

Manchester Metropolitan University

‘Carbon Literacy Training’

1) Name of institution

Manchester Metropolitan University

2) Name of the initiative

Mainstreaming Carbon Literacy Training (CLT)

3) Initiative outline

The initiative envisages CLT, carefully aligned to the accreditation requirements of the [Carbon Literacy Project](#) (CLP), being embedded into one core module within all undergraduate and postgraduate programmes of study. The training consists of six units of study, which equates to a day’s-worth of learning activity. The units can be delivered flexibly across in-person or online and synchronously or asynchronously.

4) Context/history/need for initiative

Manchester Met has been committed to delivering CLT for over a decade. At its heart is a concern to ensure students have a stronger understanding of climate change, the implications of everyday actions for greenhouse gas emissions, and the proactive steps they can take to reduce their personal carbon footprint, both now and in their future graduate careers. This commitment is situated within the context of the University’s [Leadership in Sustainability Strategy](#), which includes the target of embedding CLT into all programmes by the end of the 2026-27 academic year. It is also integral to Manchester Met’s ‘Sustainability’ Graduate Attribute, one of six attributes which the University’s programmes are aligned to.

5) What happens and how is it assessed

Academic members of staff are trained to deliver CLT within their programme(s) and provided with a suite of resources that can be tailored to their subject context. CLT-qualified students are also trained as session assistants and co-trainers and are paid for their work supporting and co-delivering sessions. The six CLT units comprise Climate change: the basics; Exploring carbon footprints; A zero carbon world; Influencing others; Our professional influence and Taking action. Once completed, all participating students then have the option of completing a structured CLT questionnaire testing their understanding and to identify personal targets to reduce their carbon footprint. The questionnaire is an adapted version of the standard CLP Evidence Form. If approved and successful, the students are then certified as Carbon Literate.

6) Green Skills developed or applied

- Technical skills: Environmental knowledge and awareness
- Transferable skills: Communication, Coping with emotions, Problem solving
- Transformative skills: Environmental stewardship, Future thinking, Systems thinking, Trans-cultural, trans-spatial, trans-temporal mindsets.

The emphasis on communication and influencing skills is a defining feature of the CLT model, supporting students to be agents of change in their future personal and professional lives.

7) Contributions to leverage points

- LP1: Natural resource and just transition solutions
- LP2: Stakeholder communications and engagement
- LP7: Resilience and values-based mindset

8) Impact, successes, challenges

Currently, CLT is embedded into just over a third of all programmes. For students taking a programme within which CLT is not currently embedded, there is the opportunity to take the course as an extra-curricular learning experience instead.

As of May 2026, over 11,200 students have engaged with CLT and 3,680 have been certified Carbon Literate. Research, comparing the perspectives of students before and after CLT, suggests strongly that it impacts positively on green skills, sustainability mindsets and behaviours of participants. Since the inception of CLT at Manchester Met, 210 students have completed the Train-the-Trainer programme. Qualitative research with the trainers has identified wide-ranging transferable skill and employability benefits, with positive implications for their graduate careers. There are currently 233 active Staff Champions and other research has highlighted positive impacts for them too including a renewed sense of institutional belonging and refreshed career identities.

Challenges that have sometimes emerged include delivering CLT to large student cohorts and finding space in the curriculum, particularly for practice-based programmes with stringent PSRB requirements. The development of online, asynchronous content has helped to address these challenges. Close collaboration between the central CLT Team, Staff Champions and Student Trainers is essential to create discipline-specific CLT examples to use within the training to ensure relevance.

9) Advice for others

- Push for a strategic, measurable target for CLT supported by senior university leadership, aligned to regular auditing of progress. In parallel to this, advocate for a ring-fenced budget to pay for running costs, including CLP certifications and student trainers.
- Develop an active community of practice and work closely with these 'champions' to tailor the content of CLT to disciplinary contexts.
- As well as staff, co-create content with students and seek their help to develop creative ways of explaining the value of CLT to their peers.
- Be flexible, adjusting the CLT professional development approach for staff to reflect changing circumstances and contexts.
- If you're aspiring to introduce CL training at your institution, a good place to start is the '[The Carbon Literacy Toolkit for Further & Higher Education](#)', which Manchester Met was heavily involved in developing.