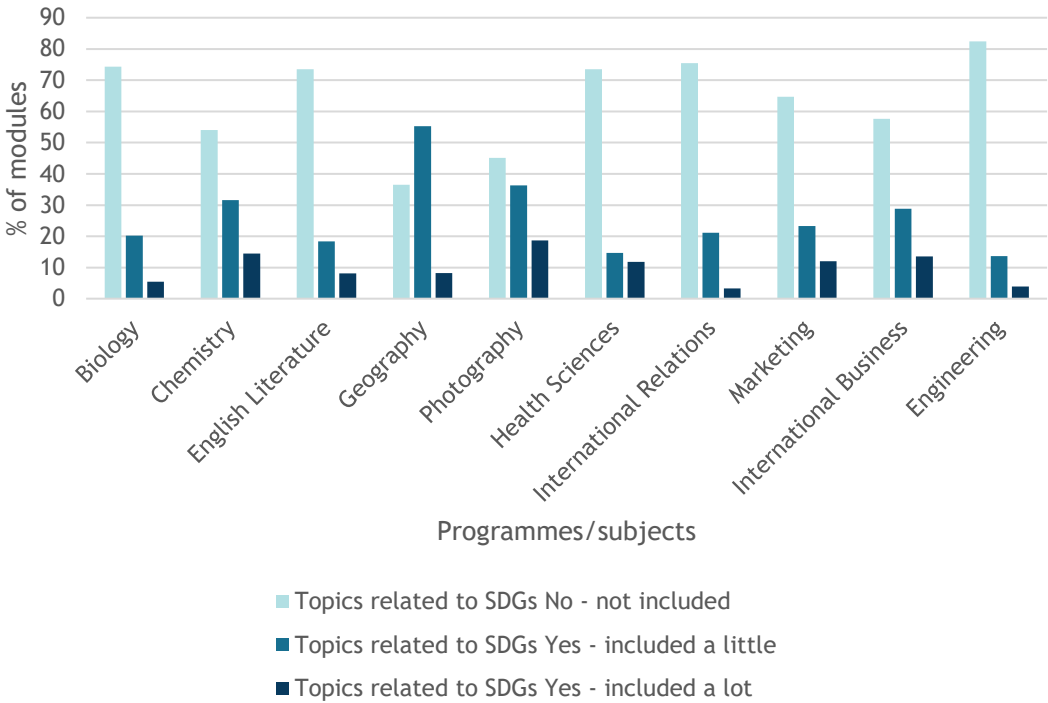
Example ESD methods output:



Example sustainability learning output:



Example SDG output across programmes:



Support offering and costs

	Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 3
Included	Preparation of training materials, training delivery, pre- and post-surveying of student auditors, raw audit data, ad hoc support.	Tier 1 offer, plus: management of auditor recruitment, graphic representation of results (e.g., graphs and charts for use in a report or presentation), two-three informal student-check ins*.	Tier 2 offer, plus: ongoing support of students, full audit report, workshop with staff, senior leaders and other stakeholders to explain rationale and review results

*Student check-ins are available for institutions using the student experience methodology.

	Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 3
Module descriptor methodology	£2,370 + VAT	£3,285 + VAT	£4,475 + VAT
Student experience methodology	£3,260 + VAT	£4,270 + VAT	£5,230 + VAT

Please note, we can develop bespoke support packages based on your institutional context.

Next steps

Interested students' unions and institutions should get in touch for more information and to discuss scope and timelines, determine cost and plan next steps.

- Contact: Sonya Peres, Senior Project Manager - Education, sonya.peres@sos-uk.org.
- To sign-up for this support package, please complete the online form: <https://www.sos-uk.org/programme-sign-up>



“[I] learned that teaching has a larger purpose than just exams and assignments.” Student auditor