

The future of sustainability at UAL

Thank you for taking part in the sustainability workshop at LCC on 16th December 2015 and for your active participation, enthusiasm and willingness to be involved.

Two connected conversations took place. This concise summary captures many of your ideas. These will help inform UAL's future university-wide sustainability programme.



1. What changes are necessary to make your college part of the most sustainable university in the world? Think radically.

● **Your votes.** You helped us to categorise and prioritise your ideas. You voted on the specific ideas or categories you felt were the most powerful, held the most potential, or were especially important to you. We've edited the categorisation as little as possible.

Thinking about food

- Act on food waste – focussing on surplus food
- Focus on circular systems, material use, and the problem of 'too much stuff' ●
- Roll-out of [Soil Association Gold Standard](#) food across UAL
- Enable students to lead changes to catering, with a focus on veganism

Collaboration and Communication ●

- Engage in working partnerships with 'sustainable' brands
- More co-learning and collaboration between students and staff/alumni (citing [Dye Garden example](#))
- Target partnerships with organisations in the recycling industry
- A concerted focus on student-community exchanges
- Regarding [ISO50001](#) – make a public statement to students

Incentives

- Place a stronger focus on *connecting* and promoting good practice ●●●
- Encourage sustainability through budgets, resources allocation and performance appraisals (staff) ●

Individual and institutional behaviours

- Culture shift across UAL to encourage more collaboration and sharing
- A clear 'Corporate Responsibility' agenda for UAL ●
- Devolution of sustainability to the 'grassroots' ●●
- A culture of transparency
- A sustainability manifesto for UAL ●●●●●●●●

Capacity building

- Need for full-time sustainability co-ordinators ●●●
- Plan specific *Meet The Tide* workshops (related to staff development)
- Student-led policy development and awareness raising on sustainability ●●●
- More opportunities and support for small-scale sustainability projects
- Sustainability intro kit for freshers ●●●
- Residency to the 'countryside' to re-engage with nature

Teaching and Learning ●●●●●●●●

- Every course to consider *impact* and *legacy* and justify choices made
- Clear signposting to students on resources and research hubs for sustainability

Estates, buildings, resources

- Emphasis on local provenance in procurement ●●●●
- Set the 'bar high' on procurement standards re: meat, plastic, materials, etc. ●●●
- On the other hand, small behavioral nudges – 'bag for life' and reusable cups
- Holistic consideration of sustainability across travel and campuses ●●
- All new build projects to meet BREEAM Outstanding; plus interest in technology such as greywater and 'soft' interventions such as plants to improve indoor air quality
- Questioning the rationale of new build rather than refurbishment
- Interest in urban horticulture: gardening lessons, growing food on the UAL estate
- A focus on biodiversity on estates and roof gardens
- More environmental qualifications for estates teams ●
- The concept of a 'mobile university' – response to a scattered central London estate ●

2. How do we get there?

You drew attention to some clear strategic objectives:

- "Demonstrable commitment and accountability from university leaders" – clear strategic direction (top down) with courses deciding how to implement (bottom-up)
- "Meaningfully embed ideas and projects into courses"
- "Need to shift behavioural norms" "Nudge style incentives"
- "Embed within Strategy 15-22"
- "Focus on students, and learning, as the starting point" and clear "student involvement"

...and some goals to set UAL on that journey:

- "10 point Manifesto" and "alignment of values with actions and PR"

- “Need for more support to staff to enable process of embedding”
- “More sustainability staff in each college”
- “Full supply change transparency”
- “Build circular economy (and ethics) principles into curriculum”
- “Integration of sustainability into grading and marking”

...as well as a whole host of suggestions for more specific action:

Acting on resources

- Classes in *repairing* – adopting a ‘curriculum hack’ approach
- Site visits to waste management facilities to build understanding of resource flows
- Develop a single central materials exchange for UAL
- Deliver more administration online – interviews, submissions, even degree shows
- Join forces with other organisations to tackle materials waste – particularly textiles
- A new *university marketplace* – to sell what students make
- Ensure students aren’t put off using reclaimed materials in their work due to assessment criteria (e.g. quality of finish)
- Funding is a barrier – address through partnerships/ crowd funding

Building capacity

- A new role to support staff and student development in sustainability
- Embed sustainability into job advertisements, job descriptions, measured objectives
- Curricula and course validation to be well facilitated and co-designed on sustainability
- Summer ‘experiential’ retreat/course for staff on sustainability/ other staff training
- Introduce sustainability scholarships
- Draw together and co-ordinate all existing sustainability-related groups together across colleges, disciplines, alumni, staff etc.
- Create the space for more ‘social learning’
- Set targets on the level of engagement on and offline (e.g. twitter interaction)
- Barriers include: Inertia, indifference, lack of understanding, expertise and engagement

Enhancing collaboration and co-ordination and building a ‘sustainability experience’

- Focus on instructing architects and contractors who are expert in sustainable construction
- Develop ‘Green’ social spaces and outdoors teaching (and walking meetings)
- Expend more effort understanding student perspectives through surveys and module evaluations
- Stronger collaboration with a) community b) other HEIs
- Develop ‘Communities of Practice’ – and tie in with UAL strategy

Thanks you once again for your input, which will feed into recommendations to be presented to the UAL Sustainability and Environment Project Board in January 2016. To discuss further, please contact matt.prescott@mint-environment.com.

Important survey!

We’d be very grateful if you would now complete this online survey by 29th January 2016 and encourage others at UAL to do so too: <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/UAL-sustain>
The results from the survey will also be helping to inform the future of sustainability at UAL.