

# EQ930-30 Education for Sustainable Development

**24/25**

**Department**

Education Studies

**Level**

Taught Postgraduate Level

**Module leader**

Nicholas Lee

**Credit value**

30

**Module duration**

10 weeks

**Assessment**

100% coursework

**Study location**

University of Warwick main campus, Coventry

---

## Description

### Introductory description

This module introduces and critically examines Education for Sustainable Development (ESD). You will address ESD both as a global project and a series of local initiatives and their connections. Key questions are: What is ESD and what change is it intended to make? What theories and assumptions have formed the development of ESD? To what extent can it deliver its key objective of transforming citizens, societies and economies? What effects has it had? What difference can it make to curricula and pedagogy? How can effectiveness be evidenced and what evidence is there that it can be effective? What new developments in the field are presently under discussion?

### Module aims

This module introduces and critically examines Education for Sustainable Development (ESD). It addresses ESD both as a global project and as a series of local initiatives.

Key questions running through the module are:

What is ESD and what change is it intended to make?

What theories and assumptions have informed the development of ESD ?

To what extent can it deliver its key objective of transforming citizens, societies and economies?

What procedures and approaches are involved in the implementation of ESD?  
What difference can ESD make to curricula and pedagogy?  
What effects has its introduction had in Early Years and Tertiary Education settings?  
How can the effectiveness of ESD be evidenced? What evidence is there that ESD is effective?  
What new developments in the field are presently under discussion?

## Outline syllabus

This is an indicative module outline only to give an indication of the sort of topics that may be covered. Actual sessions held may differ.

### Week 1: Introduction

This session will introduce and examine the concept of sustainability addressing its three intermeshing aspects - economy, society and environment. The need to address each of these three aspects at once is a basic principle of sustainability discourse. The difficulties in doing so will be highlighted through contemporary critiques of 'problem-solution' reasoning which emphasize the tenacity of 'wicked problems' of sustainability. This raises the question of how 'education', broadly understood, might contribute to achieving sustainability goals. A set of principles underlying Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) is presented.

Indicative reading:

Lee, N.M. (2013) *Childhood and Biopolitics: Climate change, life processes and human futures*. London. Palgrave Macmillan. Chapters 6 and 7

### Week 2: ESD as a Global Project

ESD is a key focus of the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). It is also threaded through United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (2017). Through a range of initiatives and interventions, UNESCO seeks to influence and inspire change in the nature and role of education with the aim of transforming global society. In this session we ask:

- to what extent does this global ESD project embody the principles laid out in our introduction?
- what measures of success might be applied to ESD?
- To what extent can it address existing differences between global regions?

Indicative reading:

Lesley LeGrange 'Environmental Education after Sustainability' in Jickling, B. and Sterling, S.

### Week 8: ESD International Case Studies

In this session, we examine a range of case studies of UNESCO ESD projects. In each case we ask:

- In what ways does this embody ESD principles?
- How have curriculum and pedagogical challenges been addressed?
- How can outcomes be assessed?
- To what extent does it exemplify critical discourses about ESD?

Indicative Readings:

<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0023/002328/232888E.pdf>

[https://en.unesco.org/greencitizens/our stories](https://en.unesco.org/greencitizens/our%20stories)

Week 9: Futures of ESD

ESD is a set of responses by a global educational community to changing circumstances and needs. There is no reason to think that the need to adapt and respond will vanish. In this session we will examine some new ideas and approaches that are currently in development. We ask whether these are responding to new sets of issues and what futures for ESD are likely to come from them. Indicative reading:

Payne, P.G. (2016) What next? Post-critical materialisms in environmental education. *The Journal of Environmental Education*. 47 (2): 169-178

Week 10: Summary and conclusions

This session comprises an overview of the module, student posters on selected topics and preparation for assessment.

## Learning outcomes

By the end of the module, students should be able to:

- Demonstrate an understanding of the key debates within ESD.
- Demonstrate an informed understanding of the relationship between ESD educational institutions and local, regional and global education and sustainability policies.
- Demonstrate a capacity to connect global issues of ESD with the diversity of local ESD programmes.
- Demonstrate an ability to reflect on the relationship between ESD as goals, strategies and practices.
- Demonstrate a capacity to reflect on the desirability and feasibility of future ESD developments.

## Indicative reading list

Arlemalm-Hagser, E. and Sandberg, A. (2017) Early Childhood Education for Sustainability: The relation between young people's participation and agency. In Waller et al (eds) *The Sage Handbook of Outdoor Play and Learning*. London. Sage pp. 213-225

Barthes, A. and Lange, J.M. (2018) Researchers' positions and construction of curricula of education for sustainable development in France. *Journal of Curriculum Studies*. 50 (1): 96-112

Hellberg, S. and Knutson, B. (2018) Sustaining the Life Chance Divide: Education for sustainable development and the global biopolitical regime. *Critical Studies in Education*, 59(1): 93-107

Lee, N.M. (2013) *Childhood and Biopolitics: Climate change, life processes and human futures*. London. Palgrave Macmillan. Chapters 6 and 7

Lesley LeGrange 'Environmental Education after Sustainability' in Jickling, B. and Sterling, S. (2017) *Post-Sustainability and Environmental Education: Remaking Education for the Future*. London. Palgrave Macmillan

Lozano, R., Merrill, M., Sammalisto, K., Cuelemans, K., and Lozano, F.J. (2017) Connecting Competences and Pedagogical Approaches for Sustainable Development in Higher Education: A Literature Review and Framework Proposal. *Sustainability*, 9 (10): 1889

Ingrid Mula, Daniella Tilbury, Alexandra Ryan, Marlene Mader, Jana Dlouha, Clemens Mader, Javier Benayas, Jiri Dlouha, David Alba, (2017) "Catalysing Change in Higher Education for Sustainable Development: A review of professional development initiatives for university educators", *International Journal of Sustainability in Higher Education*, Vol. 18 Issue: 5, pp.798-

[View reading list on Talis Aspire](#)

## International

Addresses UN scale effort to use EDS to effect a global culture change toward sustainable lifestyles. Examines cases from a range of countries.

## Subject specific skills

Students should demonstrate a critical understanding of -

- the underlying values, theories and concepts relevant to education
- the diversity of learners and the complexities of the education process
- the complexity of the interaction between learning and local and global contexts, and the extent to which participants (including learners and teachers) can influence the learning process
- the societal and organisational structures and purposes of educational systems, and the possible implications for learners and the learning process
- constructively critique theories, practice and research in the area of education.

## Transferable skills

Active listening Cognitive flexibility Communication skills Complex problem solving Confidence Creativity Critical thinking

---

## Study

### Study time

Type	Required	Optional
Lectures	10 sessions of 2 hours (7%)	
Seminars	10 sessions of 1 hour (3%)	
Tutorials	(0%)	1 session of 15 minutes
Private study	270 hours (90%)	
Total	300 hours	

### Private study description

Independent study hours include background reading, completing reading/other tasks in preparation for timetabled teaching sessions, undertaking research using the library resources, follow-up reading work, working on individual and group projects, the completion of formative and summative assignments, revision.

## Costs

No further costs have been identified for this module.

---

## Assessment

You must pass all assessment components to pass the module.

### Assessment group A1

	<b>Weighting</b>	<b>Study time</b>
5000-Word Assignment Essay	100%	100 hours

### Feedback on assessment

Both formative and summative feedback is offered; formative through tutor comments on draft papers and summative through comments on formal Masters feedback sheet.

---

## Availability

### Courses

This module is Optional for:

- RIEA-X3X8 Postgraduate Research Doctorate in Education
  - Year 1 of X3X8 Education [EdD]
  - Year 2 of X3X8 Education [EdD]
- Year 1 of TIEA-X30F Postgraduate Taught Childhood in Society
- TEQA-X35R Postgraduate Taught Education (Part-time - 2 year)
  - Year 1 of X35R Education (Part-time - 2 years)
  - Year 2 of X35R Education (Part-time - 2 years)
- TIEA-X31L Postgraduate Taught Educational Innovation
  - Year 1 of X31L Educational Innovation
  - Year 1 of X31L Educational Innovation
  - Year 1 of XL05 Educational Innovation with Specialism in Drama
  - Year 3 of X31L Educational Innovation
  - Year 3 of X31L Educational Innovation
  - Year 4 of X31L Educational Innovation
  - Year 4 of X31L Educational Innovation
- TIEA-X31M Postgraduate Taught Educational Leadership and Management
  - Year 1 of X3M1 Educational Leadership and Management by Dissertation
  - Year 1 of X3M2 Educational Leadership and Management by Professional Route
  - Year 2 of X3M2 Educational Leadership and Management by Professional Route

- TEQS-X3AN Postgraduate Taught Global Education and International Development
  - Year 1 of X3AN Global Education and International Development
  - Year 2 of X3AN Global Education and International Development
- TEQA-C8X3 Postgraduate Taught Psychology and Education
  - Year 1 of C8X3 Psychology and Education
  - Year 2 of C8X3 Psychology and Education
  - Year 3 of C8X3 Psychology and Education
- TEQA-C8X4 Postgraduate Taught Psychology and Education
  - Year 1 of C8X4 Psychology and Education
  - Year 2 of C8X4 Psychology and Education
- Year 1 of TEQA-X3V7 Postgraduate Taught in Islamic Education: Theory and Practice (Full-time)
- Year 2 of TEQA-X3V9 Postgraduate Taught in Islamic Education: Theory and Practice (Part-time - 2 years)
- TEQA-X3V5 Postgraduate Taught in Islamic Education: Theory and Practice (Part-time - 3 years)
  - Year 1 of X3V5 Islamic Education: Theory and Practice (Part-time - 3 years)
  - Year 2 of X3V5 Islamic Education: Theory and Practice (Part-time - 3 years)

This module is Option list A for:

- Year 1 of TIEA-X30F Postgraduate Taught Childhood in Society
- TIEA-X30C Postgraduate Taught Drama and Theatre Education
  - Year 1 of X3C2 Drama and Theatre Education by Dissertation
  - Year 1 of X3C3 Drama and Theatre Education by Portfolio Route
- Year 1 of TEQA-X35R Postgraduate Taught Education (Part-time - 2 year)
- TIEA-X31L Postgraduate Taught Educational Innovation
  - Year 1 of X31L Educational Innovation
  - Year 1 of X31L Educational Innovation
- Year 1 of TIEA-X31M Postgraduate Taught Educational Leadership and Management

This module is Option list B for:

- Year 1 of TEQA-X35Q Postgraduate Taught Education (Full-time)
- TIEA-X31L Postgraduate Taught Educational Innovation
  - Year 2 of X31L Educational Innovation
  - Year 2 of X31L Educational Innovation
- TIEA-X31M Postgraduate Taught Educational Leadership and Management
  - Year 1 of X3M1 Educational Leadership and Management by Dissertation
  - Year 1 of X3M1 Educational Leadership and Management by Dissertation
- Year 1 of TEQS-X3AN Postgraduate Taught Global Education and International Development
- Year 1 of TEQA-X3V9 Postgraduate Taught in Islamic Education: Theory and Practice (Part-time - 2 years)
- Year 1 of TEQA-X3V5 Postgraduate Taught in Islamic Education: Theory and Practice (Part-time - 3 years)

This module is Option list D for:

- Year 3 of TEQA-X3V5 Postgraduate Taught in Islamic Education: Theory and Practice (Part-time - 3 years)