

## What does Education for Sustainability have to do with Modern Languages?

“Our research crosses many boundaries, between languages, between cultures and between disciplines. We believe that new knowledge and new insights come at the intersections, outside traditional comfort zones.” (<http://www.southampton.ac.uk/ml/about/index.page?>)

Broadening horizons and crossing boundaries is critical to tackling the biggest challenges facing the world in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. Topic areas of relevance to sustainability already in the Modern Languages curriculum include:

- **Understanding other cultures:** expanding understanding of other cultures, beliefs, experiences; fostering human empathy; reconnecting humankind and nature.
- **Contemporary issues:** social, political, economic and environmental change in the modern world; travel and migration; globalisation.
- **Global perspective:** understanding diverse cultural backgrounds; the role of globalisation in changing human, societal, national interactions; impact on society, politics, culture and economics; immigration, refugees and the impact of people movements in changing societal demographics and developing multicultural cities.
- **Inequality:** understanding how people of different sexes, races, beliefs, classes experience equality or inequality in different cultures at different times through history.
- **Citizenship:** living as a global citizen, understanding global impacts of individual lifestyles; citizen behaviour such as voting and protest in different cultures and political systems.
- **Urban living:** the history, society and culture of cities; their national and transnational significance; their role as sites of conflict and collaboration; diversity in urban environments; how ideas of nation, class, race, gender, culture are formed in a civic context.
- **Self and identify:** notions of self; identity and the natural environment; connectedness to nature.
- **Politics and international relations:** understanding different political systems; how nations relate and the impact on individuals, nations, the environment.

**Key skills for modern linguists which sustainability teaching cultivates:** interdisciplinarity; informed decision-making; synthesis of different opinions, theory and data; debate and reasoning; teamwork; leadership; problem-solving; oral and written communication; self-management; time-management; critical thinking.

**Find out more:** Contact Julia Kendal ([j.kendal@soton.ac.uk](mailto:j.kendal@soton.ac.uk)) for more information including case studies on teaching sustainability in this area.