

CARBON LITERACY: PEER-TO-PEER TRAINING FACILITATES ACCESS FOR ALL STAFF AND STUDENTS

Manchester Metropolitan University's programme of work on Carbon Literacy training has influenced how climate change is communicated to engage different audiences. This has increased student and citizen awareness, ability, and importantly, their likelihood to take action on climate change.

It is now widely recognised that we are facing a climate crisis, with an urgent need to take strong action to achieve net zero emissions and avoid the worst impacts of climate change. However, the scale of change required is challenging, and success will require participation from everyone, whether active or passive. Developing a zero-carbon culture is therefore critical to meeting climate targets. Enhancing climate literacy is a first step on this pathway.

Working in partnership with [The Carbon Literacy Project](#) Manchester Met has delivered Carbon Literacy since 2012 and is accredited as a 'Carbon Literate Organisation' and a certified 'Carbon Literacy Training Organisation'. A specialist core team of two Carbon Literacy Consultants at Manchester Met, with support from the Environment Team and joined by other colleagues, offer expertise to students and staff, external organisations and partner universities.

Manchester Met faces the challenge of how to offer Carbon Literacy training to all members of the university, irrespective of disciplinary background. To facilitate this, we developed our innovative peer-to-peer Carbon Literacy for Staff and Students (CL4SS) training model and subsequently developed a digital service so that students and staff can now access our training programme online. Participants undertake a series of online interactive modules, consisting of a blend of self-learning and online workshops structured around group discussion and game-based activities. In 2020, the Manchester Met programme was shared by the Carbon Literacy Project with all UK universities as part of their UK Government-funded Public Sector Carbon Literacy Toolkit, to maximise the speed and ease with which Carbon Literacy can be adopted.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Peer-to-peer** digital service allows students and staff to access the training programme online
- **Pre-and post-course surveys** indicate that student trainers are as effective, if not more effective, than staff trainers
- **Marketing is key:** ensure allocation of sufficient resource to promote any training initiative
- **Celebrate your achievements:** organising a Carbon Literacy trainers awards ceremony every year helps celebrate the student trainers' success

Authors: Rachel Dunk, Jane Mörk and Liz Price, Manchester Metropolitan University



The university training is largely delivered by peers who are paid to do so upon completion of our Train the Trainer programme, where Carbon Literate students can become certified as trainers. Feedback from student trainers indicated highly positive outcomes, including an enhanced sense of responsibility to take action on climate change, enhanced team working, leadership and communication skills, and increased confidence.



Copyright: Carbon Literacy Project

Our training model has enabled over 1,400 Manchester Met students to achieve Carbon Literacy certification. Pre-and post-course surveys indicate an increase in knowledge, confidence in identifying actions to reduce emissions and likelihood of communicating with others about climate change. Since 2020, when the programme was opened to staff, over 200 academic and professional services colleagues

have engaged with the training. Most recently we developed a Carbon Literacy for Leaders Programme, to build strong organisational leadership capacity. Since 2015, the University has trained over 2,400 participants from a range of organisations and over 240 trainers, who have subsequently delivered carbon literacy training to more than 7,500 further participants.

Since the launch of the [Public Sector Carbon Literacy Toolkit](#), 42 universities in the UK, eight universities outside the UK and three cross-FHE sector organisations are delivering our training. The toolkit is free to use for the delivery of certified Carbon Literacy training within recognised Universities and Colleges and can also be used by their training partners to do this.

KEY FACTS ABOUT THE INSTITUTION

Institution name	Manchester Metropolitan University
Location	Manchester, UK
Number of students (total for institution)	34,000
Number of staff (total for institution)	5,100
Campus type	City Centre

KEY FACTS ABOUT THE CASE STUDY

University or department led:	Led by colleagues in the Department of Natural Sciences and the Environment Team.
Number of staff engaged:	Core team of two academic staff with support from the Environment Team and joined by other colleagues as the Train the Trainer programme developed.
Number of students engaged:	To date, our training model has enabled over 1,400 students at Manchester Met to achieve Carbon Literacy certification.
Credit-bearing:	Carbon Literacy training has been undertaken as an extracurricular activity or as a credit bearing project in over 100 degree programmes as part of Manchester Met's RISE programme.
Mandatory or optional:	Carbon Literacy training has been incorporated into mandatory and optional delivery.
External partners:	Carbon Literacy Project
Engagement approach used:	Digital online and class-based approach, group and individual work.

Project team: [Dr Rachel Dunk](#), Jane Mörk, Helena Tinker, Sophie Leigh, Professor Liz Price

More info: www.mmu.ac.uk/sustainability/carbon-literacy

HOW TO CITE THIS PAPER

Dunk, R.M., Mörk, J. and Price EAC (2021). Carbon Literacy: Peer-to-peer training facilitates access for all staff and students. *COP26 Universities Network Case Studies*.