

Case Study

Carbon Literacy Week (October 2023) and Carbon Net Zero Project (September 2023 – January 2024)

Key Points

- The use of an authentic real-world environmental business problem to direct student learning
- The integration of environmental learning and training within the student curriculum.
- Problem based learning pedagogy underpinned application of learning from Carbon Literacy Week to authentic real-world problem solving.
- Technical environmental teaching and learning augmented with project-based skills development.
- Opportunities for student accreditation via carbon literacy certification

Carbon Literacy Week

The Carbon Literacy Week is an integrated teaching week within the MSc International Business Management award, a one-year full time postgraduate qualification. The week was developed to support student learning while investigating a project focused upon sustainability and the attainment of zero-carbon within the university. The week's teaching/training initiative was part of the Carbon Literacy, aimed at getting students to offer environmental pledges and commit to environmental change. The week, if successfully completed, and the appropriate pledges made, resulted in the student receiving recognition of their commitment, and awarded a nationally recognised qualification for carbon literacy training delivery. This year 2023-24, we had 28 successful through CLT. The coming year 2024-25 we are looking to progress all 48 students enrolled on the programme.

Carbon Net Zero Project

In 2024, as part of their module, students have been challenged to devise a programme in sustainable environmental behaviour change for implementation within Cardiff Council. Cardiff Council is a major employer in Cardiff and Wales, currently it employs 13,263 people. Students had to consider sub-contractors and others employed within the supply chain and those indirectly employed by the council (those that fall within the category Scope 3). As such the drive to promote sustainable environmental behaviour within the council, and those that service it, has the potential to generate a massive environmental impact not only within the local city environment, but within the wider regional environment and economy. In a time where promoting environmental awareness is critical, such an initiative might be seen as an essential policy objective within such a large and far-reaching organization, where the "spill over" effects and consequences of policy, are likely to impact far beyond the original initiative.

The project I undertook with the Cardiff Council was not just a theoretical exercise, but a practical and real-world application of our studies. This hands-on experience significantly expanded our understanding of sustainability and provided an in-depth insight into the practical aspects of our field of study.

Leading a team on the Cardiff Council live project was a transformative experience for me. It not only expanded my critical thinking abilities and deepened my expertise in sustainability but also ignited a passion within me. This newfound passion has led me to actively volunteer with the Cardiff Metropolitan University Sustainability Department, where I am making significant contributions to important initiatives.

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The elements students had to focus on were:

- A baseline assessment of current behavioural change initiatives within Cardiff Council and their efficacy
- Details of the behaviour change initiative(s) to be included in their programme
- Consideration of any potential barriers to change and how these may be overcome
- A means of monitoring, assessing and evaluating the success of their initiative(s) potential impact on environmental behaviour; directly and indirectly
- An implementation plan which considers resources, timescales and responsibilities/accountabilities.
- An indicative budget for the cost of the programme

The outcomes of these projects have been transformative for the students, who have developed depth of sustainability skills and have learned to incorporate sustainability in their decision making.