

Meet a... Sustainability Student Placement



Katie Jones, Sustainability Student Placement at Sheffield Hallam University

How would you describe your job in a tweet i.e. 140 characters?

No day is the same as I support the Sustainability Team at SHU by communicating the University sustainability agenda across the organisation.

What does an average day look like?

I usually spend half my day in the office drafting communications, writing up audits, responding to emails or any other specific desk work. The other half may consist of meeting with stakeholders and my team to plan events and campaigns.

What are the key skills and qualifications required for your job? *What legal knowledge do you need that's mandatory? If none, what is useful to keep up to date on?*

As a placement student I am not expected to have certain qualifications, however strong interpersonal and communication skills are essential.

What training and continuous professional development do you require?

Throughout my placement I have been required to develop my knowledge of Environmental Management Systems and environmental legislation. This has been through experience with the University's EMS and regular meetings with the Sustainability Officer for support. I have also been to CPD training sessions such as: communication, time management and effective presentations.

What are your top three responsibilities?

- Communications
- Running a behaviour change campaign
- Supporting the Implementation of the University's EMS

Tell us something surprising about your job that people may not know about?

My role is not limited to desk work, and I've even had to opportunity to deliver a lecture to second year students on food waste at the University!

What are the positives and negatives of the job?

Positives: Opportunities to network, plenty of CPD opportunities and no day is the same.

Negatives: constraints of budget and our team is very small I can sometimes feel stretched to do many jobs at once.

Do you manage a budget, and what are your key priorities for this?

N/A



To help our members understand more about the roles in further and higher education institutions, we've created a suite of career profiles. These share the main responsibilities and skills and knowledge required of many of the key roles that play a part in embedding sustainability in a tertiary education institution.

View the entire suite at www.eauc.org.uk/meet_a_member





What does the path to career progression in this role look like? *What are the opportunities? What's this limited by?*

There are several paths to career progression in this role depending on your strengths. These include; managerial, auditing, sustainable building assessor.

What is the minimum and maximum salary band for this role?

N/A

What advice do you have for graduates and other potential candidates who are considering joining?

Knowledge of environmental legislation and EMS is highly valued by employers in this profession.

For institutions without a Sustainability Student Placement – what 3 aspects of your role do you think are the most important for any institution's sustainability journey?

- Behaviour Change campaigns to encourage sustainable behaviours as a culture within the organisation
- Regular comms on sustainability news
- Working with all University faculties and departments to get everyone on board.

What department do you and your line manager sit in? Which departmental interactions are vital for your role?

The SHU Sustainability team sits in the Estates Development and Sustainability Department. It is vital that we interact with all University departments and faculties to ensure they are all on board with the University sustainability agenda.

What opportunities and challenges does working in a higher education institution bring? *How is this role different in tertiary education compared to another sector?*

The breadth of the organisation means that communication between departments can be an issue. I have also found that progress can sometimes be slow.

How do you communicate the outputs of your role to the wider institution, and what does this include?

We publish an annual environmental report which highlights key environmental success the University as a whole is making. We also have an established environmental policy and sustainability framework that outlines our strategic approach to being a sustainable university.

What are the unique opportunities to embed sustainability in to this job?

We have taken opportunities to work with the academic faculties in embedding sustainability in the curriculum. For example, we have scheduled lectures that we deliver every year and have held student consultancy projects.

How has EAUC Membership helped you in your job and within your institution?

Being part of the EAUC has given me the opportunity to network with other professionals in the sector, which may be useful for me when I finish my final year of undergraduate study as will have contacts in the area. It has also been useful to share best practice and ask other institutions for advice in areas that we are finding difficult.

How can other Members contact you?

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