



Planetary Health Report Card (Medicine) 2026: University College Dublin



2025-2026 Contributing Team:

- Students: *Vishal Vallabhaneni, Jessica Barbulescu, Aoife Kelliher*
- Faculty Mentors: N/A

*Primary Contact: Vishal Vallabhaneni, vishal.vallabhaneni@ucdconnect.ie

Summary of Findings

Overall Grade	B
Curriculum	C
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planetary health exists throughout medical education. However, the level of detail remains sparse, and inclusion of planetary health (PH) relies on individual lecturers. Recommendations: Planetary health connections in the curriculum should be made more explicit, and more time should be invested. The medical school should identify PH (including climate change) as a priority theme and include that material in learning objectives and test questions, in addition to filling in content gaps. 	
Interdisciplinary Research	B
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overall, UCD demonstrates strong interdisciplinary sustainability and One Health research activity with active faculty engagement and a comprehensive sustainability infrastructure, however it lacks a dedicated planetary health institute and a formalised process for community-led input into the environmental health research agenda. Recommendation: UCD should establish a formal, interdisciplinary Planetary Health research hub that centralises existing climate-health and One Health research activity while embedding a structured mechanism for community partnership and input into research priority-setting. 	
Community Outreach and Advocacy	B+
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> UCD actively engages with multiple community organisations, including Airfield Estate and UCD Volunteers Overseas, to promote planetary health and sustainability. The university offers regular community-facing events, such as public lectures, Woodland Walks, and the UCD Festival, providing opportunities for public engagement with environmental health topics. Sustainability and planetary health content is communicated through programme newsletters, though not all students receive these updates. Post-graduate learners have access to structured courses and micro-credentials in sustainable healthcare and planetary health. Patients and the public can access educational materials on environmental health and climate impacts, although availability varies across sites. Recommendation: UCD should standardise community- and patient-facing materials across all affiliated hospitals, expand communications to reach more students, and integrate community engagement opportunities more consistently into curricula to strengthen planetary health advocacy. 	
Support for Student-Led Initiatives	A+
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> University College Dublin supports student groups dedicated to planetary health and sustainability. Student initiatives such as UCD Circular, the One Health Society, and the Sustainability Society are faculty-supported and receive guidance from the Sustainability Office and relevant academic staff. The university also provides structured opportunities for students to engage in co-curricular planetary health programs, including projects in sustainable food systems at UCD Greenacre, speaker panels via the Earth Institute Coffee Mornings, cultural events through the Fair Fashion Collective, volunteering initiatives, and outdoor/nature-based activities. In addition, students can access funding and mentorship for sustainability and planetary health research through the UCD Sustainable Research Initiative and other institutional mechanisms. Recommendation: While UCD provides strong institutional support, there is currently no formal student liaison representing sustainability interests on departmental or institutional decision-making councils. We recommend establishing a student representative role to strengthen student voice in curriculum reform, sustainability policy, and strategic initiatives, complementing existing project- and research-based support. 	

Campus Sustainability

B-

- University College Dublin has a dedicated Office of Sustainability with multiple staff overseeing campus-wide sustainability initiatives, including energy efficiency, transport, waste management, and climate action. The university has a Climate Action Roadmap outlining energy and decarbonisation targets, sustainable building practices for new constructions, active transport and public transport strategies, and recycling/compost programs. Sustainability is integrated into procurement processes and lab operations through structured programmes, including participation in My Green Lab and Green Labs competitions. However, formal institution-wide sustainability criteria for food and beverage decisions, event planning, and full fossil-fuel divestment are either limited or not yet mandatory. Renewable energy use is increasing, but most older buildings have not undergone deep retrofitting.
- **Recommendation:**UCD demonstrates strong campus sustainability engagement but could enhance policy enforcement and formalisation. We recommend establishing mandatory sustainability criteria for campus food services and events, appointing designated sustainability staff for healthcare facilities, accelerating retrofitting of older buildings, and publicly confirming full divestment from fossil fuels. These steps would strengthen institutional leadership in sustainable healthcare and campus operations.

Statement of Purpose

Planetary health is human health.

The Planetary Health Alliance describes planetary health as “a solutions-oriented, transdisciplinary field and social movement focused on analysing and addressing the impacts of human disruptions to Earth’s natural systems on human health and all life on Earth.” This definition is intentionally broad, intended to encompass the multitude of ways that the environment can affect health, including water scarcity, changing food systems, urbanisation, biodiversity shifts, natural disasters, climate change, changing land use and land cover, global pollution, and changing biogeochemical flows. The health of humanity is dependent on our environment, and our environment is changing rapidly and in disastrous ways. Although the World Health Organization has called climate change “the greatest threat to global health in the 21st century,” many health professional school’s institutional priorities do not reflect the urgency of this danger to human health.

As future health professionals, we must be prepared to address the impacts of human-caused environmental changes on our patients’ health. This preparation is in the hands of the institutions providing our health professional training. It is imperative that we hold our institutions accountable for educating health professional students about the health impacts of climate change and other anthropogenic environmental changes, generating research to better understand health impacts and solutions, supporting related student initiatives, embracing sustainable practices as much as possible, and engaging with surrounding communities that are most affected by environmental threats. Because climate change and environmental threats disproportionately affect vulnerable populations (for example, communities of colour, older adults sensitive to health threats, and individuals in low-resource settings), these issues are inherently ones of equity and justice.

With the purpose of increasing planetary health awareness and accountability among health professional schools, we have created a Planetary Health Report Card that students internationally can use to grade and compare their institutions on an annual basis. This student-driven initiative aims to compare health professional schools nationally and internationally on the basis of discrete metrics in five main category areas: 1) planetary health curriculum, 2) interdisciplinary research in health and environment, 3) university support for student planetary health initiatives, 4) community outreach centred on environmental health impacts, and 5) school campus sustainability.

Definitions & Other Considerations

Definitions:

- **Planetary Health:** is described by the Planetary Health Alliance as “the health of human civilisation and the state of the natural systems on which it depends.” For example, topics such as climate change, declining biodiversity, shortages of arable land and freshwater, and pollution would all fall under the realm of planetary health. Both planetary health and traditional ‘environmental health’ examine the relationship between human health and the external environment, including extreme temperatures, chemicals, vector-borne diseases, etc. Planetary health explicitly concerns itself with the potential health harms associated with human-caused perturbations of natural systems. Therefore, the human health focus of planetary health makes the field well-adapted for the context of health professional education. Throughout this report card, we use the term planetary health to refer to this broad swath of topics, but resources do not need to explicitly include the term “planetary health” to satisfy the metric.
- **Sustainable Healthcare:** As defined by the Academy of Royal Colleges, sustainable healthcare involves ensuring the ability to provide good quality care for future generations by balancing the economic, environmental, and social constraints and demands within health care settings. A sustainable healthcare system maintains population health, reduces disease burden and minimises use of healthcare services.
- **Education for Sustainable Healthcare (ESH):** is defined as the process of equipping current and future health professionals with the knowledge, attitudes, skills and capacity to provide environmentally sustainable services through health professional education, thus working to decrease the enormous environmental impact of the healthcare industry. Planetary Health Education is an integral part of this education rather than an end in itself. This is because knowledge on Planetary Health is required to be able to fully understand the necessity of sustainable healthcare as well as being part of the broader knowledge needed to fully protect and promote health. In summary, ESH is covered by the three Priority Learning Outcomes of the Centre of Sustainable Healthcare below, and Planetary Health Education is embraced in the first learning objective and is a fundamental requirement to achieve learning outcomes 2 and 3:
 1. Describe how the environment and human health interact at different levels.
 2. Demonstrate the knowledge and skills needed to improve the environmental sustainability of health systems.
 3. Discuss how the duty of a doctor to protect and promote health is shaped by the dependence of human health on the local and global environment.
- **Medical School/Department vs. Institution:** When “Medical school” is specified in the report card, this only refers to curriculum and resources offered by the School/department of Medicine and does not include offerings from other parts of the university (e.g. undergraduate departments (USA), other related departments (e.g. Public Health, Population Health departments). In contrast, when “institution” is specified in the report card, we are referring to the university more broadly including all of its campuses. Any resource reasonably accessible by medical students, no matter where in the institution the resource comes from or if it is

specifically targeted for medical students, can meet this metric.

- **Environmental history (Curriculum Section):** This is a series of questions students are taught to ask during medical encounters that elicits patients' exposures and environmental risk factors. Historically, this has included consideration of exposures like pesticides, asbestos, and lead, though in the modern era shaped by climate change, it can be expanded to include things like wildfire smoke exposure, air pollution and mould after flooding. Key components include place of residence over the lifecourse, occupational history, food and water sources (e.g. meat from industrial feeding operations, regular fishing in contaminated water, access to clean drinking water), and exposure to air pollution. Please be as specific as possible when providing evidence for this metric.
- **Elective:** The word "elective" refers to an optional course or lecture series that a student can opt to take part in but is not a requirement in the core curriculum. Generally, these elective courses take place in the preclinical curriculum but vary by school.
- **Core Curriculum:** This refers to the taught material that is delivered to the entire cohort of students in one year.
- **Clerkship / Outreach:** This is a term used in the USA to refer to placements that medical students go on e.g. Pediatrics, General medicine, Psychiatry. In the UK these are referred to as rotations, outreach or placements. This is a relatively short (approximately 4-8 weeks) period of study and patient-centred clinical experience that takes place as part of the undergraduate programme.
- **Clinical rotation:** This is a term used to refer to placements that students go on (e.g., ophthalmology, surgery, cardiology).
- **Physiotherapy vs Physical Therapy:** For the purposes of this report card these terms are considered interchangeable. However, physiotherapy will be used primarily.
- **Community organisations:** For most institutions, there are existing groups that are not directly affiliated with the university and exist as a product of what the community the institution exists in cares about or needs. These specific community organisations relevant to this report include those that are focused around some aspect of climate and health preservation. These community organisations can include but are not limited to local mutual aid initiatives, underserved-resource distribution groups, clean-up and nature conservation groups, community gardeners, and other environmental-related organisations. If your institution does not have access to local volunteerships with community groups, please report any community organisations your institution or school has collaborated with.
- **Climate justice:** The idea that certain population groups and geographical locations which are disproportionately more impacted by climate change are already economically and socially disadvantaged. This double vulnerability sits alongside pre-existing social justice concerns and should therefore shift policy and practice to mitigate the inequitable effects of the climate crisis.
- **Extractivism:** The removal of natural resources typically in large quantities. Within anthropology this term is often used in the context of colonialism to refer to the

historic seizing of natural resources, a practice which has developed business models tied to ecological degradation and loss of biodiversity.

- **Global South:** Nations that often have less economic and industrial development and are typically in the southern hemisphere. These nations have been found to be disproportionately impacted by the climate crisis.
- **Low socioeconomic status (SES):** An individual or geographical area that across a variety of socioeconomic factors (e.g., income, education, race/ethnicity) is considered vulnerable. This vulnerability has been correlated to more adverse health outcomes often as a consequence of encountering more barriers in accessing and receiving healthcare.
- **Low and Middle-Income Countries (LMIC):** Countries that have lower degrees of economic affluence.
- **Anthropogenic:** Created through human activity
- **Marginalized communities:** Groups excluded from mainstream economic, educational, social, and/or cultural experiences due to race, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, physical ability, language, and/or immigration status (Sevelius et al., 2020).

Scoring Matrix

- Elective coursework (1 point): This score applies to material that is actively selected by the students such as a module choice, or additional lecture series. By implication, only a given proportion of the cohort will receive this taught material.
- Brief coverage in the core curriculum (2 points): This score applies where a topic is covered only briefly in a core curriculum session. This implies that the entire cohort receives the same material. At minimum brief inclusion would qualify as inclusion in a single lecture slide in a single year.
- In depth coverage in the core curriculum (3 points): This score applies where a topic is taught in significant detail or where a topic is repeatedly brought up in different years. This might look like several dedicated lecture slides, or inclusion of the same topic in different lectures and teaching formats.

Other considerations:

- If there are more than one “tracks” at your institution with two different curricula (for example, Harvard Medical School has a Pathways and HST curriculum track), you can choose to fill out a report card for each track, or fill out just one report card and average the scores received by each track in cases where the scores are different (see the 2021 Harvard or Oxford report cards as examples). Where possible please indicate the proportion of students that are on each track.

Updated in 2025, a complete literature review by metric is available for the 2024/25 Medicine Report Card Template. This largely translates across disciplines although we are hoping to expand this process across all of our covered d

disciplines. A link to the 2025 literature review by metric is available [here](#).

Planetary Health Curriculum

Section Overview: *This section evaluates the integration of relevant planetary health topics into the medical school curriculum. Today's health professional students will be on the frontlines of tackling the health effects of climate and other environmental changes. Therefore, it is critical that students are trained to understand the health effects of these changes, as well as planetary health issues and principles more broadly. Topics like the changing geography of vector-borne diseases, the health consequences of air pollution, environmental health inequities, and disaster response principles must be part of every medical school's core curriculum.*

Curriculum: General

1.1. Did your <u>medical school</u> offer elective courses (student selected modules) to engage students in Education for Sustainable Healthcare or Planetary Health in the last year?	
Yes, the medical school has offered more than one elective whose primary focus is ESH/planetary health in the past year. (3 points)	
Yes, the medical school has offered one elective whose primary focus is ESH/planetary health in the past year. (2 points)	
The medical school does not have any electives whose primary focus is ESH/planetary health, but there are one or more electives that include a lecture on planetary health. (1 point)	
No, the medical school has not offered any electives on planetary health or electives that include ESH/planetary health topics in the past year. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	3
There are many elective course opportunities outside of the School of Medicine that medical students can take that have a primary focus on environmental health and sustainability. These include: BSEN40480 - Sustainable Energy & Environment, EEEN40110 - Renewable Energy Systems, ENVP10010 - Environment Change & Policy, ECON10040 - Economics and Sustainability, RDEV40490 - Sustainable Agriculture and many more modules.	

Curriculum: Health Effects of Climate Change

1.2. Does your <u>medical school</u> curriculum address the relationship between extreme heat, health risks, and climate change?	
This topic was explored in depth by the core curriculum. (3 points)	
This topic was briefly covered in the core curriculum. (2 points)	
This topic was covered in elective coursework. (1 point)	
This topic was not covered. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	2

Score explanation: All students must undertake the modules Principles of Infection and its Treatment (Module code: MEMI30040) and Epidemiology, Biostatistics & Public Health (Module code: PHPS20010). In both of these, the risk of climate change in exacerbating tropical disease and increasing the risk of pandemics was mentioned. However, the material mentioned on this topic was not examined. Climate change and pollution were also mentioned, but were not covered in depth. In Stage 4 semester 1, all modules include a med-micro section where various infectious agents and their relation to hot and humid climates are explored. In Cardiovascular & Renal Disease (Module course: PHAR30110), heat and its relation to health problems was briefly explored.

1.3. Does your medical school curriculum address the impacts of extreme weather events on individual health and/or on healthcare systems?

This topic was explored **in depth** by the **core** curriculum. (3 points)

This topic was **briefly** covered in the **core** curriculum. (2 points)

This topic was covered in **elective** coursework. (1 point)

This topic was **not** covered. (0 points)

Score Assigned:

2

Score explanation: Natural disasters and their impacts on community health were mentioned as risks for disease e.g., cholera in the Principles of Infection and its Treatment (Module code: MEMI30040) Module. An explicit link was not drawn to their frequency and climate change. The module Medical Zoology (Module Code: ZOOL10010) also briefly mentions the medical concerns that a few countries face due to climate and extreme weather.

1.4. Does your medical school curriculum address the impact of climate change on the changing patterns of infectious diseases?

This topic was explored **in depth** by the **core** curriculum. (3 points)

This topic was **briefly** covered in the **core** curriculum. (2 points)

This topic was covered in **elective** coursework. (1 point)

This topic was **not** covered. (0 points)

Score Assigned:

2

Score explanation: Climate change and its impact on infectious diseases was briefly covered in the aforementioned Principles of Infection and its Treatment (Module code: MEMI30040) Module. However, the material mentioned on this topic was not examined.

1.5. Does your medical school curriculum address the respiratory health effects of climate change and air pollution?

This topic was explored **in depth** by the **core** curriculum. (3 points)

This topic was **briefly** covered in the **core** curriculum. (2 points)

This topic was covered in **elective** coursework. (1 point)

This topic was **not** covered. (0 points)

Score Assigned:

2

Score explanation: This was briefly covered in the Cardiovascular & Respiratory Physiology Module (Module code: PHYS20150), as the risk of air pollution was mentioned as being an exacerbating factor and likely cause, in some cases, of COPD and lung cancer. It was also briefly mentioned in a variety of modules that people who are exposed to more air pollution have a higher chance of developing respiratory health issues. The respiratory health effects of air pollution are talked about in greater detail in the module Respiratory Disease (Module code: MDSA30050).

1.6. Does your medical school curriculum address the cardiovascular health effects of climate change, including increased heat?

This topic was explored **in depth** by the **core** curriculum. (3 points)

This topic was **briefly** covered in the **core** curriculum. (2 points)

This topic was covered in **elective** coursework. (1 point)

This topic was **not** covered. (0 points)

Score Assigned:

2

In the module Cardiovascular & Renal Diseases (Module code: PHAR30110), students were briefly lectured on how heat can exacerbate symptoms of certain cardiovascular diseases.

1.7. Does your medical school curriculum address the mental health and neuropsychological effects of environmental degradation and climate change?

This topic was explored **in depth** by the **core** curriculum. (3 points)

This topic was **briefly** covered in the **core** curriculum. (2 points)

This topic was covered in **elective** coursework. (1 point)

This topic was **not** covered. (0 points)

Score Assigned:

0

Score explanation: This topic was never covered.

1.8. Does your medical school curriculum address the relationships between health, individual patient food and water security, ecosystem health, and climate change?

This topic was explored **in depth** by the **core** curriculum. (3 points)

This topic was **briefly** covered in the **core** curriculum. (2 points)

This topic was covered in **elective** coursework. (1 point)

This topic was **not** covered. (0 points)

Score Assigned:

2

Score explanation: Briefly mentioned in the international health III & IV lecture series in the Public Health Medicine, Epidemiology and International Health Module (Module code: PHPS30020).

This aspect is briefly covered in the aforementioned Principles of Infection and its Treatment (Module code: MEMI30040) Module, which discusses how the environmental and socioeconomic circumstances in African and Asian countries is a contributing factor in the proliferation of mosquito-borne diseases such as malaria and dengue fever.

1.9. Does your medical school curriculum address the outsized impact of climate change on marginalised populations such as those with low SES, women, communities of colour, Indigenous communities, children, homeless populations, and older adults?

This topic was explored **in depth** by the **core** curriculum. (3 points)

This topic was **briefly** covered in the **core** curriculum. (2 points)

This topic was covered in **elective** coursework. (1 point)

This topic was **not** covered. (0 points)

Score Assigned:

2

Score explanation: This is briefly mentioned in the international health III & IV lecture series in the Public Health Medicine, Epidemiology and International Health Module (Module code: PHPS30020).

1.10. Does your medical school curriculum address the unequal regional health impacts of climate change globally?

This topic was explored **in depth** by the **core** curriculum. (3 points)

This topic was briefly covered in the core curriculum. (2 points)	
This topic was covered in elective coursework. (1 point)	
This topic was not covered. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	2
<i>Score explanation: In modules Introduction to Epidemiology, Biostatistics & Public Health (Module code: PHPS20010) and Respiratory Disease (Module code: MDSA30050) it is briefly mentioned that different parts of the world suffer from different population levels and those that have more pollution, such as in some regions of Asia, have greater health risks.</i>	

Curriculum: Environmental Health & the Effects of Anthropogenic Toxins on Human Health

1.11. Does your <u>medical school</u> curriculum address the reproductive health effects of industry-related environmental toxins (e.g. air pollution, pesticides, microplastics)?	
This topic was explored in depth by the core curriculum. (3 points)	
This topic was briefly covered in the core curriculum. (2 points)	
This topic was covered in elective coursework. (1 point)	
This topic was not covered. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	2
<i>Score explanation: In the modules Endocrine Biology (Module code: MDSA20030), Endocrine Diseases (Module code: PHAR30070) and Genetics, Perinatal and Paediatric Disease (Module code: PATH30060) it is briefly discussed that air pollution and carcinogens can cause reproductive harm and carcinomas to the related structures.</i>	

1.12. Does your <u>medical school</u> curriculum address important human-caused environmental threats that are relevant to the university's surrounding community?	
This topic was explored in depth by the core curriculum. (3 points)	
This topic was briefly covered in the core curriculum. (2 points)	
This topic was covered in elective coursework. (1 point)	
This topic was not covered. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	0
<i>Score explanation: This topic was not covered.</i>	

1.13. To what extent does your medical school emphasise the importance of Indigenous knowledge and value systems as essential components of planetary health solutions?

This topic was explored **in depth** by the **core** curriculum. (3 points)

This topic was **briefly** covered in the **core** curriculum. (2 points)

This topic was covered in **elective** coursework. (1 point)

This topic was **not** covered. (0 points)

Score Assigned: 0

Score explanation: This is not covered.

1.14. Does your medical school curriculum address the outsized impact of anthropogenic environmental toxins on marginalised populations such as those with low SES, women, communities of colour, children, homeless populations, Indigenous populations, and older adults?

This topic was explored **in depth** by the **core** curriculum. (3 points)

This topic was **briefly** covered in the **core** curriculum. (2 points)

This topic was covered in **elective** coursework. (1 point)

This topic was **not** covered. (0 points)

Score Assigned: 2

Score explanation: The Epidemiology, Biostatistics & Public Health Module (Module code: PHPS20010) briefly mentions how epidemiological factors, such as socioeconomic status, age, and gender, are correlated with increased risk of negative environmental effects, such as pesticide exposure.

Curriculum: Sustainability

1.15. Does your medical school curriculum address the environmental and health co-benefits of a plant-based diet?

This topic was explored **in depth** by the **core** curriculum. (3 points)

This topic was **briefly** covered in the **core** curriculum. (2 points)

This topic was covered in **elective** coursework. (1 point)

This topic was **not** covered. (0 point)

Score Assigned: 1

Score explanation: Students have the opportunity to study and research this on summer research

electives and have completed research topics on this historically, but it is not part of any core curriculum. It is noteworthy that any discussion of plant-based diets is in the context of pathologies e.g., anemia. There is also an elective course, “FDSC10010 Food Diet and Health”, that students may take as an elective course, which addresses the impact of plant-based diets.

1.16. Does your medical school curriculum address the carbon footprint of healthcare systems?

This topic was explored **in depth** by the **core** curriculum. (3 points)

This topic was **briefly** covered in the **core** curriculum. (2 points)

This topic was covered in **elective** coursework. (1 point)

This topic was **not** covered. (0 points)

Score Assigned:

2

Score explanation: Hospital waste is discussed in some detail in the Cardio-Respiratory Module (Module code: PHYS20150). The students are urged to think about waste generation and the reliance on single-use items.

1.17. Does your <u>medical school</u> curriculum cover these components of sustainable clinical practice in the <u>core</u> curriculum? (points for each)	Score
The health and environmental co-benefits of avoiding over-medicalisation, over-investigation and/or over-treatment (2 points)	2
The environmental impact of pharmaceuticals and over-prescribing as a cause of climate health harm. Alternatively teaching on deprescribing where possible and its environmental and health co-benefits would fulfil this metric. (2 points) .	1
The health and environmental co-benefits of non-pharmaceutical management of conditions where appropriate such as exercise or yoga classes for type 2 diabetes; social group activities such as gardening for mental health conditions; active transport such as bicycle schemes. This is commonly known as social prescribing in the UK. (1 point)	1
Environmental impact of surgical healthcare on planetary health and the climate crisis, and how can it be mitigated. (1 point)	0
The impact of anaesthetic gases on the healthcare carbon footprint and ways to reduce anaesthesia’s environmental impacts, such as total intravenous anaesthesia or choosing less environmentally harmful anaesthetic gas options with reduced greenhouse gas emissions. (1 point)	0
The impact of inhalers on the healthcare carbon footprint and the environmental benefit of dry powdered inhalers over metered dose inhalers. (1 point)	0

Waste production within healthcare clinics and strategies for reducing waste in clinical activities (e.g. single use items in the inpatient or outpatient setting) (1 point)	0
<i>Score explanation: The above curriculum components are touched upon in the following two core medicine modules: GPRS20140 - Patient-Centred Practice and MDSA30320 - Primary Care & Medical Practice. The impact of surgical healthcare, anaesthetic gas use, inhaler use, and healthcare-related waste production is not addressed in any core or elective module.</i>	

Curriculum: Clinical Applications

1.18. In training for patient encounters, does your <u>medical school's</u> curriculum introduce strategies to have conversations with patients about the health effects of climate change?	
Yes, there are strategies introduced for having conversations with patients about climate change in the core curriculum. (2 points)	
Yes, there are strategies introduced for having conversations with patients about climate change in elective coursework. (1 point)	
No, there are no strategies introduced for having conversations with patients about climate change. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	0
<i>Score explanation: During clerkship years, occasionally some OSCE communications stations may address the impact of health due to climate change-related factors.</i>	

1.19. In training for patient encounters, does your <u>medical school's</u> curriculum introduce strategies for taking an environmental history or exposure history?	
Yes, the core curriculum includes strategies for taking an environmental history. (2 points)	
Only elective coursework includes strategies for taking an environmental history. (1 point)	
No, the curriculum does not include strategies for taking an environmental history. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	2
<i>Score explanation: This is addressed when medical students learn how to take a detailed history of a patient with respiratory pathology. Students are required to ask about recent travels, environmental and occupational hazards e.g., 'pigeon-fancier's lung' and 'coal-miner's lung' and asbestos.</i>	

Curriculum: Administrative Support for Planetary Health

1.20. Is your <u>medical school</u> currently in the process of implementing or improving Education for Sustainable Healthcare (ESH)/planetary health education?

Yes, the medical school is currently in the process of making major improvements to ESH/planetary health education. (4 points)	
Yes, the medical school is currently in the process of making minor improvements to ESH/planetary health education. (2 points)	
No, there are no improvements to planetary health education in progress. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	2
<i>Score explanation: Various modules are including more aspects of planetary health and sustainability into their lecture content. For example, it is shown how worsening air pollution leads to increased rates of asthma and COPD and affects patients with Covid-19. (Module code: PHYS20150). However, progress in this regard is slow and highly dependent on which lecturers are involved in the various modules. Lecturers can change every year resulting in no consistent progress.</i>	

1.21. How well are the aforementioned planetary health/Education for Sustainable Healthcare topics integrated longitudinally into the <u>core</u> curriculum?	
Planetary health/ESH topics are well integrated into the core medical school curriculum. (6 points)	
Some planetary health/ESH topics are appropriately integrated into the core medical student curriculum. (4 points)	
Planetary health/ESH is not integrated and is primarily addressed in (a) standalone lecture(s) . (2 points)	
There is minimal/no education for sustainable healthcare. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	2
<i>Score explanation: As mentioned above, this aspect is reliant on individual lecturers including the content in their lectures. A few dedicated lectures dedicated to public health are included throughout the curriculum (PHPS20010 - Introduction to Epidemiology, Biostatistics & Public Health, and PHPS30020 - Public Health Medicine, Epidemiology and International Health).</i>	

1.22. Does your <u>medical school</u> employ a member of faculty to specifically oversee and take responsibility for the incorporation of planetary health and sustainable healthcare as a theme throughout the course?	
Yes, the medical school has a specific faculty/staff member responsible for overseeing curricular integration of planetary health and sustainable healthcare. (1 point)	
No, the medical school does not have a specific faculty/staff member responsible for overseeing curricular integration of planetary health and sustainable healthcare. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	0

Score explanation: As of this time, there is no dedicated faculty or staff member overseeing the integration of planetary health and environmental sustainability. Inclusion of these topics is on a lecturer-by-lecturer basis.

1.23. Does your health professional curriculum include teaching on civic engagement/advocacy to address the environmental and structural determinants of health?

This topic was explored **in depth** by the **core** curriculum. (3 points)

This topic was **briefly** covered in the **core** curriculum. (2 points)

This topic was covered in **elective** coursework. (1 point)

This topic was **not** covered. (0 points)

Score Assigned:

0

Score explanation: Civic engagement/advocacy to address the environmental and structural determinants of health is not taught.

Section Total (36 out of 75)

48%

Back to Summary Page [here](#)

Interdisciplinary Research

Section Overview: *This section evaluates the quality and quantity of interdisciplinary planetary health research at the broader institution. Interactions between health and the environment are complex and multifactorial. While climate change has been extensively studied from an environmental science perspective, planetary health is an emerging field. As leading health institutions with talented researchers and research resources, institutions should fund research studying the health effects of climate change and anthropogenic environmental toxins. This obligation is particularly strong because the public and policymakers are more attentive to climate change when its implications for human health are emphasised.*

2.1. Are there researchers engaged in planetary health research and healthcare sustainability research at your <u>institution</u>?	
Yes, there are faculty members at the institution who have a primary research focus in planetary health or sustainable healthcare/vetcare. (3 points)	
Yes, there are individual faculty members at the institution who are conducting research related to planetary health or healthcare sustainability, OR are part of a national/international sustainability working group, but it is not their primary research focus. (2 points)	
There are sustainability researchers at the institution , but not specifically associated with healthcare/vetcare. (1 point)	
No, there are no planetary health and/or sustainability researchers at the institution at this time. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	2
<p><i>Score explanation: At University College Dublin, multiple researchers are engaged in work that aligns closely with planetary health principles, including research linking environmental change, sustainable food systems, One Health, climate impacts, and public health outcomes.</i></p> <p><i>These activities are embedded within broader sustainability, nutrition, veterinary, environmental, and public health research frameworks rather than within a standalone planetary health institute or dedicated faculty cluster whose sole primary focus is planetary health or healthcare/veterinary sustainability.</i></p> <p><i>Researchers involved in this work are publicly listed through UCD's sustainability and research networks, including the Sustainability Working Groups and research institutes:</i></p> <p>https://www.ucd.ie/sustainability/mission/ourworkinggroups/</p> <p>https://www.ucd.ie/earth/ourmembers/</p>	

2.2. Is there a dedicated department or institute for interdisciplinary planetary health research at your <u>institution</u>?
--

There is **at least one** dedicated department or institute for interdisciplinary planetary health research. (3 points)

There is **not currently** a department or institute for interdisciplinary planetary health research, but there are **plans** to open one in the next 3 years. (2 points)

There is an **Occupational and Environmental Health department**, but no interdisciplinary department or institute for planetary health research. (1 point)

There is **no** dedicated department or institute. (0 points)

Score Assigned:

1

Score explanation: At UCD, there isn't currently a single dedicated department or institute solely for interdisciplinary planetary health research but the institute may draw from existing centres such as the Occupational and Environmental Health department, and that of faculty members.

However, there are several well-established interdisciplinary centres, schools and networks that actively conduct planetary health-related research across environmental, agricultural and health sciences.

Examples:

One Health Centre (UCD)- Focuses on the interconnections between human, animal, and environmental health—essentially the heart of the planetary health concept.

Researchers come from the Schools of Veterinary Medicine, Public Health, Biology, Agriculture, and Environmental Science.

It promotes interdisciplinary collaboration on zoonotic diseases, antimicrobial resistance, food systems, and ecosystem health.

UCD Earth Institute- A large interdisciplinary research institute addressing climate change, sustainability, and environmental challenges.

Brings together researchers from science, engineering, social science, and health disciplines.

Many planetary health-related projects happen here, especially related to climate-health links, land use, sustainable systems, and policy.

UCD School of Public Health. Physiotherapy and Sports Science- Researchers here study the impacts of environmental change, pollution, and climate on health.

Often collaborates with the Earth Institute and One Health Centre on climate-health and sustainability initiatives.

UCD School of Agriculture and Food Science- The Sustainable Food Systems, Environment & Sustainable Resource Management, and Animal & Crop Sciences programmes all focus on sustainability, climate-smart agriculture, and food security—core themes in planetary health.

2.3. Is there a process by which communities disproportionately impacted by climate change and environmental injustice give input or make decisions about the research agenda at your institution?

Yes, there is a process in which community members impacted by climate and environmental injustice have **decision-making power** in the climate + environmental research agenda. (3 points)

Yes, there is a process in which community members impacted by climate and environmental injustice **advise** the climate + environmental research agenda. (2 points)

No, but there are **current efforts** to establish a process for community members to advise or make decisions on the research agenda. (1 point)

There is **no** process, and **no** efforts to create such a process. (0 points)

Score Assigned:

1

*Score explanation: UCD does not currently have a **formal, institution-wide process** that allows communities disproportionately affected by climate change or environmental injustice to directly advise or make decisions about the climate and environmental research agenda.*

*However, there are **multiple ongoing initiatives and practices at project and programme levels** that actively involve community participation, co-creation, and stakeholder input, including:*

- **PPI Ignite Network @ UCD** – fostering public and community engagement in research.
- **Citizen Science Community of Practice** – supporting citizen-led research collaborations.
- **Masters and postgraduate programmes** – some with community partners shaping student research projects.
- **Research Ethics Committee** – includes external community members in governance oversight.
- **Project-level initiatives** – including participatory research within the UCD Earth Institute, Centre for One Health, EU-funded climate justice projects, and social/environmental policy schools.

*These efforts demonstrate that **UCD is building pathways for community engagement**, but none currently constitute a formalized institutional process giving communities decision-making authority over the research agenda.*

2.4. Does your institution have a planetary health website that centralises ongoing and past research related to health and the environment?

There is an **easy-to-use, adequately comprehensive** website that **centralises** various campus resources related to health and the environment including all of the following: upcoming events, leaders in planetary health at your institution, and relevant funding opportunities. (3 points)

There is a website that **attempts to centralise** various campus resources related to health and the environment, but it is hard-to-use, not updated, or not adequately comprehensive. (2 points)

The institution has an Office of Sustainability website that includes some resources related to health and the environment. (1 point)	
There is no website. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	3
<p><i>Score explanation: UCD maintains a comprehensive institutional sustainability website that centralises information on environmental and health-related activity across the university. The UCD Sustainability website outlines the role and structure of the UCD Sustainability Unit, established in 2023 which includes a Vice-President for Sustainability, Sustainability Manager, Sustainability Communications Officer, Senior Executive Assistant, Programme Director, Health Promotion Coordinator, two Sustainability Student Ambassadors appointed annually and a summer student intern. The website provides clearly defined sustainability action areas spanning biodiversity, climate action, water, food systems and health promotion. It also hosts regularly updated news and events relating to sustainability initiatives, as well as information on collaborative funding opportunities that support sustainability-related research and projects. In addition, the site signposts key institutional resources relevant to planetary health and environmental sustainability, including the UCD Sustainability Toolkit and the UCD Net Zero 2040 Explainer. Overall, this website serves as a central, accessible hub for ongoing and past sustainability-related activity at UCD, including initiatives relevant to health and the environment.</i></p>	

2.5. Has your <u>institution</u> recently hosted a conference or symposium on topics related to planetary health?	
Yes, the institution has hosted at least one conference or symposium on topics related to planetary health in the past year. (4 points)	
Yes, the institution has hosted at least one conference or symposium on topics related to sustainable healthcare/vetcare in the past year. (3 points)	
Yes, the institution has hosted a conference on topics related to planetary health / sustainable healthcare/vetcare in the past three years. (2 points)	
The institution has not hosted any conferences directly, but they have provided financial support for a local planetary health event. (1 point)	
No, the institution has not hosted a conference on topics related to planetary health in the past three years. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	4
<p><i>Score explanation: Yes - UCD One Health held a conference in December 2025 titled “From Priorities and Clusters to Real-World Impact”. The conference brought together internationally renowned speakers and showcased the depth and breadth of UCD’s and Ireland’s expertise in One Health. The conference addressed cutting-edge research and education alongside policy, public health, agriculture and environmental action. Contributors represented government, academia, civil society and international organisations, demonstrating strong interdisciplinary engagement with planetary health-related themes.</i></p>	

2.6. Is your institution a member of a national or international planetary health or ESH/ESV organisation?

Yes, the institution is a member of a national or international planetary health or ESH/ESV organisation. (1 point)

No, the institution is **not** a member of such an organisation. (0 points)

Score Assigned:

1

Score explanation: Yes - In 2024, the Director-General of the World Health Organisation designated the UCD Centre for One Health as a WHO collaborating centre. As the first [WHO Collaborating Centre on One Health](#) in Europe, the Centre aims to promote and strengthen cross-sectoral and international collaboration to support the implementation of a One Health approach across the region. This designation formally connects UCD to an international collaborative network addressing health interconnections across humans, animals and the environment - core components of planetary health.

Section Total (12 out of 17)

70.59%

Back to Summary Page [here](#)

Community Outreach and Advocacy

Section Overview: This section evaluates a school's engagement in community outreach and advocacy efforts associated with planetary health. Researching and teaching planetary health is necessary but not sufficient. It is critical that institutions also directly engage with communities most affected by environmental health harms. Although climate change is a problem largely created by those with power and resources, its impacts fall disproportionately on under-resourced populations and communities of colour. Institutions should partner with local communities affected by climate change and pollution to share information about environmental health threats, advocate together for change, and provide opportunities for students to be a part of this work.

3.1. Does your institution partner with community organisations to promote planetary and environmental health?	
Yes, the institution meaningfully partners with multiple community organisations to promote planetary and environmental health. (3 points)	
Yes, the institution meaningfully partners with one community organisation to promote planetary and environmental health. (2 points)	
The institution does not partner with community organisations, but participates in community focused events relating to planetary health. (1 point)	
No, there is no such meaningful community partnership. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	3
<p><i>Score explanation: The institution meaningfully partners with multiple community organisations to promote planetary and environmental health. UCD maintains an established partnership with Airfield Estate, a community organisation focused on sustainable food systems, environmental education and public engagement. This partnership is further strengthened through governance-level involvement, with a senior academic from the nutrition and dietetics programme serving on the Airfield Board, supporting strategic alignment between community food sustainability initiatives and academic expertise. In addition, UCD Volunteers Overseas (UCDVO) partners with disadvantaged communities, offering structured opportunities for nutrition and dietetics students to engage in community-based activities each year. Through these partnerships, students contribute to initiatives addressing food access, health promotion and social determinants of health, providing sustained, real-world engagement with communities most affected by health and environmental inequities. Together, these examples demonstrate ongoing, meaningful institutional partnerships with multiple community organisations that support planetary health, environmental sustainability and community wellbeing, with active and recurring student involvement.</i></p>	

3.2. Does your <u>institution</u> offer community-facing courses or events regarding planetary health?
The institution offers community-facing courses or events at least once every year. (3 points)

The institution offers courses or events open to the community at least once per year, but they are not primarily created for a community audience. (2 points)	
The institution has promoted community-facing courses or events, but was not involved in planning those courses or events. (1 point)	
The institution has not offered such community-facing courses or events. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	3
<p><i>Score explanation: The institution offers multiple community-facing events each year that address planetary health, sustainability and food systems. UCD hosts public health lectures annually through the UCD Institute of Food and Health, many of which include content on sustainable diets, food systems and nutrition-related sustainability themes. These lectures are designed to engage audiences beyond the university and support public understanding of health and sustainability issues. In addition, the university provides open-access Woodland Walks on campus, which are accessible to the local community and promote engagement with natural environments, environmental stewardship and the health co-benefits of nature exposure. UCD also hosts the annual UCD Festival, a large-scale public event held each June that actively invites the wider community onto campus. The festival showcases a broad range of sustainability and planetary health initiatives through exhibitions, talks, demonstrations and interactive activities, many of which explicitly address environmental sustainability, food systems, climate action and human health. Together, these recurring initiatives demonstrate that the institution regularly delivers community-facing events designed to engage the public on planetary health and sustainability-related topics.</i></p>	

3.3. Does your <u>institution</u> have regular coverage of issues related to planetary health and/or sustainable healthcare in university update communications?	
Yes, all students regularly receive communication updates dedicated to planetary health and/or sustainable healthcare. (2 points)	
Yes, planetary health and/or sustainable healthcare topics are regularly included in communication updates to some courses . (1 point)	
Students do not receive communications about planetary health or sustainable healthcare. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	1
<p><i>Score explanation: Planetary health and sustainability topics are included in communication updates to some courses and student groups within the institution more regularly than to the entire institution. The UCD Institute of Food and Health circulates a regular school newsletter that highlights research, teaching and activities related to health, food systems and sustainability. These communications are targeted primarily at staff and students within the school rather than the entire student body. Similarly, the UCD MSc programmes distribute programme-level newsletters to enrolled students, which at times include content related to sustainability, environmental health and planetary health themes relevant to their discipline. In addition, the UCD Sustainability Office regularly showcases sustainability initiatives and projects that have received institutional funding through its communications, raising awareness of environmental and sustainability activities occurring across the university. While these communications are accessible to the university</i></p>	

community, they are not specifically tailored to a health professional audience. Overall, sustainability and planetary health topics are communicated regularly but selectively, reaching some courses and programmes most of the time rather than all students institution-wide.

3.4. Does the institution or main affiliated hospital trust engage in professional education activities targeting individuals post-graduation with the aim of ensuring their knowledge and skills in planetary health and sustainable healthcare remain up to date during their professional career?

Yes, the **institution** or **main affiliated hospital trust** offers multiple in-person or online courses relating to planetary health and/or sustainable healthcare for post-graduate providers, including at least one with a primary focus of planetary health. (2 points)

Yes, the **institution** or **main affiliated hospital trust** offers one course relating to planetary health and/or sustainable healthcare for post-graduate providers. (1 point)

There are **no** such accessible courses for post-graduate providers. (0 points)

Score Assigned:

2

Score explanation: University College Dublin, together with its main affiliated health system, provides multiple opportunities for post-graduate learners to gain education in planetary health and sustainable healthcare. The HSE Climate and Sustainability Learning Hub offers structured online modules accessible to all health and social care staff. These modules cover topics such as the links between climate change and health, sustainable healthcare practices (including waste and water management), greener models of care, climate action within healthcare, and the role of Green Teams. The Hub is designed to integrate sustainability into healthcare, linking environmental responsibility with safe, effective, and equitable patient care, and supports learners in updating and applying their knowledge and skills throughout their professional careers.

*In addition, UCD offers a wide range of post-graduate **micro-credentials** and professional education modules relevant to planetary health and sustainable healthcare. Examples include modules on Green Care, Carbon Footprinting, Sustainable Food Systems, Environmental Footprinting, and Systems Innovation for Sustainable Farming. These courses provide structured, online education for learners beyond the undergraduate level, covering topics such as environmental impacts on health, sustainable practices, and ecosystem-based approaches to wellbeing. Although the micro-credentials are not exclusively aimed at healthcare professionals, they are relevant to planetary health and can support knowledge and skill development applicable to sustainable healthcare practice.*

3.5. Does your institution or its affiliated teaching hospitals have accessible educational materials for patients about environmental health exposures?

Yes, the **institution** or **all affiliated hospitals** have accessible educational materials for patients. (2 points)

Some affiliated hospitals have accessible educational materials for patients. (1 point)

No affiliated medical centres have accessible educational materials for patients. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	1
<p><i>Score explanation: St. Vincent's Medical Center provides publicly accessible educational materials for patients through its online Health Library. The library includes a dedicated section on Environmental Health that covers various topics such as air and water quality, hazardous materials, workplace exposures, and the impact of environmental factors on health and wellbeing. These resources are written in clear, patient-friendly language and available online, ensuring accessibility for both patients and the general public. The online Health Library demonstrates that the institution offers accessible, well-organized, and comprehensive educational materials on environmental health exposures. The information is regularly maintained and can be accessed freely without login requirements, indicating a strong institutional commitment to patient education and community health awareness.</i></p>	

3.6. Does your <u>institution</u> or its <u>affiliated teaching hospitals</u> have accessible educational materials for patients about the health impacts of climate change?	
Yes, the institution or all affiliated hospitals have accessible educational materials for patients. (2 points)	
Some affiliated hospitals have accessible educational materials for patients. (1 point)	
No affiliated hospitals have accessible educational materials for patients. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	1
<p><i>Score explanation: The Mater Misericordiae University Hospital, one of the two main teaching hospitals affiliated with UCD, has recently implemented an inhaler recycling initiative through its in-house pharmacy. This program aims to reduce the negative climate impact associated with inhaler waste and to raise public awareness about the environmental and health implications of climate change-related issues, such as air pollution and healthcare waste.</i></p> <p><i>Additionally, the Health Service Executive (HSE) provides publicly available online resources that discuss the links between climate change and health, including the impact of air quality, temperature extremes, and environmental sustainability on human wellbeing. These materials are accessible to patients and the general public, supporting education and awareness of climate-related health risks.</i></p>	

Section Total (11 out of 14)	78.57%
-------------------------------------	---------------

Back to Summary Page [here](#)

Support for Student-Led Planetary Health Initiatives

Section Overview: *This section evaluates institutional support for student-led planetary health initiatives, such as funding, fellowships, programming, and student groups. Planetary health is a young field and, as young people facing a future deeply shaped by climate change, students are often some of the first at an institution to engage with it. Institutions should provide support for students to engage in sustainability quality improvement (QI) initiatives, discover mentors in their area of interest, and receive funding for planetary health projects.*

4.1. Does your **institution** offer support for students interested in enacting a sustainability initiative/QI project?

Yes, the **institution** *either* offers grants for students to enact sustainability initiatives/QI projects or sustainability QI projects are part of the core curriculum. (2 points)

The **institution** encourages sustainability QI projects (to fulfil clerkship or longitudinal requirements) and offers resources to help students succeed in these projects, **but** there is no student funding available and there is no requirement to participate. (1 point)

No, the institution does not offer opportunities or support for sustainability initiatives or QI projects. (0 points)

Score Assigned:

2

Score explanation:

University College Dublin provides strong institutional support for students interested in enacting sustainability initiatives and quality improvement projects. The university's [Sustainability Office](#) offers structured support, funding and practical guidance for student-led sustainability projects across disciplines. An example of such is when the Sustainability Office funded a student-led [Sustainability Toolkit](#) (with BSc Sustainability students) that supports project planning, implementation and evaluation, including initiatives focused on environmental sustainability and circular economy principles. In addition, there is active student involvement in sustainability projects within schools across the university, including the [School of Agriculture](#) and related programmes. Such initiatives include the [UCD Greenacre](#) sustainability workshops, the [U21 2025 SDG Student Workshop](#) and many more. [UCD Estates](#) unit has previously provided funding and infrastructural support for student-led sustainability initiatives such as [Green Campus](#), [Green Week](#) and also the Big Switch OFF to raise awareness about more sustainable energy usage. Another key example is UCD Circular, a student-led initiative supported by the UCD Sustainability Office that promotes circular economy practices across campus. UCD Circular facilitates and delivers sustainability projects such as second-hand clothing initiatives (including professional attire), waste reduction activities and reuse schemes, providing students with opportunities to design, implement and evaluate real-world sustainability interventions. These initiatives are supported through institutional funding streams and staff guidance, enabling students to lead practical sustainability projects with measurable environmental impact. Together, these initiatives provide students with real opportunities to design, lead and implement sustainability-focused projects, meeting the criteria for institutional support through funding and structured resources.

4.2. Does your **institution** offer opportunities for students to do research related to planetary

health and/or sustainable healthcare/vetcare?	
The institution has a specific research program or fellowship for students interested in doing planetary health/sustainable healthcare/vetcare research. (2 points)	
There are research opportunities for students to perform research related to planetary health/sustainable healthcare, but these require student initiative to seek them out and carry them out in their spare time. (1 point)	
There are no opportunities for students to engage in planetary health/sustainable healthcare research. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	2
<p><i>Score explanation: University College Dublin offers structured and ongoing opportunities for students to engage in sustainability and planetary health-related research through the UCD Sustainable Research Initiative. This initiative supports interdisciplinary research addressing sustainability challenges across environmental, health, food systems and societal domains and provides an institutional framework that facilitates student involvement in sustainability-focused research. The presence of the UCD Sustainable Research Initiative demonstrates institutional commitment to supporting sustainability research and provides a clear pathway for students to engage in this area, meeting the criteria for a specific research programme supporting planetary health and sustainable healthcare research. In addition to this initiative, sustainability and planetary health research opportunities are regularly available to postgraduate students. For example, in our MSc in Clinical Nutrition and Dietetics, approximately 4-6 MSc students undertake a sustainability- or planetary health-related dissertation each year.</i></p>	

4.3. Does the <u>institution</u> have a webpage where students can find specific information related to planetary health and/or sustainable healthcare/vetcare activities and mentors within the institution? For example, projects achieved, current initiatives underway at the medical school and/or contact of information of potential mentors.	
The institution has a webpage with specific information related to planetary health or sustainable healthcare/vetcare that includes up-to-date information on relevant initiatives and contact information of potential mentors. (2 points)	
There is an institution webpage that features some information on projects and mentors within planetary health and sustainable healthcare within the institution, but it lacks key information. (1 point)	
There is no institution specific webpage for locating planetary health and/or sustainable healthcare projects or mentors. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	2
<p><i>Score explanation: University College Dublin maintains a comprehensive and up-to-date UCD Sustainability website that functions as a centralised hub for sustainability and planetary health-related activity across the institution. The website clearly organises sustainability efforts into defined action areas and provides detailed information on both completed and ongoing projects. The website includes dedicated sections outlining current sustainability initiatives,</i></p>	

institutional priorities and practical action areas, alongside named staff members and teams responsible for sustainability across the university. It also contains specific student-focused content, including opportunities for student involvement, student-led initiatives and guidance on engaging with sustainability projects. In addition, the website highlights research activity, funding opportunities and interdisciplinary sustainability programmes, making it easy for students to identify potential mentors and pathways for involvement in planetary health and sustainable healthcare-related work. The breadth, clarity and accessibility of this resource demonstrate that students can readily locate information on sustainability projects, institutional initiatives and relevant contacts through a single, centralised website, meeting the criteria for full points for this metric.

4.4. Does your institution have registered student groups dedicated towards fostering a culture of planetary health engagement, scholarship, and advocacy on campus, supported by faculty advisors?

Yes, there is a student organisation **with faculty support** at my institution dedicated to planetary health or sustainability in healthcare. (2 points)

Yes, there is a student organisation at my institution dedicated to planetary health or sustainability in healthcare but it **lacks faculty support**. (1 point)

No, there is **not** a student organisation at my institution dedicated to planetary health or sustainability in healthcare. (0 points)

Score Assigned:

2

Score explanation: UCD have a sustainability society, UCD greenacre, sustainability hub (community approach)

- *Student-led initiative called UCD circular*
- <https://www.ucd.ie/sustainability/getinvolved/students/>

**List is not exhaustive but the website shows all the societies and initiatives*

University College Dublin (UCD) has multiple registered student organisations and initiatives dedicated to sustainability and planetary health–related engagement, scholarship, and advocacy, many of which are supported through faculty, professional staff, and institutional structures.

*Relevant examples include the **UCD One Health Society**, an interdisciplinary, registered student society that explicitly links **human, animal, and environmental health**, aligning closely with planetary health principles. The society brings together students from veterinary, medical, nursing, agricultural, and environmental sciences and hosts educational talks, practical workshops, and site visits on topics such as zoonotic disease, antimicrobial resistance, biodiversity, and environmental health. Activities are supported through collaboration with academic staff and external experts, including faculty-led site visits (e.g. UCD Rosemount apiary, Seal Rescue Ireland) and invited speakers.*

*In addition, broader sustainability-focused student organisations—such as the **UCD Sustainability Society** and **UCD Fair Fashion Collective**—are institutionally recognised and supported through engagement with UCD staff, the UCD Sustainability Unit, and the Earth Institute. UCD also*

*provides structured faculty- and staff-supported initiatives such as the **Student Sustainability Ambassador Programme, Earth Institute Coffee Mornings, and UCD Sustainability Working Groups**, which include student representatives working alongside academic faculty and professional staff on sustainability and planetary health–related policy, education, and research initiatives.*

Together, these organisations and programmes demonstrate a strong, faculty-supported student ecosystem fostering planetary health engagement, interdisciplinary learning, advocacy, and action on campus.

4.5. Is there a student liaison representing sustainability interests who serves on a department or institutional decision-making council to advocate for curriculum reform and/or sustainability best practices?

Yes, there is a student representative who serves on a department or institutional decision-making council/committee. (1 point)

No, there is no such student representative. (0 points)

Score Assigned:

1

*Score explanation: At **University College Dublin**, students are formally represented on institutional decision-making bodies relevant to education and sustainability.*

*The Education Steering Group includes student representation through elected Officers of **UCD Students' Union**, including the Graduate Officer and the Education Officer. These officers participate in institutional governance processes that shape curriculum development and academic policy.*

In addition, students sit on the university's Sustainability Steering Groups, which guide implementation of institutional sustainability strategy and best practices. These working groups provide structured opportunities for students to advocate for sustainability integration across teaching, operations, and governance.

Website: <https://www.ucd.ie/sustainability/mission/ourworkinggroups>

4.6. In the past year, has the institution had one or more co-curricular planetary health programs or initiatives in the following categories? (1 point each)

Score

Projects where students are able to gain experience in organic agriculture and sustainable food systems, such as gardens, farms, community supported agriculture (CSA), fishery programs, or urban agriculture projects.

1

Panels, speaker series, or similar events related to planetary health that have students as an intended audience.

1

Events in which students learn directly from members of a local environmental justice community about the climate and environmental challenges they face, and how health professionals can partner with their community to address these exposures and impacts.	1
Cultural arts events, installations or performances related to planetary health that have students as an intended audience.	1
Local volunteer opportunities related to building community resilience to anthropogenic environmental impacts.	1
Wilderness or outdoors programs (e.g., that organise hiking, backpacking, kayaking, or other outings for students)	1

Score explanation:

UCD culture & engagement- examples

*UCD supports student participation in **organic agriculture and sustainable food systems** through the **UCD Greenacre Sustainability Hub and Community Garden**. This shared campus space enables students to engage in composting, planting, harvesting, biodiversity projects, and sustainable food production. Activities include vegetable and herb cultivation, mushroom growing using spent coffee grounds, and community-led workshops focused on sustainable living skills.*

*UCD hosts regular **Earth Institute Coffee Mornings**, a weekly seminar series open to students that features short, informal talks on environmental, climate, and sustainability research and initiatives. Additional student-focused talks and panels are organised by student societies such as the **UCD Sustainability Society, One Health Society, and Fair Fashion Collective**, often featuring academic experts, practitioners, and advocates.*

*Cultural and creative approaches to sustainability are embedded in student-led initiatives such as those run by the **UCD Fair Fashion Collective**, which hosts upcycling workshops, creative activism events, and sustainability-focused exhibitions and panels. These activities use fashion and design as cultural tools to explore themes of waste, consumption, and environmental impact, with students as the primary audience.*

*Students at UCD can volunteer with initiatives such as the **UCD Greenacre Sustainability Hub, UCD Circular**, and society-led activities including beach clean-ups and repair cafés. These opportunities focus on waste reduction, circular economy practices, biodiversity protection, and community engagement, contributing to local resilience against environmental and climate-related challenges.*

*UCD supports outdoor engagement through student societies and sustainability initiatives that organise **nature-based and outdoor activities**, including beach clean-ups, biodiversity walks, community gardening, and apiary visits (e.g. through the **One Health Society** and Sustainability-focused programmes). These activities provide students with opportunities to engage directly with natural environments as part of co-curricular learning.*

Website-

<https://www.ucd.ie/onehealth/newsandevents/onehealthcentreconference2025/>

Section Total (15 out of 15)	100%
------------------------------	------

Back to Summary Page [here](#)

Campus Sustainability

Section Overview: This section evaluates the support and engagement in sustainability initiatives by the institution. The healthcare industry is a major contributor to greenhouse gas emissions as well as pollution that harms local, regional, and global ecosystems. While healthcare is, by nature, a resource-intensive endeavour, the healthcare sector is well poised to lead the world to a more sustainable future. This will involve scrutinising every aspect of how our systems operate, from where we source our energy, to how we build our infrastructure, to what companies we invest in. Our institutions, clinics, and hospitals must set the standard for sustainable practices, and show other sectors what is possible when it comes to minimising environmental impact.

5.1. Does your <u>institution</u> have an Office of Sustainability?	
Yes, there is an Office of Sustainability with multiple full-time staff dedicated to campus sustainability. If the Office of Sustainability serves the entire campus, there is at least one designated staff member for sustainability at the hospital. (3 points)	
There is an Office of Sustainability with one or more full-time staff dedicated to campus sustainability, but no specific staff member in charge of hospital sustainability. (2 points)	
There are no salaried sustainability staff , but there is a sustainability task force or committee. (1 point)	
There are no staff members or task force responsible for overseeing campus sustainability. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	2
<p><i>Score explanation: University College Dublin does have a dedicated Office of Sustainability with multiple staff members responsible for coordinating and overseeing sustainability initiatives across the university, including energy, waste, transport and climate action. However, there is no designated sustainability staff member specifically responsible for hospital sustainability.</i></p>	

5.2. How ambitious is your <u>institution's</u> plan to reduce its own carbon footprint?	
The institution has a written and approved plan to achieve carbon neutrality by 2030 (5 points)	
The institution has a written and approved plan to achieve carbon neutrality by 2040 (3 points)	
The institution has a stated goal of carbon neutrality by 2040 but has not created a plan to reach that goal or the plan is inadequate (1 point)	
The institution does not meet any of the requirements listed above (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	0
<p><i>Score explanation: University College Dublin has a written and approved Climate Action Roadmap aligned with the Irish Public Sector Climate Action Mandate, committing to a 51% reduction in</i></p>	

energy-related carbon dioxide emissions by 2030, significant improvements in energy efficiency and annual progress updates. While the roadmap outlines concrete decarbonisation measures and governance structures, it does not commit to achieving full carbon neutrality by 2030. As such, UCD demonstrates a robust and approved climate action plan but does not meet the PHRC criteria for a 2030/2040 carbon neutrality target. However, it is worth mentioning that UCD has officially joined the [Race to Zero](#), a United Nations-backed global campaign uniting institutions across the world in a shared mission to cut greenhouse gas emissions by 50% by 2030 and achieve net zero emissions by 2050.

5.3. Do buildings/infrastructure used by the institution for teaching (not including the hospital) utilize renewable energy?

Yes, institution buildings are **100%** powered by renewable energy. (3 points)

Institution buildings source **>80%** of energy needs from off-site and/or on-site renewable energy. (2 points)

Institution buildings source **>20%** of energy needs from off-site and/or on-site renewable energy. (1 point)

Institution buildings source **<20%** of energy needs from off-site and/or on-site renewable energy. (0 points)

Score Assigned:

1

Score explanation: UCD's [Climate Action Roadmap](#) confirms that the university is actively transitioning its energy systems in line with national and public sector climate targets, with a strong focus on reducing emissions and improving energy efficiency across the campus estate. Electricity supplied to UCD buildings is sourced from the national grid, which includes a substantial and growing renewable energy component. In addition, UCD has identified on-site renewable energy generation (including solar PV) as a key priority within its Climate Action Roadmap. UCD also operates one of the earliest district heating systems in Ireland and is progressively transitioning towards renewable heat sources, including the installation of large air-to-water heat pumps. The system supplies eleven buildings on campus, with a total combined floor area of 116,000 m². There are plans to connect additional buildings to the system, increasing the floor area supplied up to 205,000 m².

5.4. Are sustainable building practices utilised for new and old buildings on the institution's campus, with design and construction of new buildings and remodelling of old buildings conforming to a published sustainability rating system or building code/guideline?

Yes, sustainable building practices are utilised for new buildings on the institution's campus and the **majority** of old buildings **have been retrofitted** to be more sustainable. (3 points)

Sustainable building practices are utilised for new buildings on the institution's campus, but most old buildings have **not been retrofitted**. (2 points)

Sustainable building practices are inadequately or incompletely implemented for new buildings. (1 point)	
Sustainability is not considered in the construction of new buildings. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	2
<p><i>Score explanation: UCD's Climate Action Roadmap confirms that sustainability principles are embedded in the design and delivery of new campus buildings, including energy efficiency, low-carbon systems, and improved environmental performance in line with evolving best practice and regulatory requirements. For existing buildings, the Roadmap outlines an ongoing programme of incremental upgrades and efficiency improvements (such as heating systems, lighting, building services, and operational energy management). While these measures improve performance, most older buildings have not yet undergone full deep retrofit. Nonetheless, the university has an active campus development programme, with new buildings and major refurbishments designed in line with state-of-the-art sustainable construction practices. Recent buildings are highly energy efficient and sustainability is central to their design and delivery, including the application of recognised environmental building rating systems. Sedum roofs have also been installed on several newer buildings, providing biodiversity benefits alongside improved building performance.</i></p>	

5.5. Has the <u>institution</u> implemented strategies to encourage and provide environmentally-friendly transportation options for students and reduce the environmental impact of commuting?	
Yes, the institution has implemented strategies to encourage and provide environmentally-friendly transportation options such as safe active transport, public transport, or carpooling and these options are well-utilised by students. Alternatively, the campus location is not amenable to unsustainable forms of transportation by default. (2 points)	
The institution has implemented some strategies to provide environmentally-friendly transportation options, but the options are unsatisfactorily accessible or advertised. (1 point)	
The institution has not implemented strategies to encourage and provide environmentally-friendly transportation options. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	2
<p><i>Score explanation: Yes, University College Dublin has implemented comprehensive and well-utilised strategies to encourage environmentally friendly transportation and reduce the environmental impact of commuting. The UCD Climate Action Roadmap Update 2024 outlines a strong institutional commitment to sustainable travel, including active transport, public transport and reduced reliance on private car use. UCD has exceeded its Travel Plan target, with over 81% of journeys to campus undertaken by sustainable modes (walking, cycling or public transport) as measured through its long-running annual travel survey. The university supports active travel through the provision of over 5,000 cycle parking spaces, including secure cycle parking facilities located close to buildings across the Belfield and Blackrock campuses. Public transport access has been enhanced through collaboration with local authorities and the BusConnects network redesign, which has increased bus services serving the campus, with further infrastructure improvements planned. In recognition of these efforts, UCD was awarded the Gold Level Smarter Travel Mark in 2024, an achievement attained only by a small number of universities nationally. Additional demand-management measures, such as parking charged and a capped number of parking spaces,</i></p>	

further discourage private car use while maintaining accessible parking for those with mobility needs. Together, these measures demonstrate that environmentally friendly transport options at UCD are well-developed, accessible, clearly promoted and widely used by students and staff.

5.6. Does your institution have an organics recycling program (compost) and a conventional recycling program (aluminium/paper/plastic/glass)?

Yes, the institution has **both** compost **and** recycling programs accessible to students and faculty. (2 points)

The institution has **either** recycling **or** compost programs accessible to students and faculty, but not both. (1 point)

There is **no** compost or recycling program at the institution. (0 points)

Score Assigned:

2

Score explanation: Yes, University College Dublin has both an organics recycling (biowaste/compost) program and a conventional recycling program that are accessible to students and faculty members across the campus. As outlined in the UCD Climate Action Roadmap Update 2024, waste is segregated into a minimum of three streams: residual/general waste, recycling waste (paper, plastic, metal and glass) and organic/biowaste. These segregated waste systems are available in academic buildings, communal areas and student residences, ensuring access for both students and staff during teaching, research and daily campus activities. In student residences, organic and recycling waste facilities are provided within apartments and at dedicated external waste disposal points. In academic and administrative buildings, UCD Estate Services has begun implementing source segregation in communal areas, alongside “binless office” initiatives that rely on shared recycling and biowaste facilities used by faculty and staff. Food waste prevention and segregation is an institutional priority, with UCD working closely with campus caterers to measure and manage food waste in line with EPA protocols. In addition, pop-up recycling centres are provided at student residences during end-of-academic year move-out periods to support correct waste segregation by students. Collectively, these measures demonstrate that both composting and recycling programs are well established and readily accessible to the UCD community, including students and faculty members.

Sustainability waste management link-

<http://ucdestates.ie/about/sustainability/waste-management/>

5.7. Does the institution apply sustainability criteria when making decisions about the campus food and beverage selections (e.g. local sourcing, reduced meat, decreased plastic packaging)?

Yes, the institution has **adequate** sustainability requirements for food and beverages, including meat-free days or no red-meat, and **is engaged** in efforts to increase food and beverage sustainability. (3 points)

There are sustainability guidelines for food and beverages, but they are **insufficient or optional**. The institution **is engaged** in efforts to increase food and beverage sustainability. (2 points)

There are sustainability guidelines for food and beverages, but they are **insufficient or optional**. The institution is **not** engaged in efforts to increase food and beverage sustainability. (1 point)

There are **no** sustainability guidelines for food and beverages. (0 points)

Score Assigned:

2

Score explanation: UCD formally applies sustainability criteria to campus food and beverage provision through binding catering tender requirements and licence agreements. These criteria are embedded at procurement stage and require quarterly reporting to ensure compliance.

All catering tenders must implement the following sustainability requirements:

- 1. Sustainable food production methods*
- 2. Local supplier consideration and growth*
- 3. Environmentally responsible sourcing of vegetable fats*
- 4. Reduction of kitchen energy and water consumption*
- 5. Sustainable food and hot beverage procurement*
- 6. Reduction of food miles and sustainable packaging (including takeaway)*
- 7. Food and beverage waste prevention, measurement, and reporting*
- 8. Environmental impact controls for cleaning materials*
- 9. Management of environmental impacts from supplier deliveries*

In addition, the following legislation is incorporated into catering licences:

- European Union (Packaging) Regulations 2014 (S.I. No. 282/2014)*
- European Union (Packaging) (Amendment) Regulations 2015 (S.I. No. 542/2015)*
- Directive (EU) 2019/904 on Single Use Plastics*
- Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2020/2151*
- European Union (Single Use Plastics) Regulations 2021 (S.I. No. 516/2021) and 2022 Amendment (S.I. No. 136/2022)*

These are not voluntary initiatives but contractual and regulatory obligations incorporated into campus catering agreements.

5.8. Does the institution apply sustainability criteria when making decisions about supply

procurement?	
Yes, the institution has adequate sustainability requirements for supply procurement and is engaged in efforts to increase sustainability of procurement. (3 points)	
There are sustainability guidelines for supply procurement, but they are insufficient or optional . The institution is engaged in efforts to increase sustainability of procurement. (2 points)	
There are sustainability guidelines for supply procurement, but they are insufficient or optional . The institution is not engaged in efforts to increase sustainability of procurement. (1 point)	
There are no sustainability guidelines for supply procurement. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	3
<p><i>Score explanation: University College Dublin (UCD) has established guidelines and practices that incorporate sustainability into institutional procurement processes. The university's Procurement Policy and participation in the Office of Government Procurement (OGP) Green Public Procurement Guidelines ensure compliance with national sustainability standards.</i></p> <p><i>UCD promotes green procurement to support environmental and broader sustainable development objectives. The university provides staff training through the central Procurement and Contracts function to enhance awareness of sustainable purchasing practices. These efforts are aligned with UCD's wider sustainability goals under the Office of the Vice-President for Sustainability, which is developing initiatives to embed sustainable decision-making across all operations.</i></p> <p><i>UCD's procurement strategy emphasizes considerations such as energy efficiency, resource conservation, and waste reduction throughout a product's life cycle. However, while these policies and guidelines demonstrate a clear institutional commitment, there is limited publicly available evidence of formal, systematic integration of sustainability criteria (such as detailed evaluation scoring or supplier weighting) across all procurement decisions.</i></p> <p>https://www.ucd.ie/sustainability/actionareas/campusandoperations/greenprocurement</p>	

5.9. Are there sustainability requirements or guidelines for events hosted at the institution?	
Every event hosted at the institution must abide by sustainability criteria. (2 points)	
The institution strongly recommends or incentivizes sustainability measures, but they are not required . (1 point)	
There are no sustainability guidelines for institution events. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	1
<p><i>Score explanation: While UCD does not have a standalone Sustainable Events Policy document, institutional sustainability requirements apply to all campus events through:</i></p>	

5.10. Does your institution have programs and initiatives to assist with making lab spaces more environmentally sustainable?

Yes, the institution has **programs** and **initiatives** to assist with making lab spaces more environmentally sustainable. (2 points)

There are **guidelines** on how to make lab spaces more environmentally sustainable, but not programs or initiatives. (1 point)

There are **no** efforts at the institution to make lab spaces more sustainable. (0 points)

Score Assigned:

2

*Score explanation: A **funded laboratory sustainability initiative** through the College of Health and Agricultural Sciences (CHAS), which provided laboratory sustainability kits containing energy meters, timers, waste audit tools, and sustainability guidance materials.*

- *Institutional participation in the My Green Lab certification programme, including achievement of Gold Level Certification by a School of Veterinary Medicine laboratory.*
- *Engagement in sustainability competitions such as the British Society of Veterinary Pathologists Green Labs Competition, supporting research-led sustainability innovation.*
- *Active participation in sustainability initiatives including nitrile glove recycling and chemical recycling assessments.*
- *Ongoing institutional engagement through Green Labs meetings and sustainability discussions.*

These activities go beyond providing passive guidelines. They include funded programmes, structured certification pathways, organised competitions, and implemented operational initiatives that actively assist laboratories in improving environmental performance.

<https://www.ucd.ie/sri/about/newsandevents/2025news/>

5.11. Does your institution's endowment portfolio investments include fossil-fuel companies?

The institution is **entirely divested** from fossil fuels **and** has made a **commitment to reinvest divested funds** into renewable energy companies or renewable energy campus initiatives. (4 points)

The institution is **entirely divested** from fossil fuels. (3 points)

The institution has partially divested from fossil fuel companies or has made a commitment to fully divest , but currently still has fossil fuel investments. (2 points)	
The institution has not divested from fossil-fuel companies, but faculty and/or students are conducting organised advocacy for divestment. (1 point)	
Yes, the institution has investments with fossil-fuel companies and there have been no efforts to change that. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	3
<p><i>Score explanation: University College Dublin (UCD) has confirmed that it does not maintain an institutional endowment portfolio. As a result, the metric concerning fossil-fuel investments within an endowment structure does not directly apply.</i></p> <p><i>Because UCD does not operate an endowment fund, there are no institutional endowment investments in fossil-fuel companies. This effectively aligns with the criteria indicating that the institution is fully divested from fossil fuels within such an investment structure.</i></p> <p><i>In addition, UCD has established a Responsible Investment Policy available through its Governance Document Library, which outlines the university's approach to ethical and responsible financial management.</i></p> <p><i>UCD's sustainability commitments are further outlined in the UCD Climate Action Roadmap (2025 Update), which details institutional actions to reduce carbon emissions and transition toward renewable and low-carbon energy systems across campus operations.</i></p> <p><i>Governance Document Library- https://www.ucd.ie/governance/documentlibrary/</i></p> <p><i>https://www.ucd.ie/sustainability/t4media/UCD%20Climate%20Action%20Roadmap%20-%202025%20update.pdf</i></p>	

Section Total (20 out of 32)	62.5%
-------------------------------------	--------------

Back to Summary Page [here](#)

Grading

Section Overview

This section focuses on the grading of the report card. The institution received a grade for each of the individual sections as well as an overall institutional grade. Section point totals were tallied, divided by the total points available for the section, and converted to a percentage. The overall institutional grade is a weighted average of the section grades, with curriculum receiving a higher weight owing to its larger number of metrics. Letter grades for each section and the institution overall were then assigned according to the table below.

Letter Grade*	Percentage
A	80% - 100%
B	60% - 79%
C	40% - 59%
D	20% - 39%
F	0% - 19%

**Within each grade bracket, a score in the top 5% (_5 to _9%), receives a “+”, and a score in the bottom 5% (_0- _4%) receives a “--”. For example, a percentage score of 78% would be a B+.*

Planetary Health Grades for the University College Dublin School of Medicine. The following table presents the individual section grades and overall institutional grade for the University College Dublin School of Medicine on this Planetary Health Report Card.

Section	Raw Score %	Letter Grade
Planetary Health Curriculum (30%)	$(36/75) \times 100 = 48\%$	C
Interdisciplinary Research (17.5%)	$(12/17) \times 100 = 71\%$	B
Community Outreach and Advocacy (17.5%)	$(11/14) \times 100 = 79\%$	B+
Support for Student-led Planetary Health Initiatives (17.5%)	$(15/15) \times 100 = 100\%$	A+
Campus Sustainability (17.5%)	$(20/32) \times 100 = 63\%$	B-
Institutional Grade	$(48 \times 0.3 + 71 \times 0.175 + 79 \times 0.175 + 100 \times 0.175 + 63 \times 0.175) = 68.9\%$	B

Report Card Trends

Section Overview

This graph demonstrates trends in overall and section grades for the years in which UCD has participated in the Planetary Health Report Card initiative.

