

# Briefing on Edinburgh Regional Network

## Executive Summary

Further and Higher Education (FHE) institutions in Scotland have signalled their commitment to address the challenges of climate change and reduce their carbon emissions by signing the Universities and Colleges Climate Commitment for Scotland (UCCCfS).

Good progress has been made by institutions to embed sustainable development within the curriculum and operational activities, however there is still much more work to be done to reduce overall emissions, due to growth in research activities and an increase in student numbers.

Both the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) and Scottish Government have encouraged institutions to develop collective sector carbon reduction measures, encourage shared service delivery and continue to work in partnership to further embed sustainable development within institutions.

To achieve these aims it is proposed to establish an Edinburgh Regional Network encompassing sustainability professionals from local universities and colleges, with representatives from sector-wide and local organisations areas.

The network would identify opportunities for collaboration between institutions, identify common challenges to overcome and encourage knowledge exchange, meeting quarterly throughout the year.

## Mission

The network will contribute towards embedding sustainable development within the local FHE sector, developing collective sector measures and encouraging knowledge exchange to overcome common challenges in the local Edinburgh area.

The network aims to do this by:

- *Identifying opportunities for collaboration, shared services and collective measures between institutions and relevant key stakeholders*
- *Sharing information between institutions to support the networks aims, including events of interest and potential funding*
- *Working towards the commitments set out in the UCCCfS, and raising and maintaining awareness of achievements undertaken by institutions.*

## Membership

The membership of the network will include sustainability professionals from each of the universities and colleges within the Edinburgh area. In addition, membership would include representatives from relevant sector-wide and local organisations who are key stakeholders.

The proposed FHE institutions to make up the membership of the network include:

- Edinburgh College
- Edinburgh Napier University
- Heriot Watt University
- Newbattle Abbey College
- Queen Margaret University
- Scotland's Rural College
- University of Edinburgh

Sustainability professionals from universities and colleges work closely with colleagues from both sector-wide and local organisations and this should be reflected in the membership of the network.

The proposed organisations to make up the membership of the network include:

- Environmental Association of Universities and Colleges (EAUC)
- National Union of Students
- Student Associations
- The City of Edinburgh Council
- Transition staff student group

Other external organisations will also be invited to share information with the network, as well as attending meetings on an ad hoc basis. These organisations could include for example the Scottish Fair Trade Forum, Soil Association and the Sustainable Scotland Network.

## Administration

The network would meet on a quarterly basis throughout the year, with the proposed schedule of meetings for 2014/15 taking place during the following months:

- 1st meeting – February 2015
- 2nd meeting – May 2015
- 3rd meeting – September 2015
- 4th meeting – December 2015

The first meeting will be an opportunity for members to share the current state of play of sustainable development at their institutions, highlighting opportunities and challenges. Furthermore, members would agree on its mission and aims, schedule of meetings and administration of the network.

Those institutions within the network will take it in turn to host meetings, providing an appropriate venue and catering. Each institution and organisation will be entitled to have a maximum of four colleagues in attendance at each meeting.

The membership of the network will nominate two co-chairs and a secretary on an annual basis, ensuring the network is working towards its mission and aims, representing the network at external meetings, encouraging communication between members and effective administration of the network.

Throughout the year members of the network will be able to share information by using the currently dormant JISCMail group, which is held by the EAUC. This list will be managed by the secretary.