

Abertay Net Zero Student Partnership

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Presentation Overview

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Personal Introduction

- Lecturer and Programme Leader for Business Management
- Teaching and research focus mainly sustainability (within business context) and entrepreneurship
- Currently completing PhD (part-time) on impact of EV transition on SMEs in automotive repair and maintenance industry
- Personal connection to the Highlands (Dad from Maryburgh)



Relevance to Sustainable Development

- Scotland Net Zero 2045 target
- Resulting organisational targets
- Impact this would have on skills demand for future workforce
- Led to development of 'Business and Environmental Sustainability: Reaching net-zero' Year 3 module in 2021
- (Learning for personal growth and employment)

Relevance to Sustainable Development

Module Learning Outcomes:

1. Understand current societal and political factors driving organisations to reduce environmental impact
2. Evaluate an organisations current environmental impact
3. Create and implement a new strategy to reduce an organisations environmental impact

Assessment:

The main assessment is an individual report where students evaluate an organisation's (of their choice) current environmental impact and create a new strategy to reduce the organisation's environmental impact

Notable Student Examples: F1, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, Cargill

(Authentic assessment and meaningful feedback)

Relevance to Sustainable Development

Engagement with Industry:

Enterprise Rent-A-Car, Highland Spring and Here's The Plan (Consultants specialising in supporting Businesses become more sustainable)

Feedback on Module:

"I did really enjoy this topic as I find the environment interesting to learn about through a business outlook"

"This module is without a doubt the most engaging and interesting class that we have had in the first semester"

"This module has helped me discover some skills about myself that I didn't know."

"This module has pushed me way out my comfort zone to produce my best work"

"Overall, a very good module: very relevant and intellectually stimulating as content is continuously changing day by day"

(Authentic assessment and meaningful feedback)

Student Partnership Introduction

- Innovation voucher (Interface) call for the development of a bespoke carbon emissions tracking system from The Scottish Dolphin Centre (Spay Bay)
- Happened to see this opportunity and think that this could be an ideal opportunity for a student (from Environmental Sustainability) module to work on as a research assistant
- Successful application and employing Year 4 student (Liz, who previously excelled on Environmental Sustainability module)
- I set project outline and key tasks (create bespoke emissions baseline + bespoke model to allow organisation to measure future emissions)
- Student then led project under my supervision

Student Partnership Outcomes

- This allowed Liz to apply and develop the skills and knowledge she had learned from the module in a practical context with genuine impact
- The SDC were delighted with the outcome of the project and had a detailed report of baseline carbon emissions for the centre
- *“Perhaps of even more use, we also have a model which we can use in future years to carry on calculating our emissions without external assistance.”*



Reflection from Student Partner (Liz)

“The content of the module and the range of knowledge and skills I gained from BMT311, allowed me to feel confident in making personalised recommendations to the dolphin centre on how to improve their carbon footprint, and the steps they can take in the future on their journey to Net Zero. ”

Without BMT311 I would never have considered that taking on a project of this nature, the module not only inspired me but provided me with the tools and knowledge I needed.

Modules like BMT311 and the opportunities like the innovation project that may subsequently arise, are fantastic to help prepare students like me in their development and for their future in a more sustainable business world.”

(Learning for personal growth and employment)



Link to Learning and Teaching Enhancement Values

Learning for personal growth and employment:

- The module encourages a degree of autonomy due to students selecting the organisation or their choice, researching and producing a specific report
- Employing a student as a partner furthers the personal growth and employment opportunities for that individual

Authentic assessment and meaningful feedback:

- Replicating a method of work (producing a report) common in consultancy profession
- First unit of assessment offers opportunity for students to get feedback and then reflect/refine their approach ahead of main unit of assessment

Reflections

- Aligning module with future industry needs is beneficial for student employability and making the module interesting
- Ambition to further ‘authentic assessment’ with a selection of industry case studies each year for students to choose from
- Time intensive to arrange and supervise Innovation Voucher project but excellent support from Interface colleagues
- Rewarding process as an academic to take a student on a journey from knowledge in a classroom to real world application (we don’t often get to see that bit!)
- At programme level, balance between embedding sustainability across the degree and specific sustainability modules such as this example

**Thanks for listening, any
questions?**

