

## Meet a... Sustainability and Engaged Learning Coordinator



Hannah Tweddell, Sustainability and Engaged Learning Coordinator at the University of Bristol

### How would you describe your job in a tweet i.e.140 characters?

Engaging and empowering students to embed sustainability knowledge and skills in the university experience to create future fit graduates.

### What does an average day look like?

There is no average day! I have meetings with students to discuss how they can support the embedding of sustainability in their course both on an individual and group basis through our Green Curriculum Team. I support Bristol SU Get Green's Engage Café which aims to create a network of students engaged in sustainability issues. I meet academics to discuss how they can embed sustainability in their courses for example, I am working with an academic on linking organisations whose aim is to encourage sustainable behaviour through education with a new module exploring sustainability and peace education. I meet community groups to explore community based learning projects where a student answers a real world problem the organisation has as part of their formal assessment, for example through their dissertation. This provides the opportunity for students to develop skills including critical thinking.

Some days involve desk based activity such as data gathering and analysis. I conducted a student survey looking at sustainability knowledge to establish where the gaps were. I write journal articles, text for newsletters and social media, share our stories and research best practice at other institutions.

### What are the key skills and qualifications required for your job? *What legal knowledge do you need that's mandatory? If none, what is useful to keep up to date on?*

There is no mandatory legislation covering the provision of ESD but it is considered important by a number of bodies including the QAA which has recently issued a guidance document.

Communication skills are vital as my job involves working with a range of groups. If the correct language is not used, this can disengage some students and academics. We use a poster (available on our wiki) which enables students and staff to pick out words relevant to them. This creates a starting point for discussing sustainability.

### What training and continuous professional development do you require?

There is little training available related to ESD. The most useful events are those that bring together different institutions to share their experiences of working towards embedding ESD.



To help our Members understand more about the roles in further and higher education institutions, we've created a suite of career profiles. These share the main responsibilities and skills and knowledge required of many of the key roles that play a part in embedding sustainability in a tertiary education institution.

View the entire suite at [www.eauc.org.uk/meet\\_a\\_member](http://www.eauc.org.uk/meet_a_member)

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I find training such as advanced excel training supports my ability to write reports as well as social media training to ensure effective communication.

### What are your top three responsibilities?

- Engaging and empowering students to embed ESD in their university experience.
- Linking formal and informal curriculum opportunities.
- Supporting the University's European Green Capital pledge and UNESCO GAP commitment to ensure all students encounter ESD while at the University.

### Tell us something surprising about your job that people may not know about?

As well as working within Get Green and with other teams based in the Students' Union, I also work with the Bristol academic lead for Green Academy and members of the Sustainability team based in Estates. This partnership creates many more opportunities than if I was based only in one team. It also means that I spend part of my week sat in estates next to the person in charge of running building management systems and, more importantly, the person who turns the heating on!

### What are the positives and negatives of the job?

Working across different teams makes the job very varied and interesting. I've learnt a lot about students' unions as well as the practicalities of running the University. A negative to this is that it took longer to settle into the teams.

### Do you manage a budget, and what are your key priorities for this?

I don't manage a budget but I have access to funds from Get Green.

### What does the path to career progression in this role look like?

The role is useful as it prepares you for working in either a university, a Students' Union, or with community organisations.

### What is the minimum and maximum salary band for this role?

From £10 an hour to £43,000.

### What advice do you have for graduates and other potential candidates who are considering joining?

Gaining a sound understanding of the breadth of what ESD means is important – it's not just about the environment or knowledge but encompasses economic and social aspects as well as skills and values. Knowing how Universities and Student Unions work is also important.

### For institutions without a Sustainability and Engaged Learning Coordinator – what 3 aspects of your role do you think are the most important for any institution's sustainability journey?

- The role focusses primarily on student engagement and empowerment which supports a push from the grassroots leading to more meaningful engagement compared to an exclusively top down approach.
- Having a dedicated person working on embedding ESD enables an institution to undertake more work faster than if the role is tacked on to another job role.
- Working with the Students' Union, academics and estates allows for a joined up approach for embedding ESD.

### What department do you and your line manager sit in? Which departmental interactions are vital for your role?

My role and line manager sit in the Students' Union but works closely with key academics and the Sustainability Estates team.

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### What opportunities and challenges does working in a higher education institution bring?

It provides the opportunity to shape future leaders that are employable and have the skills, knowledge and values to create a better future. A challenge is that universities tend to work quite slowly so change takes time!

### How do you communicate the outputs of your role to the wider institution, and what does this include?

The team produces a monthly newsletter that shares what the ESD team has been up to and offers support to academics. Key individuals are also emailed with relevant information, for example the student survey was sent to all Faculty Education Directors to take to relevant meetings.

The University has an ESD strategy that links to the Sustainability strategy which in turn links to the University vision and strategy.

### What are the unique opportunities to embed sustainability in to this job?

The unique opportunity of this role is the ability to embed ESD in the formal and informal curriculum as well as create links between the two curriculums creating a more exciting and interesting student experience.

### How has EAUC Membership helped you in your job and within your institution?

Events including the annual meeting and webinars enable those working on embedding ESD to network to share experiences and best practice. The regular newsletters provide useful information and opportunities.

### How can other Members contact you?

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