Planetary Health Report Card (Nutrition & Dietetics) 2026:

University College Dublin

2025-2026 Contributing Team:

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Summary of Findings

Overall Grade	B

Curriculum	C+

- Overall, the Nutrition and Dietetics curriculum demonstrates emerging and progressively strengthening integration of sustainability and planetary health concepts - particularly in food waste, advocacy skills and sustainable food systems - however coverage remains fragmented, inconsistently framed around climate change and lacks fully embedded longitudinal core teaching.
- **Recommendation:** The Nutrition and Dietetics programme should introduce a vertically integrated, core sustainability and planetary health strand across all years of the MSc, with clearly defined learning outcomes and assessment components, to ensure consistent, explicit and progressive development of climate-health competencies rather than reliance on isolated lectures or elective exposure.

Interdisciplinary Research	B

- 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+

- 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+

- 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.

- **Nutrition and Dietetics School/Department vs. Institution:** When "Nutrition and Dietetics School" (or similar derivative therefore) is specified in the report card, this only refers to curriculum and resources offered by the School/Department of Nutrition and Dietetics 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 nutrition and dietetics students, no matter where in the institution the resource comes from or if it is specifically targeted for these 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 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 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 nutrition and dietetics school curriculum.*** *Today's students will be on the frontlines of tackling the health effects of climate and other environmental changes. Therefore, it is critical that nutrition and dietetics 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 health professional school's core curriculum.*

Curriculum: General

1.1. Does the school within your university responsible for nutrition and/or dietetics offer opportunities to learn about sustainable healthcare, sustainable food systems and/or Planetary Health?	
Yes, the nutrition and dietetics school offers two or more core courses which focus primarily on sustainable healthcare, sustainable food systems and/or planetary health. (3 points)	
Yes, the nutrition and dietetics school offers one core course which focuses primarily on sustainable healthcare, sustainable food systems and/or planetary health. (2 points)	
The nutrition and dietetics school does not have any core courses whose primary focus is sustainable healthcare, sustainable food systems and/or planetary health. However, they offer one or more electives on these topics in addition to core courses that include a lecture on planetary health. (1 point)	
No, the nutrition and dietetics school does not offer any core or elective courses on sustainable healthcare, sustainable food systems and/or planetary health. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	1

Score explanation:
No core modules are primarily dedicated to planetary health or sustainable food systems. However, sustainability appears in the following modules:

- *Dietetics Through the Lifecycle: via the ICDA Sustainability Module 1, which introduces sustainable diets, food systems and planetary health concepts later assessed in a short-answer question. In this module, two students were provided with a literature review question – one focusing on sustainable diets and the other on the role of dietitians in food systems.*
- *Non-Acute Placement Module: during the pre-placement week, students were introduced to the HSE Food, Nutrition and Hydration Policy for Adult Patients in Acute Hospital and the accompanying Implementation Toolkit, which outline sustainable catering and food-provision practices.*
- *Dietetics Professional Practice 2: included a dedicated lecture on 'Sustainable Food Systems in Context' followed by a site-visit to Airfield Estate. The lecture introduced*

definitions, components (environmental, social and economic) and Irish/global context of sustainability. The learning outcomes of this lecture included: "to understand the definition and components of sustainability; to be able to apply the concept of food safety to sustainability and to understand the role of Ireland and yourself in sustainable food production." This module also contained a sustainability presentation during which a group of students provided a practical opportunity for some students to apply sustainability principles by designing and presenting a hospital-based food waste and menu-improvement intervention, reinforcing understanding of sustainable food systems in a healthcare setting.

Curriculum: Health Effects of Climate Change

1.2. Does your nutrition and dietetics school curriculum address the relationship between climate change and social determinants of health (e.g. reduced access to nutritional and/or traditional food, inequities in food distribution)?	
This topic was explored in depth in several courses, either in the classroom, hands-on practical experiences (e.g. practicums, community projects), and/or student research opportunities. (4 points)	
This topic was covered in two or more courses within the core curriculum. (3 points)	
This topic was briefly covered (e.g. in one course or a lecture) within the core curriculum. (2 points)	
This topic is addressed in elective coursework but not the core curriculum. (1 point)	
This topic was not covered. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	2

Score explanation: This topic is covered briefly across multiple modules:

- *Dietetics Through the Lifecycle: links environmental change, food systems and nutrition access through the ICDA Sustainability Module 1. The lecture on 'Childhood Feeding II' discusses how environmental and socio-economic conditions affect food availability and dietary habits.*
- *Clinical Nutrition: briefly mentioned in the 'Nutrition Support' lecture that malnutrition without disease can be due to hunger. In another lecture titled 'Case Study 2: Dietary Management of Type 1 and Type 2 Diabetes', the lecture briefly mentioned that individual nutritional needs should be based on their personal and cultural preferences as well as their health literacy and access to healthful food choices, which touches slightly on social determinants but not explicitly linked to climate change. In another lecture titled 'Clinical Nutrition in Older Adults', it was briefly mentioned that malnutrition in older adults can be caused by multiple factors including demographic (gender, education, etc.) and social/economic (poverty, social support, etc.).*

- *Medicine for Clinical Nutrition: introduces health inequities in three chronic disease lectures including obesity, diabetes and COPD, where it was highlighted how environmental exposures such as air pollution can cause COPD and lower socio-economic status can contribute to poorer health outcomes such as obesity and diabetes.*
- *Dietetics Professional Practice 2: explores climate-justice principles, the importance of equitable access to food and civic participation in sustainability efforts in the lecture titled 'Sustainable Food Systems in Context'. The sustainability presentation required students to consider how environmental and social determinants – including food access, waste and healthcare systems – interact to influence both planetary and patient health.*
- *Advanced Clinical Nutrition and Dietetics: includes brief references to social and environmental determinants, e.g., environment/advertising influencing children's diets and thus causing obesity in children (this was mentioned in the lecture titled 'Childhood Obesity'. As well as this, in the 'Kidney Disease' lectures, it was briefly mentioned that estimation of the kidney function has not been well-validated in certain ethnic groups. discussing kidney function differences in ethnic groups.*
- *Nutrition Communication: Social and environmental determinants of health are addressed indirectly in this module. Lecture 1 introduces the bio-psycho-social model of health, while lecture 2 and lecture 6 apply the socio-ecological model to demonstrate how income, food access, environment, marketing and policy influence dietary behaviours. Climate change is not explicitly referenced in this module.*

1.3. Does your nutrition and dietetics school curriculum address the disproportionate impact of climate change on marginalised populations (e.g. low socioeconomic groups, women, communities of colour, Indigenous communities, children, people experiencing homelessness, and older adults)?	
This topic was explored in depth in several courses, either in the classroom, hands-on practical experiences (e.g. practicums, community projects), and/or student research opportunities. (4 points)	
This topic was covered in two or more courses within the core curriculum. (3 points)	
This topic was briefly covered (e.g. in one course or a lecture) within the core curriculum. (2 points)	
This topic is addressed in elective coursework but not the core curriculum. (1 point)	
This topic was not covered. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	2
Score explanation: The disproportionate effects of climate change on vulnerable populations are addressed in several modules however these were briefly mentioned as observed below:	

- *Dietetics Through the Lifecycle discusses nutritional challenges in children and older adults. One student received a literature review assignment on the topic of: "Do dietary protein recommendations for older adults conflict with sustainable food principles?".*
- *Clinical Nutrition briefly mentioned in the 'Nutrition Support' lecture that elderly, people with comorbidities, those in institutional care and low-income groups are at a higher risk of malnutrition.*
- *Medicine for Clinical Nutrition lectures identify at-risk groups throughout the module. In the lecture title 'Paediatric GI Disorders', it was briefly mentioned that poverty and access are causes of failure to thrive in children. The 'Obesity' and 'Appetite Regulation' lectures discussed that environment, food availability, education, income, climate and public policies can influence both obesity and eating behaviours among individuals.*
- *Non-Acute Placement offers experiential learning throughout the catering rotation and placement, where students ensure equitable access to food for patients with therapeutic, cultural or texture-modified diets.*
- *Dietetics Professional Practice 2 introduces the concept of climate justice and emphasizes inclusion, community engagement and food security as elements of social sustainability in the lecture titled 'Sustainable Food Systems in Context'. In the sustainability presentation, students reflected on how hospital food systems can affect vulnerable patient groups (e.g., older adults in geriatric wards) and explored equitable approaches to sustainable nutrition interventions.*
- *Nutrition Communication: The module considers vulnerable populations through communication planning frameworks. Lecture 2 discusses food insecurity and access challenges across life stages, while lectures 3 and 4 focus on audience segmentation and formative research for at-risk groups. These inequities are not explicitly framed as climate-related.*

It has been shown above that these modules collectively highlight equity and vulnerability but stop short of framing them explicitly as climate-change-related.

1.4. Does your nutrition and dietetics school curriculum address the impacts of environmental degradation from climate change on food production, food supply, and quality (e.g. crop yields, nutritional values, etc)?
This topic was explored in depth in several courses, either in the classroom, hands-on practical experiences (e.g. practicums, community projects), and/or student research opportunities. (4 points)
This topic was explored in depth in two or more courses within the core curriculum. (3 points)
This topic was briefly covered (e.g. in one course or a lecture) within the core curriculum. (2 points)
This topic is addressed in elective coursework but not the core curriculum. (1 point)
This topic was not covered. (0 points)

Score Assigned:	2

Score explanation:

- *Dietetics Through the Life Cycle introduces foundational concepts of sustainable food production through the ICDA Sustainability Module 1.*
- *Medicine for Clinical Nutrition provided supplementary reading on minerals, biofortification / agricultural diversification could implement sustainable dietary diversification to help countries with identified micronutrient deficiencies.*
- *Dietetics Professional Practice 2 examines the environmental consequences of agricultural practices, over-reliance on ruminant animals, poor water quality and waste generation in Ireland during the 'Sustainable Food Systems in Context' lecture. Students learn about the impact of food waste and study regenerative-farming approaches through additional materials such as the films titled; 'Kiss the Ground' and 'Six Inches of Soil'. Airfield Estate fieldwork provided experiential understanding of sustainable agriculture, soil health and circular food-water systems. The sustainability presentation linked hospital food procurement and waste to environmental degradation, encouraging students to propose system-level changes that reduce resource use and promote sustainable food sourcing.*

Together these elements demonstrated repeated and applied engagement with environmental degradation and its implications for food systems and nutrition quality.

1.5. To what extent does your nutrition and dietetics school emphasise the importance of Indigenous knowledge and value systems to inform planetary health solutions?

The importance of Indigenous knowledge and value systems is emphasised throughout the nutrition and dietetics school's planetary health education. (3 points)
The importance of Indigenous knowledge and value systems is briefly addressed (e.g. in one course or lecture) in the core curriculum. (2 points)
The importance of Indigenous knowledge and value systems is emphasised (comprehensively or briefly) in elective coursework but not in the core curriculum. (1 point)
This topic was not covered. (0 points)

Score Assigned:	0

Score explanation: There is currently no inclusion of Indigenous or traditional ecological knowledge within this curriculum. Although in Dietetics Professional Practice 2, the lecture on 'Sustainable Food Systems in Context' mentions cultural food diversity and community participation, it is framed within Irish and European policy context rather than Indigenous worldviews or traditional ecological approaches. No lectures, readings or assessments specifically address Indigenous knowledge or its role in planetary-health solutions.

1.6. Does your nutrition and dietetics school curriculum address the carbon footprint of healthcare systems?	
This topic was explored in depth in several courses, either in the classroom, hands-on practical experiences (e.g. practicums, community projects), and/or student research opportunities. (4 points)	
This topic was covered in two or more courses within the core curriculum, including specific strategies for healthcare professionals to reduce the carbon footprint. (3 points)	
This topic was briefly covered (e.g. in one course or a lecture) within the core curriculum, including basic awareness of the carbon footprint of healthcare systems. (2 points)	
This topic is addressed in elective coursework but not the core curriculum. (1 point)	
This topic was not covered. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	1
Score explanation: Dietetics Professional Practice 2, a lecture on 'Sustainable Food Systems in Context' introduces environmental impacts of Ireland's healthcare and food-service system within broader sustainability discussions, noting the heavy reliance on fossil fuels, transport emissions and the need for improved waste management. The lecture was also accompanied with supplementary reading on 'HSE Climate Action Strategy'. With that being said, the module includes quantitative measurement or assessment of healthcare carbon emissions, therefore, this represents elective-level awareness rather than systematic core coverage.	

1.7. Does your nutrition and dietetics school curriculum address global issues that impact the sustainability of our food system? (1 point each, provided the topic is offered in 1 or more courses)	**Score**
Impact of the increasing global population on food supply and food security. (1 point)	1
Impact of declining biodiversity on access to a variety of nutritious foods. (1 point)	1
Impact of urbanisation on demand for less environmentally sustainable dietary patterns. (1 point)	1
Impact of colonisation on food system practices and long-term food supply and food security. (1 point)	1
Impact of socio-political instability, caused by pandemics, natural disasters, war and conflict on food supply and food security. (1 point)	0
Score explanation: The following was awarded 4 points:	

- *Dietetics Through the Lifecycle via the ICDA Sustainability Module 1 introduces concepts of global population growth, urbanisation and resource strain as key sustainability challenges*
- *Dietetics Professional Practice 2 expands this perspective in the 'Sustainable Food Systems in Context' lecture, outlining how biodiversity loss, climate variability and food-trade dependencies affect food supply. Students examine Ireland's agricultural exports in relation to European sustainability targets and the UN SDGs. This lecture also encourages students to critically analyse Ireland's role in the global food chain and to evaluate national progress towards SDG 2 (Zero Hunger) and SDG 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production).*
- *Advanced Clinical Nutrition and Dietetics discusses antimicrobial resistance and foodborne illness in relation to global issues during the lecture titled 'Food-borne Bacteria of Importance to Human Health'.*
- *Nutrition Communication: Socio-political drivers of food systems are introduced conceptually. Lecture 2 addresses food systems and food politics, including who shapes food choices and lecture 10 highlights the role of upstream policy and governance in influencing population nutrition outcomes.*
- *Health Promotion: Lecture 1 mentions global population health issues such as nutrition and access. Other factors (biodiversity, urbanisation, colonisation, conflict/pandemics) are not discussed.*

1.8. Does your nutrition and dietetics school address the environmental and human impact of food transport on planetary health and food quality?	
This topic was explored in depth in several courses, either in the classroom, hands-on practical experiences (e.g. practicums, community projects), and/or student research opportunities. (4 points)	
This topic was explored in depth in two or more courses within the core curriculum, including critical analysis of both imported and locally-sourced foods (i.e. food sold and consumed within its region of production), considering factors such as environmental impact, nutritional value, and economic implications. (3 points)	
This topic was briefly covered (e.g. in one course or a lecture) within the core curriculum. (2 points)	
This topic is addressed in elective coursework but not the core curriculum. (1 point)	
This topic was not covered. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	2
Score explanation: • *Dietetics Through the Lifecycle via the ICDA Sustainability Module 1 makes brief reference to global versus regional supply chains when discussing sustainable food*	

systems. However, there was no explicit focus on imported vs. local foods or transport-specific impacts.

- *Dietetics Professional Practice 2 via the lecture on 'Sustainable Food Systems in Context' identifies Ireland's dependence on imported foods and the resulting carbon footprint associated with long-distance transport, refrigeration and logistics. The lecture encourages discussion of local vs. imported sourcing and the concept of "food miles". The Airfield Estate fieldwork further reinforces the environmental benefits of local and seasonal food procurement through direct observation of regenerative farming and local supply networks.*

1.9. Does your nutrition and dietetics school curriculum address the environmental impact of food waste and examine solutions to minimise food waste in various settings (e.g. institutions such as hospitals, schools, prisons, small and large retail shops, the food industry and food manufacturing companies, and households)?	
This topic was explored in depth in several courses, either in the classroom, hands-on practical experiences (e.g. practicums, community projects), and/or student research opportunities. (4 points)	
This topic was explored in two or more courses within the core curriculum. (3 points)	
This topic was briefly covered (e.g. in one course or a lecture) within the core curriculum. (2 points)	
This topic is addressed in elective coursework but not the core curriculum. (1 point)	
This topic was not covered. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	4

Score explanation:

- *Dietetics Through the Lifecycle via the ICDA Sustainability Module 1 allowed students to better understand sustainable diets and responsible consumption behaviours that indirectly reduce food waste.*
- *Non-Acute Placement requires students to complete catering projects where they assess hospital food waste, menu planning and sustainability standards in line with the HSE Food, Nutrition and Hydration Policy and Implementation Toolkit. Reflections on food waste management form part of the assessed catering workbook. This hands-on experience develops an applied understanding of hospital food waste prevention and resource efficiency.*
- *Dietetics Professional Practice 2 provides a lecture titled 'Sustainable Food Systems in Context' where it quantifies global and national food waste impacts and introduces prevention strategies such as redistribution and circular food systems. The sustainability presentation directly addressed food waste management in healthcare, requiring students to analyse waste data, identify causes and design interventions to reduce waste while improving nutritional and environmental outcomes.*

Because food waste education is embedded through both classroom learning and assessed practical experiences, this topic is addressed comprehensively throughout the MSc programme.

1.10. Does your nutrition and dietetics school explore the global, regional, national and local regulations that govern food systems, and the factors that drive changes in these regulatory systems?	
This topic was explored in depth in several courses, either in the classroom, hands-on practical experiences (e.g. practicums, community projects), and/or student research opportunities. (4 points)	
This topic was explored in two or more courses within the core curriculum. (3 points)	
This topic was briefly covered (e.g. in one course or a lecture) within the core curriculum. (2 points)	
This topic is addressed in elective coursework but not the core curriculum. (1 point)	
This topic was not covered. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	2

Score explanation:

- *Dietetics Through the Lifecycle includes the reading "Understanding Codex", introducing students to global food-safety and sustainability standards under the Codex Alimentarius framework.*
- *Medicine for Clinical Nutrition indirectly discusses regulation from health policies by providing students with supplementary reading materials and referencing 'Models of Care' and the 'EASD'.*
- *Non-Acute Placement reinforces regulatory understanding through application of the HSE national food and hydration policies, food safety standard and HACCP requirements during catering audits.*
- *Dietetics Professional Practice 2 via the lecture on 'Sustainable Food Systems in Context' situates Irish policy (e.g., Food Vision 2030 and EU Farm-to-Fork Strategy) within global regulatory systems, helping students link dietetic practice to broader governance frameworks. Through the sustainability presentation, students engaged with hospital food policy, HSE standards and governance frameworks, strengthening understanding of how sustainability aligns with food-system regulation.*
- *Advanced Clinical Nutrition and Dietetics: in the lecture 'Food-borne Bacteria of Importance to Human Health', antimicrobial resistance is discussed as a One Health Challenge, emphasising the interconnected regulation of human, animal and environmental health.*
- *Nutrition Communication: Food policy is addressed at a high level within the module. Lecture 1 introduces national public health policy through the Healthy Ireland framework, while lecture 10 focuses on engaging policymakers and influencing legislation through advocacy.*

- *Health Promotion: Lecture 1 and Lecture 10 cover health promotion policy frameworks (e.g., national public health policies), which indirectly relate to regulation and drivers of dietary change.*

These examples demonstrate that students are introduced to both national and international food-systems governance. However, coverage remains descriptive rather than analytical, with the exception of the one group of students required to present in Dietetics Professional Practice 2.

1.11. Does your nutrition and dietetics school address the role of food marketing and commercial interests in shaping dietary patterns and food systems?	
This topic was explored in depth in several courses, either in the classroom, hands-on practical experiences (e.g. practicums, community projects), and/or student research opportunities. (4 points)	
This topic was explored in two or more courses within the core curriculum. (3 points)	
This topic was briefly covered (e.g. in one course or a lecture) within the core curriculum. (2 points)	
This topic is addressed in elective coursework but not the core curriculum. (1 point)	
This topic was not covered. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	2

Score explanation:

- *Medicine for Clinical Nutrition briefly mentions that commercial food / food environment influences obesity during the 'Obesity' lecture.*
- *Advanced Clinical Nutrition and Dietetics also briefly mentions that advertising and environmental factors can influence dietary behaviours in child and adolescent obesity in the 'Child and Adolescent Obesity' lecture. Discussions on oral nutritional supplements and enteral formulas include awareness of industry marketing, ethical prescribing and professional responsibility to avoid product endorsement.*
- *Dietetics Professional Practice 2: The lecture on 'Sustainable Food Systems in Context' highlights how global food markets and trade influence Ireland's food imports, prices and sustainability commitments.*
- *Nutrition Communication covers this topic in depth (however this module is an elective module, not a core curriculum module for the programme). Lecture 2 examines marketing, pricing, packaging, labelling, product placement and digital food environments, while lecture 7 explores how commercially shaped environments incentivise or discourage behaviour. Lecture 13 further examines media influence on risk perception.*
- *Health Promotion: "Commercial determinants of health: defining dominant narratives, setting rules, commodifying knowledge, undermining political, social and economic rights." Lecture 6a: Healthy settings approach includes the influence of marketing on health behaviours.*

While students gain an understanding of the commercial determinants of diet, this is embedded within broader learning rather than as a stand-alone theme with the exception of this theme being covered in the 'Nutrition Communication' elective module.

1.12. Does your nutrition and dietetics school curriculum cover these topics in the core curriculum? (1 point each, provided the topic is offered in 1 or more courses)	**Score**
The health and environmental co-benefits of innovations in novel and emerging food ingredients with a specific focus on their positive impact on planetary health. (1 point)	0
The benefits of applying a sustainability lens when learning about food labelling, product development and other food-industry practices. (1 point)	0
The environmental and health co-benefits of outdoor activities, human-powered transport and immersion in nature. (1 point)	1
Responsible prescription practices for oral nutrition supplements and tube feeding in healthcare. (1 point)	1

Score explanation:
Total score of 2:

- *Clinical Nutrition, Medicine for Clinical Nutrition, Advanced Clinical Nutrition and Dietetics all discuss responsible prescription practices for oral nutritional supplements and tube feeding throughout all three modules. Throughout all of these modules, students are encouraged to minimise waste, avoid over-prescription and consider cost-effectiveness and environmental impact.*
- *Non-Acute Placement reinforces sustainability through applied learning, where responsible ONS and tube feeding practices are discussed in clinical settings. Students also engage with sustainable procurement and community approaches as part of the HSE Food, Nutrition and Hydration Policy standards.*
- *Dietetics Professional Practice via the 'Sustainable Food Systems in Context' lecture extends sustainability beyond the clinical setting. The lecture and Airfield Estate visit explore regenerative agriculture, biodiversity, zero-waste food systems and social prescription initiatives such as community gardens that link sustainable food production with community health and wellbeing.*
- *Advancing Healthcare: Exercise Prescription module indirectly addresses the health co-benefits of outdoor activity and active moment. In lecture 1 and 7, national initiatives such as Get Ireland Active and population-level walking and physical activity strategies are discussed, aligning implicitly with sustainability principles, although environmental co-benefits are not explicitly stated.*

Together, these learning experiences demonstrate how sustainability principles are embedded across clinical, practical and community dimensions, although they are not yet explicitly assessed as standalone competencies

Curriculum: Environmental Impacts of Dietary Patterns

1.13. Does your nutrition and dietetics school curriculum address the environmental and health co-benefits of a plant-based diet?	
This topic was explored in depth in several courses, either in the classroom, hands-on practical experiences (e.g. practicums, community projects), and/or student research opportunities. (4 points)	
This topic was explored in depth in two or more courses within the core curriculum. (3 points)	
This topic was briefly covered (e.g. in one course or a lecture) within the core curriculum. (2 points)	
This topic is addressed in elective coursework but not the core curriculum. (1 point)	
This topic was not covered. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	2

Score explanation:

- *Dietetics Through the Lifecycle introduces the concept of sustainable diets via the ICDA Sustainability Module 1 and includes an assignment where one student had to complete a literature review on the title "Vegan diets – environmental and nutritional perspectives".*
- *Clinical Nutrition module included a tutorial in which a group of students discussed plant-based yoghurts, however health and environmental co-benefits were implied though not mentioned explicitly.*
- *Medicine for Clinical Nutrition briefly mentioned the benefits of vegan, vegetarian and Mediterranean diets in relation to the diabetes lecture. In the COPD lecture, it was briefly mentioned that reducing processed meats is beneficial for patients in this cohort.*
- *Dietetics Professional Practice 2 reinforces the environmental advantages of plant-based dietary patterns within discussion on regenerative and sustainable agriculture throughout the lecture on 'Sustainable Food Systems in Context'.*
- *Advanced Clinical Nutrition and Dietetics: 'Cancer and Diet' lecture references the American Institute for Cancer Research recommendations supporting plant-based diets for both health and environmental outcomes.*

While these teachings provide consistent exposure, they are introductory and not revisited longitudinally.

1.14. Does your nutrition and dietetics school curriculum address the environmental impact of dietary patterns high in animal-derived foods (particularly red and processed meats) on planetary health?
This topic was explored in depth in several courses, either in the classroom, hands-on practical experiences (e.g. practicums, community projects), and/or student research opportunities. (4 points)

This topic was explored in depth in two or more courses within the core curriculum. (3 points)
This topic was briefly covered (e.g. in one course or a lecture) within the core curriculum. (2 points)
This topic is addressed in elective coursework but not the core curriculum. (1 point)
This topic was not covered. (0 points)

Score Assigned:	2

Score explanation:

- *Dietetics Through the Lifecycle: The ICDA Sustainability Module 1 includes discussion on the environmental implications of diets high in animal products, with students exploring protein sources, resource use and climate impact.*
- *Medicine for Clinical Nutrition: The 'COPD' lecture advised reducing processed meats, however environmental framing was not addressed in this context.*
- *Dietetics Professional Practice 2 addresses Ireland's over-reliance on ruminant agriculture and its contribution to greenhouse gas emissions, positioning livestock reduction as a key sustainability target under Food Vision 2030. This information was provided to students in the lecture titled 'Sustainable Food Systems in Context'.*
- *Advanced Clinical Nutrition and Dietetics: The lecture on 'Diet and Cancer' mentioned cancer prevention recommendations by the American Institute for Cancer Research included to reduce red meat and avoid processed meat.*

Together these examples provide awareness-level learning on the environmental cost of animal-derived foods, though without quantitative analysis or formal evaluation.

1.15. Does your nutrition and dietetics school curriculum address the impact of dietary patterns high in unhealthy ultra-processed foods on planetary health? (e.g. environmental burden of food processing, excessive food packaging)
This topic was explored in depth in several courses, either in the classroom, hands-on practical experiences (e.g. practicums, community projects), and/or student research opportunities. (4 points)
This topic was explored in depth in two or more courses within the core curriculum, exploring current challenges and solutions regarding food processing and packaging practices. (3 points)
This topic was briefly covered (e.g. in one course or a lecture) within the core curriculum. (2 points)
This topic is addressed in elective coursework but not the core curriculum. (1 point)
This topic was not covered. (0 points)

Score Assigned:	2

Score explanation:

- *Medicine for Clinical Nutrition briefly mentions food processing within the lecture on diabetes and obesity, supported by sustainability-related supplementary readings (e.g., EASD) that highlight links between processed foods, chronic disease and environmental impact.*
- *Non-Acute Placement: In alignment with the HSE policy, catering standards restrict certain high-sugar or ultra-processed products. While not explicitly framed as "planetary health", these actions support sustainable and health-promoting food provision.*
- *Dietetics Professional Practice 2: The lecture on 'Sustainable Food Systems in Context' expands the discussion to include the environmental footprint of industrial food processing, and packaging waste.*
- *Advanced Clinical Nutrition and Dietetics discusses ultra-processed foods and emulsifiers in relation to the 'Inflammatory Bowel Disease' lecture and associates processed meats with increased cancer risk. Coverage focuses primarily on health outcomes, with sustainability implications mentioned only indirectly.*
- *Health Promotion: Lecture 1 discusses ultra-processed foods in relation to health outcomes. Links to environmental or planetary impacts are not made; coverage is limited to population health effects.*

Together, these modules provide consistent but brief coverage of the topic, predominantly from a health perspective with emerging links to planetary health principles.

1.16. Does your nutrition and dietetics school curriculum provide opportunities for students to develop the following skills to promote sustainable healthcare, sustainable food systems and/or planetary health? (1 point each, provided the topic is offered in 1 or more courses)	**Score**
Advocacy (a strategic and evidence-based approach or action aiming to disrupt the status quo, influence policies, practices and behaviours in sustainable food system relevant contexts) for sustainable food systems in the context of both the food industry and within a broader multidisciplinary context. (1 point)	1
Systems-thinking (understanding the interconnections and interdependence in complex systems (e.g.natural, social, health, economic, and political)) in sustainable food system relevant contexts. (1 point)	1
Leadership (to think innovatively, and inspire others to advocate for transformative changes) in food systems that prioritise health and sustainability. (1 point)	1
Knowledge and research translation (to apply high quality evidence-based research in communication to inform decision-making to individuals and groups). (1 point)	1
Score explanation: *The below scored 4:*	

- *Dietetics Through the Lifecycle incorporates systems-thinking for the first time through the ICDA Sustainability Module 1 while also providing some students with a literature review assignment where students analyse sustainable diets and critically evaluate the dietitian's advocacy role within food systems.*
- *Medicine for Clinical Nutrition reinforces knowledge translation, with students expected to apply guidelines such as Models of Care and EASD in relation to the obesity and diabetes lectures.*
- *Non-Acute Placement provides strong practice-based skill development, where students demonstrate advocacy during HEAL week, apply systems-thinking in food service sustainability analysis and strengthen communication by educating staff and patients.*
- *Dietetics Professional Practice 2 develops advocacy and leadership through reflection on dietitians' roles in sustainable food systems in the lecture on 'Sustainable Food Systems in Context'. Systems-thinking is embedded through this lecture and the Airfield Estate visit allows for the knowledge to be translated into practice. The sustainability presentation served as a key experiential task to develop advocacy, systems-thinking and communication skills, requiring collaboration with multidisciplinary stakeholders and translation of evidence into practical action.*
- *Advanced Clinical Nutrition and Dietetics builds research translation and early systems-thinking skills as students diagnose, design care plans and apply clinical guidelines. Sustainability awareness is also embedded through the One Health framing of antimicrobial resistance in the lecture titled 'Food-borne Bacteria of Importance to Human Health'.*
- *Nutrition Communication strongly develops these skills. Systems thinking is embedded through the socio-ecological model in lectures 2 and 6, community-level change and civic participation are addressed in lecture 8. While lecture 10 discusses advocacy and evidence-based communication regarding policymakers.*
- *Systems thinking and knowledge translation skills are developed across the module. Lecture 6 explores physical activity behaviour through individual, social, environmental and policy determinants. While lecture 7 emphasises whole-systems approaches to increasing population-level physical activity. Knowledge translation is reinforced in lectures 4 and 5 through application of ACSM and WHO guidelines to exercise screening and prescription.*
- *Health Promotion- Advocacy is addressed in Lectures 1, 10, and Guest Lecture, which discuss advocacy theory and its application in population health contexts. Systems thinking is taught in relation to health promotion and socio-ecological approaches but not explicitly in sustainability.*

Together, these modules provide consistent, applied opportunities to develop sustainability competencies across academic, clinical and community contexts supporting a score of 4.

Curriculum: Skills and Practical Applications

1.17. Does your nutrition and dietetics school offer students an opportunity to critically analyse existing interventions or practices that aim to promote sustainable healthcare, sustainable food systems and/or planetary health?	
There are multiple opportunities for students to critically analyse these interventions within core courses (e.g. case studies, research projects, or practical assignments) in various settings. (3 points)	
There are 2 or more opportunities for students to critically analyse these interventions within core courses. (2 points)	
There is only 1 opportunity for students to critically analyse these interventions within a core course or lecture. (1 point)	
There are no opportunities for students to critically analyse these interventions throughout their degree. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	3

Score explanation:

- *Dietetics Through the Lifecycle included one assignment requiring critical review of sustainable diets, environmental sustainability, vegan diets, role of dietitians in sustainable food systems and sustainable food systems in acute care clinical practice. Another assignment which was required to be completed by all students included a short-answer question on the ICDA Sustainability Module 1 which students were required to complete.*
- *Clinical Nutrition provides an introductory opportunity for critical analysis, where students were asked to compare nutrition products and evaluate marketing and nutritional claims during one of the tutorials in this module. This supports early evidence appraisal and awareness of the commercial influences on dietetic decision-making.*
- *Non-Acute Placement: This module strengthens applied critical thinking as students analyse hospital food-service systems, assess sustainability practices and make evidence-based recommendations for improvement aligned with the HSE policy on Food, Nutrition and Hydration.*
- *Dietetics Professional Practice 2 (via the 'Sustainable Food Systems in Context' lecture) encourages critical evaluation of sustainability strategies through discussions and written reflections on global frameworks and Irish policy. Students review ICDA and EFAD position papers to assess the dietitian's advocacy and leadership roles in sustainable food systems. The sustainability presentation required students to critically evaluate existing food waste systems, interpret quantitative data and design evidence-based interventions, providing structured experience in applied critical analysis.*
- *Advanced Clinical Nutrition reinforces systems thinking and evidence evaluation through the antimicrobial resistance – One Health concept in the 'Food-borne Bacteria of Importance to Human Health' lecture, linking environmental and clinical perspectives.*

- *Nutrition Communication: Students critically analyse communication strategies through lecture 4 (formative research), lecture 5 (approaches to working with audiences) and lecture 10 (evaluation and continuity of advocacy efforts).*
- *Advancing Healthcare: Exercise Prescription: Students critically analyse physical activity interventions and policies in lecture 6 and 7, including reflection on local environmental supports for activity and evaluation of national physical activity strategies. These lectures encourage critical engagement with real-world health promotion interventions, though sustainability is not explicitly framed as planetary health.*

Overall, the programme provides repeated and structured opportunities for critical engagement with sustainability concepts across academic and clinical modules.

1.18. Do students from your nutrition and dietetics school have the opportunity to gain real-world experience volunteering or working within projects or organisations that promote sustainable healthcare, sustainable food systems and/or planetary health?	
There are multiple opportunities for students to gain real-world experience in various settings throughout the degree. (3 points)	
There are 2 or more opportunities for students throughout the degree. (2 points)	
There is 1 opportunity for students throughout the degree. (1 point)	
There are no opportunities for students throughout the degree. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	2

Score explanation:

- *Non-Acute Placement provides direct, practical engagement with sustainability through hospital-based catering projects, sustainable procurement practices and reflection on the implementation of the HSE Food, Nutrition and Hydration Standards.*
- *Dietetics Professional Practice 2 offers experiential exposure through the Airfield Estate site visit, where students learn about regenerative farming, community food initiatives and sustainable food production.*
- *Advancing Healthcare: Exercise Prescription: Lecture 8 case-study assessment provides applied, real-world experience in exercise screening and prescription within a primary care context, drawing on content from lecture 4 and 5. However, there are no direct opportunities for volunteering or engagement with sustainability-focused organisations.*

These experiences provide tangible, real-world exposure to sustainability in both healthcare and food-systems contexts. However, they occur at specific points within the programme rather than longitudinally, resulting in a moderate level of coverage.

Curriculum: Leadership and Administrative Support

1.19. Does your nutrition and dietetics school demonstrate commitment to continuous improvement in the quality and quantity of education to promote sustainable healthcare, sustainable food systems and/or planetary health?	
There have been significant efforts made to integrate more content on these topics over the past 3 years, with strong evidence of an ongoing commitment to continuous improvement. It is therefore likely that next year's PHRC will reveal an increased score against the metrics in this curriculum domain. (3 points)	
There have been significant efforts made to integrate more content on these topics over the past 3 years, with some evidence of an ongoing commitment to continuous improvement. It is therefore likely that next year's PHRC will reveal an increased score against the metrics in this curriculum domain. (2 points)	
There has been minimal effort made to integrate more content on these topics over the past 3 years. It is therefore unlikely, but possible, that next year's PHRC will reveal an increased score against the metrics in this curriculum domain. (1 point)	
There has been little or no investment in curriculum updates to integrate more content on these topics over the past 3 years, and no evidence of a commitment to do so in the near future. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	3

Score explanation:

- *Sustainability integration has increased since 2024, with the introduction of the 'Sustainable Food Systems in Context' lecture and experiential component of the Dietetics Professional Practice 2 module. This module also implemented an assignment for a group of students to present on sustainability which represents recent curriculum enhancement, demonstrating the programme's ongoing development of applied sustainability learning and assessment.*
- *The ICDA Sustainability Module 1 in Dietetics Through the Lifecycle and the application of HSE policy frameworks in Non-Acute Placement reflect a coordinated effort to embed sustainability themes across academic and clinical teaching. This year's class has been asked to integrate a sustainability theme during HEAL week which further helps to create a stronger foundation for future students' knowledge on sustainable food systems and planetary health.*
- *Sustainability is now a recurring topic in programme meetings as per the module coordinators in the programme, further demonstrating faculty-level commitment to iterative development.*
- *Health Promotion: The School is developing a five-year strategy for Public Health, including the appointment of an Ad Astra Lecturer in Climate Change & Health. This demonstrates institutional intent to enhance sustainability-related education, which may influence future iterations of the Health Promotion module.*
- *Applied Nutrition Exercise & Sports: Sustainability, planetary health, and sustainable food systems are not currently embedded in this module. Correspondence with the module*

coordinator (February 2026) confirms recognition of the importance of these topics and a stated intention to explore integration in future iterations. This demonstrates emerging commitment to curricular enhancement in this area.

- *Advancing Healthcare: Exercise Prescription: While sustainability and planetary health are not currently embedded as explicit standalone learning outcomes within this module, its strong prevention, population health and health-systems focus- alongside periodic content review and fully online, accessible delivery - provides a clear foundation for future integration of planetary health principles, demonstrating emerging commitment to continuous improvement.*
- *Nutrition Communication: The module has been actively updated over the past two years, with sustainability-adjacent concepts increasingly integrated through examples (e.g., reduced meat consumption, food deserts, behaviour change theory, risk perception and sustainable diet promotion). While planetary health is not yet an explicit core focus, there is clear capacity and stated intention to strengthen its integration, demonstrating emerging commitment to continuous improvement.*

While these initiatives show strong progress, sustainability content remains developing rather than fully embedded across all modules.

1.20. Does your nutrition and dietetics school employ a faculty member to specifically oversee and take responsibility for curricula to promote sustainable healthcare, sustainable food systems and/or planetary health as a theme throughout the degree(s)?	
Yes, the nutrition and dietetics school has at least one dedicated faculty or staff member (e.g. curriculum champions with clearly and formally defined responsibilities for overseeing and advancing sustainability and planetary health curricula across the degree(s)). (3 points)	
Yes, the nutrition and dietetics school has at least one faculty or staff member (e.g. curriculum champions) responsible for overseeing and advancing sustainability and planetary health curricula across the degree(s), however this is a voluntary, undefined and informal role. (2 points)	
No, the nutrition and dietetics school does not have any dedicated faculty or staff members responsible for advancing sustainability and planetary health curricula, however there is evidence of a consistent and coordinated approach to this work. (1 point)	
No, the nutrition and dietetics school does not have any designated faculty or staff members responsible for advancing sustainability and planetary health curricula. There is no evidence of a consistent or coordinated approach to this work. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	2
Score explanation: The MSc programme demonstrates clear leadership in sustainability integration, though formal designation is still evolving. Prof Sarah Browne serves as the programme sustainability lead, coordinating the inclusion of sustainability themes and concepts across modules and placements. Sustainability integration and progress are discussed at monthly programme meetings, ensuring cross-module collaboration. While this leadership is active and	

consistent, no formal faculty title or designated post currently exists to oversee planetary health curriculum development.

1.21. 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:	2

Score explanation: While not a formal or assessed component of the curriculum, elements of civic engagement and advocacy are introduced indirectly through sustainability and community health activities:

- *Dietetics Through the Lifecycle encourages professional reflection on advocacy through assignments, but this focuses primarily on clinical and professional ethics rather than structural determinants of health.*
- *Non-Acute Placement provides experiential exposure to advocacy in practice through HEAL week projects, where students engage in community-focused (campus-specific) health promotion and interprofessional collaboration. These activities foster communication and teamwork skills relevant to public advocacy but are not framed within civic or environmental policy contexts.*
- *Dietetics Professional Practice 2: The lecture on 'Sustainable Food Systems in Context' introduces advocacy and leadership concepts through discussion of ICDA and EFAD position papers (which were supplementary readings, i.e., elective coursework), which emphasise the dietitian's role in influencing food-system policy and sustainability agents. The sustainability presentation encouraged advocacy and civic awareness by framing sustainability as a professional duty within healthcare, prompting students to propose system-level changes that address environmental and structural determinants of patient wellbeing.*
- *Nutrition Communication: Civic engagement is introduced in lecture 8 through community organisation and collective action models, while lecture 10 explicitly defines advocacy and teaching policy-focused engagement to address upstream determinants of health.*
- *Exercise Prescription: Advocacy and structural determinants of health are briefly addressed in lecture 7 through discussion of national physical activity policy, equity-focused initiatives and the role of healthcare professionals in addressing environmental and social barriers to physical activity. Civic and environmental advocacy are not formally taught or assessed.*

- *Health Promotion-Advocacy and civic engagement are covered in Lectures 1, 10, and Guest Lecture. While strategies for influencing policy and community action are well-described, they are applied to population health and social determinants rather than environmental or climate-specific issues.*

Overall, while the programme supports advocacy at the professional and community level, there is no explicit teaching or assessment on civic engagement or policy advocacy relating to environmental or structural determinants of health.

Section Total (46 out of 78)	**59%**

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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 institution?	
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

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.*

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.

Researchers involved in this work are publicly listed through UCD's sustainability and research networks, including the Sustainability Working Groups and research institutes:

🔗 *https://www.ucd.ie/sustainability/mission/ourworkinggroups/*
🔗 *https://www.ucd.ie/earth/ourmembers/*

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

2.5. Has your institution 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

Score explanation: Yes - UCD One Health held a conference in December 2025 titled "From Priorities and Clusters to Read-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.

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)	**71%**

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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
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.	

3.2. Does your institution 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
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.	

3.3. Does your institution 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
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 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 a**nd 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
Score explanation: ***Website*** *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.*	

3.6. Does your institution or its affiliated teaching hospitals 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
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.

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.

Section Total (11 out of 14)	**79%**

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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
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.	

4.3. Does the institution 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

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, 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%**

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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 institution 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
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.	

5.2. How ambitious is your institution's 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
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 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
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.	

5.5. Has the institution 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
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, 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 a**dequate s**ustainability 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

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.

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.

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.

https:/www.ucd.ie/sustainability/actionareas/campusandoperations/greenprocurement

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

Score explanation: While UCD does not have a standalone Sustainable Events Policy document, institutional sustainability requirements apply to all campus events through:

- *Catering licence agreements (mandatory sustainability clauses)*
- *Elimination of plastic bottled water at catered events (since 2023)*
- *Compostable single-use cups, containers, and cutlery in line with licence requirements*
- *Availability and encouragement of reusable crockery for events*
- *Use of hydro trucks for outdoor drinking water (avoiding plastic bottles)*
- *Application of Green Public Procurement principles*
- *Waste segregation and food waste monitoring requirements*

*Because these measures are embedded in institutional procurement, licensing, and operational frameworks, they are **mandatory for events using campus catering services**, rather than optional recommendations.*

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
*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.* *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**.* *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.* *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.* *Governance Document Library- https://www.ucd.ie/governance/documentlibrary/* *https://www.ucd.ie/sustainability/t4media/UCD%20Climate%20Action%20Roadmap%20-%202025%20update.pdf*	

Section Total (20 out of 32)	**63%**

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

Section	Raw Score %	Letter Grade
Planetary Health Curriculum (30%)	(46/78) x 100 = 59%	C+
Interdisciplinary Research (17.5%)	(12/17) x 100 = 71%	B
Community Outreach and Advocacy (17.5%)	(11/14) x 100 = 79%	B+
Support for Student-led Planetary Health Initiatives (17.5%)	(15/15) x 100= 100%	A+
Campus Sustainability (17.5%)	(20/32) x 100 = 63%	B-
Institutional Grade	**(59x0.3 + 71x0.175 + 79x0.175 + 100x0.175 + 63x0.175) = 69.9%**	**B**