

**2021 EUROPEAN LEARNING & TEACHING FORUM
EMBEDDING AND FACILITATING SUSTAINABILITY
ONLINE
18-19 FEBRUARY 2021 (HALF DAYS)**

ABSTRACT PROPOSAL FORM

Deadline for submission: 13 October 2020

Please note that all fields are obligatory. For a detailed description of the submission requirements please consult the call for contributions.

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Short bio (150 words max):

Caroline Wilson brings a teaching and research perspective to the task of refreshing and enhancing the curriculum at Coventry University Group. As a teacher she has experience in media, business and engineering faculties. Her research focus is on institutional, teacher and student drivers and barriers to student engagement and how to create greater equity of opportunity for all learners. Working as Curriculum Change Lead with Curriculum 2025 involves collaboration with colleagues to deliver an experience that meets the needs of tomorrow's professionals and leaders. Themes include sustainability and social responsibility, an inclusive curriculum, decolonisation, disparity of attainment, sense of belonging, and co-creation.

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Jaliyyah Bello is an Assistant Professor in Finance and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Lead, in the Faculty of Business and Law, Coventry University. She has interests in finance academia and socio-economic development in Africa. In the former, her interests are: financial contagion, financial market analysis, behavioural finance and sustainable finance. In the latter, they include: quality education and gender equality. She is a promoter of The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into curriculum. Previously, Jaliyyah served at industry level where she worked in Research and Development.

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Luda Ruddock is a Tutor/Lecturer in Public Health and Community Studies at CU Coventry, part of the Coventry University Group. Initially trained as a philologist, she later completed graduate studies in public health with concentration in community health education and is currently working on a doctorate in global education. Since 2003 she has worked in public health, community work, and capacity building at local, national and international level, primarily within third sector organisations and funding agencies. Her interests include health promotion, early intervention, workplace wellbeing, environment and health, social and health inequalities, graduate employability, interprofessional practice, social innovation, virtual mobility, and intercultural learning.

Proposal

Title: Finding our place in the world with the Sustainable Development Goals

Proposal (maximum of 800 words):

Introduction

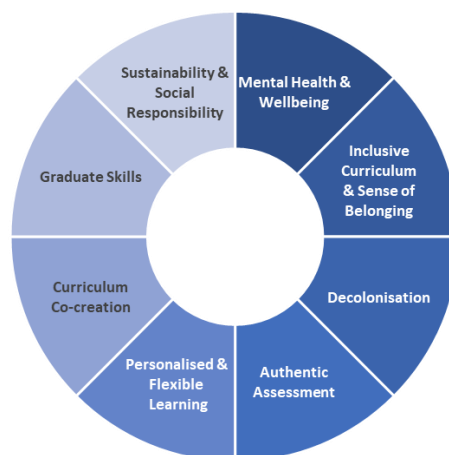
This presentation shares the experiences of the Coventry University Group in delivering an institutional level programme to embed learning about the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into every course.

The session includes the approach we have taken, how it broadens and deepens students' learning experience, the challenges experienced and still ahead. The goal is to share both lessons learned and ideas from delegates about alternative ways forward.

Approach

The programme to add learning about the SDGs into every course is part of a holistic package called Curriculum 2025, and results from a horizon scanning exercise into the likely future for our graduates and the skills, aptitudes and capabilities they will need to possess ([Wilson and Broughan 2018](#)). Also included in Curriculum 2025 are attributes associated with EUA themes of equity and inclusion and meeting the skills for employability demands (See Fig 1).

Figure 1: The features of Curriculum 2025



This holistic approach to embedding the SDGs alongside other themes critical to prepare tomorrow's globally aware citizens is a point of difference between what is happening in Coventry and elsewhere. This alignment means we can, for instance, identify the synergies between the SDGs as opportunities for co-creation of learning with students who want the SDGs in their curriculum ([Tatum, 2020](#)). And what could represent more authentic assessment topics than the challenges whose achievement is essential to humanity's future? The ability of students to respond to these challenges demonstrates attributes that will lead to greater employment opportunity for our graduates and more broadly to contribute to the well-being of their communities and the planet by 2030 ([OECD, 2019](#)).

Our approach also primes both students and staff to address the size of the challenge, recognising that at this point only deep transformational changes which achieve SDGs in parallel rather than individually are likely to deliver the goals ([Sachs et al., 2019](#)). An example of one of these transformations is to overhaul how we live in cities, home to over half of all the humans on the planet and 70% of global economic output ([Jiang and O'Neill, 2017](#)).

Practice

What our teaching of the SDGs looks like in practice can be illustrated in two examples, one outside the formal course structure, and one embedded in a public health course.

A project for students across the Business and Law Faculty is a 24 hour SDGs Hackathon where students in Coventry work via live links alongside students from countries across the globe. A hackathon is a marathon single session for creating solutions to problems by intensive effort. The annual event's current theme is to focus on sustainable cities and engages both employers in and those governing the cities of participating universities.

Meanwhile students on a Promoting Healthy Communities module are challenged to focus on a topical issue within contemporary public health, i.e., the growing ageing population and the need for age-friendly cities and settings. This enables module content to be applied to a real world challenge as identified by the WHO Decade of Healthy Ageing (2020-2030) and fulfilment of the SDGs ([WHO, 2020](#)).

The learning in both cases deepens the students' understanding of their personal contribution to outcomes in the future at local, national and international level and develops a sense of agency ([OECD, 2019](#)). The activities provide an authentic challenge that fosters creativity and innovation, while enabling integrative transformative learning ([Laininen, 2019](#)).

Challenges and progress

The clearest challenge to our work is time and space: engaging busy staff who are already developing subject expertise to undertake the further scholarship and planning necessary to relate it to the SDGs and then to find space for it in their curricula. This is especially the case due to the priority and energy understandably directed towards protecting health as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and to offer learning in either blended form or online.

One option would be to mandate inclusion via the setting of performance objectives. The university has taken an alternative approach of engaging staff and providing exemplars of best practice. Significant progress is being made. A university audit of course quality reports in 2019 indicated that more than 350 were starting to teach the SDGs and an updated audit focussed on the Faculty of Business and Law in 2020 shows the majority of modules audited now interrogating the interdependence of the goals in the transformational way advocated. An independent external audit in 2020 noted Curriculum 2025's impact in the 18 months since the first member of the team began work:

"Curriculum 2025 has stood out throughout this entire audit process, to the student auditors and the ... lead auditor, as an excellent approach to embedding sustainability learning holistically across the entire formal curriculum." (2020 Responsible Futures Feedback Report, Coventry University and Coventry University Student's Union).

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Target audience:

This session will provoke debate for university staff at all levels, as it reaches across both the strategy employed and the practice of delivering a university-wide programme. It is useful for those also concerned in issues of equity and inclusion and employability, as the synergies of integration are discussed. It is valuable to all disciplines.