

# **SPECIALIST STATUS IN EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (SSED)**

**THE RATIONALE AND THINKING BEHIND THE PILOT**

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# FOREWORD

**As we navigate an era where sustainability is no longer an option but an imperative, the Education and Training Foundation (ETF) stands at the forefront of integrating this critical agenda into the core of professional education. The development of the Specialist Status in Education for Sustainable Development (SSED) represents a significant milestone in our ongoing commitment to fostering excellence within the Further Education (FE) and Skills sector.**

In collaboration with the Environmental Association for Universities and Colleges (EAUC), this initiative embodies the power of joint working, pooling expertise and insights to drive meaningful change across the education landscape.

In an age where the demand for sustainability competencies is rapidly increasing across all sectors, the SSED is more than just a recognition of expertise; it is a testament to our dedication to upholding the highest standards of teaching, leadership, and professional development. This initiative aligns seamlessly with our strategic objectives to drive professionalism, improve teaching and learning, champion inclusion and enable sector change.

Quality and standards are at the heart of what we do at ETF. The SSED is designed not only to acknowledge the exceptional capabilities of professionals who are leading the way in Education for Sustainable Development (ESD), but to ensure that these high standards are consistently met and exceeded. By developing this status, we are setting a benchmark for what excellence looks like in the integration of sustainability within educational practices.

Furthermore, this initiative recognises the unwavering professional commitment of educators and leaders who are striving to make a tangible impact. The SSED is a reflection of the sector's collective efforts to prepare our learners for the challenges of tomorrow by equipping them with the knowledge, skills, and behaviours needed to thrive in a sustainable future.

The development of the SSED has been a collaborative endeavour, enriched by our partnership with the EAUC. Their expertise and shared vision for a sustainable education system have been instrumental in shaping this milestone achievement.

I am immensely proud of the collaborative work that has gone into the development of the SSED, and I am confident that this initiative will play a pivotal role in enhancing the quality of education and training in the UK. As we move forward, let us continue to champion sustainability and excellence in all that we do, ensuring that the FE and Skills sector remains a beacon of innovation and leadership in these critical areas.

## Dr Vikki Smith

Executive Director of Education & Standards  
Education and Training Foundation (ETF)

# INTRODUCTION

## The Education and Training Foundation (ETF) is spearheading the development of a Specialist Status in Education for Sustainable Development (SSESD).

This is proposed to be the first of many statuses that recognise expertise and impact across a range of themes. A key aim of these new statuses is to recognise and enhance expertise in critical areas and align with ETF's key strategic objectives to:



### **Drive professionalism:**

We will champion professionalism and grow the evidence base of education and leadership practice making FE and Skills a rewarding career destination.



### **Improve teaching and learning:**

We will ensure consistency in learner experience by setting clear competences and conduct required to enter and maintain professional status within FE and Skills.



### **Champion inclusion:**

We will tackle inequalities in the FE and Skills workforce, supporting routes to employment and career development by providing lifelong learning to all.



### **Enable sector change:**

We will convene sector change and respond to FE and Skills workforce needs by working in partnership.

Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) has been chosen as a pilot to develop a standardised methodology, test assumptions and create a new status for professionals who work in the FE and Skills sector to add real value to their roles. This initiative aligns with the sector's evolving needs and contributes to the continuous improvement of teaching and leadership quality.

Since this is a new and emerging approach, the SSESD is being co-created by ETF with support of both the Environmental Association for Universities and Colleges (EAUC) and representatives from across the sector who make up an external expert panel. This report outlines our rationale for the initiative, the data sources we've drawn upon to inform our work, our methodology and the framework that's being proposed as the backbone of the status. We aim to demonstrate transparency about the initiative, the decisions and compromises we've made, and to build confidence in the pilot. This approach aligns with the shared values of ETF and EAUC, ensuring that we collaborate with integrity and expertise.

## KEY TERMS

|                                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|---------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Advanced Teacher Status (ATS)               | <p>A professional status which demonstrates mastery in teaching and learning which also confers Chartered Teacher Status. It is the highest nationally recognised accreditation pathway for those working in the FE and Skills sector.</p> <p><a href="https://set.et-foundation.co.uk/your-career/advanced-teacher-status">https://set.et-foundation.co.uk/your-career/advanced-teacher-status</a></p> |
| Climate education                           | <p>Teaching students about climate science, sustainability practices and the socio-economic impacts of climate change, preparing them for green jobs and fostering environmental stewardship. It integrates environmental awareness into vocational training, ensuring learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to contribute to a low-carbon economy.</p>                                      |
| Continued professional development (CPD)    | <p>Ongoing training and education for professionals to enhance their skills, knowledge, and expertise throughout their careers.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) | <p>Teaching and learning practices that equip individuals with the knowledge, skills, and behaviours necessary to shape a sustainable future.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| ESD competencies                            | <p>The knowledge, skills and attitudes required to promote and implement sustainable practices in personal and professional contexts.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Equity, diversity and inclusion             | <p>Principles ensuring fair treatment, opportunities, and representation for all individuals, regardless of their backgrounds or characteristics, within educational and professional settings.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Green jobs                                  | <p>Employment opportunities that contribute to preserving or restoring the environment. All jobs can and should be green jobs, but this term is often used to specifically refer to roles in sectors that directly contribute to a sustainable future, for example in renewable energy systems, nature conservation, and sustainable agriculture.</p>                                                   |
| Green skills                                | <p>Skills and knowledge that enable individuals to support and implement sustainable practices and technologies in their work.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| Professional Standards                      | <p>Established criteria to support and inspire the professional learning and career development of those working in the FE and Skills sector.</p> <p><a href="https://www.et-foundation.co.uk/professional-standards/">https://www.et-foundation.co.uk/professional-standards/</a></p>                                                                                                                  |
| Professional status                         | <p>Recognition of an individual's qualifications, expertise, and adherence to the standards of their profession.</p> <p><a href="https://set.et-foundation.co.uk/your-career/professional-status-register">https://set.et-foundation.co.uk/your-career/professional-status-register</a></p>                                                                                                             |

## KEY TERMS

|                                              |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|----------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Qualified Teacher Learning and Skills (QTLS) | A professional status that demonstrates educators' progression and commitment to excellence within the FE and Skills sector.<br><a href="https://set.et-foundation.co.uk/your-career/qtls">https://set.et-foundation.co.uk/your-career/qtls</a>               |
| Specialist status                            | Specialist statuses validate current expert knowledge, skills, and behaviours within educational settings in the FE and Skills sector. They ensure and sustain an individual's impact and influence on other professionals, learners, and your organisation.  |
| Sustainability                               | The practice of meeting current needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own, encompassing environmental, social, and economic dimensions.                                                                                  |
| Universal curriculum entitlement             | The principle that all learners should have access to education for sustainable development, ensuring they gain the knowledge, skills, and behaviours needed to contribute to a sustainable future, regardless of their background, field, or level of study. |
| Whole organisation approach                  | A strategy where every aspect of an organisation, including its policies, practices, and culture, is aligned towards achieving sustainability goals.                                                                                                          |



# WHY A SPECIALIST STATUS?

The development of specialist statuses more broadly seeks to:

1

**Address specialised needs:**

The FE and Skills sector is increasingly recognising the importance of specialised expertise in key areas. These credentials provide a structured framework to acknowledge and reward professionals excelling in specific domains.

2

**Enhance professional development:**

The additional credentials contribute to ongoing professional development by encouraging educators and leaders to stay abreast of the latest advancements and best practices in their chosen specialisms. The specialist status will also link to other membership benefits.

3

**Attract and retain talent:**

The availability of specialised credentials enhances the sector's appeal, attracting individuals who are passionate about specific areas such as sustainability. This contributes to talent retention and recruitment efforts of organisations in FE and Skills.

4

**Improve sector reputation:**

The recognition of specialised credentials elevates the sector's reputation, attracting top talent and fostering a culture of excellence.

5

**Meet diverse needs:**

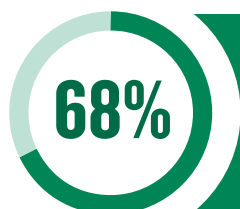
Addressing sustainability, equity, diversity, inclusion, edtech, and mental health caters to the diverse needs of students, making education more responsive and inclusive.



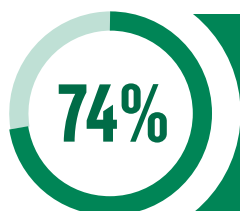
The development of the SSED is driven by a growing recognition of the critical role the FE and Skills sector has in delivering sustainability goals both domestically and globally. The SSED spotlights Professional Standards for Teaching and Trainers in Further Education and Skills:

### **(PS2) Promote and embed ESD across learning and working practices.**

Research conducted by ETF highlights a significant demand for professional development in ESD within the FE and Skills sector.



68% feel that the current UK post-16 education system does not adequately educate learners on sustainability issues.



74% of teaching staff feel that they haven't received adequate training to embed sustainability in their work nor to educate learners about sustainability or climate change.

There is a strong preference for CPD opportunities that accommodate time constraints, such as asynchronous online learning and resources that can be accessed in one's own time (ETF, 2021).

ESD are interconnected but distinct concepts. Sustainability refers to the practice of meeting current needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own, encompassing environmental, economic, and social dimensions. In contrast, ESD, as defined by UNESCO:

"empowers learners to take informed decisions and responsible actions for environmental integrity, economic viability, and a just society, for present and future generations, while respecting cultural diversity" (UNESCO, 2019). ESD focuses on equipping individuals with the knowledge, skills, behaviours and attitudes necessary to shape a sustainable future. It promotes lifelong learning and is an integral part of quality education, fostering a holistic understanding of sustainability issues and encouraging proactive engagement in sustainable practices.

Whilst there are means for sustainability practitioners to demonstrate their relevant competencies and capabilities, for example, through IEMA membership or Chartered Environmentalist status, there isn't an equivalent for people to demonstrate their ESD competencies and capabilities. The development of SSED seeks to remedy this.



# WHO IS SSED FOR?

**The specialist status has been designed to be inclusive of anyone who works in the FE and Skills sector. It is not purely for teaching and learning staff as we recognise that anyone can contribute to ESD, particularly when whole institution approaches are deployed well (Tilbury, 2011, and Climate Commission for UK Higher and Further Education, 2020).**

Eligibility criteria are being designed to be as inclusive as possible; it's not just ringfenced to teaching staff. This recognises the breadth of different ways people can develop and demonstrate their ESD expertise. As such, it's likely eligibility criteria to undertake the programme won't be prescriptive but will open participation in SSED to those who meet requirements such as:

- be working in an educational or training organisation within FE and Skills, either in paid or voluntary basis
- demonstrate support from your organisation
- be in a position to demonstrate a high level of effective practice and application of ESD in an educational environment<sup>1</sup>
- have opportunities to broaden advanced knowledge, skills and behaviours related to ESD policy and practice at the level of an expert practitioner to continue demonstrating the most effective practice in your own setting<sup>2</sup>
- have opportunities to apply ESD knowledge, skills and behaviours with your own role, professional setting and/or organisation
- have opportunities to evidence impact of the SSED developmental process on your own practice, learners, colleagues or organisation in accordance with the nine competencies in the programme framework.

There is no requirement to hold formal qualifications in ESD to access the programme.

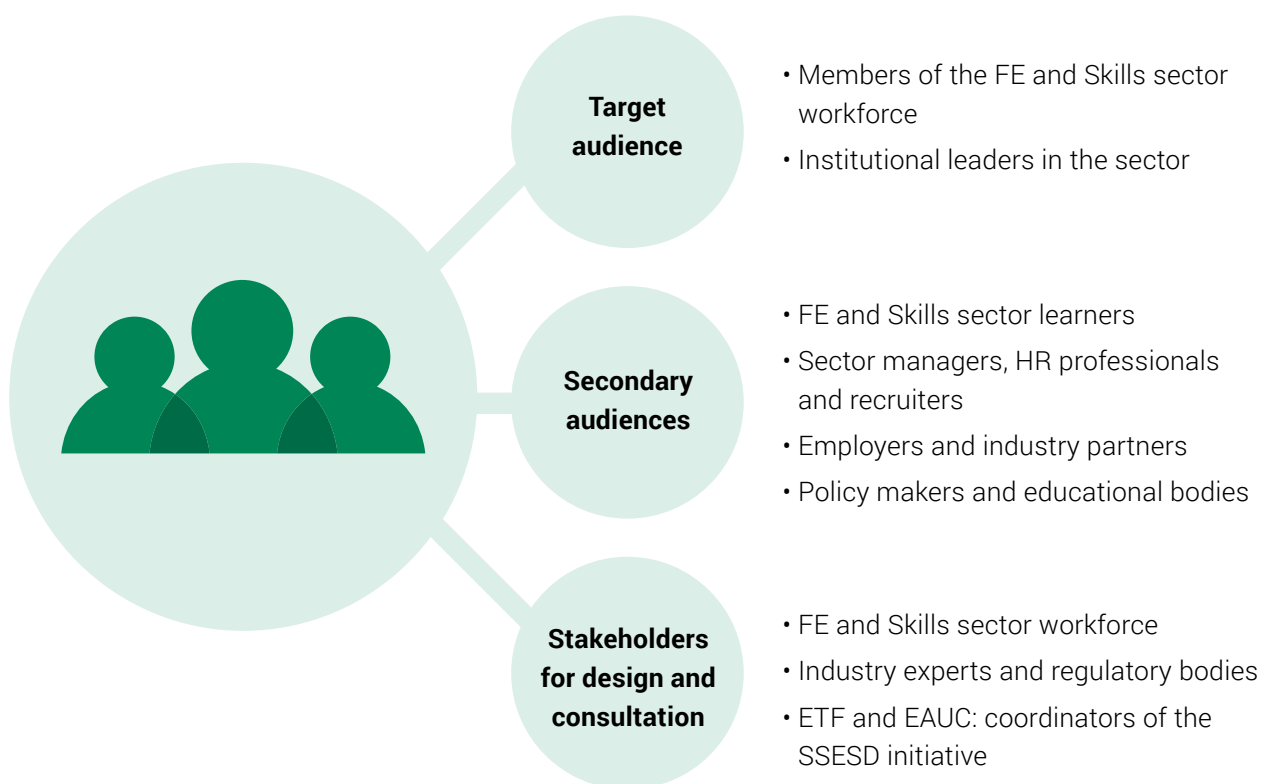


<sup>1</sup> The SSED process validates and confirms existing advanced knowledge, skills, behaviours and effective practice related to ESD. The programme does not contain learning material.

<sup>2</sup> The SSED is not suitable for those seeking an introductory programme to ESD. Applicants who are currently building their knowledge and skills (current practice and application of ESD) in ESD may need to undertake CPD prior to registering for the SSED programme.

All eligibility criteria for ETF statuses are subject to period review and [ETF's website](#) should be used for up-to-date details on programmes, statuses and eligibility criteria.

Throughout the develop of SSED the following audiences have been considered:



SSED is a status conferred to individuals. It is not an organisational kitemark or demonstration of ESD practice across a provider's workforce. Organisational recognition in this form does exist, for example, through the [Responsible Futures](#) programme, [Eco-Schools](#) (which some FE and Skills sector organisations are eligible for) and the forthcoming Climate Action Awards commissioned by the Department for Education.



# DEVELOPING THE STATUS: OUR METHODOLOGY

**Given the strong alignment of values, strategic direction and complementary nature of their audiences and expertise, EAUC were commissioned to support ETF in the development of the SSED and its pilot. They've worked as collaborative partners in the design and delivery of the methodology to develop the status.**

Key stages in the development of the status have included:

- **research** – ensuring that the status SSED offers the FE and Skills sector a unique value proposition and aligns with existing external standards and their equivalents in the UK and internationally
- **stakeholder mapping and consultation** – using a twofold process to consult broadly with our target audiences and their (prospective) employers, as well as consultation with sector ESD experts through the establishment of an external expert panel to ensure the status and the processes used are fit for purpose
- **design and development** – developing and testing eligibility criteria, status competency framework, all key elements of the candidate journey including on programme requirements and content for the learning management system through which the scheme will operate, assessment framework and processes including moderation and feedback provision, alumni and next step options and renewal requirements
- **pilot review and refinement** – analysing feedback collected and using this to make amendments to the status and how it's delivered
- **marketing, promotion and sector engagement** – developing and executing suitable marcomms plans to reach our target audiences for the external expert panel as well as pilot and future participants
- **governance, oversight and reporting** – ensuring internal reference groups are established to inform the status' development, as well as collating and presenting insights to support good governance and project management, both of which are overseen by ETF.



The proposed timescales of the status’ development can be found below. As with all projects, these are subject to change.

|                              | Apr-24 | May-24 | Jun-24 | Jul-24 | Aug-24 | Sep-24 | Oct-24 | Nov-24 | Dec-24 | Jan-25 | Feb-25 | Mar-25 |
|------------------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Initial research             |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |
| Internal and external panels |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |
| Process and framework design |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |
| Live pilot                   |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |
| Evaluation and refinement    |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |
| Promotion                    |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |
| Launch of 2025 programme     |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |

The following section outlines how the broader ESD ecosystem has been considered in the development of the SSESD. It’s seen as critical that the SSESD framework aligns with existing initiatives, reducing duplication and seeking alignment and clear progression pathways for ESD practitioners.



# WHERE SSED FITS IN THE ESD ECOSYSTEM

**The landscape of ESD in the UK is evolving rapidly, reflecting a national and international commitment to integrating sustainability into educational practices. This shift aligns with global standards and addresses the increasing demand for sustainability competencies, thereby contributing to the continuous improvement of teaching and leadership quality.**

Sustainability is becoming increasingly mainstream within the FE and Skills sector. Key developments include:

- the establishment of the Department for Education's climate change and sustainability unit and the publication of their [strategy for the education and children's services systems](#) – implementation mechanisms such as the establishment of the [National Education Nature Park](#), Climate Ambassadors scheme, [Sustainability Support for Education](#) service and [Net Zero Accelerator](#) are all underway
- ESD is recognised as a core educator competency in the professional standards for FE educators in [England](#), [Scotland](#) and [Northern Ireland](#)
- The Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education (IfATE) embedding relevant sustainability knowledge, skills and behaviours not just in occupational standards for 'green jobs' but across the [complete portfolio](#)
- Initial Teacher Education (ITE) routes into FE in England, including the QTLS route, which uses the Professional Standards; the [apprenticeship route](#) and the [minimum core](#) (which cover other ITE options) all contain explicit reference to ESD
- sustainability and ESD has recently been included for the first time in the [QAA Quality Code for Higher Education](#)
- introduction of the environmental sustainability principle within the [Association of College's Code of Good Governance](#) for FE college governors and trustees.

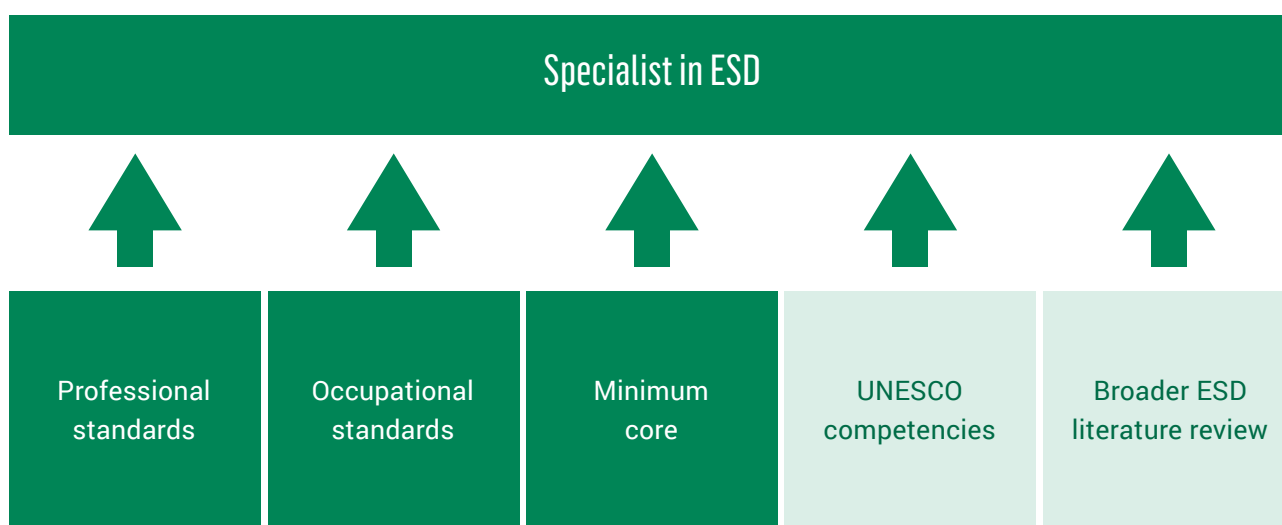
The increased focus on competency-based education, driven by the rise of Generative AI (GenAI), further strengthens the case for ESD as it inherently promotes the development of competencies over mere knowledge acquisition (Ewen, 2023).



While various programmes and frameworks address sustainability in education, a structured accreditation like the proposed Specialist Status in Education for Sustainable Development (SSED) is lacking. Notable initiatives supporting ESD competencies development include:

- Embedding ESD course: delivered by the ETF's membership offer and in partnership with EAUC, integrating ESD into teaching practices
- Green Changemakers: empowering FE and Skills staff to lead sustainability projects
- CPD resources: including guides for governors, leadership toolkits, communities of practice, educator toolkits, conferences, and events provided by ETF, EAUC and many others. An overview of CPD available to those in the sector has been developed by EAUC as part of their contribution to the delivery of the National Climate Education Action Plan.

However, these programmes do not provide individual professional recognition akin to ETF's QTLS and ATS. The SSED aims to fill this gap by offering a unique value proposition that aligns with other frameworks setting out and shaping professional competencies, including the Professional Standards and ITE frameworks outlined above as well as international frameworks, such as UNESCO's ESD competencies, the Inner Development Goals and the Rounder Sense of Purpose framework.



In terms of the broader literature review to inform the development of the SSED, this can be summarised below.

Academic research emphasises the integration of ESD into teacher training and CPD. Sterling (2010) advocates for a transformative approach to ESD, focusing on developing critical thinking, problem-solving, and systems thinking skills among educators. Barth et al. (2007) stress the need for interdisciplinary thinking and ethical reflection in teacher training.

In the realm of CPD within the FE and Skills sector, Lucas, Spencer, and Claxton (2012) highlight the importance of sustainability as a core element of vocational pedagogy. Their research underscores the necessity of CPD in maintaining high teaching standards and suggests that effective CPD programmes can significantly improve teaching quality and learner outcomes. Orr (1992) further supports this by advocating for ecological literacy as a foundational aspect of education.

The integration of ESD in curriculum and pedagogy is also critical. Wals (2012) and Tilbury (2011) both emphasise experiential learning, community engagement, and reflective practices as critical for effectively fostering sustainability mindsets in students.

Moreover, the role of ESD in enhancing employability is significant and well established. Svanström, Lozano-García, and Rowe (2008) demonstrate the link between ESD and employability, arguing that sustainability competencies are increasingly valued in the job market. Redman (2013) adds that exposure to ESD can inspire students to pursue careers in sustainable fields, underlining the importance of equipping educators with the skills to deliver ESD effectively.

This connection between ESD and employability is further substantiated by labour market insights that highlight the growing demand for sustainability skills across all sectors. There is a clear recognition of the economic benefits of transitioning to a sustainable economy, and numerous briefings from academia, industry, and trade organisations highlight the skills gap and the critical need for investment in skills and training to enable that transition. For instance, the Aldersgate Group have called for “sustainability and net zero delivery to be embedded across the whole education system and in training and lifelong learning” (Aldersgate Group, 2020).

The urgency of this transition is underscored by the current hiring trends in the UK. Hiring for green jobs is outpacing overall recruitment by up to 30 per cent, as reported by LinkedIn (Stone, 2024). The same report shows that despite this growth, only one in eight workers globally possesses the appropriate skills to contribute to sustainability efforts. Between February 2022 and February 2023, LinkedIn job postings requiring at least one green skill grew by a median of 15.2% (LinkedIn, 2023).

Deloitte UK’s “A Blueprint for Green Workforce Transformation” identifies the following four key sector trends that reflect the evolving demand for green skills (Deloitte and IEMA, 2022).

- 1 Expansion of skills and scope in existing specialist sustainability roles:** roles such as recycling operatives and sustainability managers are expanding in both scope and skill requirements.
- 2 Increased need for green skills in non-specialist roles:** professions such as marketing professionals and product designers now require green skills to integrate sustainability into their work.
- 3 Transition of workforces from unsustainable sectors to new roles:** workers from sectors such as oil rig marine engineering and vehicle assembly are transitioning to new roles that support sustainability.
- 4 Demand for green skills in new green sectors and organisations:** emerging sectors such as hydrogen production and carbon capture and storage are creating new roles, including hydrogen plant operatives and carbon capture engineers.

These trends underscore the critical need for targeted professional development and training programmes to equip the workforce with the necessary green skills. The integration of ESD into the education system is not just about enhancing employability but also about ensuring that the workforce is prepared to support the transition to a sustainable economy. By fostering sustainability competencies, educators can play a pivotal role in this transformation, thereby contributing to a more sustainable future for all.

Challenges in implementing ESD are well-documented. Experiences and perceptions of ESD by the FE and Skills sector workforce were researched by ETF extensively in 2021 – much data collected focused on challenges and barriers including the lack of relevant content in study programmes, lack of time, lack of personal knowledge, lack of encouragement in Ofsted's requirements and lack of student interest (ETF, 2021). Leal Filho (2010) identifies institutional resistance, lack of resources, and insufficient training as key barriers, but also points out the opportunities provided by growing recognition of sustainability in education. Mogren, Gericke, and Scherp (2019) advocate for targeted professional development and institutional support to overcome these challenges.

Investment in ESD can also support broader business objectives across the FE and Skills sector. For example, staff morale, employee loyalty, motivation and productivity is better in organisations with strong sustainability programs, compared to those with poor ones (HBR, 2016).



# APPENDIX 1 – SSED COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK

**This framework forges the basis of the Specialist Status in Education for Sustainable Development (SSED). It describes competencies those working in the Further Education (FE) and Skills sector can demonstrate, to positively impact ESD outcomes for themselves, their learners, their organisation and the wider sector.**

Specialist statuses validate the current expert knowledge, skills, and behaviors of those working within educational settings in the FE and Skills sector. They ensure and sustain impact and influence on professionals, learners, and within organisations. Specialist statuses are underpinned by the Professional Standards and the SSED specifically links to PS2 – Promote and embed education for sustainable development (ESD) across learning and working practices.

The specialist status in education for sustainable development (ESD) has been created to recognise ESD practice in any role in the FE and Skills sector – from professional and business support staff, teachers and educators to leaders. How participants demonstrate the competences will depend on their context, role and organisation.

To help illustrate different ways different people could practice and demonstrate the competence, we've provided examples of what each might entail and examples of what this could look like. These aren't exhaustive but there to illustrate what ESD competencies are and the breadth of ways ESD can be delivered.

If a participant contributes to ESD differently, because of their role and context, that's absolutely fine with us – we'll simply ask them to outline how they demonstrate each competence as part of the specialist status process.

The nine competency descriptors are:

- 1 I have **self-awareness** of my own ESD competencies
- 2 I contribute, directly or indirectly, **to developing learners' ESD competencies**
- 3 I contribute, directly or indirectly, to **supporting learners' progression and employability**
- 4 I develop and share **role, subject and/or industry specific sustainability expertise**
- 5 I use **evaluation and feedback** to understand the **impact** of my ESD work
- 6 I **collaborate and build partnerships** to support my ESD work
- 7 I ensure my ESD practice is **accessible and inclusive**
- 8 I work to affect **wider change** across my organisation, community and the sector
- 9 I **reflect** on my practice and invest in **continued professional development** relating to ESD

| Competence                                                                                            | This might entail...                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Examples of this in practice could include a...                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p><b>1</b> I have <b>self-awareness</b> of my own ESD competencies</p>                               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowing the basics of sustainability well.</li> <li>• Understanding how education for sustainability is discussed and practised locally, nationally, and globally.</li> <li>• Being aware of my own skills in systems thinking (recognising complexity), planning, and critical thinking.</li> <li>• Having a mindset that finds solutions and solves problems.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Teacher</b> using a tool such as a <u>Rounder Sense of Purpose</u> to assess their skillset and areas for improvement in teaching sustainability.</li> <li>• <b>Assessor</b> reflecting on how to incorporate sustainability into their assessment criteria and feedback methods.</li> <li>• <b>Receptionist</b> reflecting on how to incorporate sustainability into daily professional tasks, whether it relates to teaching or administrative roles.</li> <li>• <b>Vice principal</b> using systems thinking workshops to shape the development of a new ESD-related strategy.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                             |
| <p><b>2</b> I contribute, directly or indirectly, to <b>developing learners' ESD competencies</b></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providing chances for learners to gain ESD knowledge, skills and behaviours.</li> <li>• Planning and carrying out ESD activities in your role, whether in formal, informal, or non-formal learning settings whether that be in teaching, enrichment, community projects, personal development activities etc.</li> <li>• Offering hands-on, participatory learning experiences that connect different subjects.</li> <li>• Creating learning spaces that support ESD activities or topics.</li> <li>• Demonstrating sustainable practices in your work.</li> <li>• Developing and using the right materials to achieve ESD goals.</li> <li>• Using ESD examples to help learners improve other skills, like maths, English, digital or communication.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Hair and beauty technician</b> showcasing different eco-friendly products and hair care techniques to their learners.</li> <li>• <b>Curriculum manager</b> mapping current ESD provision to identify future opportunities for integrating sustainability into customer service training.</li> <li>• <b>Head of department</b> developing a sustainability plan for their area to maximise opportunities for ESD.</li> <li>• <b>Student experience manager</b> supporting sustainability-themed events and activities for students, like eco-fairs or guest speaker sessions.</li> <li>• <b>Facilities manager</b> creating opportunities for learners to engage with real-life projects and research as part of a <u>living lab</u> approach.</li> </ul> |

| Competence                                                                                                         | This might entail...                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Examples of this in practice could include a...                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
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| <p><b>3</b> I contribute, directly or indirectly, to <b>supporting learners' progression and employability</b></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognising the difference between jobs focused on sustainability and the basic sustainability education that everyone can and should have.</li> <li>• Helping learners build skills and knowledge related to sustainability that they can use in their education or career.</li> <li>• Planning and carrying out activities that prepare learners to understand how sustainability relates to their progression options.</li> <li>• Providing practical, hands-on learning experiences focused on sustainability to boost their employability or progression.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Careers coach</b> organising workshops on green skills and careers for learners.</li> <li>• <b>Lecturer</b> inviting industry experts with sustainability specialisms to speak directly to learners about sustainability in their field.</li> <li>• <b>Partnerships manager</b> facilitating internships, placements, and work experience with a focus on sustainability for learners.</li> <li>• <b>Personal tutor</b> teaching learners about the importance of sustainability in their future careers.</li> <li>• <b>IT manager</b> introducing the ICT lecturer to industry contacts who are leading on sustainability in their organisation.</li> </ul>                                                             |
| <p><b>4</b> I develop and share <b>role, subject and/or industry specific sustainability expertise</b></p>         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understanding how key sustainability issues relate to your subject area or job.</li> <li>• Regularly thinking about the sustainability challenges we face locally, nationally, and globally, and how your subject or industry contributes to these challenges and their solutions.</li> <li>• Actively promoting and integrating sustainability and/or ESD in your field whenever possible.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Finance officer</b> joining relevant membership organisations or participating in relevant communities of practice to stay informed about sustainability in finance practices.</li> <li>• <b>Sports lecturer</b> publishing articles, blogs, or presenting at conferences on ESD in their subject area.</li> <li>• <b>Estates manager</b> reading recent industry press publications about sustainability and facilities management.</li> <li>• <b>Part-time ESOL lecturer</b> participating in practitioner communities to share and learn about sustainable teaching practices.</li> <li>• <b>End point assessor</b> leading webinars on incorporating sustainability into vocational training assessments.</li> </ul> |

| Competence                                                                                          | This might entail...                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | Examples of this in practice could include a...                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p><b>5</b> I use <b>evaluation and feedback</b> to understand the <b>impact</b> of my ESD work</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Giving feedback to learners on their ESD knowledge, skills and behaviours and their application of these competencies.</li> <li>• Gathering and analysing data on the effectiveness of sustainability activities, initiatives and projects.</li> <li>• Collecting feedback from colleagues, learners and other stakeholders on your ESD practice and its impact.</li> <li>• Using learner voice and stakeholder engagement to inform your plans.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Lecturer</b> creating clear criteria to evaluate ESD projects and provide constructive feedback to learners.</li> <li>• <b>Events officer</b> conducting surveys or holding focus groups to assess the effectiveness of ESD initiatives.</li> <li>• <b>Data analyst</b> collaborating with educators to provide data on the impact of sustainability initiatives on campus.</li> <li>• <b>Line manager</b> referencing ESD competencies when giving feedback and setting objectives during staff appraisals.</li> <li>• <b>Senior leader</b> using end-of-course feedback data on ESD outcomes to inform planning for future student experience initiatives.</li> </ul>                                                                   |
| <p><b>6</b> I <b>collaborate and build partnerships</b> to support my ESD work</p>                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Building and maintaining relationships with stakeholders to support ESD initiatives.</li> <li>• Learning from others.</li> <li>• Understanding and respecting the needs, perspectives and actions of others (empathy).</li> <li>• Helping to solve problems together through collaboration and participation.</li> <li>• Finding local learning opportunities related to sustainable development.</li> </ul>                                                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Apprenticeships lead</b> partnering employers to establish student sustainability projects.</li> <li>• <b>Agriculture tutor</b> inviting external speakers from local sustainable food and farming organisations to share their experience and expertise with learners.</li> <li>• <b>Head of department</b> gaining access to technical equipment used in industry for use by learners.</li> <li>• <b>Trades lecturer</b> building relationships with community organisations to support their ESD initiatives whilst providing practical projects for learners.</li> <li>• <b>Catering staff</b> working with external networks to share best practices in promoting sustainability through their supplier and menu choices.</li> </ul> |

| Competence                                                                                                       | This might entail...                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Examples of this in practice could include a...                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>7</b> I ensure my ESD practice is <b>accessible and inclusive</b>                                             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understanding that cultural diversity, gender equality, social justice, environmental protection, and personal development are key parts of ESD.</li> <li>• Making sure all ESD initiatives are accessible and inclusive for everyone.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Workforce development lead</b> coaching teaching staff on methods that are relevant and responsive to the diverse backgrounds of learners.</li> <li>• <b>Lecturer</b> creating ESD materials, activities, and environments that everyone can access.</li> <li>• <b>Estates manager</b> conducting equality impact assessments before beginning new capital estates initiatives.</li> <li>• <b>Community engagement manager</b> working with diverse community groups to include their perspectives and needs in sustainability initiatives.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                            |
| <b>8</b> I work to affect <b>wider change</b> across my organisation, community and the sector                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leading or supporting efforts to make bigger sustainability impacts inside and outside the organisation, including in the community and wider education sector.</li> <li>• Acting as a change agent to help your organisation learn and move towards excellent, 'whole organisation' sustainability practices.</li> <li>• Sharing successful sustainability strategies and practices, as well as your lessons learned, with others to inspire and support broader change.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Health and safety officer</b> leading awareness campaigns on sustainability issues within the institution.</li> <li>• <b>Communications manager</b> supporting and promoting institutional sustainability initiatives through student and staff facing communications channels.</li> <li>• <b>Assessor</b> participating in sector-wide working groups to advance ESD.</li> <li>• <b>Quality manager</b> responding to relevant sector body consultations to encourage wider adoption of ESD.</li> <li>• <b>Business lecturer and chief operating officer</b> working together to create a <a href="#">living labs</a> programme that spans 'curriculum' and 'campus'.</li> </ul> |
| <b>9</b> I <b>reflect</b> on my practice and invest in <b>continued professional development</b> relating to ESD | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understanding and reflect on the norms and values that underlie your actions.</li> <li>• Continuously improving your professional practice through reflection and ongoing professional development.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>HR officer</b> attending a CIPD event about promoting sustainability through recruitment practices.</li> <li>• <b>Lecturer</b> reflecting on teaching practices to inform future curriculum planning.</li> <li>• <b>Leader</b> sharing ESD challenges in their peer action learning set.</li> <li>• <b>Estates manager</b> seeking feedback to improve and refine sustainability practices in campus management.</li> <li>• <b>Personal tutor</b> attending ESD-related CPD workshops to stay updated on best practices.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                               |

## APPENDIX 2 – EXTERNAL EXPERT PANEL MEMBERS

- David Brook (SecuriGroup)
- Jane Chillingworth (ACL Essex)
- Arinola Edeh (Westminster Adult Education Service)
- Hannah Fitzpatrick (SOS-UK)
- Mafalda Giudice (New City College)
- Nina Hart (West Suffolk College)
- Donna-Marie Janson (Varndean College, Brighton)
- Liz Lawrenson (LANDEX)
- Lynette Leith (Hull College)
- Alex Miles (Northern Skills Network)
- Alexa Oneill (Nottingham College)
- Charlie Simmans (Suffolk New College)
- Stacy Vipas (Askham Bryan College)

The group was chaired and facilitated by:

- Charlotte Bonner (CEO at EAUC)
- Berta Miguez-Lorenzo (ETF – Standards and Status Manager)
- Paul Smith (ETF – Head of Quality and Standards)



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