

Climate Change Education at the University of Winchester - A Five Year Strategy 2016-2021

updated 4/11/16



“ Parties shall cooperate in taking measures, as appropriate, to enhance climate change education, training, public awareness, public participation and public access to information, recognising the importance of these steps with respect to enhancing actions under this Agreement. “

UN Global Climate Agreement reached in Paris, December 2015

Vice-Chancellor’s Introduction

In the University of Winchester’s 2015-2020 strategic plan we commit to reflect on “the most urgent problems facing humankind” and ask, “What are our responsibilities, given our focus on values-driven higher education?”

“And no challenge - no challenge - poses a greater threat to future generations than climate change.”

Barack Obama , State of the Union Speech 2015

Our vision for embedding climate change education across the university by 2021 is an ambitious and exciting practical application of those commitments.

We want to inspire all our students and staff to engage together to learn about and explore the extensive range of issues generated by climate change.

The damaging affects of climate change do not stick to national or social boundaries; they are not confined to towns or specific industries or to impoverished communities.

Similarly, climate change education at Winchester will be made accessible and relevant for all students, whatever their chosen subject.

It is our shared ambition that the success and hallmark of being a Winchester graduate will include an appreciation of three key issues: the affect on social justice, the ubiquitous impact and, above all, the urgency of the challenges presented by climate change.

Drawing on the expertise and creativity of our staff, and in collaboration with our students, this strategy is about adaptations to and innovations in climate change education so that it becomes a natural part of every undergraduate's learning.

I have written elsewhere of the risk that, in times when students are often characterised as consumers and degrees as only currency in the jobs market, we are too easily persuaded to forget the power of higher education to shape thoughts, deeds and attitudes. We have a duty to exercise that power and to do so, I believe, in line with our moral responsibilities.

To date, research and learning about climate change has been largely concentrated in the science departments of the higher education sector. That excellence in science has served us well, taking us to a point where we can confidently say those who deny the impact of human activity on climate change are on the wrong side of robust evidence.

A key message from the science is that climate change is not just an issue for scientists. This is, perhaps, not only its most important message, but the least understood. An important rationale of Winchester's education strategy is to understand and demonstrate climate change is a mainstream issue - just as important a part of higher education in institutions strong in the humanities as it is in those strong in science.

Climate change presents a global challenge and our ambition extends to inspiring other universities not only across the UK , but across the world, to share our commitment to mainstream climate change education. This will involve working in partnership with other HEIs and other organisations such as the Environmental Association of Universities and Colleges (EAUC)

Whatever vocation, industry, profession, enterprise our graduates chose to enter, none will be immune from the impact of global climate change. An informed and thoughtful awareness of climate change has now become a personal asset; and people with this awareness are global assets. This strategy is about supporting Winchester students to become just that.

Professor Joy Carter DL, Vice-Chancellor

"How is it that, in the face of overwhelming scientific evidence, there are still some who would deny the dangers of climate change? Not surprisingly, the loudest voices are not

scientific, and it is remarkable how many economists, lawyers, journalists and politicians set themselves up as experts on the science.”

Nicholas Stern, Chair of the Centre for Climate Change Economics & Policy

Rising to the Climate Change Challenge - Four Strategic Priorities

Embedded Education ; Research ; Shared Vision ; Strong Partnerships

1. EMBEDDING CLIMATE CHANGE EDUCATION

“Saving our planet, lifting people out of poverty, advancing economic growth... these are one and the same fight. We must connect the dots between climate change, water scarcity, energy shortages, global health, food security and women's empowerment. Solutions to one problem must be solutions for all.”

Ban Ki-moon , Secretary General, United Nations

Objective

From December 2016 the University of Winchester launches a long term strategy to ensure by 2021 every graduate will have learnt about and explored issues relevant to climate change.

Climate change education will be made available, accessible and relevant for all undergraduates, whatever their chosen subject, so that the success and hallmark of being a Winchester graduate will include an appreciation of three key issues: the affect on social justice, the ubiquitous impact and, above all, the urgency of the challenges presented by climate change.

How we will do this

The University of Winchester is embarking on this ambitious project by combining exciting innovations with the development of existing activities to embed climate change education across our degree courses.

1.0 All degree courses will be encouraged to include an aspect of climate change education in existing mandatory modules. These can be included in any year of the course, and should reflect how climate change impacts on that specific area of study. There will be also be some optional modules.

1.1 We will support staff with development and CPD opportunities to ensure the highest quality of teaching and research in climate change education. Importantly, staff will not be expected to develop new areas of expertise but rather to examine their own subject areas and address the question, what issues does climate change present for your discipline ?

1.2 We will resource a senior academic to carry out an audit with the goal of sharing good practice and supporting staff with implementation of this strategy. By conducting a survey of what is currently being researched and taught, and what is planned or possible, we can obtain a useful profile of climate change education at Winchester.

1.3 We will offer pre-entry options in study skills, “An introduction to climate change: causes, impacts, politics and importance of action” module to the pre entry study skills package for joining students. This is non credit-bearing and optional but students who complete are entered for prize draw.

1.4 An album of songs on the theme of climate change, inspired, written, performed and produced on the university’s own record label by three Winchester Alumni and Creative Writing Programme Leader, Glen Fosbraey, will be presented to every new student

1.5 The UN supported “Sustainability Literacy Test” for freshers will be offered and repeated at a later stage

1.6 Climate change education will be introduced as validation question for all new programmes and re-validation of existing programmes (on a 6 year cycle)

1.7 From September 2017, there will be optional, credit-bearing interdisciplinary modules, available to all undergraduates, delivered by the Institute for Value Studies

1.8 During 2016/17 a business plan will be produced on the potential for an International Summer School on Nature & Values

1.9 “Your Campus Your Planet” - a campaign around our buildings and spaces will label, promote and embed positive actions and behaviour in day to day living to tackle climate change and reduce carbon fuel consumption

1.10 We will introduce a taught masters in climate change education and communications and an interdisciplinary offer combining campus and distance learning

Measuring success

We will report annually to SMT and Governors on progress. (*Professor Carole Parkes leading*)

The assessment will include:

- take up in the climate change pre entry skills module
- progress in the “Sustainability Literacy Test”
- courses validated for embedding climate change education
- staff development
- student feedback

2. RESEARCH

Objective

Academic research into climate change education and communication will be a fundamental part of the strategy. Research activities will engage students, as well as staff. They will explore essential questions to develop an evidence-based knowledge and understanding of how the dangers of climate change are communicated and understood and how societies can improve awareness and motivate effective action on climate change. The focus of research will not focus on exploring the science of climate change as such but rather on the role of other areas of human activity, such as governance, politics, education and mass communication, in addressing climate change. The research will be multi disciplinary and will address the topic from many perspectives for example, the challenges of establishing the facts, the values, the psychology of behaviour change, and the role of institutions such as businesses.

How we will do this

2.0 We will establish a Research Centre for Climate Change Education and Communications, which will include knowledge exchange. The Centre should acquire some external funding

2.1 We will introduce a fully funded PhD studentship in Climate Change Education and Communications

2.3 We are recruiting World Climate Change Challenge Scholars (funded by UN Green Climate Fund)

Measuring Success

There will be an annual report to SMT and Governors on progress. This might blend both qualitative and quantitative feedback and will include :

- A report on the activities of the Research Centre for Climate Change Education and Communications
- An update on funding
- A report on the appointment of a PhD student
- Report on number, quality and impact of research outputs

3. SHARING THE VISION FOR CLIMATE CHANGE EDUCATION

"I still do not understand why we don't have people on the streets every single day raising their voices for climate."

Christiana Figueres, United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

Objective

The University of Winchester will establish itself as a leading and supporting influence on universities across the UK and internationally to promote climate change education for all higher education students.

How we will do this

We will take every opportunity to seek out and engage with higher education institutions and representative bodies in the UK and internationally, who share our commitment to climate change education.

3.1 We will host and present at the Environmental Association of Universities and Colleges conference (EAUC)

3.2 We will engage with sector colleagues at a range of conferences and meetings

3.3 We will host a series of lectures and events with the aim of enhancing mainstream climate change education.

3.4 We are reviewing strategic aims and programme of events/talks with Hoare Centre for Responsible Management to include climate change education.

3.5 We will develop internal & external communications material and events including speeches, blogs, media, student prospectus, engagement with opinion formers

Measuring Success

We will monitor and log activities & report annually to SMT and Governors (*Sue Littlemore leading*)

4 FORGING PARTNERSHIPS

“The scientific evidence is now overwhelming: climate change presents very serious global risks, and it demands an urgent global response.”

Nicholas Stern, Chair of the Centre for Climate Change Economics & Policy

The University of Winchester will collaborate with and support other organisations and individuals committed to improving widespread education in and communication of causes and impact of climate change

How we will do this

4.1 Strengthening focus on this issue with existing and new partners, Compassion in World Farming, WinACC, the Food Climate Research Network, the Sustainability Centre in the South Downs National Park, for example.

4.2 Establishing relationships with high profile institutions and other experts on climate change e.g. John Houghton, Chris Packham, John Broome

Measuring Success

We will monitor and log activities & report annually to SMT & Governors (*Sam Jones leading*)

*“LAUDATO SI’, mi’ Signore - Praise be to you, my Lord, through our Sister, Mother Earth, who sustains and governs us, and who produces various fruit with coloured flowers and herbs” This sister now cries out to us because of the harm we have inflicted on her by our irresponsible use and abuse of the goods with which God has endowed her.
Pope Francis, Laudato Si: On Care for Our Common Home, 2015*

AFTERWORD & ENSORSEMENT BY SIR JOHN HOUGHTON

Sir John Houghton was formerly chief executive of the Meteorological Office and co-chair of the scientific assessment working group of the intergovernmental panel on climate change. He is the author of Global Warming: the Complete Briefing

Sir John was kind enough to send this response in May 2016 :

Thank you Joy for sending me your World Climate Change Challenge.

It is wonderful that you wish to inspire all your students and staff to engage together to learn and explore the extensive range of issues generated by Climate Change.

It really is an issue which affects not only all human beings on the planet but also all parts of creation.

The latest statement from the world conference last December presses for a target no more than 1.5 degrees of average temperature rise because of carbon dioxide emissions from burning fossil fuels - it has already risen by 1 degree but it is not a difficult target to meet and there are many ways of meeting it. Governments seem incapable of taking on board the damages that the world will have to face if they refuse to act effectively and quickly.

Please let me know how things go. I will be praying that you will succeed beyond your expectation.

With very best wishes

John