

Planning for sustainable development

Which of these is most important?: guidance notes

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Section 1

Introduction

This is the second in a series of activities which focuses on the importance of sustainability and consultation in the planning process. In this activity learners use a card sort as a basis for a discussion on a range of sustainability statements. They will then consider the importance of different aspects of sustainability in the planning process.

The activities take place over a number of sessions. This needs careful planning to ensure continuity and to get the most out of the tasks. Each session builds on the last. You will find an overview of the activities in the full Teacher* guidance document, with indicative timings to help you.

You will be using a range of teaching and learning approaches, but there is a particular focus on using, improving and reflecting on discussion skills, giving feedback and using collaborative working techniques. Make the learners aware that they are developing their personal and learning skills as well as gaining new knowledge. This helps them to become more 'expert' learners.

We have included sheets for you and your learners to record your reflections on using these activities in Section 2.

* We use the word 'teacher' as a generic term to include teachers, tutors, trainers, lecturers and instructors in the further education (FE) system.

Learning objectives

Objectives for learners

Learners should be able to:

- discuss a range of sustainability statements

- assess their level of importance to specific built environments.

Literacy, language and numeracy (LLN) objective

- SLd/L2.4: Support opinions and arguments with evidence.

Learning outcomes for learners

After completing this activity learners should:

- understand the impact of construction activities on the environment.

Learning outcomes for teachers

After completing these activities you should be able to:

- practise embedding LLN into the vocational learning process
- use active learning methods
- reflect on and evaluate your teaching experience
- encourage learners to talk about their learning experience.

Resources required

- Sustainability importance cards.
- White board and markers.

Starting points

Learners will need discussion skills at Level 1. The activity aims to move learners on to discussion and listening skills at Level 2. Learners will also need information and communication technology (ICT) skills at Level 1 to be able to access the internet. The learners will be asked to read a document that they have found to pick out the main points which is also a Level 1 task. They will build to Levels 2 and 3 by synthesising and presenting information in their own words, both orally and in writing.

Suggested approach (Indicative timing: 40 minutes)

Activity 2: Which is the most important?

Stage 1 (In groups) (Indicative timing: 15 minutes)

Give out **Learner sheet 1** and the **Planning for sustainability cards**. Create three categories to classify the cards:

- very important
- reasonably important

- not important.

Encourage learners to think about a particular development that might be made in your area. They should consider the points on the cards from their own perspective. Tell learners that the aim is to get them to reflect and give a full and clear explanation for their answers.

There is a set of context cards which gives some background information to each card. Do not give these to the learners.

Once they have finished categorising the cards, they should sort each category into order of importance. Encourage learners to create cards for any other factor they think should be included. Give feedback using assessment for learning techniques.

Extension activity

You can ask learners to sort the cards according to different perspectives:

- economic
- social
- environmental
- social enterprise
- other.

Differentiation

Allow learners to work in pairs so that those with language or reading difficulties are not disadvantaged. Each pair can take a turn to read and place a card.

Stage 2 (In groups) (Indicative timing: 15 minutes)

At the end of the activity, groups should be encouraged to move to another table and look at another group's cards. They should:

- discuss similarities and differences between groups' responses and reasons for categorising them in a particular ways
- discuss statements that have been added to the blank cards
- update their glossary.

If you punch a single hole in the cards, you could ask learners to create a display of the cards using map pins on the wall display boards.

You could create an amalgamated version of the learners' work on the interactive whiteboard. It would be useful for Activity 3 in this resource.

Stage 3 (Whole group then individually) (Indicative timing: 10 minutes)

Ask the learners about their learning experience in this activity. Draw attention to the methods you have used.

Ask learners to assess their reasoning skills for this activity using the **Learner reflection sheet** in Section 2.

Learner sheet 1

Which is the most important?

Stage 1 (In groups)

Think about a particular development that might be proposed or is taking place in your area. Consider the points on the cards from your own perspective. Give a full and clear explanation for your choices.

- 1) Take a pack of the **Planning for sustainability cards**. Create three headings:
 - a) very important
 - b) reasonably important
 - c) not important.
- 2) Take it in turns to read out each card.
- 3) Place it under one of the categories. Give at least one reason for your choice.
- 4) Once all your cards are placed, sort each category into order of importance.
- 5) Create cards to add statements that you think are missing.

Extension activity

Sort the cards according to different viewpoints:

- economic
- social
- environmental
- social enterprise.

Stage 2 (In groups)

Move to another table. Looking at the cards of another group, discuss:

- what is similar
- what is different
- which cards they have added.

Update your glossary.

Stage 3 (Individually)

Evaluate your reasoning skills using the **Learner reflection sheet**.

Section 2

Learner reflection sheet

How are my discussion and learning skills?

Name..... Date.....

Activity 2: Which of these is the most important?

	Skill	I do this well	I'm okay at this	I need to work on this
SLd/L2.4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Did I support my opinions and arguments with evidence? 			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Did I think through the reasons before talking about them? 			

I could improve my reasoning skills by:

Reflection on learning

Learning approaches	I do this well	I'm okay at this	I need to work on this
Working individually.			
Contributing to group work.			
Listening to other people.			
Making helpful suggestions to other learners.			
Accepting suggestions about how to improve your work.			
Giving clear oral explanations.			
Asking clear questions.			
Using the internet to select information.			
Making notes that use key words.			

I learn best by:

I find it difficult to learn when:

I could improve my learning by:

Next time I will:

Teacher reflection sheet

How confident am I in my ability to embed LLN?

Was I able to help learners to:		I do this well	I'm okay at this	I need to work on this
SLd/L1.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> respect the turn taking rights of other people during the discussion? 			
SLd/L1.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> use eye contact or gestures to show that they wanted to contribute? 			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> allow people to finish what they were saying? 			

What would help me to embed LLN into my teaching?	I do this well	I'm okay at this	I need to work on this
Show the learners that I value the work on LLN.			
Liaise with LLN or Mathematics specialists.			
Work with a Subject Learning Coach.			
Work with other people who are teaching my subject to plan how to embed LLN.			
Have relevant knowledge of the LLN core curriculum.			
Look at the National Research and Development Centre for Adult Literacy and Numeracy (NRDC) research which shows how other teachers have done it.			
<p>The action I will take to improve embedding of LLN in my teaching is:</p>			

How confident am I in using these approaches?

If you have adapted these resources and used different approaches please edit this sheet accordingly. You may find it helpful to read Section 3 before doing this self-assessment.

Teaching and learning approaches or activities Do I:	I do this well	I'm okay at this	I need to work on this
• facilitate group investigation effectively?			
• give time for peer review and feedback?			
• use differentiated questioning?			
• encourage learners to reflect on the development of their personal, learning and thinking skills?			
My key improvement targets are:			

How can I help my learners to become 'expert' learners?	I do this well	I'm okay at this	I need to work on this
I allow my learners to seek for information rather than giving it to them.			
I encourage my learners to explore and discuss information.			
I construct activities so that learners are confident to work independently.			
I work with a Subject Learning Coach to explore methods and approaches which will make learners more independent.			
I use a wide range of active learning methods.			
I get regular feedback from my learners about how they learn most effectively.			
I explain to learners the methods I am using and why they are effective.			
I show my learners how to plan effectively.			
I give timely and specific feedback to learners about their work.			
My learners have personalised learning plans which help them to know what they should be doing inside and outside the classroom.			
I will take these steps to enable my learners to become more 'expert':			

Context cards

<p>Design should include use of local materials</p> <p>Materials that are sourced locally reduce the need to transport materials long distances.</p>	<p>In keeping with existing structures</p> <p>The property developed is in keeping with the other existing properties around its location.</p>	<p>Creating a local identity</p> <p>Paying particular attention to the social environment of the surrounding community, the history and current use of the area.</p>
<p>Creating buildings with high energy usage</p> <p>The efficiency of design in relation to regulations, for example, part L of the building regulations.</p>	<p>Reducing the need for travel</p> <p>Property located near to existing transport infrastructure such as cycle paths, railways, or water transport.</p>	<p>Minimising materials and resource usage</p> <p>The construction materials used to produce the structure and the distance from the supply, such as using local materials or re-using existing materials within the proposed location.</p>
<p>Considering links to public transport</p> <p>For example, bus routes, railways, multiple car-user lanes, park and ride and so on.</p>	<p>Considering the management and maintenance of the buildings</p> <p>How does the design minimise the need for maintenance and ensure that maintenance can be easily undertaken? How will open spaces be managed and maintained?</p>	<p>Improve pedestrian routes</p> <p>For example, walkways, cycle paths, foot bridges and so on.</p>

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<p>Considering the impact on the natural environment</p> <p>How will the development affect natural features such as green spaces, trees, ponds, waterways and protected natural environments for plants or wildlife?</p>	<p>Creating an attractive environment</p> <p>What will it feel like for people living or working in the new development, what it is made of or what it looks like? What features will it include to enhance it?</p>	<p>Increase car journeys</p> <p>Will the development increase or decrease the number of journeys made?</p>
<p>Considering locally produced energy</p> <p>Are there any plans for micro-generation, for example, use of wind, geothermal energy or solar power?</p>	<p>Reducing waste</p> <p>The design, construction and use takes into account the potential waste it is likely to produce and how it can be efficiently managed.</p>	<p>Fitting into the local development plan</p> <p>The development is part of the overall plan for the community, area or region</p>
<p>Considering the lifespan or re-use of the buildings</p> <p>What is the intended life expectancy of the buildings, can they be adapted for different uses and can elements be removed and re-used?</p>	<p>Design should include use of local materials</p> <p>Materials that are easily sourced locally reduce the need for long distance transport.</p>	<p>Considering relationship with existing communities</p> <p>Structures are developed so that they do not damage the image and life-style of the existing community.</p>
<p>Improve cycle routes</p> <p>Safe and traffic free cycle routes with good cycle storage and security.</p>	<p>Including affordable housing</p> <p>Does any housing proposed include a range of affordable housing for local people?</p>	<p>Combining areas for work, living and leisure activities</p> <p>The creation of a community within a larger area where people can readily access work and leisure opportunities from their homes.</p>

Construction and the built environment

<p>Providing local access to services, such as shops, schools and so on</p> <p>Are these easily accessible to the community?</p>		
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Section 3

Guidance on teaching and learning approaches

Literacy, language and numeracy (LLN)

Recent research has found that programmes that embed LLN lead to a 16% improvement in retention and achievement of vocational qualifications (Helen Casey *et al*, 2006).

In these activities learners will have the opportunity to develop their speaking and listening skills. Tell learners about the skill(s) to be developed in each activity and give specific guidance on how to improve. The notes on each activity help you to do this. Focus on developing one or two skills at a time. Your LLN specialist will also be able to advise you on other strategies and approaches.

As part of your continuing professional development (CPD) you can evaluate your own confidence to embed LLN into your teaching. Use the **Teacher reflection sheet** to do this. This can contribute to your CPD activity for the year.

Ask learners to self-assess their performance using the **Learner reflection sheet**. They can also set targets for improvement.

Glossary

The glossary is a feature of all the materials developed for Construction and the built environment (CBE) in this phase. We have included a glossary that you can adapt.

A range of technical terminology is used in planning sustainability. You can work with learners to develop personalised glossaries. Value the glossary by reviewing it on a regular basis. You may also want to refer learners to one of the following websites to help them in developing their glossaries:

www.esd.rgs.org/glossarypopup.html

www.greenconstruction.co.uk/glossary/default.asp

Co-operative learning

Most of the activities use co-operative learning. Learners work in pairs, teams and opposing groups. The teacher acts as the 'guide on the side'.

The tasks are structured to allow learners to explore information and to seek for meaning; in this way a deeper and more lasting learning takes place. Co-operative learning has been found to improve information acquisition, higher-level thinking skills, interpersonal and communication skills.

Think carefully about pairing and grouping learners. Place those with reading difficulties with those who are more proficient, for example.

Planning learning in multiple environments

Learners need to use their experience from visits to construction sites, general knowledge and research from the internet to complete these activities.

A visit to a site, or from a planning officer or designer involved in planning, will make the learning experience more meaningful.

Experiential learning

The learner activities in this resource are experiential. Learners are engaged in work-related experiences that allow them to make discoveries and to experiment. They can construct meaning and develop their understanding.

Activity 4 asks groups to look at the planning process from the standpoint of another person or opposition group. This activity should lead to affective (feeling) as well as cognitive (thinking) learning.

Assessment for learning

Giving specific and constructive feedback on how to improve in each task will enable learners to progress more effectively. It will also have a profound influence on learners' motivation and self-esteem.

There are opportunities for you to become involved in a learning conversation with individuals and groups to help them to identify where and how to focus their efforts.

Assessment for learning does not need to be teacher led. These activities include self-assessment and peer feedback which are both powerful forms of assessment for learning

Reflect on the teaching and learning approaches used in this activity

You could use **Teacher reflection sheet** when planning, or after using the activities in these resources. This enables you clearly to identify areas in which you may need development. You can use the instruments outlined below to plan and record the development of these skills. This can contribute to the development of your skills within the framework of the new overarching professional standards for teachers in the further education system.

The new professional standards can be downloaded from the LLUK website:
www.lifelonglearninguk.org/standards/new_prof_standards.html

The Institute for Learning (IfL) website, www.ifl.ac.uk can provide:

- a description of the CPD process
- a place for teachers to keep a record of their activities and achievements.

The joint Training and Development Agency for Schools/Lifelong Learning UK website supporting the workforce delivering Diplomas, www.teach14-19.org provides an online interactive training needs analysis for teachers of Diplomas.

If you have adapted these resources and used different approaches you can edit the Teacher reflection sheet accordingly. You should undertake this reflection and development with your Subject Learning Coach or another colleague and encourage your learners to give you feedback on the use of the approaches and the development of your skills.

References

Casey, Helen et al (2006) *“You wouldn’t expect a maths teacher to teach plastering...”* Embedding literacy, language and numeracy in post-16 vocational programmes – the impact on learning and achievement, NRDC, London.