

Introduction

The Advocacy Strategy gained approval from the Board in February 2018 following a lengthy period of planning with EAUC members to ensure it encapsulated the key advocacy issues and promulgated the most efficient and effective solutions.

Implementation began straight away and followed the highly detailed operational framework that was established in discussion with EAUC staff to ensure deliverability.

2019 Highlights

- In 2019, we submitted [14 consultation responses](#) to various Government departments and attended several roundtables with Government departments, upon invitation, as a result of consultation submissions. Discussion topics included: reaching net zero, low carbon skills, SDGs, the Environment Bill and the 25 Year Environment Plan.
- We introduced a whole [new package for FE](#) to support them in integrating sustainability, including a dedicated FE email network, new FE newsletter, FE specific webinars and other FE resources.
- We increased our media mentions hugely, featuring in the [Washington Post](#), [Thomson Reuters](#), [Times Higher Education](#), [University Business](#), and [Wonkhe](#) among many more.
- We engaged with international partners on the climate emergency, working with the UN and Second Nature to launch a [Global Climate Letter](#), before organising for this to be presented at several events in Madrid at COP25.
- We launched a [Climate Commission](#) in partnership with AoC, UUK, and GuildHE to ensure a coherent and consistent approach to meeting net zero emissions in UK and Ireland institutions. We have ensured members voices are at the centre of this and have been proactive at communicating updates.
- We lobbied: The Office for Students and HESA to return the mandate for EMR data submission; BEIS to improve their emissions reduction targets for the higher and public education sector; DEFRA to reassess the priorities of the 25 Year Environment Plan in light of the Government's declaration of a Climate Emergency; and Ofsted to introduce a requirement for ESD to be taught as a mandatory part of the curriculum. These are all ongoing conversations and we hope to update you on them soon!
- We continued our SDG momentum through the [SDG Accord](#), which continues to grow. We presented the latest report to the UN High Level Political Forum in July 2019 and engaged with the UK Government on the UK's first SDG Voluntary National Review.
- In Scotland, we continued to work with the Scottish Government, Scottish Funding Council and other partners, including Universities Scotland and the College Development Network, to push for aspirational targets and activities on climate change and sustainability, particularly in light of the increased focus on the Climate Emergency. We have responded to Scottish consultations such as the Role of Public Bodies in Tackling Climate Change, Climate Ready Scotland and the Circular Economy Bill, and represent sector views on a variety of national networks and steering groups.
- In Wales, we have engaged with Welsh members on topics and news that directly impacts them through the dedicated Wales email network.
- In Ireland we have reached out to the Ireland group to discuss how we can better work with them to advocate for sustainability in their institutions. We organised two virtual meetings, one

face to face meeting and spoke at University College Dublin Sustainability Action Day.

- We have been sharing best practice on the Sustainability Exchange, adding just over 400 new resources this year to help members to advocate for sustainability, including a guide on adaptation to climate change.
- We have promoted sustainability excellence across the sector, both nationally and internationally through the Green Gown Awards, with the International Green Gown Awards being hosted in New York during the High-Level Political Forum in July 2019.

However, Education members did not feel like we had as much impact with our advocacy work externally as Strategic Partners thought we had.

This year the political situation in the UK can only be described as unprecedented. Brexit and a General Election have dominated parliamentary debate, and with periods of purdah and prorogation there has been even less time for a sitting House of Commons to progress other regulation and legislation such as the Environment Bill. Therefore, policy work in all organisations has had less impact. In the space we had access to, we did have a proportionately high impact on improving the profile of sustainability. There is a slight disconnect between educational member and

"I find the EAUC resources and updates valuable and motivating."

"We really appreciate the support of the EAUC and its advocacy role."

Summary

To monitor our advocacy work, we sent out an advocacy survey in December 2019. 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.

The responses to both surveys were overall positive:

- There was an increase in respondents providing us with feedback.
- Educational members agreed that EAUC has been very supportive in enabling them to advocate for sustainability within their institution
- Strategic partners felt EAUC had greatly increased its influence at a policy level and profile within education.

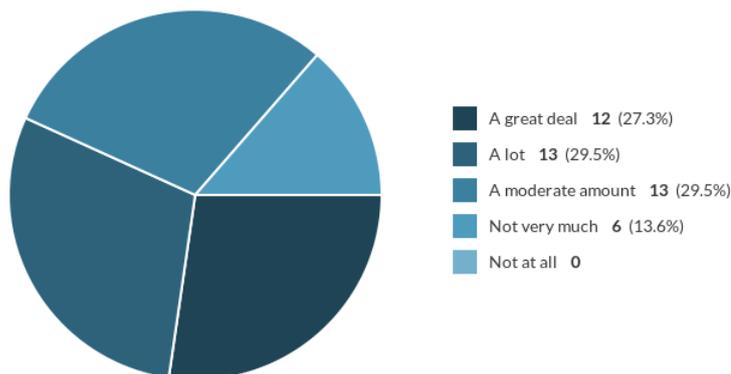
strategic partners in recognition of this, and in 2020 we aim to ensure all members feel that as a result of EAUC's advocacy work, sustainability has gained a higher profile in education.

Survey to Education Institution Key Contacts:

58% of Education Key Contacts felt EAUC had done either 'a lot' or a 'great deal' to support them advocate for sustainability in their institution. Another 30% described EAUC's support to advocate as 'a moderate amount'. When asked how well they felt the EAUC advocated on their behalf, 95% said EAUC either met or exceeded their expectations. When

asked if EAUC's advocacy work had resulted in sustainability gaining a higher profile within education, 86% stated progress attributable to EAUC was apparent.

Q.1 Do you feel the EAUC has supported you to better advocate for sustainability within your institution?



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. From the 15 respondents, eight (53%) of them said EAUC was either extremely influential or very influential.

We also asked them whether they feel sustainability has gained a higher profile within education as a result of EAUC's work. 14 out of 15 (93%) respondents said 'a lot' or 'an adequate amount'.

Evaluation

These results feed into several KPIs, and the majority were very positive. Following on from this report – the Board has decided that the organisation's advocacy super KPI does not cover the full extent of EAUC advocacy activity. It has been agreed that a series of indicators should be collated to form the super KPI and we will work with EAUC staff, Board members and Fellows to address this.

Recommendations

Include, among others:

- Enable universities falling behind the sustainability agenda by providing more advocacy resources aimed at those at early stages of sustainability integration.
- Lead on net zero ambitions and sector-wide Climate action – ensure we are creating case studies of best practice, fact sheets, toolkits and other helpful resources for members to use to advocate for net zero targets and action plans.
- Continue to push for the integration of ESD into the curriculum. Provide resources for members to lobby for it internally, but also continue to lobby the government and relevant bodies such as OfS and Ofsted to recognise this requirement.
- Continue to work on integration of SDGs into institutions through the SDG Accord.