

Edinburgh College of Art (ECA) Sustainability Policy

Introduction

At the ECA we are fortunate to have a campus located in the heart of the city of Edinburgh, a World Heritage City and the capital of Scotland, a country with outstanding natural beauty which attracts visitors from all over the world. In Scotland we have a long standing tradition of protecting our natural resources to ensure that we and our children and successive generations continue to benefit from this heritage. But, as increasing global warming threatens to disrupt the climate we must respond to these new challenges and harness our talents and creativity to seek solutions to these problems.

The Edinburgh College of Art, as one of the UK's leading art, architecture and design institutions, is therefore committed to 'sustainable development' as defined by the Brundtland Commission - *"development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."* As a small, specialist institution we will embed this goal within our strategic plan to ensure that all our activities from teaching and learning, research and our day to day operations are carried out in accord with this principle

Education can make a vital contribution to this goal. We require graduates now who can innovate, who have sound knowledge and understanding of the problems and are equipped with the confidence and creativity to discover and implement solutions. We believe that the future artists, designers and architects from ECA will be well prepared to make a real contribution to this agenda.

We are committed to embedding sustainability principles across all curriculum areas and to further developing our research activities into sustainability - explicitly and implicitly - and to ensuring that all our students, staff and researchers are well informed about the issues.

The College has established a Sustainable Development Working Group to identify and co-ordinate the activities necessary to ensure that the College can deliver its strategic commitment to sustainable development. This group is chaired by the Assistant Principal and includes representatives from Estates, HR, Janitorial Services, Research, the Student Body and Policy and Planning. Working with external consultants we have identified a range of actions which we are progressing to deliver a more sustainable organisation. The principles of sustainable development will be integrated into all activities across the College.

The comprehensive range of activity currently underway is summarised in the SFC/EAUC Five Year Climate Change Action Plan 2010-2014, (see Appendix 1). The College was a founder signatory of the Climate Change Action Plan on 16th February 2009. The Climate Change Action Plan sets out for the next five years the targets and milestones on our journey and will be instrumental in the College becoming a more sustainable institution.

Key Objectives

The College will seek to promote sustainable development throughout its activities, conduct of business and management of estate, through three key areas of defined responsibility:

- 1. Environmental Responsibility;**
- 2. Social Responsibility (including Learning and Teaching);**
- 3. Business, Financial and Legal Responsibility.**

To implement the actions within these areas of responsibilities the College will pursue the following actions through a process of continuous improvement, tracking and review.

Environmental Responsibility

The College has prioritised the following areas with regards to the environment with a view to achieving significant improvements in sustainability:

- Carbon Emission Management and Reduction;
- Energy Efficiency, Consumption and Management;
- Water Efficiency, Consumption and Management;
- Waste Efficiency, Consumption and Management;
- Procurement policies;
- Transportation and Travel;
- Biodiversity on the College Campus.

These areas will provide the focus of the development of clearly defined objectives and targets. Specific actions have been established and will be implemented to deliver the necessary improvements:

- Reduce carbon dioxide (and other greenhouse gases) relating to all aspects of the College's operations;
- Monitor the use of energy and water on Campus and implement energy and water efficiency action plans;
- Educate staff and students about the importance of reducing our consumption of energy and water and to implement estates developments to increase resource efficiency;
- Travel Planning for staff and students to encourage green travel for staff in both commuting and business travel and for student exchanges and travelling to and from the campus. To include reduction in single occupancy car journeys via the implementation of a Travel Plan;
- Waste Management for staff and students to minimise waste generated by maximising re-use and recycling. To include the identification of waste streams and to match them with appropriate re-use or end use;
- Minimise the lifecycle environmental impact of any new buildings and other developments;
- Take advantage of opportunities to improve the environmental performance of buildings as part of refurbishment and maintenance programmes;
- To consider the lifecycle impact of products purchased by the College;
- To support and promote local and Fairtrade products as appropriate;
- Comply fully with all Scottish, UK and European Environmental and Climate Change Acts and regulations affecting the College.

Social Responsibility (including Learning and Teaching)

The College will work with all its stakeholders to identify appropriate opportunities for promoting sustainability in a mutually beneficial way. The key stakeholders to be involved in this process will include:

- ECA Management;
- ECA Staff;
- ECA Students;
- Local Communities;
- Public Authorities;
- Scottish Funding Council;
- Local Schools;
- Graduate employers.

Specific action to be undertaken will include:

- Providing education and encouragement to staff and students involving them in the College's initiatives in this area;
- Engaging and empowering all staff and students by effective internal communication about the importance of sustainability leading to bottom up changes in behaviour advancing our objective of becoming a more sustainable institution;
- Providing opportunities for staff and students to generate new ideas and understanding through teaching, learning, research activities and cross disciplinary work. This will include a series of staff seminars on improving student awareness of sustainability and a series of student talks and activities to promote and encourage their contribution to sustainable development.
- Improved engagement with local communities in and around the College campus to implement education and improvement initiatives in the field of sustainability.
- Embedding sustainability awareness within appropriate courses as one of the outcomes of our Curriculum Review 2010 building on our existing best practice. This Review will ensure that sustainability is included as part of the first year student induction process and that it will form part of our students' professional practice modules within the Art, Architecture and Design curriculum. Additionally, formal teaching of sustainability will be a cross-College programme of study.
- Promoting research related to sustainability issues where appropriate.

Business, Financial and Legal Responsibility

- Sustainable development will be a key objective in our strategic plan;
- The ECA Climate Change Action Plan will be the key driver for delivering a long term sustainable campus ;
- The College has set up a Sustainable Development group chaired by a senior member of staff to monitor and direct our progress in this area and to ensure the implementation of our Climate Change Action Plan objectives and targets;
- We will establish effective ECA reporting systems and procedures, commit to a process of continual improvement, and set best practice standards which meet or surpass the requirements of legislation;

- We will work to ensure our procurement policies embrace these principles and will work with our suppliers to encourage them to meet high standards of sustainability;
- We will work to continually improve our performance and commitment and will encourage the College community to be involved in debating the issues and challenges that lie ahead;
- The College will publish an annual sustainability report which will be communicated to all external and internal stakeholders and published on the College's website;
- We will comply fully with all relevant Scottish, UK and European Acts and regulations affecting the College.