

What does Education for Sustainability have to do with History?

History at Southampton aims to “challenge you to rethink the stories we tell about the past while creating a passport for your future.”

(<http://www.southampton.ac.uk/history/undergraduate/index.page?>)

Understanding the past enables people to shape a better future. Topic areas of relevance to sustainability already in the History curriculum include:

- **Understanding other cultures:** the role of the history in expanding understanding of other cultures, beliefs, experiences and foster human empathy; reconnecting humankind and nature.
- **Global perspective:** understanding diverse cultural backgrounds; the role of globalisation in changing human, societal, national interactions; immigration, refugees and changing societal demographics.
- **Inequality:** understanding class structures, social inequality; gender history; slavery and abolition.
- **Understanding human emotions and behaviours:** understanding how humans relate to each other, as individuals, in society; human consumption – why we buy and how this is part of a wider cultural movement.
- **Societal development:** understanding how societies develop; civilisation; domestication and the impact on society; what impacts the rise and fall of societies, nations, empires rise and fall; the role of human health in societal change.
- **Responding to injustice:** helping us to understand how to respond to social and environmental injustices, such as the holocaust.
- **World ideologies:** understanding differing social, economic, political, cultural, military and environmental ideologies and their impacts on society, nations and empires.

Key skills for historians which sustainability teaching cultivates: interdisciplinary working; evidence-based decision-making; analysis; debate and reasoning; teamwork; leadership; problem-solving; oral and written communication skills; self-management; time-management; critical thinking.

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