

TEACHING AND LEARNING CASE STUDY	
Name of Institution/ Organisation	University of Galway
Who led the initiative?	Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT)
Date and timeframe of the initiative	Academic year 2024/2025 and ongoing
What was the reach of the initiative?	The 65 undergraduate programme leaders at the University of Galway, spanning all disciplines. This is the total number of undergraduate programmes in the University.
Initiative Title	Embedding Sustainability across the Curriculum at the University of Galway: An interdisciplinary approach
Aims/ Objectives	<p>The aim of this work is to embed sustainability across the curriculum at the University of Galway. The objectives are fourfold:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To develop a tailored approach, within each discipline, to embed sustainability competencies. - To explore and make visible the sustainability skills, knowledges and expertise within each degree programme. - To open up a space for interdisciplinary learning for sustainability within and between University disciplines. - To identify new programmes of knowledge and new actor constellations for Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) within the University of Galway.
Rationale and Identified Needs	<p>The rationale for this work is to provide specific and tailored pedagogical support to staff in Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) through the provision of staff training and curriculum development.</p> <p>In embedding sustainability across the curriculum, students will leave the University being able to analyse and discuss the impacts of sustainability in the context of their discipline; have the tools to tackle the ethical questions around sustainability; and have the capability to brainstorm creative solutions to interconnected global challenges.</p>

Frameworks, Policies, or Strategies Aligned (internal, local or national)	<p>In line with the National Strategy for Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) and building on previous and existing work across the institution, this work focusses on identifying and further embedding sustainability competencies across undergraduate degree programmes at the University of Galway.</p> <p>Sustainability is at the heart of the University of Galway's Strategic Plan, it is one of the core values. Embedding ESD across the curriculum addresses aspects of the Academic Strategy including strategic priority area 4 (our community and beyond) and strategic policy area 5 (culture of quality enhancement). ESD is a priority action as detailed in the University wide Sustainability Strategy. In addition, it links to the Race Equality Framework and Action Plan; Student Success Strategy and the University Performance Agreement and Implementation Plan, including the development of micro credentials.</p>
Summary	<p>The programme of pedagogical support for embedding sustainability across all disciplines and ultimately enabling interdisciplinary work include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Mapping all degree programmes to SDGs and mapping key sustainability competencies (UNESCO, 2017) to the core (required) modules. This involves development of a competency mapping tool for working within degree programmes, to understand how the competencies map to the core modules. 2) Work with programme leads to evaluate modules. This step works to strengthen discipline-specific sustainability expertise i.e. which knowledge, skills, values and attitudes are key to discipline-specific sustainability expertise? How do the degree objectives support the understanding of sustainability specific to the discipline? And finally, how do sustainability skills complement those relevant to the discipline? 3) Develop initial plans for enhancing/embedding ESD in disciplines. This involves the implementation of a backward design curriculum approach, tailored to each discipline (See Fig. 1). 4) Offer professional development and further pedagogical support with a specific emphasis on interdisciplinary working and creating the space for this (iterative + ongoing including postgraduate). <p>Concurrently, a module entitled Embedding Sustainability in the Curriculum (Fig 2: CEL6109) has been developed as part of the MA Academic practice (CELT). It is also offered as a micro-credential. This course runs for 7 weeks</p>

	and involves collaboration with 10 staff members from across the university: Bio-engineering; Physics; Philosophy; Psychology; Equality Diversity and Inclusion (EDI); counselling services; and the sustainability office. Topics include: Living labs; Green labs; Eco-anxiety; Climate literacy; Decolonising the Curriculum; Curriculum Design to embed sustainability competencies. This course is available to all University staff. Fig 3 depicts the University beehive that is part of the Biodiversity Trail, and example of how the campus may be used as a learning environment. Fig 4 depicts the results of an SDG 'wedding cake' exercise for collective SDG literacy.
Did you collaborate with internal and/or external stakeholders to deliver?	The work is being led by the ESD team in the Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT), who have a partnership agreement in place with the University Sustainability office, which is led by the Director of Sustainability. Additional collaborators include the University Equality and Diversity Initiative (EDI). The EDI have a strong commitment to transforming and diversifying the curriculum as outlined in the Race Equality Framework and Action Plan. Their work specifically on decolonising the curriculum includes different perspectives in embedding the SDGs including the global South, nomadism, Indigenous and black communities. Any work on embedding the SDGs and associated competencies should include these perspectives.
Organisation and Planning	<p>The work with degree programme leaders will take place in 2024/2025 as follows.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Map degree programmes to SDGs and key sustainability competencies (ongoing). • Work with programme leads to evaluate modules (Jan-June 2025). • Develop initial plans for enhancing/embedding ESD in disciplines (June-Nov 2025). • Offer professional development and further pedagogical support (iterative + ongoing including PG and interdisciplinary work).
What resources did you need?	The provision of SATLE (Strategic Alignment of Teaching and learning Enhancement) funding has enabled the employment of two Lecturers in Sustainability/Education for Sustainable Development, who make up the ESD team. These are both five-year full-time posts affording the time to operationalise such an in-depth project. Each of the Lecturers have a remit to work with two University Colleges: College of Arts, Social Sciences & Celtic Studies; College of Business, Public Policy & Law (Lecturer 1); College of

	Medicine, Nursing & Health Sciences; College of Science & Engineering (Lecturer 2).
Has it been evaluated? How successful has it been?	Provide any evaluation details and outcomes. NA
Any future plans, including the sustainability of the initiative?	This is a five year project with the specific intention to embed sustainability across the curriculum at the University of Galway. The role of the Lecturers is to empower staff to be agents of change within their own disciplines in terms of ESD and support them in initiating the embedding of ESD in a disciplinary specific manner. This is, however, an ongoing and iterative project, given the uncertainty of interconnected global challenges. Funding of additional work, training and any new courses that emerge following this five year period will be dependent on resources.
Key Learning Points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Specific and tailored pedagogical resources and support is required to embed sustainability across the University curriculum - Interdisciplinary work is challenging and requires resources and specific interdisciplinary expertise to open up new spaces for action.

Teaching and Learning Focus Areas (please tick all that apply)

Categories	Elements	Topics	Target Groups
Commit <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Leadership, Strategy & Governance <input type="checkbox"/>	Digital Transformation <input type="checkbox"/>	Students <input type="checkbox"/>
Coordinate <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Curriculum and Assessment <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Education for Sustainable Development <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Staff <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Consult <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Innovation in Teaching <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Academic Integrity <input type="checkbox"/>	Wider community <input type="checkbox"/>

Create <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Professional Development <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Inclusive and Equitable Teaching Practices <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Other <input type="checkbox"/>
Celebrate & Continue <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Research and Evaluation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Innovations in Assessment and Feedback <input type="checkbox"/>	
		Student Engagement and Partnership <input type="checkbox"/>	
		Collaborative and Interdisciplinary Approaches <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
		Artificial Intelligence <input type="checkbox"/>	
		Other <input type="checkbox"/>	

Contact Details

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Links	<p>Please add links to any relevant pages/ documents. Please attach any items not in a link format with your submission.</p> <p>https://www.universityofgalway.ie/centre-excellence-learning-teaching/curricular-design-innovation/about/</p>