

# SUSTAINABILITY BOARD REPORT

October 2019

The logo for The Students' Union at UWE is a white triangle pointing downwards, containing the text 'THE STUDENTS' UNION AT UWE' in red, uppercase letters.

**THE STUDENTS'  
UNION**  
AT UWE

## NUS GREEN IMPACT ACCREDITATION

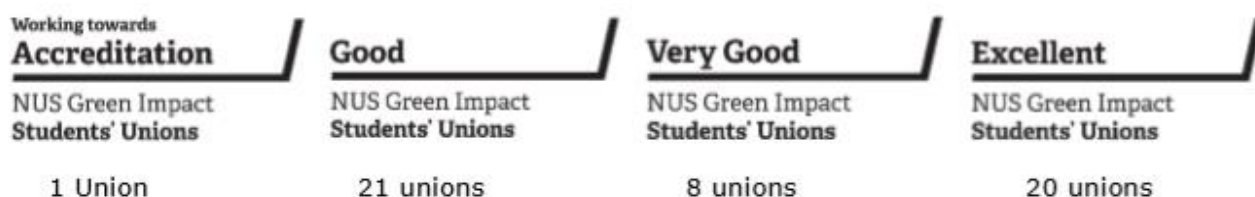
We are delighted to announce that for the third year in a row, The Students' Union at UWE has been awarded an 'excellent' accreditation rating, and received the 'Highest Scoring Students' Union' award at the NUS' Green Impact Awards!

The awards are an opportunity to recognise the commitment students' unions have made to equip students with the skills needed to create a positive change, which helps work towards a more just and sustainable future.

Green Impact responds to the student body's interest and demand for sustainability. It allows unions to showcase work on areas such as equality, community, curriculum reform and campaigning.

2018/19 has marked the 12th year of Green Impact Students' Unions. 60 unions have engaged with the programme this year, with 50 reaching the audit stage. A total of 13190 points were awarded across the 50 sustainability actions each union could complete through the Green Impact toolkit.

This is a significant achievement encompassing a breadth of activities from campaigning and influencing, to conducting sustainability research and inducting and training student and staff members. These results are the collective achievement of all the students, officers and staff members involved in your local Green Impact committees or working groups.



The table below outlines how many points The Students' Union at UWE scored for each sustainability category and how this compares to the total amount available as well as the average score.

	The Students' Union at UWE	% of points available	Student Union Average points
Knowledge & Understanding	26	87%	13
Leadership & Strategy	51	93%	39
Partnership & Policy	75	100%	46
SU Operations	90	90%	57
Campaigning & Influencing	85	94%	47
Outcomes	95	95%	36
Outreach & Collaboration	20	100%	11
Self defined criteria	30	100%	14

This year, The Students' Union at UWE scored a total of 472 points (out of 500) which is a 79% difference from the average score of 264 across all participants in Green Impact Students' Unions this year.

We would like to thank all of our colleagues at UWE Bristol for their fantastic support and expertise on our sustainability journey. A big well done goes to all of The Students' Union Presidents and staff, for their hard work and continuous commit to improve, and as ever, thank you to our students for challenging us and being part of our journey in helping to create a happier, healthier and more sustainable world.

## NUS RESPONSIBLE FUTURES ACCREDITATION

NUS have introduced 'host partnerships', these are accredited partnerships who want to share their leadership and good practice, as well as their challenges and failures, in order to collaboratively support other ongoing and future partnerships within Responsible Futures. Three partnerships were successful: UWE Bristol and The Students' Union at UWE, Anglia Ruskin University and Students' Union, Keele University and Students' Union.

UWE Bristol and The Students' Union at UWE are proud to be a Responsible Futures Host Partnership for 2019-20 because we feel that the Responsible Futures scheme is an excellent vehicle for promoting education for sustainable development within FE and HE. We hope very much to share our experience of working closely and effectively together, to further develop opportunities for students to learn about and practice sustainable development, in order to help other institutions to do the same. We look forward to working with other Host Partnerships to deliver a range of events and workshops for the wider FE and HE sector, and to draw on the experience of other institutions in working towards and achieving Responsible Futures accreditation as part of our five year review of the scheme.

## WELCOME EVENTS

Thank you to Paul Roberts and Louise Finch, for facilitating a workshop for The Students' Union on building sustainable practises into our events programme last semester. We explored Welcome as an opportunity to scope out new ways of reducing our negative environmental impact and increasing student awareness of the agenda. From this workshop, we are currently working on creating an events toolkit/checklist for all staff members to consider when planning events to enable more conscientious decision-making.

We published a news article for new students, giving ideas for a more eco-friendly student experience: <https://www.thestudentsunion.co.uk/news/article/thesuatuwe/A-UWE-Bristol-students-guide-to-being-more-eco-friendly/>

The Green Team has collaborated with a range of Welcome events and initiatives organised by The Students' Union.

- Pop-Up Charity Shop: In a joint collaboration between The Students' Union and UWE Bristol, The British Heart Foundation ran a pop-up charity shop on campus staffed by student

Welcome Reps. Over the two weeks, it was open, we collectively managed to raise £855 for charity, and promote sustainable living to incoming students. A huge thanks to BHF, Paul Roberts and Adam Green for their support.

- Charity Shop Crawl: The Green Team and RAG joined forces to give incoming students a tour of charity shops along Gloucester Road in town. 25 students from a range of faculties attended the crawl and purchased many second-hand treasures to start the term with sustainable purchases.
- Dip Dye Disco: The Green Team and HallsLife teamed up for our annual Glenside Welcome Event: Dip Dye Disco. This fun outdoor event boasts a range of activity including tie-dyeing second-hand t-shirts, biodegradable glitter face painting, fresh smoothies made with our smoothie bike, all tied together with informal information sessions about ways to get involved with a range of programmes on campus.
- Freshers Fair(s): The Green Team hosted a stall at our main Freshers' Fair on Frenchay Campus, and at the Glenside and Bower Ashton Welcome Fairs. The Green Team is aiming to increase engagement with students from our satellite campus sites this academic year with more frequent activities and events.
- Green Fest: Green Fest was a celebration of sustainability that concluded the Global Climate Strike Week on 27 September, it was attended by hundreds of students from a variety of faculties. Several stakeholders from The Students' Union, UWE Bristol, and the community attended, and ran informational stalls signposting ways to get involved with sustainability on campus. The event boasted vegan cakes and vegan hotdogs, the Vintage Vera Kilo Clothing Sale, a sustainability edition of Funday Friday, The Students' Union's new Bike Loan Scheme, and many of our valued internal stakeholders from The Students' Union and UWE Bristol – thank you to everyone who attended. More than 150 pledges/consultations were taken under the framework of the SDGs, providing us with insight about what students want UWE Bristol and The Students' Union to achieve by 2030. The consultations will be continued during Big Green Week, especially at Glenside and Bower Ashton and published later this term.



## BIG GREEN WEEK

The Green Team and UWE's Sustainability Team will be running another collaborative Green Week from 7 October to 13 October. The Green Team has confirmed the following events:

Monday 7 October:

- Meatless Monday at The Students' Union Bar (Frenchay) 11:00-15:00: Go meatless this Monday and enjoy 20% off a range of our meatless menu options.
- People and Planet's Sweatshop Free Workshop at The Students' Union (Frenchay) 17:30-19:30: The primary goal of the Sweatshop Free campaign is to get universities, colleges and other public sector bodies to join Electronics Watch, allowing them to find out the working conditions the products they purchase are made in.

Tuesday 8 October:

- Bring Your Own Bowl at The Students' Union Bar (Frenchay) 18:00-20:00: Our award winning food waste awareness event, where students enjoy a free meal made from surplus food.

Wednesday 9 October:

- Community Garden Session at Frenchay 12:00-15:00: Drop in gardening session co-led by UWE Bristol Grounds Team and The Green Team. Our Sustainability Officer and Green Team Reps will be along to share information about how to get more involved.

Thursday 10 October:

- De-Stress Fest at The Students' Union (Glenside) 12:00-15:00: Drop in World Mental Health Day event at Glenside to showcase the range of wellness programmes we have for our Glenside students, along with a mini Green Gathering to sign post to the connection between green spaces and wellbeing. Coffee, tea, and cake provided.
- Green Gathering at The Students' Union (Frenchay) 17:30-19:30: The first Green Gathering of term will have representatives along from many of our sustainability programmes within The Students' Union, UWE Bristol, and local community to give a brief explanation of how to get involved. We will also conduct a blue-sky mind mapping activity to suss out what kinds of sustainability campaigns and initiatives students want to see on campus.

Friday 11 October:

- Green Gathering at The Students' Union Bar (Bower Ashton) 12:00-14:00: A lunchtime Green Gathering with a similar format as Frenchay event held at Bower Ashton to engage our creative students and gain their feedback on a sustainability University 2030. Tea, coffee, and vegan cake provided.



## SUSTAINABILITY OFFICER & COMMITTEE

Recruitment for our Student Sustainability Committee is currently open to all students. Registration will close 16 October and the AGM will be held 17 October at The Students' Union (Frenchay) 17:30-19:30. There are 14 available positions including biodiversity, campus development, education, energy, engagement, IT, transport, waste, water, food and health, procurement and portfolio (x3). Students are not limited to one particular role and are encouraged to pursue several in order to open the committee up and encourage collaboration.

### NUS Annual Divestment and Reinvestment Day

Our incoming Sustainability Officer, Curzio, has raised the issue of creating an ethical banking and investment policy to guide future finance by means of divestment-banking campaigns as part of his manifesto. The Divest Barclays campaign is of particular interest as Barclays is one of UWE Bristol's primary banks and has billions of pounds worth of direct investments directly invested in fossil fuels. Following this manifesto point, Curzio alongside the Student Sustainability Engagement Coordinator (Lauren McLeron) at The Students' Union at UWE, attended the NUS Annual Divestment and Reinvestment Strategy Day in Liverpool at the Liverpool Guild of Students. Delegates from several other institutions including University of Liverpool, Keele University, The University of Manchester, University of Salford, University of Sheffield, and University of Hull attended. The workshop covered a variety of useful techniques when running a divestment campaign, and has provided our Sustainability Officer with useful tools for making progress on his manifesto point.

## PERIOD POVERTY

The Students' Union is working in collaboration with UWE Bristol to address the issue of period poverty within our student population. We are seeking to distribute plastic free single use products to campus sites, to support menstruating student who might need short term access. We are working with the UWE Money Advice Team to support students who need longer term support.

The Students' Union ran a period poverty stall at GreenFest on Friday 27 September, talking to students about the different products available, reusable and single use and raised awareness about plastic in products. We ran a quiz to engage students and improve knowledge. The Students' Union shops at all sites stocks reusable lunette cups at a reduced price – only £9.95!



## STUDENT MATTERS

The Students' Union debriefs each year post Welcome to learn lessons and start the planning process for the following Welcome period. Whilst really positive steps are in place to improve our events planning process and reduce the carbon footprint of our activities, we are aware that we still have a long journey ahead of us to ensure Welcome is carbon neutral.

Several students have raised serious concerns about the ethical ethos of suppliers at the Freshers' Fair and the quantity of single-use items that are given out as promotional materials.