



Anglia Ruskin  
University

**Global Sustainability  
Institute**

# **ANGLIA RUSKIN UNIVERSITY**

## **PREPARING OUR STUDENTS FOR A RESPONSIBLE FUTURE**

**Championing Education for Sustainability in the  
formal curriculum at Anglia Ruskin:  
*3 approaches to preparing our students  
for a responsible future***





## **Alison Pooley**

Senior Lecturer,  
Course Leader for BA (Hons) Architecture

### **HOW HAVE YOU EMBEDDED SUSTAINABILITY INTO YOUR COURSE?**

I teach on the BA (Hons) Architecture course as well as contributing to the MSc Urban Planning and MSc Town Planning courses. Architecture at Anglia Ruskin is taught as a practical art, derived from its legacy as a technical college and acknowledging the work of our namesake John Ruskin.

We focus on the application and innovation of technology, and the ways in which it interacts with the changing needs of our communities looking towards 2050 and beyond. Our students explore these issues through different types of learning and teaching, which culminates in the work they produce through their studio design projects.

**“ students studying now are the architects of the future: we must prepare them for the many challenges they will face ”**

### **HOW DOES THE COURSE DEVELOP YOUR STUDENTS' SUSTAINABILITY SKILLS?**

During their second-year community design projects, architecture students collaborate with a local housing charity. They work to a specific brief that is developed with the charity in response to a direct community need. These projects often involve working with other disciplines within the department and require engagement with the future users and the wider community addressing the broad issues relating to sustainability.

### **WHAT DO YOUR STUDENTS THINK?**

**“Everyone there was passionate about what they were doing... you're immersed in the experience rather than just going and connecting to it once a week and you learn more from the people you're surrounded by than the teaching itself ...you're part of a small community”**

*- a second year student on their visit to the Centre for Alternative Technology*

### **WHY IS SUSTAINABILITY IMPORTANT TO THE DEPARTMENT OF ENGINEERING AND THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT?**

Sustainability and resilience in our built environment are of critical importance and are central to the issues within the wider debate. Society must develop environmentally responsible and responsive urban places, mega cities, and liveable cities in order to maintain and promote health, comfort, and well-being. It is essential to engage architecture students and all future built environment professionals in this work.

We have to improve our environment and enhance our built environment beyond a sustainable point to a point where we are giving back to the planet rather than balancing our consumption. We must engage students in the implications of their work one hundred plus years hence. Students studying now are the architects of the future: we must prepare them for the many challenges they will face.

**For more information, visit:**  
<http://www.anglia.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/architecture>



## **Dr Beatriz Acevedo**

Senior Lecturer, Economics and International Business (Sustainability)

### **HOW HAVE YOU EMBEDDED SUSTAINABILITY INTO YOUR COURSE?**

Sustainable Transformation and Environmental Practice (STEP) is a core module on Level 6 (Year 3) based on three main pillars: experiential learning, creativity and employability. It is a hands-on module in which the students develop an environmental management program for their households aimed at reducing their carbon footprint, while learning about environmental management, organizational change and sustainability. Additionally, the students reflect on a number of employability skills such as project management, communication and leadership. The module includes well-being as a key component of our approach to sustainability.

### **HOW DOES THE COURSE DEVELOP YOUR STUDENTS' SUSTAINABILITY SKILLS?**

The module is inspired by the QAA and the IEMA guidelines on graduate attributes, skills and knowledge on sustainability.

Students are able to describe the relationships between environmental, social and economic systems from local to global, identify that positive or negative environmental change may arise from economic growth, and describe how aspects of business and management contribute to sustainable development.

They are able to think systematically in terms of recognising connections and interactions between factors and understand that actions often have

multiple consequences. They can effectively engage with real life-problems relevant to sustainable development.

### **WHAT DO YOUR STUDENTS THINK?**

**“STEP has been an eye opening experience and one of the best classes I have taken here at Anglia Ruskin to date. Beatriz set out to create a module that teaches students skills that future employers require. The course is also intended to develop a deeper understanding of how sustainable management of systems are employed by looking at them from an environment that we can control: the home”**

*- a third year student*

### **WHY IS SUSTAINABILITY IMPORTANT TO THE ECONOMICS AND INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS DEPARTMENT?**

I have been championing the development of education for sustainability in my faculty for the last 8 years. My contribution has been to make these topics into “core” modules, with a number of hands on experiences, such as the GoGreen Pilot, the work with National Union of Students, the interaction between art and sustainability (using art-based methods) and most importantly, the possibility of students becoming leaders of change and sustainability champions in their families, households and local communities.

**“ students can effectively engage with real-life problems relevant to sustainable development ”**

**For more information, visit:**

<http://www.anglia.ac.uk/lord-ashcroft-international-business-school/about/economics-and-international-business>



## **Dr Paulette Luff**

Senior Lecturer,  
Faculty of Health, Social Care & Education

### **HOW HAVE YOU EMBEDDED SUSTAINABILITY INTO YOUR COURSES?**

FdA Early Years, Playwork and Education, BA (Hons) Early Childhood Studies and MA Early Childhood Education courses include many aspects of sustainability. Inspired by the heritage of pioneer educators, who aimed to change the world through transformative early education, the Early Childhood Team are passionate about the health, well-being and optimal development of all children and their families.

We advocate for the embracing of diversity and fair, inclusive policies and practices in early childhood education and care. There is a strong emphasis upon Children's Rights and we aim for an ethos of democracy and participation underpinned by ethics of care. As the QAA subject benchmark for Early Childhood Studies states: 'Critical analysis of children as active participants, their rights and an anti-bias approach which considers early childhood as a site for democracy, sustainability and social justice underpins and permeates the subject.'

**“ the world needs people who have a caring, ethical and critical outlook and that is what we are aiming to achieve ”**

**For more information, visit:**

<http://www.anglia.ac.uk/health-social-care-and-education/about/school-of-education-and-social-care>

### **HOW DOES THE COURSE DEVELOP YOUR STUDENTS' SUSTAINABILITY SKILLS?**

We aim to embed EfS pedagogies on two levels – students' own learning experiences, and ways to support young children's learning. Our pedagogy can be described as 'relational': centred upon ethical relationships with one another and the world and focussed upon working collaboratively and dialogically to connect people, ideas and materials. One example is fostering environmental awareness via experiential learning to engage children with nature through creative play.

### **WHAT DO YOUR STUDENTS THINK?**

**“Learning about Children's Rights from around the world has given me a better understanding of what goes on and is often unnoticed. It has given me confidence to research ideas on how to improve conditions for children using law”**

- a third year student

**“It has opened my mind to different theoretical approaches in practice as well as encouraging me to think about sustainable education. I enjoyed carrying out my sustainability project. I am now continuing the activity on in my setting.”**

- a part-time third year student

### **WHY IS SUSTAINABILITY IMPORTANT TO THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION?**

This focus upon EfS is essential for students of Early Childhood in HE as they will go on to work with the youngest children and their families, with real prospects for raising awareness of sustainability through influencing values and attitudes at a vital early stage in life. The world needs people who have a caring, ethical and critical outlook and that is what we are aiming to achieve in ECS.

It is our belief that we can bring a more caring and trusting world into being and that early childhood education and care can play an important part in this.