



Universities and Colleges  
Climate Commitment for Scotland

CHANGE  
AGENTS<sub>UK</sub>

Working and learning for a  
**sustainable future**



# Student Engagement (for sustainability)

Jimmy Brannigan  
[www.esdconsulting.co.uk](http://www.esdconsulting.co.uk)  
Twitter: @NetPositiveUK  
Tel: (0044) 7775514579

# Agenda

- 13.00 Welcome and introductions
- 13.15 What do we mean by student engagement?
- 13.45 Hannah Plant, Change Agents UK
- 14.30 Break
- 14.45 Case Study
- 15.30 An Outline approach – developing a strategy
- 16.00 Developing an action plan

A large, faint graphic in the background consists of several overlapping, rounded shapes in light green and yellow, resembling stylized leaves or abstract human figures.

# What do we mean by student engagement?

# What do we mean by student engagement?

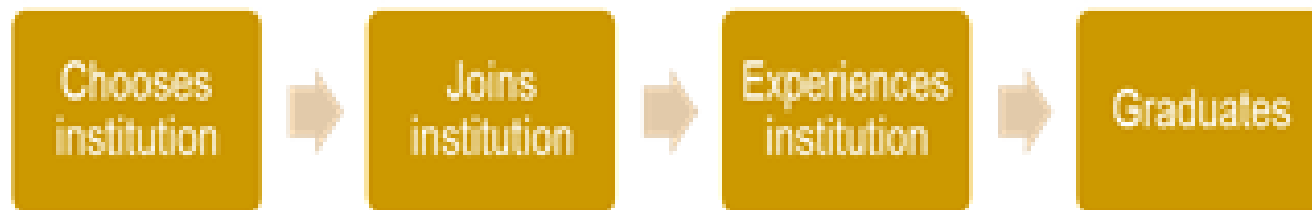


- **Student engagement** occurs when "students make a psychological investment in learning"

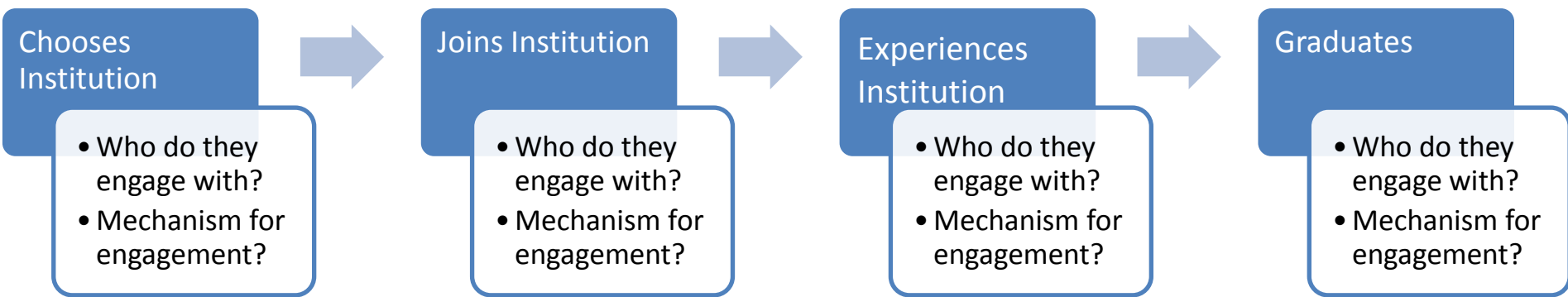
“Effective and deep learning about sustainability cannot be confined to the individual programme or degree but has to take place across the entire student experience.”

(Hopkinson, Hughes and Layer 2007)

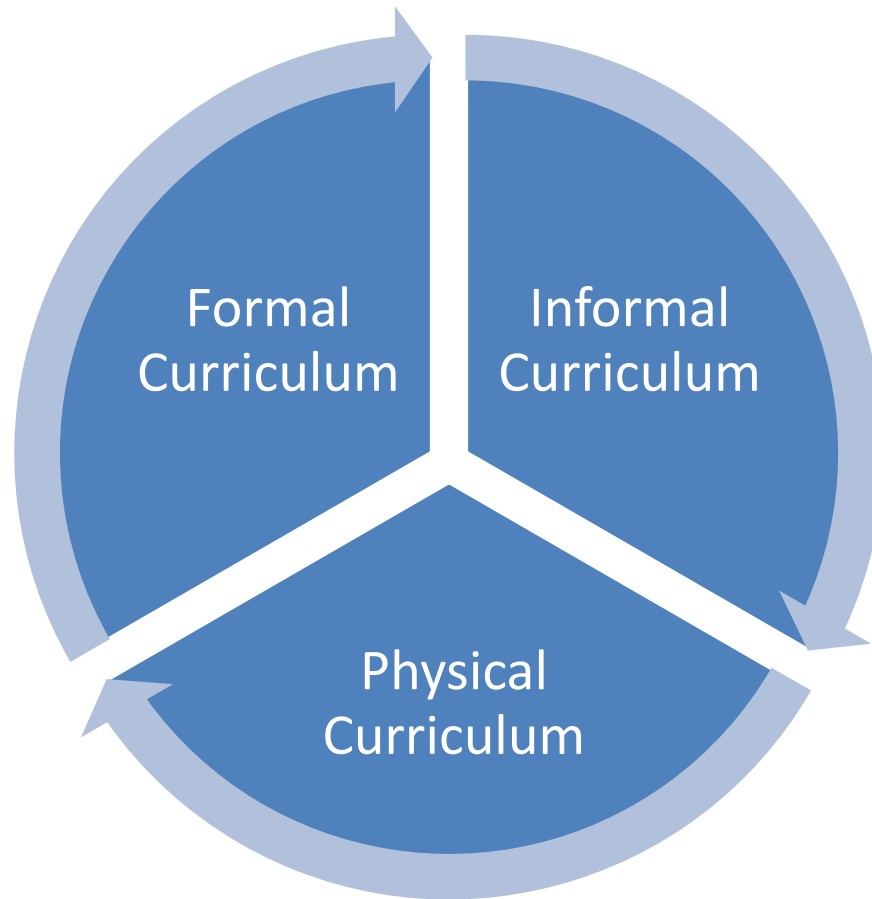
# Simplistic student journey!



# Who engages with students?



# Where do opportunities exist for student engagement?





# Why is student engagement and sustainability important?



## Context

- Respond and shape real world conditions
- Equip students with the skills to operate in a resource constrained world
- Employability
- “Developing the leadership skills we need for the transition to a sustainable economy is both urgent and critical to our future economic success – as well as our social and environmental wellbeing” BITC
- 90% of businesses think these skills (sustainability) are a critical business issues and 80% seen an urgent need to put programmes in place

# Why is student engagement and sustainability important?



## Policy

- There is an increasingly strong mandate for ESD
- “The greatest contribution HE can make to sustainable development is by enabling students to acquire the skills and knowledge that allow them to make a lasting difference. What they learn and what they are taught are therefore critical” HEFCE
- ESD offers relevance and renewal in curriculum

# Why is student engagement and sustainability important?



- Rising public interest
- Funding council mandate
- Links to employability and employers
- Student demand
- Professional requirement
- Financial savings and efficiencies
- Enriching the curriculum and enhancement of teaching and learning
- Policy is leading all institutions in this direction
- Some tutors / academics feel obliged to their student as the next generation

## Negative Impacts

## Positive Contribution

Use of resources

Social Impact  
(Community Impact)

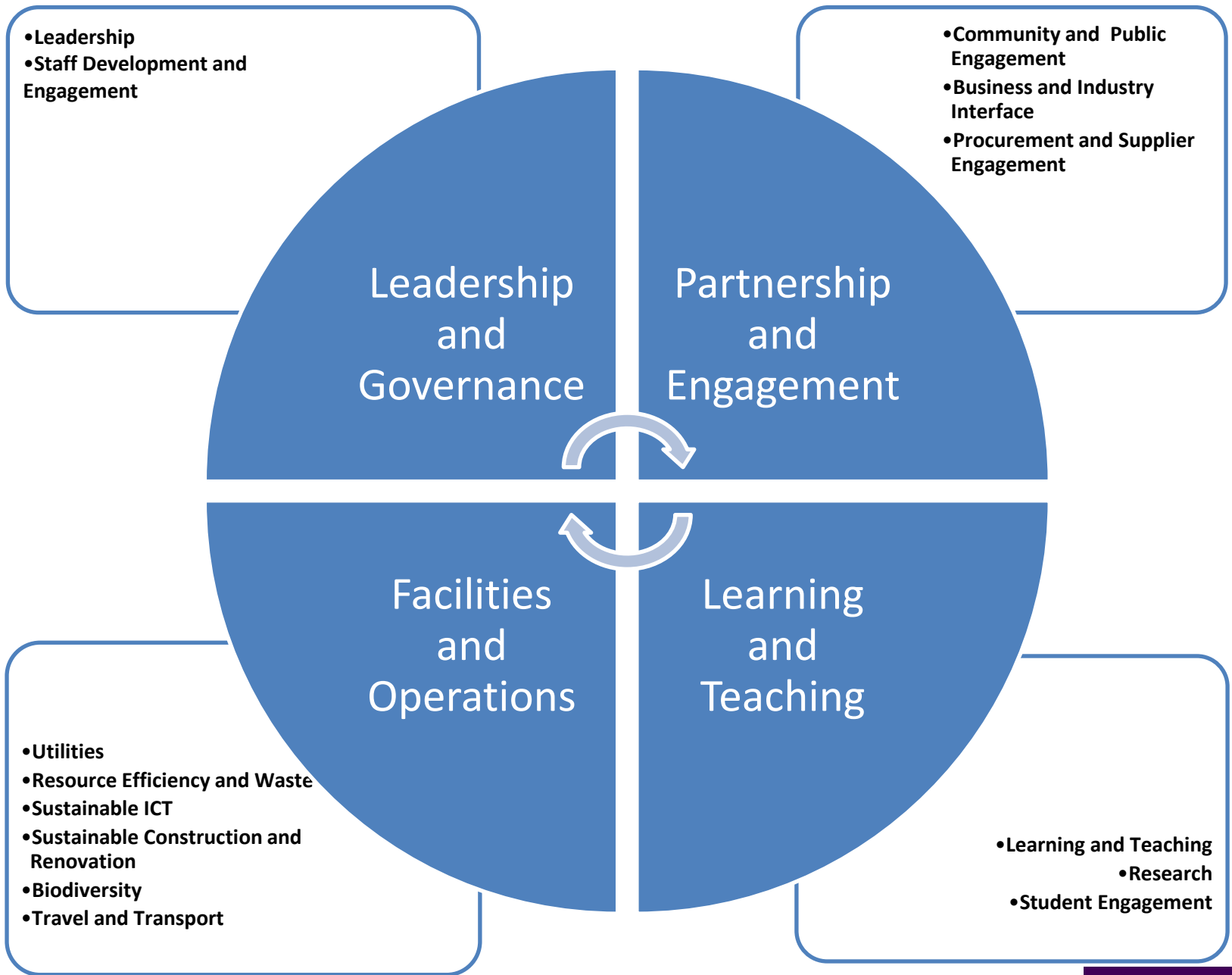
Learning  
Teaching  
Student  
Engagement

Graduate Attributes  
Employability  
Competence

Business Engagement  
Community Engagement  
Regional objectives  
Global Objectives

Social Cohesion  
Equality

**We need to  
recognise  
and enhance  
the  
positives!**




Team Leader: [Katherine Thorne](#)

**Sustainability and social responsibility are holistic activities necessitating the involvement of the entire community; for universities, students are clearly a significant part of the internal community both in terms of numbers and also in the potential that they offer. Every new intake of students offers a surge of fresh energy and ideas that can be harnessed for the benefit of all. As they are by nature a transient population they should also be considered as future change agents as following their experiences on campus they will return relatively quickly to wider society where their impacts can continue to be felt. Students who are actively engaged with sustainability agendas as part of their student experience are more likely to emerge as graduates who are equipped with the skills knowledge and experience that make positive contributions to sustainable development throughout their lives.**






This framework has been designed to assess the extent to which your institution can evidence that it is committed to actively engaging students with sustainability through their wider student experience. Parallel to the formal learning experiences that are delivered for students there are a range of informal curriculum experiences creating opportunities for students to experience 'sustainability in action'. This engagement will support students in emerging as the kind of citizens vital to society achieving sustainable development.

There are a variety of ways an institution can evidence their active engagement with students on issues of

[Read more...](#)

▼ Explore the Student Engagement Framework  (2 of 8 cells rated)

Show/Hide Activity Areas

<b>Policy and Strategy</b>  (1 ratings)	<b>Action Planning</b> 	<b>Stakeholder Engagement</b>  (1 ratings)	<b>Measurement</b> 
The university's strategies for student engagement are well developed and aligned with university social responsibility and sustainability strategies to maximise impact. Activity is reviewed on a regular basis. There are clear reporting lines into formal university management structures.	Action Plans, which incorporate objectives and associated targets, drive the cycles of activity across the university. This includes the development of mutually beneficial links between student engagement and sustainability.	Key stakeholders (including staff and students) review this activity and shape its development.	The impacts and benefits of student engagement are routinely monitored and evaluated as part of existing university practice. There is evidence of continual improvement and feedback loops.
<b>Communication</b> 	<b>Training and Support</b> 	<b>Implementation</b> 	<b>Links To The Curriculum</b> 
The strategies are in the public domain. There is a planned approach to communicating to relevant stakeholders the strategies, associated activities and their implications. The agenda has clear, high-level support within the university.	Commitments and/or targets are linked to named individuals or teams within the university. Staff have either appropriate sustainability skills and knowledge, or opportunities to develop them through access to specialist support.	There is evidence of student engagement activity across the university and beyond through the Student Union, student societies, volunteering programmes, staff groups, trade unions or individual sustainability champions.	Students are actively encouraged to be involved in curriculum development and to support the process of embedding education for sustainable development (ESD) at programme level.

The background of the slide is decorated with several overlapping, hand-drawn style lines in light green and yellow, forming abstract shapes that resemble leaves or organic forms.

Hannah Plant

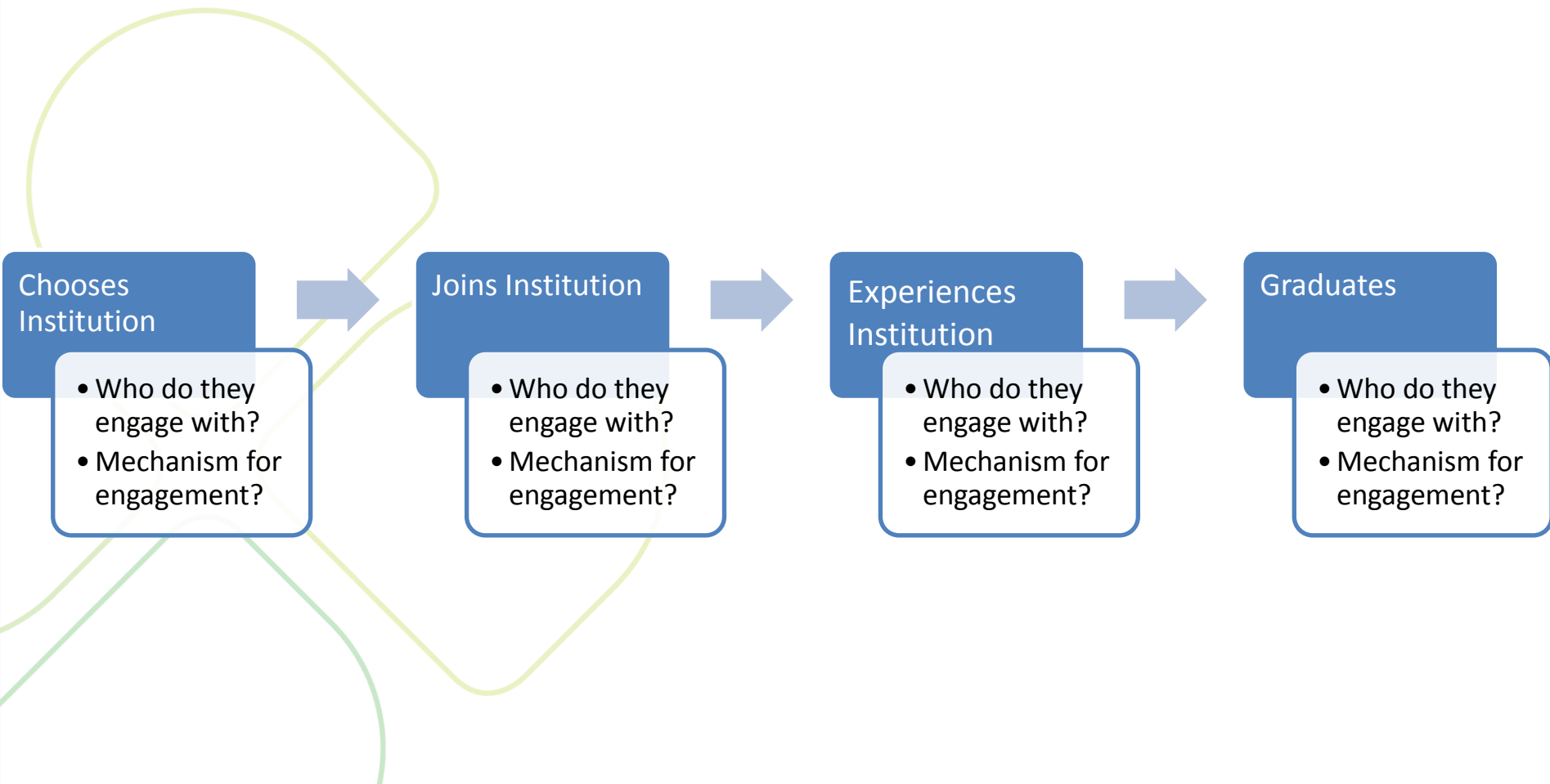
Change Agents UK

# Student Engagement

- Developing your student engagement plan



# Who engages with students?



# Developing your plan

- What are you trying to achieve?
- Who is best placed to engage?
- Who do you need to engage with?
- What are the existing opportunities that take place within the institution?
- How do avoid overload!

Team Leader: [Katherine Thorne](#)

**Sustainability and social responsibility are holistic activities necessitating the involvement of the entire community; for universities, students are clearly a significant part of the internal community both in terms of numbers and also in the potential that they offer. Every new intake of students offers a surge of fresh energy and ideas that can be harnessed for the benefit of all. As they are by nature a transient population they should also be considered as future change agents as following their experiences on campus they will return relatively quickly to wider society where their impacts can continue to be felt. Students who are actively engaged with sustainability agendas as part of their student experience are more likely to emerge as graduates who are equipped with the skills knowledge and experience that make positive contributions to sustainable development throughout their lives.**




This framework has been designed to assess the extent to which your institution can evidence that it is committed to actively engaging students with sustainability through their wider student experience. Parallel to the formal learning experiences that are delivered for students there are a range of informal curriculum experiences creating opportunities for students to experience 'sustainability in action'. This engagement will support students in emerging as the kind of citizens vital to society achieving sustainable development.

There are a variety of ways an institution can evidence their active engagement with students on issues of

[Read more...](#)

▼ Explore the Student Engagement Framework  (2 of 8 cells rated)

Show/Hide Activity Areas

Policy and Strategy  (1 ratings)	Action Planning 	Stakeholder Engagement  (1 ratings)	Measurement 
The university's strategies for student engagement are well developed and aligned with university social responsibility and sustainability strategies to maximise impact. Activity is reviewed on a regular basis. There are clear reporting lines into formal university management structures.	Action Plans, which incorporate objectives and associated targets, drive the cycles of activity across the university. This includes the development of mutually beneficial links between student engagement and sustainability.	Key stakeholders (including staff and students) review this activity and shape its development.	The impacts and benefits of student engagement are routinely monitored and evaluated as part of existing university practice. There is evidence of continual improvement and feedback loops.
Communication 	Training and Support 	Implementation 	Links To The Curriculum 
The strategies are in the public domain. There is a planned approach to communicating to relevant stakeholders the strategies, associated activities and their implications. The agenda has clear, high-level support within the university.	Commitments and/or targets are linked to named individuals or teams within the university. Staff have either appropriate sustainability skills and knowledge, or opportunities to develop them through access to specialist support.	There is evidence of student engagement activity across the university and beyond through the Student Union, student societies, volunteering programmes, staff groups, trade unions or individual sustainability champions.	Students are actively encouraged to be involved in curriculum development and to support the process of embedding education for sustainable development (ESD) at programme level.

A large, faint graphic on the left side of the slide consists of several overlapping, rounded shapes in light green and yellow, resembling a stylized plant or a cluster of bubbles.

# Questions / Discussion