

Title of presentation

Taking Action on International Foundation Programmes: our SDG Collaborative Initiative

Presenters

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Abstract

The rationale of this poster is to consider the influential role of the International Foundation Programme (IFP) delivered by INTO Queen's University Belfast (INTO QUB) and particularly the International Foundation Programme in Architecture (IFPA) on attitudes centred around environmental integrity, economic viability and a fair society.

The aim of this proposal is to show how the Foundation teaching team at INTO Queen's University Belfast (INTO QUB) recognised the importance of a collaborative opportunity and developed an "education for sustainability" thread within the 2021-22 curriculum where sustainability topics can be considered and debated by international students who represent not only a variety of different cultures but who are following a diverse range of paths through further education.

One central theme is to illustrate the unique opportunity for interdisciplinary collaboration in a student body selecting modules from a wide range of disciplines such as: Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Economics, Business Studies, Art, Architecture, Politics & International Relations. English Language & Study Skills (ELSS) is taken as a core subject by all INTO QUB foundation students. and therefore provides an ideal environment for the sharing of different perspectives on tackling global issues.

A second theme spotlights the role of the Foundation Architecture programme which has been specifically developed to prepare students for undergraduate entry to the QUB RIBA accredited Architecture degree. Due to its inherent cross disciplinary content and the fact that in the UK the building sector is responsible for around 40% of global carbon emissions, this subject discipline is leading the drive for a focus on embedded sustainability knowledge across the IFP. An architectural education not only provides students with the skills to design buildings that provide accommodation but it also endeavours to improve the human experience and through an understanding of human behaviour has the potential to shape lives (Pallasmaa, 2012). Research indicates that interaction and collaboration leads to creativity and innovation (Heerwagen J.H. et al. 2004; Grolleau,G.,2013) and that biophilic experiences enhance health and wellbeing (Wilson, E.O.,1984; Fisk W.,2000). Future plans are to identify opportunities within communal spaces in the INTO QUB centre to further develop the thread of discussion and weave it into other aspects of the student experience. The intent is to engender an attitude of making an impact and to encourage small contributions by supporting student initiatives that respond to the SDGs.

References

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