

Whole Earth?

UWE, Bristol's Response to the SU President's Challenge



Introduction

In October 2015, UWE opened the Whole Earth? exhibition on its Frenchay Campus. In response to this powerful call to action the President of the Students' Union challenged the Vice Chancellor to publically demonstrate how the university was responding to the University Challenges presented in the exhibition. This is the university's response to that challenge which has been developed through a series of conversations with staff and students facilitated by the Students' Union and the Knowledge Exchange for Sustainability Education group. The response focuses upon the undergraduate provision of the university although it is recognised that the postgraduate taught provision and the research activities of the university make substantial contributions to meeting the University Challenges of the Whole Earth? exhibition.



The Sustainability Ambition of the University

UWE's Sustainability Plan sets out the university's ambition to become a sustainable university. The Sustainability Plan takes its authority from Strategy 2020 and the Vice Chancellor, Chair of the Board of Governors and the President of the Students' Union take collective responsibility to ensure that the aims and ambitions of the plan are secured. In the forward to the Plan the three leaders commit the university to addressing the issues arising from the imperative for sustainable development. Simply put, this means playing our part in ensuring we support the global sustainability agenda for a strong, healthy and just society living within environmental limits. The university has implemented considerations of sustainable development into the business planning of the University in both its educational role and in the management of the estate. The Plan is overseen by a high level University Sustainability Board with action devolved to Professional Services and Faculties to embed sustainable development into their business decision making.



The Sustainability Ambition of the University

UWE has been addressing this challenge since the early 1990s and remains committed to ensuring our students - future graduates - are exposed to and can engage with the ideas of sustainable development in their programme of study. The university provide many opportunities for the informal curricula of volunteering and public engagement to embrace the sustainable development agenda. For UWE, Bristol education for sustainable development is about the contribution that can be made through learning and teaching in both the formal and informal curricula. The university seeks to support its students develop the skills, knowledge, behaviours and values that help reconcile human needs with the environmental limits of the planet and thus to prepare our graduates for the sustainable development challenges they will confront in their professional and private lives.

As of 2015 the university is proud to announce that all of its full and part time undergraduate and postgraduate teaching programmes provide the opportunity for students to consider the issues raised by sustainability within the context of their discipline. For those students who wish to develop and extend their understanding of sustainability and to enhance their skills the university, often in partnership with the SU, provides a wide range of extra and c o-curricula activities. In addition the university has developed an on- line learning package called Keys to Sustainability which will be available to all students from September 2016. UWE, Bristol's Graduate Attributes Framework defines the skills and attributes of a UWE, graduate as self-reliant and connected, ready and able, enterprising, globally responsible and future-facing. These attributes, of course, define sustainability. A graduate leaving UWE, Bristol will have, according to actuary tables, some 60 years of life post-graduation and in their professional and private life a UWE, Bristol graduate will express these skills and attributes and contribute to the development of a more sustainable future.



Response to Specific Whole Earth? Challenges

The University Challenges in the Whole Earth? Exhibition

The future of humanity will depend on mastering a balancing act, or perhaps a number of balancing acts, all balanced. The challenge is to provide for the needs of more than 10 billion people while safeguarding our planetary life-support systems, while conserving all the non-human lifeforms that make up those systems, while balancing concern for the future with concern for the present. Recent scientific insights better equip us to manage those balances. Doing this is your generation's great task.

Universities are at the cutting edge of this challenge. WHOLE EARTH? is an invitation to students and professors to share the research they are doing and approaches they are taking that might underpin future security for all.

We have addressed some of the disciplines directly here, but to get through the climate/resource/population bottleneck will require the skills and ingenuity of people from all walks of life. Upload your contribution – from you personally or from your discipline – to the SOS YouTube channel via SOSnetwork@outlook.com, or tweet #studentearth, or email via www.hardrainproject.com/comment, and inspire a wider audience with new approaches to problems that sometimes seem overwhelming.

The challenge from the President of the SU at UWE

Dear Steve, Jane, Helen and Jim,

I am writing to follow up the WHOLE EARTH? Launch event, which I was honoured to have been given the opportunity to say a few words at on behalf of the Students' Union. I found the exhibition really inspiring and hope it has the same effect on UWE, BRISTOL students and staff alike and encourage them to take positive action. The Students' Union were very pleased that the University had championed the NUS WHOLE EARTH? Campaign and was willing to host the exhibition and use it as a flagship exhibition to start Big Green Week. As you know, the Students' Union are very committed to the sustainability agenda, through our work with the Green Team, Green Impact & Responsible Futures – to name a number of initiatives. On behalf of the students at UWE, Bristol, please could I request a response from the University on the individual challenges that the campaign highlighted next to each issue? It is crucial for us to ensure that we use these highlighted issues as a stepping stone to make change, rather than to simply acknowledge the issues and not take the necessary following steps.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Kind Regards,

Jack Polson

President – The Students' Union at UWE, Bristol

Coldharbour Lane – Frenchay

15/10/15

Response to Specific Whole Earth? Challenges

The Arts Challenge

Sustainable development is an esoteric, theoretical concept. It does not work well as a call to arms or action. If it is going to get under people's skins, art is probably going to have to take it there. Can art students develop new ways of presenting sustainable development? Many arts students go on to join advertising agencies. The advertising industry spends \$600 billion a year persuading us that we can consume our way to happiness. Imagine if all that talent was focused on communicating the benefits of sustainable development.



The Arts at UWE

UWE, Bristol has a wide range of arts disciplines, including English, Linguistics and English Literature providing the opportunity for students to consider the place of sustainability in their discipline and the way in which they can use their disciplinary skills to further a more sustainable future. Co curricula and informal curricula provide further opportunities for UWE, Bristol arts students to develop skills, knowledge and attributes that will serve them well in their professional and private lives. In their professional lives UWE, Bristol graduates demonstrate and embody the attributes necessary to thrive in the changing and challenging environment of the 21st Century.

The [ParkHive](#) project shows how UWE, Bristol Arts students are using their skills, knowledge and enthusiasm to change perceptions and communicate the benefits of sustainable development.



Response to Specific Whole Earth? Challenges

The New Economics Challenge

There already is such a thing as the “new economics” and there are already students at prestigious universities demanding that the economics faculty teach an economics that fulfils its real responsibility – answering how the world’s population can live well without further draining the planet’s resources. What answers does this new approach offer? What other answers might it offer?



New Economics at UWE

Economic problems are an ever-present and inherent part of our lives and essential to understanding the world in which we live and work. BA or BSc Economics at UWE, Bristol is an exciting and cutting-edge applied Economics course which focuses on real and relevant issues using and applying the latest post-crisis economic theory. UWE, Bristol Economic students analyse numerous real-world issues including irrational behaviour, how firms really operate, economic growth, post-crisis banking, development and sustainability as well as alternative schools of thought that are shaping economics including new-institutional economics, happiness economics, evolutionary economics and behavioural economics. UWE, Bristol students critically consider the issues of economic growth and the decoupling of resource inputs and pollution outputs from nation states. This extends to consideration of outsourcing of pollution when considering imported goods. Co curricula and informal curricula provide further opportunities for UWE, Bristol economics students to develop skills, knowledge and attribute that support sustainable development.

Response to Specific Whole Earth? Challenges

Media Studies Challenge

This project is based on the notion that living within the bounds of nature will require new forms of communication and persuasion. The media world is changing rapidly. The move from paper to electrons, the new social media and other radical changes in communications technology should create paths toward a sustainable world. Can universities work sustainability into their media studies courses?



Media Studies at UWE

UWE, Bristol media students experience a range of media production techniques, processes, technologies and concepts allowing the development of a critical, creative approach to the world. Students devise experimental and socially engaged projects, while building practical skills in writing and analysis, blogging, websites and social media, film, photography and events. All of which are underpinned by theoretical enquiry and critique and developing an understanding of the impact of media in its cultural and historical context including consideration of sustainability issues. Bristol's year as [European Green Capital](#) provided numerous opportunities for students of film, journalism, photography and media practice and culture to explore, represent and report these issues to a wide range of audiences including fellow students. Co-curricula and informal curricula provide further opportunities for UWE, Bristol media students to develop skills, knowledge and attributes that will serve them well in their professional and private lives.

Response to Specific Whole Earth? Challenges

Political Science Challenge

Realities are global, but effective political systems for managing them are, at best, national: and multi-nationalism is not working very well. At one end of the political science spectrum: Can we develop effective world governance without a world government? At the other end: Can voters be effectively educated about sustainability issues? And can universities develop a political science that factors in sustainable development.

Political Science at UWE

Consideration of sustainability issues is embedded into the Politics and International Relations provision at UWE, Bristol. Politics modules examines the influences, dynamics, conflicts and interactions of governments, individuals, organisations, and countries and provide an understanding of the causes and possible resolutions of domestic and international political issues including those caused by natural resource allocation processes and sustainable development.

Read in the Politics in Action blogs of UWE staff [here](#) to explore how UWE Politics and International Relations degrees are addressing the challenges posed by sustainable development.



Response to Specific Whole Earth? Challenges

Science and Technology Challenge

Universities teach many forms of sciences and technologies. Obviously both are crucial to sustainable development: new and renewable forms of energy; new ways to grow and use foods; new forms of transport; new ways of managing planetary systems; the list is endless. The debates on things like GMOs, nanotech and nuclear energy might be different in society, through democratic governments, were driving these toward the service of humanity rather than the service of corporations. So cutting edge science and technology schools will want to see how they can combine values driven by sustainable development to produce “technology as if planet and people mattered”.



Science and Technology at UWE

UWE, Bristol provides a wide range of Science and Technology degrees including Computer Science, Environmental Science, Forensic Science, Product Design Technology and Broadcast Audio and Music Technology . Each of these provides the opportunity for students to explore the issues of sustainability within their discipline of study, to understand the contribution their discipline makes to environmental problems and to develop their ideas for how the discipline can contribute to a more sustainable society. Many of the science and technology degrees are accredited by professional bodies that require sustainability to be present in the curricula. UWE, Bristol science and technology graduates have the knowledge skills and attributes to create solutions to intractable problems because the planet and people really do matter.

The Community Action and Knowledge Exchange [CAKE Student Consultancy scheme](#) illustrates how UWE, Bristol Computer Science students are using their skills and knowledge to help community groups, voluntary and social enterprises to become more sustainable.

Response to Specific Whole Earth? Challenges

Finance Challenge

It will be difficult to achieve sustainability amid global financial markets that discourage it through short-term goals. The same markets currently fail to value the most invaluable goods and services such as a climate that supports human endeavours.

Our goal, in the words of the UN Environment Programme, is “to advance policy options to deliver a step change in the financial system’s effectiveness in mobilizing capital towards a green and inclusive economy.”

But this is probably a job for academics and political leaders, not those involved in the melee of the present financial market. Will you use your skills to benefit more people, ecosystems and future generation?



Finance at UWE

Students of the Accounting and Finance degree at UWE, Bristol engage in a contemporary, applied and well-connected course of study providing a broad grounding in the subject with opportunities to hone crucial skills and knowledge through specialist modules. Whilst those studying Banking and Finance consider contemporary issues in banking and finance including principles and practice of modern banking, ethics and regulation. Students are exposed to considerations of about tax and investment planning, credit, portfolio and risk management and other practical and topical issues from a truly international perspective. The blending of economics, banking and finance perspectives allows the exploration of the role of new rules and regulations in the wake of the financial crisis including consideration of how capital can be mobilised to support green or socially useful outcomes.

Response to Specific Whole Earth? Challenges

Philosophy Challenge

Some of the most pessimistic writing about humanity's future is being written by the philosophers, particularly the moral philosophers. They point out that any action on, say, climate change must be rooted not in science, economics or politics but in ethics. The generation running governments and companies today would not benefit from a switch to sustainability. They would pay and future generations would benefit. Meanwhile, they benefit greatly from GHGs in the carbon that fuels their world. But this will be true for each future generation; what will change will be the difficulty and expense of remedial and adaptive action. So philosophy is already helping us understand unsustainability and its motivations in the context of time. How can it help us navigate the transition to a sustainable civilization?



Philosophy at UWE

UWE, Bristol's philosophy degree examines life's fundamental questions exploring the ethical, political and social questions that shape our lives, asking what it is possible to know and forming opinions on how best to change the world in light of what we know of it. The degree offers a distinctive and diverse course of study, from pre-Socratic and medieval to ground breaking contemporary philosophy, and everything interesting and topical in between. The course provides a solid foundation in the central issues of philosophy and students are encouraged to create a unique path of study depending on their interests and strengths. These considerations and perspectives are essential if we are to understand the individual and societal motivations particularly relating to decisions and actions supporting sustainable development.

Response to Specific Whole Earth? Challenges

History Challenge

History involves studying moments of change. The historical narratives in which these individual moments are placed inform our own identity, and in turn this identity feeds into how we act today and the choices we make. Given how significant history can be in shaping the present and future of our world, it is surprising that the effects of climate change, a continuum of undeniably momentous change, are not given more focus in the subject? Can historians use their understanding of how change has occurred in the past to enact change now, when it is most needed?



History at UWE

History is not about facts. It is about interpreting human experience in all its diversity. In UWE, Bristol's BA (Hons) History students discover new ways of interrogating the past. History students have imagination, creativity and a fascination with the social, economic and political forces that have shaped history across centuries and continents. Using primary sources from the start, UWE, Bristol students build their understanding of past events in their historical contexts creating unique insight into the important global issues of today.

[UWE History Community blog](#) is a fantastic forum for student talent and creativity showing how a deep understanding of the past informs and supports action for change today.



Response to Specific Whole Earth? Challenges

Fashion Challenge

In 2014, the collapse of the Rana Plaza clothing factory in Bangladesh, killing 1,130 workers, focused the concern of consumers and activists on the true cost of clothes. Those costs not only involve the livelihoods of producers, but the environmental impacts associated with the production of clothes. Whilst consumer awareness of the issues is growing, designers have made some progress toward achieving a closed loop of production. Many fashion and textiles students now study sustainability as part of the curriculum to inform their design practice. As graduates and designers, can you – will you? – use your influence to shape the future of the fashion industry?

Fashion at UWE

Students of UWE, Bristol's Fashion and Fashion Communication degrees develop the key skills and professional attitude needed for a successful career in fashion. The degrees nurture a student's creativity and help them to re-think what 'fashion' means today, including consideration of sustainability issues in design, production and consumption. Students develop a unique insight into all areas of the industry from the development of textiles to the design and manufacture of fashion collections to the production of images and publications. UWE, Bristol students develop the skills attributes and knowledge to allow them to shape the future direction of their profession upon graduation.



Response to Specific Whole Earth? Challenges

Agriculture Challenge

Agriculture courses used to teach little more than how to maximise yield and maximise farmer income. Today concepts of sustainability, nutrition, food safety and health are creeping in – but way too slowly. We must double present food production in a few decades, but do it in ways that do not destroy the environmental resources upon which the future depends. That is a hard row to hoe.



Agriculture at UWE

UWE, Bristol's Associate Faculty at Hartpury College provides a wide range of agricultural and land based courses of study from which the next generation of capable, creative farmers with the knowledge and skills to push forward best practice will emerge. Using the College's own commercial home farm as a learning laboratory for agricultural students explore and come to understand the challenges facing the industry and the opportunity to farm in more sustainable ways.

Throughout the agricultural programme, students are exposed to the latest research and industry practice, developing the ability to critically question and evaluate and to consider the financial impact of decisions.

Agricultural considerations feature in a wide range of other UWE, Bristol provision including Biology, Wildlife Conservation, Environmental Science, Geography and Environmental Resource Management degrees providing students of those disciplines with critical insights into the challenges of feeding a hungry world when agricultural land is becoming increasingly scarce or degraded at the global scale.

Response to Specific Whole Earth? Challenges

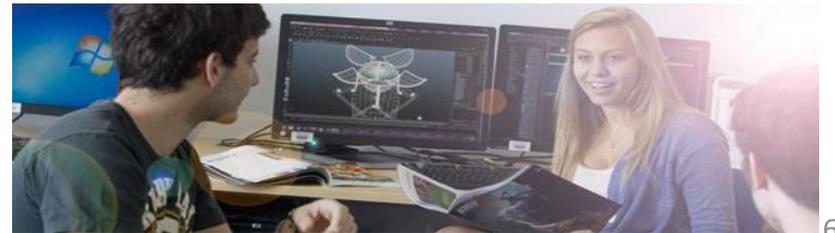
Engineering Challenge

Engineers are problem solvers. Faced with a swelling population and all its associated challenges, how can we find solutions to meet the needs of today without compromising the ability of future generations? Can today's problems be solved without the unintended consequences of previous 'solutions', such as the carbon fuelling our economies? Can universities equip our engineers with a sense of responsibility for our planet and its inhabitants?

Engineering at UWE

Addressing the complex challenges of the 21st century requires engineers who can use a range of engineering technologies, mathematical skills and design methods to define, develop and deliver solutions that meet user requirements, offer value for money and are environmentally effective. UWE, Bristol provides a range of exciting and challenging professionally accredited undergraduate degree courses that cover a wide range of [Engineering disciplines](#) including Civil, Building Services, Mechanical, Aeronautical, Automotive, Electronic and Robotics. Accreditation by the engineering professional bodies ensures that UWE, Bristol engineering graduates are equipped with the skills and knowledge required to engineer a sustainable future. Student societies such as [Engineers Without Borders](#) extend and enrich the learning opportunities by exploring practical activities of real world benefit.

EWB
ENGINEERS WITHOUT BORDERS
UWE BRANCH



Response to Specific Whole Earth? Challenges

Business Challenge

Cutting pollution usually saves money, because pollution is waste. Doing business with the poor in ways that benefit the poor can be profitable business. Being seen to 'do good' while doing business can attract the best employees and build customer loyalty. Companies are learning these things. And they are even slowly beginning to be taught in business schools.



Business at UWE

UWE, Bristol [business degrees](#) include Team Entrepreneurship, Business Management and International Management. The degrees consider questions such as “how do we create sustainable businesses that will compete in a highly competitive, globalised market?” In so doing students confront and explore the challenges faced by contemporary business as they engage with the requirements of Corporate Social Responsibility reporting amongst other business requirements. They recognise that businesses constantly have to challenge their position, re-invent themselves and face the threats of competitors in a rapidly changing globalised industry. Central to the UWE, Bristol approach is the recognition that students no longer need just business theory but vital skills, experience and cutting-edge knowledge of how real businesses work including why sustainability should be a central part of business decision making.

The Bristol Business School leads UWE’s commitment to the [Principles for Responsible Management Education](#) which guide educational/ pedagogic development of our curriculum and the enhancement of personal development opportunities for our students and staff in all disciplines (including business and management studies). UWE has made an organisational commitment to a set of values related to, for example, global citizenship, human rights, fair and responsible leadership and reflected in UWE’s response to the sustainability agenda, the ongoing ecological crisis and other complex challenges in contemporary society.

Response to Specific Whole Earth? Challenges

Biology Challenge

Given that biology is literally the study of life, it is the king of sciences when it comes to sustaining the various life forms of our planet. Yet in academic biology there is a tendency to specialize in minutiae, rather than link the learnings of the various fields of biology to maintain and improve the Earth's biodiversity. Can universities encourage biologists to write their discipline large, and join the dots?



Biology at UWE

UWE, Bristol provides a wide range of Biological Science degrees in which students are introduced to and engage with the facts, ideas, concepts and theories that underpin life on earth. Students are encouraged to explore the diversity of the biological sciences, to appreciate the linkages between sub disciplines and to recognise and describe the relationships present in the inter connected natural world.

[Biological Sciences](#) at UWE Bristol emphasises the the real world applications of the biological sciences and takes a hands-on, practical approach to learning. Whether studying in microbiology or genetics labs, undertaking field work on an expedition to Madagascar or a Cuban island, or studying primate ecology at Bristol Zoo, you will learn the methods and technology at the cutting edge of the field exploring life from the molecular level to the scale of ecosystems.

Response to Specific Whole Earth? Challenges

Law Challenge

The Kyoto Protocol failed to tackle the key greenhouse gas emissions that cause climate change. How can we learn from our mistakes and create an effective international treaty to bring about real legislative changes at various government levels to cut these emissions? Such a framework would need to be firmly grounded politically, with goals and targets measured in ways that would convince citizens that their lives, and the lives of their children and grandchildren, were being improved, that terms were realistic, and obligations could be met.



Law at UWE

Law provides a varied and multi-faceted degree subject which affects every part of human life, from the air we breathe, our relationships both with each other, the state and internationally, whether it be about our education, our employment, travel, property, human rights or health. UWE, Bristol Law students explore the foundations of law and their interaction with all facets of human life. By analysing the success and failure of the law in for example human rights, trade or the environment, students are enabled to identify new opportunities for legal instruments to remedy the deficiencies of past practices.

Whilst at [UWE Bristol Law School](https://www.uwe.ac.uk/law), students can get involved in a variety of projects from supporting local residents in dealing with community issues to providing free legal advice and assistance to members of the public. This Pro Bono work could be as part of a specific course or module or undertaken to further your legal interests.

Response to Specific Whole Earth? Challenges

Architecture/Community Planning Challenge

The world is moving rapidly into cities, and cities can be a powerful force for sustainable progress, benefiting from economies of scale and planning. But much of the planning is based on assumptions that the climate will continue within the parameters that have existed in the past. Can students of architecture design and promote cities that respond to the realities of a changing world while reducing pollution and promoting community? Former UK Government Chief Scientific Adviser Sir David King believes that slums, shantytowns and favelas could hold the secrets to better urban living and should be studied by planners designing new green cities: “While slums represent urban living at its worst, the way they have been built to suit the needs of their residents also shows how developments should embrace self-organized development”



Architecture/Community Planning at UWE

UWE, Bristol provides a wide range of Architecture and the Built Environment degrees including Architecture, Architecture and Environmental Engineering, Architecture and Planning, Architectural Technology and Design. Students at UWE, Bristol are part of a community of practice committed to an inter-disciplinary approach to the creation and management of sustainable buildings, whether they are in urban or rural environments, residential or commercial, new or refurbished. Sustainability and the environment are common themes across all of the provision, and research in these subjects underpins all of the teaching. Students engage with and come to understand why it is that the places, spaces, buildings and communities of the future must be designed with sustainability in mind.

The [Hands On Bristol](#) project illustrates how UWE, Bristol architecture students are using their skills, knowledge and enthusiasm to build a more sustainable city.



Images courtesy of Marcus Way Photography and Video

Response to Specific Whole Earth? Challenges

Development Studies Challenge

Universities have departments of development studies or they subsume the discipline under geography or political science. The key question for this discipline is how to make development sustainable.



Development Studies at UWE

Students of Geography, Politics, International Relations and Economics are just some of the UWE, Bristol community who will explore questions of development, power and inequality from the local to the global scale. In all of these disciplines UWE, Bristol students explore the models of development, the successes and failure of past practices and develop their own critical appreciation of the need for development, at whatever scale, to be based upon a clear understanding of sustainability. Increasingly such students will use the global Sustainable Development Goals to help shape their understanding and to allow them to analyse progress with global development.

Student societies such as [PAIRS](#) (Politics and International Relations) extend and enrich the learning opportunities by exploring practical activities of real world benefit. PAIRS runs Model United Nations (MUN) conferences annually and most recently PAIRS hosted its fourth MUN on renewable energy, sustainability and climate change.

Response to Specific Whole Earth? Challenges

Geography Challenge

Geography is unique in bridging the social sciences (human geography) with the natural sciences (physical geography). Human geography concerns the understanding of the dynamics of cultures, societies and economies, and physical geography concerns the understanding of the dynamics of physical landscapes and the environment. This sounds as if geography would be a perfect discipline for setting the planet on a sustainable path. But the discipline too often becomes too fractured and specialized and broken into its sub-disciplines, rather than connecting human society with the realities of the world it inhabits.



Geography at UWE

Through the Department of Geography and Environmental Management UWE, Bristol offers a range of contemporary undergraduate degree courses in Physical and Human Geography, Environmental Resource Management and Urban Planning. These degrees provide the student with a wide range of opportunities to develop skills and knowledge about sustainability issues and to apply these to real world problems. Striving for environmental sustainability through careful stewardship of our environment has led to an increasing need for cohesive and equitable strategies concerning natural resource management, human migration, healthcare, and wealth distribution. There are many differing facets to this, but working towards policies which strengthen the environment can ensure communities have access to food, energy and healthcare and support economic growth. UWE, Bristol geography degrees will enable students to understand these issues and how they might be addressed.



Response to Specific Whole Earth? Challenges

Teacher Training Challenge

Teachers around the world are developing innovative ways of work issues of sustainable development into most class levels and most disciplines: maths, literature, science, geography, art, etc. These need to be gathered and the best approaches taught in teacher training courses. There is a spectrum of challenges: from giving teachers the overall mindset to help students think about how to care for their planet and their civilization, to giving teachers the individual techniques and 'tricks of the trade' to do this effectively and creatively. How do you think teachers can be equipped to effectively and creatively bring sustainable development issues to the classroom?



Teacher Training at UWE

The Department of Education at the University of the West of England is a vibrant community with a mission to advance human flourishing and social justice through education and lifelong learning. The Department has a long-term commitment to providing high quality learning, teaching and research. We achieve this through partnerships with a range of local schools, colleges and other organisations. The wide range of teacher training provision allows the student to engage in considerations of sustainability within their chosen subject as well as providing co curricula and extra curricula opportunities.

UWE [Green Ambassadors](#) take their knowledge and enthusiasm for sustainability and green issues out and about and facilitate workshops and projects in local schools on sustainability and environmental education.



Response to Specific Whole Earth? Challenges

Religious Studies Challenge

In June 2015, Pope Francis released a 192-page letter (encyclical) calling for a new partnership between religion and science to combat climate change. He called on people to get involved in “saving the planet”. This was the Roman Catholic position, but everyone who believes in a Supreme Being and creator might be expected to want to cherish and preserve the creation of that Supreme Being. Surely it is time for religious studies courses to reconnect theology to biology, geology, hydrology, etc?

Religious Studies at UWE

UWE, Bristol does not offer degrees in Religious Studies or in Theology. Legal and moral issue of right and wrong, principles of international relations, intra and inter-generational equity, the relationship of humanity to the natural world and ethical frameworks for decision making are just some of the issues derived from Judeo-Christian religious teachings which find a place in many degrees programmes.



Conclusions

UWE, Bristol is committed to supporting the global sustainability agenda for a strong, healthy and just society living within environmental limits. The university's policies, plans and strategy support sustainable development in both our educational role and in the management of the estate.

UWE, Bristol is committed to ensuring all of our students are exposed to and can engage with the ideas of sustainable development in their degree.

Working in partnership with the Students' Union, the university will ensure that we provide our graduates with the skills, knowledge and attributes that they need to thrive in the 21st century.

Rachel Colley, Dr Georgina Gough, Vicki Harris, Laura-Kate Howells and Professor Jim Longhurst

UWE, Bristol and The Students' Union at UWE

May 2016



