



national union of **students**

# Sustainability and the Curriculum

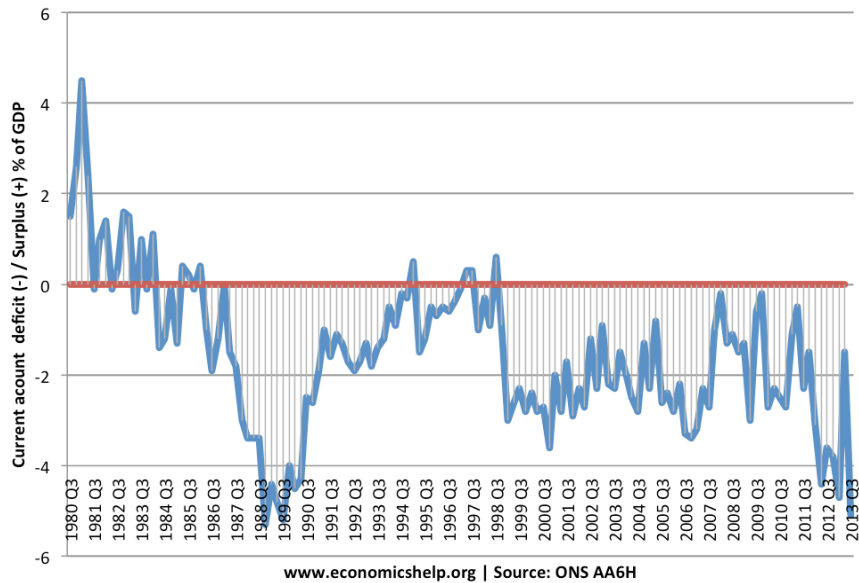
*What does it matter and what can YOU do*

Kim Croasdale  
Sustainability Project Officer

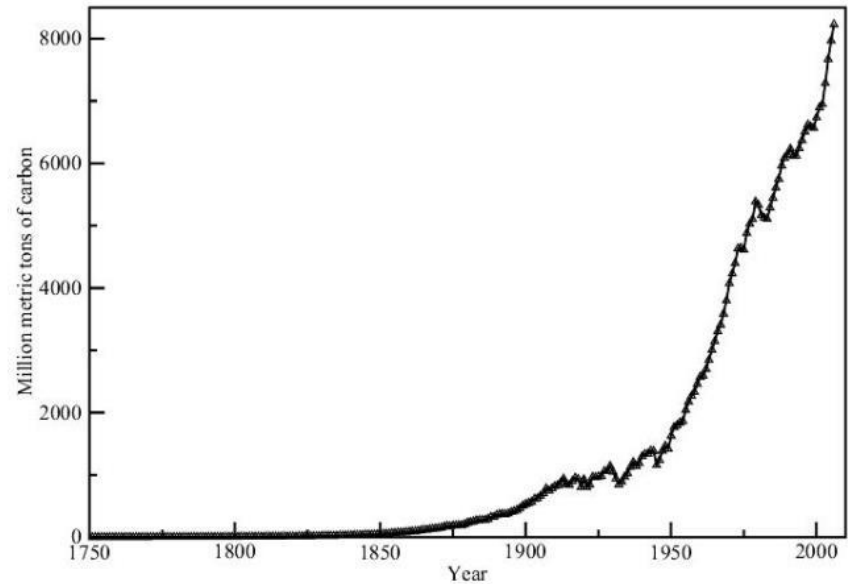
Alex Henderson  
Sustainability Project Officer

# What's it like to be a student today?

## UK current account % of GDP

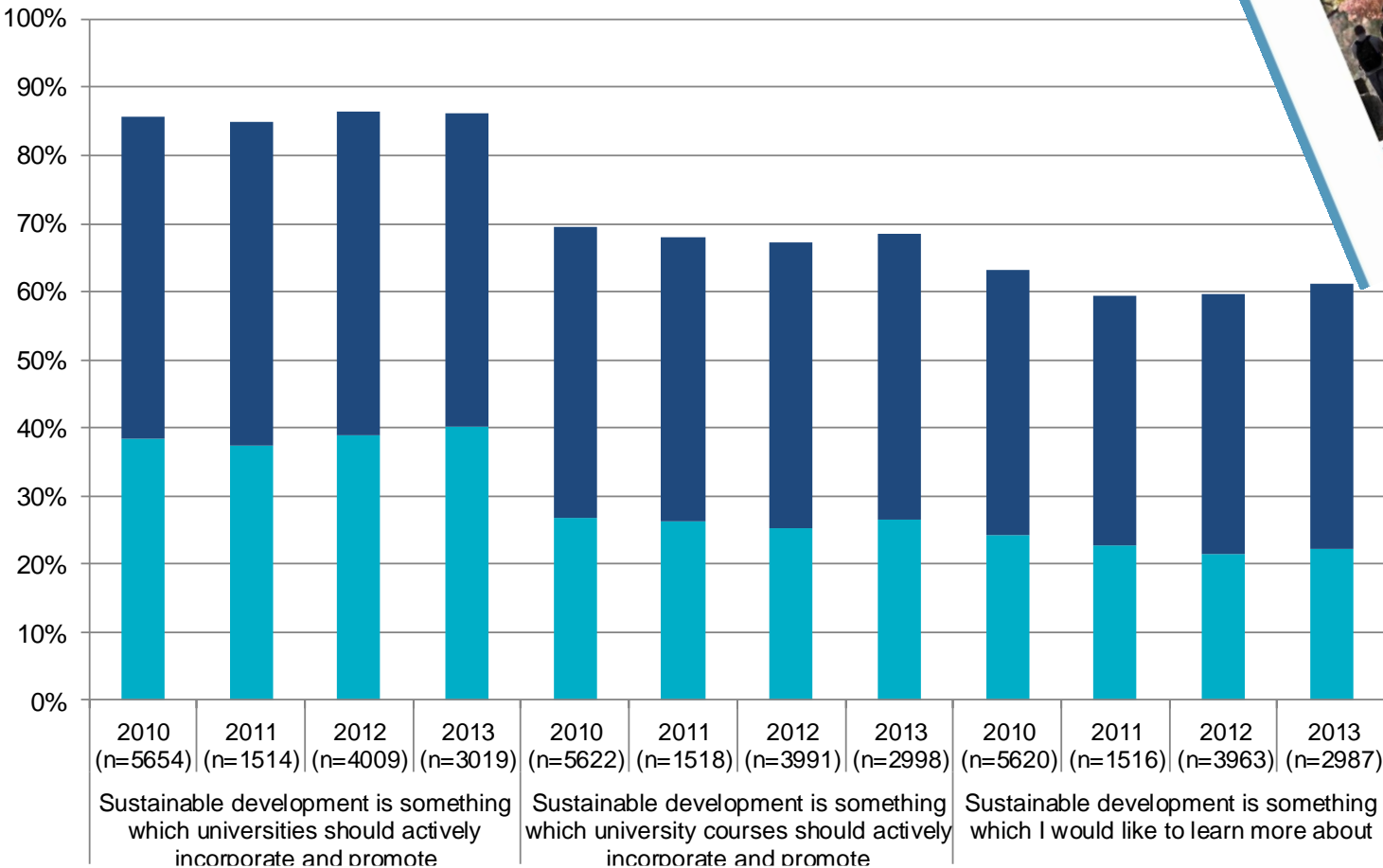


## Global Fossil-Fuel CO<sub>2</sub> Emissions



# NUS HEA surveys

## *A latent student interest in sustainability*



- Agree
- Strongly agree

# What is the definition of ESD?

**Education for sustainable development** 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.

*QAA ESD guidance 2014*

# What does that mean for students?

- Consider what the concept of **global citizenship** means in the context of their own discipline and in their future professional and personal lives
- Democratic and **participatory learning** approaches are modelled. Teaching, learning and assessment activities are linked to **real-life concerns**.
- Think about issues of **social justice, ethics and wellbeing**, and how these relate to ecological and economic factors
- Develop a **future-facing** outlook, learning to think about the **consequences** of actions, and how systems and societies can be adapted to ensure **sustainable futures**.

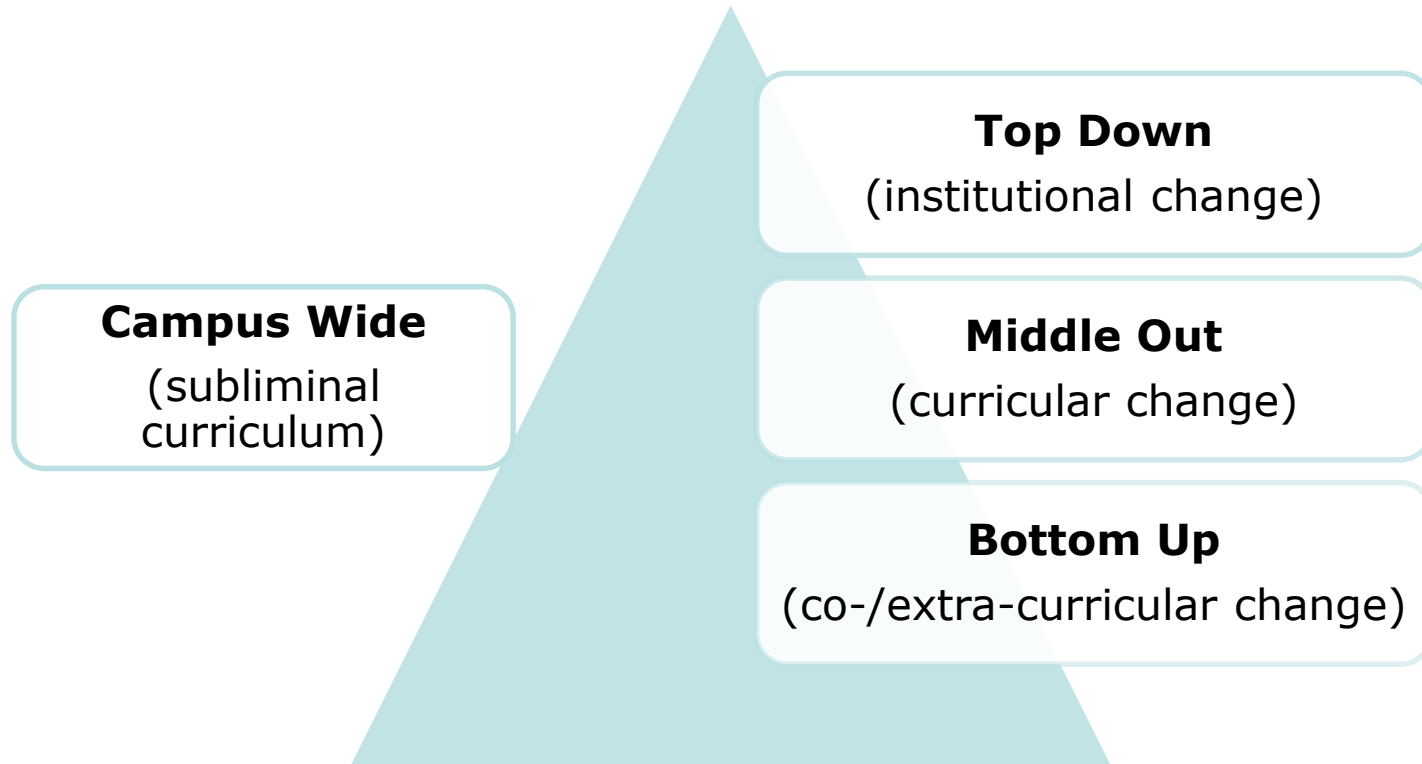


**3%** of people attend university  
but they take up **80%** of the  
leadership positions.

Chuck Hopkins, UNESCO Chair

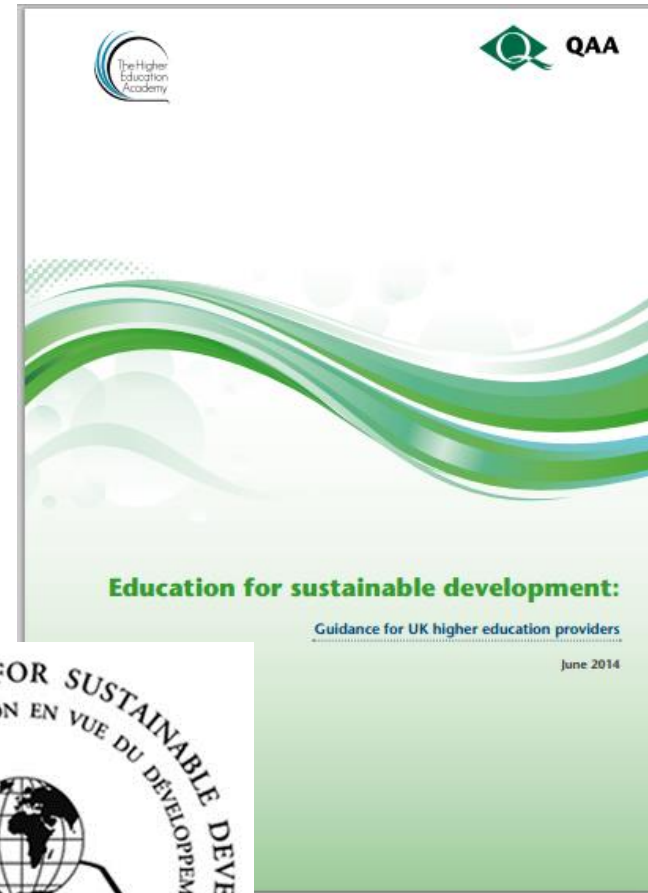


# ESD in Practice



# Drivers for change

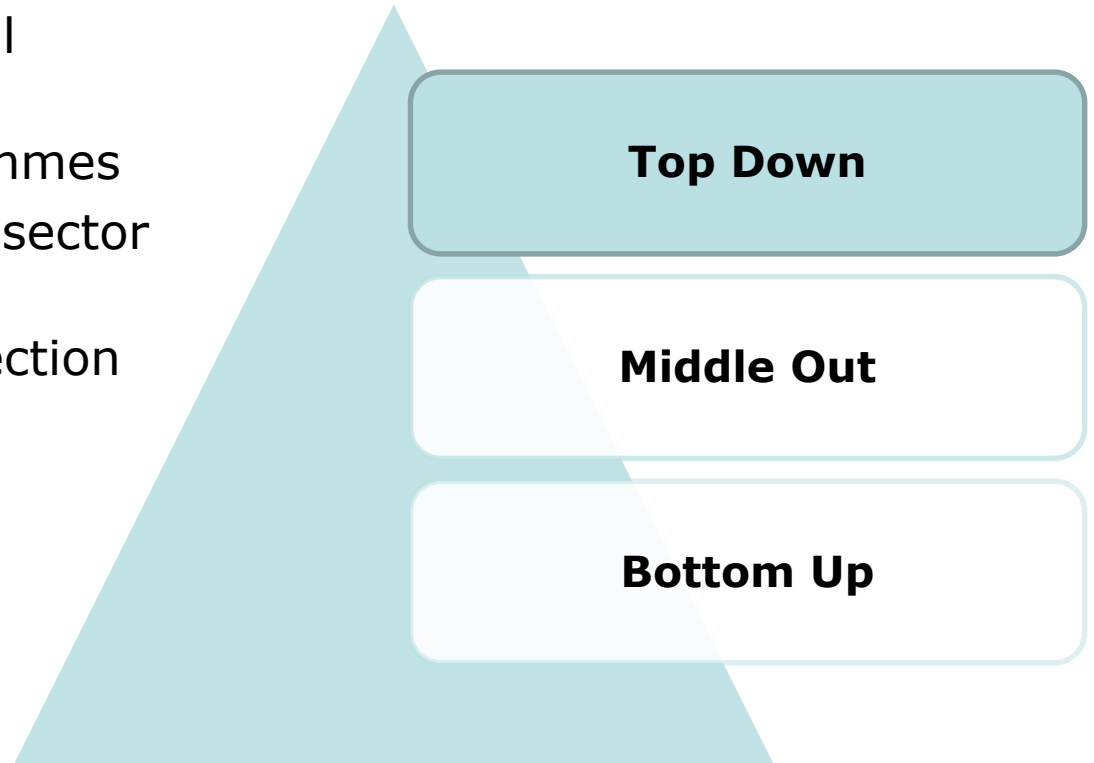
- UN Decade on ESD
- QAA Guidance on ESD
- HEA Green Academy





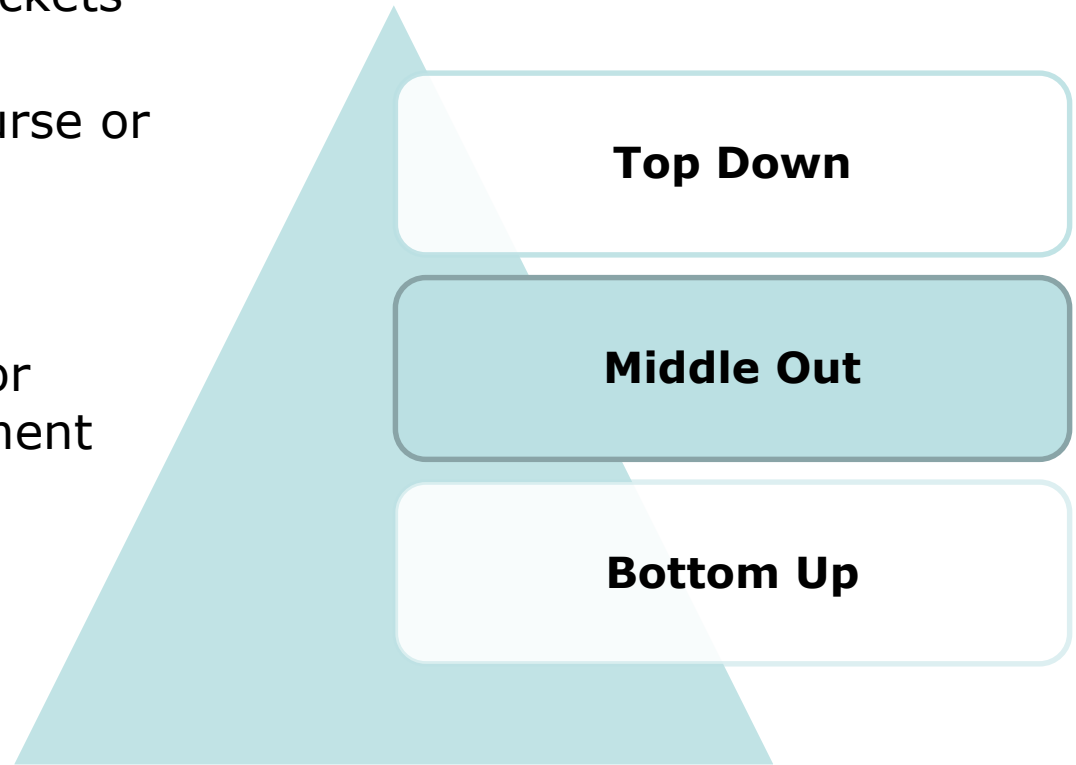
# How do institutions change?

- Change facilitated through senior management-led or external initiatives
  - External change programmes
  - Guidance or policy from sector organisations
  - Senior leadership or direction within the organisation



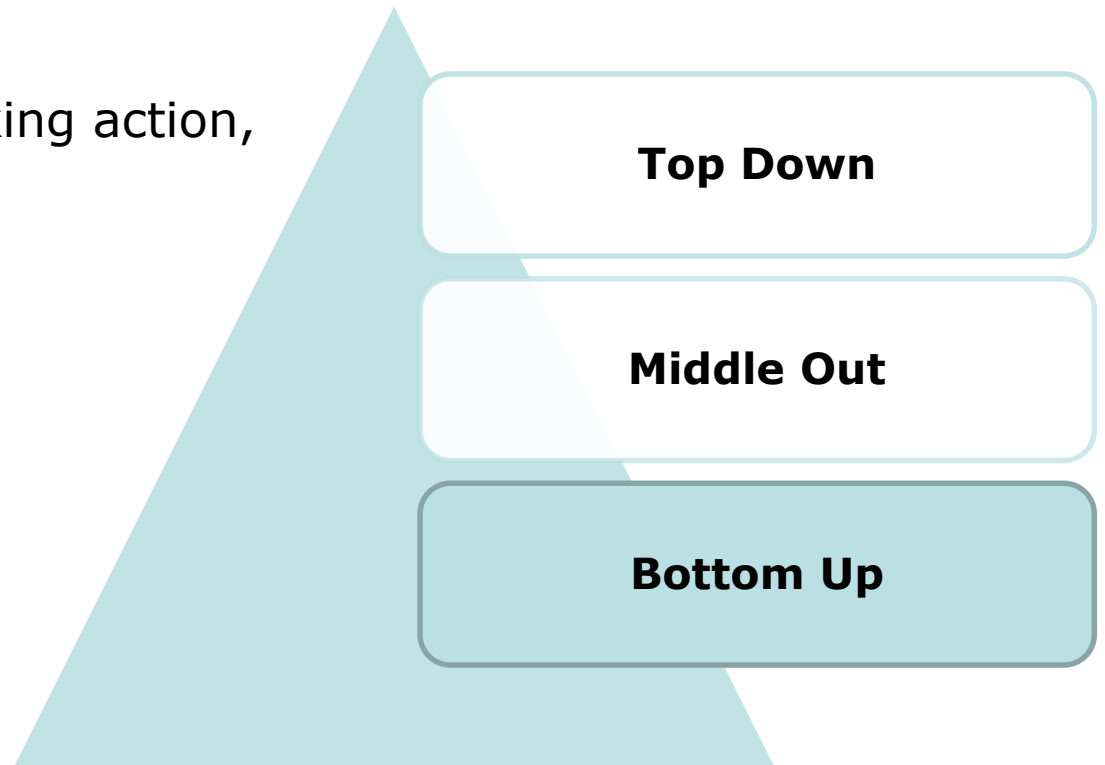
# How do institutions change?

- Change driven through pockets of good practice, e.g.:
  - Within a particular course or department
  - Led by an individual academic
  - Facilitated by the SU or Sustainability Department *alone*



# How do institutions change?

- People on the ground taking action, e.g.:
  - Students
  - Societies



# To what extent to you agree/disagree?

How much should students be allowed to contribute to curriculum reform?

I feel like my degree promotes my understanding of **social justice, ethics and wellbeing**, and how these relate to ecological and economic factors

I feel like the university/college would respect my opinions on curriculum change if I voiced them **on my own**

**along with 50 students from my institution**

# What challenges would your institution face in attempting to change?

- Lack of will (from students, academics, the institution as a whole)
- Lack of resources (financial, staff capacity – skill or time)
- Institutional barriers (policy, funding, uncertainty, staff morale)

# Why should/do institutions get on board?

- Our universities and colleges are public institutions and therefore have a moral obligation to act in the best interest of society
- Students, regardless of what they study, should be equipped to deal with a changing world
- The skills offered through ESD are universal: future thinking, critical thinking, systems thinking, partnership working, and participatory decision-making
- An ESD education results in a better learner experience: students are involved and consulted on curriculum, learning and teaching methods, and topics

# Students as drivers for change

## Manchester Post-Crash Economics Society

<http://www.post-crasheconomics.com/>

'It is our belief that the content of the economics syllabus and teaching methods could and should be seriously rethought.'

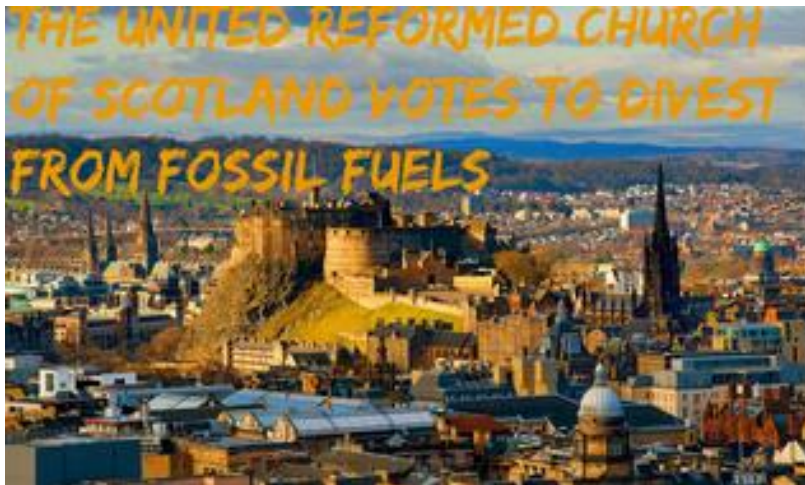
**PCES**



# Students as drivers for change

## People & Planet Fossil Free campaign

<https://peopleandplanet.org/fossil-free>





# Tools available for students to drive change

## Dissertations for Good



## SEEDS PROGRAM



*Studying the possible use of worm composting in the New SUB - a SEEDS Project*

## Seeds Program

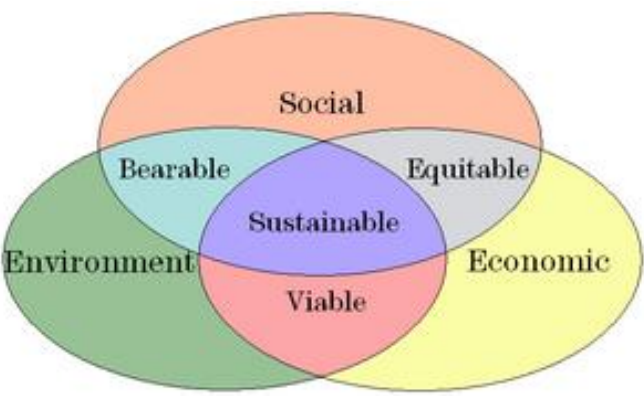
# Tools available for students to drive change

## Sustainability Skills and Education



Note: all sessions run 12:00-13:00

SusSEd



Core sessions (1 <sup>st</sup> and 3 <sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of the month) Various rooms, see each session	Optional sessions (2 <sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of the month) Hicks Building LT4	What is Sheffield doing? (2 <sup>nd</sup> Thursday of the month) Various rooms, see each session	Professional skills sessions (3 <sup>rd</sup> Monday of the month) Bartolome House BA-SR EG03
<b>Introduction</b> <i>Environmental Projects Officer, Sustainable Behaviour Assistant</i> 6 <sup>th</sup> November (and 20 <sup>th</sup> November subject to demand) Arts Tower LT7	<b>Environmental path: Urban greening</b> <i>Dr Ross Cameron</i> 13 <sup>th</sup> November	<b>Project Sunshine</b> <i>Professor Tony Ryan</i> 14 <sup>th</sup> November Dental School, DS-SR02	<b>Communications</b> <i>Linda Allen, Customer and Communications Manager</i> 18 <sup>th</sup> November
<b>Recycling in Sheffield</b> <i>Charlotte Winnert, Environment Officer</i> 4 <sup>th</sup> December (and 18 <sup>th</sup> December subject to demand) Arts Tower LT7	<b>Economic path: Sustainable economics</b> <i>Professor Paul Mosley</i> 11 <sup>th</sup> December	<b>CEES</b> <i>Professor Lenny Koh</i> 12 <sup>th</sup> December Dental School, DS-SR02	<b>Time management</b> <i>Liz Taylor (University of Sheffield Enterprise)</i> 16 <sup>th</sup> December
<b>Energy-saving</b> <i>Philip Riley, Energy Manager</i> 22 <sup>nd</sup> January (and 29 <sup>th</sup> January subject to demand) Arts Tower LT7	<b>Social path: The citizen of the future</b> <i>Colin Whittle</i> 23 <sup>rd</sup> January	<b>Green roofs</b> <i>Jeff Sorrell</i> 24 <sup>th</sup> January Hicks Building, HI-LT09	<b>Money and budgeting</b> <i>Richard Brailey</i> 27 <sup>th</sup> January
<b>Sustainable food</b> <i>Ruth Roberts, Research Technician, MBB</i> 5 <sup>th</sup> February (and 19 <sup>th</sup> February subject to demand) Arts Tower LT7 (5 <sup>th</sup> February) Arts Tower LT8 (19 <sup>th</sup> February)	<b>Environmental path: What is climate change?</b> <i>Professor David Beerling</i> 12 <sup>th</sup> February	<b>Solar farm</b> <i>Dr Alastair Buckley</i> 13 <sup>th</sup> February Hicks Building, HI-LT09	<b>Leadership</b> <i>Liz Taylor (University of Sheffield Enterprise)</i> 17 <sup>th</sup> February
<b>Sustainable travel</b> <i>Darren Hardwick, Travel Planner</i> 5 <sup>th</sup> March (and 19 <sup>th</sup> March subject to demand) Arts Tower LT8	<b>Economic path: Fuel poverty</b> <i>Robert Marchand</i> 12 <sup>th</sup> March	<b>(TBC)</b> 13 <sup>th</sup> March Arts Tower LT07	<b>Careers in sustainability</b> <i>EPO, SBA</i> 17 <sup>th</sup> March
Note: no sessions in April due to holidays			
<b>Exit session</b> <i>EPO, SBA</i> 7 <sup>th</sup> May (and 21 <sup>st</sup> May subject to demand) Arts Tower LT8	<b>Social path: Compensatory green beliefs</b> <i>Aimie Hope</i> 14 <sup>th</sup> May	<b>Biodiversity walk</b> <i>Landscape team</i> 8 <sup>th</sup> May	<b>Creative engagement in sustainability</b> <i>Teo Greenstreet</i> 19 <sup>th</sup> May

# Tools available for students to drive change

## Responsible Futures

- Externally assessed accreditation mark for a whole-institution approach to environmental sustainability and social responsibility
- Formal and informal curriculum (encourages bottom up and middle out interventions)
- Applicable to HE and FE
- Collaborative partnership b/w SU and institution
- Aims to create an enabling environment for ESD to thrive, not seen as an endpoint

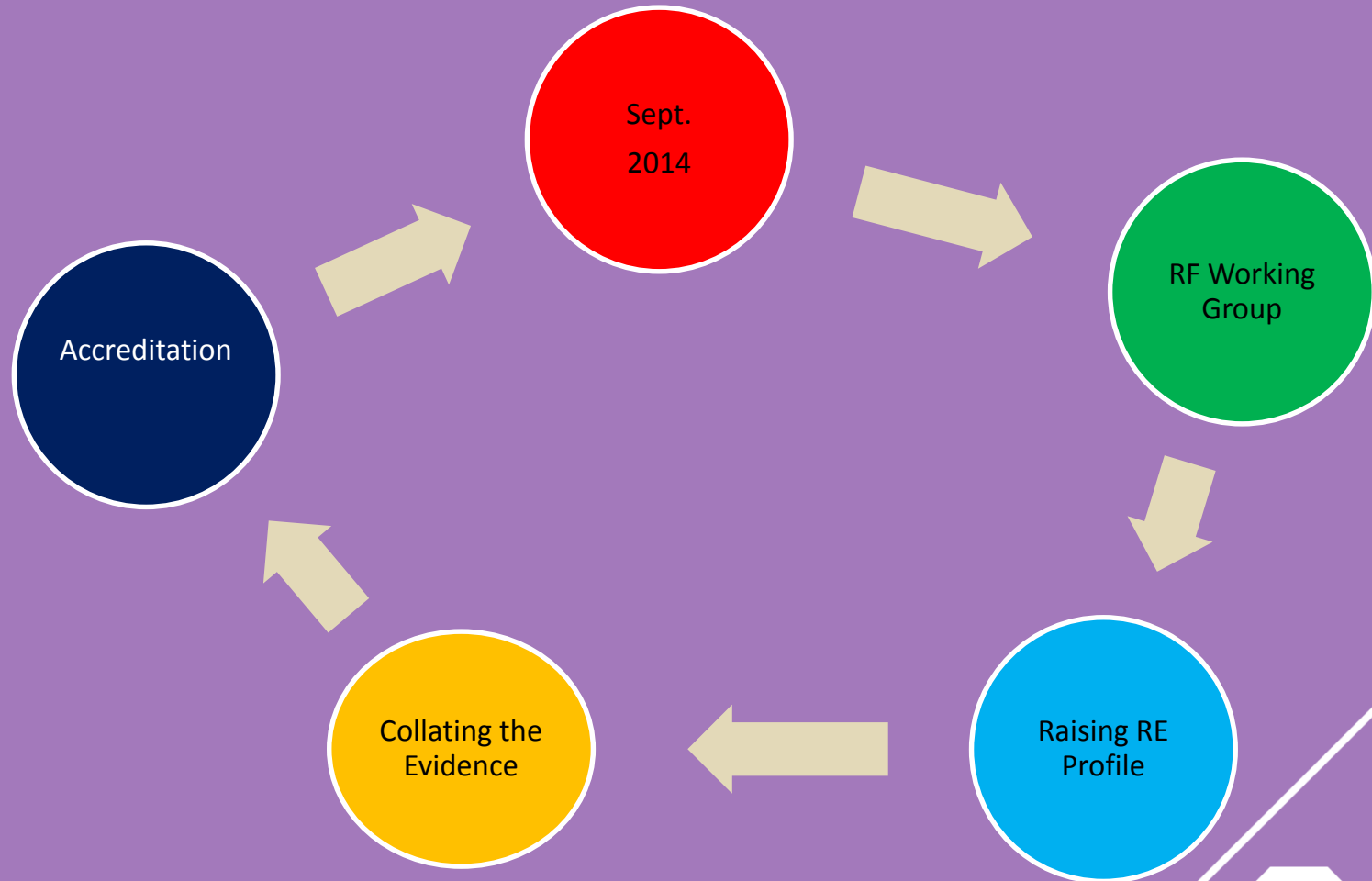
***Responsible Futures** is certification of a whole institution's commitment to SRS, and having an enabling environment for it to thrive, rather than an endpoint.*

**nus**

**Responsible  
Futures**

# Case Study: South Lanarkshire College

# IN THE BEGINNING



The secret  
of getting  
ahead  
is getting  
started.



South  
Lanarkshire  
College  
East Kilbride

# ESD in the Curriculum

- Recycling
- Ethical Issues
- Sustainability
- Volunteering
- Health Promotion



# Environmental Sustainability



South  
Lanarkshire  
College  
East Kilbride



# Social Responsibility in the Curriculum



South  
Lanarkshire  
College  
East Kilbride

# Students Co-developing the Curriculum

- Employability units
- Personal Development units
- Sustainability units
- Timing of unit delivery
- Realistic working environments



# Students Co-Developing the Curriculum

**Safety starts with S but begins with YOU!**

**SLCek Road Safety Awareness Day!**

**Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> November 10am – 1pm**

National Event Organiser - Balfour Beatty  
Fire Scotland  
South Lanarkshire Council - Safety Officer



Road Safety

Blind-spot Awareness for Cyclists and other Road Users



**SLC South Lanarkshire College East Kilbride**

**You said... We did...**

**You said...** "It is possible to get used to the noise of a generator running in the school?"

**We did...** Highgate Quay has been filled by the school's own recycled water.

**You said...** "Can Painting & Decorating students have a role in the construction industry?"

**We did...** New paint being used throughout the construction company.

**You said...** "Will our staff wear a safety vest when working in the future?"

**We did...** All new staff wear a safety vest when working in the future.

**You said...** "The College staff seem to be very busy with mobility issues."

**We did...** The College has been working on a new staff bus with mobility access.

**You said...** "The more science there are, the better it is for the school?"

**We did...** The College has been working on a new science building with mobility access.

**You said...** "When we are planning an event, we can use our skills to help in the school and help the community?"

**We did...** Students have been working on a new project to help the community.

**You said...** "There are problems with the construction that is high demand for construction?"

**We did...** A new construction project has been started with a high demand for construction.

**You said...** "Project Management has been approved for a new construction building. This will provide an opportunity for construction."

**We did...** Project Management has been approved for a new construction building. This will provide an opportunity for construction.

**2014 Issue 1**

# Telling the Story



# Working Collaboratively with NUS

- Student Auditors
- Student focus Groups
- Course Team Reports
- FMT Meeting
- Question Time
- Groups & Committees
- Student Induction
- Freshers Week



# Responsible Futures at SLC



South  
Lanarkshire  
College  
East Kilbride

# Responsible Futures at SLC



# Action Planning

In pairs...

- Discuss ESD activity already taking place at your institution (if any)
- What will you take away from this workshop?
- Write down 3 actions you will take back to your institutions

*Share with the group*



# Conclusions

## **What does it matter?**

- Issues of sustainability are becoming more and more relevant; they are a problem of today
- Problems left by earlier generations have to be cleared up
- Moral obligation to act in the best interest of society

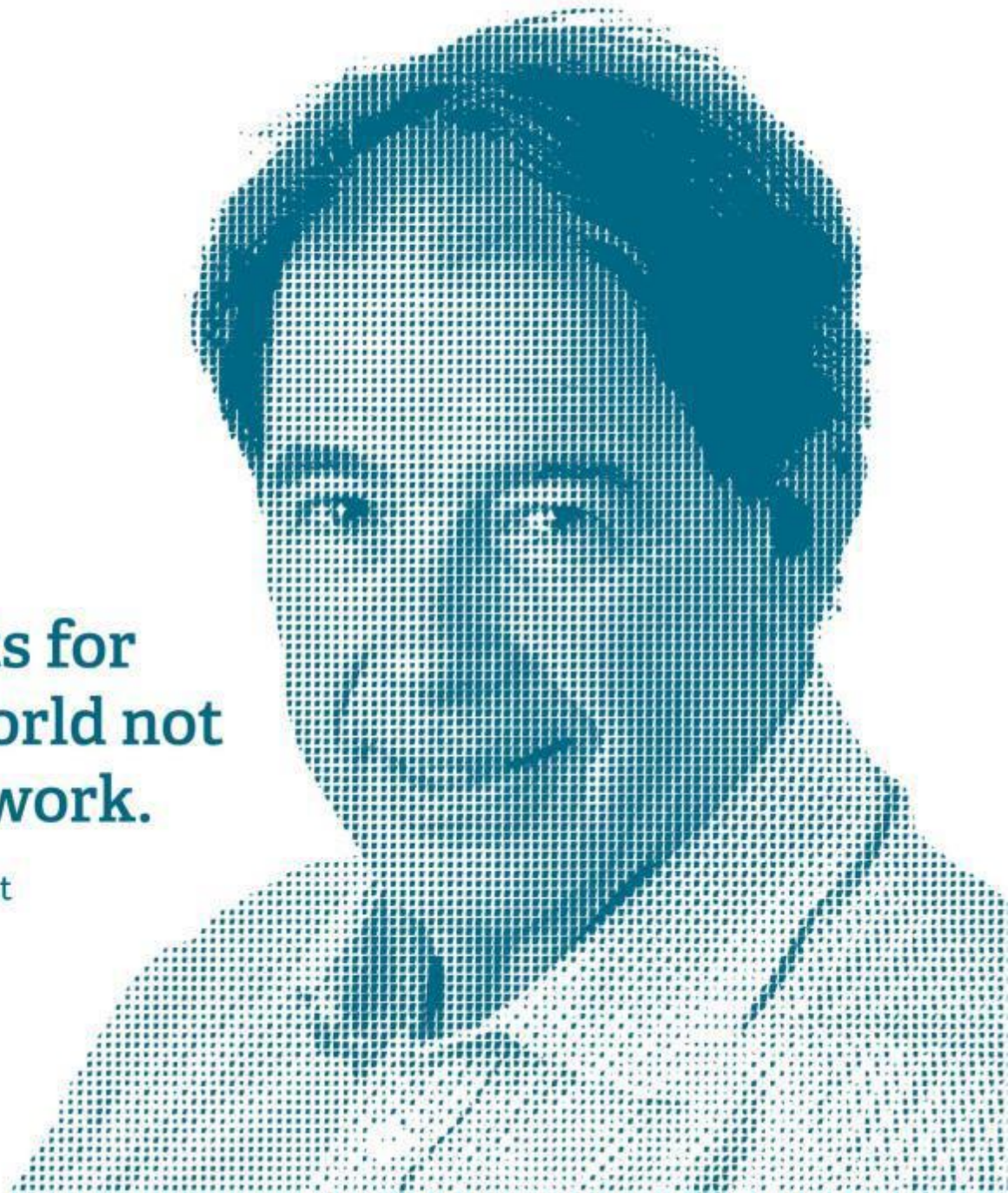
## **What can YOU do?**

- Suggest solutions to the problems you can see
- Use the tools available to you
- Have a say and influence your curriculum – managers respond to action and proof of concept
- Promote a participatory approach, build a sense of teamwork and collaboration



Preparing students for  
the work of the world not  
just the world of work.

Sir Jonathon Porritt, Environmentalist



# Where to go to find out more

- PCES: [www.post-crasheconomics.com](http://www.post-crasheconomics.com)
- People & Planet Divestment: [www.gofossilfree.org](http://www.gofossilfree.org)
- Sussed:  
<http://www.greenimpact.group.shef.ac.uk/wordpress/about/sussed/> (or contact Kim)
- SEEDS (UBC): <http://sustain.ubc.ca/courses-teaching/seeds>
- QAA Guidance on ESD:  
<https://docs.google.com/viewer?url=http://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/Publications/Documents/Education-sustainable-development-Guidance-June-14.pdf>
- Dissertations for Good: [www.nus.org.uk/dfg](http://www.nus.org.uk/dfg) (or contact Kim)
- Responsible Futures: [www.nus.org.uk/responsiblefutures](http://www.nus.org.uk/responsiblefutures) (or contact Alex)

Thank you!

Kim Croasdale  
[kim.croasdale@nus.org.uk](mailto:kim.croasdale@nus.org.uk)

Alex Henderson  
[alex.henderson@nus.org.uk](mailto:alex.henderson@nus.org.uk)