

# Climate Commission for UK Higher and Further Education



## Virtual Evidence Gathering Meeting: Priority 5 – Education and Student Experience

**Date:** 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2020 – 15:00 – 16:30 - [https://www.eauc.org.uk/shop/mms\\_single\\_event.php?event\\_id=6916](https://www.eauc.org.uk/shop/mms_single_event.php?event_id=6916)

### Purpose of the Meeting

This is an initial evidence gathering meeting where we have invited some key stakeholders relating to this priority topic. We will be asking the expert witnesses to respond to the key questions as outlined below. We will then open the discussion to the wider audience for input. The aim is to provide guidance to the Climate Commission that we are asking the right questions and focussing on the correct areas that are needed. The recording and notes from the meeting will be publicly available.

This is the early stages for the Climate Commission and output, advice and support for the sector will emerge at a later stage based on the analysis of the evidence from this meeting and other inputs. Following this event further meetings and discussions will be held to help the Climate Commission develop the practical guidance and outputs for the sector for each priority.

**Lead Commissioners:** Chair: **Steve Frampton**, Chair, Association of Colleges and Commissioner for Climate Commission; **Amy Brazier and Joshua Setford**, Students, Portsmouth College and Student Commissioners for Climate Commission; **Ian Munro**, Director, Association of Colleges and Steering Group for Climate Commission

### Invited Expert Witnesses:

Name	Organisation
Mark Wright	Director of Curriculum and Development, Education and Training Foundation
Professor Simon Kemp	Deputy Head (Education), School of Geography and Environmental Science National Teaching Fellow & University Lead, Education for Sustainable Development, University of Southampton
Eddie Playfair	Senior Policy Manager, Association of Colleges (AoC)
Jamie Burrell	Student

### What is the need?

To ensure that climate change and carbon literacy/Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) are included across all curricula.

College curricula are driven by qualification content and programmes of study cover a very broad range of general and specialist vocational and technical content at all levels from Entry to level 6. Although aspects of climate change will be present in some course specifications (eg: science, geography) there is no single programme which covers the issue comprehensively and no requirement to ensure that every student has a minimum level of awareness and knowledge.

Courses which might have provided fuller coverage at level 3 (eg: A Level Science for Public Understanding, Citizenship) have been withdrawn. The Project Qualification (at levels 1, 2 and 3) provides opportunities for students to research a topic of their choice but does not include any common subject content. The

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International Baccalaureate and Cambridge Pre-U qualifications have a broader global perspective built in but reach only a tiny proportion of 16-19 year old learners.

There are some excellent examples of social action and campaigning projects with a climate change focus taking place in colleges, notably as part of the Friends of the Earth 'My World My Home' leadership development programme. These have impact but reach limited numbers of students and are focused on advocacy, campaigning and leadership skills rather than on imparting specific curriculum content. National Citizens' Service (NCS), #IWill and Duke of Edinburgh projects also reach 16-18 year olds and focus on youth social action and volunteering.

While there is a need to embed global awareness and sustainability education wherever possible within qualification specifications, this will necessarily result in a patchy and diverse coverage. In order to reach all students, a core curriculum for sustainable development/global perspectives would need to be part of the entitlement for all learners. This would require a change to the study programme guidance to strengthen the expectations of 'other non-qualification activity to develop students' character, broader skills and confidence and to support progression' (Education and Skills Funding Agency) as well as the resources to support such a change. This would match Ofsted's increased focus on Personal Development as a graded judgement which includes 'developing responsible, respectful and active citizens who are able to play their part and know how to become involved in public life.'

The AoC is keen to work with others, including students in particular, to build a coalition for curriculum change of this sort.

## Key questions:

- What are the opportunities and barriers in changing curriculum across all of education?
- How do we make the changes to embed in curriculum across the sector? Who do we need to influence and lead?
- How do we empower students to be the advocates of sustainable futures within our institutions?

## Student Experience Question

- We will invite Student Commissioners and invited guests to share their insight and experience within their curriculum and whether this met their expectations

## Suggested solutions:

- Engage with Teach the Future and Responsible Futures and other student led activities
- New guidance on ESD being developed by Advance HE & QAA
- UNESCO due to launch Decade for ESD in June 2020 and potential indicators for primary, secondary and tertiary education on ESD (note that the launch event has been postponed)
- Awareness of regional differences within the UK
- Teaching resources and training for teachers
- Carbon literacy training for staff and students
- Link with employability
- Link with mental health
- Provide opportunities and resources for student engagement
- Use the SDGs as a framework to implement throughout all curricula

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## Key Reading:

- Teach the Future - <https://www.teachthefuture.uk/>
- Responsible Futures - <https://sustainability.nus.org.uk/responsible-futures>
- Carbon Literacy - <https://carbonliteracy.com/>
- UNESCO – Decade for ESD - <https://en.unesco.org/events/ESDfor2030>
- UK Student Climate Network - <https://ukscn.org/>
- Friends of the Earth – My World My Home - <https://friendsoftheearth.uk/about-us/my-world-my-home-creating-environmental-leaders-tomorrow>
- QAA/HEA ESD Guidance (2014) - <https://www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/quality-code/education-sustainable-development-guidance-june-14.pdf>

## Key Expert Witness – Biographies:

### **Mark Wright, Director of Curriculum and Development, Education and Training Foundation**

I spent many years working as a volunteer for Friends of the Earth before saving the planet became a more widely recognised thing. This included a few years travelling the globe helping with local campaigns, speaking with politicians and galvanising community action. After a near burn out and a recognition that the issue needed a more integrated and strategic approach I saw also that education was the way forward, and contributed to the importance of this in policy papers I helped draft for the '92 Rio Environment Summit. It became obvious that more aware leadership needed to be a cornerstone of the strategy and while working at the National College for School Leadership I was heavily involved in driving the Sustainable Schools initiative. I've now worked with leaders in Further Education for nearly 10 years and see the thirst to want to contribute to the solution in colleges across the nation. I recently took the role of Design & Development Director at the Education & Training Foundation and am now in the process of recruiting a Head of Education for Sustainable Development to help ETF contribute to the solution to the sustainability problems we all face.

### **Simon Kemp, Deputy Head (Education), School of Geography and Environmental Science National Teaching Fellow & University Lead, Education for Sustainable Development, University of Southampton**

Professor Simon Kemp is Professorial Fellow in Education for Sustainable Development within Geography and Environmental Science at the University of Southampton. Simon's teaching and research expertise lies in Education for Sustainable Development (ESD), Environmental Management Systems (EMS), Carbon Footprinting, Environmental Law, and Waste Management. He is the University Lead in Education for Sustainable Development (ESD), co-chair of Sustainability Action, and joint leader and founder of the Carbon Management Group.

Simon's work has been nationally recognised winning the Times Higher Education (THE) Most Innovative Teacher of the Year award 2013 (the sole individual HE teaching award), and he was also awarded a National Teaching Fellowship in 2010. He was recently seconded to the Higher Education Academy as UK Academic Lead in ESD where he led a range of national ESD projects such as the Green Academy programme, and the publication of the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) guidance document on ESD for universities.

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Simon has an extensive track record of working with industrial partners, ranging from SMEs to international large organisations, in a variety of sectors including construction, demolition, retail, communications, freight handling, local authorities, hospitals, and logistics. He has coordinated over 100 environmental management projects with industrial partners, leading some to gain certification to ISO14001:2004. He has previously founded an environmental consultancy (The Olive Consultancy), is a Chartered Environmentalist (CEnv) and Full Member of the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (MIEMA).

Simon is currently leading on revised guidance on ESD with QAA.

## **Eddie Playfair, Senior Policy Manager, Association of Colleges**

Eddie is a Senior Policy Manager at the Association of Colleges which represents Further Education, Sixth Form and Specialist Colleges in England. He was the principal of Newham Sixth Form College in East London from 2008 to 2018 and of Regent Sixth Form College in Leicester from 2002 to 2008. He trained as a science teacher and has taught in further education colleges and secondary schools in East and North London.

Eddie has a long standing interest in developing a broader curriculum for young people aged 16 to 19, which develops their all-round understanding and skills, including their capacity to be active and engaged citizens. He was active in the national post-16 Citizenship programme which followed the publication of the Crick report on Post-16 Citizenship education in 2000. He has consistently promoted the development of student engagement, representation and leadership, most recently through his work on the AoC's Charter for Student Engagement.

Eddie has blogs at [eddieplayfair.com](http://eddieplayfair.com) including posts on citizenship education, tweets as [@eddieplayfair](https://twitter.com/eddieplayfair) and can be contacted at [eddie.playfair@aoc.co.uk](mailto:eddie.playfair@aoc.co.uk)