

Date: 30th March 2023

Time: 2-4pm

Venue: Online

[Resources](#)

Spring Forum and AGM Minutes 2023

Attending:

Alan Smith	AlaS	Royal Conservatoire of Scotland
Alice Smith	AliS	EAUC Scotland
Amy Gove-Kaney	AGK	University of Stirling
Andy Stahly	ASt	University of St Andrews
Anna Clark	AC	Heriot-Watt University
Billy Currie	BC	Dumfries and Galloway College
Bruce Laing	BL	Queen Margaret University
Charlotte Bonner	CB	The EAUC
Christine Calder	CC	Dundee and Angus College
Claire McCulloch	CMcC	SRUC (Scotland's Rural College)
Claire Mitchell	CMi	The EAUC
Colin McLaren	CMcl	Edinburgh College
Craig Anderson	CA	University of Stirling
David Charles	DC	University of Strathclyde
Fiona Craig	FC	Scottish Qualifications Authority
Fraser Lovie	FL	University of Aberdeen
Gilbert Valentine	GV	The Gannochy Trust
Gillian Forshaw	GF	North East Scotland College
Hazel Dalgard	HD	Scottish Funding Council
Jackie Beresford	JB	Dundee and Angus College
John Walker	JW	Queen Margaret University
Kathrin Mobius	KM	EAUC Scotland
Kirsten Leask	KL	Learning for Sustainability Scotland
Lindsay Wilson	LW	Heriot-Watt University
Lucy Patterson	LP	University of Edinburgh
Martin Webb	MWe	Edinburgh College
Matthew Woodthorpe	MWo	EAUC Scotland
Paul Mack	PM	Robert Gordon University
Pauline Donaldson	PD	Forth Valley College
Robert Hewitt	RHe	Borders College
Rory Hill	RHi	EAUC Scotland
Rose Lyne	RL	University of Aberdeen
Stewart Miller	SM	University of Glasgow
Thea Bailey	TB	University of Edinburgh
Trudy Cunningham	TC	University of Dundee
Victoria Tierney	VT	West Lothian College

Apologies:

Betsy King

Learning for Sustainability Scotland

	SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS	ACTIONS
1	<p>Welcome and Introductions <i>Christine Calder, Dundee & Angus College and EAUC Scotland Convenor</i></p> <p>Christine introduced herself and invited the group to share the most hopeful things about Spring.</p>	
2	<p>Introduction from our new EAUC CEO <i>Charlotte Bonner, The EAUC</i></p> <p><u><i>This presentation can be viewed via the Sustainability Exchange.</i></u></p> <p>CB has long worked alongside the EAUC and is glad to now be part of the team as we approach its 20th anniversary. She expressed gratitude to the Scotland team for its hard work, noting that EAUC Scotland has often been a trailblazer, demonstrating what is possible across the UK and internationally.</p> <p>CB noted how far we've come in developing a holistic understanding of the climate crisis, as well as the role of education providers in solving it. Discussions are no longer framed "why should we", rather "what can we do". She observed that working in sustainability is often hard, noting stark warnings from IPCC and business as usual approach from government.</p> <p>Amidst leadership changes and the Covid-19 pandemic, the EAUC has been without a strategic plan for the past few years. Now is an excellent opportunity to reflect and plan for the future. The output will be a bold new strategy catalysing change for our sector focusing on helping members reach others within their institution while centring equity, diversity and inclusion. It will include supporting the sector to develop sustainable research practices, as well as functional pieces including overhauling our website.</p> <p>CB noted that we are keen to ensure that EAUC's offer is comprehensive across the diversity of educational institutions in the UK, and so the development of the plan will be done in partnership with members, funders and strategic partners.</p> <p>Q&A</p> <p>CA asked if members would have an opportunity to directly feed into strategic plan. CB said yes, but exact form that this will take is still unknown.</p>	
3	<p>EAUC and EAUC Scotland project update <i>Matt Woodthorpe, EAUC Scotland</i></p> <p><u><i>This presentation can be viewed via the Sustainability Exchange.</i></u></p>	

<p>With the 2020-2023 funding programme in partnership with the Scottish Funding Council drawing to a close on 31st March, MWO reflected on the work of EAUC Scotland of the past three years – not just by staff, but by Advisory Group members, convenors, event attendees.</p> <p>EAUC Scotland’s work is primarily funded by the Scottish Funding Council. The 2020-2023 programme covered five key outcome areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Institutional leadership • Skills, data and knowledge • Sector collaboration • Education for Sustainability • Partnerships <p>MWO noted that there have been challenges in this programme. The Covid-19 pandemic led us to switch to a primarily online model. While this resulted in the loss of face-to-face relationship building opportunities, it has allowed us to increase the accessibility of our events – especially to institutions based in the Highlands and Islands.</p> <p><u>Spotlight: Sector Leadership</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 25 new Race to Zero for Universities and Colleges signatories (33 total) • 9 new SDG Accord signatories (18 total) • 15 Scottish Green Gown Award Finalists and 8 winners/high commended • Engagement with sector leadership through board invitations, Secretaries Group, Committee of Scottish Chairs, SAUDE and CDN’s Climate Emergency Expert Working Group <p>MWO encouraged all members to consider ways to engage their leadership – whether by inviting EAUC-Scotland to board or committee meetings, or by signing up to Race to Zero or the SDG Accord.</p> <p><u>Spotlight: Carbon Literacy</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EAUC and EAUC Scotland are certified as Platinum Carbon Literate Organisations by the Carbon Literacy Project • Over 14 cohorts we have delivered CLT to 210 participants, with 31 institutions and partners represented • Our monitoring data shows that participants’ knowledge about climate change, confidence to identify work actions and motivation to act all increase as a result of the training <p>MWO encouraged anyone interested in booking either an open or closed CLT session to get in touch.</p> <p><u>Spotlight: Knowledge, Data and Skills</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 97 EAUC Scotland events (including 16 training sessions) with 1800+ participants • 91% Scottish FHE institutional engagement • 356 sector enquiries 	<p>Please contact scotland@eau.c.org.uk with enquiries about CLT.</p>
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- PBCCD Peer Review expanded to 20 institutions
- New Health and Wellbeing TSN and Student Leaders Network

Spotlight: Learning and Teaching

- Education for Sustainable Development TSN and Realigning Curricula for the Future series
- QAA Collaborative Enhancement Research Project
- Advocacy:
 - Advance HE professional standards framework consultation
 - GTCS Proposed Draft Standard for Provisional Registration
 - Office of National Statistics consultation on definition of Green Jobs
 - Learning for Sustainability Action Plan refresh
 - Climate Emergency Skills Action Plan education subgroup

MW0 noted that this is the first programme where we have had a dedicated staff member working on learning and teaching.

Spotlight: Partnerships & Collaboration

MW0 outlined some of our key partnerships and the work they have produced.

- Working with SSN and other public body partners, we co-wrote the Public Sector Leadership on the Global Climate Emergency guidance, and we will be carrying out a similar exercise with the statutory guidance that will be presented to the Scottish Government.
- CDN consulted us on their College Climate Change Conference, as well as working with us and Learning for Sustainability Scotland on the new online sustainability module for their e-learning platform.
- We have worked with APUC to develop their Supply Chain Climate and Ecological Emergency Strategy.
- Our pilot Central and South Scotland College Partnership has seen Borders College, Forth Valley College and West Lothian College share budget to fund a joint Sustainability Manager role hosted by EAUC Scotland.

MW0 thanked everyone who has contributed over the course of the last three years – including fellows, board members, key partners and current and previous staff.

2023-2024 Programme Launch

MW0 announced the launch of the new SFC-funded 12-month programme "Supporting a step-change towards environmental sustainability at Scotland's Universities and Colleges". MW0 thanked SFC and noted financial pressure for the sector.

While the Outcome Agreement has yet to be finalised, over the next 6 months we will:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launch a Network Communications Pack • Launch a Sustainability Champions Toolkit • Facilitate aviation in FHE workshops • Publish a sector Public Bodies Climate Change Duties Report overview • Launch a new sustainability careers guide • Deliver Spring and Autumn Topic Support Network series • Carry out institutional engagement calls and visits <p>MWo shared our events calendar for the next few months.</p>	
4	<p>Advisory Group voting <i>Christine Calder, Dundee & Angus College and EAUC Scotland Convenor</i></p> <p>CC explained the role of the Advisory Group in supporting and informing EAUC Scotland’s work.</p> <p>Reaching the end of his first two-year term, Dr Roddy Yarr, Higher Education and Estates representative, stood unopposed for a second term. RY delivered a short presentation highlighting his sector-specific knowledge and experience, and extensive community links.</p> <p>Voting was then opened with one representative from each educational institution invited to either cast a vote for RY or to Re-Open Nominations (RON) or abstain.</p>	
	<p>Comfort Break</p>	
5	<p>Scottish Funding Council Net Zero and Sustainability Framework workshop <i>Hazel Dalgård, Scottish Funding Council</i></p> <p>This presentation can be viewed via the Sustainability Exchange.</p> <p>HD has been tasked with distilling the Scottish Funding Council’s work into a framework which pivots it towards a strong climate emergency response. SFC is a small body, despite its large budget, and HD sees this as a major opportunity.</p> <p>HD outlined SFC’s strategic objectives, including enabling people to learn and flourish, generating new ideas and diffusing knowledge. In its mission statement, HD noted the inclusion of “system change”.</p> <p>HD suggested that we have reach a Net Zero policy tipping point, with most new strategies emerging from the Scottish Government referencing NZ. SFC is particularly interested in CESAP and Just Transition plans.</p>	

	<p>HD shared action points and themes of the SFC's Net Zero and Sustainability Framework, noting that everything starts with leadership and accountability.</p> <p>Attendees were then invited to join breakout rooms to discuss three key questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What does the whole institutional response and mainstreaming net zero look like in your institution? • What barriers and enablers are there to mainstreaming at this point in time? • If you had to make one ask of SFC at this point in terms of discharging our role in supporting institutions net zero journeys what would that be? <p>These breakout rooms followed Chatham House Rule. General notes and themes follow:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whole organisation response of SFC is appreciated, and there was support for creating a community for action across public bodies • However, given the funding landscape, there are major operational challenges and concerns, especially around Scope 3, and some report that whole-institution responses are fragmented with sustainability action remaining estates-driven • Public bodies are facing the question "what do we care about?" in relation to funding and sustainability – for example, funding cuts increase reliance on international students, therefore increasing Scope 3 emissions • With funding representing the primary barrier faced across the sector, there is a desire to make the funding system simpler, more straightforward, and more flexible by developing a more transparent and effective funding model • Buildings and construction play a large role in perception of value for students and create competition between institutions – instead, we should focus on students' lived experience, mobilising this highly motivated group for climate action • With net zero success dependent on evolving technologies, smaller institutions are struggling to find resources and expertise • There is an understanding that institutions cannot act alone, and will need to create networks – however, this creates organisational and funding challenges for institutions split between local authorities • Ultimately, there is concern that sustainability is still viewed as a tick box exercise, and desire for SFC to robustly demonstrate that this is not the case 	
6	<p>Green Gown Awards 2022 Case Study: Borders College (Winner in the category of 2030 Climate Action) <i>Robert Hewitt, Borders College</i></p>	

	<p><u><i>This presentation can be viewed via the Sustainability Exchange.</i></u></p> <p>Borders College is one of the smallest in Scotland with four campuses covering a very large and very rural geographical area.</p> <p>When they started to develop their new strategy in 2019, the first thing they did was look at previous achievements – from EVs and solar PV to keep cups and hedgehog houses. In developing the new strategy, they took a leadership-approach, engaging with senior management to develop strategic objectives and performance measures.</p> <p>Underpinning this strategy were the key themes of behavioural change, circular economy and global citizenship. These informed strategic objectives ranging from adopting ethical and sustainable practices and embedding these within curricula, to reducing Scope 3 emissions, to working with partners across to region to support the green economy and embed green skills.</p> <p>This led to a realisation that during the previous ten years their response had been too narrow in focus. Having the buy-in of senior management for this strategic plan, allowed them to work on a cross-college response. They developed seven individual plans diversified across the college and covering:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carbon management • Travel and transport • Waste management • Procurement • Biodiversity • Curriculum • Behaviour change <p>All of these plans sat with senior executive members and directors within the college in order to drive them forward.</p> <p>Other key elements of the strategy included work with EAUC Scotland, particularly the Central and South of Scotland College Partnership.</p> <p>The <u>Green Gown Awards</u> found the project to be a comprehensive whole-institution approach, replicable in large and small institutions alike. Those interested in reading more about the <u>Borders College sustainability strategy</u> can do so via their website.</p>	
7	<p>AG voting result and AOB <i>Christine Calder, Dundee & Angus College and EAUC Scotland Convenor</i></p> <p>Dr Roddy Yarr was re-elected with 100% of the vote.</p>	
8	<p>Thanks and Close</p>	

	<i>Christine Calder, Dundee & Angus College and EAUC Scotland Convenor</i> CC thanked all speakers and attendees.	
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Minutes prepared by Alice Smith, EAUC Scotland, April 2023