

Advocacy Report 2018

Introduction

EAUC launched the Advocacy Strategy in February 2018 as part of the organisation's evolved Strategic Plan. Created alongside members, it captures the key advocacy issues members face and provides the most efficient and effective solutions.

2018 Highlights

- We appointed our first dedicated staff member with a focus on Advocacy.
- We successfully applied to join influential networks including Aldersgate Group, UKSSD and Greener UK.
- With input from members and fellows, we responded to 10 consultations, on topics from plastic to SDGs, Environmental Principles to student skills.
- We further developed our relationship with the UK Government and the Scottish Government – taking part in initiatives with them and ensuring our members' voice was heard on topical issues.
- Our Scotland Office continued to work with the Scottish Government, Scottish Funding Council and other partners to push for aspirational targets and activities on climate change and sustainability. We responded to Scottish consultations on the Climate Change Bill and partner consultations such as the Professional Standards for College Lecturers developed by the College Development Network, and represent sector views on a variety of national networks and steering groups.
- In Wales we have started work on resources that align the SDGs with the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act's well-being goals.
- We established EAUC Ireland as a foundation for consultation and policy development with the Government of Ireland and the Northern Ireland Assembly.
- We published the Governance Guide 'Sustainability: Key to Long-term Institutional Success' with CUC, UUK, Advance HE, supported by Rathbones. This was designed to help members advocate for sustainability at an executive level.
- We continued the work of the Future Business Council, focusing on graduate attributes and building relationships and synergy across university and corporate leadership.
- We took the SDG Accord to new heights and raised the profile of post-16 education's role in the SDGs by taking the very first SDG Accord report to the UN High Level Political Forum.
- We have been sharing best practice on the Sustainability Exchange, adding 343 new resources this year to help members to advocate for sustainability!
- We have undertaken more partnership work than ever, including the Sustainability Leadership Scorecard with AUDE and ARUP, the Sustainability in Education Survey with AoC, NUS, CDN and UCU, and policy work with UKSSD, the Scottish SDG Network and Aldersgate Group.
- Created new academic partnerships with Emerald Publishing on the International Journal of Sustainability in Higher Education.
- We have also promoted sustainability excellence across the sector, both nationally and internationally through the Green Gown Awards.

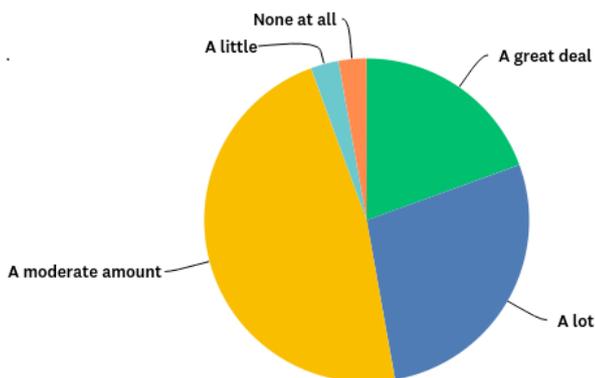
To monitor our advocacy work, we sent out an advocacy survey in December 2018. There were two versions, one for the Key Contacts at Education Institutions that are currently members, and another for Key Contacts from our Strategic Partners.

Summary

The results were very positive and will now enable us to benchmark and make new targets.

Survey to Education Institution Key Contacts:

47% of Key Contacts felt EAUC had done either 'a lot' or a 'great deal' to support them advocate for sustainability in their institution.



When asked how well they felt the EAUC advocated on their behalf, 69% said EAUC met their expectations and 28% said EAUC exceeded their expectations. Responses were very positive when asked whether EAUC's advocacy work had resulted in sustainability gaining a higher profile within education – 67% stated progress attributable to EAUC was either 'a lot' or 'a great deal'.

Survey to Strategic Partner Key Contacts: We asked Strategic Partners how influential they believed the EAUC is in policy development in wider society regarding sustainability in tertiary education. Five out of seven respondents said EAUC was somewhat influential, and two said EAUC was very influential.

We also asked them whether they feel sustainability has gained a higher profile within education as a result of EAUC's work. Six out of seven respondents said 'a moderate amount', and one said 'a lot'.

Recommendations

Following the results of the survey, and the qualitative feedback we also received, we will be providing additional advocacy support in 2019 on:

- Greater communications to strategic partners to raise awareness of sustainability in HE/FE and to get them to incorporate it into their own agenda and messaging.
- Continue to build on SDG support and guidance.
- Continue to input consultation responses to UK and Ireland Governments – with improvement on lobbying.
- Look at new ways of communicating – to include podcasts and top 10 lists. More readily consumable information, with new and more engaging language. Particularly aimed at non-estate department audiences.
- More resources – i.e. guidance documents on popular topics.
- More suggested engagement activities that students would be interested in.
- Research funding opportunities and have a centralised list.
- Lobby for ESD to be incorporated into lecturers' professional standards as well as in new job specifications at institutions.
- Create better relationships with academics. Research facilitation of a sustainability academics community.
- More support for FE institutions and specialised resources for them.