

Meet a... Senior Lecturer and Artist



Dr Beatriz Acevedo, Senior Lecturer in Sustainable Management at Anglia Ruskin University

How would you describe your job in a tweet i.e.140 characters?

Artist and educator passionate about sustainability.

What does an average day look like?

My time is divided in two, sometimes merging my roles/jobs as artist and educator. In the first role I work on art-related projects, mainly related to botanical paintings and illustrations, and more recently in a project about sustainable fashion called RawTag. My work as an artist has three dimensions: work in the studio, meeting fellow artists, but also a lot management and research. A typical day as an artist involves working in the studio, checking emails, keeping up with my webpage and keeping in touch with customers and collectors.

I also work as a senior lecturer in sustainable management, which involves teaching and working with students, supervising dissertations, preparing lessons and promoting that sustainability is included in all what we do. In the research part of my work, I prepare research projects, read a lot about what other people have done about the topic I am interested, get to interview people and analyse data, and write, write, write! Because I am working with art-based methodologies it is normally something nice, creative and engaging, so I have lots of fun too.

What are the key skills and qualifications required for your job? *What legal knowledge do you need that's mandatory? If none, what is useful to keep up to date on?*

As a lecturer: You may need a PhD or teaching in higher education. Mostly you need to be passionate and have the bug of educating: meaning bring out the best of people! You may need to have been trained as a lecturer, or have an accreditation from the Higher Education Academy.

As an artist: Everybody is a natural artist! But perhaps your skills need a bit of honing. To attend an art course is always a good idea, but there are many good self-taught artists (like myself) who simply love to paint, attend courses, etc. Apart of drawing/painting/creating art, you need also to be a good manager: you need to keep up with your finances; manage your time; product marketing; establish networks, etc.

What training and continuous professional development do you require?

As a lecturer in sustainability is always good to keep up with the discussions about education for sustainability, in terms of adding new strategies and methodologies to the way we teach. Also, it is important to keep informed about the political and economic discussions. Climate change is always on the news, but also so many things related to ethical issues, social justice and human development.

As an artist devoted to sustainability is important to know how to be a real eco-artist: learn about disposal of products, eco-friendly materials, paints, etc., and also about what are the discussions and main trends outside. Keep informed



To help our Members understand more about the roles in further and higher education institutions, we've created a suite of career profiles. These share the main responsibilities and skills and knowledge required of many of the key roles that play a part in embedding sustainability in a tertiary education institution.

View the entire suite at www.eauc.org.uk/meet_a_member

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about exhibitions, new techniques for improving your work and researching about key topics inspiring your work. For instance, at the moment I am learning a lot about sustainable fashion and this is affecting my life and consumer options.

What are your top three responsibilities?

- As a lecturer: prepare and deliver educational materials; respond to stakeholders and keep my research going.
- As an artist: create, plan and produce visual art and manage this process.

Tell us something surprising about your job that people may not know about?

As a lecturer: People think that we just take the summer holidays, in fact, this is the time when we most work because we are preparing for the new semester, we attend conferences and concentrate on our research!

As an artist: It is not enough to paint or create, if you think that it is all about being in the studio, you may forget about a career in it. It involves so much management, networking and strategic thinking!

What are the positives and negatives of the job?

As a lecturer: What keep me going is to see students growing and becoming responsible citizens! What bores me is the amount of emails and admin work, and also the fact that sometimes sustainability is not understood properly. It is seen as something "nice" but it also needs money!

As an artist: The time in the studio and talking to other artists is great. What is difficult is the fact that money is not always constant, you need to chase it or to have another part-time job to keep you going!

Do you manage a budget, and what are your key priorities for this?

"Do not spend more than you have" it is obvious but it is important to divide your budget in categories. Also keep a weekly record of what is your money going toward!

What does the path to career progression in this role look like? *What are the opportunities? What's this limited by?*

As a lecturer: You move in the scale from lecturer to senior lecturer, to principal lecturer or reader and to professor. You need to decide which role fits your life better. Success is a subjective matter.

As an artist: Some people aim for fame, others for greatness, my aim is prosperity! It all depends on a combination of factors: being in the right place at the right time, but prepared with a good portfolio and practice.

What is the minimum and maximum salary band for this role?

As a lecturer: You may start in £25k and move toward £70k in high roles.

As an artist: This is too variable, but it is good to put goals to your art.

What advice do you have for graduates and other potential candidates who are considering joining?

Join I am convinced that the future is green. More and more jobs are requiring graduates with sustainability knowledge, skills and attributes. Sustainability skills are all transferable. Personally, I have made my career based on my passion for sustainability, I have created my personal brand GoGreen and I have obtained promotions, prizes, fellowships, grants, etc and most importantly, personal satisfaction of doing something really worthwhile!

As an advice for people wanting to do something in sustainability: Join your Green office or sustainability group at the university. Employers look at thousands of "good graduates" like yourself... but things like joining green initiatives always stand out. I know of many students using their participation in green initiatives as keys for opening doors, you will be surprised!!!!

EAUC sustainability CPD programme

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How can other Members contact you?

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