



**How Might We:**

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**Highlight Global Citizenship  
within the Curriculum?**

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# Overview

**‘Global Citizenship’** broadly refers to the use of subject-specific knowledge and skills to contribute meaningfully and thoughtfully to solving global problems. Such problems might include climate change, sustainability, social justice, and equality.

A global citizenship education aligns with UNESCO’s global Sustainable Development Goals and the ‘education for sustainable development’ agenda and is increasingly being embedded in Higher Education policy and practice. It is crucial that graduates of Higher Education are equipped with the tools, skills, and insights that allow them to contribute to solving global problems in a responsible, informed, reflective and ethical manner. Global Citizenship skills allow students and graduates to contribute to solving global problems in a responsible, informed, and ethical way (Horey et al., 2018).

Global Citizenship is aligned with the University of Leeds’ strategic priorities:

- **Leeds Curriculum Redefined Project**, which aims to help students develop attributes such as “critical thinking, global citizenship...ethical thinking”.
- **Vice-Chancellor’s vision** for “training the next generation of global citizens”
- **University Values, Global Change 2020-2030**, which notes how students should graduate as ‘engaged global citizens’

## Guiding principles

Global citizenship may also be referred to as: international, inter-cultural or global perspectives, community or critical development, or social justice education. It encompasses the following aligned attributes of a curriculum:





# Student voice

Global citizenship is important to students, because it provides a framework that students can use to articulate the skills and knowledge that have developed during their studies. In this sense, global citizenship is linked to surfacing skills initiatives, which aim to help students to understand, reflect upon, and articulate their unique skills. To facilitate this articulation of learning, students may be encouraged to develop explicit links between their subject content and global challenges at a local level through, for example:

- embedding authentic assessment
- encouraging problem-based learning (Cranney, 2013)
- use of applied learning activities (Edwards et al., 2020)

Further, global citizenship sits under the umbrella of UNESCO's (2017) global Sustainable Development Goals' and 'education for sustainable development' agenda. Therefore, this approach has the potential to empower students to consider how their education allows them to contribute to societal and global challenges in a responsible, informed, and ethical way (Horey et al., 2018).

# How might we...

## Practitioner based tips

Many of the qualities of a global citizenship education are present within subject QAA benchmark statements, and these may already be present in your programme. However, by engaging with the following reflective questions you will develop the chance to highlight these aspects of your programme, and to explicitly embed global citizenship in a discipline appropriate way.

## Reflective practice

This is the process of actively thinking about personal experiences, in order to develop new insights and actions for growth.

- Where might reflection be beneficial for students in your subject?
- Can you provide opportunities for students to engage in reflective practice in your subject?

For example, reflective practice may involve students' critically reflecting on their own learning and development, which can be expressed in reflective journals, blogs and personal development records.

## Ethics and responsibility

Ethics and responsibility centres around promotion of ethical behaviours and values, considering the impact of the subject on the wider world.

- What are the ethical issues in your subject?

- How can students demonstrate their ethical literacy, in the context of your subject?
- How can you position ethical issues in your curriculum?

For example, students may consider the effects of their research projects in the world – how it may affect people and communities.

## Critical and analytical thinking

Critical thinking is about making thoughtful, evidence-based, analytical judgements, arriving at a logical conclusion. Critical thinking is a disciplined and active skill, that is present in all subject areas.

- What are the key opportunities for critical thinking in your subject area?
- Can other aspects of Global Citizenship (i.e., social justice and sustainability) be critically considered in your subject?

For example, across disciplines this may involve critical comparison of results or theory, and development of analytical skills to construct logical arguments.

## Sustainability

Sustainability has wide applicability, from financial sustainability of organisations to impact on the planet and environmental sustainability. Within your subject, sustainability is likely touched upon in several different areas.

- Which areas of your curriculum are most relevant to sustainability?
- Is sustainability explicitly mentioned in your curriculum? Could it be?
- How might students in your area demonstrate awareness of sustainability?

For example, in Business and Management, this may look like a concern for the sustainability of organisations and the business environment, whereas in Geography this may be based around environmental sustainability.

## Social justice

Social justice brings together aspects such as human rights, civic responsibility, fairness, and equity, in societal context. It is broadly concerned with the intersection of privilege, voice, and power. This includes equality, diversity, and inclusion.

- Is there a social justice element to your subject area? Are students supported in the pursuit of this?
- Can you embed social justice in the conceptualisation of your subject? Where does your knowledge come from? Whose voice is heard?
- Is your subject content able to contribute to the goals of social justice? How?

## Intercultural perspectives

This refers to perspectives which extend beyond your local geographical and cultural context. This may include community or civic responsibility, global outlook, and the contribution to solving global challenges (e.g., see sustainability).

- Does your subject look different in international contexts? How can this be explored with students?
- Where is there opportunity to offer an international perspective to your subject content?

# More information

[LITE Fellowship: Developing a global citizenship framework](#)

[Sustainability strategy, University of Leeds](#)

# References

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Horey, D., Fortune, T., Nicolacopoulos, T., Kashima, E., & Mathisen, B. (2018). Global citizenship and higher education: A scoping review of the empirical evidence. *Journal of Studies in International Education*, 22(5), 472-492.

