

## Chapter Four: Survey into extra-curricular ESD interventions in the UK universities

### Introduction

#### **Box 4.1: Chapter purposes**

- To document the postal questionnaire survey process
- To present the survey findings
- To appraise these findings in the context of earlier discussion about the potential role of extra-curricular ESD in a HE context
- To set the scene for the elaboration of the intensive case study in subsequent chapters

Having introduced the subject of investigation (in Chapters One and Two) and the broad methodological approach adopted (Chapter Three), the focus now turns to the empirical material collected. In particular, this chapter focuses on the prosecution and findings of the extensive part of the research, the questionnaire survey of UK HEIs to look into the use of extra-curricular ESD interventions. The chapter's purposes are summarised in Box 4.1. Here the aim is to establish the extent of such interventions across UK universities as well as to document perceptions about the relative importance, strengths and weakness, and opportunities for and barriers to their use. The chapter starts with an overview of the survey process including the preparation, format and deployment of the questionnaire. This part also includes details of the survey response. The main findings follow: firstly, the use of extra-curricular ESD-related interventions by UK universities is documented; secondly, views about the use of such interventions to advance ESD in HE are reported; and thirdly, the position of extra-curricular interventions is placed in context through consideration of views recorded about the development of ESD work overall. The implications of the findings are then discussed and some links made to earlier points emerging from the review of the literature (Chapter Two). The chapter ends with a brief conclusion. Here the key points are emphasized alongside some emergent questions for exploration in the subsequent chapters that document the case study.

## **The survey process**

In the previous chapter the methodological relevance of a postal survey as part of the research design was elaborated. Here the preparation, format and deployment of the questionnaire tool and resultant survey response are detailed as a prelude to consideration of the survey findings.

### ***Preparation***

Prior to deployment, the questionnaire was pre-tested and refined. First, a draft of the questionnaire was circulated amongst the research supervisory team for comment. Secondly, a revised draft was sent for testing by two contacts at external HEIs; both of these reviewers had previously indicated a willingness to test the questionnaire and provide feedback.

### ***Format***

Particular attention was paid to the format of the questionnaire package in order to maximise the chance of a response to it (Bryman, 2008; Fink, 1995b). The package comprised a questionnaire booklet, an accompanying introductory letter and a reply-paid envelope and postcard. In accordance with good practice (Bryman, 2008; Fink, 1995b), the first page of the questionnaire introduced the survey and its purpose including a glossary of terms used and assurances about anonymity. To maximise the potential return, this introduction also indicated the likely time that it would take to complete and a suggested return date rather than a final deadline. The number of questions was deliberately limited to the key areas of interest. Closed questions were used to record the use of particular types of interventions and to gather views about both their value and the context of their use. Open questions were used to gather views about the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and barriers associated with extra-curricular ESD. The line of questions was ordered to ensure a logical flow (Fink, 1995a) starting with closed question to capture the occurrence of a range of different extra-curricular practices. The questionnaire and accompanying letter were reproduced using a high quality 'business grade' recycled paper. To confer their official status both were branded with the University of Chester's crest.

For maximum impact the cover letter was individually addressed to the named head of each institution surveyed, and was signed by the Vice Chancellor of the University of Chester. Names, titles and addresses were taken from a listing on the Universities UK website (Universities UK, 2006) or institution specific websites, where an address was not given on the former. A reply-paid envelope was provided to return the completed questionnaire. A reply-paid postcard was included so that in cases where the survey was forwarded on for completion, notification of to whom it had been sent could be reported thereby making it easy to direct follow up correspondence<sup>21</sup>. There was no direct benefit offered as an incentive to survey respondents to complete the questionnaire, however the respondents were given the opportunity to nominate a charity with the promise that the University of Chester would make a donation to this charity on their behalf. As mentioned in Chapter Three a copy of the questionnaire is included in Appendix 1.

### ***Deployment***

Questionnaires were sent out in May 2006, to the head of each of the 140 HEIs listed by the UK Government as having degree awarding powers (DfES, 2006 – <http://www.dfes.gov.uk/recognisedukdegrees/annex4.shtml>, accessed April 2006). Up to three postal reminders were sent to non-respondent HEIs at approximately ten day intervals, the optimal interval to maximise returns (Fink, 1995b). The first follow up was sent to 138 institutions, the second to 91 and the third to 69. E-mail reminders were sent where notification was given that the response had been delegated to a named individual and an email supplied. Accordingly, 17 emails were also sent at the time of second postal reminder and 11 to coincide with the third. E-mail correspondence continued with some potential respondents until mid-July in cases where an indication had been given that a return was likely. The final returns were received in August 2006.

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<sup>21</sup> I decided to include a reply-paid postcard to allow such a notification after discussing with the Vice Chancellor's Office at the University of Chester how a questionnaire would likely be handled. They indicated it was often difficult for respond to follow-up requests as it was difficult to keep track of where questionnaires had originally been forwarded on the Vice Chancellor's behalf.

## Response

In total, 72 HEIs responded to the survey representing 51% of UK HEIs, a reasonable return for such a survey although not necessarily a representative one. In order to explore this aspect further, the sample and wider population were compared using two known categorisations: the geographic distribution of HEIs by each of the four constituent UK nations; and the date of conferment of university status using the common UK categorisation of old/new – pre/post-1992 universities. The results of these comparisons are shown in Tables 4.1 and 4.2. Broad similarities can be seen in both comparisons. In the geographic comparison, the proportions of English and non-English UK HEIs are similar; although within the non-English HEIs the sample under-represents Welsh HEIs in favour of Northern Irish and Scottish institutions. In the comparison based on date of conferment of university status there is little difference between the sample and wider population.

**Table 4.1: Geographic comparison between total population of UK HEIs and respondent sample**

<i>Location</i>	All UK HEIs		Respondent HEIs		Response rate by location
	Number of HEIs	Proportion of UK HEIs	Number of respondent HEIs	Proportion of Respondent sample	
<i>England</i>	111	79%	57	79%	51%
<i>Scotland</i>	15	11%	9	13%	60%
<i>Wales</i>	12	9%	4	6%	33%
<i>Northern Ireland</i>	2	1%	2	3%	100%
<b>UK Total</b>	140	100%	72	100%	51%

**Table 4.2: Comparison between total UK population of HEIs and respondent sample by date HEI attained university status**

<i>Date of becoming a university</i>	All UK HEIs		Respondent HEIs		Response rate by date
	Number of HEIs	Proportion of total HEIs	Number of respondent HEIs	Proportion of Respondent sample	
<b>Pre 1992</b>	55	39%	29	40%	53%
<b>Post 1992</b>	85	61%	43	60%	51%
<b>UK Total</b>	140	100%	72	100%	51%

## **Findings**

Having documented the survey process and response, the focus now turns to the findings. These are presented in three parts: firstly, those that relate to the use of extra-curricular ESD interventions; secondly, views about the utility of these interventions; and thirdly, views about the ESD work overall, including views about the relative position of extra-curricular interventions as part of that work.

### **1. The Use of Extra-curricular ESD related interventions**

#### ***Extent of Interventions across UK HEIs***

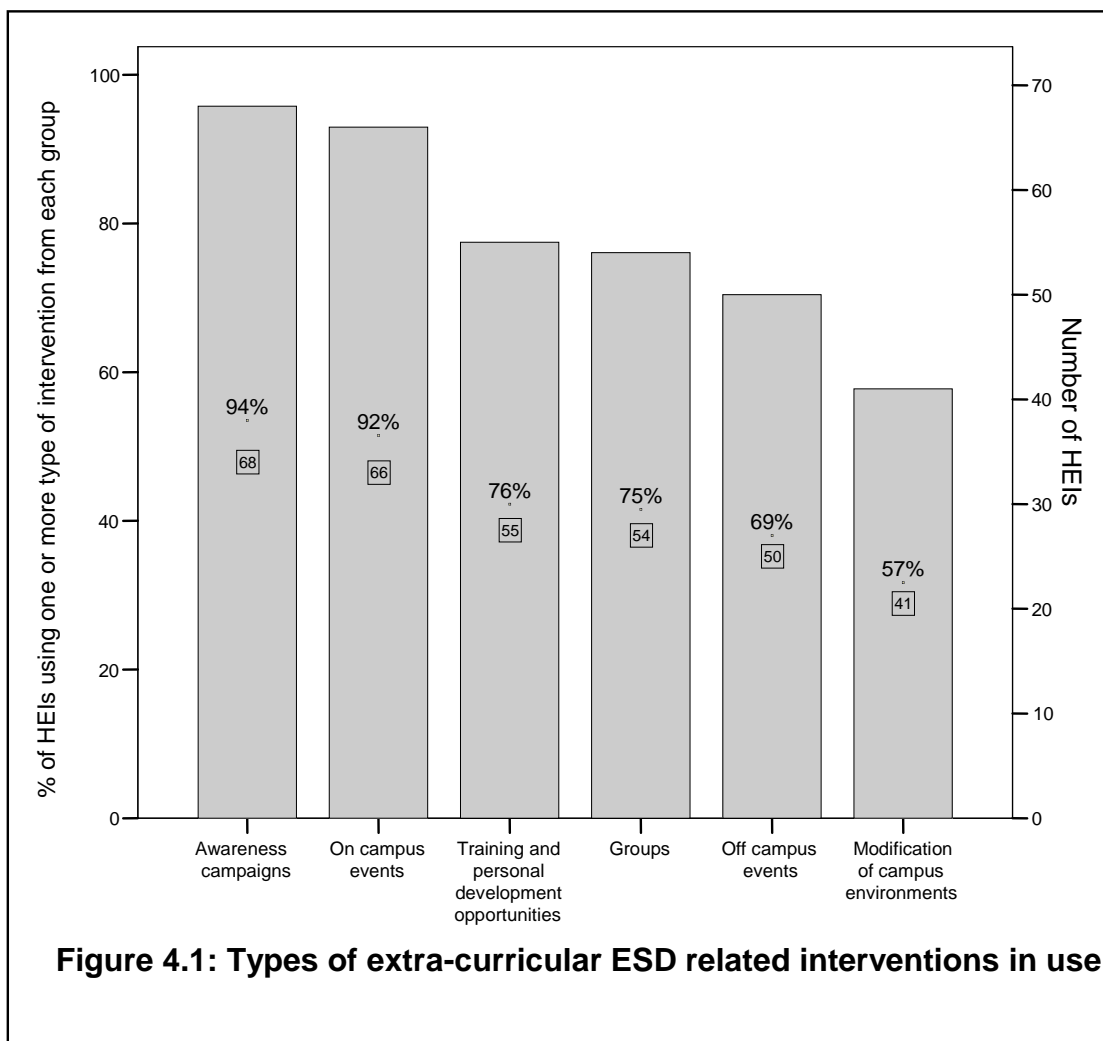
Extra-curricular practice was common to nearly all the UK HEIs that responded. Respondents were asked to indicate which types of interventions their institutions had used in the last two years from the list summarised in Table 4.3. Notably, 99% indicated that their institution had used one or more type; 86% had used five or more; and 50% had used 10 or more.

#### ***Type of Interventions***

Figure 4.1 shows the percentage of respondent HEIs reporting use of one or more interventions from the six main categories shown in Table 4.3. Table 4.3 also shows the numbers utilising the different intervention types within each group. Awareness campaigns were the most widespread type of interventions in use. Amongst these, recycling campaigns were most frequent and used by three-quarters of respondent HEIs. Sustainable travel and Fairtrade campaigns had occurred in over half of respondent HEIs - less commonplace were campaigns on waste reduction, water, litter and noise.

**Table 4.3: Types of extra-curricular ESD-related interventions presented to respondents and their use as reported by respondents**

Type of extra-curricular ESD intervention	Respondents reporting the use of interventions by their HEI in the previous two years	
	Number	% of respondents
<b>Events on-campus related to sustainable development</b>		
Occasional lectures	53	74
Lecture programmes	23	32
Staff/student conferences	26	36
Events to mark widely observed theme days/weeks	48	67
Specific institution wide day/week/festival	19	26
Other on-campus events	8	11
<b>Off-campus events related to sustainable development</b>		
Promotion of events hosted at other institutions	30	42
Directly supported events hosted off-campus	18	25
Occasional visits	31	43
Programme of visits	9	13
Other off-campus events	2	3
<b>Awareness campaigns related to sustainable development issues</b>		
Energy	45	63
Water	14	19
Recycling	54	75
Waste reduction	26	36
Sustainable travel	46	64
Litter	8	11
Noise	5	7
Fairtrade	46	64
Other campaigns	10	14
<b>Training &amp; development opportunities related to sustainable development</b>		
Staff induction	20	28
Student orientation	21	29
Compulsory staff training	2	3
Optional staff training	17	24
Dedicated intranet/internet pages	31	43
On-campus volunteering opportunities	23	32
Off-campus volunteering opportunities	30	42
Other personal development opportunities	9	13
<b>Sustainable development related groups for students and/or staff to join</b>		
Sustainable development committee	34	47
Sustainable development network	17	24
Other groups	24	33
<b>Modification of campus environments to promote sustainable development</b>		
	41	57



On-campus events were the second most common intervention in use. 'Occasional lectures' were most frequent, used by around three-quarters of respondent HEIs compared to around a third who hosted lecture programmes. Events to mark widely observed theme days/weeks were also prominent, used by around two-thirds of HEIs. Just over a quarter had used an institution-specific day, week or festival.

Training and personal development opportunities were the third most widespread type of intervention in use. Most commonplace in this group were 'Dedicated Intranet and/or Internet pages' used by 43% of HEIs. A similar proportion used off-campus volunteering opportunities, more so than used on-campus opportunities. Student orientation and staff induction were

used in roughly equal measure, both slightly more than optional staff training. Very few had utilised compulsory training.

Sustainable development-related groups were found in three-quarters of respondent HEIs, with 'environmental' groups a noticeable type amongst them. Just under half had a 'Sustainable Development Committee' and just under a quarter a 'Sustainable Development Network'. A third of respondents reported 'other' groups, usually environmental committees or those dealing with specific environmental themes.

Off-campus events were less commonly used than those on campus. 'Occasional visits' were the most widespread type reported, used by 43% of respondent HEIs. Only 13% reported a visit programme. Many HEIs – a similar proportion to those using occasional visits – promoted events hosted at other institutions. A quarter directly supported events hosted elsewhere.

Modifications to campus environments to promote sustainable development were the least frequently cited type of extra-curricular intervention, but were nevertheless found in more than half of HEIs.

## **2. Views about the use of extra-curricular interventions to advance ESD in HE**

### ***Utility of extra-curricular interventions***

Extra-curricular interventions were generally believed to have utility to help advance ESD in HE and were highly valued by just over half of respondents. Of the 71 respondents who gave answers, 17% indicated they were 'of vital use' and 34% 'very useful'. This compared with 38% who thought they were 'quite useful'. Only 11% thought them 'of limited use only' and none 'no use at all'.

### ***Strengths and weaknesses***

The main strengths and weaknesses attributed to extra-curricular interventions by respondents are presented in Table 4.4. The potential to



raise awareness about sustainable development and reach a wider audience were identified as key strengths. In contrast, a limited take up was seen as one of the main weaknesses.

**Table 4.4: Strengths and weaknesses of extra-curricular ESD interventions**

Strengths*	Weaknesses <sup>+</sup>	
	<i>Cited by</i>	<i>Cited by</i>
Raise awareness about sustainable development	35% (23)	A limited take up 42% (27)
Reach a wider audience	34% (22)	Limited resources to develop them 23% (15)
Promote wider perspectives	24% (16)	Limited links with the planning of the institution and its curricula 22% (14)
Provide tangible examples	20% (13)	Seen as marginal 20% (13)
Possess a motivational quality	19% (12)	Sporadic 15% (10)
Change behaviour/culture	15% (10)	Appeal to the ‘converted’ only 8% (5)
Promote citizenship/links with wider community	14% (9)	No benefits/credits for taking part 8% (5)
Demonstrate leadership	14% (9)	Superficial rather than substantive 6% (4)
Support and reinforce learning	11% (7)	
Personal and powerful learning experiences	9% (6)	
Freedom for creativity and experimentation	9% (6)	
Help communicate progress and disseminate good practice	8% (5)	
Stimulus for curriculum change	5% (3)	

\* 65 respondents listed strengths

+ 65 respondents listed weaknesses

A lack of resources – time, money and the right skills - was seen as a major constraint to developing extra-curricular interventions. With limited resources, and a marginal status, such interventions could suffer through sporadic application, and the criticism that they only appealed to ‘the converted’ or could simply create a superficial impression of activity:

[extra-curricular interventions] often get initial publicity, but without high-level management 'buy in' little practical may be achieved.

(Respondent HEI-25)<sup>22</sup>

In contrast, many respondents pointed to the role of extra-curricular interventions in changing individual behaviour and wider culture. They highlighted the motivational qualities of such work in bringing people together and harnessing their skills and energies. They pointed to their usefulness communicating progress, demonstrating leadership and providing tangible examples of sustainable development in practice, seen as:

visible statements about the institution and its social responsibility.

(Respondent HEI-89)

The potential to promote wider perspectives was seen as a key strength:

[extra-curricular interventions] promote broader thinking, lateral thinking, outside of conventional departmental activities, and encourage multidisciplinary creativity.

(Respondent HEI-36)

In addition, the potential freedom for experimentation was also valued. This presented the opportunity to create powerful, personal learning experiences; to support and reinforce learning; as well as provide a stimulus for curriculum change. The potential to develop links with the wider community through extra-curricular work was identified as a clear strength that could help to foster citizenship.

### ***Opportunities and Barriers***

The main opportunities for, and barriers to, the use of extra-curricular interventions are presented in Table 4.5. Respondents highlighted the opportunities for extra-curricular interventions presented by work with others - in the wider community, with students and through networks of interest. They also pointed to opportunities afforded by linking such activities to other interests - be that personal or institutional benefits, high profile issues prominent in the media, or simply basic issues of relevance to everyone:

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<sup>22</sup> I have referenced the extracts taken from the survey responses according to the reference number that was originally assigned to each of the 140 UK HEIs when the questionnaires were sent out. Here extracts are used for illustrative purposes.

Day-to-day activities such as waste disposal, travel and energy management can be managed in a more sustainable way. This provides a practical message that reinforces educational messages and changes behaviour permanently

(Respondent HEI-30)

Making links with institutional work, such as work on staff development, student experience, or curriculum planning; or simply making use of existing policy frameworks, formed the third main group of opportunities highlighted. Many respondents listed benefits associated with these interventions as both strengths and opportunities; the most commonly cited opportunity was the benefit of raising awareness and reinforcing learning. Others simply listed specific types of intervention as opportunities in themselves.

**Table 4.5: Opportunities for and barriers to extra-curricular ESD interventions**

<b>Opportunities*</b>		<b>Barriers<sup>+</sup></b>	
	<i>Cited by</i>		<i>Cited by</i>
To raise awareness and reinforce learning	38% (20)	Resource pressures	82% (49)
Work in the wider community	21% (11)	General inertia	28% (17)
Work direct with students	19% (10)	Lack of commitment	20% (12)
Highlighting benefits	15% (8)	Lack of understanding	18% (11)
Specific types of extra-curricular intervention	13% (7)	No obvious lead agents	9% (5)
Links with staff development and student experience	11% (6)	‘Extra’ perceived as ‘optional’	7% (4)
Chance to link with curriculum planning	11% (6)	A credibility problem	5% (3)
Networks of interest	9% (5)	Disciplinary silos	5% (3)
Links to high profile issues	9% (5)		
Citing ESD policies	8% (4)		
Links with ‘day-to-day’ issues	8% (4)		

\* 53 respondents listed opportunities

<sup>+</sup> 60 respondents listed barriers

Pressure on resources, be that time or money, was *the* barrier indicated by a clear majority of respondents. A general inertia to change was also recognised, along with a lack of commitment to such work, and a lack of understanding. The absence of obvious leads to take forward such work was also highlighted:

It competes for time and other resources with all other HE activities.  
It is not discipline specific and as such the delivery of extra-curricular ESD is not driven by any responsible agency.

(Respondent HEI-79)

Extra-curricular work was perceived as optional; it suffered a credibility problem, and was not considered part of the core business of the institution.

### **3. Views about the institution's work on ESD overall**

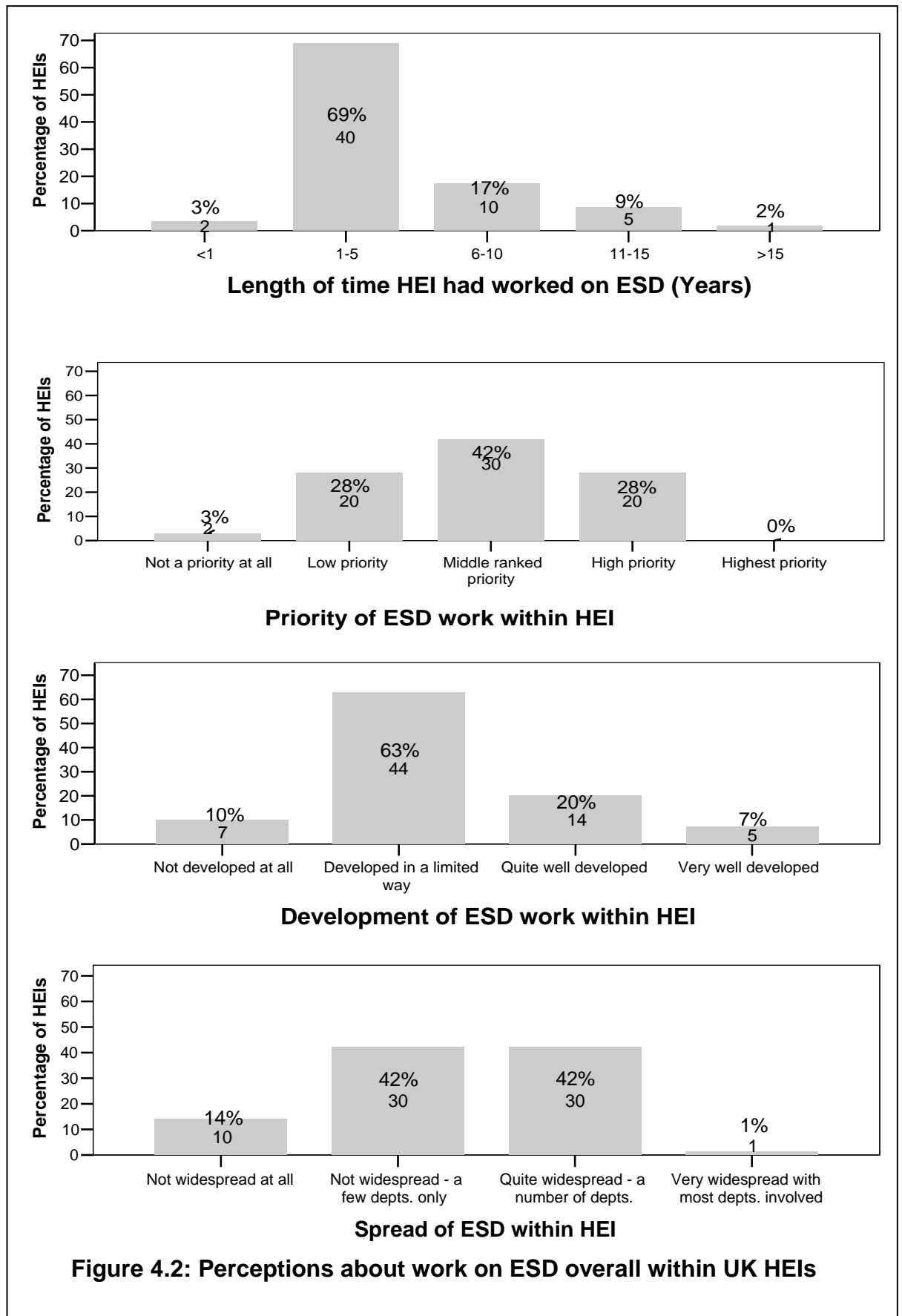
In order to place the findings in context, respondents were asked for their views about their institution's work on ESD as a whole. Views were gathered about the length of time, stage of development and spread of ESD work, as well as the priority of such work within the institution. The results are summarised in Figure 4.2.

Work on ESD across HEIs appears most commonly to be at an early stage of development. A clear majority of respondents felt their institution had started work relatively recently, within the last five years, and that ESD was developed in a limited way, or in some cases not at all. Marginally more respondents viewed ESD work as being limited in extent rather than widespread within their institution. ESD was most commonly seen as a middle ranked priority, and although similar proportions viewed it as a high priority as a low one, a small fraction (3%) viewed it as no priority at all.

#### ***The relative development of curricular and extra-curricular ESD work***

Extra-curricular ESD work appears to be developed in similar measure to curricular work. Of the 69 HEIs that indicated the relative development of each, 25% indicated it was developed equally in both spheres and 9% that it was developed in neither. It was seen to be developed primarily in the

curricular sphere in 35% of HEIs, whilst a similar proportion - 32% - indicated it was developed primarily in extra-curricular sphere.



## Discussion

The survey indicates that the extra-curricular sphere is commonly used for ESD by UK HEIs. *This is significant because it confirms the widespread occurrence of a phenomenon that has hitherto been given little regard in the literature.* It follows that if we are to understand ESD practice fully, a focus on learning and teaching with a narrow curriculum-centred aspect will not give the full picture; to appreciate the ESD phenomenon the extra-curricular dimension needs consideration too.

Unsurprisingly, given their common occurrence, extra-curricular interventions are widely perceived to have utility for ESD work. Several of the positive qualities associated with them address some of the weaknesses identified with HESD in the literature (Chapter Two). Importantly, respondent opinions suggest the extra-curricular space provides a place where it is possible to cultivate wider perspectives. It may thus have a role to reconnect knowledge that is believed to be fragmented between disciplines (Camino et al., 2005; Cullingford, 2004; Haigh, 2005; Higgit et al., 2005; Huckle, 2004)

Paradoxically, extra-curricular interventions are seen to be able to reach a wider audience, whilst simultaneously being viewed as limited in reach because they are often voluntary and optional. The implication is that not everyone is engaged with sustainable development via their subjects or disciplines, and that extra-curricular interventions can thus help reach out to engage these people. However, this engagement is not inevitable; extra-curricular interventions are not a catchall solution, they may only *catch some*. Moreover, those they do extend to may already be 'the converted', i.e. people who are already interested and active with respect to sustainable development.

The prevalence of extra-curricular interventions and their dominant position within some HEIs could in part be seen as a reflection of the early stage of development of ESD and the relative ease of initiating these types of interventions. The survey suggests that general ESD practice in HE is predominantly at an early stage of development, being perceived as recent

and limited. This is in line with the view that the educational contribution of HE towards sustainable development is underdeveloped (HEFCE, 2005). Whilst in some HEIs work on ESD has been a part of practice for many years and is well developed, in the majority this is not the case. Extra-curricular interventions could thus be seen as a noticeable part of ESD practice because there is relatively little ESD to notice. When looking at the specific interventions recorded in the survey, it is possible to discern more widespread use of those interventions that could be interpreted as easier to implement. Thus, occasional lectures are more commonplace than lecture programmes, occasional visits more commonplace than visit programmes, and dedicated intranet pages more common than staff training programmes. This in itself is unsurprising. However, the combination of limited progress with ESD generally and the prominence of easy to implement and occasional interventions within the extra-curricular sphere point to the possibility of superficiality rather than substance and sporadic rather than sustained engagement. These potential weaknesses were identified in the survey, but by relatively few respondents.

With work on ESD in its infancy, extra-curricular interventions appear to have an obvious developmental role. In situations where ESD is not established, a logical first step would be to try to engage people with sustainable development and motivate them to act. Here some of the positive qualities attributed to extra-curricular interventions by survey respondents - notably raising awareness, helping reach wider audiences and leading and motivating - could be particularly useful attributes. Extra-curricular interventions could thus play a part in forming an early *bridgehead* from which to advance ESD work. The model of organisational change put forward in the recent strategic review of sustainable development in English HEIs (Policy Studies Institute, CREE, & PA Consulting, 2008) suggests that the response to sustainable development within HEIs often grows from the grassroots actions of a few motivated individuals. It seems likely that such grassroots action would find early expression as extra-curricular interventions where these interventions are perceived to hold such positive qualities. In addition to assisting with the development and propagation of ESD, the

survey hints at a useful complementary role, notably the potential to reinforce curriculum inspired learning.

The variety of extra-curricular ESD interventions found in use suggests that there are likely to be mix of instigators involved. It seems plausible that different types of extra-curricular practice may arise from different sections of the university community. For example, environmental awareness campaigns may stem from environmental management work linked to estates departments; whilst occasional lectures may be initiated by individual academic departments. There has been a tendency in the literature to associate ESD solely with the academic teaching community when it seems, in the light of the survey, that a more heterogeneous community is likely to be interested. Indeed, it is possible that in some institutions ESD work may not be led by the academic teaching community at all. Accordingly, if we are to give greater attention to pedagogy rather than curriculum content, as Sterling and Scott (2007) suggest, then we ought also to be considering the pedagogic approaches/needs of different groups, not just those within the academic teaching community. This pedagogic gaze ought also to extend to physical pedagogies of place; this is because a sizable proportion of universities are already delivering physical modifications to campus environments to support ESD. There may be some way to go with these physical changes, as changes to infrastructure may not be the easiest type of intervention to initiate, but nevertheless the survey indicates some recognition of the need to address the 'hidden curriculum' (Orr, 1994) and so make sustainability part of everyday life in line with Blewitt's (2004) vision.

The potential presence of multiple instigators for ESD points to an inherent opportunity to link actors from campus, curriculum and the wider community. Survey respondents alluded to the opportunity to develop extra-curricular interventions through work in the wider community, work linked to curriculum planning, and by making links with day-to-day issues such as travel to work and workplace waste - aspects of campus management traditionally handled by support staff. These opportunities seem to present a chance to bridge the



divide between academic and lay knowledge identified by Bawden (2004) and Huckle (2004).

The survey confirms that the extra-curricular sphere is permeable to external influence. The frequency of Fairtrade campaigns and 'widely observed' theme days/weeks illustrate this point. This permeability presents an opportunity for external bodies who seek to promote ESD, and for those within HEIs seeking to do likewise. In the past, direct attempts to influence the curriculum from outside of HEIs have met resistance (see Knight (2005) for a damning response to an earlier attempt to promote ESD in the curriculum). The extra-curricular sphere may thus be a more fertile ground for externally driven ESD initiatives, in effect being a conduit for direct influence on individuals in the HE community with the prospect for an indirect influence over curricula in the longer term. The widespread participation of universities in initiatives promoted by movements for change in wider society, such as the 'Fair Trade' movement, point to the possibility of mutually affirming change processes of the type envisioned by Sterling (2001; 2003)

Concerns about a lack of commitment and resources for extra-curricular ESD echo the same concerns raised for ESD as a whole (Calder & Clugston, 2004). However, the marginal status and lack of ownership for none 'core' work, could make extra-curricular interventions particularly precarious. If extra-curricular ESD interventions are deemed to be a useful component of the ESD mix, it seems important to try to make stronger links to mainstream work to protect the viability of such interventions.

## **Conclusions**

First and foremost the survey is designed to answer the research question about the extent of extra-curricular interventions as part of the ESD response. Despite little attention in the literature, extra-curricular interventions are seen to form a key part of contemporary ESD practice within UK HE; nearly all HEIs that responded to the survey have made use of them in the recent past. The survey suggests a prominent position, where extra-curricular interventions are perceived to be developed in equal

measure to curricular ones in many HEIs; or form the primary approach to ESD in a similar proportion to those where curricular interventions are primary. This prominence suggests extra-curricular work deserves greater attention amongst those with an interest in advancing ESD in HE.

Extra-curricular interventions are widely believed to have utility to help advance ESD in HE and are highly valued by the majority of respondents. At best, they have the potential to tackle many of the issues seen to limit the educational contribution of HE towards sustainable development. At worst, they may only create the impression of action. Barriers remain, not least resource pressures; but there are a number of opportunities too, often through connecting extra-curricular work to mainstream concerns, or perhaps drawing on resources from those seeking to promote ESD from outside of HE.

Generally speaking, ESD work by UK HEIs is relatively recent, developed in a limited way and, more commonly than not, restricted to a small number of departments. In this regard ESD practice is in its infancy and extra-curricular interventions may play an important developmental and complementary role in curriculum change.

The voluntary nature of extra-curricular interventions can be seen to both extend and limit the reach of ESD. They have the potential to reach those involved in disciplines where ESD is absent. Yet, when optional, are unlikely in themselves to reach everyone. Whilst extra-curricular interventions may not extend to everyone, they could perhaps help broaden and deepen learning amongst those that they do reach.

In the UK, much recent work to support ESD in HE has been focused on curriculum change within disciplines and has been directed at academics. In the future, support should perhaps also be directed at the extra-curricular sphere, with recognition that such work may not always be initiated by academics and may involve others within and beyond HE – a wide interpretation of the pedagogic response is needed.

As a cross-sectional survey, this aspect of the research presents a 'snapshot' of UK practice at one point in time – spring/summer 2006. The views of representatives from different HEIs have been grouped together to build an overall impression of the extent, nature and perceived value of extra-curricular ESD-related interventions. In order to explore actual practice and its impacts more thoroughly, the focus now turns to the presentation of the case study. Here the survey raises several questions worthy of further consideration:

- Do extra-curricular interventions cultivate wider perspectives of sustainable development?
- What is the reach of extra-curricular interventions? Who is engaged by them? Are those engaged already 'converted'?
- Are extra-curricular interventions superficial, or do they make a substantive contribution to ESD?
- Do extra-curricular interventions promote curriculum change? Do they reinforce curriculum learning?
- Are a variety of instigators involved? If so, is there evidence of any differences in approach, between them? Are such instigators working in isolation or in a coordinated way? To what extent are external instigators involved.

Chapters Five, Six and Seven will now document the case study and thus shed further light on these questions.