Sustainability and Social Justice: Leadership Challenges

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Abstract

Shiel and Jones, drawing on research which argues that higher education needs to adopt new approaches to internationalisation and sustainable development, consider the potential for universities to play a transformative role in securing a sustainable world. They examine why few universities have embraced such a radical role; identify ways of prompting and enabling universities to engage strategically with this existential challenge, and; explore the kinds of leadership styles and behaviours that would facilitate such engagement.

The concept of elective affinities is used to characterise the way in which organisational and career factors coalesce with a neo-liberal model of the market, comprising a powerful negative reinforcement cycle that inhibits transformation. They argue that the predominance of neo-liberal thinking in shaping how universities are assembled is both misguided and unhelpful. They provide examples of alternative and more radical approaches that business and some universities have adopted to systemically engage with sustainability.

Building on their experience of introducing a Global Perspectives framework and work with senior teams at a number of UK universities, they highlight the importance of engaging leaders, colleagues, students and external partners, identify the leadership challenges and propose the key features of globally responsible leadership.

Introduction

The role of education in contributing to a sustainable future has been quite clear since the World Commission on Environment and Development (WECD) was asked to formulate a "global agenda for change" (WECD, 1987, p.9). Their report with the publication of "Our Common Future" (WECD, 1987), established the vision for a more sustainable and socially just society; and, proposed that education at all levels should contribute to developing global citizens who would address the need for sustainable development.

Post Rio+20[i], and with the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) at a close (United Nations Educational, Scientific & Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), 2014), the challenges facing humanity (global poverty, conflict, social injustice, environmental degradation and climate change) continue unabated and largely unresolved. The impacts of policy interventions and countless global summits since the eighties are barely noticeable; the contribution that higher education has made to an ambitious agenda has been negligible. That is not to deny progress, some universities have been at the forefront of change but to be quite clear, while universities should be leading a transition towards a more secure and sustainable future, there is little evidence of systemic engagement (Sterling, Maxey & Luna, 2013).

Few universities are at the forefront of transformational change. Many have a myopic, instrumental and functionally specific conception of sustainability, global citizenship and internationalisation. Too often these inter-related agendas (Shiel, Williams & Mann, 2005) are addressed as separate initiatives, where actions are deemed completed once responsibility has been discharged to a particular department. Thus, sustainable development becomes the responsibility of estates' departments[ii], with targets for carbon reduction and utilities efficiency (Shiel & Williams, 2015); internationalisation largely rests with an "international office" with targets for international recruitment (Warwick, 2 012) and (more recently)

student mobility, driving the function; the educative agenda may, if considered at all, be loosely attributed to academics and thus, addressed in a very limited way. This chapter will explore a fundamental rethink of these agendas and argue that a more integrative approach to managing the university is required. Some of the factors that reinforce this organisational and individual myopia will be examined before consideration is given to the kinds of organisational engagement and leadership that might secure a more holistic approach, and enable universities to play a more prominent role in contributing to a sustainable future.

The Strategic Opportunity: The Rallying Call

 "We are moving into a world that differs in fundamental ways from the one we have been familiar with during most of human history" (Alcamo & Leonard, 2012, p. 3) – so things need to change. In the forty years since the Stockholm Conference on the Human Environment, a growing body of literature has highlighted the need to do things differently. Some authors have argued for ensuring that curriculum and pedagogy develop "sustainability literacy" (Stibbe, 2009) and that critical thinking is an essential component of ESD (Vare & Scott, 2007); others explore global citizenship (Bourn, McKenzie, & Shiel, 2006), and critical thinking in relation to development education (Andreotti, 2014). Several authors have commented repeatedly that what is required is a "'transformative shift" (Cortese, 2003; Sterling, 2004a) within higher education (HE), and the development of holistic and systemic ways of working (Shiel, 2007; Sterling, 2001; 2003; 2004b). The potential for universities to contribute to sustainable development (through research, education, community engagement, and as large organisations) has been emphasised time and again, and writ large. However, the sector continues to fall short in the endeavour to contribute towards a more equitable and sustainable future. Few universities are at the forefront of transformational change; few university leaders (despite endorsement of countless declarations) fully comprehend the

significance of the issues; their mental models (of both leadership and sustainability) often serve as barriers to change (Shiel, 2013).

In addition to those advocating change from an ESD perspective (with an emphasis rooted in environmental education), or a development education (DE) perspective (with an emphasis on human development and social justice), researchers from other fields have critiqued higher education's response to globalisation and particularly, the limitations of internationalisation strategies with an over-emphasis on market share and competition (Altbach, Reisberg, & Rumbley, 2009; de Wit, 2002). The internationalisation literature notes that the economic and political rationales have dominated the internationalisation agenda within HE resulting in a "marketisation discourse" (Caruana & Spurling, 2007). Generating income from international student fees has been the predominant focus of international activity (Warwick, 2012), with the softer components of internationalisation (for example, developing global citizenship and cross-cultural competence in the curriculum; establishing partnerships, based on reciprocity and learning) marginalised as a consequence. The social/cultural rationales to internationalise (Knight, 2012) are frequently neglected (Jones & Lee, 2008).

In a similar vein (to authors writing from an ESD & DE perspective), writers on internationalisation suggest that it (just like sustainability) requires a broader and more inclusive approach (Jones & Brown, 2007) to address the complexity of the twenty-first century (Morey, 2000; Bourn, 2011). Commentators propose that internationalisation should embrace a spirit of mutual learning; enrich collaboration across cultures; and develop global perspectives (Shiel & McKenzie, 2008; Shiel, 2007; Lunn, 2008; Bourn, 2011; Brookes & Beckett, 2009) and global citizenship (Otter, 2007; Caruana, 2012; Clifford & Haigh, 2011). Such approaches would not only enhance graduate outcomes but might contribute to a better world, where graduates are more globally aware, culturally sensitive, and socially responsible. Leadership approaches to internationalisation (like leadership approaches to

sustainability) are often too narrow in perspective, inadequate in their response to the global context (Luker, 2008) and the leadership of internationalisation within HE needs enhancing (Middlehurst, 2008).

Just as some authors propose a vision for a "Sustainable University" (Sterling at al., 2013); others describe the "Global University" (McKenzie et al., 2003; Shiel & McKenzie, 2008). The headings may be different, but there are similarities in terms of ambition and commonality around themes: universities should contribute to a more sustainable and equitable world; fundamental change within HE is required; education and research needs to be re-oriented "in a way that leads to new mental models and competencies" (Wals & Blewitt, 2010, p. 57) to address unsustainable development and globalisation.

The literature (on internationalisation, sustainable development, and global perspectives) and personal experience developing this oppositional agenda over a number of years, confirm that researchers (and activists), often from very different starting points (environmental education, DE, internationalisation) and disciplinary perspectives, have been urging universities across the world to explore alternative paradigms. Champions (often tenacious academics with a vision that education should make a difference to the world) have been influencing change within their own institutions and have led a variety of initiatives with some success. Only a few have been successful in developing more systemic and holistic approaches; wholesale transformation remains elusive (Sterling et al., 2013); and, the challenges of transforming a sector that traditionally resists change (Wals & Blewitt, 2010) are often insurmountable. Within the UK, despite the potential for universities to be playing a leading role in addressing the challenges of sustainability, only a few institutions are pursuing coherent, institution-wide approaches. Very few institutions embrace global citizenship, internationalisation and sustainable development within a single educative agenda, let alone link these to employability; senior leaders who support a holistic perspective and who appreciate the

synergy between agendas are uncommon. As Blewitt (2012) suggests, a paradigm shift seems as far away as ever.

Inhibitors of Change: Why has the Response Been so Limited?

Why then, despite the potential for universities to play a leading role in addressing the challenges of sustainability as demonstrated by some in the USA (Harvard University, for example), and a few in the UK (see Luna & Maxey, 2013, for examples) and elsewhere (University of British Columbia, for example), are so few universities taking a leadership role and pursuing a strategic institution wide approach? The authors' experience of working with colleagues from the US, Europe and Canada, suggests that those who are successfully engaging with this agenda, have undertaken a fundamental review of the strategic implications and are pursuing planned, coherent, and institution-wide responses. Reflecting on our experience in wrestling with these challenges in a number of institutions in the UK we have identified a number of factors that constrain responses and inhibit a more fundamental engagement.

Recent research with University Boards and senior staff teams (Shiel, 2013a; 2013b; Shiel & Williams, 2015) has demonstrated that university leaders have a narrow understanding of key concepts such as sustainable development; internationalisation continues to be conceptualised as "attracting international students" (Caruana & Spurling, 2007) and establishing an international presence in world markets; the relationships between globalisation, internationalisation and sustainability (apart from in the context of financial sustainability) are rarely considered.

This limited understanding of sustainability and globalisation constrains the debate. Instead of exploring the implications for the university as a whole and the related implications for other strategic agendas such as internationalisation, employability, the curriculum and the

student experience, most universities in the UK consider sustainable development as simply yet another external policy lever to address. They do not, in the main, regard it as a strategic imperative that raises fundamental questions about the future direction of education and the positioning and operation of the university.

Experience demonstrates that there is a prevailing tendency to set the consideration of sustainability within an accommodative, short-term oriented, management frame of reference and decision making, focusing on what needs to be done to satisfy specific external policy drivers and metrics (Shiel & Williams, 2015). Whilst we acknowledge that such an orientation can yield some positive gains and enable staff and students to align and support local sustainability initiatives, the overall impact is unlikely to facilitate the transformational changes implied by the sustainability agenda.

A deeper engagement is, we contend, further frustrated by another facet of the prevailing accommodative management frame of reference and decision making and that is, the enduring managerial concern to establish clear, atomistic and unambiguous lines of accountability. Whilst this particular model of accountability can be successful in ensuring that staff within universities focus attention on key targets in the short-term, it does engender a mode of engagement where only what's measurable and measured gets done. It can also lead, as the various reviews of the UK National Health Service (NHS) experience demonstrate, to unanticipated suboptimal outcomes (see, for example, Ham (2014) who notes that whilst the introduction of targets and performance management in the NHS has led to reduced waiting times for hospital admissions and improved cancer and cardiac care, it has also led to game-playing, data manipulation, areas not included in targets being neglected, and over reliance on top-down guidance). This mechanistic view of accountability does little to encourage, indeed could be argued to subvert, the kinds of cross-university, cross-disciplinary and multi-functional ways of thinking and engagement that might encourage the

flexibility and adaptive capacity to anticipate and respond to the emerging, complex and uncertain future that we face.

The focus on short-term organisational accountability with related performance management metrics also tends, in our experience, to encourage a transactional culture with a narrowing of allegiances to individual and subunit goals. This is reinforced by success and reputational criteria, particularly at senior levels, that prize individual achievements that demonstrably add value in the market place in the short-term, such as improving league table rankings, increasing student numbers, extending employer engagement, leading "'clicks and bricks" projects, improving financial sustainability and fund raising. These criteria tell us a lot about what senior leaders and university boards value; they influence the prevailing culture at all levels. It is perhaps not surprising that those aspiring for promotion and senior leadership roles seem unwilling to take on the complex, organisationally diffuse and uncertain challenges of sustainable development, when the prevailing success criteria focus on demonstrable market growth in the short-term.

It is important too, to reflect to on the lack of diversity of senior teams that continue to demonstrate a bias in favour of white males (Bagilhole & White, 2008; Grove, 2013). Aside from the fundamental questions of equality and social justice that this raises, we argue that the current composition of senior teams severely restricts the variety of life experiences and leadership orientations and styles that can be brought to bear on strategic challenges such as sustainable development, and that this may also be a factor in constraining engagement with agendas that require broader perspectives and new ways of working.

A significant feature of the constraining factors that we have identified is that they are mutually reinforcing. Thus, a limited understanding of the challenges posed by sustainable development leads to an accommodative response that treats sustainable development as an

operational or constraint problem that can be, as it were, "slotted in" to the current leadership and administrative arrangements. But there is also an important sense in which the prevailing accommodative leadership and administrative arrangements themselves predispose universities to "see" sustainable development as a challenge that is capable of being so accommodated. These arrangements reinforce and are reinforced by an emphasis on short-term measurable outcomes, with individual and unambiguous lines of accountability that foster and are fostered by, a transactional culture. Such transactional cultures cultivate individual career and promotional motivations and trajectories that are founded on short-term individual gains, where performance is tangible and measurable. In turn, career success founded on these principles, further reinforces cultures that are based on transactional norms, where successful contributions to short-term market growth provide the justificatory logic.

We suggest that the mutually reinforcing nature of the relationship between these constraining factors comprises a powerful negative reinforcement cycle that seriously inhibits the propensity and capacity of higher education institutions to engage systemically with the challenges of sustainable development.

In our view these constraining factors exhibit what Max Weber referred to as an "elective affinity"[iii] (Howe, 1978), in that they cohere and resonate not only with themselves, but also with the "market" as the sovereign ideational register and organising principle (see [iv] and [v]). The development of this ideational shift has accompanied the movement from elite to a mass model of higher education, which occurred from the eighties onwards. Governments across the world have increasingly pressured universities to maximise efficiency, reduce dependence on the public purse, and to become more accountable to the consumer. This has resulted in radical changes within higher education and created a context where marketisation and branding (Slaughter & Rhodes, 2004; Jiang, 2008; Walker, 2009) have come to the fore; the need to develop income streams from private sources (Currie, 1998) has made international

students attractive to institutions, and; the language of the consumer and "customer care'" gains sovereignty, as universities are assembled and operated as commercial enterprises.

In a sense, this brings us to what is often seen as the crux of the challenge facing those who want to see universities engaging in a deeper and more systemic way with sustainable development. Whilst universities are measured and indeed measure and manage themselves by criteria and models that are rooted in the "market" how can we hope to engage seriously with an agenda that subverts the very idea of to the "market"?

This conception of the challenge is, we contend, both misguided and unhelpful. It is misguided because it is rooted in a particular view about the market and business activity, the neo-liberal model. The critical challenge facing sustainable development in universities is not the "market" but the influence of neo-liberal ideas on public policy, and the way that universities assemble themselves and respond to that policy. It is the pre-occupation that educational policy makers and university leaders have with short-term economic growth and mechanistic measures of accountability and performance that frustrates a deeper engagement with sustainable development, not the "invisible hand of the market". The idea that sustainable development and the "market" are necessarily antipathetic forces for change is not only misguided but unhelpful in that it lowers expectations, and encourages quiescence, cynicism and fatalism.

The seemingly fixed adherence to this conception is not surprising within the UK, given that UK Government rhetoric and policy are dominated by neo-liberal thinking. However the danger is that we ourselves become seduced into thinking that business and the market are solely concerned with short-term economic growth, and there is little alternative other than to adopt strategies and operational models that secure this objective. There are however clear international examples emerging, of alternative conceptions of the market and "doing

business". Companies such as Walmart, Unilever, Kingfisher and Marks and Spencer are moving away from focusing exclusively on short-term economic performance towards a long-term conception of environmental sustainability, integrated into strategic plans and company operations. Unilever, for example, has introduced the "Sustainability Living Plan" which is fully integrated into the company's strategy, and identifies significant goals in the areas of health and well-being, environmental impact and human livelihoods, to be achieved by 2020 (Coulter & Guenther, 2014).

Clearly there may well be a gap between the rhetoric and the reality but surely the point is that these examples demonstrate that some of the largest international corporates are addressing sustainability at a strategic level and fundamentally rethinking their strategic direction, leadership, and ways of operating as a consequence. It is interesting to note in the context of the current debates about university public engagement and impact, that some corporates are now recognising a role for themselves in public advocacy and "catalytic leadership" to promote collective engagement and stimulate changes in policy and the market (GlobeScan & Sustainability, 2013).

Perhaps part of the problem is that too many policy makers, university leaders and boards are placing too much reliance on limited and out-dated models of business strategy, leadership and operations. They would do better we suggest, to examine more closely the range of models emerging in the business world.
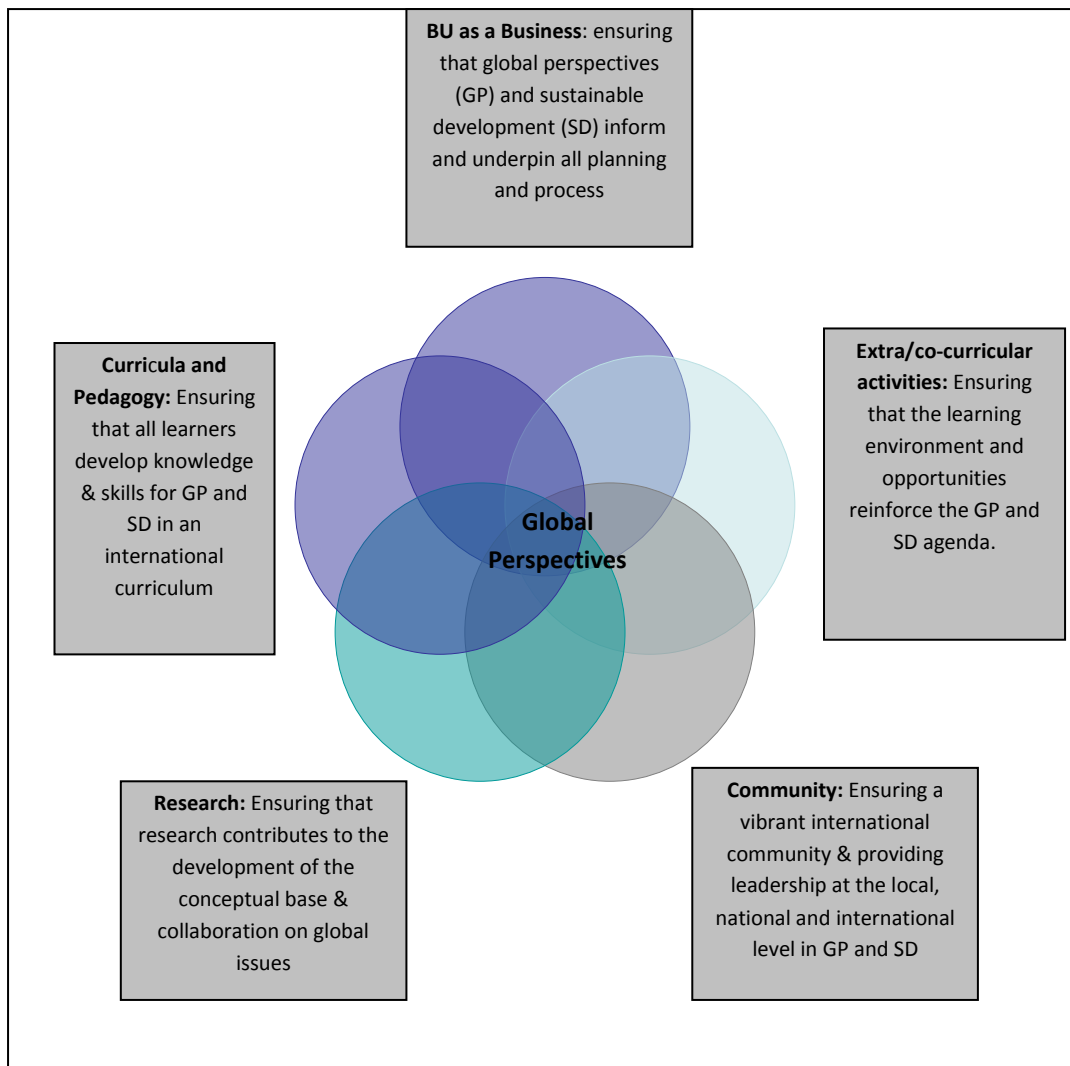
Globally Responsible Leadership: Reflecting on Experience with Assembling and Leading Higher Education for Sustainable Development

This chapter will now explore ways in which universities can organise themselves to engage in a more strategic and fundamental way with the challenges of sustainable development and the models of leadership that would enable them to do this successfully. We begin with a

consideration of a model developed in the UK. The model was informed by a DE perspective. It represented an extension of collaboration with colleagues (from a number of universities) who had sought initially to identify the knowledge, skills and dispositions of a global citizen (see McKenzie, Bourn, Evans, Brown, Shiel, Bunney, Collins, Wade, Parker& Annette, 2003) and then to embed global citizenship within higher education and influence strategic change.

Early work in this endeavour focused on developing a conceptual approach and organising principles that would be capable of providing a unifying focus for university-wide engagement. The underlying goal was to prompt higher education institutions, at all levels, to systematically consider the challenges posed by sustainable development and globalisation and to encourage new ways of thinking and working. The framework (see Figure 1) developed at Bournemouth University (BU) embraces five facets of assembling the higher education institution: the business activities of the university; curricula and pedagogy; research; extra/co-curricular and community relationships. The central focus of the framework is the development of global perspectives (GP) and global citizens (GC) across the university and its communities; the emphasis is on creating an experience that enables students to become global citizens who understand the need for sustainable development (SD) (Bourn & Shiel, 2009; Petford & Shiel, 2008; Shiel & Jones, 2005). At the same time the framework challenges universities to regard themselves as "global citizens" and to ensure that all aspects of their operations address social responsibility and sustainable development.

Figure 1. Global perspectives in a global university (Shiel & Mann, 2006).

BU as a Business: ensuring that global perspectives (GP) and sustainable development (SD) inform and underpin all planning and process

Curricula and Pedagogy: Ensuring that all learners develop knowledge & skills for GP and SD in an international curriculum

Extra/co-curricular activities: Ensuring that the learning environment and opportunities reinforce the GP and SD agenda.

Global Perspectives

Research: Ensuring that research contributes to the development of the conceptual base & collaboration on global issues

Community: Ensuring a vibrant international community & providing leadership at the local, national and international level in GP and SD

A significant feature of this framework, and indeed our own experience of wrestling with these challenges, was the recognition of the need to marshal momentum and gain the support of different interests and constituencies, within and without the institution. Demonstrating how a more holistic approach aligned with other policy levers and university goals with shorter-term market pay-offs, such as employability and internationalisation (Shiel et al., 2005) was important for securing initial buy-in (Shiel, 2008); organising events and developing discursive devices to surface worldviews and trigger debate on the concepts but also significant global issues, were important for taking the agenda forward.

Early initiatives (through participative approaches) sought to engage the support of students and staff in transformative change, and to inspire engagement with a holistic agenda that would impact upon curriculum, campus and community. The framework is not dissimilar to the "4C" model at Plymouth University (where the foci include curriculum, campus, community and culture - see Jones, Selby and Sterling, 2010, p. 7). It has been taken forward by a small group of UK universities in either seeking to achieve education for sustainable development, or in developing the ethos of global citizenship (as an extension of internationalisation), or both. More recently the Green Academy (see Luna & Maxey, 2013), a UK Higher Education Academy change programme, has played a pivotal role in inspiring and facilitating the adoption, by a growing number of institutions, of similar approaches.

The mobilisation of support and engagement at BU was enhanced by working in partnership with the Student Union, the International Office, student societies, local NGOs, local schools and the local authority. Partnership working (particularly between the academic function and the professional function of environmental management within the Estates Department), has not only contributed to capacity building but has earned the institution a number of awards, including recognition in the People and Planet Green League[vi]. The latter, with high profile rankings published in the Times Higher Education Supplement initially and later the Guardian (a UK newspaper), has been a critical driver in raising the profile of sustainable development with senior staff; it has also served (at times) to advantage campus greening, over ESD. External acclaim is certainly an important factor for securing senior leaders' backing in contexts where other pressing concerns demand their attention, with the caveat - acclaim can also lead to complacency.

The experience of developing and implementing the framework at BU, offers an illustration of the ways in which significant change can be secured through a bottom-up approach, met by top-down support. The experience has also underlined the vulnerability of reliance on top-

down support: senior leaders move on; replacements may arrive with very different worldviews, and personal career agendas that may mean previous approaches are rejected in pursuit of more personally advantageous strategies (Shiel & Williams, 2014).

Whilst much can and indeed has been achieved through working bottom-up within higher education institutions and with external partners, we have come to recognise that to secure fundamental and long lasting change, strategies for "middling out[vii]" (Caruana & Hanstock, 2005) need to be carefully thought through for long-term impact. More importantly, rather than depending on one or two champions at a senior level, it is evident that there is a need to change the thinking and engagement of the University Board and Executive Team and to encourage them (as a collective), to take a longer term view of institutional goals and to embrace a broader range of organisational and individual success factors, beyond financial performance and university rankings.

Recent work with senior leaders (Shiel, 2013) and those responsible for university governance, at four UK universities, has attempted to bring about such collective engagement. Workshops with this target group, have explored role-modelling leadership behaviour for sustainable development (Shiel & Williams, 2014), and through action learning sets, sought to develop strategic change initiatives. While the project has had positive outcomes (for example, enhanced the target groups knowledge of sustainable development, enabled strategies and approaches to change to be formulated, and resulted in one Board considering environmental consequences of all decisions) and has confirmed the importance of securing the engagement of the Chairs of universities, Board Members and senior teams, the experience has also confirmed that seeking to engage this target group is particularly challenging. They are busy people, used to a focus on the bottom-line and to delegating actions quickly, rather than owning an unfamiliar agenda. It has also revealed that: senior teams hold a wide range of diverse views on the key priorities for their institutions; both

senior teams and university boards have a very limited understanding of sustainable development (and often quite diametrically opposed views of what is required to secure the future of the world) and; they have limited worldviews on leadership, very little knowledge of leadership theory, and often a noticeable preference for transactional (and sometimes "macho") approaches. The evaluation of the project confirmed that participants' "mental models" of both sustainability and "management" are powerful inhibitors of change (Ballard 2005).

Radical new ways of assembling the higher education institution will certainly require radically new forms of leadership. Fundamental engagement with the challenges of creating a sustainable world for future generations can only be achieved by top leaders and university boards who recognise the significance and urgency of the challenge, and are willing to move away from the predominant focus on short-term market gains and personal career objectives. It is perhaps not too surprising, given the earlier discussion about inhibitors to change and the mutually reinforcing nature of their relationship, to note that writers on ESD suggest, that within universities, "bold leadership" (leaders who are willing to transform structures, cultures and processes) is uncommon (Tilbury, 2013). Such leaders need to be embrace "turnaround leadership" (Scott, Tilbury, Sharp & Deane, 2012), if their institutions are to become "beacons of social responsibility" (Foskett, 2013, p. x); they need to adopt a longer-term vision that embraces the needs of future generations and that focuses on cross-institutional ways of working. They also need to empower others to lead the change and ensure that enabling frameworks are provided. Champions working bottom-up cannot by themselves secure the level of transformational change that is required; challenging and removing organisational boundaries needs to be driven by those at the top. Whilst we regard senior team engagement as necessary (and the first challenge is to convince them of the

importance and potential of the change), it leaves open the question of the nature of that engagement and the type of leadership required.

There is influential literature on leadership for sustainable development which summarises "seven sustainability blunders" (Doppelt 2010) made by those leading change within organisations. Doppelt suggests that patriarchal thinking and mechanistic organisational designs, where issues are dealt with in silos, inhibit engagement, other blunders include: having no clear vision, confusion over cause and effect, lack of information, and insufficient mechanisms for learning. He reinforces the importance of challenging the dominant mind-set, and developing new opportunities for learning (and indeed some unlearning). Marshall, Coleman and Reason (2011) also stress the importance of learning but particularly the value of participatory ways of working, where diversity enhances that learning. Essentially, what is required is thinking (and ways of working) that challenge conventional wisdom, and leaders who are able to facilitate transformational change. This may pose a challenge for university teams, particularly where their composition is predominantly male and more used to deploying transactional and overly adversarial approaches to thinking, interaction and decision-making. Although exploring gender differences in leadership styles is beyond the scope of this chapter and is an area of research that is controversial, evidence suggests that women tend to favour a more democratic and participative style and are less likely to use an autocratic or directive style than men (Eagly & Johnson, 1990); women are more likely to score higher on transformational scales that relate to inspirational motivation, and individualized consideration (Eagly, Johannesen, & Schmidt, 2001). While there is no evidence to suggest that female leaders might be more effective at leading sustainable development, it is not unreasonable to conclude that gender imbalance (in senior teams) might be a factor that inhibits new ways of working.

In reviewing our experience, we have had cause to reflect on the kinds of qualities and behaviours that might be appropriate to enable universities to take on the challenges that sustainability presents. In many respects these echo with the concept of transformational leadership[viii] (Burns, 1978; Bass, 1985; Yukl, 2006), not surprisingly, given the fundamental changes implied by the agenda.

Research has shown (Shiel, 2013; Scott et al., 2012) that successful sustainability leaders share many of the general qualities associated with effective leadership (see Yukl, 2006 for a summary of literature on what constitutes effective leadership) but with greater levels of emotional intelligence (see Goleman, 1996), and an increased capacity for openness, integrity, empathy and humility. They have a greater respect for people and the planet and seek to develop more holistic (and inclusive) ways of working. Such a leader has the courage to challenge the status quo, particularly the negative reinforcement cycle of organisational and career factors based on a neo-liberal view of the market. They seek to challenge "silo mentalities" (where organisation structures and processes reinforce silo working and thinking) and facilitate new processes to encourage synergies across university functions, while striving to re-align systems and goals towards the common endeavour of sustainability (Shiel & Williams, 2015).

The literature on leadership for sustainable development, combined with feedback from colleagues leading change across the sector, within their own universities (Shiel, 2013), suggests that a globally responsible higher education leader:

- sets a compelling vision and stimulates task commitment and optimism for action;
- seeks to implement a holistic approach, uniting everyone in collective responsibility and action;

- exemplifies commitment to learning for SD and enhances their own perspectives by also learning from the perspectives of other cultures;

- builds personal awareness and "mindfulness", facilitating systemic learning (Sterling, 2004b);

- explores own/others' worldviews and challenges own/others' limitations;

- demonstrates responsibility for the environment in the personal, professional and community spheres;

- exemplifies passion;

- displays creativity in planning for the future (visioning);

- respects the complexity of systems (Bateson, 1972) and the inter-connected nature of global challenges;

- encourages multiple perspectives appreciating that listening to conflicting perspectives maximises learning;

- identifies new ways of working and opportunities for learning;

- develops alliances, to build commitment and momentum;

- assesses all actions and decisions in relation to SD (futures-oriented decision-making and an appreciation of the connections between the local and the global);

- inspires hope;

- proactively seeks positive solutions and displays courage in challenging the status quo;

- endures in adversity. (Adapted from Shiel, 2013).

We are aware that this is a tall order for any one individual, so it is worth remembering that leadership is a relational activity, and perhaps it would be better to develop the capabilities of teams rather than focusing on individual competence. It is important that senior teams reflect

on how far they exemplify these qualities in their own leadership approaches. It is also critical that they facilitate leadership development at all levels, ensuring that enabling mechanisms support others to champion change and engage in new ways of working. Undoubtedly reward mechanisms will encourage action but incentives that reward individuals rather than celebrate the success of the whole, may be counter-productive.

Further, the globally responsible leader must be as committed to their own personal learning, as they are to enabling others to learn new ways of seeing, thinking and being. As Sterling (2001) reminds us in noting what is required for sustainability:

"It's about creating the conditions of survival, security, and wellbeing for all. Un-learning, re-learning, new learning are the essences of this challenge" (p. 88).

Conclusion

This chapter has examined a specific aspect of global social justice, the opportunity for higher education to play a leading role in contributing to a sustainable future. The vision for this strategic opportunity was established nearly thirty years ago and we have provided a brief summary of the burgeoning international literature that has clarified the challenges for higher education institutions. It is unfortunate that although many senior higher education leaders have exemplified their university's commitment to sustainable development and social justice, as signatories of numerous "International Declarations" they have, in the main, failed to address the strategic questions that a serious commitment to this agenda poses for their own institutions; the new ways of assembling that are required, are under-developed. It has been suggested that examples of transformative approaches, or radical ways of working to address the challenges, are few.

The organisational and career factors that limit strategic engagement and reinforce a myopic conception and response to sustainable development, we have argued, comprise a set of elective mutually reinforcing affinities, and constitute a negative reinforcement cycle that inhibits both conceptions of the challenges posed by sustainable development and consideration of the ways a university may be assembled, to address these. We suggested that these inhibiting conceptions and practices are rooted in a neo-liberal conception of the "market," where short-term economic returns and market rankings are sovereign. Whilst recognising the prevalence of this model in higher education, we also noted examples from the world of international corporations where strategy and ways of assembling their operations, are being fundamentally changed in response to the challenges of sustainability. If international business corporations can establish long-term goals for sustainability and embrace a broader range of organisational goals, that include the environment, health and well-being, why are very few higher education institutions doing so? We suggest that part of the answer is, that too many higher education policy makers, leaders and boards are in the thrall of a limited and anachronistic business model and are slow to consider new models emerging in the business world, and indeed higher education. The failure of many institutional leadership teams and boards to ask in the face of the urgent need for sustainable development, such basic questions as: "what" should we do to enhance global sustainability and social justice?' and, "how should we assemble ourselves to secure this?" is for us, one of the most disturbing and ironic features of higher education.

This lack of serious engagement is not for the want of alternative visions and approaches. We have outlined one such alternative, a Global Perspectives framework that was designed to stimulate and guide a more systemic engagement. We have also explored the ways in which momentum and support for assembling new ways of working can be mobilised. Whilst the contribution of both "bottom-up" and "lateral" approaches were noted it was recognised that

for fundamental and long lasting changes to be secured, we have to radically change the thinking and engagement of university boards and executive teams in contexts that too frequently encourage instrumentality and short-term thinking and action. There is undoubtedly a need to challenge myopic policy initiatives and institutional assemblies that predominantly focus on short-term market growth, atomistic accountability and consumption, and which are too often underpinned by justificatory vocabularies, infused by a neo-liberal view of the market. Without a shift at the senior level, away from short-term accountability, limited measures of reputations, status hierarchy and CV building, wider transformation in society is unlikely to be led by universities.

Obviously university leaders cannot completely ignore market forces and their local contexts but as Ballard (2005) suggests, leaders for sustainable development need to recognise the contextual barriers to change and challenge these, and we might add, also explore alternative ways of responding to and shaping the market.

This requires, as noted, bold leadership to challenge the status quo and transform institutions. The qualities of globally responsible leadership share much in common with the general qualities of an effective leader but with a distinctive focus on transformation, emotional intelligence and learning. We have also suggested that more attention should be given to the relational aspects of leadership and that more diversity at board and executive level might enhance the capacity for delivering transformational approaches.

The qualities that senior teams should seek to enhance, we argue, are; "humility, respect for all forms of life and future generations, precaution and wisdom, [and] the capacity to think systemically and challenge unethical actions" (Martin & Jucker 2005, p. 21).

We conclude where we began, reminding university leaders and ourselves of the rallying call echoed over the last thirty years, and so forcefully recalled at the recent finale of the Decade for Education for Sustainable Development in 2014:

> We call upon world leaders to support the transformative role of higher education towards sustainable development, and commit to work together and further promote transformative learning and research by encouraging multi-stakeholder, multi-sector partnerships, communicating examples of sustainability practices, promoting broad and strong leadership and public awareness of the values of sustainable development and education for sustainable development, and recognizing the essential role and responsibility of higher education institutions towards creating sustainable societies.(Nagoya Declaration on Higher Education for Sustainable Development. 2014).

If universities are to fulfil their responsibility and play a transformative role, then we suggest that transformation has to start with university leadership; a critical task is to find new way of assembling universities so that they are more responsive to the agenda and capable of contributing to sustainable societies and the needs of future generations.

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ENDNOTES

[i] "Rio+20" is the abbreviated title for the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil in June 2012 – twenty years after the landmark 1992, Earth Summit in Rio.

[ii] In the UK, the "Estates Department" typically has responsibility for managing, maintaining and developing a university's physical infrastructure, buildings and campus facilities.

[iii] The concept of elective affinities originates with Goethe who derived it from the idea of chemical affinities. He deployed this as a metaphor to explore the emerging coalescence of patterns of human attraction and romance. Weber borrowed the metaphor to explain the emergence of capitalism and its relationship to social, cultural and historical factors. For an extended discussion of Weber's treatment of this concept see Howe (1978).

[iv] For a rigorous and balanced account of the policy changes informing this transition in the UK see: Brown & Carasso (2013); or for a more controversial commentary and critique exploring the "Whys" and focusing on the USA, see Giroux (2014).

[v] For an extended and immensely illuminating discussion of neoliberalism and sustainable development see Blewitt (2013).

[vi] People and Planet run a league table that ranks universities on the basis of data collected to assess their environmental policies, actions, activities and their broader engagement with sustainability (https://peopleandplanet.org/university-league.

[vii] "Middling out" is described as an approach that enhances "bottom-up" and "top-down" change by ensuring the engagement of those at middle-levels of the organisation (Heads of Departments & Heads of Services for example, and middle-managers) but also includes developing policies and processes that impact across the organisation.

[viii] Transformational leadership is contrasted with transactional leadership and may be associated with values of fairness, honesty and responsibility. A transformational leader may appeal to followers and mobilise energy to reform their institutions based on mutual respect and by appeals to the greater food.