

Sustainable development in higher education

Summary of written responses to HEFCE 2005/01

Background to the analysis

1. In January 2005 we published 'Sustainable development in higher education: Consultation on a support strategy and action plan' (HEFCE 2005/01) inviting responses by 11 April. The purpose of this report is to set out the trends observed in responses and attempt to quantify them.

2. There were a total of 133 respondents to the consultation; responses ranged from a single quote, submitting a relevant article or company information, to a detailed analysis of each proposed support role for the Council. The original consultation set out a series of practical actions we propose to take within the parameters set by the strategy. Annex A lists these action points and provides a reference number for each that is used in the following text. Annex B shows the responses to each suggested action. A list of respondents is attached at Annex C.

Table 1: Breakdown of responses received

	Received
HEIs	96
Individuals	10
Other	27
Total	133

3. The consultation document asked four open questions:

1. Will the proposed action plan help deliver the vision set out in our support strategy for sustainable development?
2. Which actions should take priority?
3. Do you have any other comments on the strategy or action plan?
4. What other activities are you engaged in which support the agenda for sustainable development?

4. This report analyses the responses to questions one, two and three, concerning HEFCE's strategy and action plan for sustainable development in higher education. Question four will be analysed separately and a web-based report produced by October 2005.

5. A consequence of asking open questions was that we encouraged a wide variety of responses and stimulated considerable discussion. Respondents often focused on particular aspects of the consultation, and these aspects did not always map directly onto our specific proposed actions. Therefore, in analysing the responses, we decided to capture opinion thematically as well as registering comments directly applicable to our proposed actions. For example, we captured whether the respondent supported the suggestion that curricular developments were a legitimate means for higher education to promote the sustainable

development agenda; as well as looking at views on the specific proposal to explore with Universities UK, the Standing Conference of Principals and the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (UUK/SCOP/QAA), how sustainable development could be used as an indicator of high quality taught provision.

6. In analysing the responses we have been careful only to code what was actually said rather than to imply support where there is no specific reference to a theme, or proposed action point. For example, if a respondent said that they supported the whole strategy, but in particular action point three (support of flexible capital monitoring systems) we would have registered a 'yes' to question one (will the proposed strategy help deliver the vision outlined) and a 'yes' to action point three; but we would not register support against all of the other action points. Similarly, if a respondent wrote only that we should not have written the strategy we would have captured this against question one, and probably as a comment, but not counted a negative against every single action point, unless they were specifically mentioned.

7. Where a submission was made from a group representing several members, the response has only been counted as one. We did not imply that it was from many members and should be counted as such, because in many groups the individual members answered in addition to their group response.

We asked: 'Will the action plan deliver the vision?'

8. A large majority (79 per cent) supported the action plan as an instrument for delivering the vision. This was broken down into two categories:

- 27 per cent wholly supported the strategy and thought the action plan would deliver the vision
- 52 per cent supported our action plan and thought it would be successful, but with caveats – sometimes about the vision or specific actions, or about a barrier that must be overcome -- all of which have been captured in the analysis. For example, an institution might write that the actions are commendable but the vision will only be achieved if university estates are managed sustainably.
- a further 5 per cent were unsure whether the action plan would deliver the vision
- 5 per cent thought it would not work
- 5 per cent said that they did not think we should have written this strategy and thought that HEIs were more than capable of taking on the promotion of sustainable development themselves without our intervention. Within this 5 per cent, some respondents indicated that they might react more positively to HEFCE adopting a supporting role rather than being prescriptive in our expectations of HEIs.

Definition

9. The consultation document recognises that the definition of sustainable development is contestable, but defines it according to the 1987 World Commission on Environment and Development as 'development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs'. Forty per cent of respondents commented on our definition. In addition to the opinions we have captured here, a small

minority of respondents felt the definition and language were in places too abstract or difficult to understand. The comments recorded were:

- 11 per cent said that we did not have a clear definition (this was also identified as a barrier to promoting sustainable development: see paragraph 36)
- 5 per cent said that elements of our action plan contradicted each other, for example respondents thought environmental sustainability was often in conflict with financial sustainability, because they presumed it advocated prioritising environmental benefits over value for money
- 3 per cent recognised that rather than contradict each other, there needed to be a balance of the different elements (economic, social, and environmental) and suggested the strategy should take greater account of that
- 2 per cent felt we should take greater account of the contested definition of sustainability
- 10 per cent of respondents felt that our definition gave insufficient attention to the social, moral and/or international elements of sustainable development
- 4 per cent felt that the definition was too focused on the environmental elements of sustainability to the detriment of economic and social aspects
- 2 per cent felt that the strategy should only focus on the environmental aspects.

Role of higher education

10. The strategy outlines the role of higher education as being:

- as educators, helping students to gain awareness of the world in which they live and the complex interplay of economic, social and environmental factors
- in finding social and technical solutions to the challenges presented by sustainable development
- as a catalyst for learning about sustainable development beyond the boundaries of the higher education, by exchanging knowledge and ideas with local people, business, government bodies and the wider world.
- continual improvement of its own impact on the environment, society and the economy.

11. Almost all respondents agreed that higher education does have a role to play in promoting the sustainable development agenda. The role of the funding council in supporting the adoption of sustainable development was far more controversial. A significant number (31 per cent) felt there was already considerable engagement by the sector on sustainability issues and that our primary task should be to identify and build on the good practice that already exists. Within this, a small number of respondents felt that we should not waste resources on commissioning additional research and creating new networks, but should use existing research and take on more of a co-ordination role.

Curriculum

12. The strategy suggested that promoting sustainable development through the curriculum was a legitimate role for higher education. In response:

- 48 per cent of respondents broadly supported this, with 13 per cent of the total viewing it as a priority

- 3 per cent of respondents said that it was inappropriate to include the development of the curriculum as a means of encouraging sustainable development. The reasons given included that this was a breach of academic freedom and that there was an inherent fear of the Government (or its agency) supporting one social objective above all others, and the universities were already making considerable headway in this and other societal objectives as part of their corporate social responsibility.

(Paragraphs 19 and 20 below talk specifically about the two action points relating to the inclusion of sustainable development within the curriculum.)

Business strategy and operations

13. There was widespread support for encouraging the higher education sector towards sustainable management of estates:

- 46 per cent of respondents supported action point 10 to build the sector's capacity to manage more sustainable buildings
- 39 per cent of these respondents thought that this action should be a priority
- no respondents opposed this action
- 21 per cent felt that a strategy for sustainable development must be embedded in university planning
- 11 per cent felt that for the strategy to be successful it must have sector-wide support.

Leadership, knowledge-generation and transfer

14. The draft strategy identified a further role for the sector as strengthening links to business and the community and others, in pursuit of sustainable development, and acting as a catalyst for learning about sustainable development beyond the boundaries of the higher education arena, through communication and partnership, research and knowledge exchange. Two action points specifically relate to this role: action 1a, to build links to employers, professional bodies and students – all aimed at encouraging these groups to view sustainable development as a desirable component of higher education courses; and action 16, to develop a set of metrics for institutions' community activities and, if suitable, to use these metrics to drive funding allocations under the Higher Education Innovation Fund (HEIF):

- 27 per cent were in support of action 1a, with 19 per cent viewing it as a priority
- 1 per cent of respondents disagreed with this action
- 15 per cent supported action 16, with 11 per cent viewing it as a priority
- 5 per cent had reservations and 2 per cent disagreed with this action point.

Comments indicate that those who disagreed with this action opposed the implied reporting requirements rather than the element concerning engagement with the community. Several respondents also noted the difficulty of measuring community engagement and referred us to the work of community engagement practitioners and the Russell Group, who have undertaken a scoping exercise to begin to map community engagement.

15. Twenty-three per cent of respondents felt that a missing element was the role of HEIs' purchasing policies and that this would have as great an impact as any other of the elements outlined in the strategy. Several respondents also felt the strategy should focus more on the responsibility of the sector to be sustainable in its refurbishment, even where this is a more expensive option.

Role of HEFCE

16. The consultation document outlines a support role for HEFCE in four key areas. These are: engaging with stakeholders, building the capacity of people to manage sustainable development, sharing good practice and supporting its development, and rewarding more sustainable behaviour. The role of HEFCE was the most contested area of the strategy. A range of views was expressed, from regarding HEFCE's role as a leader, to seeing it more as a support and facilitator, through to those that felt the funding council had no place promoting this agenda (or anything beyond its role in funding teaching, research and third stream activities).

17. Five per cent of respondents felt that we should not have written this strategy and agenda and that it was not our role to force onto HEIs what was regarded by these respondents as a single-issue societal objective. This compares with:

- 5 per cent who did not think that the strategy we have outlined will be successful in delivering our vision for sustainable development
- 5 per cent who were not sure whether it will deliver the vision (within this there are those who were unsure of HEFCE's part to play in delivering the strategy, and those who just did not know if this strategy will be sufficient to bring about widespread culture change)
- 79 per cent who thought that our action plan will deliver (at least in part) the aims set out in the strategy.

'We have a general concern that the consultation suggests an inappropriate role for HEFCE, fails to recognise the crucial and central role of institutional governance and leadership and could lead to substantial increases in burdens by identifying sustainability as a separate strategic priority for institutions.'

Curriculum

18. Despite broad support for the role of the curriculum in promoting sustainable development (48 per cent), a majority of those respondents (27 per cent of all respondents) felt that HEFCE should not be the authority to introduce or enforce this. A small minority (3 per cent) did not think it was appropriate to include the development of the curriculum within the strategy. There are two action points that relate specifically to the curriculum. They provide a useful indication of what is viewed by the majority of the sector as an acceptable level of contribution from HEFCE toward the development of the curriculum.

19. Action point 1b is to explore with UUK/SCOP/QAA how sustainable development can be used as a measure of high quality taught provision:

- 26 per cent of respondents strongly disagree with this action (the highest incidence of opposition to any of our specific action points)
- 13 per cent agree with this action, with 11 per cent viewing it as a priority
- 3 per cent have reservations.

20. Action point 11 was to provide dedicated funds to the Higher Education Academy for a programme of identifying, sharing and augmenting good practice in learning about sustainable development:

- 45 per cent agree with this action, with 40 per cent viewing it as a priority (this is the highest level of support for any specific action point)
- 5 per cent strongly disagree
- 2 per cent have reservations.

Working with stakeholders

21. The role of HEFCE in engaging with stakeholders is defined in the strategy by support role 1: 'engaging with stakeholders to bring about policy synergies on sustainable development'. This was supported by the sector, except with regard to working with the QAA (action point 1b). There was one other objection, to action 6 which advocates working with the Regional Development Agencies (RDAs), where the respondent felt that sustainable development was a global issue, and should be considered in an international context and not be confined to the region. However, despite not being contested, support for the actions within support role one was modest, (excluding the actions regarding the curriculum). Several respondents listed additional stakeholders that they felt we should engage with, including non-government organisations, trade unions, charities and international organisations who might be able to share good practice. A numerical breakdown of support for each action point is included in Annex A.

Government strategy

22. Sixteen per cent of respondents felt that we should engage more with the Government agenda's on sustainability, and there was a concern that the HEFCE strategy was not entirely in line with the Government's strategy. A particular concern for some respondents was the absence of specific reference to the purchasing power of HEIs, which is a key feature of the Government's strategy. Others were more generally concerned that the two strategies were not entirely complementary, and that conflicting strategies from various departments and agencies could work against sustainable development.

Staff

23. Twenty-seven per cent of respondents felt that higher education had a role to educate and engage staff with the sustainable development agenda. A considerable amount of the strategy is dedicated to building the capacity of staff, in the context of leaders, and in action point 1a we identify professional bodies as a stakeholder group to engage with. However, we do not make explicit mention of engaging with and educating all staff within HEIs (not just academics). Some respondents suggest that engaging with trade unions might be a route for HEFCE to facilitate this.

Students

24. The strategy talks about the importance of enabling students to develop new values, skills and knowledge in order that they can contribute to sustainable development, and that the main (but not only) way to develop this is through curricula and pedagogy. Fourteen per cent felt that there should be more mention of engaging with students as stakeholders. The strategy also mentions engaging with students under action point 1a. Those respondents who felt we should engage more with students cited student unions and student associations as powerful advocates for sustainability.

25. Three per cent of respondents thought that students were engaging with the sustainability agenda through volunteering and that the strategy should encourage this further. As part of question four (What other activities are you engaged in which support the agenda for sustainable development?), several universities mentioned student volunteering as a part of their university's contribution to sustainable development. One respondent requested we took further steps to consult with students, and perhaps the National Union of Students on this issue. We had one student respondent to the consultation:

'I'm not a Vice-Chancellor and I don't have any say or sway, but I did want to comment that I think your vision for higher education's contribution to sustainable development is highly positive and should be commended.'

Sharing good practice

26. The majority of respondents supported HEFCE's role in sharing good practice: 47 per cent of respondents supported the development of a web-site for this purpose (action 12), and 34 per cent viewed it as a priority action; no respondents disagreed with this action. However, three per cent of responses felt that a web-site would not be enough to communicate good practice to the sector and that HEFCE needed to be more proactive in this regard. Suggestions included running workshops and seminars, and producing guidance including examples of success and failure from which to learn.

Support for making a business case

27. As part of the support strategy we identify the benefits of sustainable development, recognising that sometimes there are conflicting priorities of economic, social and environmental objectives. We do not currently have any specific actions relating to this, however it was an area of discussion amongst respondents. There was tacit support for HEFCE developing a business case for HEIs outlining how they might reconcile conflicting priorities, with 41 different comments about areas where the sector felt they needed support from HEFCE. They include:

- cost benefit analysis – 18 per cent of respondents commented on this aspect. The majority of respondents who mentioned this were concerned with the initial higher costs of a more sustainable approach while recognising a long-term payback. However, some respondents said that cheaper methods of promoting sustainable development could be achieved by being innovative, but they needed longer to plan than conventional methods and were sometimes unfavourable because they incurred more risks

- sustainability as a marketing tool – 6 per cent of respondents felt that sustainability could be a good marketing tool and thought HEFCE should make greater mention of this in its strategy
- demand and relevance of the sustainability agenda – 5 per cent of respondents wanted evidence of the demand and relevance of sustainability in order to encourage staff and student buy-in.

Reporting and funding

28. The consultation document expressed an aspiration to reward more sustainable behaviour mainly through core funding and not through special funding. We also had an action to develop a set of metrics for institutions' community activities and, if suitable, these would be used to drive allocations under the Higher Education Innovation Fund (action 16). Furthermore, we supported the testing of different sustainable development review and reporting methodologies to help us identify a mechanism or mechanisms to recommend to the wider sector (action 18):

- 18 per cent asked for more clarity on what was meant by rewarding sustainable behaviour
- 15 per cent supported action 16, with 11 per cent seeing it as a priority
- 5 per cent had reservations about action 16, and 2 per cent strongly disagreed
- 12 per cent supported action 18, with 8 per cent thinking it a priority
- 1 per cent disagreed strongly with action 18 and 1 per cent had reservations.

29. Respondents also commented more widely on what sort of funding they would like and what they view as an acceptable level of accountability. In terms of funding:

- 32 per cent wanted some sort of funding and 10 per cent thought it a priority. These respondents did not specify whether they would prefer mainstream or special funding
- 13 per cent would like mainstream funding, with 3 per cent thinking it a priority
- 5 per cent would like special funding with 2 per cent thinking it a priority.

30. It is important to note that some respondents wanted both mainstream funding and special funding so the total number of respondents who indicated they wanted some sort of funding is between 37 per cent and 45 per cent. Only 1 per cent of respondents specifically requested no funding because they felt that funds should not be diverted from the core activities of research and teaching which were already regarded as being under-funded.

'Given that teaching, learning and research resources are already stretched (and historically under-funded), how can the diversion of these funds into such an initiative be justified?'

Targets and reporting

31. The strategy recognised that the inclusion of sustainable development could lead to changes in our information requirements in order for us to gain a sense of how the sector is performing. It also recognised the risk that additional reporting requirements might add to what is already perceived as an overly-burdensome accountability framework. In response to this the strategy advocated two action points: action point 4, that HEFCE would work with

other stakeholders committed to sustainable development to co-ordinate any associated reporting requirements; and action point 5, to work with the Higher Education Regulation Review Group to ensure that our reporting requirements continue to be consistent with the five principles of good regulation. The generic responses to targets and reporting that we captured were:

- 13 per cent thought that institutions should report their own progress
- 11 per cent supported benchmarking
- 7 per cent supported sector-wide targets
- 6 per cent supported institutions having their own targets
- 8 per cent supported no targets
- 4 per cent supported no reporting.

32. It was very difficult to unpick the variety of responses, and even within those captured above there are those that think funding should be linked to targets, and those that think it should be mainstreamed but that failure to make progress against targets should be penalised. However, other institutions make the point that if we are encouraging the sharing of failure as well as success then linking performance to funding will discourage institutions from sharing their failure.

33. In response to action point 4, 8 per cent supported this action, and 5 per cent viewed it as a priority. In response to action 5, 24 per cent of respondents supported this action, 12 per cent of them thought it a priority, and no respondents disagreed.

34. A further 5 per cent of respondents said that progress within sustainable development was particularly difficult to define, and measurable outputs did not always signify a move towards sustainability. They also cautioned that a mechanistic approach to funding and measuring progress encouraged institutions to view sustainability as a 'bolt-on' or 'tick-box' measure, rather than to embrace it as a holistic approach to university governance.

Diversity

35. Twenty per cent of respondents urged that whatever approach we adopted, we should take account of the diversity of HEIs. This included acknowledging that city and campus universities would have different restrictions on students' travel to and from university, that many universities were based in listed buildings, and that some HEIs wish to engage with this agenda but do not at present have the resources to do so. Five per cent of respondents said that small institutions would find engaging with this agenda financially over-burdensome.

Barriers to promoting sustainable development

36. The consultation document recognised that sometimes there could be some tension between the different elements of sustainable development (economic, social and environmental) and that this could be a barrier to promoting sustainable development. One of our proposed actions (action 15) was to commission research and evaluation projects to explore the barriers to sustainable development in higher education and how these might be overcome. Twenty per cent of respondents supported action 15. A large majority of respondents also told us what they perceived to be barriers to promoting sustainable development, in HEFCE's existing policy:

- 8 per cent said short timescales for spending capital grants did not support the planning needed for innovation, and a sustainable development approach
- 6 per cent said competitive tendering and value for money
- 5 per cent said RAE assessment of inter-disciplinary and multi-disciplinary research (because sustainability is a cross-disciplinary concept, and they feel that the RAE favours more traditional subjects)
- 3 per cent cited RAE assessment of applied research
- 2 per cent said selectivity of research funding (because they feel it is anti-diversity)
- 2 per cent said funding for teaching and research (as it encourages traditional discipline structures within organisations)
- a small minority were also concerned with the additional burden applied by HEFCE-funded initiatives (including the Transparent Approach to Costing, TRAC, which is designed to ensure financial sustainability), funding initiatives at marginal cost, and the increased number of HEI mergers which seemed in conflict with supporting diversity. There was also a concern that the planned growth of HE would contradict sustainability measures.

Additional barriers were also identified:

- 13 per cent found the definition of sustainable development was either unclear or too broad and that this would inhibit achieving the strategy's aims
- 11 per cent felt that without buy-in from higher education leaders and senior managers the strategy would not succeed
- 9 per cent said that initiatives from different sources were often conflicting and that it was burdensome to engage with them
- 7 per cent said that sustainability could be viewed as a 'bolt-on' activity and institutions would not embed the principles in their governance and management
- 6 per cent cited the lack of a life-cycle orientated culture
- 5 per cent said that the different starting points of HEIs would make it difficult to co-ordinate a sector-wide response, deemed necessary (by some) for the success of the strategy
- 5 per cent said there was a need for champions to drive the initiative but that individuals were often committed to one aspect and needed to engage with the whole agenda
- 4 per cent said the shortage of additional staff time
- 4 per cent said that the private sector provides services, such as building student accommodation for universities to manage, and they do not always comply with the principles of sustainable development, preferring value for money
- 3 per cent said that because government strategies were often short term (in particular for RDAs) there is a lack of confidence in the sector to commit to long-term projects when the Government may move the goal posts or change its mind within that time frame
- 2 per cent said initiatives such as Higher Education Partnership for Sustainability (HEPS) only benefited participating HEIs and learning did not 'leak-out' into the sector
- 2 per cent said the Enhanced Capital Allowance was not available to public sector bodies

- 2 per cent said that students' curriculum is already overloaded.

Suggested new ideas

37. The responses to the consultation contained a wealth of additional suggestions on how the Funding Council could advance its strategy and achieve its vision. In addition to the comments we have captured here, a number of institutions and organisations expressed their willingness to work in partnership with HEFCE in revising and delivering part or all of the strategy and action plan.

Networks

38. Ten per cent of respondents suggested we should create networks to facilitate the communication of good practice across the sector. Related to this, a further 3 per cent said we should encourage collaboration between institutions to share expertise in sustainable development. For example, an energy manager could be shared by a number of institutions, or a construction expert in one institution could be called upon to consult for a neighbouring institution.

Setting standards

39. Ten per cent of respondents suggested that all HEFCE-funded new buildings and major refurbishments should be constructed to a recognised set of standards. BRE's Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM) was the most frequently quoted, but others included ISO 14001, the Eco-Management and Audit Scheme (EMAS), the Design Quality Indicator (DQI) or the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design system (LEED). One respondent also suggested that we work with the Association of University Directors of Estates (AUDE) to establish our own sector-specific building framework.

Communication

40. Eight per cent of respondents wanted us to provide a reference and resource guide, either as an appendix to the strategy or on the good practice web-site. Suggestions for its content included a comprehensive list of stakeholders engaged in sustainable development, a register of experts, and potential funding sources. Two per cent suggested we should produce toolkits and templates for the process of implementing sustainable development initiatives, and 1 per cent said we should provide a help desk for queries about sustainable development. A further four per cent of respondents said we should fund a central support agency (like the Office for Fair Access, OFFA) to support and implement this agenda.

Other ideas

- 5 per cent suggested an audit of all existing sustainability activity
- 5 per cent suggested looking abroad for examples of good practice and encouraging international collaborations
- 3 per cent suggested HEFCE should work as an advocate between HEIs and local government in implementing more sustainable transport regimes
- 1 per cent suggested a study to identify the impact of students on university towns, (including the impact of those commuting to study, impact on housing rental costs, and waste and recycling)
- 4 per cent suggested there should be continuing professional development for staff

- 3 per cent suggested 'champions' should be identified and cultivated within each HEI
- 2 per cent suggested that we should fund staff, to allow them time to learn about sustainable development
- 2 per cent suggested we should reward students for sustainable behaviour through accreditation and perhaps academic credits
- 2 per cent suggested a survey of staff and student attitudes toward sustainability, and that this could be repeated as a measure of progress over time
- 1 per cent suggested we should encourage additional modules on sustainable development that could be open learning or online units
- 3 per cent suggested we work with the Treasury and the Department of Trade and Industry to allow Enhanced Capital Allowances for higher education (currently not available for public bodies)
- 2 per cent suggested that we should amend HEFCE's mission to include sustainable development
- 2 per cent suggested we extend our approach to sustainability in construction to include the use of space and heating
- 2 per cent suggested we continue the Higher Education Active Community Fund (HEACF)
- 1 per cent suggested we have a memorandum of understanding with the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) on sustainability
- 1 per cent suggested that we seek consultancy advice on the implementation of our strategy
- 1 per cent suggested we set up a league table of participation and innovation with the sustainability agenda by higher education institutions
- 1 per cent suggested we extend the Business and Environmental Annual Index forms to include teaching and research
- 1 per cent suggested we engage in dialogue with accreditation bodies regarding the embedding of sustainability within the curriculum
- 1 per cent suggested making Agriculture and Food strategically important subjects
- 1 per cent suggested we support the Tailloires agreement.

Annex A

Sustainable development in HE

Support role 1: Engaging with stakeholders to bring about policy synergies on sustainable development

1. Action: Building on the work of the Higher Education Academy in identifying, sharing and augmenting good practice in curricular and pedagogical developments, we will:
 - a. Build links to employers, professional bodies and students – all aimed at encouraging these groups to view sustainable development as a desirable component of higher education courses.
 - b. Explore with the QAA, UUK and SCOP how a contribution to sustainable development could be used as an indicator of high quality taught provision.
 - c. Continue to work with the Learning and Skills Council to ensure this activity meets the needs of institutions providing higher and further education.
2. Action: We will continue to work with partners, including HM Treasury and the DTI, and through initiatives including the Transparent Approach to Costing (TRAC) to pursue financial sustainability for English institutions.
3. Action: We will work with the Treasury, DTI and DfES to improve capital monitoring systems, providing institutions with greater flexibility and encouragement for longer-term planning.
4. Action: We will work with other stakeholders committed to sustainable development to co-ordinate any associated reporting requirements.
5. Action: We will work with stakeholders, in particular the Higher Education Regulation Review Group, to ensure our reporting requirements continue to be consistent with the five principles of good regulation.
6. Action: We will work with RDAs to bring about policy synergies around sustainable development.
7. Action: We will explore with the Research Councils and other research funders whether research could be strengthened to build new skills, knowledge and tools needed for sustainable development in all subject areas.

Support role 2: Building capacity of people to manage sustainable development

8. Action: We will continue to support the Leadership Foundation in embedding sustainable development in its courses and programmes.
9. Action: As catalysts in the transition to sustainable development, we will continue to:

- a. Allocate funds through the Rewarding and Developing Staff initiative.
- b. Support the implementation of the self-assessment tool for people management.
- c. Support the Equality Challenge Unit.

10. Action: In partnership with representative bodies, we will fund activity aimed at building the sector's capacity to manage more sustainable buildings.

Support role 3: Sharing good practice, or supporting the development of good practice where none exists

11. Action: We will provide dedicated funds to the Higher Education Academy for a programme of identifying, sharing and augmenting good practice in learning about sustainable development.

12. Action: We will build and maintain a section of our web-site dedicated to raising the visibility of existing good practice on sustainable development, in partnership with other bodies.

13. Action: We will invite applications to the Leadership, Governance and Management Fund aimed at developing good practice in sustainable development.

14. Action: We will work with the Carbon Trust in supporting a pilot group of institutions to develop test and refine a carbon management programme for HE.

15. Action: We will commission research and evaluation projects exploring the barriers to sustainable development in higher education and how these might be overcome.

Support role 4: Rewarding more sustainable behaviour

16. Action: We will develop a set of metrics for institutions' community activities. If suitable metrics can be identified, they will be used to drive funding allocations under the Higher Education Innovation Fund.

17. Action: We will develop good practice for estates, from which the self-assessment methodology will derive. This methodology will be developed to enable institutions to give the necessary assurance to stakeholders and will incorporate suitable arrangements for verification.

Action: We will support the testing of different sustainable development review and reporting methodologies to help us identify a mechanism or mechanisms to recommend to the wider sector.

Annex B

Summary of responses to specific action points

	Disagree strongly	Reservations	Agree	Priority
Action 1a	1	0	27	19
Action 1b	26	3	13	11
Action 1c	1	0	16	10
Action 2	0	0	15	12
Action 3	0	0	32	27
Action 4	0	0	8	5
Action 5	0	0	24	12
Action 6	1	0	20	12
Action 7	1	0	19	14
Action 8	1	0	37	27
Action 9 a	0	2	13	10
Action 9 b	1	0	12	10
Action 9 c	0	0	12	9
Action 10	0	0	46	39
Action 11	5	2	45	40
Action 12	0	0	47	34
Action 13	0	1	23	19
Action 14	0	1	21	15
Action 15	0	0	20	14
Action 16	2	5	15	11
Action 17	2	1	24	18

Action 18	1	0	12	8

Action points in order of priority highlighted by respondents

First priority actions (34-50 Votes)

Fund the Higher Education Academy
Build capacity for construction and refurbishment

Second priority actions (25-33 Votes)

Build a web-site to share good practice
Work on a flexible capital monitoring system
Support the Leadership Foundation in embedding sustainable development

Third priority actions (15-24 Votes)

Build links to employers, professional bodies, students
Invite applications to the Leadership, Governance and Management Fund
Develop estates self-assessment methodology
Work with the Carbon Trust

Fourth priority actions (11-14 Votes)

Work with the Research Councils
Commission research to explore the barriers to sustainable development in higher education
Work with the Treasury and DTI to secure financial sustainability
Work with HERRG on reducing the burden
Work with the RDAs to bring about policy synergies
Explore with QAA/UUK/SCOP – sustainable development as high quality indicator
Develop metrics for institutions' community activities

Fifth priority actions (6- 10 Votes)

Work with the Learning and Skills Council
Continue to allocate funds through Rewarding and Developing Staff initiative
Continue to support the Equality Challenge Unit
Adopt the self-assessment tool for people management
Test review and reporting methodologies

Sixth priority actions (1- 5 votes)

Co-ordinating reporting with stakeholders

Annex C

Respondents to the consultation

Institutions

Arts Institute at Bournemouth
Aston University
Bath Spa University College
Bournemouth University
Brunel University
Buckinghamshire Chilterns University College
Canterbury Christ Church University College
Cardiff University
Centre for Environmental Strategy, University of Surrey
City University
Coventry University
De Montford University
Edge Hill College of Higher Education
Environmental Change Institute, University of Oxford
Goldsmiths College, University of London
Harper Adams University College
Heythrop College, University of London
University of Huddersfield
Imperial College
Institute of Cancer Research
Institute of Education, Manchester Metropolitan University
Institute of Education, University of London
Keele University
Kings College London
Kingston University
Leeds Metropolitan University
Leeds Metropolitan University's Environmental Policy Steering Group
Liverpool Hope
Liverpool John Moores
London Metropolitan University
London School of Economics
Loughborough University
Middlesex University
Newman College
Open University
Oxford Brookes University
Queen's University Belfast
Roehampton University
Royal Agriculture College

Royal College of Art
Royal College of Music
Royal Northern College of Music
Royal Veterinary College
Schumacher College, Dartington
Sheffield Hallam University
Somerset College of Arts and Technology
Southampton Institute
St George's Hospital Medical School
St Helen's College
St Martin's College
St Mary's College
Staffordshire University
Surrey Institute of Art and Design University College
Thames Valley University
Trinity College of Music
University College Chester
University College London
University College Northampton
University College Winchester
University of Bath
University of Birmingham
University of Bolton
University of Bradford
University of Brighton
University of Bristol
University of Cambridge
University of Central England
University of Central Lancashire
University of Durham
University of Exeter
University of Gloucestershire
University of Greenwich
University of Hertfordshire
University of Hull
University of Kent at Canterbury
University of Leeds
University of Leicester
University of Lincoln
University of Liverpool
University of Luton
University of Manchester
University of Newcastle

University of Northumbria at Newcastle
University of Nottingham
University of Oxford
University of Plymouth
University of Portsmouth
University of Sheffield
University of Southampton
University of the West of England
University of Warwick
University of Westminster
University of Wolverhampton
University of York
Wimbledon School of Art
York St John College

Other

1994 Group
Article 13
Association of Business Schools
Association of the University Directors of Estates
Biosciences Federation
The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA)
CITB-ConstructionSkills
Commonwealth Human Economy Council
Community Engagement Practitioners
Corporate Social Responsibility Group of Proc-HE
Crisis Forum
C-SAP
Development Education Association
Environment, Education and Community Group
Environmental Association for Universities and Colleges (EAUC)
Environmental Design Consultants Ltd
Groundwork UK
Higher Education Academy
Higher Education Environmental Performance Improvement
Institution of Environmental Sciences
Natural Environment Research Council
North Eastern Universities Purchasing Groups
Royal Academy of Engineering
Royal Society of Chemistry
UUK/SCOP
Waste and Resources Action Programme
Yorkshire Universities and Yorkshire Forward

