Sustainability Qualities: Learning not Listening

Wednesday 22nd June 2016, 12pm

Luci Attala
Programme Director, Anthropology
University of Wales, Trinity Saint David

Contact: Nina Bartlett - nbartlett@eauc.org.uk/01242 71 4321

www.greengownawards.org.uk

Education for sustainability:
immersive methods
(learning not listening)

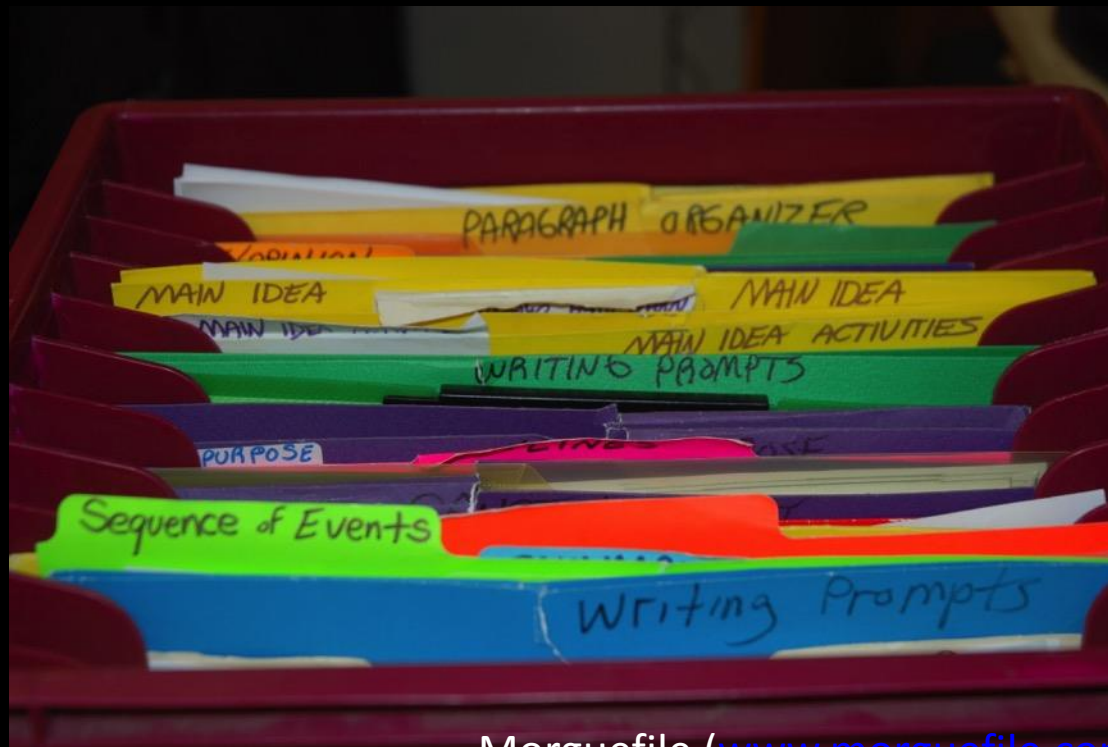What, *and how,* should people be learning today?

Traditional methods in Humanities

- Passive

- Listeners

- Distanced

- Knowledge = information acquisition
  - Measured through writing
  - Cerebral activity

Morguefile (www.morguefile.com)

Why is this the case?

Because learning is assumed to be a cerebral pursuit concerned with passive information acquisition.

Clerks and accountants

- Sir Ken Robinson (2006, 2010) believes education was designed to create a population of clerks and accountants because these were the skills needed for industrialisation.

Morguefile (www.morguefile.com)

What do students need to learn?

- This is the great unknown.

  What 'subjects' are relevant? Future studies?

- The jobs of today may – will – could - be redundant by the time our students graduate.

Morguefile (www.morguefile.com)

Recent documentation agrees -

- Students must be
  - Solution seekers
  - Collaborators
  - Presenters
  - Leaders
  - Confident
    - In their knowledge
    - In their abilities
  - Critical practitioners
  - Reflexive
  - Sensitive
  - Inclusive
  - Independent

Image: UWTSD student in Zimbabwe

The 'how' of learning

Otherwise known as 'delivery methods'

**HOW -
IS NOT THE QUESTION,
IT IS THE ANSWER.**

Current structures rely on old 'how-s'

- How education is structured –
  - as single disciplines,
  - through learning 'about' what others have done
  - and preparing students for proficiency in one skill/subject
  - measured through writing
  - results focused

Morguefile (www.morguefile.com)

An 'immersive' approach

- Uses enquiry based learning (EBL)
  - Active
  - Solution seeking
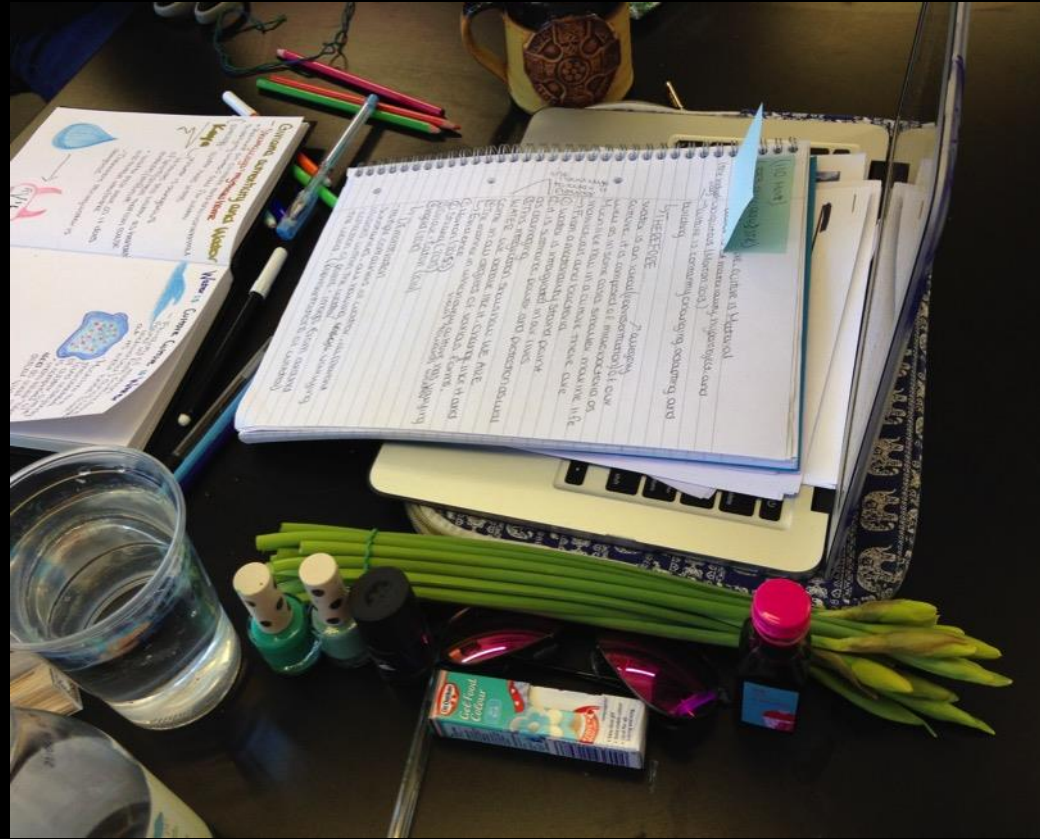 - Performance assessed
- Complete, absorbed involvement
- Extensive exposure

Image: author's own

Immersion – approaches issues, seeks solutions

- Immersive Education
  - Spending extended periods of time exploring one concept or topic
  - Knowing through 'doing'
  - Draws research into the curriculum
  - Seeks solutions

Image: author's own

Structure (overview)

- Attend to one topic/question (a block) without any other classes

- Daily contact time with tasks to complete for the following day

- Contact time filled with activity not passive didactic lectures

Image: author's own

Materialities in Anthropology

Course structure

- 4 consecutive hrs per week
- Introductory lecture
  - Housekeeping
  - Lecturer talks – my research
- Next weeks
  - student lectures

  (up to 1 hour each)
- Reading week
- Second half of term devoted to projects

Image: author's own

Content

- Core question: how do relationships with materials make us human?

- Core themes: porosity, blending, boundaries

- Reconsideration of human engagement with the material world through exploration of how substances behave WITH humans
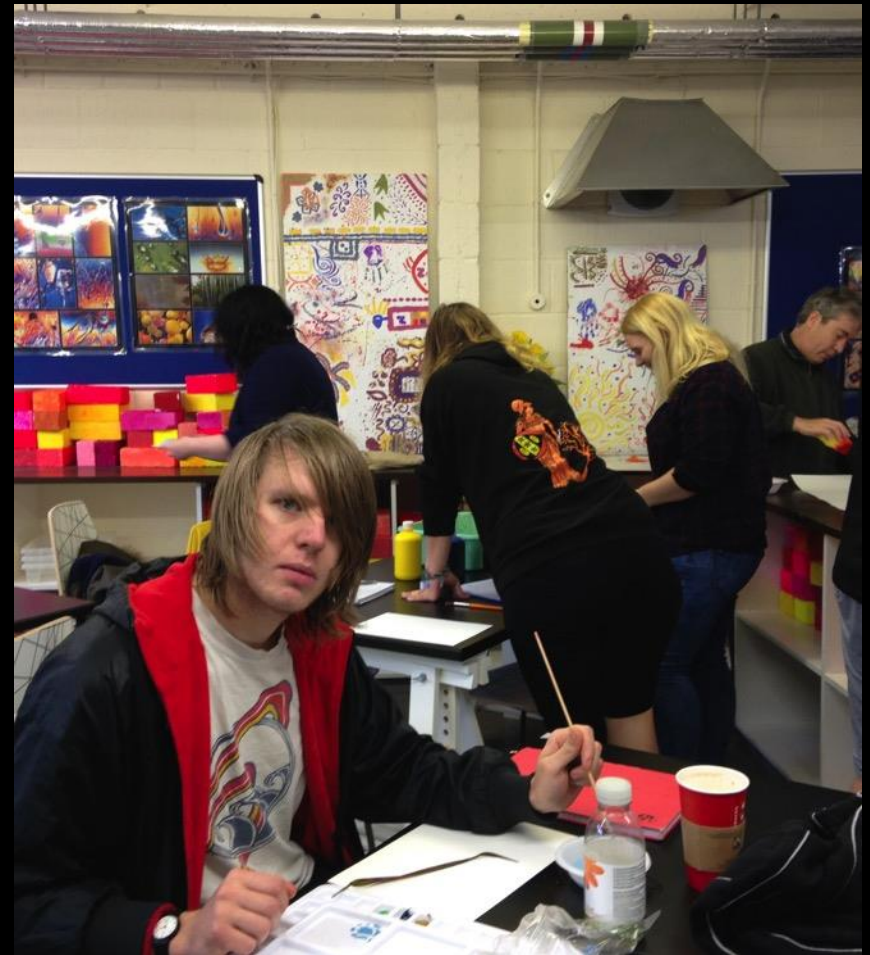
Image: author's own

Rationale for structure

- To draw students towards the identity 'researcher'

- To create a research community at undergraduate level

- Work collaboratively and independently

Image: author's own

Student lectures

- Formative
- Voluntary
- 1 hour each (max.)
- Based around one of the course articles or the core text (Drazin and Kuchler 2015.*The social life of materials*).

- Up-take:
  – Initial reticence
  – Those who did perform excelled... out of their comfort zones
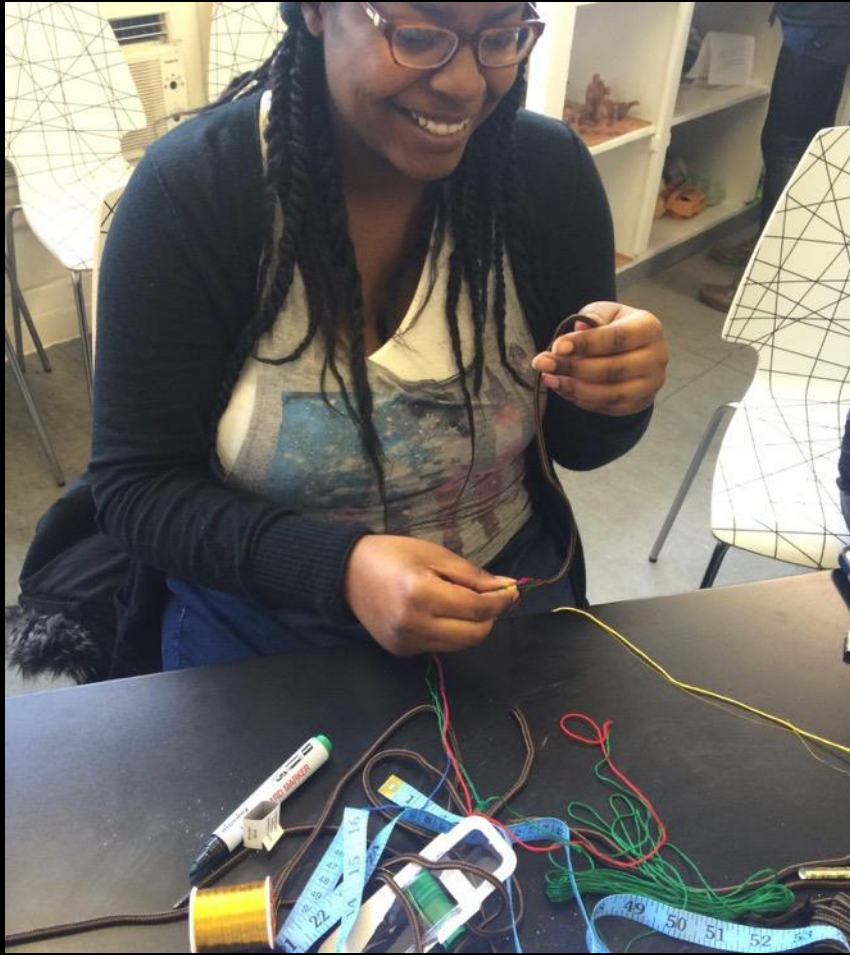

Image: author's own

Project time

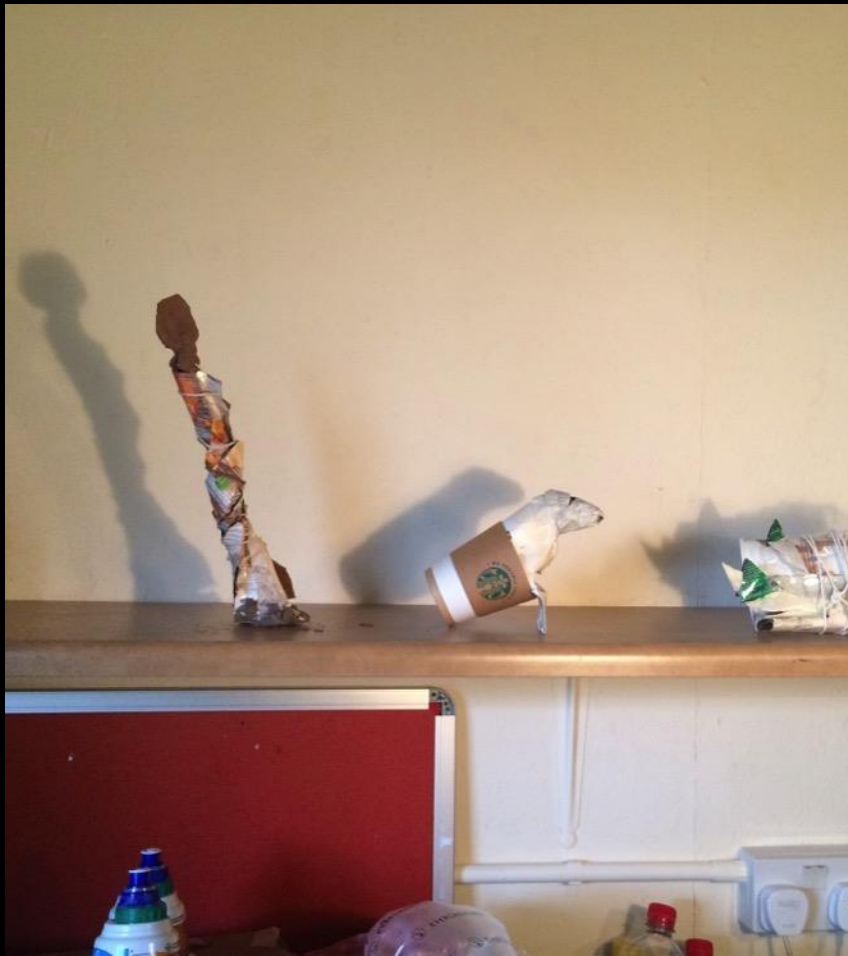- To produce a visual representation of one of the ideas in the course materials.

Image: author's own

Brittney and Ollie

Images: author's own
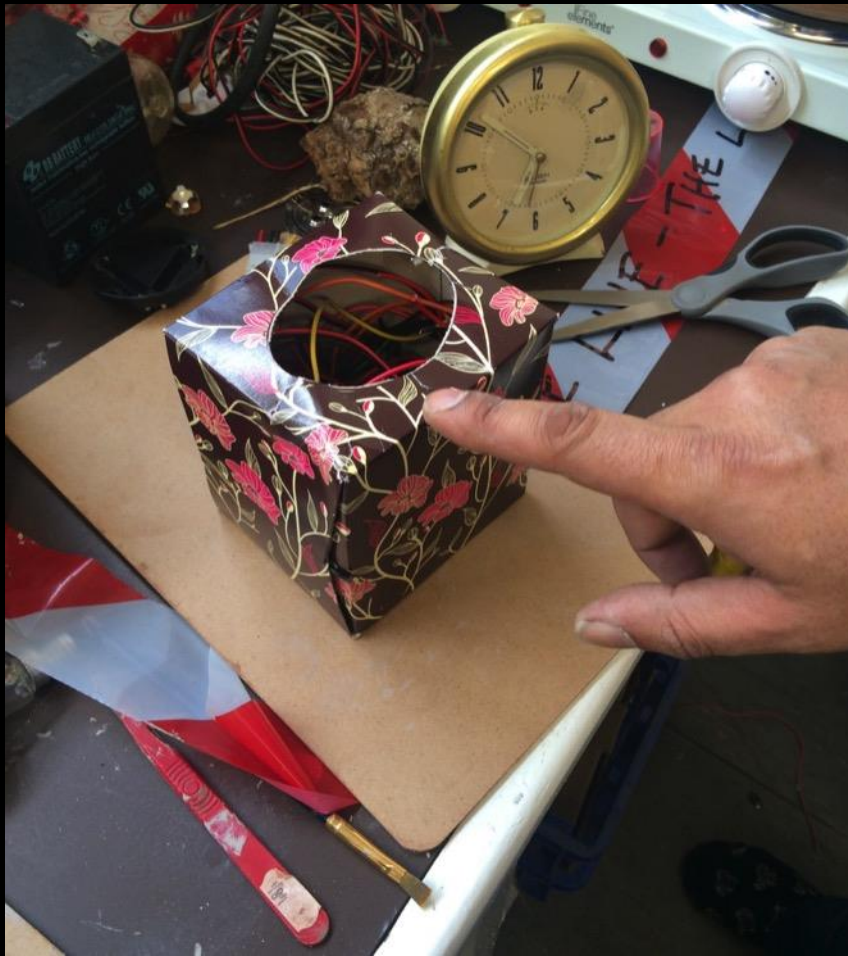
Lucinda and Rosemary

Images: author's own

Shadow art inspired by trip to Zimbabwe

Image: author's own

Kenny's bioplastic lamp
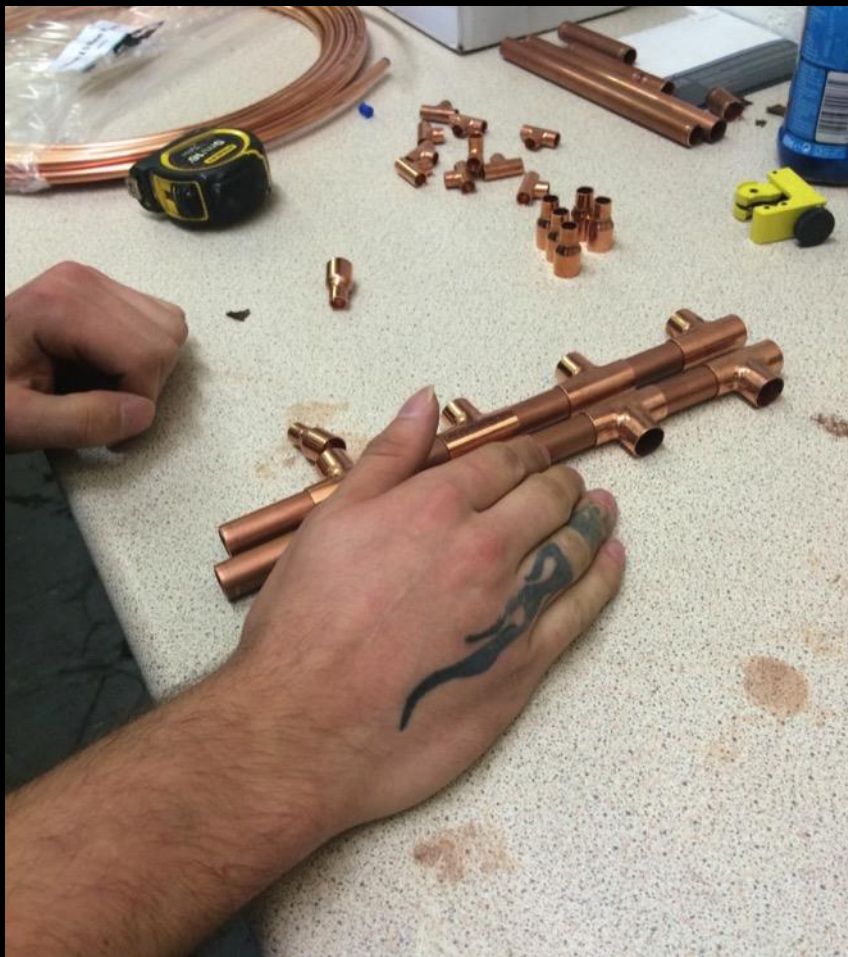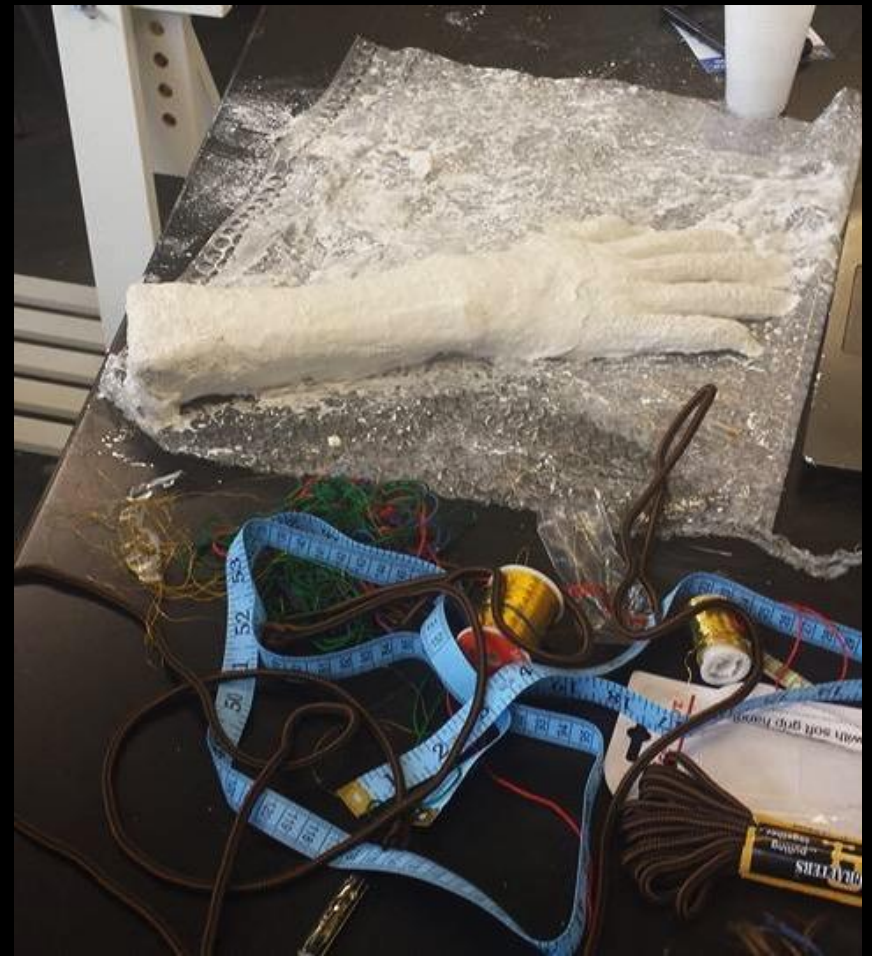

Images: author's own

Image: author's own

Image: author's own

Tristan's copper ribcage
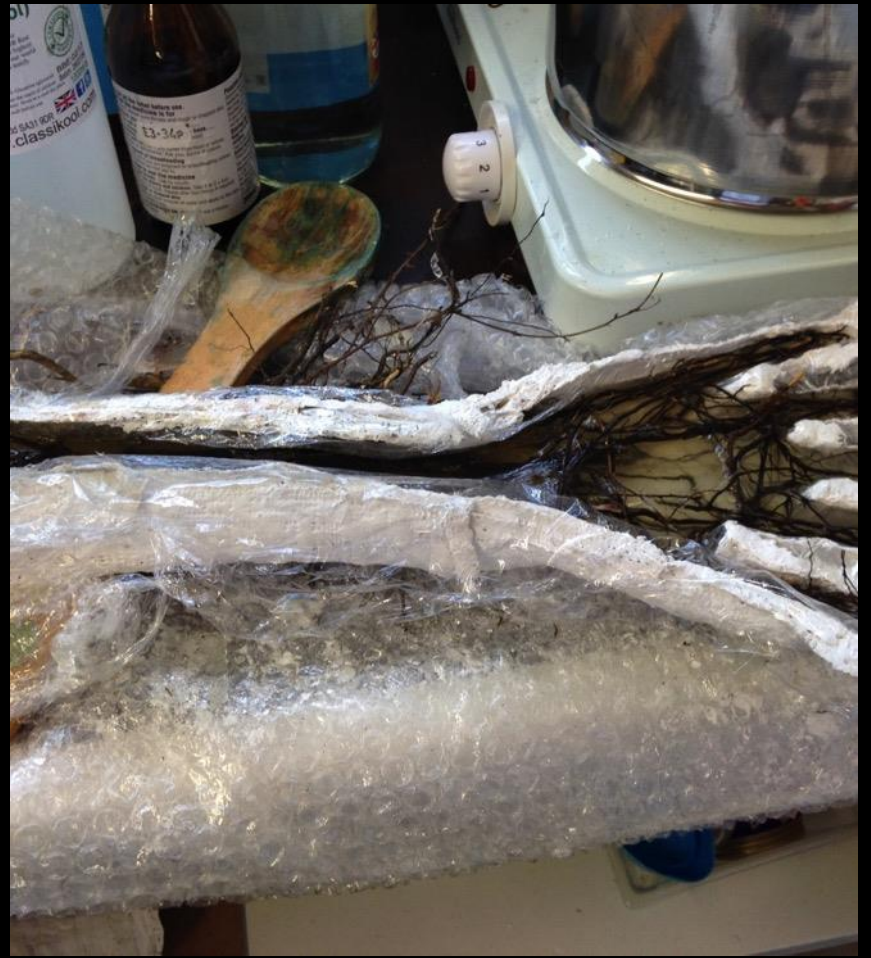

Images: author's own

Seren's arm

Images: author's own

Images: author's own

Images: author's own

Images: student's own

Image: student's own

Benefits for students

Image: student's own

- Solution seekers
- Collaborators
- Leaders
- Confident
  - In their knowledge
  - In their abilities
- Critical practitioners
  - Reflexive
  - Sensitive
  - Inclusive
  - Independent

In summary

- Education methodologies need to dramatically alter to respond to global conditions

- Immersive education supports this end creating graduates fit for the future.

Morguefile (www.morguefile.com)

Bibliography

- ESfD. 2014 *Education for Sustainable Development: guidance for UK higher education providers* [online] Available at http://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/Publications/Documents/Education-sustainable-development-Guidance-June-14.pdf
- Longhurst, S. 2014. In *Education for Sustainable Development: guidance for UK higher education providers* [online] Available at http://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/Publications/Documents/Education-sustainable-development-Guidance-June-14.pdf
- Miliband, D. 2006 Choice and Voice in Personalised Learning In OECD (Eds.), *Personalising Education* (pp. 21-30). Paris, France: Organization for Economic Cooperation & Development. [online] Available at http://www.oecd.org/site/schoolingfortomorrowknowledgebase/themes/demand/41175554.pdf
- Sterling, S. 2012 *The Future Fit Framework: an introductory guide to teaching and learning for sustainability in HE* [online] Available at https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/sites/default/files/future_fit_270412_1435.pdf
- Robinson, K .2006 *Do Schools Kill Creativity* TED talks (online) Available at https://www.ted.com/talks/ken_robinson_says_schools_kill_creativity?language=en#t-261363
- Robinson, K. 2010 *Changing Education Paradigms* TED talks (online) Available at https://www.ted.com/talks/ken_robinson_changing_education_paradigms
- Quest University, Canada. 2015 [online] available at http://www.questu.ca/about.html
- United Nations World Summit. 2005. 2005 World Summit Outcome, [online] Available at: www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/60/1

- All pictures are copyright free.
- Sources:
  - Morguefile (www.morguefile.com)
  - Personal collection