

Date: 15th November 2023

Time: 1-3pm

Venue: Online

[Resources](#)

Autumn Forum Minutes 2023

Attending:

Alice Smith	AS	EAUC Scotland
Claire Mitchell	CM	EAUC
Craig Anderson	CrA	University of Stirling
Kathrin Mobius	KMo	EAUC Scotland
Matthew Woodthorpe	MWo	EAUC Scotland
Rory Hill	RHi	EAUC Scotland
Sarah Shea	SSh	Glasgow Kelvin College
Pauline Donaldson	PD	Forth Valley College
Scott Strachan	SSt	University of Strathclyde
Stefan Jindra	SJ	James Hutton Institute
Steven Morrison	SM	West Lothian College
Billy Currie	BC	Dumfries and Galloway College
Alma Kalina Riessler	AKR	Edinburgh University Students' Association
Dr Christine Anderson	ChA	UHI Moray
Dr Kerry McInnes	KMc	UHI Moray
David Charles	DC	University of Strathclyde
Elisa Garcia-Wilson	EGW	University of Dundee
Emma Zara	EZ	Edinburgh Napier University
Lucy Patterson	LP	University of Edinburgh
Linda Miller	LM	West College Scotland
Anna Clark	AC	Heriot-Watt University
Lisa Forrest	LFo	Glasgow Caledonian University
Lara Fahey	LFa	EAUC Scotland
Hazel Dalgard	HD	Scottish Funding Council
Amy Ledger	AL	APUC

Apologies:

Roddy Mackenzie	RM	Glasgow Kelvin College
Roddy Yarr	RY	University of Glasgow
Christine Calder	CC	Dundee and Angus College

	SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS	ACTIONS
1	<p>Welcome and Introductions <i>Craig Anderson, University of Stirling and EAUC Scotland Advisory Group member</i></p> <p>CrA welcomed all to the meeting and invited us to share names and roles.</p>	
2	<p>Place-based responses to sustainability: UHI Moray's Just Transition Project <i>Dr Christine Anderson & Dr Kerry McInnes, UHI Moray</i></p> <p>What is the Just Transition? ChA introduced the concept of the Just Transition. Their definition is as follows: "A Just Transition refers to the process of transitioning to a sustainable economy while ensuring that the rights and well-being of workers, communities, and the environment are upheld." The Just Transition aims to maximise the co-benefits of transitioning away from fossil fuels - for example, by providing quality jobs.</p> <p>UHI Moray – Just Transition Project This 12-month project is funded by the Scottish Government's Just Transition Fund. It aims to understand the implications of reaching Net Zero on employment, skills and infrastructure in Moray. The project is engaging with a diverse range of stakeholders.</p> <p>The project has four main strands:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The range of knowledge and skills required to support Moray's green economy • Curriculum and training requirements of the emerging and established workforces • Training and educational infrastructure requirements to provide this learning • Enterprise pathways translating skills into new green businesses <p>ChA said that one of their first actions in the project was to commission a study from the University of Warwick into green jobs in Moray. 31.7% of vacancies were in green occupations, a figure comparable with the rest of Scotland and the rest of the UK. Their taxonomy looks at vacancies and classifies them into three green job categories:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New and emerging jobs directly related to the Net Zero transition (i.e. hydrogen cell technician) • Enhanced skills and knowledge – jobs that will require enhanced competences in the transition (i.e. architects, environmental consultants) • Existing jobs that will be in Increased demand because of the transition (i.e. insulation installers, energy assessors) 	

	<p>Of green vacancies in Moray, they found that 8.4% were new and emerging, 64.5% required enhanced skills and knowledge, and 27.1% were in increased demand.</p> <p>The methodology of the UHI Moray Project includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stakeholder mapping • Stakeholder survey and interviews • Thematic analysis • Student survey <p>The next steps will be curriculum development and the final report, including recommendations.</p> <p>Key Findings so far</p> <p>Stakeholder key findings – 72% had heard of “green skills”. They reported a lack of funding and skill shortages, as well as lack of training in new technologies.</p> <p>79% of students agreed that UHI should develop “green skills” as part of their course and 69% said that this should be built into existing course content. They said that making green learning should be made relevant to their area of study.</p> <p>Q&A</p> <p>KMo asked how many students participated. ChA said that 80% responded.</p> <p>CrA asked what types of courses the students were on. ChA said that they were across a wide range – business, sport, catering, horticulture and more.</p> <p>ChA invited anyone interested to get in touch.</p>	<p>Contact Christine Anderson or Kerry McInnes for further information about the project.</p>
3	<p>Place-based responses to sustainability: West Lothian College’s ECOHOUSE <i>Steven Morrison, West Lothian College</i></p> <p>Introduction</p> <p>SM introduced West Lothian College’s ECOHOUSE, now named the Skills Centre for Sustainable Living, which opened in August this year. The ECOHOUSE was funded by West Lothian Council using funds from the Scottish Government’s Place Based Investment Programme.</p> <p>The Houses</p> <p>Eco houses minimise environmental impact and maximise energy efficiency and sustainability. The Skills Centre is made up of two houses: a completed low carbon house and an unfinished shell house.</p> <p>The completed house is designed with features at platinum, gold and silver level energy efficiency standards – air source heat pump,</p>	

	<p>triple glazing, certified air tightness, heat recovery ventilation and electric car charging. It uses passive design, optimising the build's orientation, window-placement etc. to reduce the need for artificial lighting and ventilation (for example, using sun tunnels to maximise lighting).</p> <p>The shell house is unfinished with no interior fittings, stud walls or plasterboard. This house is a practice area for developing skills in a real-life environment to achieve low carbon house standards.</p> <p>Engagement Their year 1 engagement targets are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 200 school pupils • 20 teachers • 150 full time students • 150 modern apprentices • 50 foundation apprentices <p>The focus of this project is on developing the future workforce. The practical skill development prepares students for industry, while providing real life settings for data science and engineering projects.</p> <p>The project focuses on upskilling, not necessarily reskilling. In learning about Insulation Building Technologies, students are preparing for both retrofit and new build. The shell house allows them to learn installation skills: heat pump installation, solar panel installation, small controls and EV charging points.</p> <p>Q&A SSt suggested that a standard house could be used to study retrofit. SM agreed but said that they are restricting by awarding body. The ideal scenario would have been three houses, including a conventional build for retrofit.</p> <p>ChA asked if they are open to external visitors. SM said that yes, they are open to visitors and partners.</p> <p>LFo pointed out the value of this environment for Occupational Therapy students to consider sustainable living and universal design.</p> <p>DC asked about the circular economy implications of the materials stripped out of the shell house each year. SM said that materials that are removed will be reused and repurposed as much as possible – this is part of the learning that they are embedding, taking a holistic overview.</p>	<p>Please contact Steven Morrison if you have further questions or are interested in visiting the ECOHOUSE.</p>
4	<p>Place-based responses to sustainability: Q&A and group discussion <i>Craig Anderson, University of Stirling and EAUC Scotland Advisory Group member</i></p>	

	<p>CrA noted that both presentations focused on upskilling rather than reskilling. SM responded that they hope to increase their capacity to provide reskilling courses. BC said that looking at the local labour market is essential in this process. KMo said that a recent EAUC event on Retrofit education raised the issue of integrating retrofit into existing qualifications rather than creating new courses.</p> <p>MWo asked whether either project had received feedback from local businesses around a lack of clarity on skills and knowledge required for a sustainable Scotland. BC said that they had encountered this at Dumfries and Galloway College.</p> <p>MWo asked what the role of institutions is in creating a change in SMEs' understanding of green skills. ChA said that smaller businesses are focused on cost of living and larger ones may struggle to recruit sustainability staff locally. They have tried to be Moray-specific by listening to local stakeholders before developing their curriculum piece. BC said that they sit on Energy Transition Board with other south Scotland institutions. The colleges try to be responsive, but courses need to be sustainable long-term. KMo raised the innovative approach of the NPTC Group which works together with businesses.</p> <p>SM said that green technology is still seen as a niche market and that, until the installer market picks up, they are limited. A lack of systemic response now will lead to a skills gap in the future.</p>	
	Comfort Break	
5	<p>Progressing ESD alongside estates: University of Strathclyde <i>Scott Strachan & David Charles, University of Strathclyde</i></p> <p>Introduction SSt said that the aim of the presentation was to introduce everyone present to the concept of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD), while reflecting on Strathclyde's experience of integrating this alongside their estates.</p> <p>What Students Want According to a recent Students Organising for Sustainability survey, 89% of students agree that their place of study should actively incorporate and promote sustainable development. A majority would accept a smaller salary in exchange for working for a company with a good environmental and social record.</p> <p>What Employers Want SSt noted a lack of business managers and leaders who are sustainability literate. As well as this, businesses are struggling to recruit candidates with the right sustainability skills. There is a mismatch between available training and the changing</p>	

requirements of employers which could be resolved by improving communication between business and educational institutions.

Drivers for ESD

UNESCO defines ESD as follows: "Education for Sustainable Development is the process of equipping students with the knowledge and understanding, competencies, skills and attributes needed to work and live in a way that safeguards environmental, social and economic wellbeing, both in the present and for future generations."

The Department for Education and Scottish Government have both published reports and legislation addressing ESD. In the past 5 years, higher education has started to see tangible signs of progress with levers for change starting to appear - I.e. [Skills Development Scotland's Climate Emergency Skills Action Plan](#) and [AdvanceHE's Education for Sustainable Development Guidance](#).

SSt noted that a previous EAUC Scotland Forum may have focused solely on estates.

Introducing the University of Strathclyde

DC said that the University of Strathclyde is a "place of useful learning". Over the past few years, they have started to look at their campus as a living laboratory.

Past student projects & placements

As Head of Climate Operations, DC works with undergraduates, post-graduates, doctorates from across Engineering, Business and Science on projects and placements with outputs within the university. Examples include:

- Travel Survey Development (undergrad placement and psych dissertation)
- Ross Priory Intermobility Hub Feasibility (Electronic & Electrical Engineering MSc dissertation)
- Review of student engagement with sustainability (undergraduate MDP placement)

Continuing to embed ESD at Strathclyde

DC described future actions to further embed ESD at Strathclyde:

- Develop a portal to connect students with professional services staff and external organisations
- Engage with existing networks to gauge demand for student projects and timescales
- Aim to engage evenly across all faculties

Q&A

MWo asked what enables successful student research and projects through a living lab approach and whether there is scope for students to work with local colleges on specific sustainability challenges. SSt said that making this work credit-bearing is what

	<p>makes this challenging. They would love to see more interaction between universities, colleges and schools, all working in an integrated, joined up way. DC said that allocating resource is a challenge – having the funding is vital.</p>	
6	<p>PBCCD Statutory Guidance Update and Discussion <i>Matthew Woodthorpe, EAUC Scotland</i></p> <p>MW delivered an overview of changes to Public Bodies Climate Change Duties. The headline is “The climate leadership expectations, accountability and scrutiny landscape is changing.”</p> <p>Each year institutions must report emissions to the Scottish Government. In October 2021, EAUC contributed to supporting guidance Public Sector Leadership on the Global Climate Emergency. Since 2022, these reports must include target date for reaching Net Zero, targets to reduce indirect emissions, and how the body will cost this.</p> <p>Alongside this movement from Scottish Government, there has been guidance from Audit Scotland on auditing climate change – six reports published since 2021. MW shared questions received from Audit Scotland for all public bodies as part of their Climate Change Return 22/23.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What targets has the body set for reducing emissions in its own organisation or in its local area? 2. Does the body have a climate change strategy or action plan which sets out how the body intends to achieve its targets? 3. How does the body monitor and report progress towards meeting its emission targets internally and publicly? 4. Has the body considered the impact of climate change on its financial statements? 5. What are the areas of the financial statements where climate change has, or is expected to have, a material impact? 6. Does the body include climate change in its narrative reporting which accompanies the financial statements and is it consistent with those financial statements? <p>The Scottish Funding Council’s Outcome Agreement Guidance 2023-24 identifies net zero and environmental sustainability response as priority area 5. EAUC has developed a Scottish colleges and university leadership checklist for responding to the climate and ecological emergency which is a self-assessment responding to national policies and guidance.</p> <p>Updated statutory guidance for public bodies is currently being codeveloped with contributions from across public sector, with a formal consultation expected in Spring/Summer 2024, to come into force in Spring 2025.</p>	

	<p>Main impacts The primary impact of this will be improved mitigations, adaptation and biodiversity incomes through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governance, decision making and action • Report boundaries • Data quality • Targets <p>Q&A SSh asked whether institutions should be prepared to address Audit Scotland's six questions in their PBCCD reporting or simply in the case that they are audited. MW responded that the questions mirror the report and institutions should be prepared. However, we expect that Audit Scotland will look for a high-level, light-touch response initially.</p> <p>KMo asked if there is a way to bring students into PBCCD reporting process. SSh said they have had some interest at Glasgow Kelvin College. RHi suggested that the data should be made accessible and shared as widely as possible. SSt said that students could and should be involved and suggested that mechanisms likely already exist, pointing out potential internship opportunities.</p> <p>MWo shared the University of Aberdeen's Net Zero dashboard.</p> <p>AC said that they would like to see students involved in making dashboards of the year-on-year data across institutions - it could help highlight what is being declared in reported emissions, as it differs by institution.</p> <p>LFa said that EAUC is currently working with a lecturer at the University of Strathclyde along with two Masters students. The PBCCD reports are useful for identifying gaps and then filling them. CrA raised the credit-bearing issue again and noted the challenge of working within the degree timescale.</p>	
7	<p>AOB <i>Craig Anderson, University of Stirling and EAUC Scotland Advisory Group member</i></p> <p>MWo flagged Green Careers Guide and Climate Risk Register Tool due to be launched shortly, as well as upcoming EAUC events.</p>	
8	<p>Thanks and Close <i>Craig Anderson, University of Stirling and EAUC Scotland Advisory Group member</i></p> <p>CrA thanked all speakers and attendees.</p>	