



Keele's Global Challenge Pathways - embedding an institution-wide interdisciplinary elective pathways programme

DR KATIE SZKORNIK

k.szornik@keele.ac.uk

What are the Global Challenge Pathways?

- Launched in September 2022
- Themed elective pathways facilitating engagement with topical 'Global Challenges' and debates from interdisciplinary perspectives.
- Interdisciplinary teaching teams and student cohorts
- Students take one, 15-credit module at L4-L6 (45 credits total)
- Receive formal recognition on their degree certificates

Global Health

Social Justice

Enterprise, Entrepreneurship
& Employment

Digital Society

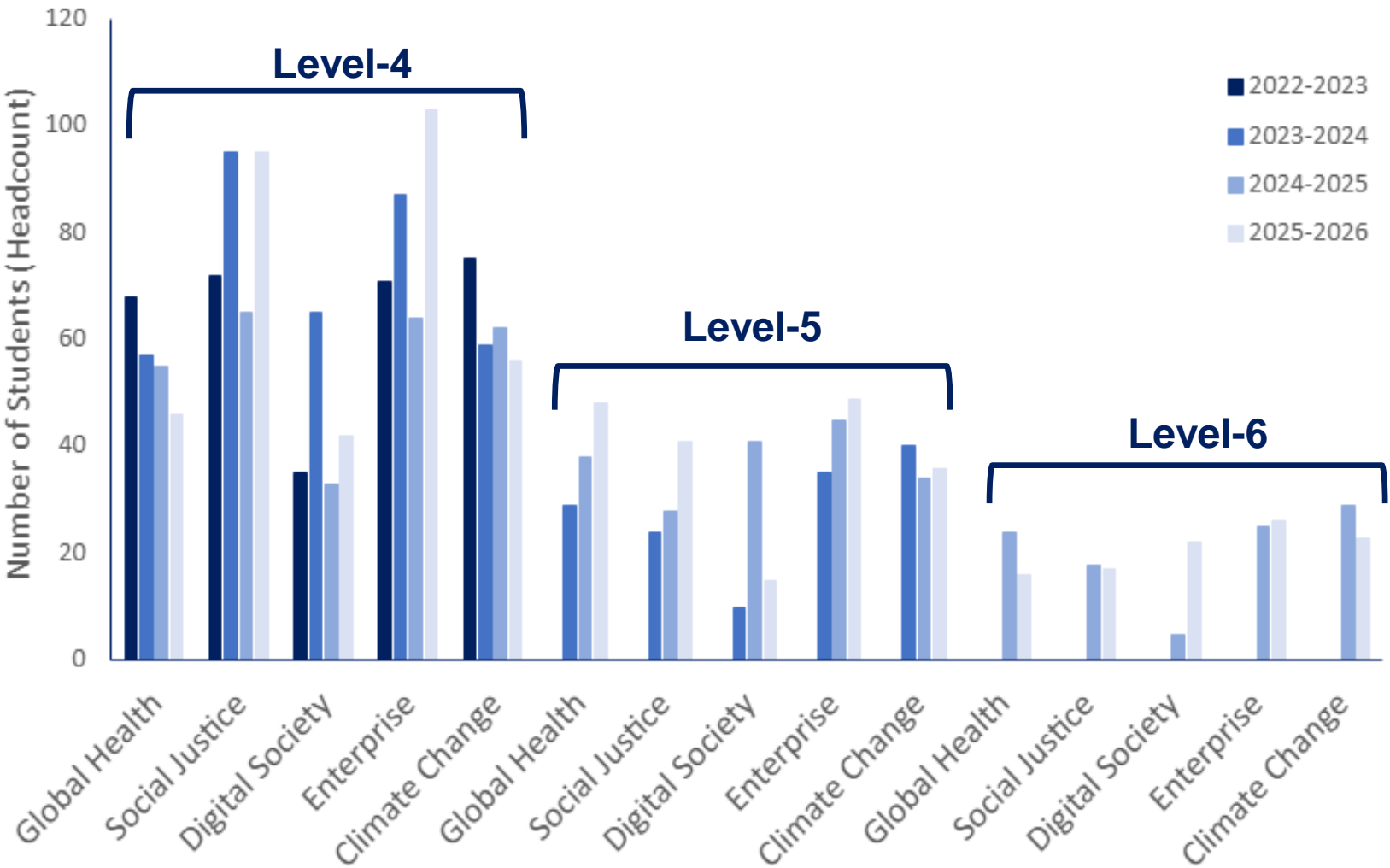
Climate Change &
Sustainability

Global Challenge Pathways

Module Design

- Modules were originally designed to be **fully online**, module development facilitated by KIITE learning design workshops
- Learning outcomes tied to the underlying themes of the project: Interdisciplinarity, internationalisation, employability and digital skills and all modules are underpinned by the **UN Sustainable Development Goals**.
- Focus on **group work assessment** (e.g., presentations, podcasts, video blogs), with independent elements (e.g., reflective diaries).
- **Delivery:** interactive, collaborative, interdisciplinary group-working, employer/external engagement, interdisciplinary teaching teams.

Student Numbers



- 80% of Keele’s UG degree programmes now facilitate GCP study
- 40% of eligible students do choose GCP
- Tendency for students to choose GCP most closely aligned to their own discipline.

Continuous Enhancement....

- **Strengthening of interdisciplinarity:** Introduction of whole- cohort teaching to enhance cross-fertilisation between pathways. Introduction of L6 poster presentation session.
- Shift from largely online to largely in-situ delivery
- Separation of our Language offer for 2025/26 to enable clearer promotion of both offers
- Significant work to review pathway & module names, 80-word module summaries and full revision of website to improve attractiveness of offer.

Evaluation – Student Feedback

- **Students liked:**
 - working with students from different backgrounds
 - inclusion of guest (industry) speakers
 - opportunities to connect with external agencies and businesses
- **Common issues:**
 - Students struggled with **group work & collaboration**
 - The initial online nature of the modules did not make the most of the opportunity to interact with students from different subjects
 - Students (and staff) felt that the modules were over assessed, with **too much focus on group work.**



Evaluation – Feedback Cont.

*“One key skill I believe the module has helped me to improve on is my digital fluency. The collaborative nature of assignments also allowed me to work on collaborative powerpoints, which I had never done before...The development of these skills has **made me feel more confident when using collaborative technology**, which in turn, has increased my employability”*

“Your ability to blend online, live lectures and international guest speakers seamlessly has made the learning experience incredibly enriching and accessible. I truly thank you for your unwavering commitment to educating and empowering us to make a difference in the fight against climate change and sustainability”

“This reflective journey I have been on throughout this year has taught me that I am the change, my generation and the future people are the change that is needed for us to see developments in our society”

*“Students raised interesting points about how much they appreciated discussions with other pathway students particularly about how the sessions made them think differently. This illustrates not only the importance of learning about different pathways- **but also about how students are learning about different ways of learning**”*

Impact on Staff...

- Evidence for SF and PF submissions
- Informal peer-reflection of teaching
- Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL)



Image: WonkHE's (Debbie McVitty) meeting students and staff involved in GCP during a visit to Keele (March 2024).

What's Next?

1. Evaluation and Impact
2. Externalisation & Learning from Others
3. Re-imagining our model – is GCP still fit for purpose?



Thank you

Keele University
Newcastle-under-Lyme
Staffordshire
ST5 5BG
+44 (0)1782 732000