Utilising the ESD Agenda to Institutionalise PRME: A case study of the University of the West of England, Bristol

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Presentation overview

• What does ‘institutionalised’ look like?
• ESD
• ESD and PRME
• Outcomes and lessons
What does it mean to ‘institutionalise’ an agenda?

• Whole institution
• All stakeholders
• All decisions
• Invisible?
Education for Sustainable Development (ESD)

- Deals with the well-being of all four dimensions of sustainability
- Engages formal, non-formal and informal education
- Builds civil capacity for community-based decision-making, social tolerance, environmental stewardship, an adaptable workforce, and a good quality of life
- Is interdisciplinary

(Source: UNESCO, online)
"Learning for and about sustainable development aims to prepare graduates to be able to contribute to, stimulate and lead the debate on complex issues such as what constitutes global citizenship and good governance, sustainable resource use, and the determination of ecological limits."

(QAA/HEA, 2014, 7)
Sustainable Development at UWE

‘At UWE Bristol, …we will support our staff and students to work and live in a sustainable way’

(Strategy 2020)
ESD at UWE: Curriculum

• All programmes

• All students

• Inputs, outputs and outcomes

• Knowledge, skills and attributes
Alignment between ESD and PRME

- Sustainability at the core
- Cross-curricula relevance
- Need for interdisciplinary engagement
- Global and holistic scope
- Responsibility, citizenship and stewardship
- Core purpose of HE?
Differentiating ESD from PRME

• Motivation?
• Identification with disciplines
• Corporation focus
• More explicit focus on economic realm
• Research
Opportunities

• Legitimises cross- and interdisciplinary working
• Promotes consideration of the contribution of disciplines to ‘society’
• Context for globalising curriculum
• Strengthens links within institution and with external partners
Challenges

• Crowded curricula
• Lack of understanding, staff time and capability, student demand
• Discipline identities
• Other agendas
Current agendas in HE

• Employability
• Equality and diversity
• Professionalism/practice-based learning
• Internationalisation
• Digital capability and agility
Influences on curriculum

• Validation bodies and benchmark statements
• Staff interest and capability
• Student demand
• Developments in profession
• Professional body criteria

Institutional priorities
Engagement: How?

• Find common ground
• Demonstrate bigger picture
• Talk and facilitate talking
• Listen and facilitate listening
Outcomes

• Better understanding of scale of knowledge and practice across institution
• Renewed enthusiasm and engagement
• Shared ownership of agenda across staff groupings
More outcomes!

• Better social networks and integration – rethinking who ’we’ are
• New systems, resources and activities
• Curriculum change?
What next for UWE?

• Breaking down more barriers
• Awareness raising (ESD and PRME)
• Resource and mapping projects
• Processes and networks
• Modes of teaching, learning and assessment
• The whole curriculum experience
• Role of employers and local community
Thank you for your attention!

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Feedback/discussion most welcome!