

A MESSAGE FROM NICK BRAITHWAITE



Dear Colleagues,

We are now just a matter of weeks away from COP26 taking place in Glasgow, which continues to focus our current sustainability activity and act as a catalyst for future work. I



was delighted to formally [announce our participation in the Green Zone](#) earlier this month on OU Life. Our 90-minute event, 'Ancient Knowledge and Modern Thinking: Climate Perspectives in Folk Art', will take place on Sunday 7 November at 1pm, in the Glasgow Science Centre. We will be sending a panel of OU contributors to the event, and you have the opportunity to meet these speakers at a lunchtime webinar on Wednesday 20 October as part of the ongoing Go Green events programme. [Sign up to attend the event via Eventbrite here.](#)

I also had the pleasure of notifying our OU observers of their official COP26 role – selection was based on an anonymised panel evaluation of expressions of interest and consideration of travel plans. Professor Stephen Peake will be joined by Kate Symons, Sabine Gundel, Leslie Mabon, Graeme Smith, Rosalie Faithfull, Gillian Mawdsley, David Edwards and Clive Mitchell in attending the summit. Many thanks to the many worthy colleagues who did not make the final list.

Our OU observers will have access to the blue and green zones throughout the conference, meaning they will be able to sit in on the negotiations as well as look around the 150+ exhibitions at COP26. To share their experiences and report back on the event, our observers will be working with MarComms to plan how best to do this throughout and following on from COP26.

Our 2030 Vision

In [my last bulletin](#), I shared an update about our 2030 sustainability ambition (outlined below) and welcomed your feedback. I would like to invite colleagues to join me tomorrow (Wed 13 October) for a discussion of the high level 2030 vision, which will form the basis for the OU sustainability policy – please [sign up for this Go Green via Eventbrite here](#). In the session, we will look at a succinct statement of a 2030 vision and discuss solutions for what needs to happen to reach this status – we want to involve you in the "who and how" of realising the vision, drawing on your knowledge and experience, whatever your role. If you have any questions for me to answer, please email them to sustainability@open.ac.uk today.

By 2030 we shall be confident that:
Our creation and sharing of knowledge and skills enriches and transforms society, enabling our students to deliver on the Sustainable Development Goals which are visible in our curriculum, our research, and our enterprise activities.
Our student-centred pedagogy enables responsible behaviours and disruptive innovations.
Our teaching model is low environmental impact and we transparently report on this.
Our course content and resources, across all disciplines, challenge unsustainability and exemplify sustainability through theories, application, stories, and practice - ensuring 21st century transformative competencies.
Our students turn to us for multi-disciplinary lifelong learning, upskilling, and reskilling for decarbonisation, decolonisation, and the just transition to a sustainable society.
Our research is recognised for its policy influence and impact which enables implementation of sustainability in all areas of society.
Our stakeholders see us as a trusted source of informed debate and holistic understanding through a range of contemporary media and partnerships.
Our staff proactively engage to embed sustainability in all roles, meeting or exceeding legislative requirements across our business operations in the four nations.

You can also now catch-up Professor David Humphreys recent Go Green session, where he explored environmental policy and the response to the climate crisis during a global pandemic. [Watch the recording here.](#)

Sustainability in the Curriculum

To help us deliver our new institutional sustainability policy, we are looking to review our current sustainability-related curriculum and map this against the [17 UN Sustainable Development Goals](#) (SDGs). Please help us to do this by identifying any modules that pertain to sustainability using [this e-form](#), which will help fill in some of the landscape before we complete a more formal mapping.

BBC

The BBC recently announced extensive coverage plans for COP26, bringing audiences to the heart of November's summit with special programming, news and digital coverage. [You can read the BBC announcement here.](#)

We are also supporting COP26 in a number of ways through our partnership with the BBC. We are currently co-producing a special programme for Countryfile as part of the "Plant Britain" sustainability campaign to be broadcast during COP and on Radio Four/Sounds - BBC Inside Science will be exploring key themes in more detail. As part of BBC Education's Regenerators campaign, we are co-producing a series of videos for BBC Bitesize 16 plus age group about green careers. Finally, there will also be a special pre-screening at COP of one of the programmes from our new major series with David Attenborough, Green Planet. All episodes will be on BBC One early next year.

Student Voice Week presents an opportunity for us to build the student perspective into our Sustainability plans - if you have other ideas on ways we can involve our key stakeholders, then please do [get in touch](#).

With continued optimism,

Nick

Prof. Nicholas Braithwaite

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