

Sustainability Champion

The role

A Sustainability Champion is, “An individual who seeks to lead change in an organisation to transform that organisation into a smarter, more successful, and more sustainable enterprise. This individual may exist at any level within an organisation and in any type of organisation, from the Chief Executive Officer to administrative assistant, from Mayor to city staffer, from university president to student leader.” The Sustainability Dictionary

At the University of Kent our Sustainability Champions are a vital part of our delivery of sustainability actions, driving change and improvements in the departments and teams. Since 2010 the Sustainability Champions Network, which covers the Canterbury and Medway campuses, have delivered thousands of actions and ideas to improve sustainability at Kent.

The role

Sustainability Champions join a network of people working to advocate for sustainability at Kent and support local delivery of sustainability actions that support their department or the University more broadly in meeting it’s Sustainability ambitions and objectives.

Champions also play a vital role in identifying where we could be doing more and supporting solutions to make these things happen.



Main Responsibilities

1: Engaging with the network

By joining the network, you will have access to a collaborative Teams group where champions and the Sustainability Team communicate, coordinate and share key information. There are different work streams, training opportunities, resources and up to date news so for new champions this is a great place to find out what is happening, get inspiration for ideas, or join existing projects that interest you.

2: Advocating for sustainability

As a champion you will be advocating for sustainability within your role and using your influence to improve decision making in your area to reduce negative environmental impacts. This will look different depending on your role and department and the Sustainability Team will support you in this as part of your development as a champion.

3: Engaging in sustainable actions

This may be helping to coordinate an existing project; representing staff on a sustainability forum; coming up with a bespoke project for your department; or anything else that supports sustainable actions at the University. These actions can be small, ongoing or large scale. This will depend on the time you have available, your ambitions and who is engaged. Whatever you do, every action counts.

4: Shout about your successes

Champions record and share their achievements and challenges, not only to help with the collation of the Sustainability Annual Round Up but also so others can learn and replicate in their own areas. Champions are encouraged to share things through the Teams group, as internal staff news, and as part of our Earth Day Round Up that happens every April.



Main responsibilities continued...

5: Have fun and build your Sustainability skillset!

As a champion you will find a group of likeminded people to share with, work with and hopefully find solutions and positive actions with to address your sustainability concerns. As part of the network, you will be encouraged to develop your sustainability skills and knowledge through suggested training, resource lists and bespoke workshops that champions have requested.

There will also be opportunities for networking and there is always an onus on having fun and getting enthused about sustainability.

6: Contact Point

Champions are the first port of call for colleagues and students within your team/department who may have sustainability questions or ideas. As champion your role will be to signpost people to information, others that can help, or support their projects yourself if you have the capacity.

Interested?

If you are interested in the role and want to know more information about it, please get in touch with the Sustainability Coordinator Emily Mason for an informal chat.

Please also share this document with your line manager to get their thoughts and input. There is further information in the rest of this document about time commitments, expectations, and benefits to the individual and department.



Who should be a Sustainability Champion?

Anybody who is interested! We only ask that you are:

- enthusiastic about sustainability and the environment, and willing to learn more about current global issues
- able to commit a certain amount of time to the role and have the permission of your line manager
- able and willing to attend some workshops, training sessions and events

Successful champions tend to have the following attributes: optimistic, collaborative, approachable, facilitative, motivating. The “perfect” sustainability champion isn’t someone that necessarily has all of the above however, they are someone that wants to learn and is able to bring people together that have additional skills and enable them to get involved.

As part of the role, you are offered regular training not only on sustainability but also on developing your own skills to be a successful champion.

Benefits to the individual for becoming a champion:

- Take part in community actions and be part of a network
- Develop your skill set/enhance your employability
- Influence and drive the change you wish to see
- Be rewarded and recognised for your work
- Be engaged with and drive positive action

Benefits to the department for having a champion:

- Up skilling of staff
- Help towards achieving departmental goals
- Reduce resource use
- Improve staff engagement and satisfaction
- Achieve operational excellence
- Enhanced reputation and recognition
- Align with the University strategic objectives

Time Commitment

Please scan and send a copy of this page to the Sustainability Coordinator.

Time Commitment

The time commitment required for this role is around 15 – 60 mins a week, however this is not every week and is flexible.

Some champions like to contribute weekly to the network with small actions e.g. sharing news, whilst others focus on specific activities as one offs e.g. carrying out a sustainability audit of their department's activities.

Because of this time commitment we require the Sustainability Champion and their line manager to sign a declaration that acknowledges this and commits to this.

Whilst Champions are able to use their [volunteering time](#) for this, we would encourage champions and line managers to integrate this into their work time as this is directly delivering against University objectives so should not be thought of as a 'nice thing to do' but a strategic opportunity.

As mentioned above, the role is completely flexible so you will never be asked by the Sustainability Team to complete a task or attend events/workshops that conflict with your day-to-day work which will always take precedence over your champions role.

_____ (*insert name of team/department*) **confirms that**
_____ (*insert name of champion*) **will act as our Sustainability**
Champion and will be supported in delivering the role described above.

Signed:

Sustainability Champion

Line Manager

Objectives

As a starting point it can be useful to set a year one objective for what you would like to achieve in your role as a Sustainability Champion. You may be brand new to the role, or an existing champion that is refreshing this form.

Your objective can be a specific personal goal e.g., attending training opportunities to build up your skillset, or a project goal e.g. Run a switch off campaign in your department or incorporate sustainability case studies in your teaching.

Either way, your objective will be bespoke to you, something that inspires you to act, and is achievable for you. You do not have to fill this out on day one as it may take you some time to think of something suitable. Please feel free to come back to this once you have been in the network for a little while. You may want to discuss this objective with your line manager and/or the Sustainability Coordinator. Once you have decided on your year one objective, please do share this with the Sustainability Coordinator.

Year One Objective...

Day One Check List

- Introduce yourself in the Teams group and fill out a champion's profile form so others can get to know you
- Let colleagues know in your department that you are their Sustainability Champion and what that means
- Take a look at the training opportunities, upcoming events and recent chats in the Sustainability Teams groups for activities, actions and discussions you can get involved with
- Book in a chat with the Sustainability Coordinator to discuss potential ideas, projects and activities in your department