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A student-led approach to introducing the principles of Green Chemistry into undergraduate lab classes.

Reducing our environmental impact and increasing sustainability are of ever increasing concern to society and these ideals are also important to many of our students. The principles of Green Chemistry1 provide guidance on how to make chemical processes more environmentally friendly and embedding these principles into undergraduate teaching will raise student awareness of how we can continue to make a positive difference in the area of Chemistry and related subjects. Undergraduate practical classes present a great opportunity in which to demonstrate changes that can be made in small scale experiments to reduce environmental impact. Before changes can be made, however, we need to assess the impact of our current experiments and identify areas where small changes could improve overall sustainability, whilst still teaching students the key skills required for practical chemistry. We are currently undertaking a student-led project in which a Reading University summer student performs their own research, supported by academics, with the aim of developing a method by which we can assess our current impact and suggest changes that can be made to make our lab classes align more closely with green chemistry principles. Materials such as infographics and posters will be produced with the aim of introducing students to green principles and bringing awareness of what we as chemists can do to move towards a more sustainable future.

1. 12 Principles of Green Chemistry, https://www.acs.org/content/acs/en/greenchemistry/principles/12-principles-of-green-chemistry.html, (accessed June 2021).

Key words

Green Chemistry, organic chemistry, Undergraduate laboratory course, student-project, environment.

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