



This is our **Sharing Information on Progress (SIP)** Report on the Implementation of the **Principles for Responsible Management Education**

## Australian Catholic University, Faculty of Law and Business Sharing Information on Progress Report July 2017

**Principle 1 | Purpose:** *We will develop the capabilities of students to be future generators of sustainable value for business and society at large and to work for an inclusive and sustainable global economy.*

The mission of the School of Business is crafted to reflect our sense of responsibility:

“The School of Business seeks to develop reflective business leaders and independent learners who are global in their outlook, ethical in their actions and practical in the application of their professional skills. This is done by engaging in business practices which strive to contribute to the common good, uphold the dignity of work and create goods and service which meet authentic needs; fostering an appreciation of the dignity of all people and the interconnectedness of nations as a global community; developing the skills to connect diverse experiences and knowledge into new insights; and ensuring an appropriate balance of theoretical, practical and research-engaged learning experiences.”

Since our last report we have renamed and repositioned the Business School as: “the Peter Faber Business School.” St Peter Faber was one of the founders of the the Society of Jesus, more generally known as the Jesuits. The Jesuits have developed a reputation as educators. St Peter Faber thought well ahead of his time, seeing business as having a responsibility to contribute to the common good. By “the common good” we mean that business helps to create the conditions for people to flourish, assuring fulfilment as human beings.

Also, since our last report, the then naissant Thomas More School of Law has steadily increased its student numbers and has this year graduated its first cohort.

The Australian Catholic University more generally has conducted research into the way in which we are seen in the community, so that our branding can be engineered to more accurately reflect the true value that our stakeholders see us as delivering. The primary quality that we have found that people in the Australian Community associate with us is that of empathy. As a result the formal brand proposition of the University is “impact through empathy”. This represents a unique place in Higher Education in Australia. It is a quality that is difficult to replicate and therefore gives us a sustianable competitive advantage.

**Principle 2 | Values:** *We will incorporate into our academic activities and curricula the values of global social responsibility as portrayed in international initiatives such as the United Nations Global Compact.*

We have restructured our flagship undergraduate program, the Bachelor of Commerce, such that eight of the twenty four subjects are primarily focused on issues of responsibility, including ethical management and stakeholder awareness. In addition we have revised all of our units to embed the principles of Catholic social thought, which include respect for the dignity of the human person, community solidarity and participation in community life. We have maintained and strengthened our focus on community engagement by bringing the community engagement experience that students are required to undergo into the assessable structure of the degree.

Over the period since the last SIP we have involved a wider range of staff in the teaching of what we call the “core curriculum.” This is constituted by two units of the 24 unit degree that apply Catholic social teaching to the resolution of a range of social problems. They are designed to build social awareness and commitment in the manager that we are educating. This has included the continuation of subjects that we had reported in the last SIP as being reframed to link traditional management principles with UN Global Compact themes – eg *Ethical leadership and Social Responsibility* and *Strategic Management for Sustainability*.

We have addressed the educational needs of the non profit sector through the development of our Graduate Certificate in the Management of Non Profit Organisations. Educational programs that deal with the needs of not for profit organisations are still relatively rare in Australia, despite the fact that over 800,000 Australians work within the not for profit sector and our governments have moved out of direct provision of many social services. In the past two years we have begun to provide the program as a cohort model to those strategically positioned to influence provision of social services: e.g to cohorts of school principals, hospital administrators and the clergy.

The Peter Faber Business School and the Thomas More School of Law continue to encourage staff to undergo pro bono work for worthy causes. We have provided staff to the MBA program at Assumption University in Thailand and the Divine Word University MBA program in Papua New Guinea. A number of staff also sit on not for profit boards.

We have internationalised our curriculum and are building a global mindset in students. 2016 saw the inauguration of our international study tour, available to both undergraduate and post graduate students, including classes at our new Rome campus.

There are multiple opportunities for students to engage in international activities. A new program that has been instituted is the intercultural virtual classroom. This program allows students to engage with students in an international partner institution through the cross country group work in a group assignment.

In addition students have the opportunity to take advantage of international winter and summer schools. The redesign of the commerce degree allows students to undertake a full semester of study for credit at an international partner institution.

***Principle 3 | Method:*** *We will create educational frameworks, materials, processes and environments that enable effective learning experiences for responsible leadership.*

Since our last SIP, we have developed online provision, incorporating the flipped classroom concept to raise the level of engagement among students and push the classroom experience further up the taxonomy of learning. Using a consistent “digital core” template staff provide students with a common core of information about the courses while allowing for individual lecturer customisation. The university has also introduced mandatory recording of live lectures which are uploaded as part of the digital core.

The move to the common digital core has allowed the School to move away from the traditional large lecture plus small tutorial model to interactive workshops at all levels. A pleasing result of this change in approach has been a significant reduction in student failure rates in quantitative units such as statistics or introductory accounting.

As part of the School repositioning as the Peter Faber Business School all subjects (units) were refined so that one formal learning outcome for assessment covers at least one of the following: sustainability (stewardship); dignity of the person; dignity of work; solidarity (interconnectedness of all people); preferential option for the poor; subsidiarity and participation; and the common good. On completion of their degree students will have a deep and embedded ethical perspective to inform responsible leadership.

We have also upgraded our programs for Indigenous students from a specialist sub Bachelor / Associate Degree to a full Bachelor of Commerce. The Bachelor program allows Indigenous students to undertake one of two majors: management or accounting. Students in the Indigenous programs are from all over the country, work weekly through the digital core and come together for two residential sessions each semester for face to face workshops. The Indigenous business units which were previously restricted to the Indigenous cohort have been opened up to all students to allow students to develop a deeper understanding of Indigenous issues.

We have been deemed eligible by the European Foundation for Management Development (EFMD) to apply for EPAS accreditation of our flagship program, the Bachelor of Commerce. That assessment is currently underway.

***Principle 4 | Research:*** *We will engage in conceptual and empirical research that advances our understanding about the role, dynamics, and impact of corporations in the creation of sustainable social, environmental and economic value.*

We have now established within the Peter Faber School of Business a research centre, called the *Centre for Sustainable HRM and Wellbeing*. Last year it achieved the Australian national bench mark (Excellence in Research Australia) indicating world’s best practice. This was achieved after only two years of operation.

Our publications feature in top-tier journals including *Academy of Management Review*, *Administrative Science Quarterly*, *Accounting Organizations and Society*, *Human Relations*, *Human Resource Management (US)*, *Journal of Business Ethics*, *Journal of Management*,

*Journal of Vocational Behavior, Journal of Applied Psychology, Organization Science and Organization Studies.*

The key streams of research in the Centre are:

- Sustainable HRM: beyond financial metrics;
- Happiness and job satisfaction;
- Voice, institution and social identity; and
- Employee engagement and organisational performance.

All research in the school is expected to demonstrate its linkage to the ethical and social principles which are articulated within the School Mission. In addition to the research undertaken within the Centre, School members continue to research in their own disciplinary fields such as finance, accounting and marketing.

***Principle 5 | Partnership:*** *We will interact with managers of business corporations to extend our knowledge of their challenges in meeting social and environmental responsibilities and to explore jointly effective approaches to meeting these challenges.*

The Peter Faber Business School has programs accredited by industry representative bodies with an interest in higher education. These include the Certified Practicing Accountants Australia (CPAA) the Institute of Chartered Accountants Australia (ICAA) and the Australian Human Resources Institute (AHRI).

We have also instituted a School Advisory Board which comprises representatives from the private, public and non for profit sectors in addition to an alumnus, who collectively serve the role of a critical friend, reviewing our programs so that we can assure their focus on industry needs. The Advisory Board is a national board which meets quarterly to advise the School.

ACU has recently opened a business incubator called “Collaborate Plus” with the support and funding of the New South Wales state government. The role of Collaborate Plus is to provide a shared work space for local startups and also to allow these small businesses to connect with student entrepreneurs and provide placement opportunities.

The School also has an active internship program. There are two types of internship which are available to students. The first is embedded in a core unit which all students undertake and requires students to undertake a placement with a not for profit or charitable organisation. The second type of internship is discipline based and is an elective unit. Funding has been received by the state government specifically to ensure that international students have the opportunity to undertake internships within government organisations. In addition students can undertake internships with any of our major for profit corporate partners.

***Principle 6 | Dialogue:*** *We will facilitate and support dialog and debate among educators, students, business, government, consumers, media, civil society organisations and other interested groups and stakeholders on critical issues related to global social responsibility and sustainability.*

The School is involved in a range of networks across the country. These include local Chambers of Commerce, professional associations and the various Catholic Business networks. These networks afford members of the School to engage in debate with key business leaders. In addition the School supports such networks via sponsorships. These sponsorships give the School speaking opportunities to promote the ethical approach of the School and its programs.

In addition staff are, at times, called on to give comment in the media in their field of specialisation as well as give keynote and other addresses to conferences and other gatherings. Staff are supported in developing skills to engage in the media through the provision of media training and presentation skills.