Teaching for Holistic Sustainable Wellbeing Higher Education

Toolkit for Educators

2024

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CONTENT

01

INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

Sustainable wellbeing represents a comprehensive approach that **unites individual and community wellbeing with environmental sustainability.** It goes beyond traditional definitions of wellness by recognising that human flourishing is deeply interconnected with ecological health and social equity. This holistic framework encompasses personal health and happiness, the quality of our relationships, organisational effectiveness, and community vitality - all while maintaining a strong focus on environmental stewardship and sustainable practices.

Sustainable wellbeing has become increasingly crucial in higher education as universities recognise their role in preparing students for complex global challenges. Research shows that traditional educational approaches often prioritize academic achievement at the expense of student wellbeing and environmental considerations. By adopting a sustainable wellbeing framework, universities can create learning environments that support students' mental health, foster meaningful relationships, build resilient communities, and develop environmentally conscious graduates. This approach is particularly relevant today as students face increasing mental health challenges while also needing to develop competencies for addressing climate change and social inequalities.

Educators can promote sustainable wellbeing through several practical approaches in their teaching. They can integrate mindfulness and resilience-building activities into their courses, create collaborative learning opportunities that foster peer relationships, and design assignments that connect course content to real-world sustainability challenges. For example, educators might incorporate community-based projects that address local environmental issues, use reflective journaling to help students explore the connections between personal wellbeing and sustainability, or develop group activities that build both social bonds and environmental awareness. The key is to embed these practices across pedagogy, curriculum, and assessment rather than treating them as separate add-on activities.

This toolkit is designed to provide educators in Higher Education with practical, adaptable tools and strategies for fostering sustainable wellbeing in their teaching. **The framework and ideas in the toolkit recognise the importance of balancing academic achievement with the holistic development of students, focusing on their physical, mental, emotional, and social wellbeing while fostering among them a sense of planetary stewardship to prepare students for sustainable futures.**

Co-creation with students as partners in teaching and learning was key to developing meaningful proposals

This toolkit is designed **to empower educators in Higher Education with practical strategies and tools to embed holistic sustainable wellbeing** into three key areas:
- Curriculum
- Assessment
- Pedagogy

Ultimately, the toolkit is intended to **be flexible across diverse teaching environments**, allowing educators from various disciplines to integrate the ideas into their existing practices. It is not intended to be a step-by-step recipe but a call for action to reflect how holistic sustainable wellbeing could be fostered in their classrooms and then take an active role in shaping such integration.

The project 'Sustaining Wellbeing in Students and Society through Curriculum, Assessment and Pedagogy', funded by the Strategic Alignment of Teaching and Learning Enhancement (SATLE) brought together participants, including faculty, staff, and students, demonstrating a commitment to co-creation and shared ownership of the project's goals.

The overall project and the toolkit were designed and implemented with the guiding principle of **recognising students as partners in teaching and learning.** Thus, all the different sections of the toolkit were developed through collaborative co-creation work among the academics and students involved in the team.

Our understanding of holistic sustainable wellbeing in higher education emerged from a rich tapestry of evidence sources. The research combined insights from an extensive literature review with desk-based and empirical research, creating a comprehensive picture of how sustainable wellbeing operates in university settings. To ensure our findings reflected both existing knowledge and current practices, particularly in UCD, we mapped existing programmes and modules across the University, providing valuable insights into how sustainable wellbeing is currently being implemented and developing strategies to promote further integration across the curriculum, as well as pedagogical and assessment practices. We also captured students' perspective by conducting a survey with undergraduate students and implementing small-scale projects with graduate students. The figure below shows the different sources of data and evidence.

Existing practices

Mapping existing programmes and modules offered in UCD

Students' projects

Small-scale projects by graduate students exploring ways to foster and promote sustainable wellbeing in UCD and beyond.

Literature review

Review of existing evidence on sustainable wellbeing, particularly in Higher Education.

Students' survey

Survey with undergraduate sutdents to capture their percpetions and experiences of sustainable wellbeing in UCD.

Figure 1. Sources informing the toolkit

Figure 2. Main aims of the project

CONCEPTUALISING

EXPLORING

PROMOTING

The toolkit presents how we understand holistic sustainable wellbeing in Higher Education. We introduce a framework for sustainable wellbeing that we developed from the existing evidence in the literature on both fields: sustainability and wellbeing. This framework forms the basis for the exploration of existing practices and educational opportunities as well as students' experiences.

We mapped existing educational opportunities in UCD for sustainable wellbeing by looking at programmes and modules that address this issue. We then explored students' experiences and perceptions of sustainable wellbeing in UCD to understand positive impacts of modules that explicitly address sustainable wellbeing.

We supported the small-scale projects designed and implemented by UCD graduate students to identify meaningful proposal across curriculum, pedagogy and assessment. The toolkit brings their proposals forward by developing actionable strategies for fostering sustainable wellbeing in the University classroom.

Students' contributions to the toolkit

The commitment to co-creation with students as partners and inclusivity in the project is evident in the students' contributions to it. A postgraduate student was employed as a research assistant, and five student-led bursaries were granted for the design and implementation of small-scale projects on sustainable wellbeing in relation to curriculum, assessment, and pedagogy (CAP). These projects were instrumental in generating new insights and activities for the toolkit. For example, some projects resulted in the identification of potential class workshops or highlighted physical spaces on campus that could be improved to enhance sustainable wellbeing.

The outputs of these bursary projects were integrated into the broader framework of the toolkit and enriched by academic literature and student feedback. Applications were received on a rolling basis through an online submission form, requiring a project description and budget plan. These were evaluated through a double-blind process, with projects assessed for their relevance, feasibility, and financial viability. The final selection of projects were:

1. *SustainWell: Nurturing Campus Harmony* - Photo competition by Francesca Pignolini: A student competition, in collaboration with the UCD Students' Union, invited participants to identify campus spaces that positively contributed to or could improve sustainable wellbeing. Winning entries received monetary awards, and the findings highlighted actionable recommendations for campus improvements.

2. *Mindfulness walk – Teaching for Holistic Sustainable Wellbeing outdoors* by Klara Carselin and Marta Darska: Developed by in collaboration with the School of Nature and Life Sciences and UCD Estate Services, this project introduced six informational posts along the UCD woodland walk. These posts, equipped with QR codes, provide users with access to interactive resources such as mindfulness exercises, information about local biodiversity, and navigational guidance to the next post. By blending mindfulness and environmental awareness, the project creates an accessible, low-cost intervention to enhance sustainable wellbeing.

3. *Students' experiences of sustainable wellbeing in UCD* – undergraduate workshop by Aoife Keogh and Sara Lannin. Interactive workshop using Ketso mapping to explore students' experiences, identifying barriers, strengths, and opportunities for improvement. The activity provided both data to inform the toolkit and a replicable strategy for engaging students in co-creation.

4. *Teaching for Sustainable Wellbeing – Idea competition by Sara Lannin and Aoife Keogh.* A competition for undergraduate students to design a lesson plan for an innovative teaching idea that would foster sustainable wellbeing in Higher Education. The winning entries became a part of the toolkit's examples for effective student-led contributions.

5. *Sustainable Wellbeing beyond UCD – graduate workshop by Sara Ponce.* A collaboration with the UCD Careers Network, this workshop explored graduate experiences of sustainable, particularly through reflections on work-life balance and career planning.

Resources available in the toolkit

Our commitment to inclusive communication shapes how we share our research findings. The toolkit offers multiple ways to engage with the outputs of the project and with practices on sustainable wellbeing in Higher Education. We recognise that people access and process information differently and provide different ways, so in addition to the written toolkit there are other resources available:

Graphic recording of the workshop about the views of undergraduate students regarding Holistic sustainable Wellbeing and how it could be fostered through the curriculum, pedagogy and assessment:

Graphic recording of the workshop about the views of graduate students regarding Holistic Sustainable Wellbeing in UCD and their careers.

Podcast. Whether you prefer reading in-depth analysis, listening to practical discussions, or engaging with visual representations, you can access our findings in a way that best suits your learning style and needs.

https://sustainablewellbeinghighered.podbean.com/

Mindfulness walk. Map and exercises for the different stops along the Mindfulness walk in UCD.

Short introductory mindfulness recording by David Delaney to accompany the walk.

02

CONCEPTUALISING
HOLISTIC
SUSTAINABLE
WELLBEING IN
HIGHER
EDUCATION

WHAT IS HOLISTIC SUSTAINABLE WELLBEING?

Sustainable wellbeing combines the concepts of individual and community wellbeing with sustainability, addressing the need to balance human development, ecological sustainability, and social equity. This approach involves understanding human needs, capabilities, and happiness within the context of a sustainable society**. It emphasises the interconnectedness of human and environmental systems, advocating for a holistic perspective that recognises the relational dimensions of human interactions and our connection to nature.**

The concept of **Holistic Sustainable Wellbeing** (HSW) takes this further, offering a comprehensive framework that is particularly relevant to addressing global challenges like over-consumption, environmental degradation, and social inequalities. It expands on the foundational principles of sustainable wellbeing by introducing a more integrated approach that reflects the complex interplay between personal, relational, organisational, and communal dimensions of wellbeing. HSW recognises that wellbeing is not just an individual pursuit but is deeply rooted in broader systems of relationships, institutions, and environmental contexts.

By adopting this holistic approach, higher education institutions can cultivate practices and environments that not only support academic success but also promote the flourishing of individuals, communities, and ecosystems.

The relational nature of HSW emphasises how the different spheres of wellbeing are connected:

Individual wellbeing: individual's health, happiness and life satisfaction.

Communal wellbeing: collective health, vitality and resilience of the communities.

Organisational wellbeing: healthy and functional institutions and organisations.

Planetary wellbeing: healthy and resilient ecosystems with thriving individuals, communities, and organisations that co-exist peacefully and sustainably with the ecosystems.
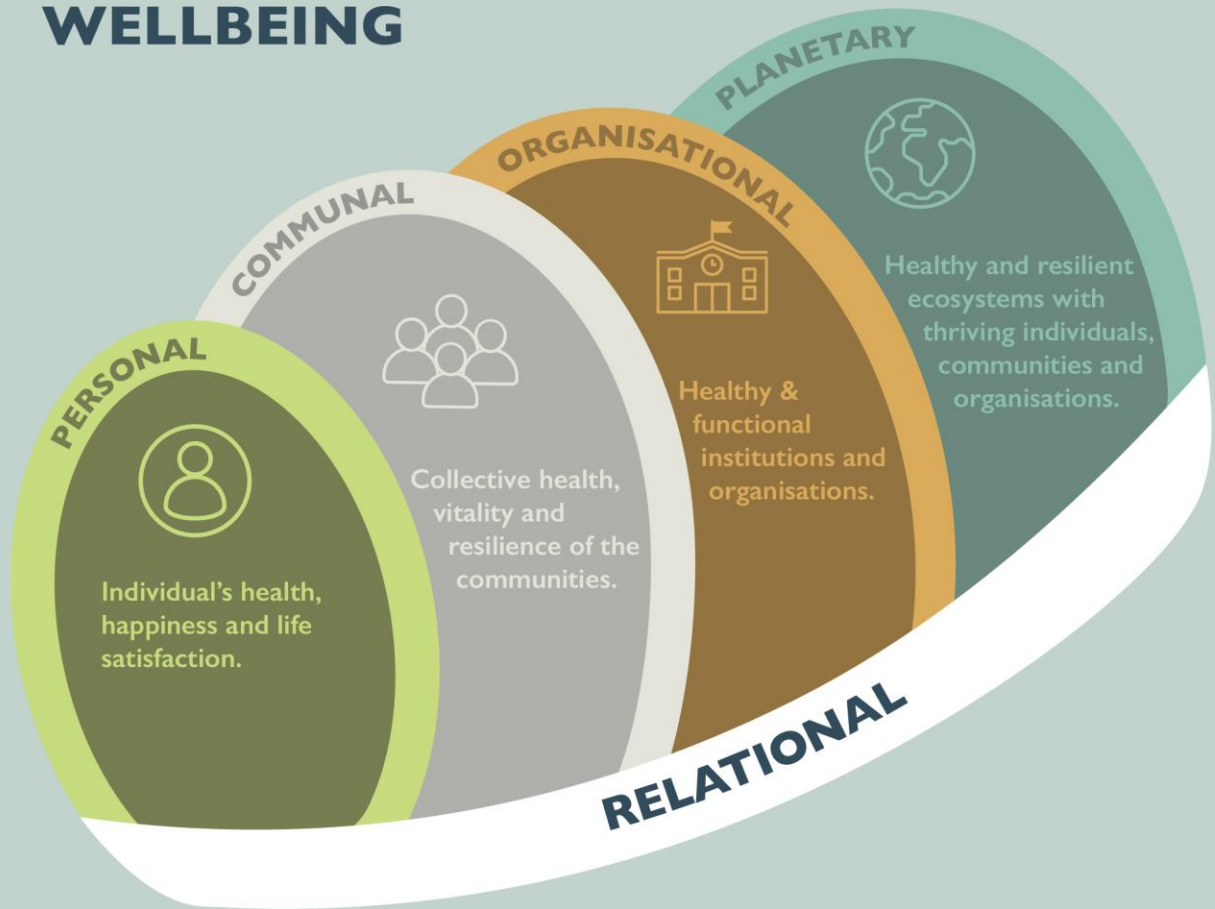
Figure 2. The spheres where Holistic Sustainable Wellbeing emphasise its relational nature

The individual wellbeing is an introspective sphere that focuses on nurturing the individual as a key component of holistic wellbeing. In contrast, communal wellbeing focuses on the collective and organisational wellbeing and serves as a conduit for fostering broader societal and environmental wellbeing. The relational nature of wellbeing relies on the interconnection between spheres and the quality of relationships between individuals and their social environment, including family, friends, colleagues, and the broader community. This includes relationships with the natural world, recognising the importance of environmental stewardship and reciprocity.

The interconnected spheres of holistic sustainable wellbeing emphasise its relational nature and provide a structural understanding of where sustainable wellbeing operates and its scope. Within the different spheres it is posible identify the individual, social, econo- mic and environmental dimensions of HSW. The figure below showcases the multi- dimensional components and the way in which these are the result of the intersections and overlaps of the HSW dimentions.

Figure 3. The multi-dimensional components of Holistic sustainable Wellbeing

WHY DOES HOLISTIC SUSTAINABLE WELLBEING MATTER IN HIGHER EDUCATION?

The Government of Ireland Second National Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development (2023) envisions that educational organisations can promote social, economic, and environmental sustainability by helping students develop "competencies to change the way they think and work towards a sustainable future" (p. 5). At the heart of this process are two key concepts. Firstly, sustainable wellbeing that describes how humans care for themselves, others, and the environment. Secondly, the concept of doughnut economics (Raworth 2017) which prioritises thriving in balance (jointly meeting the needs of humans and the planet) over endless growth (resource acquisition) which damages ecosystems by prioritising one element (e.g., financial capital; comfort) over all others. Together these two concepts allow for greater understanding of micro, meso, and macro factors and their impact on social, economic, and environmental sustainability and ultimately, how we can better educate and support the following generations in realising a sustainable future for all.

Therefore, creating sustainable wellbeing requires students to nurture elements of each ecosystem, while recognising interdependencies across them.

Sustainable wellbeing requires competencies within and across personal, social, (academic), economic, and environmental ecosystems

Recognising the key role educators in Higher Education Institutions (HEI) have in shaping students' learning experiences, the present toolkit aims to provide guidelines and resources for them to embed and foster sustainable wellbeing in their professional practice. This toolkit will help educators to value, foster and embed sustainable wellbeing across three core areas of HEI around the world:

- **Pedagogy:** how we teach in Higher Education.
- **Curriculum**: what we teach and the content we cover in Higher Education.
- **Assessment**: how we evaluate students' learning in Higher Education.

Examples of holistic sustainable wellbeing in Higher Education include:

Mindfulness and resilience workshops

Incorporating mindfulness and resilience-building workshops into the university curriculum can help students manage stress, improve focus, and develop emotional balance. For example, offering workshops on meditation, stress management techniques, and reflective journaling provides students with tools to improve their mental health and wellbeing. These activities could be integrated into first-year orientation programmes or elective modules, encouraging students to cultivate personal wellbeing practices early in their academic journey.

Peer mentorship and environmental stewardship initiatives

Peer mentorship programmes can enhance relational wellbeing by fostering supportive relationships between students. For instance, a peer mentor system where senior students guide and support incoming students in navigating both academic and personal challenges creates a sense of belonging and community. Additionally, students can participate in environmental stewardship initiatives, such as volunteering for campus sustainability projects (e.g., tree planting or community gardening), which emphasise the relationship between human wellbeing and care for the natural environment. These initiatives reinforce the idea that nurturing relationships with others and the environment is fundamental to holistic wellbeing.

Sustainable Campus Operations and wellbeing in the Workplace

Organisations can support sustainable wellbeing by implementing sustainable operational practices and fostering a culture of wellbeing within the workplace. For example, a university could establish a "green office" programme that promotes energy efficiency, reduces waste, and encourages sustainable commuting. Additionally, staff wellbeing can be enhanced through flexible work hours, mental health support services, and professional development opportunities that focus on wellbeing. An organisation that models sustainable practices and prioritises the wellbeing of its staff can create a ripple effect, positively influencing students and the wider community.

Community Engagement and Service Learning

Integrating community-based projects and service-learning opportunities into their curricula. For instance, students might collaborate with local organisations to address pressing sustainability challenges, such as food insecurity, housing shortages, or urban green space development. These initiatives provide students with hands-on experience in tackling real-world problems while Such projects promote dialogue between diverse stakeholders, encouraging mutual understanding and collective action. Through this work, students learn the importance of shared values, equity, and resilience in maintaining vibrant, sustainable communities.

WHAT IS THE LATEST EVIDENCE ON SUSTAINABLE WELLBEING IN HIGHER EDUCATION?

A literature review of existing evidence was conducted and a synthesis of the insights from 68 studies published between 2014 and 2023 is presented here. . Key themes identified in the review—such as Health and Wellness Integration, Environmental and Biodiversity Contributions, Socioeconomic and Technological Frameworks, and Environmental Justice and Governance—Where then analysed in relation to three key areas of Higher Education: curriculum, assessment and pedagogy (CAP).

Pedagogy

Pedagogy plays a crucial role in shaping the learning environment and the student experience, particularly when it comes to fostering sustainable wellbeing. By integrating approaches that promote mental, emotional, and social wellbeing alongside academic learning, educators can create supportive learning spaces that contribute to long-term resilience and adaptability.

Sustainable wellbeing in pedagogy involves teaching methods that actively promote students' mental and emotional health alongside academic learning. A range of pedagogical approaches have been proposed to improve higher education students' sustainable wellbeing. Henrico (2022) suggests a combination of self-coaching

appreciative coaching, and self-management principles, while Tudball (2010) emphasises the role of education for sustainability in developing critical awareness and practical skills. Evans (2015) and Bielefeldt (2013) advocate for student-centred pedagogies, with the former highlighting the need for transformative pedagogies and the latter providing examples of methods to achieve sustainable learning outcomes.

Steinemann (2003) and Burns (2013) both focus on problem-based learning and the integration of sustainability pedagogy, with the former emphasising the development of critical cognitive and professional skills and the latter highlighting the importance of thematic, diverse, and experiential learning. Holmberg (2008) and Zhang (2016) both emphasise the role of interaction and leadership in embedding sustainability and improving student wellbeing, with the latter specifically focusing on implementing wellbeing-oriented education.

> **Practical strategies for embedding sustainable wellbeing into pedagogy, ensuring that teaching methods not only prepare students for academic success but also for a sustainable future.**

Why does sustainable wellbeing in pedagogy matter?

Sustainable wellbeing in pedagogy matters because it helps create a learning environment that goes beyond traditional academic metrics. It acknowledges that students' mental, emotional, and relational wellbeing are just as critical to their success as intellectual achievement. Research shows that students are more likely to thrive in environments that support their holistic development, including their sense of purpose, resilience, and emotional intelligence. Wellbeing-centred pedagogy encourages active, experiential learning that allows students to engage deeply with course material while simultaneously cultivating self-awareness, empathy, and social responsibility.

Sustainable wellbeing in pedagogy matters for several key reasons, emphasizing the holistic development and success of students. By prioritizing wellbeing in educational practices, institutions can foster environments that are not only conducive to learning but also supportive of the mental, emotional, and physical health of students. Here are some of the main reasons why sustainable wellbeing is critical in pedagogy:

- *Enhanced Learning Engagement*: When students feel well and supported, they are more likely to engage actively with their learning materials and participate in class activities. A sense of wellbeing can boost motivation, focus, and curiosity, leading to deeper learning and understanding.
- *Improved Academic Performance*: There's a strong correlation between student wellbeing and academic success. Students who are mentally and emotionally healthy are better equipped to handle the pressures of academic work, leading to improved grades, retention, and completion rates.
- *Reduced Stress and Anxiety*: Educational environments that prioritize wellbeing can help mitigate the stress and anxiety associated with academic pressures. Techniques such as mindfulness, stress management, and flexible learning options (like asynchronous classes or flipped classrooms) can reduce the negative impacts of stress on students.
- *Support for Diverse Learning Needs:* Recognizing and accommodating diverse learning preferences and life circumstances through flexible teaching formats acknowledges the varied needs of students. This inclusivity can make education more accessible and equitable, supporting students from different backgrounds and with different abilities.
- *Development of Life Skills*: Pedagogical approaches that incorporate wellbeing often include the development of soft skills, such as emotional intelligence, resilience, and self-regulation. These skills are valuable not only in academic contexts but also in personal and professional life.
- *Positive Social Environment:* Fostering wellbeing within educational settings contributes to a positive social environment. It encourages collaboration, empathy, and mutual support among students and between students and faculty, creating a community of learning that values individual members' health and happiness.

- *Long-term Health Benefits*: By promoting habits and attitudes that support wellbeing, educational institutions can contribute to the long-term health of their students. This includes fostering a balanced relationship with technology to mitigate screen time fatigue and promoting physical activity and healthy lifestyle choices.
- *Preparation for Future Challenges*: Educating students in environments that prioritize their wellbeing prepares them to face future challenges with resilience and adaptability. It equips them with the mindset and skills needed to maintain their wellbeing in the face of life's stresses and uncertainties.

In summary, sustainable wellbeing in pedagogy is crucial for creating educational experiences that are not only academically enriching but also supportive of the overall health and happiness of students. This approach recognises that academic success is intricately linked to wellbeing and seeks to nurture both for the benefit of students and the broader community.

How can we embed sustainable wellbeing in our pedagogy?
To promote sustainable wellbeing through pedagogy, educators can employ a variety of strategies such as student-led projects, group discussions on wellbeing, and the incorporation of mindfulness and reflective practices in class. Collaborative learning exercises, like peer mentoring, also foster interpersonal skills and empathy among students.

Educators should focus on creating interactive, inclusive, and participatory learning spaces that allow students to reflect on their own wellbeing while engaging with sustainability topics.

Curriculum

Curriculum is the backbone of any academic programme, defining the content and scope of learning. Integrating sustainable wellbeing into the curriculum ensures that students not only gain disciplinary knowledge but also learn how to apply it to real-world challenges.

Sustainable wellbeing in the curriculum involves integrating concepts and practices that promote students' long-term mental, emotional, and social health into the learning content and objectives. A range of studies have explored the potential for curriculum-based interventions to improve the sustainable wellbeing of higher education students. Henrico (2022) and Edwards (2021) highlight the benefits of self-coaching and mental health awareness activities in promoting student wellness. Hamiti (2014) and Salimova (2020) emphasise the importance of integrating sustainability and sustainable development goals into the curriculum, with Hamiti specifically noting the effectiveness of an assessment tool in this process. Brooker (2019) and Upsher (2022) both stress the need for a whole-curriculum approach to student wellbeing, with Brooker advocating for a dynamic systems approach and Upsher calling for high-quality studies to guide teaching staff.

Tudball (2010) and Young (2020) further support integrating sustainability and wellbeing programs into the curriculum, with Young's study specifically demonstrating the positive impact of a wellbeing program embedded in university classes.

In this section we will explore how curriculum design can be enhanced to embed sustainable wellbeing principles, preparing students to become thoughtful, responsible, and adaptable global citizens.

Why Does Sustainable Wellbeing in Curriculum Matter?

Incorporating sustainable wellbeing into the curriculum is essential because it fosters resilience, emotional intelligence, and critical thinking—skills that students need to navigate both academic and life challenges. A well-rounded curriculum addresses personal, relational, and environmental dimensions of wellbeing, helping students understand the interconnectedness of their academic pursuits and the world around them. By integrating topics like sustainability, wellbeing, and social responsibility into academic courses, students develop a broader perspective on their role in creating a sustainable and just society.

Benefits for Students includd:
- *Enhanced Self-Awareness*: Understanding the connection between personal choices and their impact on the environment fosters greater self-awareness and responsibility.
- Improved personal wellbeing: By actively engaging in sustainable practices, students can improve their physical and mental health, leading to a more balanced and fulfilling life..

- *Broader Perspective*: Integrating sustainable wellbeing into the curriculum helps students see the relevance of their studies in addressing real-world challenges, promoting a more holistic education.
- *Practical Skills for Life*: Students gain practical skills and knowledge that contribute to their personal development, professional growth, and ability to contribute positively to society.
- **Career Alignment with Personal Values:** Students gain insight into how their careers can reflect their values related to sustainability and wellbeing, leading to more fulfilling professional lives.
- *Skills for the Future*: Understanding the importance of HSW in professional settings equips students with the skills and knowledge to innovate and lead in their future careers, addressing both business and societal needs.

Incorporating sustainable wellbeing into learning outcomes and curriculum alignment ensures that education not only imparts knowledge but also cultivates individuals who are well-equipped to lead sustainable, healthy lives, contributing to a more resilient and equitable society.

How can we incorporate sustainable wellbeing in the curriculum?

To embed sustainable wellbeing into the curriculum, educators can align learning objectives with sustainability goals, integrate interdisciplinary courses, and design projects that connect students with real-world environmental and societal challenges.

Curriculum design should focus on fostering a balance between intellectual development and wellbeing by incorporating reflective exercises, personal sustainability plans, and service-learning opportunities. Courses across all disciplines can explore how sustainability and wellbeing intersect with their specific fields, enriching students' understanding of their impact on both human and environmental systems.

Assessment

Assessment can shape students' learning experience. Assessment practices should be designed to promote sustainable wellbeing, encouraging students to view success as a balance of academic achievement, personal growth, and social responsibility.

Sustainable wellbeing in assessment refers to evaluating students in a manner that supports their overall wellbeing, focusing on growth and learning rather than just performance. Many studies have explored the potential for assessment to improve higher education students' sustainable wellbeing. Beck (2013) and Jones (2020) highlight the importance of sustainable assessment theory, which involves shared criteria for long-term learning outcomes and regular monitoring of student progress. Makovskaya (2022) and Kioupi (2020) emphasise the need for varied assessment tasks and aligning learning outcomes with sustainability attributes. Carmenado (2016) and McCarthy (2022) focus on the role of student and lecturer input in improving assessment systems, with

the latter also highlighting the potential of e-portfolio practice to enhance student wellbeing. Finally, Rodríguez-Gómez (2015) and Boulton (2019) underscore student participation's importance in assessment and the dynamic nature of student engagement and wellbeing.

Why does sustainable wellbeing in assessment matter?

Assessment has a direct impact on student wellbeing, particularly when it creates a balance between academic rigour and personal development. Traditional high-stakes exams can often contribute to stress and anxiety, detracting from a student's holistic wellbeing. By rethinking assessment strategies to focus on continuous feedback, personal growth, and collaborative projects, educators can help students develop a growth mindset that prioritises learning and wellbeing over performance. Sustainable wellbeing-focused assessments allow students to demonstrate their knowledge and skills in ways that promote both academic and personal success.

A flexible approach is in line with providing multiple options for comprehension, having options with the assignment topics allows students choice in understanding and processing the class material in different ways to best relate to their own needs, educational backgrounds, language, ability, and cultures. Benefits for students include:

- *Personalized Learning*: Students can tailor their learning experiences to their interests and needs, fostering deeper engagement and satisfaction.

- **Collaborative Skills**: Working on group projects enhances teamwork, communication, and problem-solving skills, valuable in any professional setting.

The creation of or peer mentoring programs as part of the assessment strategies where lecturers can share experiences and strategies for maintaining wellbeing have clear benefits for students including:

- **Enhanced Support System**: Peer mentoring provides a supportive community, reducing feelings of isolation and enhancing academic and personal wellbeing.
- **Leadership and Communication Skills**: Acting as a mentor develops leadership, empathy, and communication skills, valuable in both personal and professional contexts.

Having clear guidelines and goals when preparing presentation, understood expectations and receive feedback promptly after completing assignment has significant benefits for students including:

- **Feedback loop** - the assessment can be used to inform UCD policies/practices but also to be responsive and make changes needed in the content and teaching strategies.
- **Constructive Feedback**: Students receive timely, constructive feedback that supports their learning and personal development.
- **Real-World Application**: Designing solutions for real-world problems enhances students' problem-solving skills and prepares them for professional challenges.

Incoporating multi-stakeholders view in their assignments also impacts students's sustainable wellbeing, in particular as they think not only on the impact for themselves but also on the effects in their communities. Benefits include:

- **Enhanced Critical Thinking**: Engaging with multiple stakeholders deepens students' critical thinking and problem-solving skills, as they must navigate complex social, economic, and environmental factors.
- **Improved Communication Skills**: Interacting with diverse groups enhances students' communication and negotiation skills, preparing them for collaborative work environments.
- **Increased Awareness**: Considering multiple perspectives fosters a greater awareness of community dynamics and the interdependencies between different groups, promoting more socially responsible and sustainable actions.

What can we implement sustainable wellbeing through our assessments?
To develop sustainable wellbeing through assessment, educators should consider incorporating continuous assessment methods such as reflective essays, personal development plans, and project-based learning. These approaches help reduce the pressure of high-stakes exams, allowing students to demonstrate their learning in diverse and creative ways. Additionally, feedback should be timely and constructive, encouraging students to reflect on their progress and apply insights to future challenges..

03

HOLISTIC SUSTAINABLE WELLBEING IN UCD

MAPPING OF MODULES/ PROGRAMMES

LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES ON SUSTAINABLE WELLBEING AT UCD

We conducted a mapping exercise to identify current efforts aimed at improving students' sustainable wellbeing within UCD's study programmes and modules over the past year. This mapping exercise helps us understand how sustainability and wellbeing are embedded within the curriculum, assessment, and pedagogy (CAP) at UCD, as well as identify gaps and opportunities for further enhancement.

What are Sustainable wellbeing Programmes and Modules at UCD?

This section provides an overview of the sustainable wellbeing initiatives currently embedded in UCD's academic programmes and modules. The aim is to examine how different departments, schools, and module coordinators incorporate sustainability and wellbeing principles into their curriculum, assessment, and pedagogy. By understanding these efforts, we can identify areas where sustainable wellbeing is already being effectively integrated and where there are opportunities for further development.

In the context of this mapping exercise, the following descriptors are key

Programme: A programme is the overall course of study that a student pursues, such as the BA Humanities or BA Modern Languages. Programmes represent the full degree path and are typically divided into stages (usually 3 or 4 stages), with each stage corresponding to one academic year for full-time students. To complete a programme, students are required to achieve a set number of credits (typically 60 credits per stage). A programme comprises multiple modules, and successful completion of all required modules and stages is necessary to earn the degree.

Module: A module is a self-contained unit of teaching, learning, and assessment, usually delivered over one trimester. Each module has its own credit value—most commonly 5 credits—and there are typically 12 modules per programme stage. Modules come in different types, such as:

- *Core Modules*: These are compulsory and must be taken to meet the programme's requirements.

- *Option Modules*: These are selected from a range of choices within the programme.

- *Elective Modules*: These are additional to programme requirements and allow students to explore broader subjects outside their primary degree.

In summary, a programme offers the overarching structure and long-term goals of a degree, while modules provide more focused, short-term learning experiences within that structure. Programmes and modules together shape a student's academic journey, with wellbeing and sustainability being elements that can be integrated into both.

Mapping Programmes

The programmes mapping revealed a variety of sustainability-focused academic pathways that touch on sustainable wellbeing in different ways. For example:

- **BSc Sustainability** offers three undergraduate specializations: Environmental Sciences; Social Sciences, Policy & Law; and Business & Economics. Key modules include an introduction to sustainability concepts, skills, interdisciplinary research projects, and international field courses. Within the **BSc Sustainability** the **Social Sciences, Policy & Law specialisation** in particular focuses on the social, legal, and governance dimensions of sustainability, covering human behaviour, social equity, wellbeing, institutions, policy, and global relations.

- **Graduate Programmes** such as MSc Environmental Sustainability, MSc Sustainable Development, MSc Risk, Resilience & Sustainability, MSc Design Thinking for Sustainability, MSc Digital Technology for Sustainable Agriculture, MSc Environmental Technology, MSc Global Change: Ecosystem Science & Policy, and MSc Architecture, Urbanism

& Climate Action target specific aspects of sustainability, from environmental science to technological and policy solutions. Specific module details for these programmes were not provided.

- **Sustainable Wellbeing: Humans, Environment, and Liveability (SWHEL)** is a research project focusing on sustainable wellbeing through interdisciplinary research, conceptual mapping, and stakeholder communication.

- The **Structured Elective: Towards a Sustainable and Healthy Society** offers a variety of modules related to food, agriculture, environment, and health, emphasizing interdisciplinary approaches to sustainable practices.
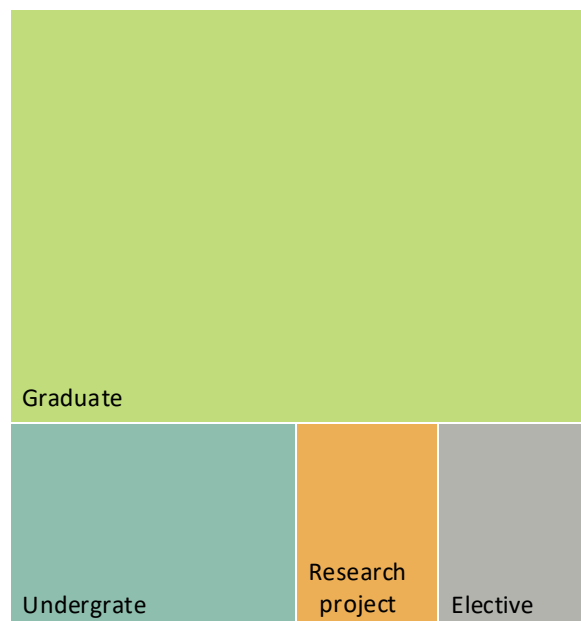

Figure 4. Modules in UCD that explicitly address HSW

The table provides an overview of the academic programmes by study level. Results indicate the uneven distribution towards graduate study programmes, which a commonly shorter in duration with Taught programmes being only three trimester long

Programme	Level	Description	Key modules/ Focus areas
BSc Sustainability	Undergraduate	Offers three specializations: Environmental Sciences; Social Sciences, Policy & Law; Business & Economics	- Introduction to Sustainability - Sustainability concepts and skills - Interdisciplinary research project - International field course
BSc Sustainability Specialisation - Social Sciences, Policy & Law	Undergradaute	Focuses on social, legal, governance, and justice dimensions of sustainability	-Human behaviour and change - Social equity - Wellbeing - Institutions and policy - Global relations
MSc Environmental Sustainability	Graduate	Focuses on environmental aspects of sustainability	Not specified in the search results
MSc Sustainable Development	Graduate	Addresses broader sustainable development concepts	Not specified in the search results
MSc Risk, Resilience & Sustainability	Graduate	Combines risk management with sustainability principles	Not specified in the search results

Programme	Level	Description	Key modules/ Focus areas
MSc Design Thinking for Sustainability	Graduate	Applies design thinking to sustainability challenges	Not specified in the search results
MSc Digital Technology for Sustainable Agriculture	Graduate	Uses digital technology to promote sustainable agricultural practices	Not specified in the search results
MSc Environmental Technology	Graduate	Focuses on technological solutions for environmental issues	Not specified in the search results
MSc Global Change: Ecosystem Science & Policy	Graduate	Studies global environmental changes and their impacts	Not specified in the search results
MSc Architecture, Urbanism & Climate Action	Graduate	Integrates architecture and urban planning with climate action	Not specified in the search results
Sustainable wellbeing: humans, environment, and liveability (SWHEL)	Research Project	Interdisciplinary network on sustainable wellbeing within UCD	- Conceptual and operational maps of sustainable wellbeing - Interdisciplinary research - Stakeholder communication
Structured Elective: Towards a Sustainable and Healthy Society	Elective	Addresses issues in food, agriculture, and the environment	Land Use and the Environment, Introduction to Animal Science, Introduction to Crop Science, Trees and Forests in Ireland, Plants and People, Forests, Climate and Carbon, etc.

Mapping Modules

Following the programme mapping exercise, a comprehensive screening of all UCD modules was conducted to identify those related to sustainable wellbeing. Key terms "sustainable wellbeing", "sustainable", "wellbeing", and "wellness" were used, filtering 105 relevant modules from a total of 6,336. These modules were evaluated based on subjects, the school or college responsible, ECTS credits, and module level to help identify shortcomings and bottlenecks in educating students for sustainable wellbeing.

The findings of the module screening include:
- **Modules** cover a wide range of subjects connected to sustainability and wellbeing, with common focus areas in environmental and social aspects. There is a strong emphasis on technical and scientific modules, particularly those addressing environmental challenges.
- **School or college offering modules** are distributed across multiple UCD schools and colleges respectivly, notably those related to Science, Business, and Agriculture, which are prominent in offering sustainability-focused modules.
- **ECTS credits per module** typically range between 5 to 10, indicating a moderate to significant workload dedicated to sustainability and wellbeing topics.
- **Module levels** cater to both undergraduate and postgraduate students, ranging from introductory to advanced levels, ensuring comprehensive coverage of sustainability topics throughout different stages of education.

Focus areas of a significant number of modules is on environmental challenges, integrating scientific and technical knowledge with practical applications to address real-world problems.

Key takeaways
Many modules, particularly in the sciences, business, and agriculture, integrate sustainability topics into their content. These modules often focus on technical and scientific knowledge, with a strong emphasis on addressing environmental challenges. Examples include modules on Environmental Impact Assessment and Climate Change Adaptation.

While sustainability topics are well-represented, there is less focus on mental, emotional, and social wellbeing in the curriculum. Few modules explicitly address these aspects of wellbeing, highlighting an opportunity for UCD to incorporate more content related to personal and social wellbeing into sustainability-focused courses.

In terms of module Structure and Assessment, the majority of modules related to sustainability are assessed through essays, projects, or final exams. However, there is potential to incorporate more reflective assessments that encourage students to connect their personal wellbeing to sustainability topics, such as journals or group projects that focus on real-world sustainability challenges.

Gaps and opportunities

Interdisciplinary Integration

UCD offers a wide array of sustainability-focused modules, with a strong emphasis on environmental and scientific aspects. However, there is a significant opportunity to enhance interdisciplinary integration by incorporating perspectives from humanities, social sciences, and the arts. Current offerings are predominantly technical or science-based, often overlooking the broader cultural, ethical, and emotional dimensions of sustainable wellbeing. Integrating these disciplines could offer students a more comprehensive understanding of how sustainability intersects with human wellbeing, fostering skills in empathy, ethical reasoning, and social responsibility. By doing so, UCD can better align with the holistic sustainable wellbeing approach, which underscores the interconnectedness of human flourishing and environmental sustainability.

Wellbeing focus

There is a noticeable gap in modules that focus explicitly on wellbeing, particularly mental and social wellbeing, which are critical to a holistic understanding of sustainable wellbeing. While there is coverage of environmental and economic dimensions, mental health promotion remains peripheral despite the increasing recognition of its importance Introducing more modules that target these areas within the context of sustainability can help bridge this gap, enhancing the student experience by fostering resilience, social cohesion, and overall wellbeing alongside academic and professional success.

Comprehensive coverage

Although sustainability is a recurring theme across several programmes and modules, there is an imbalance in addressing the social and economic dimensions of sustainability. Most of the current offerings heavily focus on environmental sustainability, leaving economic and social sustainability somewhat underexplored. Expanding coverage in these areas, particularly by integrating sustainable business practices, social equity, and justice-related content into existing modules, could offer students a more balanced perspective on sustainability that aligns with the multidimensional goals of sustainable wellbeing.

Collaboration and coordination

A lack of coordination and communication between different schools and departments emerged as a recurring issue in both the programme mapping and module screening. Modules addressing sustainability and wellbeing are offered across various schools (e.g., Science, Business, Agriculture), but there is little evidence of collaboration or integration. Strengthening interdepartmental collaboration could facilitate more coherent, interdisciplinary learning pathways for students. This would ensure that sustainability and wellbeing are embedded across curricula, not just within isolated disciplines. Furthermore, promoting collaboration among module coordinators and establishing clear guidelines for interdisciplinary modules can lead to a more integrated approach, ensuring that all students, regardless of their programme, are exposed to key principles of sustainable wellbeing.

04

STUDENTS' EXPERIENCES OF HOLISTIC SUSTAINABLE WELLBEING

STUDENTS' EXPERIENCES OF SUSTAINABLE WELLBEING AT UCD

This section delves into the vital role of student perspectives in shaping Holistic Sustainable Wellbeing (HSW) within Higher Education. y prioritising the voices of learners, this section ensures that the toolkit remains grounded in the realities of student life, addressing their diverse needs while fostering a collaborative and inclusive approach to education.

Empirical data gathered from multiple sources provided the foundation for this section. A survey conducted across several modules and tutorial groups at UCD engaged over 85 students, capturing their perceptions of wellbeing, the challenges they face, and their views on how CAP can foster HSW. Additionally, three of the student-led projects explored students' experiences through interactive workshops and competitions that offered students the opportunity to propose actionable ideas for integrating sustainable wellbeing into academic life, fostering a sense of ownership and innovation.

The outputs from these initiatives—survey data, workshop findings, and bursary projects—were carefully analysed and incorporated into the toolkit. By centring student perspectives, this section provides a deeper understanding of their needs and aspirations in higher education.

It offers practical examples of student-led initiatives, illustrating how sustainable wellbeing can be fostered through co-creation and shared ownership. Ultimately, this approach highlights the potential of higher education to build resilience, empathy, and a sense of agency among students, preparing them to contribute meaningfully to a sustainable and equitable future.

Students' survey

The surveys were administered to undergraduate students in modules such as EDUC10170 and PERS20030 at UCD, as the contents of these modules focus on sustainability, wellbeing, or sustainable wellbeing topics. The survey was conducted at the start of the Autumn semester 2023, using in-class QR codes for easy access to an anonymous online survey. Participation was voluntary, and students had the opportunity to complete the survey in class without instructor supervision. The final sample size consisted of 87 valid responses. Limitations of the survey methodology include sample size, the reliance on self-reported data, which may introduce bias, and potential underrepresentation from students who were absent on the day of survey administration. The absence of follow-up interviews or qualitative data collection also limits deeper exploration of student experiences.

Survey design

To gather relevant data, anonymous in-class digital surveys were conducted with undergraduate students engaged in sustainability-focused programmes or modules. The survey focused on understanding the role of curriculum, assessment and pedagogy in fostering sustainable wellbeing.

They survey was distributed through QR codes by module coordinators in their respective class units. Participants were asked to reflect on their demographic information, levels of happiness, life satisfaction, and the perceived impact of their academic experiences on sustainable wellbeing. *The Human Flourishing Index* was utilised as a framework to assess wellbeing in the context of education, ensuring alignment with internationally recognised standards for measuring student wellbeing.

Participants

Year 1 students represent the largest portion at 54.3%, followed by Year 2 students at 30.9%. There is a significant drop in numbers for Year 3 (6.2%) and Year 4 (8.6%) students, suggesting a possible attrition in participation as students advance in their degrees. Most participants belong to the Social Sciences and Law category, accounting for 52.4% of the total respondents. Science follows with 22.0%, while Arts and Humanities and Health & Agricultural Sciences have smaller representations at 13.4% and 9.8%, respectively. Business has the least representation at 2.4%. This distribution suggests a strong interest in the survey topics among students from Social Sciences and Law, with a notable but smaller participation from other disciplines
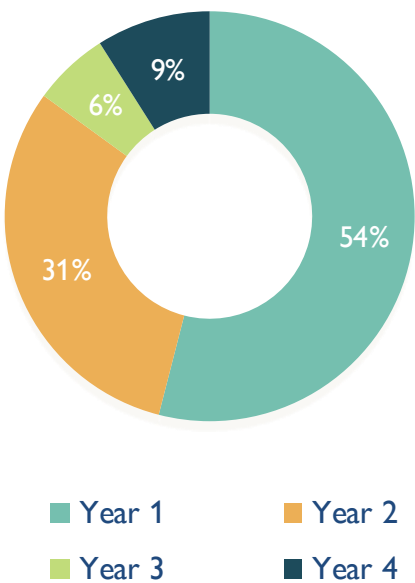

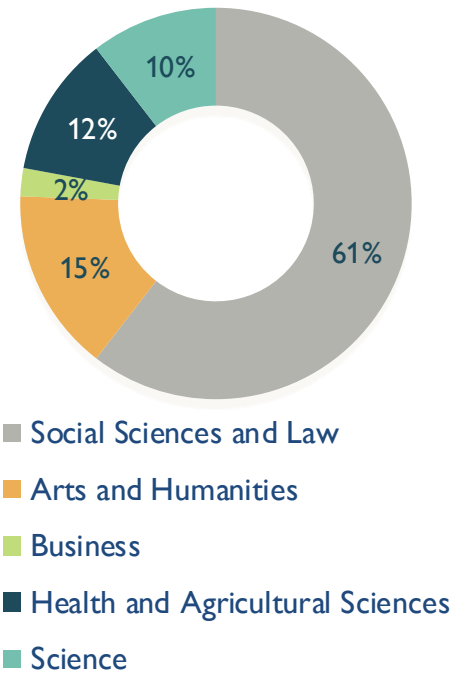*Figure 5. Participants in the students' survey by year*

Figure 6. Participants in the students' survey by College

Regarding module types, Mandatory Core modules are most frequently selected by participants (54.3%), reflecting the fact that this course was required coursework for the students. Electives and Optional Core modules make up 30.9% and 14.8%, respectively, overall indicating a balance between choice and mandatory content in learning pathways. The high selection of Mandatory Core modules underscores the central role of the module within the students' study programmes and in the curriculum, while the substantial proportion of Electives highlights the flexibility and breadth of the academic offerings at UCD. The presence of Optional Core modules also suggests that students have opportunities to tailor their education to their interests and career goals within certain structured frameworks.

Student Experiences with Sustainable Wellbeing: participants reported their experiencesas overwhelmingly positive. Over 68% of respondents indicated that their modules either "Contribute" or "Strongly Contribute" to the development of sustainable wellbeing skills and knowledge. Interactive and participatory methods, particularly in-class activities (83.8%), were identified as the most effective in fostering sustainable wellbeing. These findings emphasise the importance of active learning strategies in helping students engage with sustainability concepts. Traditional methods such as lectures and readings were also significant, though less impactful than participatory activities. However, while there is clear engagement with sustainable wellbeing content, opportunities to apply these learnings to real-world problems were less frequent, with only 36.8% of students reporting that they were "Often" given such opportunities. This suggests that while the curriculum introduces sustainability topics, there is room to strengthen their practical application through more real-world problem-solving and experiential learning.

The survey results provide valuable insights into the experiences and perceptions of UCD College students regarding the modules they have taken, particularly in relation to sustainable wellbeing skills and knowledge. The data reveals that a significant majority of students believe the modules contribute positively to their understanding and development in this area. Specifically, 38.4% of respondents indicated that the modules "Contribute" to their sustainable wellbeing skills and knowledge, while 30.1% stated they "Strongly Contribute", and 12.3% noted they "Significantly Contribute." Only a small fraction felt that the modules did not contribute or only slightly contributed to their development in this regard.

In terms of specific elements within the modules, in-class activities emerged as the most impactful, with 83.8% of respondents identifying them as opportunities for developing sustainable wellbeing skills and knowledge. Content of the lectures was also significant, with 72.1% of students acknowledging its contribution. Assigned readings and assessment or feedback were recognised by 48.5% and 38.2% of respondents, respectively, while "Other" elements were the least common at 4.4%. This indicates that the primary methods for imparting sustainable wellbeing knowledge are interactive and participatory, followed by traditional lectures and readings.

When asked about opportunities to apply their learning to real-world problems related to sustainable wellbeing, 36.8% of students reported that such opportunities were "Often" provided, and 29.4% said they were "Usually" provided. In-class activities were again the most common element facilitating this application, with 70.6% of respondents highlighting their importance.

Content of the lectures (42.6%) and assigned readings (30.8%) also played significant roles, though to a lesser extent. Assessment or feedback was less frequently cited (19.1%), suggesting that there may be room for improvement in integrating sustainability concepts into evaluation methods.

The survey also explored opportunities for students to engage in critical and creative thinking related to sustainable wellbeing. Here, 45.3% of respondents indicated that the modules "Usually" provided such opportunities, and 20.3% said they "Always" did. In-class activities again stood out as the most effective element, with 45.2% of respondents recognising their value in fostering critical and creative thinking. Content of the lectures (23.1%) and assigned readings (19.8%) were also important, while assessment or feedback was less commonly used for this purpose (11.9%). Notably, no respondents selected "Other," suggesting that the provided categories comprehensively cover the methods used to develop students' understanding of sustainability.
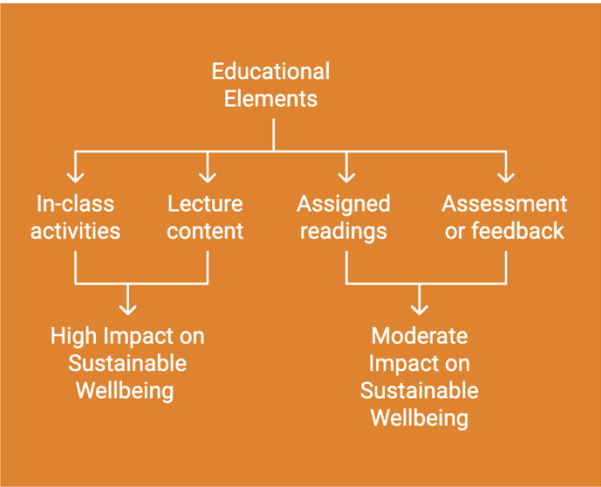
Overall, the survey results reflect a strong alignment between the modules and the development of sustainable wellbeing skills and knowledge among students. In-class activities consistently emerged as the most impactful element, followed by the content of the lectures and assigned readings. These findings highlight the importance of interactive and participatory methods in education and suggest potential areas for enhancing the integration of sustainability concepts into assessments and feedback mechanisms.

Critical and Creative Thinking: The survey highlighted that critical and creative thinking opportunities related to sustainable wellbeing were moderately available, with 45.3% of respondents stating that such opportunities were "Usually" provided. In-class activities were again the most effective method for fostering these skills, suggesting that interactive formats play a crucial role in developing deeper cognitive engagement with sustainability topics. Enhancing these opportunities, particularly through assessments and feedback, could further embed critical thinking within sustainable wellbeing education.

Reflections on Personal Role in Sustainability: An important finding from the survey was how frequently students were encouraged to reflect on their personal role in creating a sustainable and just society. While 25% of respondents indicated that their modules often encouraged such reflection, there is room for more consistent integration of this element across different disciplines. Encouraging personal reflection not only deepens students' understanding of sustainability but also aligns with the broader goals of sustainable wellbeing by promoting self-awareness, empathy, and social responsibility.

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Key findings

- **Positive experiences**: Over 68% of respondents reported that their modules either "Contribute" or "Strongly Contribute" to the development of sustainable wellbeing skills and knowledge.

- **Application of learning**: Only 36.8% of students felt they were "Often" given opportunities to apply their learning to real-world problems, indicating a need for more experiential learning and problem-solving activities.

- **Effective learning approaches**: in-class activities (83.8%) and lecture content (72.1%) were the most recognised elements for developing sustainable wellbeing skills. Assigned readings (48.5%) and assessment or feedback (38.2%) were acknowledged, but to a lesser extent.

- **Critical and creative thinking**: 45.3% of respondents indicated that modules "Usually" provided opportunities for critical and creative thinking, with in-class activities being the most effective (45.2%). Lectures (23.1%) and assigned readings (19.8%) also contributed, while assessment or feedback was less frequently cited (11.9%).

Addressing mental health and wellbeing: One of the notable gaps identified was the relatively low frequency of addressing mental health and wellbeing in the curriculum. While some modules included mental health discussions through in-class activities and lectures, 21.1% of respondents indicated that their modules "Never" addressed these issues. This represents a key area for improvement, as mental health is a critical component of sustainable wellbeing. Incorporating mental health awareness more consistently into sustainability modules, particularly through reflective assignments or participatory workshops, would ensure a more holistic approach to student wellbeing.

Financial and Social wellbeing: The survey data also revealed that financial concerns were a moderate source of worry for students, with 2.38 as the average score on a five point scale for concerns about living expenses. While this aspect is not directly related to curriculum, it impacts students' overall wellbeing and their capacity to engage with sustainable wellbeing concepts. Modules that integrate financial literacy or discussions around socio-economic sustainability could provide students with tools to better navigate these challenges, reinforcing the interconnectedness of individual and societal wellbeing

Figure 7. Word cloud of students' responses to the question: 'What words come to your mind when you think about Holistic Sustainable Wellbeing?'

Workshop to explore undergraduate students' ideas and experiences of sustainable wellbeing in UCD

This workshop with undergraduate students was designed and developed by UCD doctoral students Aoife Keogh and Sara Lannin. They created a workshop to explore with students the importance and implementation of sustainable wellbeing practises in UCD. The workshop was facilitated with a wide variety of students from diverse departments providing the ability to engage with UCD students across the entire campus.

In the workshop they incorporated the concepts of co-operative learning and critical pedagogy to give all students will be given the opportunity to reflect and provide guidance on what specific areas of wellbeing and skillsets would most benefit enhancing their learning experiences in UCD.

Using ketso maps, a tool for group conceptual mapping, undergraduate students three key areas of the project:
- Curriculum
- Assessment
- Pedagogy

The Ketso method workshop focused on collecting experiences, ideas and feedback on how to better foster sustainable wellbeingin UCD. This method allowed an interactive, collaborative approach for the development of ideas.

The workshop facilitated discussions around practical strategies for integrating sustainable wellbeing into educational environments, with participants contributing ideas on how curriculum, pedagogy, and assessment could better support these goals. Common themes that emerged included the importance of emotional resilience, the role of mindfulness in student wellbeing, and the need for interdisciplinary approaches to tackle sustainability challenges holistically.

Overall, the workshop provided valuable insights into how students and educators perceive sustainable wellbeing, highlighting both the challenges and opportunities for embedding these practices into higher education. The collaborative nature of the Ketso method allowed for a diverse range of perspectives to surface, ensuring that the toolkit recommendations are grounded in real-world experiences and concerns.

- *Emotional Resilience*: Participants frequently highlighted the importance of fostering emotional resilience among students. They emphasised that wellbeing initiatives should not only focus on academic performance but also on helping students manage stress and anxiety, particularly in response to the climate crisis.

- *Mindfulness and Reflection*: Mindfulness practices were seen as crucial for supporting student wellbeing. Participants suggested integrating reflective activities into the curriculum to give students space for personal growth, introspection, and emotional management.

- *Interdisciplinary Approaches*: A strong theme from the workshop was the need for interdisciplinary teaching. Participants agreed that sustainability and wellbeing are complex, interconnected issues that require input from various fields. They suggested that curricula should promote cross-disciplinary learning to give students a more comprehensive understanding of how sustainability and wellbeing intersect.

- *Practical Application*: Participants called for more opportunities for students to apply sustainability and wellbeing concepts to real-world problems. This included project-based learning and collaborations with external organisations to ensure students can engage practically with the issues they study.

- *Community and Collaboration*: Many participants emphasised the importance of creating a sense of community within learning environments. They suggested that collaborative work, peer support networks, and group projects could improve student engagement with sustainability and wellbeing topics while promoting social wellbeing.

These insights informed the toolkit's focus on practical, interdisciplinary, and emotionally supportive educational practices to foster sustainable wellbeing for students. The graphic recording summarising students' ideas and experiences presented in the next page is also available to download in the following QR code.

HOLISTIC SUSTAINABLE WELLBEING

PEDAGOGY
- ALL Lectures
- Should be Recorded Online
- Lecturers are Approachable and Open to Answering Questions
- Lectures more Interactive - NOT Just Listening
- Smaller Class and Tutorial Sizes
- More Connection Between TEACHERS and STUDENTS
- Consistent Feedback From Lectures
- PEER REVIEWS - No Lonely Failing!

CURRICULUM
- Freedom in Choosing Modules
- Greater Focus on Problem Solving in Tutorials
- A Clear Consistent Outline to Curriculum
- Make Lectures More Relevant to Real-World Issues
- More Input From Students as the Curriculum can Feel Outdated

ASSESSMENTS
- Confusing Assignments - Not Explained Properly
- Opportunities for Different Types of Assessments
- Feedback Surveys During Module Rather than End of Term
- More Time Explaining Assignments. Not Just Posted on Brightspace
- Continuous Assessment Over Final Exams
- Exams Should be an Exception, NOT the NORM

MISCELLANEOUS
- PHYSICAL and MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT
- Affordable Adequate Accommodation
- Room for Rent
- Inclusive and Modern Facilities
- Support for Students Outside of Academics

## SustainWell: Nurturing Campus Harmony Photo competition.

This photo competition was designed and developed by UCD doctoral student Francesca Pignolini. In collaboration with the UCD Students' Union, the photo competition invited participants to identify campus spaces that positively contributed to or could improve sustainable wellbeing. Winning entries received monetary awards, and the findings highlighted actionable recommendations for campus improvements.

The first place of the photo competition proposed an intervention to create a communal garden outside the UCD Village, as the student explain:

My concept is to turn the patch of greenery outside of the UCD village building into a communal garden. Most students do not have access to their own gardens which they can modify and contribute to during their time of study. With a communal garden, people have the agency to grow their own food, which has proven to have positive impacts on people's moods and mental wellbeing. The idea is that students on or off campus can join regular meetings discussing which plants they wish to grow. Any student is eligible to drop in, allowing for a low-commitment opportunity to participate. There would be a small council group which organises the initiative, but all the decisions surrounding the crops would be decided by the students. Once a week, the council group, as well asstudents who are interested, check in on the crops and water them.

This is the space outside the UCD Village that the award of the photo competition proposed as a place to develop a communal garden.
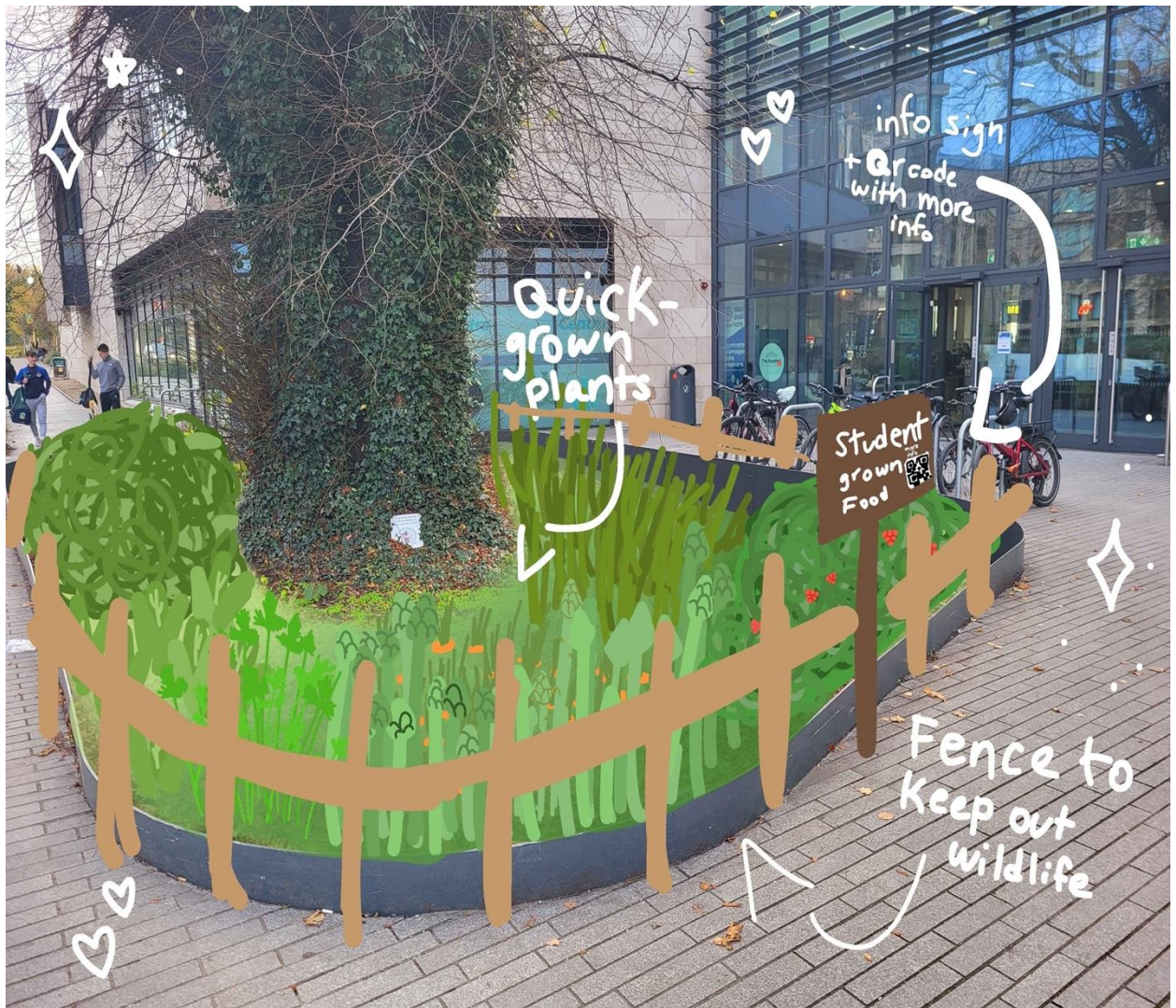
There will be a digital discussion board on the UCD website as well with general information regarding the crops and the rules and regulations (which would be adjusted based on what is being grown at the current moment). All students are allowed to harvest crops as long as they follow the given regulations. For example, students may not harvest crops before they are ripe, and students must harvest in moderation.

Funding for the project may come from the university itself, or it could be considered an extension of the student union.

Animals may attempt to eat the food which has been planted. To prevent this, a net can be placed over the crops, and a fence could be reinforced around the crops to prevent access. Another issue could be the fact that some plants will not be able to grow deep roots due to the already existing tree roots. To prevent this, we could add soil to increase the ground level. The garden area is currently on a lower level compared to the pavement, so there is no issue in adding soil. In addition, the students can focus on only planting more surface-level plants.

Loneliness is a persistent issue at UCD, often brought up in discussions among students or even in articles. A communal garden could decrease this sense of loneliness and create a larger sense of community by allowing everyone to contribute to a tangible goal, one which everyone benefits from. Gardening and being surrounded by nature has a positive impact on mental wellbeing and should not be understated in our day to day environments. Simply being surrounded by nature and interacting with it could benefit the mental wellbeing of students. Lastly, the access to free food can reduce the amount of items on a grocery list a student has, even if only marginally.. This can alleviate the financial burden by a little, reducing stress.

Workshop to explore graduate students' experiences and expectations of sustainable wellbeing in UCD and beyond

This workshop with graduate students was designed and developed by UCD doctoral student Sara Ponce in collaboration with the UCD Career Centre. This project has the potential to strengthen UCD Careers Networks understanding of graduate students' needs and values when it comes to getting support from on campus services. Graduate students will have the opportunity to voice concerns and share their experiences when it comes to their career development and UCD's role in it.

Participating graduate students will first listen to the Career Network's workshop and then answer the following questions.

- Have you engaged with UCD Career Services prior to this workshop? Why or why not?
- As a graduate research student what concerns you most about transitioning into employment after graduation?
- What services do you identify as being most helpful that UCD Careers offers
- What do you think can be added to support you as a graduate student?

Following this, a graphic record from the Word Cafe prompts was created to highlight core areas that may be focused or improved upon by UCD Career Networks in order to address the current needs of students. This will create sustainable pathways for UCD to potentially develop ways in which to support the graduate student in a more holistic way, ultimately increasing the students confidence and overall wellbeing when it comes to career growth.

"This workshop explores the process of instilling holistic sustainable wellbeing—bridging students' experiences with career opportunities—by examining an important part of the academic journey: graduate students' career development and support.". The graphic recording summarising students and expectations experiences presented in the next page is also available via the following QR code.

HOLISTIC SUSTAINABLE WELLBEING

IMPACT OF JOB SEARCH IN STUDENTS' SUSTAINABLE WELLBEING

Establish Connections with Companies/Government organisations outside of UCD.

Build partnerships and provide students with resources or mentors via the UCD Careers Portal.

Teach Strategies to help students effectively market their skills.

Offer Practical experience by Facilitating internships, mini-projects, or specific skill-based courses to address gaps in experience.

Be honest about how you feel regarding your career and life direction.

Have strategies or plans for when things don't go as expected in career pursuits.

Be flexible and accept that plans can change.

Prioritise Work-life balance! Maintain hobbies and personal interests during your career and education journey.

Create a centralised online resource for job postings.

SUSTAINABLE WELLBEING BEYOND UNIVERSITY

Be open to therapy or emotional outlets while career searching and completing education.

Share real-life stories to create authentic connections in career discussions.

Insights into what the realistic prospects are within a particular job field.

Access to lists of job opportunities.

Guidance on setting small, manageable goals. Advice from mentors in the field. Templates for planning.

Identifying long-term goals and actionable steps.

CAREER SERVICES TO SUPPORT SUSTAINABLE WELLBEING

Support networking to create a sense of community through shared experiences.

Overcoming barriers by creating more diverse and tailored events, including guest speakers, to better engage attendees.

Address challenges faced by individuals who find it hard to integrate into groups.

Encourage informal connections among smaller groups or teams.

Provide a safe space that allows people to feel vulnerable without judgment.

CAREER ADVICE THAT FOSTERS SUSTAINABLE WELLBEING

Networking Strategies: Tips on effective small talk, Learning how to be memorable when networking, leveraging social media messages or strategies to reach people effectively.

05

TEACHING IDEAS HOLISTIC FOR SUSTAINABLE WELLBEING

TEACHING IDEAS FOR HOLISTIC SUSTAINABLE WELLBEING

This section presents teaching strategies and ideas that were designed by students with the aim to provide actionable insights into how to foster holistic sustainable wellbeing in Higher Education. Drawing from their own educational experiences and understanding of wellbeing needs and sustainability, UCD students designed and developed these actionable approaches to help educators integrate sustainability and wellbeing into their teaching practice. From lesson plans to short strategies for the classroom related to curriculum, pedagogy and assessment also included, the different ideas presented recognises students as experts of their own learning experiences in Higher Education. The goal was to understand from students themselves the challenges and opportunities of addressing both sustainability and wellbeing in today's university environment

Teaching for Sustainable Wellbeing - Idea Competition

This competition was designed and implemented by UCD doctoral students Aoife Keogh and Sara Lannin who were teaching assistants in the module 'Education for Sustainable Futures'. Through the competition they encouraged undergraduates to design a lesson plan for an innovative teaching idea that would foster sustainable wellbeing in Higher Education.

By encouraging students to explore wellbeing topics and actively create their own content, the project fostered creativity, critical thinking, and peer collaboration. The lesson plans covered various topics such as climate action, responsible consumption, and personal wellbeing practices.

As Sara explained: "*I wanted each student to leave the lesson feeling inspired to expand on the advertisements they created into their own affirmations—they should stand up, they must certainly use their voice, they have a duty to make a difference. And from that, they will reap rewards for their own wellbeing. Helping others increases the self-esteem of the doer and helps build up a sense of purpose.*"

The project demonstrated that when students take an active role in designing teaching activities, it enhances their engagement and sense of responsibility towards sustainability and wellbeing. The lesson plans allowed students to connect emotionally with complex topics, like inequality and climate change, and to apply these issues to real-world challenges by creating advertisements aimed at authority figures. Peer assessment further strengthened their understanding by encouraging collaborative learning. The winning entries are presented below as part of the examples for effective student-led strategies.

Greater Focus on Problem Solving in Tutorials

Teaching Idea 1: Understanding the Difference in Quality of Life between Children in the Developed and Developing Worlds by Ronan Brennan.

TOPICS

• Reduced inequalities

• Gender

• Equality

• Climate Change

AUDIENCE

The target audience for this teaching activity would be 2nd-4th class children. Medium difficulty, mostly in relation to explanation on inequalities. This would be considered formal education as it would take place within primary schools or other formal institution equivalents.

RELEVANT SDGS

• SDG 1 – No Poverty. Target 1.1 - By 2030, eradicate extreme poverty for all people everywhere.

• SDG 5 – Gender Equality

• SDG 10 – Reduced Inequalities. Target 10.3 – Ensure equal opportunity and reduce inequalities of outcome, including by eliminating discriminatory laws, policies and practices and promoting appropriate legislation, policies and action in this regard.

• Target 13.b – Promote mechanisms for raising capacity for effective climate change-related planning and management in least developed countries and small island developing States, including focusing on women, youth and local and marginalized communities

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

The learners will be able to:

1. Understand how external factors (patriarchy, climate change, poverty) impact the lives of developing world children through a comparison between livelihoods in the Global North and Global South.

2. Empathise with the struggles marginalised children face through a shared interest.

3. Encourage students to think critically about the conditions which cause poverty by learning about their causes.

4. Analyse potential solutions to the dilemmas faced by Developing World Children.

RESOURCES

This activity would require the learners to have paper with pens/pencils. The activity would then progress to a video documentary which would necessitate both a link to the video file and a means to present the video. It would also require smaller pieces of paper for voting purposes at the end. The rest of the activity would not require any additional resources. This teaching idea revolves around the disparity between living conditions between the developed and developing worlds. Although both worlds face challenges, the nature of the challenges differ greatly.

CONTENT

POVERTY: Acute poverty affected just under one third of the populations of 104 countries in 2014, most of these countries being in the process of developing (Alkire and Santos, 2014). This is a driver of inequality as more people are driven to substandard levels of living and are without access to healthcare or sanitation. Children are particular victims of poverty as they are targets for child labour by transnational corporations, harming both their livelihoods and their educational prospects (Otaibi, 2020).

CLIMATE CHANGE: Global warming will drastically worsen inequality in the Global South. Alston (2019) discusses how wealth determines if you can effectively deal with the consequences of climate catastrophe. This may result in citizens in the developing world fleeing their countries in search of countries with fewer natural disasters. This is troubling given that developing countries are not the primary drivers of climate change as pollution in developed countries is often exported to the Global South, hindering their climate defences further (Mehta, 2012).

GENDER INEQUALITY: Gender inequality is another topic that is relevant as 104 out of the 246 UN Global Indication Frameworks involve gender (Cohen and Shinwell, 2020). Education is a notable area where the gender gap is prominent as in Global South Nations, boys are often preferred over girls when it comes to continuing education (UNICEF, 2019). This perpetuates inequality, needing a wider solution to solve this injustice.

These problems are not isolated; they compound in on each other. My reasoning for having multiple lowered time limits for the activity is to show that lowered time and qualities of life are due to overlapping factors.

Therefore, I hope the activity would show that in order to see a developed global world, we need to think about radical solutions that address multiple problems as related issues. In particular, I would like for them to arrive at the conclusion using their own knowledge and opinions, avoiding the possibility of the 'banking system' of education by encouraging critical thinking (Freire, 1970).

IMPLEMENTATION

This task begins with the basis that the learners are gathered into a space suitable for both individual work and group communication.

Step 1: The students would work individually in the first step. They would be asked to do a recreational task of the teacher's choosing (i.e., drawing a picture) within a comfortable time limit. Once the time has passed, the teacher would ask them to do the activity again, with the caveat that they have a shorter time limit to complete the task. This would repeat with an even stricter limit for the final task. I would hope that this would communicate to the students the impact of having less time takes on their recreational activities.

Step 2: After the task has finished, the teacher would ask the class what they thought about the strict time limits and if it negatively impacted their artistic/creative abilities. The teacher would then bring up that their activity was a microcosm of the restrictions

placed on children in the developing world. A simplified explanation of the effects of poverty, patriarchy, and climate change would be provided to the children, showing a connection between their self-imposed restrictions on recreation and the developing world children's externally-imposed restrictions on their day-to-day life.

CONCLUSION

After the explanation, the students would enter groups of 4-6 to discuss why they think these problems exist. Afterwards, they would try to brainstorm answers to these pressing problems. The teacher would go around the room to enable discussion, help groups that are stuck and ask the students why they think their answers would be the solutions needed.

ASSESSMENT

After the class is finished discussing ideas, they will share their group ideas with the rest of the class. A teacher will act as a moderator to allow the students to present ideas without letting the discussion get too divisive. Each group will nominate what they believe to be their most creative and innovative idea and the rest would vote on which idea they preferred (with the caveat that they could not vote for their own idea). The winning group would win a prize, likely chocolate/sweets.

ADVANTAGES

- This teaching idea conveys the meaning of what is being taught before it is properly explained, making it easier for a young audience to connect the dots on the lesson.
- It allows the students to empathise with the perspectives of children living very different lives to their own by drawing a common comparison between the groups.

- Giving the students a chance to discuss the issue among themselves enables them to come to their own conclusions, preventing the 'banking system' of education from infiltrating the lesson.

LIMITATIONS

- This teaching idea requires knowledge on what the target audience finds relaxing in their free time, tailoring the activity to their preferences.
- The complexities of the realities of patriarchy, poverty, and climate change may have to be simplified for the students to understand. In particular, this activity acknowledges the problems but not their causes. This could be adapted by asking the learning audience why they think the problems exist and trying to widen their perspectives given their answers.
- This activity assumes that the children would be able to grasp even a simplified explanation of geographical inequalities. The teacher would need to be prepared to elaborate on the more complicated aspects.

FURTHER POSSIBILITIES

This teaching idea mainly focuses on the constraints imposed on children living in developing countries. It could also be extended to children who are refugees, asylum seekers, or migrants. This activity is designed for children in developing countries, but it may be useful to try the first step with children in the developing world in reverse, to give them an idea of the perspective of children in Global North countries. Trying this activity with an older audience may lead to a more fruitful discussion on inequalities as they are more likely to understand the finer details of the topic.

- SDG 12 – Responsible consumption and production

- SDG 13 – Climate Action

Teaching Idea 2: Thriving Together In Today's World by Madeleine Houssou.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

The learners will be able to:

1. Provide in-depth explanations of sustainability and wellbeing as well as the reasons for their interrelation.

2. Communicate in groups about how emotions can be a driving force towards promoting sustainable wellbeing.

3. Analyse and debate the ethics of sustainable wellbeing policies internationally.

TOPICS

- Sustainable Wellbeing

- Emotional responses to sustainable wellbeing

- Ethical implications of sustainable wellbeing

RESOURCES

Physical resources for the activities:

- A3 sheets of paper and post-it notes

- Markers

- A device e.g. laptop or phone to record an informational video or access the articles

- Printouts of articles on the different issues being discussed

AUDIENCE

Students in Higher Education institutions. This teaching idea is designed to be implemented in a formal setting (eg. University classrooms).

Digital resources for the activities:

1. Article about the extraction of oil and it's effects on the planet in Uganda: https://www.hrw.org/news/2023/11/02/uganda-oil-pipeline-protests-stifled (SDG 13)

RELEVANT SDGS

- SDG 3 – Good Health and Wellbeing

- SDG 11 – Sustainable Cities and Communities

2. Article about the health issues of people suffering through the genocide in Palestine: https://www.newscientist.com/article/2421388-the-war-in-gaza-is-creating-a-health-crisis-that-will-span-decades/ (SDG 3 and 11)

3. Article about the Taoiseach looking to end income inequality in Ireland: https://www.euronews.com/business/2024/01/18/irish-taoiseach-pressed-on-solving-economic-inequality-in-ireland (SDG 3 and 11)

4. Article about the forced labour and unethical production of clothing in China: https://www.politico.com/news/2023/06/05/shein-china-forced-labor-claims-lobbying-fast-fashion-00100065 (SDG 3 and 12)

5. Article about mental health not being prioritised over physical health in the USA: https://medicalxpress.com/news/2024-04-survey-americans-mental-health-seat.html#google_vignette (SDG 3)

6. Article about the cause and end of gang violence in Haiti: https://www.theguardian.com/world/2024/mar/08/haiti-crisis-gang-jailbreak-explained (SDG 11)

CONTENT

'wellbeing' defined by the World Health organisation (2021) encompasses 'a positive state experienced by individuals and society...focusing on wellbeing supports the tracking of the equitable distribution of resources'. This distribution can be shortened into one concept known as 'sustainability.' This definition on its own proves the obligatory interrelation of the two concepts - how one cannot be transformed in a positive way without the other.

As future leaders and decision-makers, young adults should actively be involved and promote sustainable wellbeing as they 'will be the next generation in charge of their own self-care and of influencing the wellbeing of the world we live in' (Ronen & Kerret, 2020, p.3). The activities within this teaching idea revolve around reasoning with the authority figures of their institutions / workplaces in making them healthier and more functional spaces. Ronen and Kerret (2020) demonstrate this point under the sample of schools that 'serve as a living lab for social and emotional behaviour... an essential tool for teaching and promoting wellbeing'.

Lastly, Iniguez-Gallardo et al, (2021), reports on emotional states surrounding climate change and how they can have both a positive and negative impact on how we perceive sustainability. The study was done with a sample of South-Ecuadorian farmers and the different emotions collected in the data included confusion, guilt and optimism. The results showed that the farmers were willing to 'take responsibility' and were optimistic in 'using new knowledge and technology' to combat the climate crisis on their farms. This is an example of positive implementation of emotions in aiding sustainability.

IMPLEMENTATION

Introduction:
- An individual activity of the students writing down on the post-it notes the personal meaning they attach to the words 'Sustainability' and 'Wellbeing' as separate concepts.

- After five minutes, they will stick their post-it notes on the wall and come together to form a community of practice. Students will be called to read out some definitions and reflect on if they agree or disagree.

- Via PowerPoint slides, we will then refer back to the World Health Organisation's definition of sustainable wellbeing (mentioned above) as our starting point of knowledge surrounding it.

Body:
- Larger groups of five or six will now be formed by tables to complete two activities.

- The first involves each group being given a different issue harming sustainability internationally to focus on. They will read through the article given to them, list and elaborate on the emotions the article may arise in both them and the people of the nation mentioned in the article. The list of articles I have selected for this lesson are linked in the resources box above e.g. Physical health being prioritised over mental health in the USA may raise feelings of worry and pessimism in American parents and children because children who are suffering from mental health problems may find it difficult to go through the school system.

- The second activity will involve the group creating advertisements to authority figures to help in combating the issue in their specific nation. This can be a digital or hand drawn infographic or a short 3-5 minute informational video. Students will also be encouraged to constructively utilise the different emotions they had thought of in the previous activity e.g. A video establishing the damaging effects of the climate crisis from a negative stance to capture the attention of authority figures.

Conclusion:
- Students will present their advertisements to each other with assessment from others and the lecturer.

- The lesson will finish with 'exit tickets' - students will have to write down one thing they do regularly to look after their mental and physical health, sticking it up on the wall for others to read in order to leave e.g. In order to look after my wellbeing, I go for regular walks in the park by my house.

ASSESSMENT

The creation of advertisements will test a student's knowledge of what holistic sustainable wellbeing means to them and apply it to a real-world situation. Students will then peer-assess each others' advertisements on how effective they are at getting the message of holistic sustainable wellbeing across. Advertisements will also be peer-assessed by the lecturer and given feedback after the lesson.

ADVANTAGES

- The implementation supports student's understanding of the topic because it builds up existing knowledge about wellbeing and sustainability that students already have.

- It caters to a variety of learning styles as students are able to create an infographic or make an informational video.

- It is in alignment with the learning objectives which are effective to achieve within the lesson. I followed guidelines under the SMART goals which aided this.

LIMITATIONS

- There may be limitations within the implementation because of conflicting opinions during the group activities surrounding the issues brought up. This may result in a lack of teamwork or productivity.
- There may be a time constraint issue involved in having two sizable group activities during the same lesson. To fix this, I would shorten the activity about the advertisement to a simple class discussion or debate of how we can encourage sustainable wellbeing to authority figures as opposed to a kinesthetic activity.

Opportunities for Different Types of Assessments

Teaching Idea 3: Holistic Sustainable Consumption Through the Lense of True Cost Accounting by Kylie Brannon and Cosima Krause.

TOPIC

- True cost accounting (TCA) through the lens of Paulo Freire's "pedagogy of the oppressed". We will do so by problem-based learning, making it applicable to student's own life experiences by enabling their ability to become agents of change for their own future. We additionally approach our teaching topic through dialogue to support the students' collaborative skills.

AUDIENCE

Our target audience comprises of students in higher education institutions, taught in a formal education setting. We hope the primary audience of the students will spread our teaching topic to the secondary audience of their friends and family members.

RELEVANT SDGS

The main SDG we hope to focus on is SDG 12: Responsible Consumption and Production (United Nations, 2015). Specifically, our main sub-target of focus is: 12.8: Promote universal understanding of sustainable lifestyles.

Our topic will slightly cover the following SDGs:

- SDG 3: Good Health and Wellbeing

- SDG 13: Climate Action

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

We designed the following learning objectives following Bloom's Taxonomy by reaching up to level 5: "evaluate". Our 3 learning objectives build on each other, each touching on a different level of taxonomy

The learners will be able to:

1. Express what true cost accounting (TCA) is by identifying 3 of its key defining aspects.

2. Discuss at least one example of how they will implement the ideas of TCA into their own lives.

3. Critically evaluate the concept of TCA by debating its merits and weaknesses.

RESOURCES

Introductory Youtube video that will be used to give a brief summary of TCA.

The students will have no prior knowledge of the topic, so this will be part of their foundational knowledge needed for the rest of the teaching Idea:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KVTLLrP9uOg&t=1s

Short informational article on the basics of TCA will be provided for students to navigate to and read over:
https://www.foodinspiration.com/us/the-rise-of-true-cost/

Worksheet will be used to assess student's understandings of TCA and provide discussion points to create a dialogue:
https://docs.google.com/document/d/1wT0JCDTH-9Qg8rHYGAQiaupTmGkz9mVR0hOVLLGNvD4/edit?usp=sharing

Worksheet will be used by students to calculate the true cost of their groceries:
https://docs.google.com/document/d/1iiZHUxeq8D65hwvrZhe3jADIYiXaV-2HImCrAXQedto/edit?usp=sharing

CONTENT

Our teaching idea will cover the topic of True Cost Accounting including what it is, its weaknesses and merits, and why it must be addressed. True cost accounting explains the reason for low food prices. This concept argues that low food prices do not exist, we still pay the price for cheap food but in indirect ways such as water charges to clean up pesticides, taxes to subsidize farmers, insurance costs for diet related disease, or environmental clean up costs (TRUE COST, 2023). Therefore, true cost accounting does not just take the economic value of food into consideration, but also looks at "the social, human, and natural capital value for all stakeholders" (Gemmill-Herren, Baker, & Daniels, 2021, pp. 2).

generation in charge of their own self-care and of influencing the wellbeing of the world we live in' (Ronen & Kerret, 2020, p.3). The activities within this teaching idea revolve around reasoning with the authority figures of their institutions / workplaces in making them healthier and more functional spaces. Ronen and Kerret (2020) demonstrate this point under the sample of schools that 'serve as a living lab for social and emotional behaviour... an essential tool for teaching and promoting wellbeing'.

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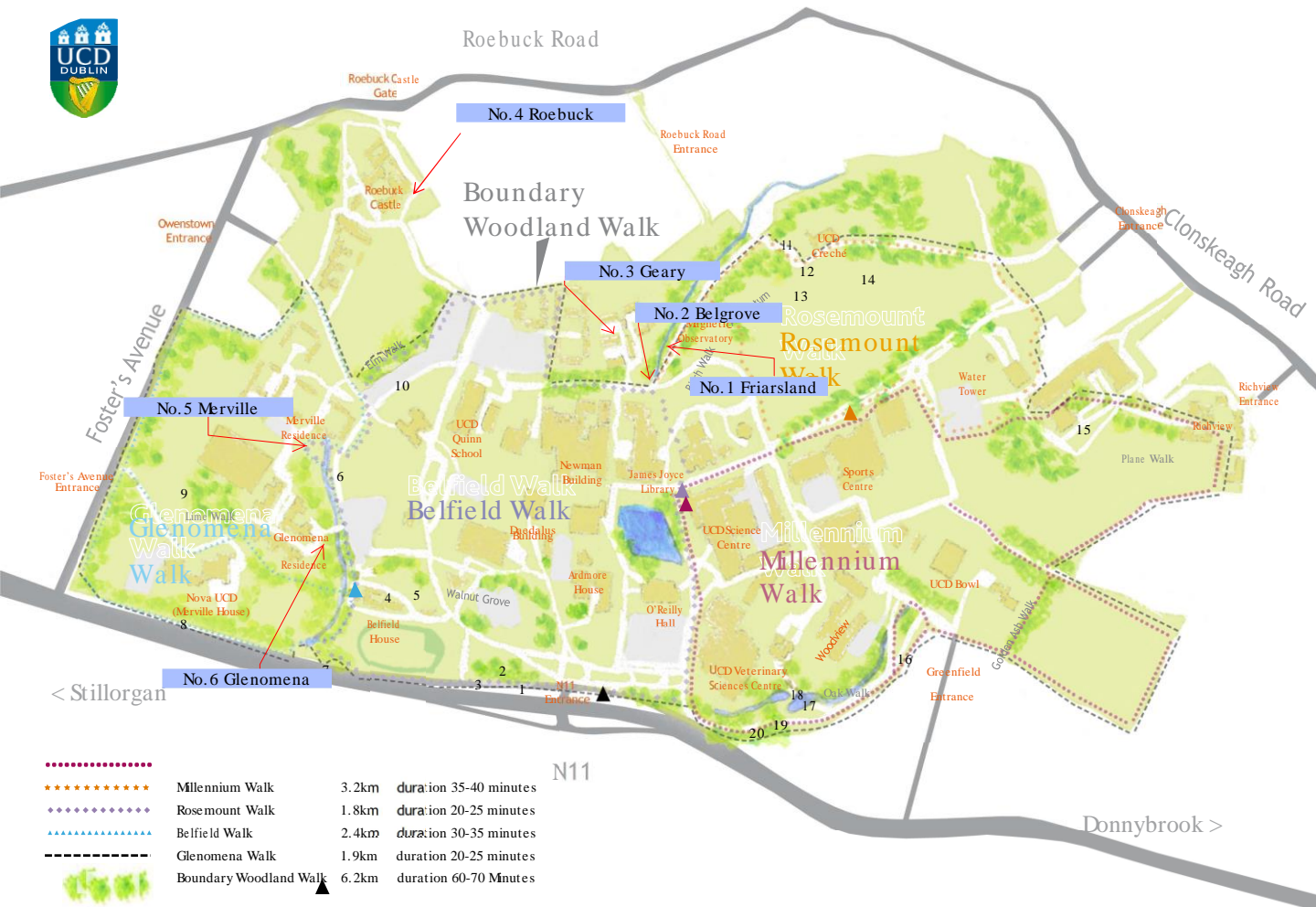
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- It caters to a variety of learning styles as students are able to create an infographic or make an informational video.

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LIMITATIONS

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- There may be a time constraint issue involved in having two sizable group activities during the same lesson. To fix this, I would shorten the activity about the advertisement to a simple class discussion or debate of how we can encourage sustainable wellbeing to authority figures as opposed to a kinesthetic activity.

Map legend:

Walk	Distance	Duration
Millennium Walk	3.2km	duration 35-40 minutes
Rosemount Walk	1.8km	duration 20-25 minutes
Belfield Walk	2.4km	duration 30-35 minutes
Glenomena Walk	1.9km	duration 20-25 minutes
Boundary Woodland Walk	6.2km	duration 60-70 Minutes

Mindfulness walk – Teaching for Holistic Sustainable Wellbeing

This competition was designed and implemented by undergraduate students Klara Carselin and Marta Darska from UCD School of Psychology. Developed by in collaboration with the School of Nature and Life Sciences and UCD Estate Services, this project introduced six informational posts along a new UCD woodland walk.

These posts, equipped with QR codes, provide users with access to:
- interactive resources such as mindfulness exercises
- information about local biodiversity
- navigational guidance to the next post.

By blending mindfulness and environmental awareness, the project creates an accessible, low-cost intervention to enhance sustainable wellbeing.

> # "Nature does not hurry, yet everything is accomplished."
>
> ## Lao Tzu

Combining Nature and Wellbeing

This goal of the Mindfulness walk is to highlight the rich tree ecosystem, modern art, and rich history surrounding the UCD campus, while encouraging mindfulness practices to enhance wellbeing. By connecting with nature, we hope to demonstrate how it can positively impact our mental and physical health.

There are six stops along this walk, each showcasing a unique tree species or landmark that highlights the natural beauty of the UCD campus.

1. Friarsland Stream
2. Belgrove
3. Geary Institute
4. Roebuck Castle
5. UCD Village cross paths
6. Glenomena

To make the most of your experience, we invite you to try a short introductory mindfulness recording by David Delaney.

Stop 1

Friarsland Stream

You can explore the Monterey cypress – *Cupressus macrocarpa*. The Monterey cypress is now found naturally only on the central coast of California where it is now considered endangered.

Stop 2

Belgrove

You can explore the Birch – *Betula* species. There are two birch species native to Ireland which returned to recolonise c.12,500 years ago after the last ice age.

Stop 3

Geary Institute

You can explore the sculpture by Colm Brennan 'Rotations in Space' from1986. and the movement of the elements within the atom and the planets in outer space.

Stop 4

Roebuck Castle

Stop 5

Merville

Stop 6

Glenomena

You can explore the heritage building which became a residence soon after the Anglo-Norman Conquest. The castle itself was first built in the 13th century. It was an important residence, but it was severely damaged during the rebellion of 1641.

You can explore the Yew – *Taxus baccata*. This is one of the few evergreen coniferous tree species native to Ireland (Scots pine and juniper being the other two)

You can explore the pocket forest consisting of planted, native trees that mimics the natural ecosystem that exists in a natural occurring forest but in a much smaller scale.

06

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