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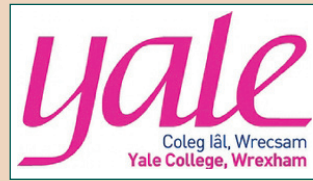
## Using projects to integrate sustainability into the curriculum

DATE:

September 2008

SUMMARY

Yale College wanted to use practical projects to demonstrate how sustainability can apply to any subject area. The college's environmental manager worked with the motor vehicles department to address sustainability, and then used this project as a showcase for other areas of the curriculum.



INSTITUTION PROFILE

FE Wales  
3200 FTE  
14000 PTE learners  
Two sites

EAUC COMMENT

This is an excellent example of how an institution can successfully embed sustainability into all areas of the curriculum, and make a big environmental impact through small scale schemes.

## PROJECT PARTNERS

Arena Network Wales, Green Dragon

## THE PROBLEM

After addressing sustainability in the management of the college, including introducing a paperless Environmental Management System, Yale College wanted to increase sustainability within its curriculum, especially in areas which have not traditionally included it. The college wanted to find a project to demonstrate how sustainability could link to the curriculum, which would inspire other subject areas to include sustainability and which would lead to a real change in the way staff and students saw it.

The ever-changing nature of the industry means that staff often find it difficult to keep up to date with new industrial waste management practices within their vocational areas. The college used the environmental manager to advise the motor vehicles department on a small scale project that would lead to long term change.

## THE APPROACH

The motor vehicle department was challenged to engage with the latest environmental considerations across the motor vehicle industry and to develop these within the department.

The college used ARENA Network's Green Dragon Award environmental management system (EMS) criteria so any outcomes would count towards accreditation. ARENA Network is a not-for-profit organisation which provides practical support to organisations wanting to implement an EMS.

The environmental manager met with staff from the department and reviewed codes of practice against the criteria, then helped the department to use manufacturing data sheets to develop a set of environmental considerations about waste management.

COSHH (Control of Substances Hazardous to Health) regulations were also used to discuss safe management of waste products. These were adapted by the motor vehicle team and embedded into curriculum practice, so that all the students learned about the environmental management and sustainability developments surrounding their subject.

## GOALS

- Embed sound institutional environmental management practice into specific areas of college
- Raise awareness of how to dispose of waste safely and sustainably
- Promote student dialogue and debate about sustainability issues in their vocational area of study and as a wider dialogue about environmental issues within and outside college
- Implement small scale schemes within curriculum areas that make a big environmental difference, incur little capital cost and make learners more conscious about sustainability
- Use these schemes to get other curriculum areas to consider ways that they could to improve their sustainability performance.

## OBSTACLES AND SOLUTIONS

### Obstacle

- Potential cost of equipment
- Need for understanding of latest waste management practices
- Policies on spill procedures
- Sharing the good practice and inspiring other departments

### Solution

- The motor vehicle department worked with students to create a version of a bund to contain oil in tanks if there was a spillage
- Booms – absorbent pads to contain spills - were constructed from waste hair from the Hair and Beauty department
- Training from Environmental Manager on how spillages should be contained and disposed of appropriately
- Whole-college policies on spill procedures were updated and shared across all departments in order to unify and clarify spillage procedures
- The work of the motor vehicle department was shared across the college in training by the environmental manager, showing how environmental policies should be integrated firmly into the curriculum and practice of vocational courses.

## PERFORMANCE AND RESULTS

This small project resulted in:

- A fully compliant and environmentally aware department
- Clear understanding by lecturers about the latest COSHH safety procedures which was passed on effectively to students and embedded into curriculum practice
- Greater understanding of sustainability and the changing needs and environmental issues in the motor vehicle market
- Other departments looking at their liquid waste procedures and use of bunding with other opportunities taken forward

## LESSONS LEARNT

- Often the most effective environmental management schemes are small scale solutions
- Engage learners by using the updating of environmental procedures as a tool to consider sustainability performance and the sector's ever changing needs and demands
- Model the small scale projects as area of good practice for other departments to learn from and initiate their own improvements

## FURTHER INFORMATION

For more information on ARENA Network and Green Dragon visit  
<http://www.greendragonems.com/cgi-bin/website.cgi?tier1=Home>

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The Environmental and Sustainability Champion within Further and Higher Education in the United Kingdom.

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