



Green Gown
Awards 2016



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Finalist's case study

LSE Learning and Skills Sustainability-e-training



THE LONDON SCHOOL
OF ECONOMICS AND
POLITICAL SCIENCE

About the project

Summary

A bespoke sustainability training package, equipping LSE Estates staff to continually improve the School's environmental performance. The training combines theory and practice through an online module and workshops, and introduces staff to key environmental issues, as well as how sustainability relates to their daily roles.

Project partners

LSE worked with Cloud Sustainability, a sustainability training provider with huge experience in the HE sector and expertise in training and designing e-modules in an attractive and engaging way. Cloud Sustainability co-produced the e-module and delivered the workshops.

Profile

- Higher Education
- 11,011 students (includes full and part time students)
- 3300+ staff
- Urban

The results

The problem

- A need to improve environmental performance by ensuring key staff have a good understanding of all our procedures
- A need to show staff what LSE is already doing, and where day-to-day roles fit into improving environmental impacts
- A need to ensure that the highly impactful Estates staff – who are responsible for maintenance, cleaning, construction, space management and more – understand the importance of sustainability in their roles and for LSE
- A need to give staff a better understanding of wider sustainability issues, and why LSE is addressing them, to give them 'line of sight' from their daily roles to LSE's sustainability vision

The approach

The training package included an e-module which gave core information in a lively and interactive way. The online module incorporated interactive elements such as quizzes and games, as well as multiple assessments to demonstrate participant's knowledge uptake. The e-module was followed by workshops designed and tailored for the different teams. These targeted specific issues relevant to the teams, and enabled discussion and feedback from the groups.

Our goals

- Improve LSE's overall environmental performance in Estates related areas – energy usage, building management and design, recycling and waste, procurement and water consumption
- Improve adherence to environmental procedures

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- Show staff what LSE's doing on sustainability already and build buy-in for these initiatives.
- Give staff a better understanding of wider sustainability issues, and why LSE is addressing them, to give them 'line of sight' from their daily roles to LSE's sustainability vision

Obstacles and solutions

Obstacle

The target audience had a very broad range of skills and backgrounds, so it was challenging to create something that was accessible to all, but which would also be interesting and relevant to all participants.

Solution

The training was developed through extensive dialogue and feedback with representatives of all groups of staff, to ensure the training catered to all needs and achieved a good balance between everyone's roles and levels.

Performance and results

In the period since training delivery LSE has seen improved environmental performance:

- carbon emissions cut 6.2% from previous year;
- re-use and recycling rates both increased 1% from previous year
- Total waste produced dropped 14% from previous year.

Internal audits show a decrease in the number of non-compliances with environmental procedures, as well as a decline in the level of seriousness of those non-conformances.

The training has improved staff sustainability knowledge, both of global environmental issues and those specific to LSE. 98% of participants achieved 70% or more of the learning outcomes of the e-module, showing great uptake of knowledge.

The training has increased knowledge of LSE's sustainability achievements, and the role of individuals in maintaining and improving LSE's environmental performance.

As well as boosting engagement with sustainability, the project also resulted in better collaboration between teams within the division. It encouraged closer-working relationship between different teams within the Estates division, leading to further improvements in environmental outcomes, e.g. improved approaches to waste re-use.

Team workshops also led to new suggestions for how we could improve re-use methods, and how to measure changes in energy performance during refurbishment works. These changes are now being implemented.

The training has been so successful that the e-module is now going to be made available to all new starters at LSE as part of their induction pack, with a view to extend this to all existing staff.

The training is applicable to other higher education institutions. LSE and Cloud Sustainability have demonstrated it to a number of other universities, potentially spreading environmental benefits across the sector.



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The future

Lessons learned

1. Participants benefit from understanding the bigger picture and how global issues relate to staff's everyday roles. Illustrating the line of sight from daily to strategic activities is really important
2. The combination of online and face-to-face training is really effective for engagement and learning.
3. The power of collaboration - getting different teams to work together led to interesting insights and solutions!

Sharing your project

Internally the training was communicated to all participants online and through the workshops. The results were published in staff newsletters and departmental meetings, and taken to the Senior Management Committee in the HR department where it was decided to roll it out to staff across the School. Externally the results were announced at the EAUC Conference and shared with peer universities.

What has it meant to your institution to be a Green Gown Award finalist?

We are thrilled to be a finalist for the Learning and Skills Green Gown Award for our bespoke sustainability training for Estates Division staff. We worked hard to make the training innovative and impactful and it has certainly paid off: a Green Gown Award finalist, and we are now expanding the training across the school!

Further information

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