



Media Release

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Contact: Ecodesign Centre Wales,
Sophia House,
28 Cathedral Road,
Cardiff, CF11 9LJ

Telephone: +44(0)29 2066 0147

Email: info@ecodesigncentrewales.org

Media Released written by Gavin Cox.
Mobile: 07803 071747

Ecodesign to become a key player in future degree programmes of Welsh Universities

Ecodesign Centre Wales are leading the way for Wales to become a nation of sustainable designers by working in partnership with the four universities in Wales offering Product Design degrees in a unique approach to establishing a future for Wales as a sustainable nation.

On 20th May, Ecodesign Centre Wales hosted a seminal event at Cardiff Castle aimed at encouraging Eco-design into the degree curriculum of Welsh Universities Bangor, Glamorgan, Swansea Metropolitan and UWIC.

Dr Emma Dewberry – Senior Lecturer in Design & Sustainability at The Open University, spoke of the need for universities in Wales to share experience in order to benefit students, many of which will shape Wales in years to come.

She said: “The first half of this century will require industrialised societies to achieve ten times the materials and energy efficiency of today. This is a huge ask. Decisions made in the early part of the product design process will determine how efficient a product will be – it is therefore crucial that product designers are informed and



motivated to take on the sustainability challenges that lie ahead. **The learning resources that EDC have produced in this area are really comprehensive and have already provided an extremely valuable platform for discussion on what is useful and helpful in promoting sustainable literacy in the Higher Education Design sector in Wales and beyond”.**

For the Welsh Assembly Government to reach its sustainability targets by 2020 Ecodesign Centre Wales recognises the need to encourage bottom-up growth in the sustainable design economy. Through engaging with Wales’ 4 key universities, Ecodesign Centre Wales is helping to ensure that Wales produces a new generation of designers, academics and entrepreneurs who can help Wales lead the way in sustainable design and production.

Commenting, Dr Frank O’Connor who heads EDC in Wales said:

“Students passing through Higher Education will play a key role in shaping Wales future and are currently of an age where encouraging ecodesign thinking in future product development is crucial as they seek to become tomorrow’s leaders in sustainable design and production.”

John Hughes, Director of BSc Courses at Bangor University one of the establishments offering Product Design degrees in Wales agrees:

“We at Bangor assess students’ Eco considerations when they are designing products. We allocate 20% of marks to Eco considerations. We are beginning to develop an ethos: how can design be good design without considering the Eco elements? Up to now, students have responded by emphasising upon material savings when designing products. **As a result of resource material produced by Ecodesign Centre Wales, students are broadening their understanding of sustainability when designing”.**

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Notes for editors:

- Ecodesign Centre Wales (EDC) was set up in September 2006 as part of the Welsh Assembly Government's commitment to sustainable development. EDC is currently funded through the Materials Action Programme (MAP).
- EDC focuses on building capacity and capabilities in industry, public sector organisations and higher education so that effective ecodesign can happen in Wales.
- EDC are employees of the University of Wales Institute, Cardiff (UWIC) who manage and administer the funding.

Mission:

- EDC aims to proactively inspire and lead the Welsh Assembly Government, public sector organisations and higher education to enable effective ecodesign in Welsh industry. EDC facilitates the open sharing of knowledge and experience with fresh thinking and integrity.

Vision:

- Wales will be an internationally renowned ecodesign led nation by 2020 with ecodesign embedded as a sustainable competitive core value within all relevant government strategies and support services, industry, the design community and higher education.
- Ecodesign is a design management process which minimises the negative environmental impacts of a product, package or service while optimising its performance. This involves assessing, prioritising and then designing out problems, or designing new solutions. Communicating and building ecodesign thinking into future product development is crucial.
- Ecodesign also takes into account social impacts in the production and consumption of products and services, making a significant contribution to sustainable development.

Further information can be found on Ecodesign Centre Wales' website: www.edcw.org



Other

- EDC logo is available electronically for print purposes in all formats.
- Photographs from the event are also available. Please contact EDC with specific requirements.
- EDC welcome the opportunity to assist with articles for academic, specialist and trade publications.