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ARUP

SUSTAINABILITY
LEADERSHIP
SCORECARD
ANNUAL REPORT

JUNE 2019

CONTENTS

FOREWORD

We are delighted to present the first annual report on the sector's performance from the Sustainability Leadership Scorecard (SLS).

At the best of times, the multi-dimensioned term we call sustainability can be confusing. Not least the myriad of ever-increasing performance improvement tools, quality standards, reporting accreditations and of course the UN Sustainable Development Goals, which aim to help, but often leave sustainability leaders feeling overwhelmed, and our colleagues and students none the wiser.

The SLS enables a single, engaging indicator of performance and gaps for an institution that is easy to understand and communicate.

The SLS is a partnership between EAUC, AUDE and Arup. At last, the sector has a transformational 'All in One' tool, which captures data and performance from many sources and builds one definitive picture of an institution's performance. With increasing expectations on universities and colleges to demonstrate responsibility and build organisational adaptability and resilience, it is appropriate that we find new approaches to sector challenges and opportunities. Reflecting the integrated and aligned approach of the Scorecard, EAUC, AUDE and Arup are committed to a collaborative approach, which we hope other agencies will join.

This report aims to show where the sector is leading and where it needs to improve. This, our first report, establishes an important baseline for sector sustainability performance. With ever increasing stakeholder interest from funders, students, employers and the general public, we know there will be more eyes than ever reviewing future reports with the expectation of performance improvement. We welcome this scrutiny and are confident that our collaborative and strategic approach to whole-institution sustainability will inspire our sector and give it deserved recognition as a sustainability leader.

Overall score diagram for the sector - The breakdown of the tool, with 18 frameworks distributed across four priority areas, can be seen on page 6 (Figure 1).

1 KEY FINDINGS

Since the launch of the SLS in June 2018, 45 institutions have used the tool to assess their current activities and set targets. Also encouraging to see is how users of the tool have found both expected and unexpected benefits of using the SLS as a powerful engagement tool across their institutions. Used to prioritise areas that are often overlooked, fragmented, undervalued, now coming together in a more strategic whole institution approach.

To whet your appetite, on the right are a sample of insights identified in this year's report.

BRONZE OR NO RATING %

36% SILVER

INSTITUTION RATINGS

18% GOLD
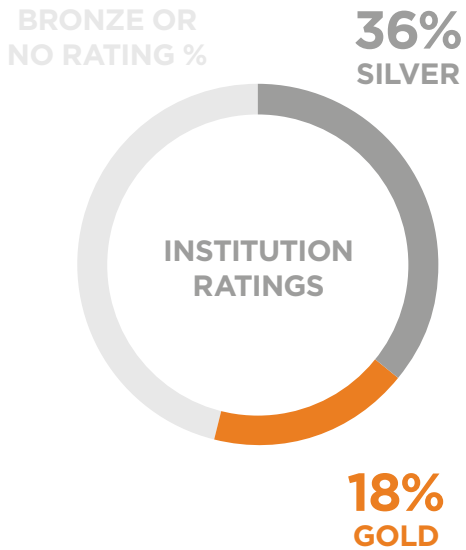
36% of institutions receive a rating of Silver, with 18% receiving Gold.

Sustainability is gaining traction across the whole institution and building beyond its strong base in campus estates and operations now with similar achievements across all areas

Estates & Operations are higher performing areas with Partnership & Engagement activities being lowest

The overall sector score for institutions is bronze

Small teaching institutions and colleges perform above sector average for Leadership & Governance

Risk and Climate Change Adaptation is low down on institutions' priorities

Differing institution types are showing strengths in different areas

Linking activities to the curriculum is the hardest area for the sector to achieve and this area is performing poorly compared to others
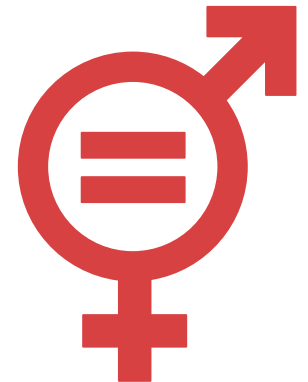
The sector is impacting most positively on Sustainable Development Goals - Gender Equality, Sustainable Cities & Communities, Responsible Resource Consumption and Climate Action and least impact on Health and Wellbeing

Bournemouth University

What was pivotal in you securing senior management authorisation to use the Sustainability Leadership Scorecard (SLS)?

BU is committed through its strategy to embed sustainability across all its activities with the aim to contribute towards achieving the UN SDGs. BU uses its Environmental Management System, certified to ISO14001:2015, to drive continual improvement and recognised the SLS as a new tool to capture and identify risks and opportunities.

Building on this strong strategic position, a presentation about the SLS and its potential benefits was delivered to the Sustainability Committee, to secure their support for completing the tool. In addition, being involved in the development of the Green Scorecard and having the support of the Director of Estates was also key.

What was your approach to completing the Sustainability Leadership Scorecard?

The Sustainability Manager identified the key stakeholders for each topic area and contacted them asking for their support in completing the SLS. Meetings of between half and hour and one hour were scheduled to complete the tool online. Whilst this was time consuming, it did ensure a consistent approach and completion of the SLS to an agreed deadline. The expectation is less time will be needed next time as stakeholders will be familiar with the tool. The completed SLS was reported to the Sustainability Committee in September 2018.

Did you encourage colleagues from other Departments to participate and help you with the Sustainability Leadership Scorecard?

Yes, those staff responsible for the different topic areas were identified in a stakeholder mapping exercise and then contacted them asking for their support in completing the SLS, emphasising the importance of BU completing the tool and the benefits. Face to face meetings were essential in completing the SLS and delivering positive outcomes.

What are the 3 top benefits of using the Sustainability Leadership Scorecard?

1. The SLS covers all aspects of sustainability and so enabled good quality conversations with staff who would not normally be involved in such matters.

2. The SLS provides a gap analysis and so identified areas for improvement.

3. The SLS report was used as evidence for the **The University Impact Rankings**

You can also hear about our approach to the SLS **here**

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2 INTRODUCTION

In 2018, EAUC and AUDE initiated a collaboration with the then funding body, HEFCE, to create a tool representing a whole-institution approach to sustainability. The SLS, created by Arup, was launched in the summer of 2018.

Since then, further and higher education institutions have been using the tool to structure their own response to issues of sustainability and examine their performance against others. This report shows some of the trends that the sector is exhibiting based on the data entered into the tool.

The SLS is split into four priority areas, with a number of frameworks (18 in total) providing dedicated topics within these priorities (Figure 1). As a result of this breadth, the tool examines an institution's potential impact in the area of sustainability beyond the direct impact of its estate. It allows an institution to understand their current performance in the context of their priorities and set their aspirations for future performance. The tool is supported by an easy-to-use web-portal.

The SLS tool draws directly from the annual Estates Management Return (EMR) dataset completed by universities. This provides an invaluable source of information on sector performance. By linking in with EMR, the tool reduces workload and maximises the value of the existing processes.

For more information on EMR and the performance of the HE sector, a full analysis report is available[1].

Figure 1: The structure of the tool with 18 frameworks distributed across four priority areas

Leadership and Governance

Leadership | Staff Engagement and Human Resources | Health and Wellbeing | Risk

Partnership and Engagement

Community & Public Engagement | Business & Industry Interface | Procurement & Supplier Engagement | Food & Drink

Learning, Teaching & Research

Learning & Teaching | Research | Student Engagement

Estates & Operations

Waste | Biodiversity | Construction | Water | Travel | Adaptation | Energy

1 AUDE Higher Education Estates Management Report 2018: Summary, insights and analysis of the 2016/2017 academic year. www.aude.ac.uk/emr

What was pivotal in you securing senior management authorisation to use the Sustainability Leadership Scorecard (SLS)?

Through engaging with senior colleagues we were able to demonstrate the value in engaging with the SLS. The university has already made several commitments to sustainability in general as well as to the Sustainable Development Goals so this was relatively easy to incorporate. We could show how the SLS would help the university meet its current commitments.

What was your approach to completing the Sustainability Leadership Scorecard?

One member of the Estates sustainability team took responsibility for completing the SLS. The approach taken was to research policy documents and information on the university web pages, as well as to contact staff with relevant roles in other departments in order to gather the information required for each score. The information found was originally inputted to a spreadsheet and then at the time of the deadline, this was copied into the web pages.

Did you encourage colleagues from other Departments to participate and help you with the Sustainability Leadership Scorecard?

Colleagues didn't really need too much convincing to get involved. However, most of the people that were engaged with for the SLS were already involved in the sustainability network at the university so were more likely to see the value in this kind of activity. The majority of the information gathered for this was taken from the internet so not all departments were directly engaged with.

What are the 3 top benefits of using the Sustainability Leadership Scorecard?

1. Through engaging with different staff to complete the SLS, we were able to engage new people in conversations of sustainability. Many people at the university are already aware of and engaged with the SDG's but not necessarily with sustainability work at Strathclyde. So the SLS gave us the opportunity to bring more people into our work.

2. The widespread and integrated nature of the SLS gave a thorough overview not only of sustainability at Strathclyde but also of all the other influencing and connected factors such as wellbeing and engagement. Through this it was fantastic to see how interconnected sustainability is to the institution and now we can use this insight to go forward.

3. The target setting aspect of the SLS allowed us, for each issue we identified, to plan clear pragmatic action points going forwards. It is easy to make generalised statements about sustainability targets but the SLS helps us identify the particular areas that needs worked on and move towards this effectively.
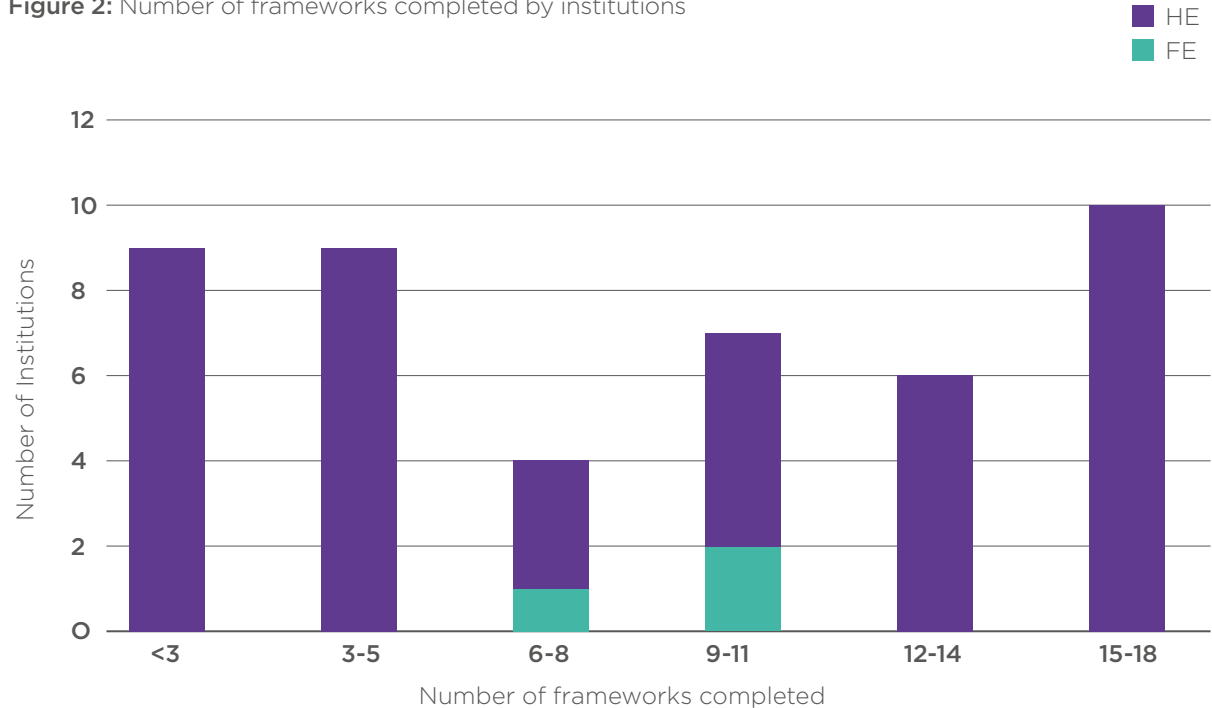
3 PARTICIPATION

3.1 OVERALL ENGAGEMENT

Since the tool was launched in June 2018, take-up has been encouraging amongst universities, with 42 (27%) of the UK's HE institutions actively using the tool[2]. Adoption within Further Education (FE) colleges has been understandably lower with only three institutions engaging to date.

There are many reasons why the engagement among FE colleges is lower than universities. It should not be taken to mean that the FE sector is not contributing to the sustainability agenda. Colleges are often very embedded in their local area and are active in social, community and curriculum elements. Elements that are carried out in these spaces may not be seen as being directly linked to the sustainability agenda even though their impact can be considerable.

More likely is the relative lack of drivers in the FE sector – the OFSTED performance appraisals do not include any elements of sustainability. Coupled with pressures on resources from reducing central government budgets means very few institutions have staff dedicated to sustainability for even a small part of their week. Against this backdrop, the three colleges that have engaged should be congratulated for their proactive approach and their participation shows that using the tool can be a useful exercise for institutions of this type.

The flexibility within the tool is allowing institutions to pick those frameworks that are most relevant to their organisation. However, many institutions are choosing to evaluate themselves against a significant number of frameworks (Figure 2).

**Figure 2:** Number of frameworks completed by institutions

2 This data only considers institutions that have manually entered at least 10 scores, the threshold set to indicate meaningful participation. More institutions have entered fewer scores and all universities have data carried into the SLS from the annual Estates Management Return. A further 8 institutions have used the tool but not entered enough scores to be included for this report.

Of the institutions that have chosen to score themselves on a more limited basis, there is a very even distribution of the number of frameworks being completed. This indicates a number of approaches to using the tool are being taken.

This degree of engagement is encouraging and shows that institutions are starting to use the tool to understand their current progress on the issues that are most important to them.

The vast majority of institutions participating are also choosing to set targets to guide their progress. The number of targets set is very close to the number of scores entered as shown by Figure 3 where the diagonal line represents a 1:1 ratio of scores and targets.

This shows that many institutions are using the tool not only to appraise their current performance but also to identify gaps or areas where additional attention is needed to achieve the levels of performance they aspire to. This shows the real power of the tool for institutions.

Figure 3: Relationship between scores and targets
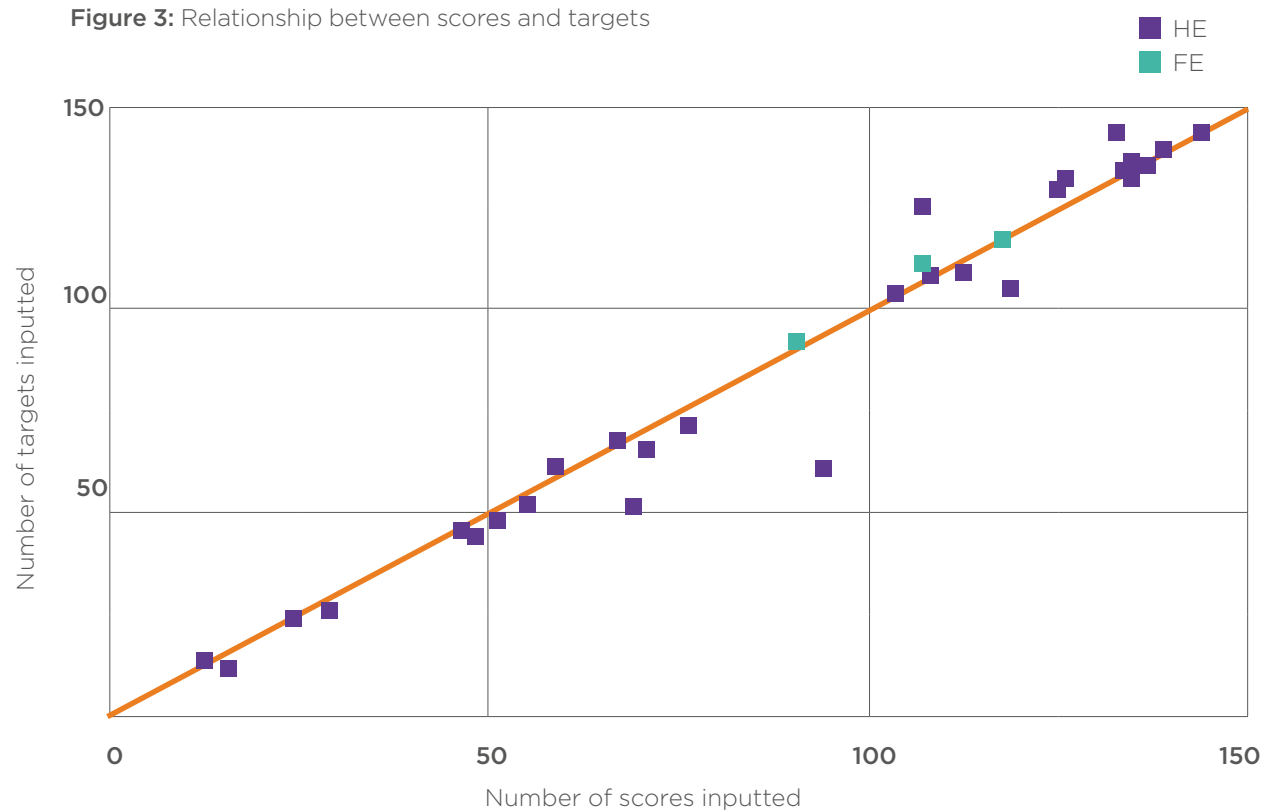
When considering the institution type, it is clear that larger institutions are more active in this area. It has already been shown that FE colleges are much less likely to have engaged with the tool at this time, but, within universities, 34% of large organisations have completed the tool compared with only 15% of small institutions[3] (Figure 4).

Figure 4: Participation by institution type
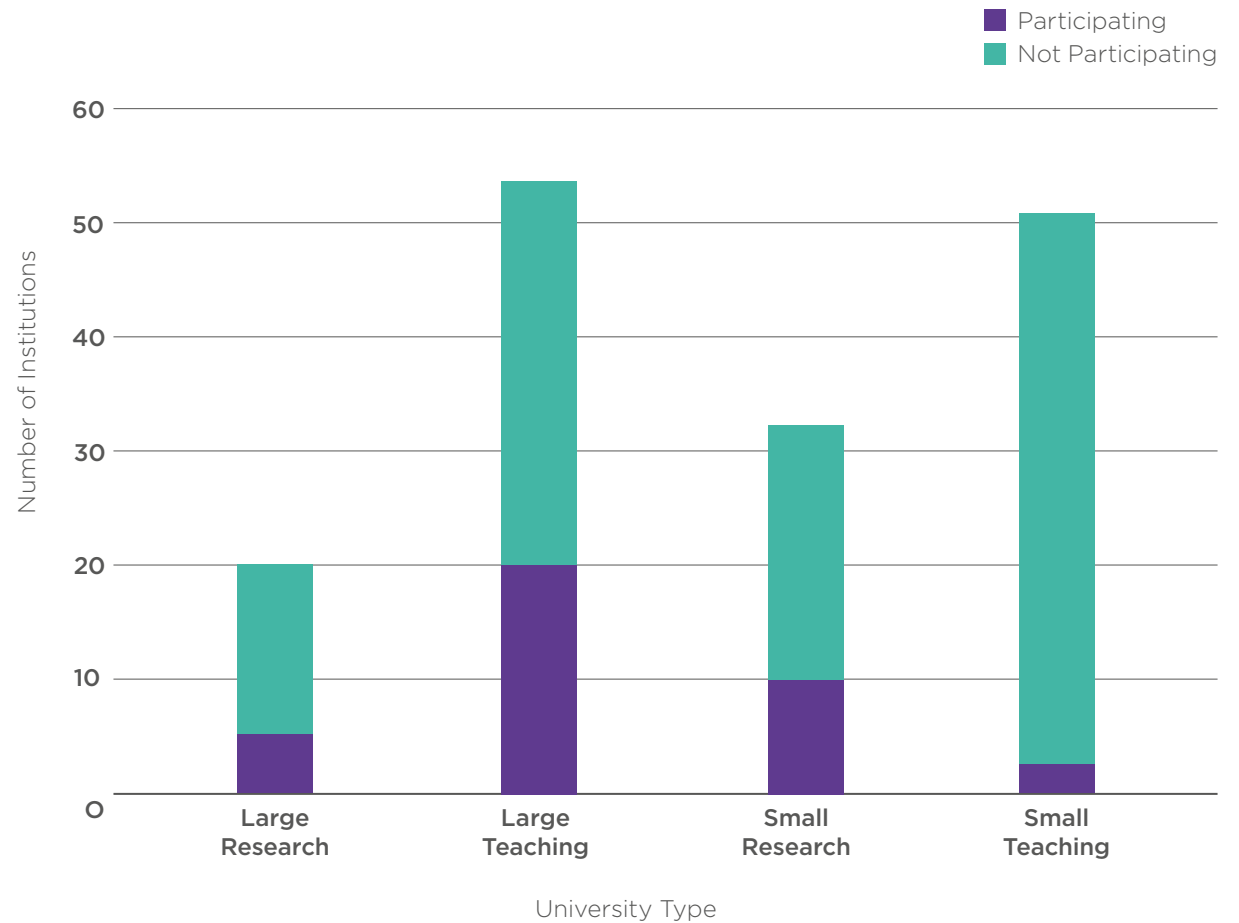
3 Teaching institutions are those that generate over 80% of their income from teaching. Small Teaching institutions have an academic income below £100m (and Large above this threshold). Correspondingly, Research institutions generate over 20% of their income from research but the threshold between large and small is set at £300m.

3.2 PARTICIPATION BY REGION

There is a wide range of participation between universities in different regions (colleges are excluded from this analysis due to the low numbers involved).

Against a backdrop of an average participation rate of 27%, it is clear that increased engagement within universities in London and the South East (with an average participation of 19% and a large number of institutions) would raise this rate significantly (Figure 5).

However, whilst these trends are interesting, we must be careful not to assume cause-and-effect. It is unlikely that their location in London and the South East is the reason for the lower proportion of participation. More likely is that the region contains a higher proportion of institution types (such as small teaching institutions) that are less likely to participate for other reasons.

3.3 PRIORITY AND FRAMEWORK AREAS

Looking at the most popular frameworks for institutions to complete shows a relatively even distribution. Of the 45 institutions to participate, the number each has completed ranges from less than two complete frameworks to all 18. Despite this wide range, the number of times each framework has been completed ranges from 16 to 30 (Figure 6).

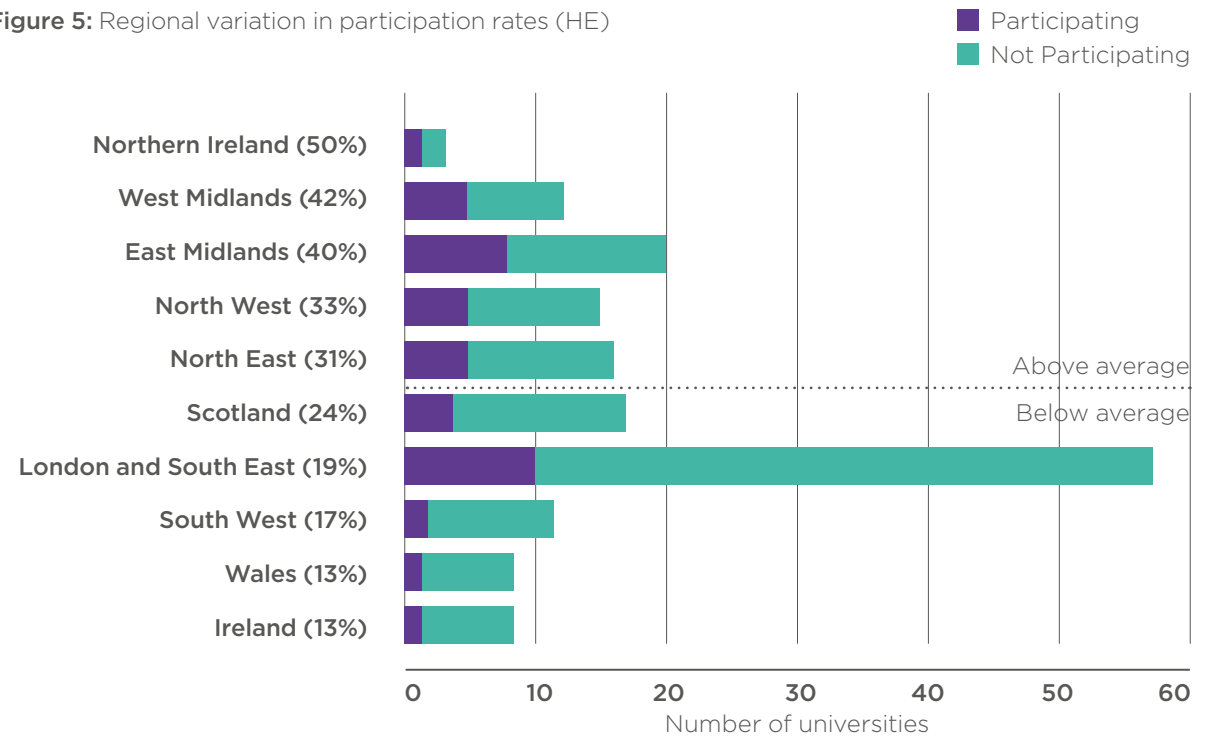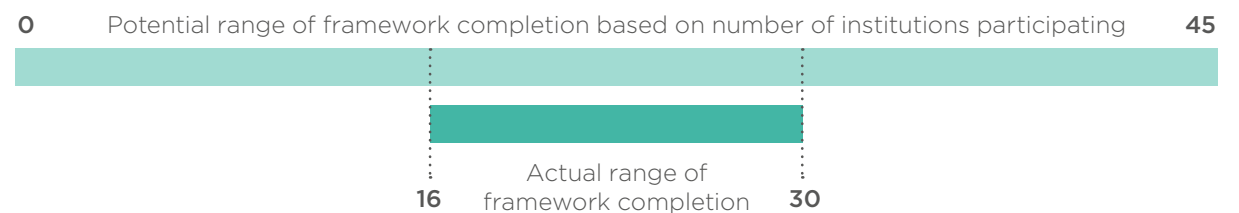**Figure 5:** Regional variation in participation rates (HE)

Legend: Participating, Not Participating

Figure 6: Relatively narrow range of completion of frameworks

0 — Potential range of framework completion based on number of institutions participating — 45

Actual range of framework completion: 16 — 30

This shows that each of the frameworks has a good amount of relevance to a wide range of institutions. Looking in more detail at how often frameworks are completed within each priority area, we do not see very clear patterns of one priority area being more popular than others. Perhaps the only prominent trend is that Partnership & Engagement frameworks are tending towards the less-often completed (Figure 7).

- Learning, Teaching, & Research
- Estates & Operations
- Leadership & Governance
- Partnership & Engagement

Figure 7: Variation in number of institutions completing each framework
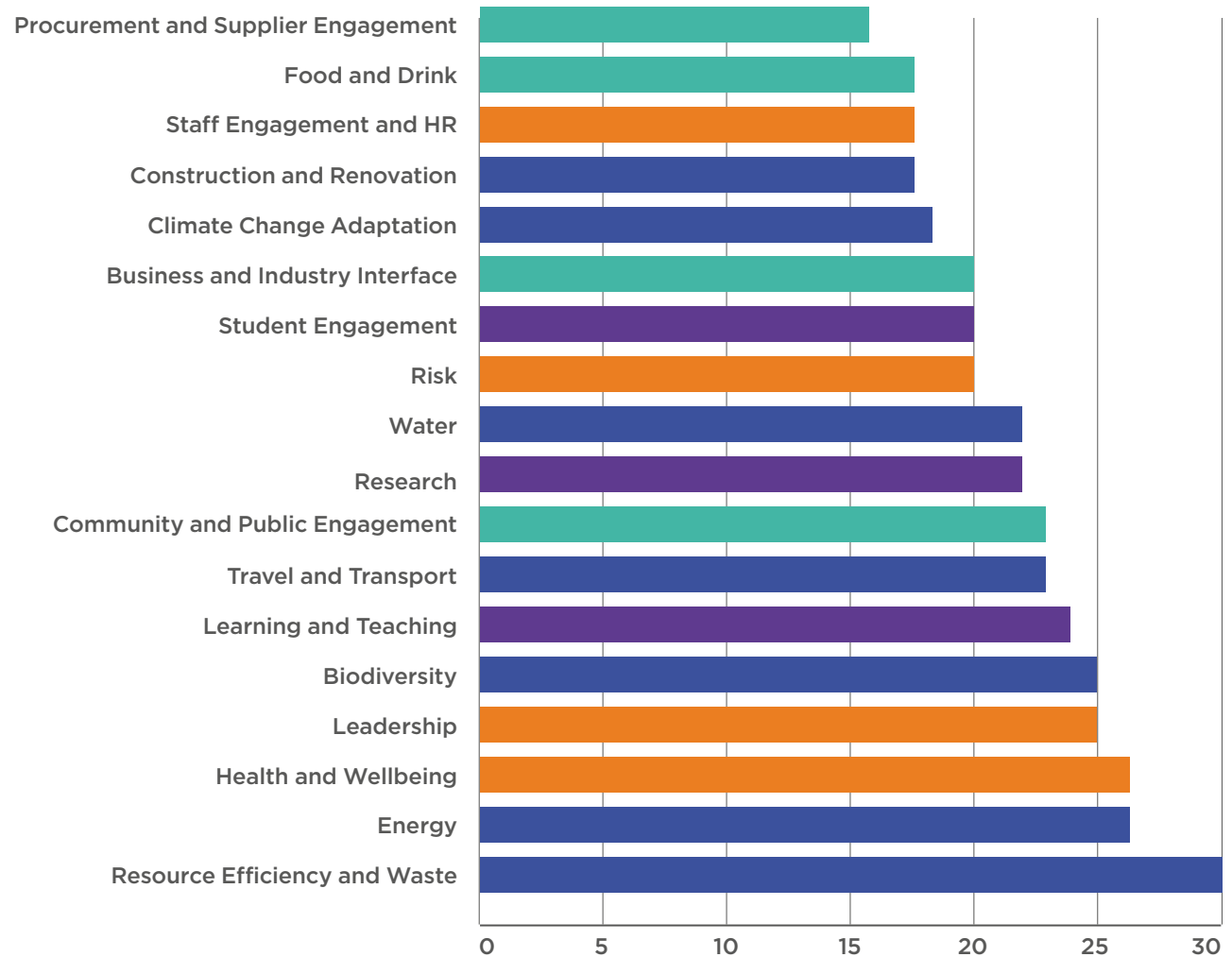
Overall, these results indicate that the structure of the tool represents the needs of a wide range of institutions, giving confidence that others who have not yet completed it will find it a useful exercise.

However, one trend is quite stark. When comparing the popularity of frameworks against the average score in those frameworks, it can be seen that those frameworks where institutions are, on average, scoring lower are also those that are not completed as often (Figure 8).

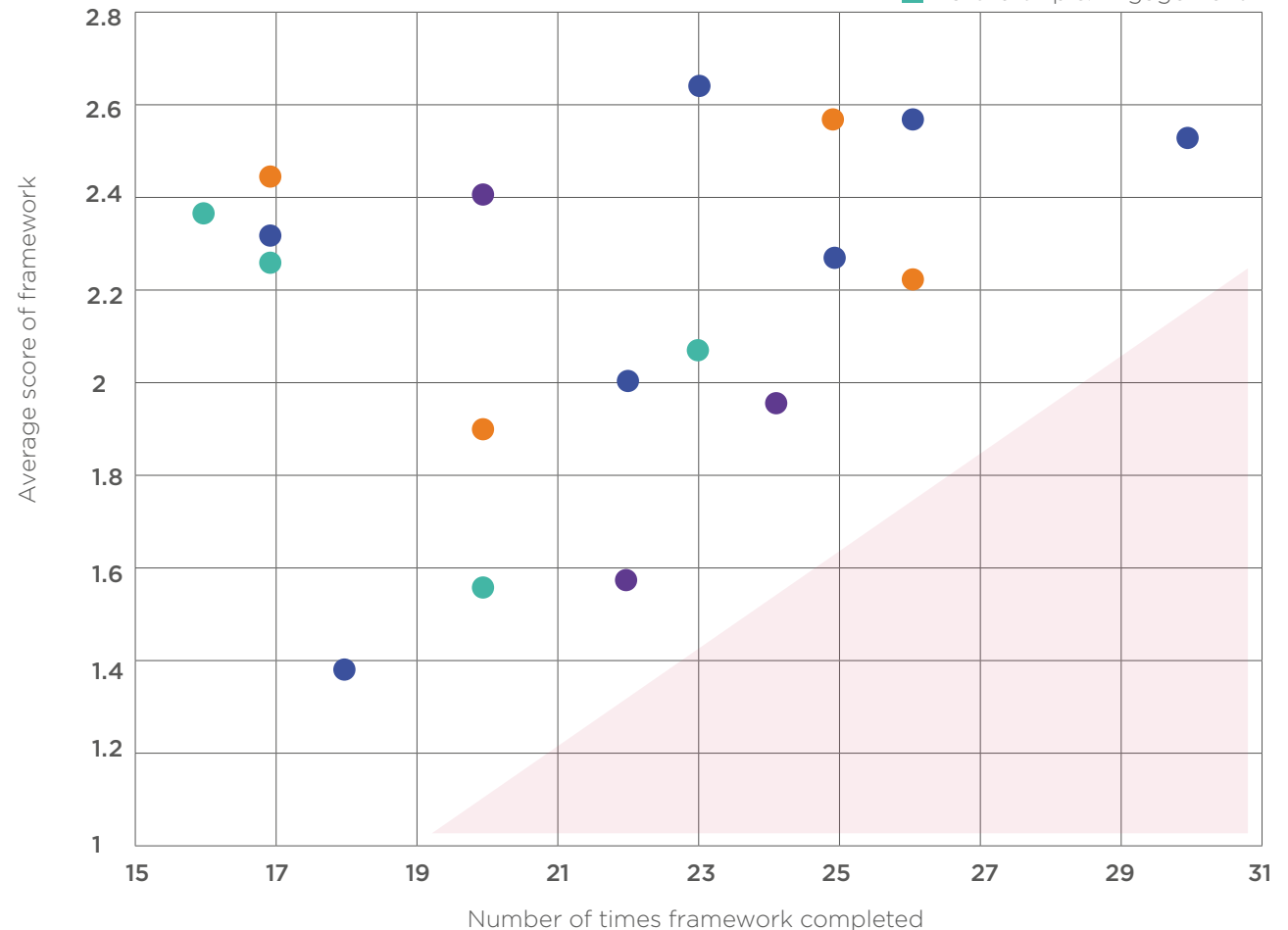There are two competing interpretations of this:

• Institutions are appraising themselves against the issues that are clear priorities, meaning that they have been focusing on them and as such have higher scores.

• Institutions are, unconsciously or otherwise, choosing to score themselves on frameworks which they are comfortable they will score well and are not challenging themselves with the difficult questions.

The balance of these reasons cannot be determined from the data, but it highlights the need for institutions to approach the appraisal exercise with honesty for the good of their own institution. The fact that the tool does not develop overly simplistic rankings comparing institutions encourages this honesty.

Figure 8: Comparison of framework popularity and its overall average score

There are no cases of low scoring frameworks being completed by a high proportion of institutions

Legend:
- Learning, Teaching, & Research
- Estates & Operations
- Leadership & Governance
- Partnership & Engagement

X-axis: Number of times framework completed
Y-axis: Average score of framework

What was pivotal in you securing senior management authorisation to use the Sustainability Leadership Scorecard (SLS)?

Our Sustainability Manager identified the SLS as his preferred tool for carrying out an institutional sustainability "gap analysis". Its use was discussed and agreed at a meeting of our Sustainability Development Working Group (presided over by the University's Quaestor and Factor and attended by representatives from across the institution).

What was your approach to completing the Sustainability Leadership Scorecard?

We have identified leads for each individual Framework. Sometimes this is one person, for example for the Risk Framework, the lead is our Risk Manager. However, some Frameworks, especially those around Engagement and Health and Wellbeing, crosscut between departments and units. Public and Community Engagement, for example, is carried out by our Public Engagement with Science team, Transition University of St Andrews, our Corporate Communications team and others. For these crosscutting Frameworks we consulted with up to 4 different people before assigning a score and narrative that all parties were happy with. Other Frameworks were completed by committees, for example, the Learning and Teaching Framework was completed by our Sustainability in the Curriculum Committee. We plan, in time, to "embed" the Scorecard within the institutional formal reporting system via the Planning Office.

Did you encourage colleagues from other Departments to participate and help you with the Sustainability Leadership Scorecard?

Yes, we have had input from colleagues from across the institution. We identified potential leads, emailed them explaining what the SLS was, who was instigating its usage (Principal's office via our Quaestor) and asked for a meeting. This process has been led by our Sustainability Officer, who makes initial contact and holds each meeting. This allows continuity of questioning and ensures the process is robust. We have taken our "best guess" at scoring each section as a starting point for our meetings.

What are the 3 top benefits of using the Sustainability Leadership Scorecard?

1. Allows us to have conversations about sustainability with people at the institution we may not otherwise have access to.
2. Allows us to identify gaps in how we are performing in sustainability using a consistent approach, and how these can be filled.
3. Can be used as a planning tool for some Frameworks, for example, our Sustainability in the Curriculum Committee is using the Teaching and Learning Framework for this purpose.

4 OVERALL PERFORMANCE

Overall, the institutions engaging with the tool scored an average of 2.2 out of 4 (55%). This is very close to the boundary between a Bronze and a Silver rating, showing that the sector is already performing at a reasonable standard (but with clear room for improvement).

Of the institutions actively engaging with the tool, most scored at least a Bronze rating. A significant number scored higher ratings with average scores within the Silver and Gold categories[4] (Figure 9).

Institutions not achieving a rating were those that had chosen not to appraise themselves against many of the frameworks. Therefore, a low average score does not necessarily mean that these institutions are not achieving high standards on the issues that are important to them.

Figure 9: No. Institutions achieving each rating
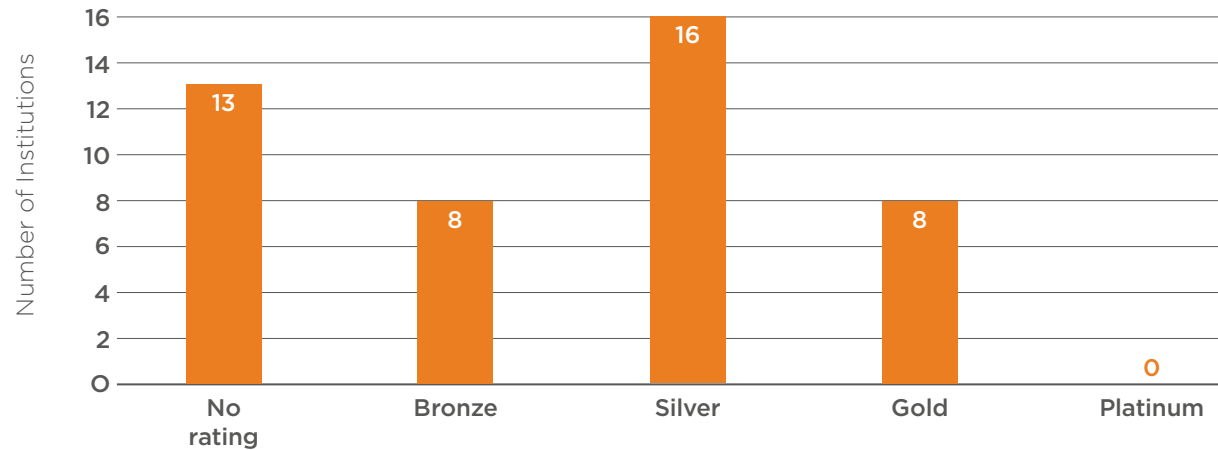
4 Rating bands are: Bronze 40-55%; Silver 55-70%; Gold 70-85%; Platinum >85%

OVERALL SCORE DIAGRAM

Whilst these scores are useful to show the progress of the sector as a whole, it is not necessarily useful to compare institutions at this overall score level as sustainability is individual to the priorities and characteristics of each individual organisation. Which institution scores the highest is of less relevance that whether each is improving. It is this improvement that the optional gap analysis or score verification process available as part of the SLS is intended to confirm.

Figure 10: Overall score diagram for the sector
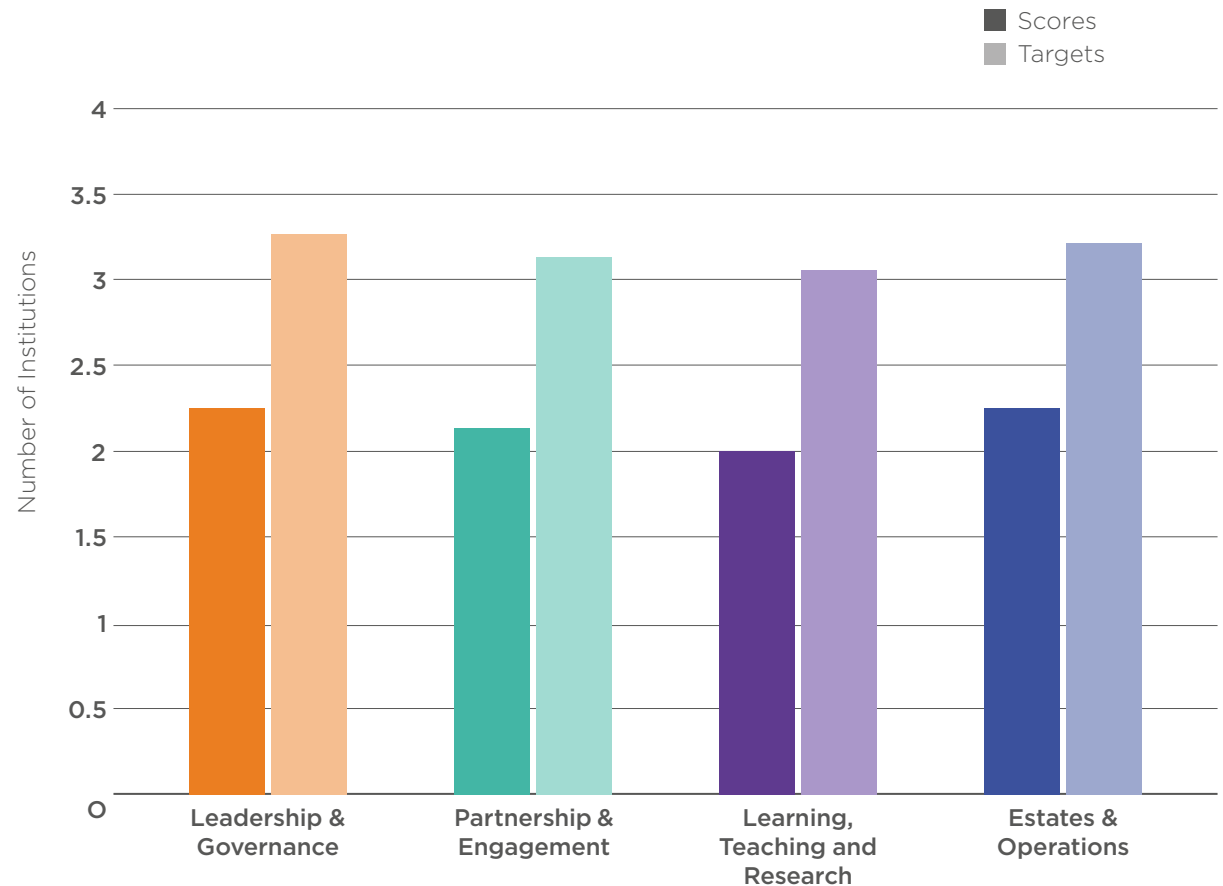
4.1 PRIORITY AREAS

Across the four priority areas, the scores are relatively evenly spread but Leadership & Governance and Estates & Operations are those areas with the highest scores (Figure 11). This perhaps reflects the fact that institutions have been addressing sustainability in these areas for the longest. In many institutions, the Estates Team was the originator of a focus on sustainability due to clear impacts and this then migrated up to leadership attention as the topic became more prominent. Both these areas also have the benefit of being relatively self-contained.

Interestingly, whilst the Leadership & Governance and Estates & Operations priority areas are similar in their overall scores, there are clear differences when the activities within the priority areas are examined. Estates & Operations scores highly for setting policies and strategies but lower than average for managing to implement these policies and achieve performance. Leadership & Governance is the other way around, with performance being achieved despite a lower than expected score relating to strong and effective policies.

Contrary to the relatively self-contained areas discussed above, integrating sustainability considerations into Partnership & Engagement and Learning, Teaching & Research requires all areas of the institution to be involved. This is a more challenging task that cannot be achieved by a relatively small core of advocates – it requires wholesale behaviour change amongst large swathes of staff.

However, whilst it is understandable that these areas are slightly behind others, it is also something that should be addressed. These areas are those in which an institution has the greatest degree of influence. A sustainable estate will reduce an institution's direct impact but an army of hundreds or thousands of enlightened graduates, researchers and partnership managers can have a far greater effect. Learning, teaching and research is, after all, the core function of the institutions.

Figure 11: Score variation across the priority areas

INSTITUTION TYPES

Within these average scores across priority areas, we see significant variations across institution types. Although the dataset is small at only five institutions, the large research universities that have participated are showing excellent performance, particularly within Partnership & Engagement and Learning, Teaching & Research (Figure 12). Whilst this might be expected due to the larger resources at their disposal, the extent of this variation is very significant.

The news is not all bad for smaller institutions. Both colleges and small teaching universities indicate a higher than average score within the Leadership & Governance priority area (Figure 13). Perhaps the smaller, more directly connected leadership teams within these institutions are more nimble and able to respond to emerging issues on a shorter timescale than those at larger, more complex institutions.

Figure 12: Large research institutions outperforming sector averages in some areas
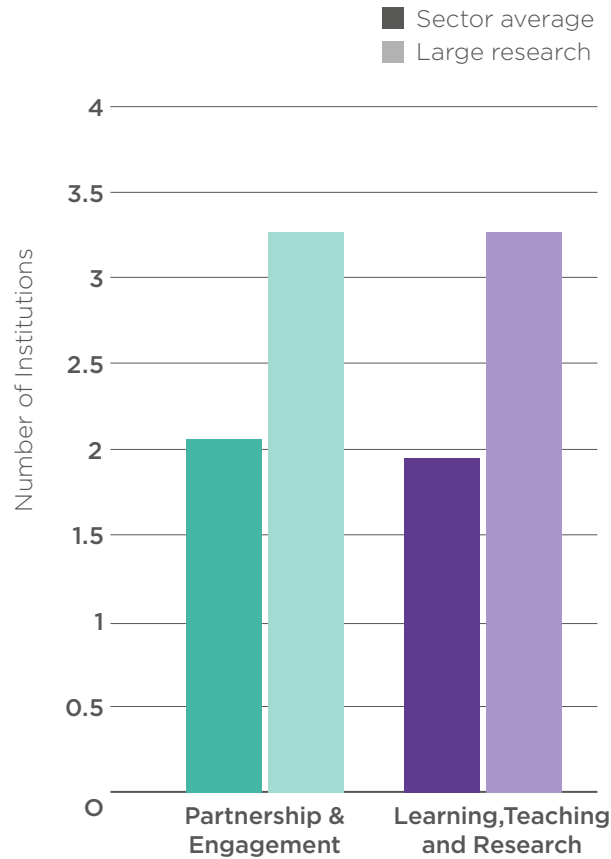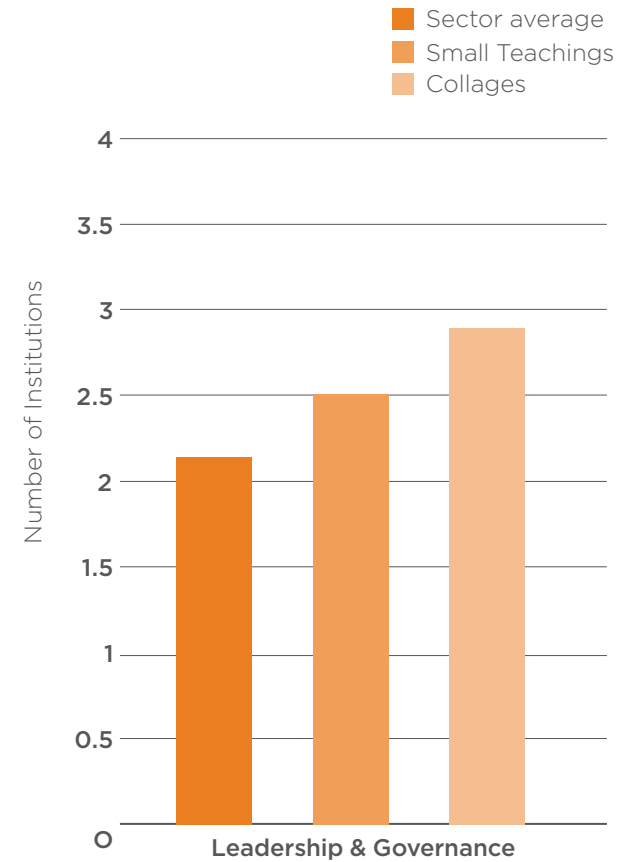

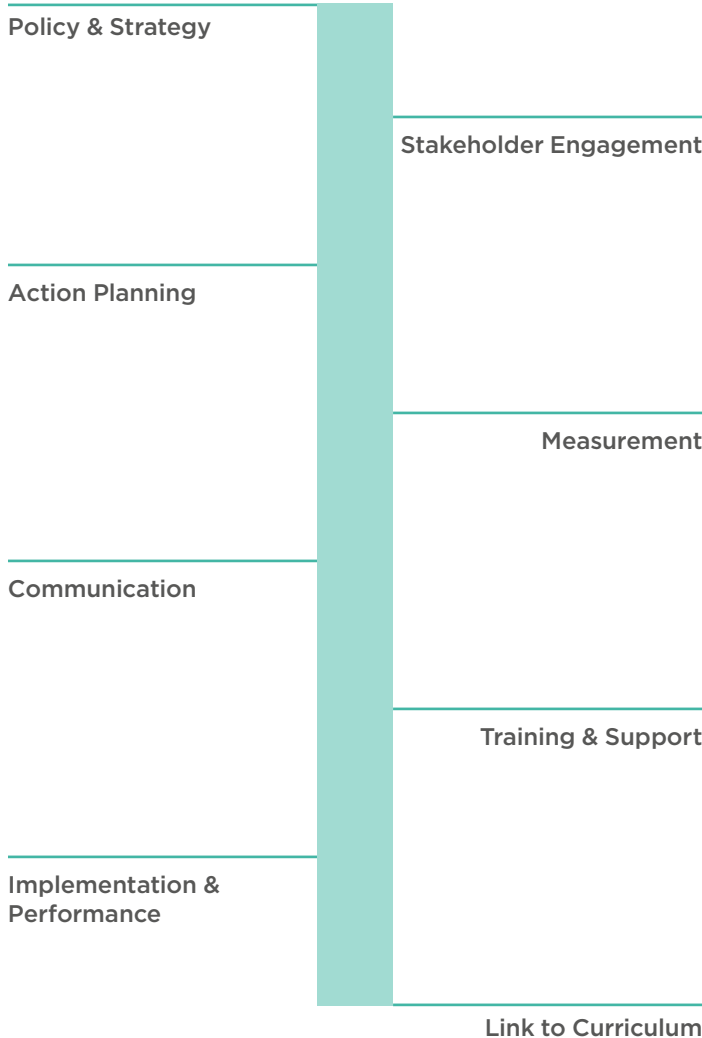**Figure 13:** Smaller institutions showing strength in leadership areas

4.2 ACTIVITIES

Within each of the frameworks of the SLS, institutions appraise themselves against the same eight activities. The activities are not designed to be strictly linear but there is a logical flow that institutions might follow approximately (Figure 14).

Looking at these activities across the frameworks gives an understanding of the maturity of the progress from initially setting policies to realising improved performance and effective links to the curriculum being taught.

Figure 14: Activity Flow

Policy & Strategy

Stakeholder Engagement

Action Planning

Measurement

Communication

Training & Support

Implementation & Performance

Link to Curriculum

As can be seen (Figure 15), institutions are scoring slightly higher in the first three activities which could be argued to constitute the inception stage of an activity.

What is more evident, though, is the relative lack of progress that is being made in linking sustainability activities into the curriculum. The score descriptions tell us that, on average, issues are only embedded into some parts of the curriculum (either formally or informally) but that there is no coordinated approach to this element.

Given that this is one of the ways teaching institutions can have a significant impact on the skills and outlook of a massive annual cohort of leavers, surely this should be a priority going forwards.

Figure 15: Average scores and targets for each activity

Average Score or Target

[ ] South Devon College

What was pivotal in you securing senior management authorisation to use the Sustainability Leadership Scorecard (SLS)?

At South Devon College, we do consider ourselves to be amongst the leaders in the FE sector and the introduction of the SLS with our re-launch of our Sustainability group was timely. Our Senior Leadership Team are keen to ensure that this is embedded into both everyday teaching and learning, as well as our professional services. The SDG link up and cross reference is excellent. It is important to have clear goals and as they are pictorial, colourful and recognised worldwide this gave us a key focus and something that we could easily relate to our learners and colleagues with.

What was your approach to completing the Sustainability Leadership Scorecard?

As we don't have the infrastructure or resource that many larger organisations have, the Head of Catering and Retail Services, who is also the sustainability lead, was the overall owner & lead. They consulted with various department heads; Procurement/HR/Property Services/Curriculum to obtain the information which is an example of how inclusive the SLS is.

Did you encourage colleagues from other Departments to participate and help you with the Sustainability Leadership Scorecard?

The starting point with each one is the policy. If you don't have a policy, your starting point is at the first level. This then provides a clear gap, from where we are now and where we aspire to be. This was positive and a great point to start.

What are the 3 top benefits of using the Sustainability Leadership Scorecard?

1. Bringing all areas of the College together for the same reason, sustainability. This highlighted how sustainability touches all areas of the organisation & reiterated the importance of us all working together to make a difference.

2. The "at a glance" dashboard is very easy to read and compare against. The scores/links to the SDG's that sit behind this were easy to use and access to flip between the two.

3. The Policies. To ensure you score well, you need to have a policy that includes the sustainability objectives. This is a fantastic way of ensuring organisations have these policies in place or include the sustainability agenda items.

5 TOOLS MAPPING

The SLS includes the ability for institutions to identify other tools and methodologies relating to sustainability issues that they are already using. This feature is well-used (with 35 of the participating institutions mapping at least one tool), highlighting the need for a coordinated response to sustainability measurement and reporting.

Based on which tools are selected, SLS scores are suggested for frameworks and activities that are within the scope of the external tools. The most popular of these external tools are BREEAM (with 64% of participating institutions using) and ISO14001 (60%) which is perhaps not surprising given how ubiquitous they are in many sectors (Figure 16).

At the other end of the scale, the least frequently referenced tool is ISO26001 which examines an organisation's approach to social responsibility. Given the increased attention on this issue, it will be interesting to see if engagement with this tool increases over time.

Figure 16: No. Times external tools are linked to SLS
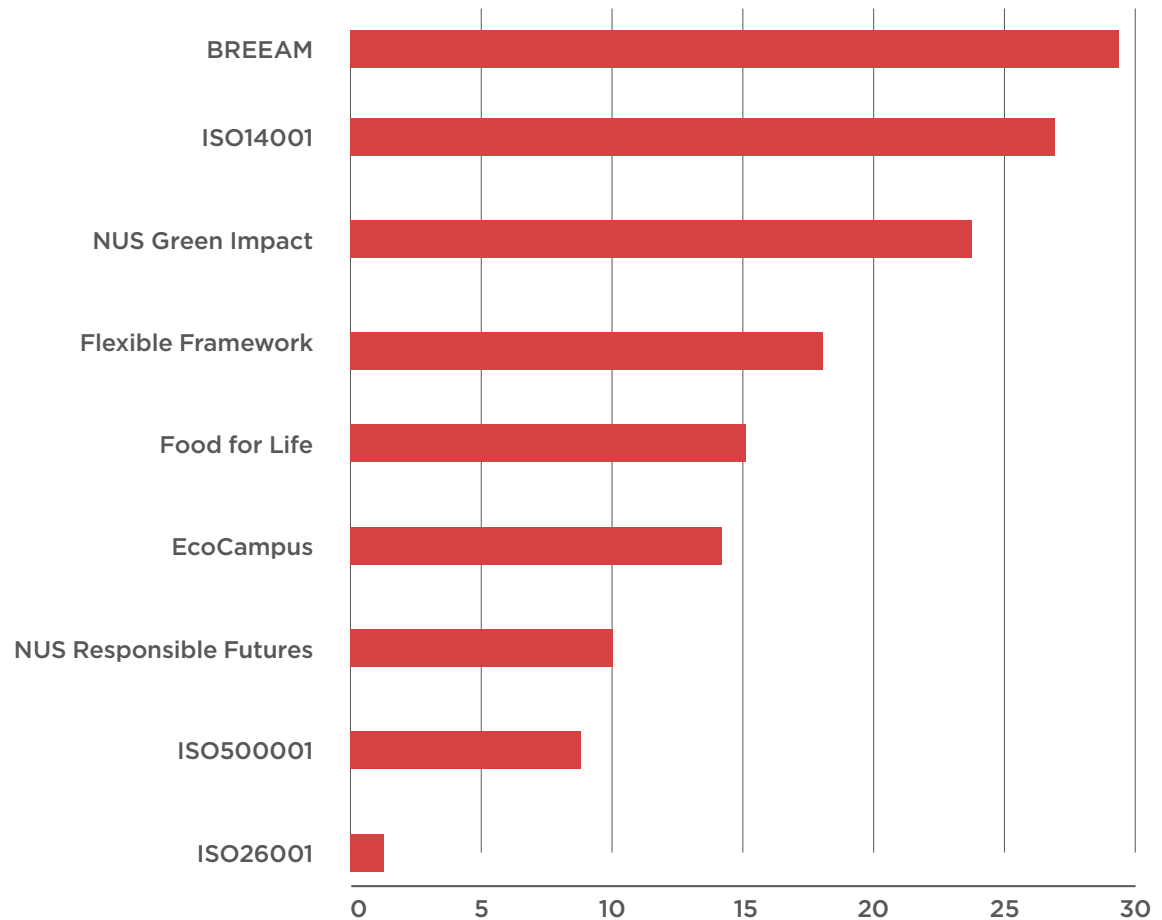
UNIVERSITY OF
LINCOLN

What was pivotal in you securing senior management authorisation to use the Sustainability Leadership Scorecard (SLS)?

Rather than taking this to Senior Management before trialling the SLS, the Environment Manager completed a first draft of the SLS over the course of around 2 months, working with representatives from a number of departments within the University. After having completed the SLS, we then took the results to our Environment and Sustainability Committee and presented the diagrammatic format of the results and talked through the areas of the organisation that had been shown as being stronger/weaker. This was well received and the visual representation has been particularly helpful when giving updates to management on our progress.

What was your approach to completing the Sustainability Leadership Scorecard?

The approach was led by the Environment Manager as 'owner'. I was able to complete a few of the sections myself, using knowledge and information already gathered by the environment team. Rather than complete the whole SLS independently however, I reached out to colleagues and requested their support for those sections where the Environment Team was not the lead, e.g. procurement, resilience, teaching and learning.

Did you encourage colleagues from other Departments to participate and help you with the Sustainability Leadership Scorecard?

For most of the sections, further stakeholder engagement was required so I reached out to colleagues across the institutions and asked them for a meeting to discuss the SLS and integrate their expertise. These were fairly short semi-structured conversations – outlining the SLS and what we were hoping to achieve by using it (an overview of the extent to which sustainability was embedded across the organisation) and asked for their help.

For example, I met with the Engagement and Wellbeing manager, based in HR, to talk about health and wellbeing activities offered by the University. She was interested to draw the link between the work that team does and how this contributed to overall sustainability outputs; so the semi-structured nature of the conversation, based round the questions on the scorecard helped to facilitate a different kind of conversation around sustainability-related engagement.

I also met with others such as those in the Planning department around Corporate Risk and how Climate Adaptation was incorporated into strategic planning. This again resulted in some further follow up conversations about climate adaptation and flood risk remediation, for example.

What are the 3 top benefits of using the Sustainability Leadership Scorecard?

1. Helpful visual summary of the areas of our organisation that have more successfully embedded sustainability

2. Highlighting the areas where more focus is needed to truly embed sustainability, which will prompt targeted engagement with particular departments and stakeholders

3. Ability to benchmark with other organisations and seek support from a third party when required.
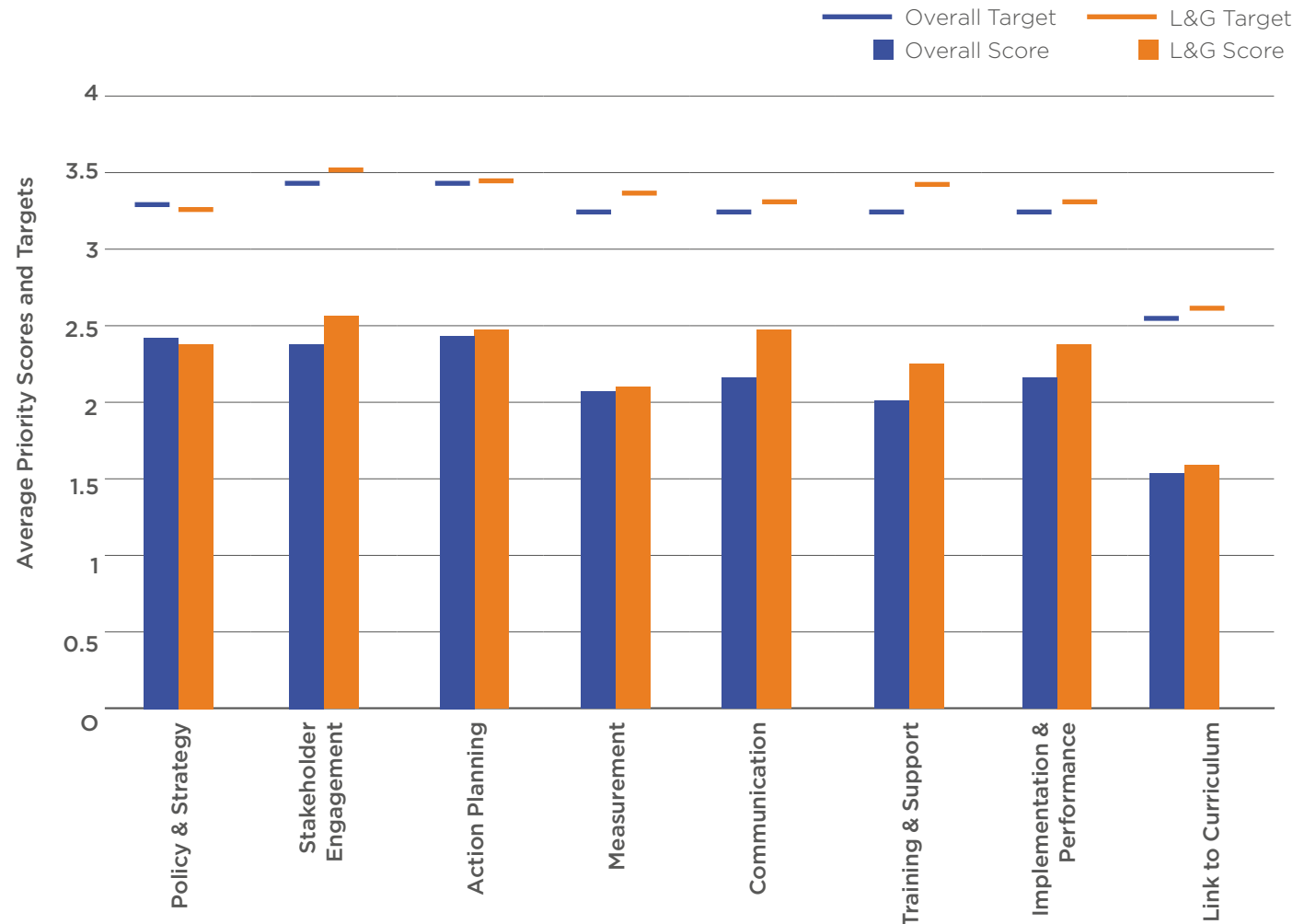
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6 PRIORITY AREAS

6.1 LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

Overall, the Leadership & Governance priority area has higher scores than average. This is reflected in the higher proportion of institutions achieving a Gold rating (Figure 18, following page). However, it is evident that this effect is not seen across all activity areas. Those activities aimed at engagement, communication and support are very strong. Perhaps this is not unexpected as these activities are critical for effective Leadership and Governance.

The only area where this priority area is lower than average (albeit only slightly) is Policy & Strategy, suggesting that a clearer direction needs to be set by leadership teams with high-level strategies.
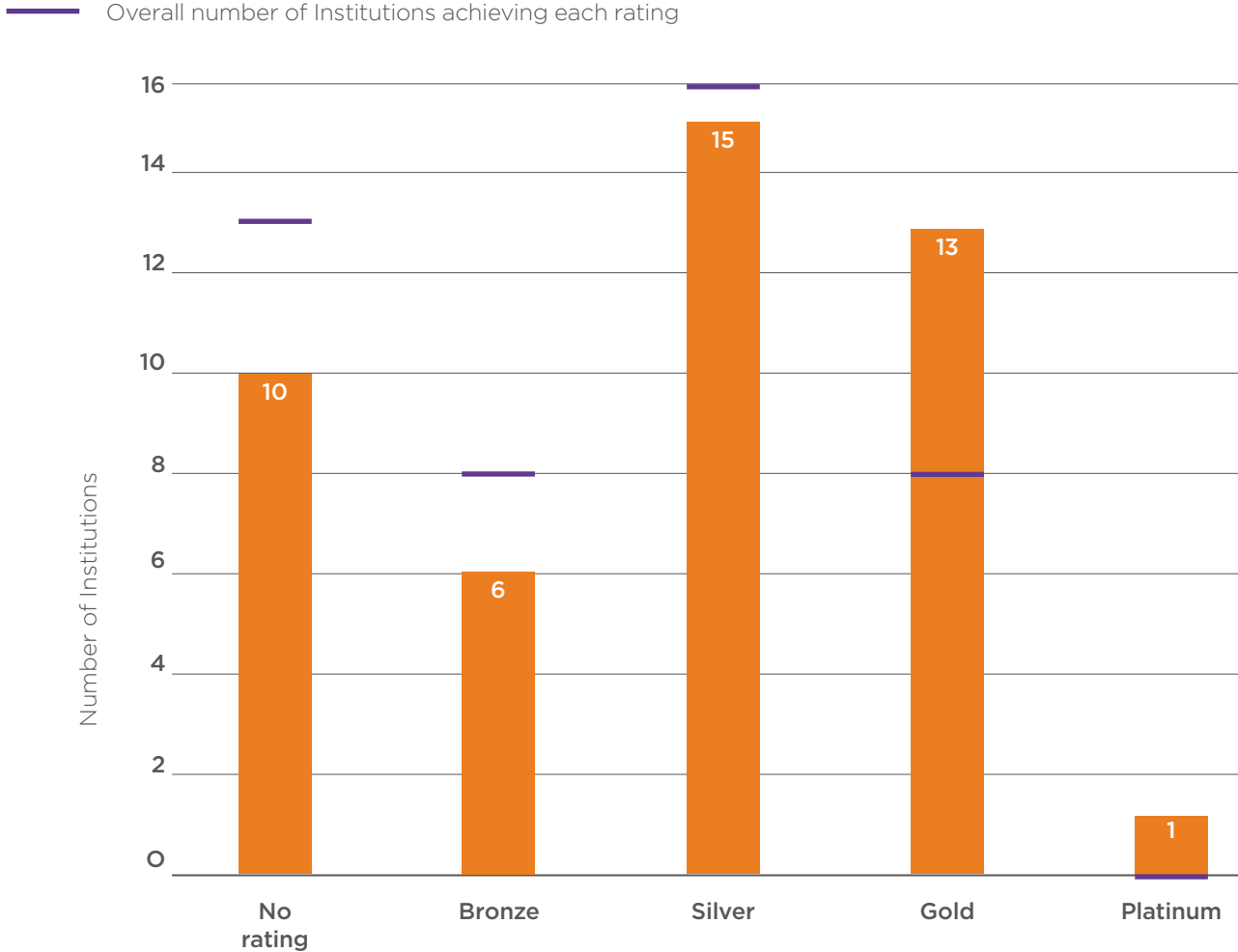
Figure 17: Comparison of Leadership & Governance scores with overall averages

Overall, the Leadership & Governance priority area has higher scores than average. This is reflected in the higher proportion of institutions achieving a Gold rating.

Figure 18: No. Institutions achieving ratings in L&G (bars show overall data)

—— Overall number of Institutions achieving each rating

Leadership and Governance

Leadership | Staff Engagement and Human Resources | Health and Wellbeing | Risk

FRAMEWORKS

Of the frameworks within the Leadership & Governance priority area, Risk is scoring particularly low on average (Figure 19). The Risk framework includes the issues of responsible investment and divestment from organisations whose operations or activities are not commensurate with sustainable development principles. The lower scores are almost across-the-board in activity areas, implying that almost all areas require improvement on this topic. Correspondingly, other research shows that over half of UK universities have no commitment to divest from fossil fuels[5].

ACTIVITIES

Within the frameworks in this priority area there are some interesting patterns. Some individual areas of strength are apparent such as:

- Strong Training & Implementation within both Staff Engagement and Wellbeing

- Unusually weak scores for Communication in Wellbeing.

Within the low-scoring Risk area, the two activities where the discrepancy between Risk and the other frameworks in the priority area are most clear are around Action Planning and Implementation & Performance. This suggests that, whilst these issues are being considered to some degree (such as the commitments to divest previously mentioned), they have yet to reach the stage where concerted action is being addressed.

**Figure 19:** Frameworks within Leadership & Governance
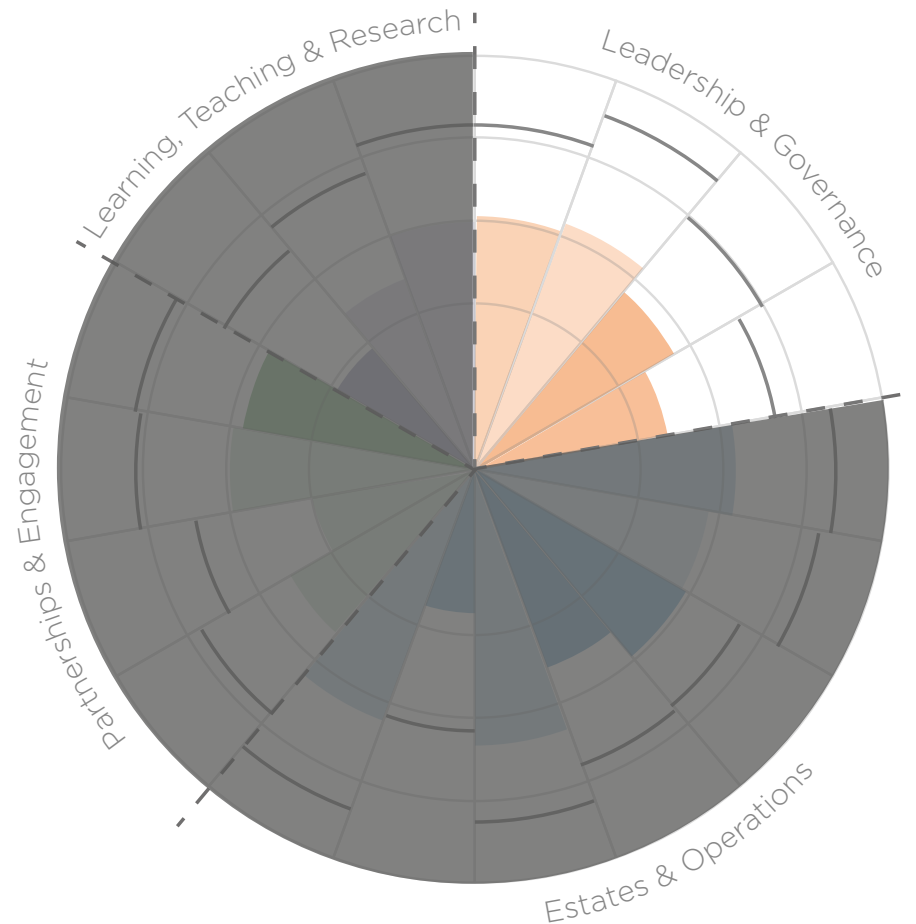
6.2 PARTNERSHIP AND ENGAGEMENT

Partnership and Engagement scores are just a little below average, with the Measurement activity that shows the greatest discrepancy with other frameworks. This is understandable given the difficulty of robustly measuring the effectiveness of engagement.

The score of just under two represents that institutions are, on average, formally monitoring many impacts and benefits of Partnership & Engagement activities. However, it implies that the next step has not been made by many. To increase their score to the next level, an institution would need to be comfortable they're measuring all the main impacts and are using the findings from this monitoring to alter and improve practices and policies with clear feedback loops.

Figure 20: Comparison of Partnership & Engagement scores with overall averages
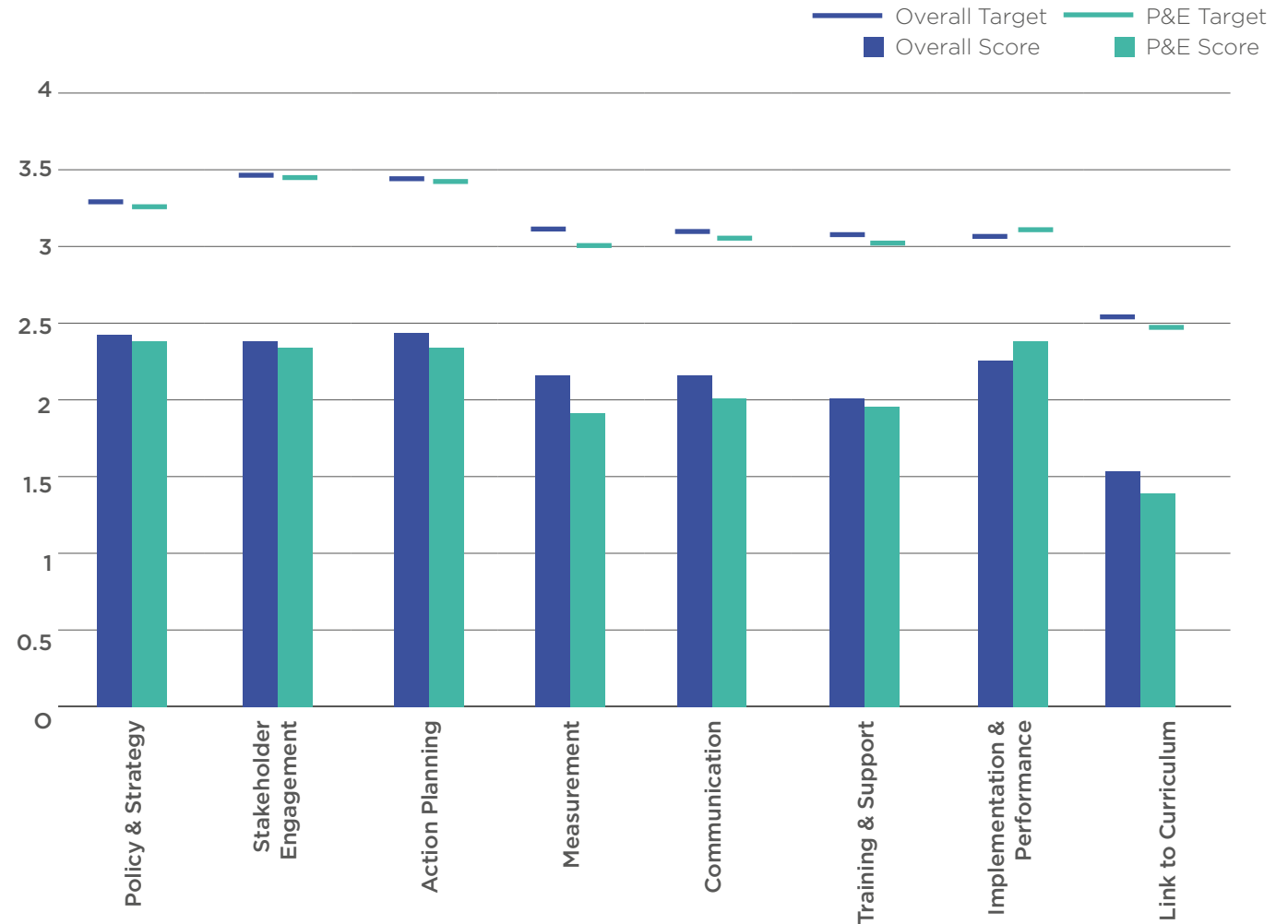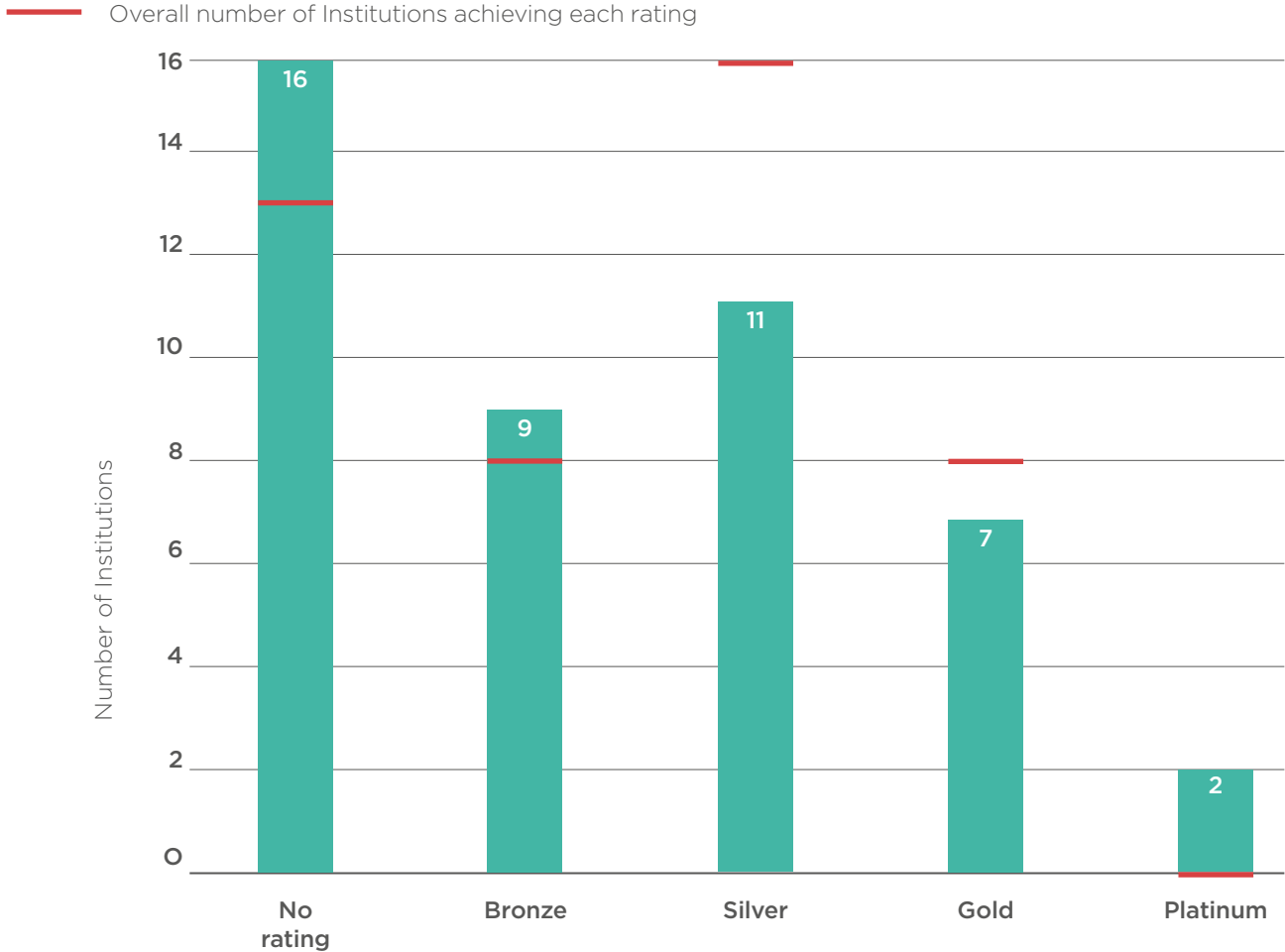

27

Partnership and Engagement

Community & Public Engagement | Business & Industry Interface | Procurement & Supplier Engagement | Food & Drink

The fact that two institutions are managing to achieve a Platinum rating in this priority area shows that it is possible (Figure 21).

**Figure 21:** No. Institutions achieving ratings in P&E (bars show overall data)

— Overall number of Institutions achieving each rating

FRAMEWORKS

Within Partnership and Engagement, it is clear that the framework for Business and Industry Interface is lagging behind the others (Figure 22). This is of concern as it is an area where institutions have not only a significant opportunity to influence issues outside the confines of the own institution but also in terms of aspects of employability. Whether this is indicative of institutions' activities not responding to the needs of business and industry is not clear but the implications of this would be so large as to warrant further investigation by institutions.

**Figure 22:** Frameworks within Partnership & Engagement
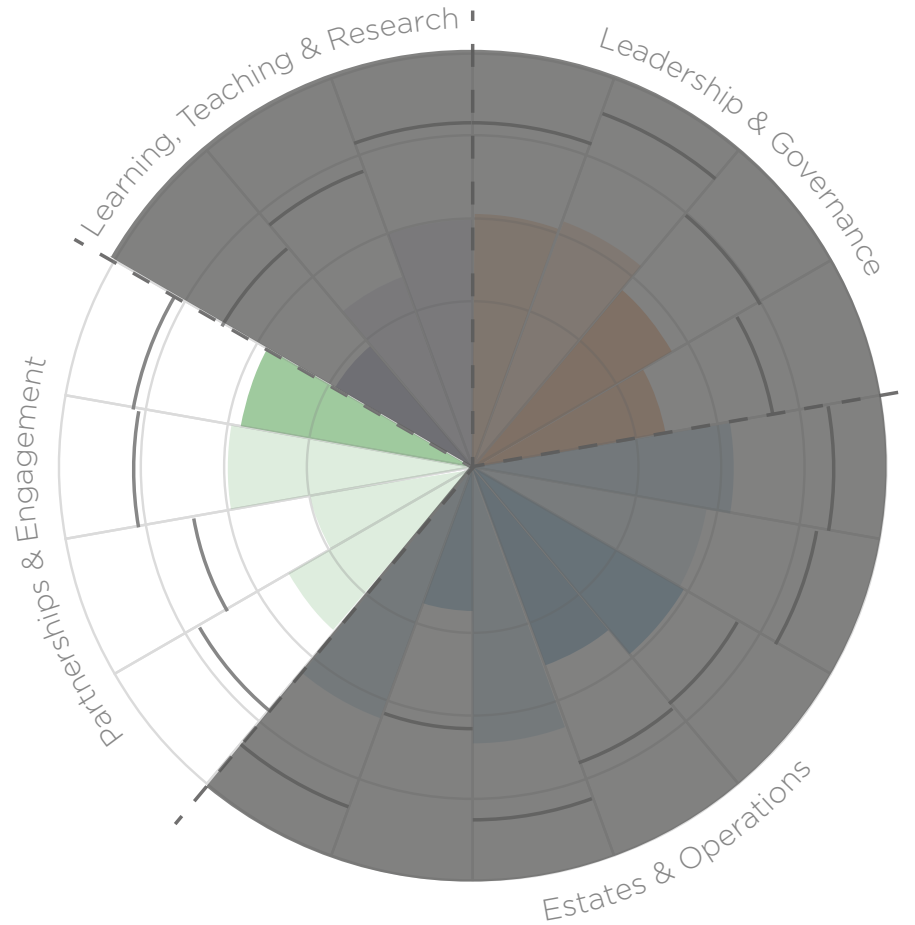
ACTIVITIES

An interesting trend exists in this priority area between what could be considered different types of engagement. Two frameworks relate to engagement that could be considered very *collaborative* and with a wide stakeholder base - Community & Public Engagement and Business & Industry Interface. In comparison, the other two frameworks (Procurement & Supplier Engagement and Food & Drink) could be considered more controllable with a smaller stakeholder base with a direct *contractual* relationship with the institution.

Instinctively, the more *contractual* type of engagement might be expected to be stronger in implementation due to its controllability

However, the *contractual* type is much stronger in the activities that could be considered to be at the start of the process (from Policy & Strategy to Community). Conversely, the frameworks relating to more *collaborative* engagement are relatively stronger in the later stages - Implementation & Performance and Links to the Curriculum (Figure 23).

Figure 23: Difference between scores of different engagement types

Learning, Teaching & Research
Learning & Teaching | Research | Student Engagement
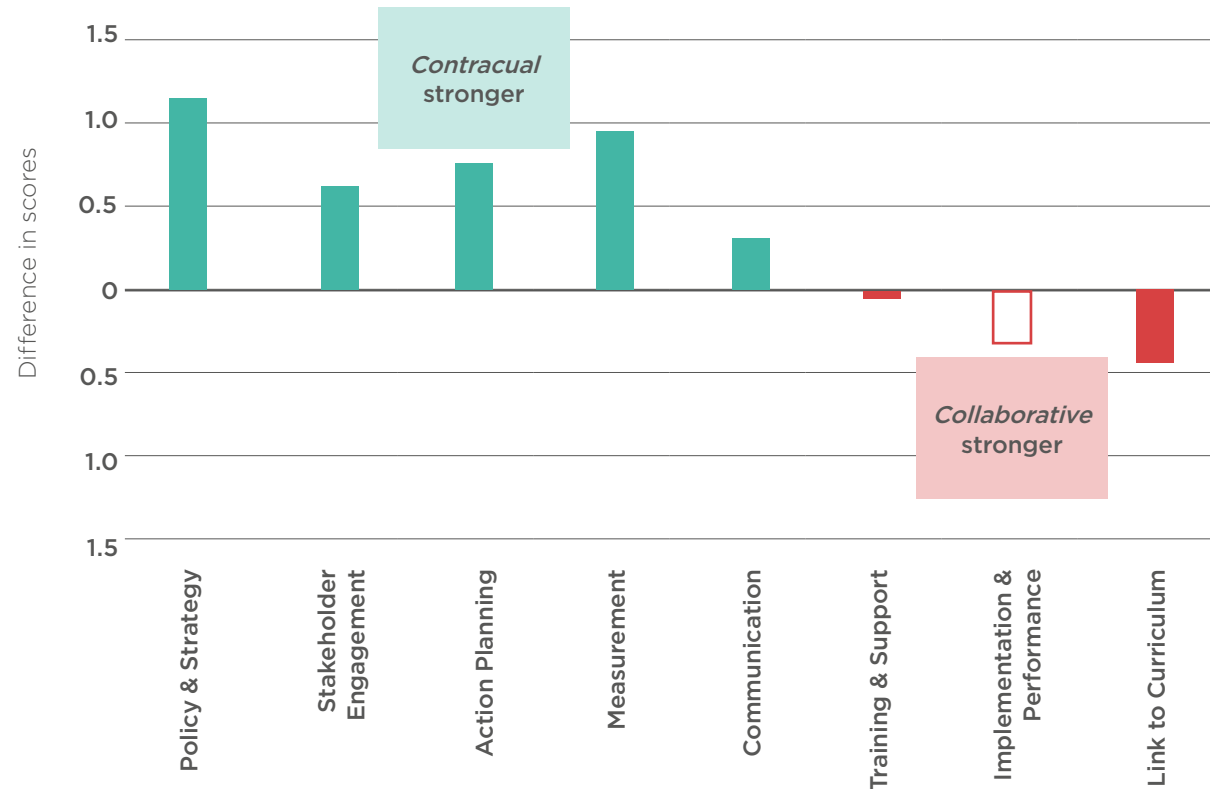
6.3 LEARNING, TEACHING AND RESEARCH

OVERALL

Learning, Teaching and Research is the priority area where institutions have scored themselves lowest. Policy & Strategy and Training & Support are particularly behind the curve. Unsurprisingly, though, this is an area where the Link to the Curriculum is particularly well developed. Implementation & Performance is also a framework which out-performs.

Figure 24: Comparison of Learning, Teaching & Research scores with overall averages

Learning, Teaching & Research

Learning & Teaching | Research | Student Engagement
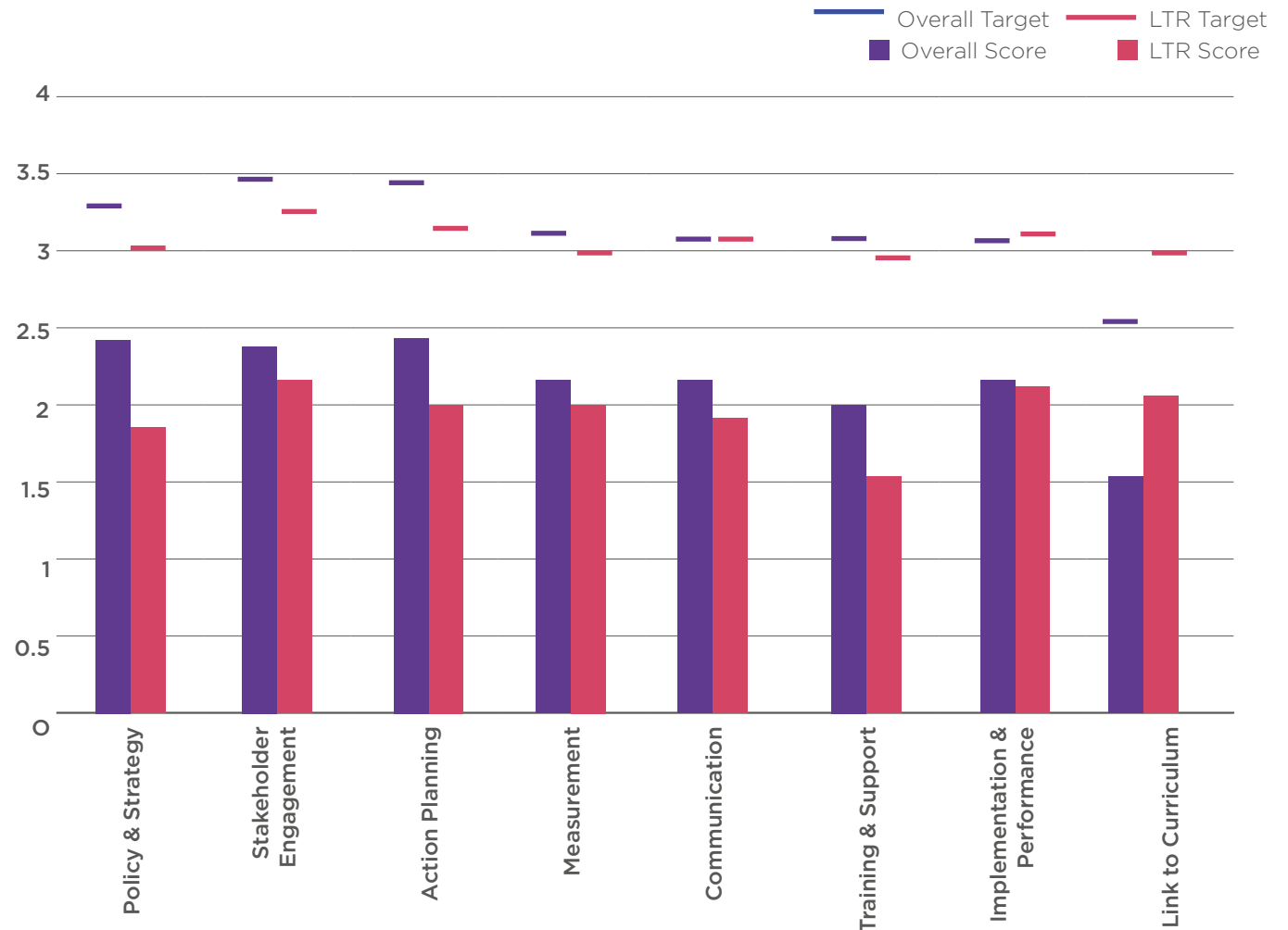
The distribution of ratings within this priority area (Figure 25) interestingly show that many fewer institutions are achieving a middle-ground rating of Silver. Instead, they are polarised into lower and higher ratings.

Figure 25: No. Institutions achieving ratings in LTR (bars show overall data)

━━━ Overall number of Institutions achieving each rating

Learning, Teaching & Research

Learning & Teaching | Research | Student Engagement
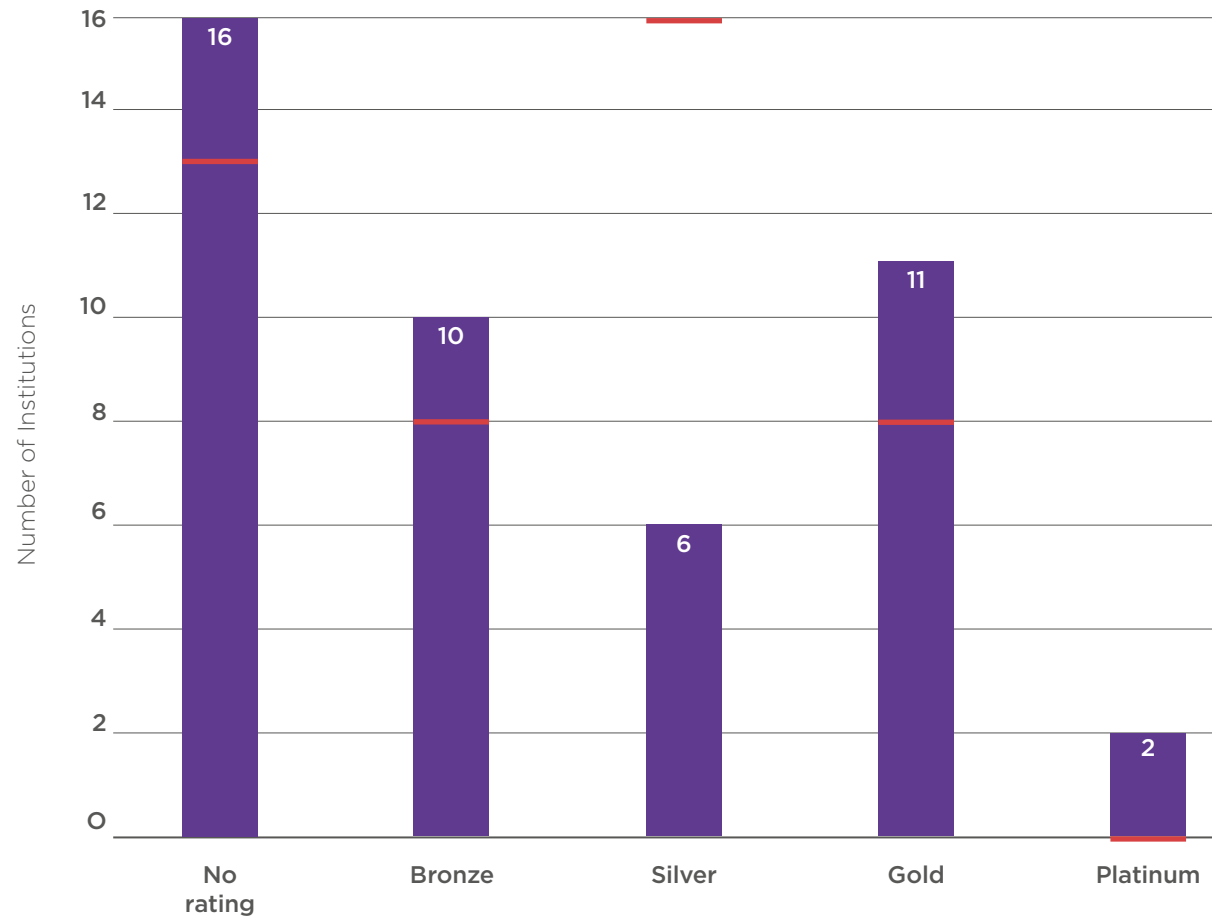
FRAMEWORKS

The range of scores and targets seen within the Learning, Teaching and Research priority area is not unusual compared with the others. However, it has the most stretching targets – perhaps indicating it is an area the sector is focussing on.

The priority area also contains the framework with the highest aspiration[6], that of Research (Figure 26). This implies it is now a priority for institutions and they are becoming more ambitious in this area.

It is also worth noting that Student Engagement is also particularly high – reflecting the fact that this is an area that has seen significant progress in recent years since changes to funding models have occurred.

Figure 26: Frameworks within Learning, Teaching & Research
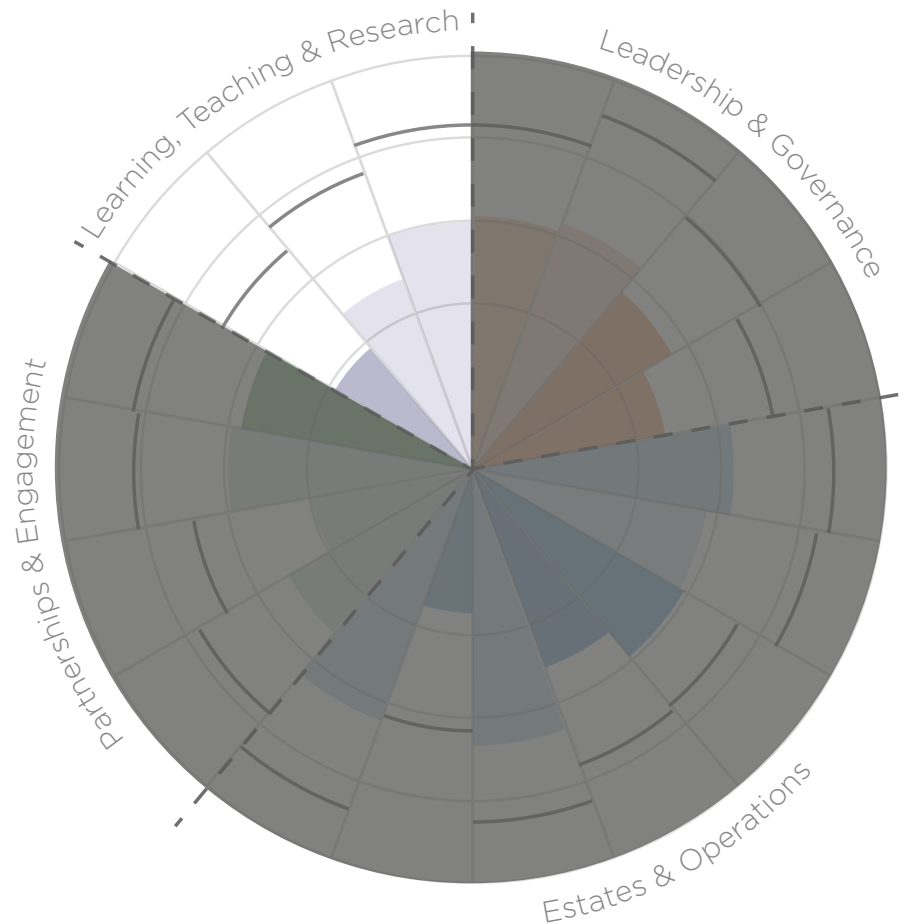
6 Measured as the difference between current score and target, not the level of the target

ACTIVITIES

In some cases, the SLS shows stark differences in indicators that might be considered very similar. An example of this exists within the Learning, Teaching & Research priority area.

It might be expected that institutions would be equally strong in Stakeholder Engagement with each of their teaching and research communities, even if the differing audiences for the engagement may not be approached in the same way or even as part of the same process.

However, the data shows that institutions are engaging with their teaching population with much greater thoroughness than their research community (Figure 27). Whatever the reason for this variation, there is a clear need for increased or more effective engagement with research staff.

Figure 27: Differences in engagement
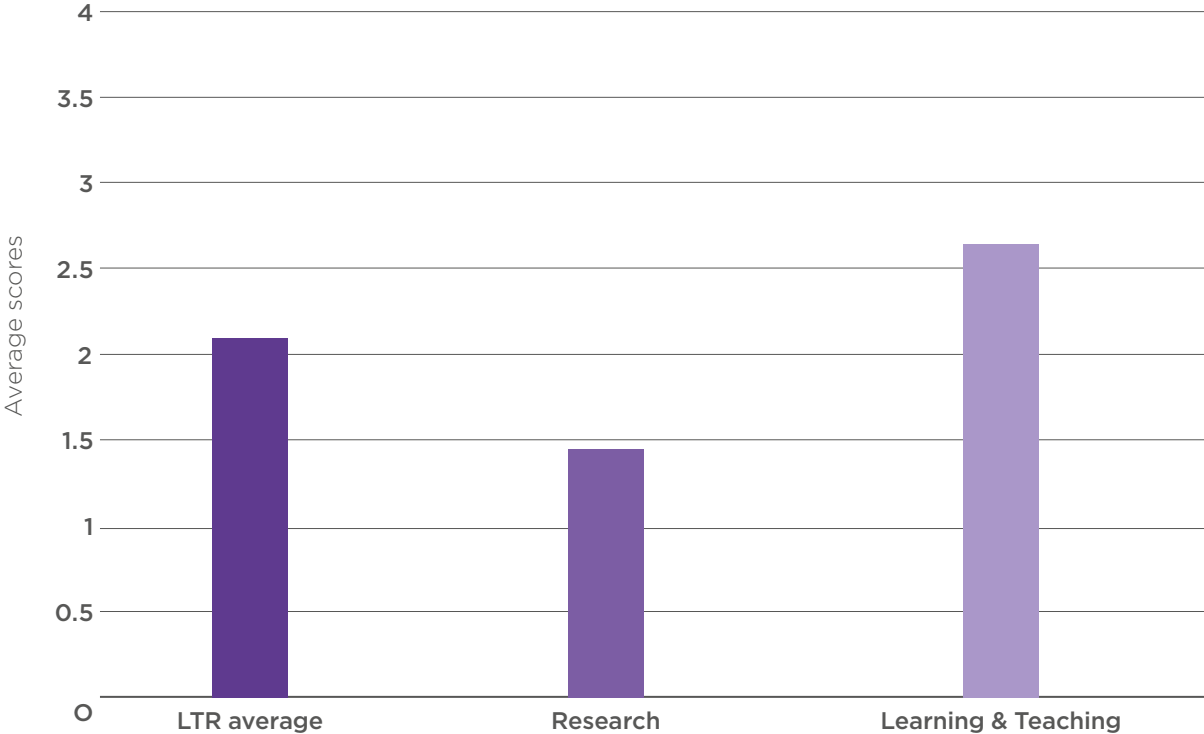
What was pivotal in you securing senior management authorisation to use the Sustainability Leadership Scorecard (SLS)?

Bridgend College is a signatory to the SDG Accord and we know and accept that we have a collective responsibility and moral obligation to act positively to tackle some of the biggest threats we all face as a global community, set against a backdrop of geopolitical and geo-economic tensions as well as local challenges too.

Securing approval from senior management was relatively straight forward as we recognised the SLS as being a valuable tool in helping us voluntarily develop broader and deeper level thinking and promote further discussion and debate on a range of issues. The SLS was seen as a great way to encourage others to engage in sustainability issues and the role and responsibility we all have in helping the organisation focus on those areas of priority and those areas which offer the greatest positive impact.

In addition, the benefit of the SLS was seen as something which helps us knit together objectives and align with the SDG's particularly as the tool offered flexibility in this application. There are curriculum benefits too as the results and links to the SDG's can be taken into the classroom environment; this was seen as a positive benefit of the tool.

The SLS is seen as a tool to support our sustainable development strategy. The results of the scoring exercise may now find their way into our strategy as additional objectives and targets. There is of course much further discussion to be had following the scoring exercise but this is both positive and forward-looking and, is reflective of our organisational culture.

In terms of both our purpose and our legacy this places a huge burden of responsibility on the shoulders of our college leaders but this aligns with our ambition to be an extraordinary organisation and we are not afraid to ask some of the tough questions - the 'killer questions', as part of a business growth mindset

What was your approach to completing the Sustainability Leadership Scorecard?

The approach we took was for one person to lead on working collaboratively with others through initial structured meetings which introduced the SLS via formal presentation and discussion. Once the group had agreed to authorise use of the SLS, individuals within the group were then able to take time by themselves to engage more fully with the questions, liaising with other staff if they wished and generate scores and a brief narrative. Those people supporting this process included the Vice Principal for Resources, Facilities Manager, Health/ Safety and Sustainable Development Manager, Director of People, Director of FE, Finance Manager, Director of Work Based Learning and the Director of Funding, Registry and Financial Services.

What are the 3 top benefits of using the Sustainability Leadership Scorecard?

1. Simplicity in design and use

2. Encourages deeper level thinking and promotes discussion and debate

3. Focuses on priority areas and areas of greatest impact

6.4 ESTATES AND OPERATIONS

OVERALL

The comparison with the average performance of institutions for Estates & Operations scores implies that this is an area where policies and action plans are particularly well developed but that they are not necessarily effectively translating into performance. The Link to the Curriculum is also weaker than other areas which is surprising. The issues within Estates & Operations are relatively well defined in scope (biodiversity and travel for example) which should be relatively easily transferred into the curriculum. The results coming out of the tool imply that the benefit of these potential linkages are not being maximised. For example, institutions using Living Lab models[7] would benefit from greater engagement between Estates and Operations activities to learning and curriculum.

Figure 28: Comparison of Estate & Operations scores with overall averages
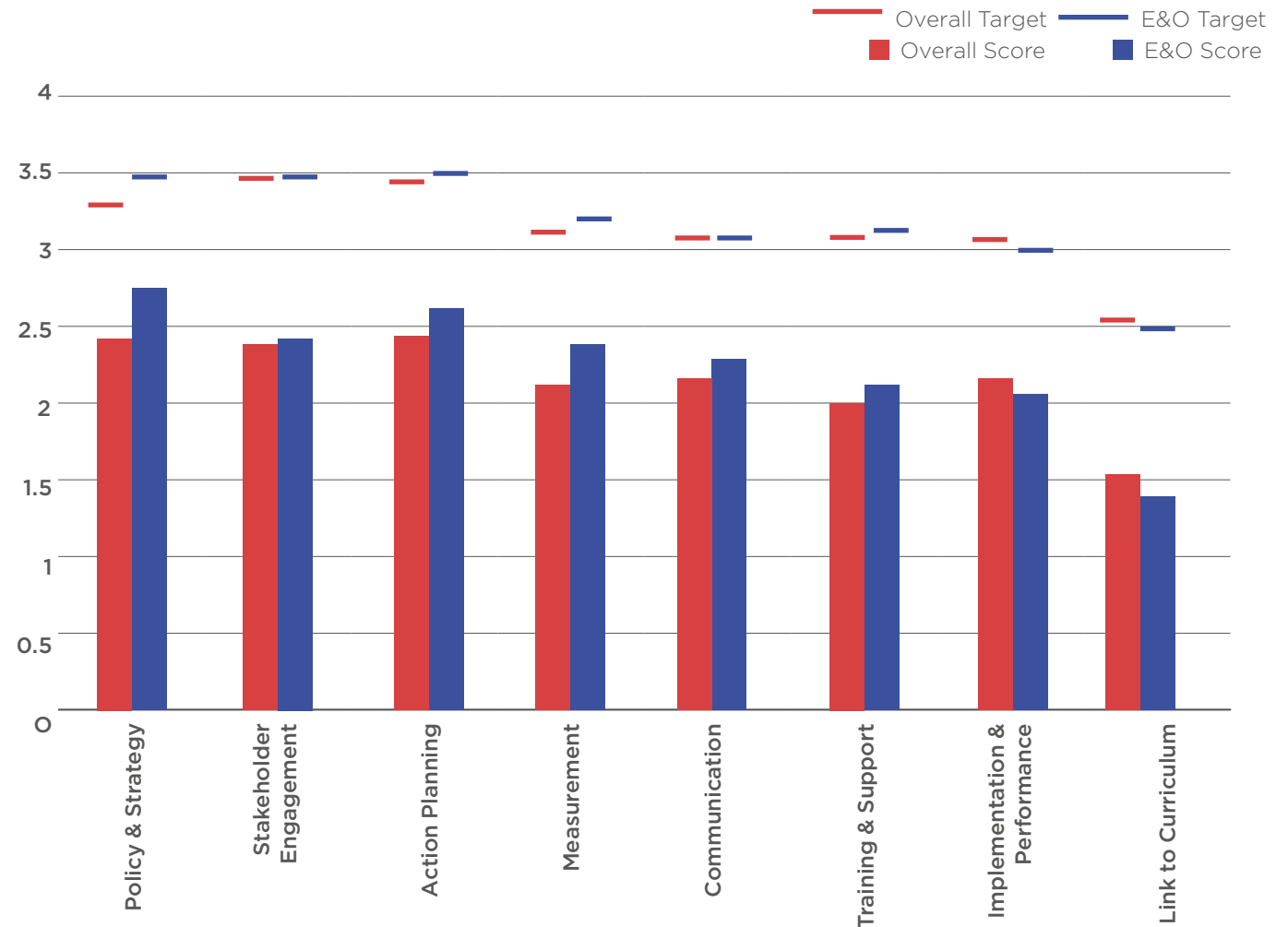
7 https://www.eauc.org.uk/living_labs_programme

No institutions achieved a Platinum rating for this priority area, perhaps showing the difficulty in achieving very high scores across all seven frameworks (Figure 29). However, many more achieved a Gold rating than did in the tool overall showing that a good number are working at a high level in this field.

Figure 29: No. Institutions achieving ratings in E&O (bars show overall data)

— Overall number of Institutions achieving each rating
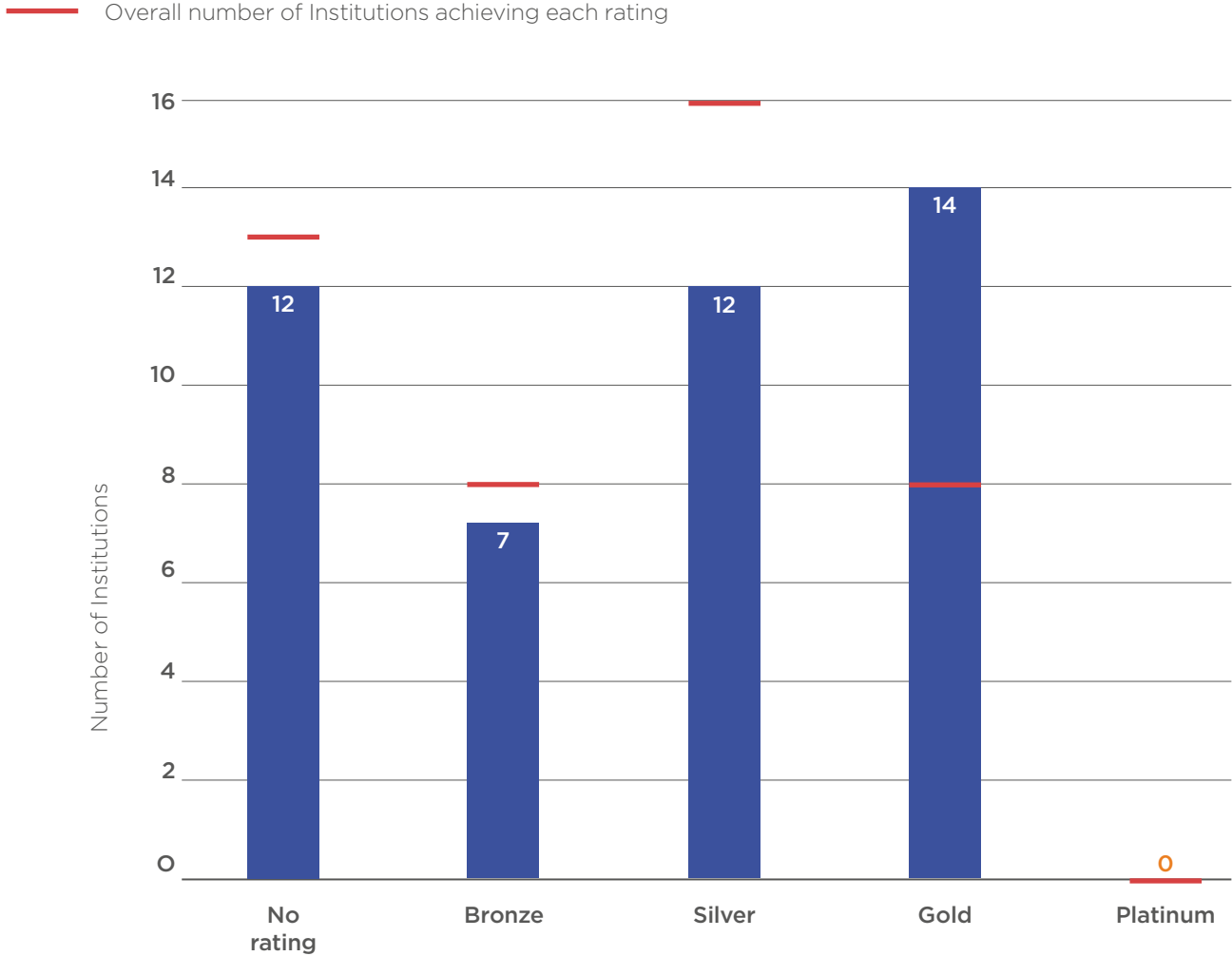
FRAMEWORKS

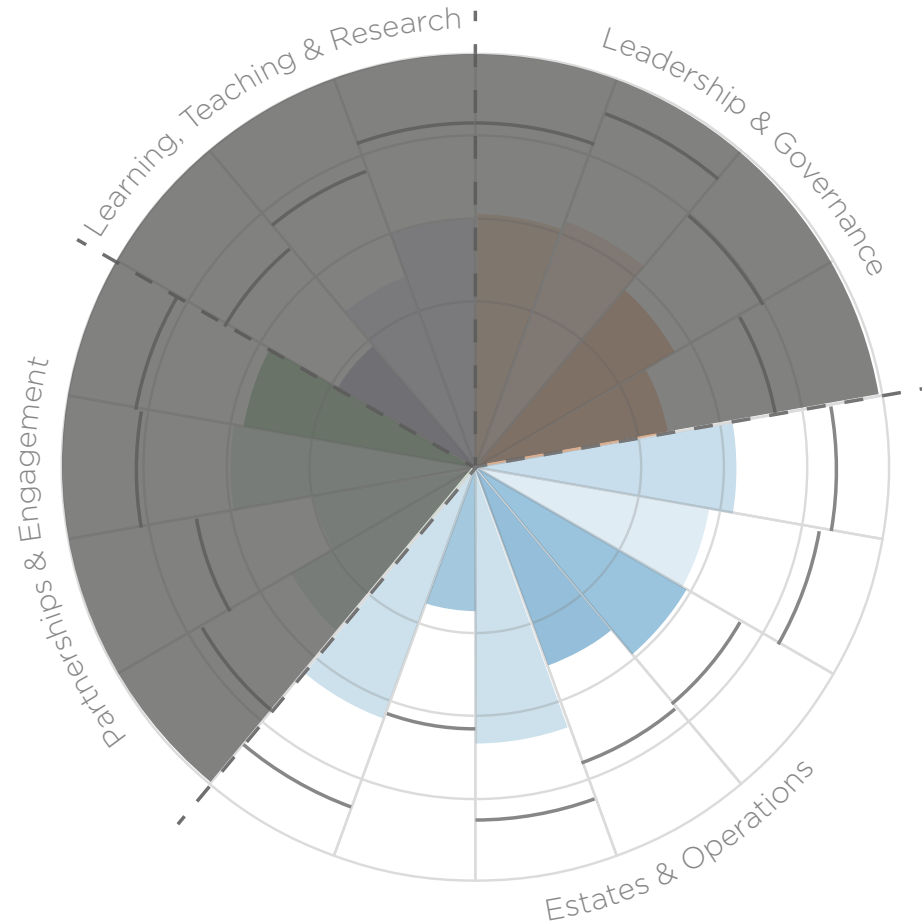The Estates and Operations priority area contains the framework that scores the lowest overall across the entire SLS. Climate Change Adaptation scored less than 1.4 on average, indicating that it is an issue with which institutions are yet to engage. It also has the lowest target score of all frameworks (Figure 30).

This repeats similar patterns from the very first Sector Trends report of the Green Scorecard from August 2016 where Adaptation had the lowest score but the highest distance to the target. This is a significant risk to the sector as it continues to be ignored by institutions as a priority.

What is surprising is that this lack of attention on climate adaptation is usually seen in sectors where owners hold buildings for shorter timescales such as the commercial office sector. Further and Higher Education institutions have some of the most long-term owner-occupation in any sector. Most can trace their history and some of their buildings back decades and, in some cases, centuries. Within this context it is almost inconceivable that they will not be in existence in the one or two decades within which changing weather patterns due to climate change are set to alter many aspects of life.

Perhaps this talk of impact in decades' time makes estates and leadership teams think that it is not a problem that needs urgent attention. Firstly, whilst the worst effects of climate change may be in the future, we are already seeing effects now in the form of higher temperatures and more volatile rainfall patterns. Also, by considering instead these seemingly long timescales in the context of major building refurbishment or infrastructure upgrade cycles, we can draw attention to the fact that almost every major project underway or being planned now represents the last opportunity for significant improvement before the effects of climate change hit with a vengeance and that some projects may not be future-fit.

**Figure 30:** Frameworks within Estates & Operations

ACTIVITIES

Within the Estates and Operations priority area we see the framework that has the lowest level of aspiration. The difference between the score and target for Construction and Renovation is only 0.66.

This is not because the score is exceptionally high in which case there would not be as much room for improvement – the score is quite average. Indeed, when comparing frameworks in other priority areas with low aspirations, it scores the lowest (compared with Staff Engagement & HR and Travel & Transport) (Figure 31).

The reasoning behind this can only be guessed at, especially as many sustainability teams are located organisationally within Estates teams that oversee construction and renovation projects. Perhaps there is some linkage with the fact that BREEAM is the most commonly-mapped external tool which gives teams the false impression that they are doing everything they reasonably can to integrate sustainability into their capital programmes. Even when external tools are used, it is still essential actively embed the tools in the relevant processes and engage those who are affected. Tools used in isolation as tick-boxes are unlikely to fulfil their potential in terms of outcomes.

Figure 31: Comparison of three frameworks with low progress expected

■ Score
■ Aspiration (difference between target and current score)
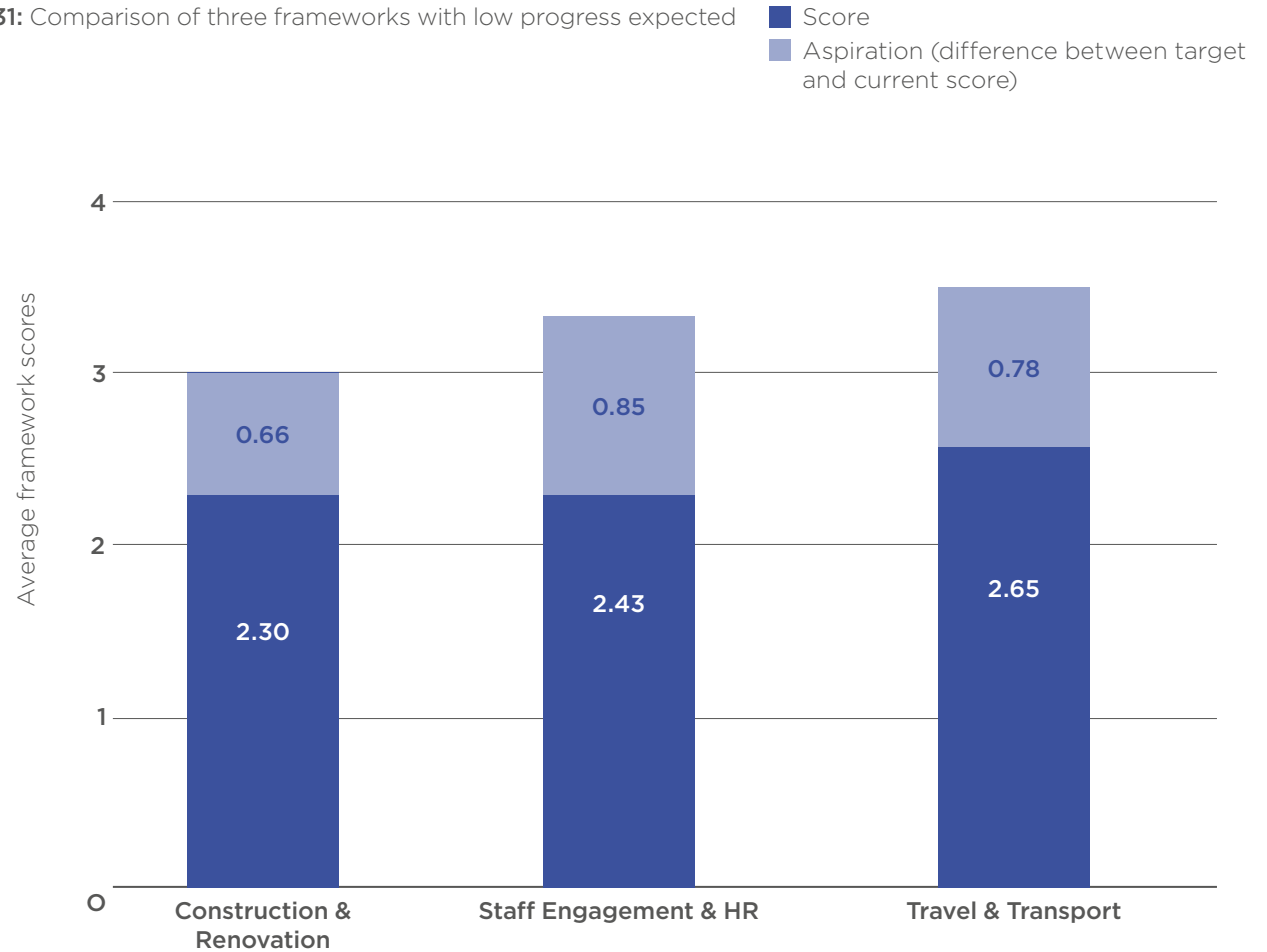
Loughborough University

What was pivotal in you securing senior management authorisation to use the Sustainability Leadership Scorecard (SLS)?

It was a direct continuation from the LiFE index which we had been using for a number of years to report at a strategic level. Our governing group endorsed use of this index as the one we would use over and above others available. At LU the fact that we use it as an inward facing tool is considered more favourable to Senior colleagues than it being a competitive table.

What was your approach to completing the Sustainability Leadership Scorecard?

The Sustainability Manager is the "owner" of the SLS. Leads are assigned for each framework. However, it has become apparent that it is not always appropriate for one lead as some of the Frameworks will cover more than one area or impact. This can take time to establish but for the most part leads have been in place through LiFE and continue with the SLS.

Did you encourage colleagues from other Departments to participate and help you with the Sustainability Leadership Scorecard?

Yes. I think that this is the best way to complete the SLS. It is an excellent tool for dialogue. I set up meetings with key colleagues and would introduce the SLS ahead of the meetings. I would then meet and discuss how the Framework/sustainability may apply/look in their area. We would work through the Framework together adding narrative as we went. In some cases I would extract perhaps only one or two key questions for colleagues and email them if it did not merit a meeting.

I also report the findings/scores annually to our Heads of Professional Services and Academic Leadership Team. The report is also presented to the governing group our Sustainability and Social Responsibility Committee.

What are the 3 top benefits of using the Sustainability Leadership Scorecard?

1. Opportunity for dialogue with colleagues around sustainability and how they might be able to engage better with the agenda

2. Ability to measure areas of success and areas that require further focus/improvement

3. High level strategic reporting and link to SDG's

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7 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

The SLS offers institutions the ability to link frameworks to the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)[8] and to use these linkages to appraise their contribution to the Goals based on their score within the linked frameworks. These potential and actual impacts are given one of five descriptions of impact: none; limited; medium; high; significant.

The tool gives institutions the option to adapt the linkages between the frameworks and the Goals to match their own internal mappings. It is recognised that the wide variety in institutions' activities might lead to differences in relevance of the Goals. However, when looking at the potential impacts we see that most institutions are using the default connections. Eight of the 45 institutions participating altered their linkages and most of these only altered their potential impact by one category either up or down.

Figure 32 shows the actual impacts seen across the SDGs where the scores from the frameworks linked to the SDGs are combined to give an overall impact scores. The circles at different heights show the variation in actual impact. The relationship between the potential impact can also be seen (generally indicated by the highest impact with a circle against each SDG).

Figure 32: Actual SDG impact (no. & circle size indicates no. institutions)
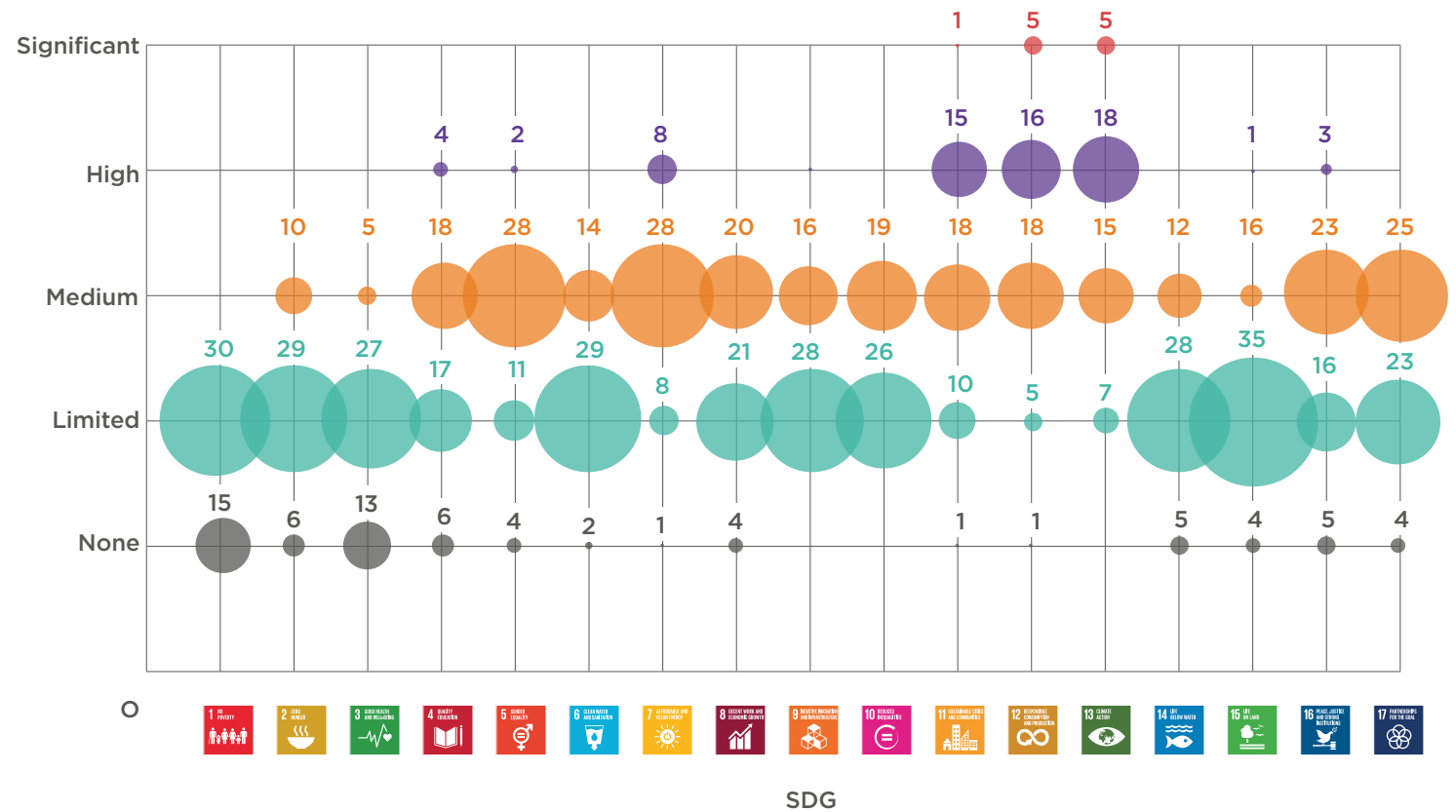
On analysis[9], a number of aspects become clear. For example, the Goals with the highest impacts (nos. 11, 12 & 13) are those that are the more tangible and have generally seen considerable amounts of attention over the past five years or so within institutions (Figure 32 and Figure 33). It is assumed that Goal 13 (Climate Action) is being bolstered by good activity levels on climate change mitigation (i.e. emissions reductions) given the poor performance seen previously on climate change adaptation.

On the positive side, Goals 16 (Peace, justice & strong institutions) and 17 (Partnerships for the Goals) are showing a good impact. These Goals can be difficult for some sectors to engage with, so it is encouraging that the FE and HE sectors are embracing the opportunity their position affords by engaging with partners to promote sustainable development issues.

Less positively, however, it is perturbing to see Goal 4 (Quality education) only being in the middle of the pack. Given the primary reason for the sector as a whole, it could be expected that this might be seen to be given a little more priority. Also surprising is that Goal 3 (Good health & wellbeing) is apparently being impacted on the least amongst all of the Goals. Health and wellbeing has been emerging as an important issue over the last few years – perhaps this result shows that institutions, while they have accepted that action is needed, have not had time to fully implement change.

Overall, though, only one goal is achieving it's potential – that of Goal 16 (Peace, justice & strong institutions). This shows that there is still considerable improvement possible in the sector.

Figure 33: SDG Summary
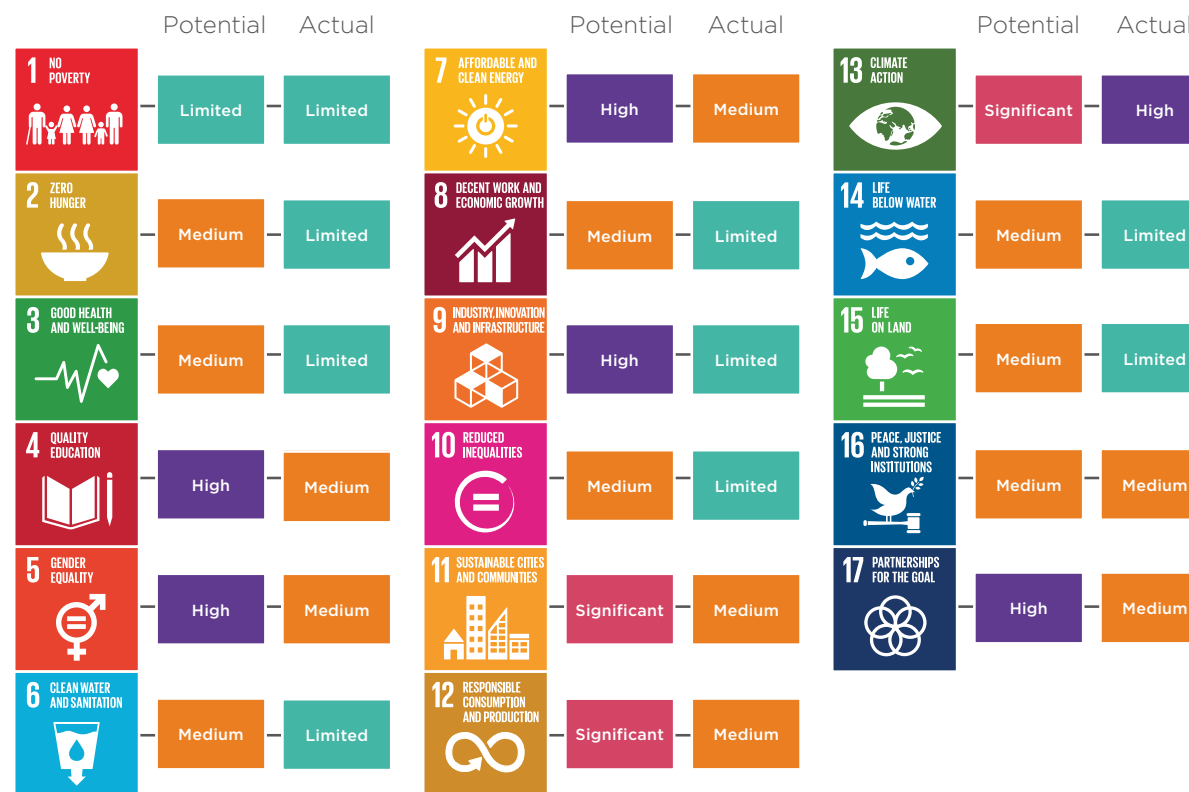
9 For the sake of being able to identify patterns and communicate them effectively, this analysis only considers the default potential impacts used by the majority of institutions. It should also be noted that actual scores for an SDG will be lowered if the linked frameworks are not completed (i.e. a score of zero is carried into the impact assessment). The summary is the default potential impact and the average (mode) actual impact

8 SUMMARY

The findings of this report are encouraging. Sustainability is being seen as relevant across all areas of an institution and more users are taking a whole institution approach.

However the sector needs to address Risk and Climate Change Adaptation. With the call from students seen recently in the Youth Climate Strikes there is an urgency for the sector to take action now. This is to ensure not only that measures are taken to mitigate climate change but to also to educate about climate change. Post-16 educational institutions are in a unique place to ensure through our buildings and operations to our teaching, learning and research we can make a difference to the future of our students and our planet.

To show how we are supporting the sector in areas that are needed, EAUC and the Higher Education Business Continuity Network (HEBCoN) have been working with a group of Members over the last year, with the support of AECOM, to develop a guide and process document to help universities and colleges make progress on climate change adaptation. This will be available to the sector in the summer.

The impact and value that the sector makes is clear through the SDG report.

From Gender Equality through to Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions. Yet more needs to be done to ensure our staff and students have Good Health and Wellbeing.

We encourage those that are using the tool to take the next step to gain independent gap analysis to further support their journeys.

We thank all those institutions that have helped us with this report as well as providing feedback on the tool.

We look forward to seeing more institutions benefitting from the tool in the following year.

Institutions have a responsibility to ensure their graduates have the skills they need to succeed in a tumultuous world; they need the skills to be resilient and adaptable.

Iain Patton   **Craig Nowell**
EAUC CEO   AUDE Chair

9 PARTICIPATING INSTITUTIONS

The below institutions are those that participated in the SLS in this period and their data is included within this report. This data only considers institutions that have manually entered at least 10 scores, the threshold set to indicate meaningful participation. More institutions have entered fewer scores and all universities have data carried into the SLS from the annual Estates Management Return. A further 8 institutions have used the tool but not entered enough scores to be included for this report.

Anglia Ruskin University	Oxford Brookes University	The University of Sheffield
Aston University	Sheffield Hallam University	The University of St Andrews
Bath Spa University	South Devon College	The University of Stirling
Birmingham City University	The Nottingham Trent University	The University of Strathclyde
Bournemouth University	The Queen's University of Belfast	The University of Surrey
Bridgend College	The Royal Veterinary College	The University of Warwick
Buckinghamshire New University	The University of Central Lancashire	The University of Westminster
Canterbury Christ Church University	The University of Dundee	The University of York
Cardiff University	The University of Kent	University College Cork
Coventry University	The University of Leicester	University of Chester
De Montfort University	The University of Lincoln	University of Derby
King's College London	The University of Liverpool	University of Northumbria at Newcastle
Kingston University	The University of Manchester	University of Ulster
Leeds Beckett University	The University of Salford	University of Worcester
Loughborough University		

WANT TO KNOW MORE?

If you'd like further information on the Sustainability Leadership Scorecard, please contact us on info@sustainabilityleadershipscorecard.org.uk

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