

EN 1: Outreach and Communications

Rationale

This credit recognizes institutions that produce sustainability-focused outreach materials, conduct outreach campaigns around sustainability issues, and use communication channels such as social media to share information about the institution’s sustainability initiatives, connect campus stakeholders, and enhance student and employee learning about sustainability.

Applicability

Applicable to all institutions.

Points available

A maximum of 5 points are available for this credit.

Criteria

1.1 Sustainability outreach and communications

An institution earns 3 points when it A) has a central sustainability website, B) has integrated sustainability information into new student orientation, C) has integrated sustainability information into new employee orientation, D) has dashboards and/or signage highlighting the institution’s sustainability features or performance, E) manages a **sustainability-focused** communications medium or platform, and F) has coordinated one or more sustainability-focused outreach campaigns during the previous three years. Partial points are available and earned as outlined in Table I.

Table I. Points earned for indicator 1.1

Criterion	Points available	Points earned
A. Institution has a central sustainability website that consolidates information about the institution’s sustainability efforts.	0.5	
B. Institution has integrated sustainability information into the educational offerings or materials provided during new student orientation or the equivalent.	0.5	
C. Institution has integrated sustainability information into the educational offerings or materials provided during new employee orientation or the equivalent.	0.5	
D. Institution has dashboards and/or signage highlighting the	0.5	

institution’s sustainability features or performance.		
E. Institution manages a sustainability-focused social media account, newsletter, blog, online community, podcast, video series, or equivalent communications medium or platform.	0.5	
F. Institution has coordinated one or more sustainability-focused outreach campaigns during the previous three years.	0.5	
Total points earned →		

Measurement

Report on the current status of the institution’s programs and initiatives.

Documentation

Report the following information in the online Reporting Tool.

- Does the institution have a central sustainability website that consolidates information about its sustainability efforts? (required)

If Yes, the following field is also required:

- Website URL of the institution’s central sustainability website

- Does the institution integrate sustainability information into the educational offerings or materials provided during new student orientation or the equivalent? (required). An institution that does not hold orientation for new students may report on other initiatives to educate incoming or first-year students about the institution.

If Yes, the following field is also required:

- Narrative outlining how sustainability information is integrated into new student orientation or the equivalent

- Does the institution integrate sustainability information into the educational offerings or materials provided during new employee orientation or the equivalent? (required). An institution that does not hold orientation for new employees may report on other initiatives to educate employees about the institution, e.g., in-service events or training.

If Yes, the following field is also required:

- Narrative outlining how sustainability information is integrated into new employee orientation of the equivalent

- Does the institution have dashboards and/or signage highlighting the institution’s sustainability features or performance? (required)

If Yes, the following field is also required:

- Description of the institution’s sustainability dashboards and/or signage
- Does the institution manage a sustainability-focused social media account, newsletter, blog, online community, podcast, video series, or equivalent communications medium or platform? (required)

If Yes, the following field is also required:

- Description of and/or website URL for at least one sustainability-focused communication medium or platform
- Has the institution coordinated one or more sustainability-focused outreach campaigns during the previous three years? (required). For example, an office or residence hall based energy conservation or recycling competition or a collective challenge to achieve a specific institution-wide sustainability target or outcome.

If Yes, the following field is also required:

- Description of sustainability-focused outreach campaigns from the previous three years

1.2 Percentage of campus stakeholders reached through sustainability outreach and communications

An institution earns 2 points when it has evidence that 80 percent or more of campus stakeholders (i.e., students and **employees**) are currently reached through the institution’s sustainability outreach and communications efforts or aware of its sustainability initiatives. Partial points are available and earned as outlined in Table II.

Table II. Points earned for indicator 1.2

Percentage of campus stakeholders reached through sustainability outreach and communications	Points earned
80 to 100	2
60 to 79	1.5
40 to 59	1
20 to 39	0.5
1 to 19	0.25

Measurement

Report on the current status of the institution's programs and initiatives and the most recent data available from within the previous three years.

Reach may be evidenced by the measured extent of stakeholder awareness of the institution's sustainability initiatives (e.g., as demonstrated in survey responses) and/or by active newsletter subscriptions, email open rates, social media followers or group members, unique annual website visits or video views, campaign sign-ups, or the equivalent.

An institution may take one of three approaches in pursuing this indicator:

- A. Survey or assessment results. Report the results of an institution-wide survey or sustainability culture assessment that includes one or more items on respondent awareness of the institution's sustainability initiatives. To avail of this option, the survey or assessment results must be indicative of the entire population of students and employees, as ensured through **representative sampling** or by making the assessment mandatory.
- B. Communications analytics. Report on the analytics associated with the sustainability-focused communications medium or platform that has the greatest reach (e.g., newsletter subscribers or social media group members). The analytics for two or more media or platforms may be aggregated if the potential for double-counting (counting the same individual more than once because they are reached by more than one medium or platform) is minimal (e.g., if there are separate channels or groups for students and employees).
- C. Conservative estimate based on mixed/limited data sources. Report on the most credible sources of data that are available, taking steps to minimize double-counting. For example, an institution may use the single best data source for students (e.g., membership in a student-focused social media group) and the single best data source for employees (e.g., staff newsletter subscribers) and/or adjust figures downward to account for the anticipated extent to which individuals may be counted more than once.

When using limited data sources, do not report a higher percentage range than is credibly supported by the data. For example, an institution with 1,000 students and 500 employees that has survey data indicating that 20 percent of students are aware of the institution's sustainability initiatives, but no such data on employees, should report that 1 to 19 percent of stakeholders are reached rather than 20 to 39 percent.

Similarly, survey or assessment results may not be extrapolated to a larger population in the absence of representative sampling. For example, the results of a survey of 100 students enrolled in a sustainability program may only be used to establish the level of awareness of those individuals; they may not be used to report on the entire population of students.

Documentation

- Does the institution collect data on the reach of its sustainability outreach and communications efforts and/or stakeholder awareness of its sustainability initiatives? (required). For example, through communication analytics and/or surveys/assessments.

If Yes, the following three fields are also required:

- Percentage of campus stakeholders reached through sustainability outreach and communications. Select one.
 - 80 to 100
 - 60 to 79
 - 40 to 59
 - 20 to 39
 - 1 to 19
- Approach used to determine the percentage of campus stakeholders reached. Select one.
 - Survey or assessment results
 - Communication analytics
 - Conservative estimate based on mixed/limited data sources
- Description of the methodology used to determine the reach of the institution's sustainability outreach and communications. Include the specific data sources and results used, how a representative sample was reached or double-counting was avoided or minimized (if applicable), and any assumptions used and/or adjustments made in arriving at the percentage range.

Glossary

Employees – Personnel compensated directly by the institution (unless otherwise specified in credit language). Also known as “staff members” or “direct employees”, these personnel include both academic and non-academic staff and both regular/permanent and short-term/casual workers.

Representative sample – A subset of a statistical population that accurately reflects the members of the entire population. A representative sample should be an unbiased indication of what the entire population is like. For example, in a student population of 1000 students in which 25 percent of the students are enrolled in a business school, 50 percent are enrolled in humanities programs, and 25 percent are enrolled in science programs, a representative sample might include 200 students: 50 business students, 100 humanities students, and 50 science students. Likewise, a representative sample of purchases should accurately reflect the institution's total purchases, accounting for seasonal and other variations in product availability and purchasing.

Sustainability-focused – The term sustainability-focused is used to indicate that a primary and explicit focus on the integrated concept of sustainability or the interdependence of ecological and social/cultural/economic systems is required.