Green Impact Universities Auditing Guidance

Introduction

Green Impact aims to reduce the environmental impact of the University by encouraging, rewarding and celebrating environmental good practice within departments.

How does Green Impact Universities work?

- Departments volunteered to take part in the programme and receive a digital workbook of simple practical actions they can do to improve their environmental performance in the form of criteria.
- The departments have roughly 3 months to make changes by working towards completing the criteria whilst being supported by NUS and their institution.
- After submission of the workbook, the departments are then audited by a trained volunteer auditing team.
- Once audits are complete, scores are finalized and an awards ceremony held to celebrate successes and recognize the efforts of those participating.
- Good practice is shared through an annual brochure, web forums and workshops.

Why we audit

- To make sure the departments are as green as they say!
- To spot any unknown issues to the department and to offer them help and support.
- To identify best practice case studies and/or photos to be used in the good practice guide.

How the training works

The Green Impact Universities project team conduct training sessions which cover environmental issues and practical ways of implementing change within the higher education sector. Auditors can be either staff members or students and can be recruited through existing Green Impact teams, academic departments, volunteering programmes, careers fairs or through the students’ union. The training last three hours, and is informal and interactive to ensure engagement.

The audit process

Following the training, the auditors visit a number of departments to meet the Green Impact team and other relevant staff. The audit principally consists of:

- Viewing documentary evidence, such as staff inductions, lighting and equipment responsibility plan etc.
- Viewing site evidence by doing a tour of the department with the departmental contact, ensure they have sufficient numbers of recycling bins, energy awareness posters and stickers etc.
• Discussing criteria with a number of relevant staff to ensure good practice is embedded within the department.
• Taking and good quality digital photos and documenting good practice for sharing with other participants and helping to promote the scheme.

Benefits to auditors:
• Gives the scheme credibility as submissions are scrutinized.
• Provides staff and students with a better understanding of Degrees Cooler, Green Impact Universities and their institutions commitment to environmental issues.
• Provides staff and students with insight and practical experience in auditor training. This is recognized by certificates and supporting letters which can be used for improving CVs.
• Provides Green Impact Universities teams more insight into how they will be audited.
• Gives staff and students the opportunity to input to the universities sustainability strategy by providing feedback and ideas.

More Information
For more information on Green Impact Universities and other opportunities within your university, please visit www.degreescooler.org.uk If you have any queries about the auditor process, please contact your University’s Green Impact lead, or alternatively email cbonner@nussl.co.uk