



RHODES UNIVERSITY
Where leaders learn

Postgraduate Diploma in Sustainability Learning

Our society needs new ways of learning, new ways of building and sharing knowledge so that people and the planet can flourish.

This requires critical thinking and problem-solving skills, collaboration and communication skills, environmental literacy, systems thinking, creativity, cultural competence, and an ethic of care.

These are features of **Sustainability Learning**, a sub-field of education that aims to enable individuals and communities to take action for a more sustainable future.



The Postgraduate Diploma (PGDip) in Sustainability Learning is an interdisciplinary qualification that prepares individuals to work as 'sustainability educators'. Whether you have just completed a Bachelor's degree or Advanced Diploma, or are an experienced practitioner interested in sustainability learning, the PGDip will equip you with the knowledge and practical skills to support people in learning how to transition towards sustainability.

This postgraduate diploma will be a good fit for you if

- you work (or aspire to work) in a sector that addresses sustainability, environmental justice and/or development
- you are looking for ways to engage people in quality learning processes to address sustainability concerns
- you want to draw on a wide range of knowledge traditions, disciplines, learning approaches and perspectives on people and the planet
- you want to develop a more reflexive approach to your work in sustainability.

Please note: the programme does not focus on school teaching. Graduates wanting to qualify as school teachers should apply for the PGCE.



Career opportunities

What does a 'sustainability educator' do? A wide range of practices fall under the umbrella term of 'sustainability educator' such as training, mentoring, activating, facilitating, mobilising, mediating, informing, and teaching! These educative practices occur in a wide range of work sectors including:

- Biodiversity conservation and natural resource management
- Youth and community development
- Environmental justice
- Urban sustainability transitions

Sustainability educators use diverse teaching approaches such as arts-based methods, nature-based field trips, dialogue and reflective practice to support learning about climate change, Green Skills development for Just Transitions, school-community or school-NGO partnerships, sustainable production and consumption – and many more!

Successful completion of the PGDip (Sustainability Learning) gives access to a Master's degree in a similar area of specialisation, for example the Master's in Environmental Education or Master's in Environmental Science at Rhodes University.



Course structure

The PGDip (Sustainability Learning) is jointly offered at Rhodes University by the Environmental Learning Research Centre (ELRC) within the Department of Secondary & Post-School Education, and the Department of Environmental Science.

The 120-credit programme is offered part-time over two years (2025–2026).

Students are required to attend four teaching blocks (Monday-Friday) per year, and complete individual and group assignments in between.

Provisional dates for the compulsory teaching blocks in 2025 are:

- 3 – 7 February
- 7 – 11 April
- 7 – 13 June (note extra day for exam)
- 25 – 29 August

Note: This is not a distance or online learning programme; students are required to attend face-to-face teaching blocks at Rhodes University in Makhanda.



YEAR 1 (4x in-person teaching blocks)

Foundations of Sustainability Learning consists of six modules:

1. Sustainability Concepts and Critique
2. Systems Thinking: History, Context and Future
3. Interdisciplinarity, Knowledge and Human Learning
4. Participation, Solidarity and Sustainability Ethics
5. Introduction to Social Learning Processes
6. Introduction to Interdisciplinary Social Science Research

YEAR 2 (4x in-person teaching blocks)

Action Research Change Project consists of six modules:

1. Understanding Sustainability Learning Contexts
2. Facilitating Learning for Change
3. Practising Reflexive Research in ARC Projects
4. Evaluation as Learning
5. Elective A (options available)*
6. Elective B (options available)*

* Elective modules vary according to students' foci and staff availability. Options could include *Citizen Science for Sustainability Learning *Creative Methodologies for Sustainability Learning * Multi-stakeholder Learning Networks *Climate Change Education and Governance * School-Community Partnerships for Sustainability Learning.



Admission requirements

A Bachelor's degree or an Advanced Diploma or equivalent.

Applicant's academic track record and evidence of past or current work experience will be taken into consideration.

Individuals can enter the programme from any disciplinary background, but must be willing to engage with social science methods and teaching resources.

To apply online, click this link
<https://ross.ru.ac.za/>

**APPLICATIONS CLOSE
14 OCTOBER 2024**



Fees

Fees for the 2025 academic year are not yet confirmed but are expected to be approximately R24 500.

A modest departmental levy is also charged for internal operating costs (e.g., printing of course handouts; teas; local excursions).

Students based outside of Makhandla must make provision for travel and accommodation costs for four teaching blocks per year.

For further information visit the websites of the hosting departments:

Environmental Learning Research Centre
www.ru.ac.za/elrc

Department of Environmental Science
www.ru.ac.za/environmentalscience

or email Associate Professor Lausanne Olvitt:
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