



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

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 ACU interprets the kinds of principles underpinning PRME in a Catholic intellectual and moral framework. Our stated mission is

“Within the Catholic intellectual tradition and acting in Truth and Love, Australian Catholic University is committed to the pursuit of knowledge, the dignity of the human person and the common good.”

The Thomas More Law Academy, our Business School and the University in general is open to students and staff of all beliefs, but the students are engaged with fundamental value creation that we see as an especially important feature of a Catholic identity: this includes, a long term view, a view of equity that ensures that the vulnerable are included in the joyous aspects of life and a view of people as cultivators of creation. Business therefore becomes a matter of building just, sustainable and resilient workplaces that bring the satisfaction of needs to employees and prosperity to organisations. We also aim to influence organisations to direct their resources towards making a contribution to the common good.

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.

The UN Global Compact is a strategic institution that aims to focus businesses that participate within it (and those that are yet to engage) on ten universal principles in areas of Human Rights, labour standards, the environment, and anti-corruption.

All our teaching, learning and curriculum grow out of the University Mission, which is committed to “the pursuit of knowledge, the dignity of the human person and the common good”. This underpins both our pedagogical approach, and the development and delivery of our curricula.

In the last two years we have developed and run a Graduate Certificate in Leading Resilient Enterprises, a course that deals with the skills and knowledge that is fundamental to building resilient organisations. In particular, the course develops systems thinking, innovation capacity and sustainable Leadership.

Our postgraduate units have also developed around the core values of the University. Leadership has become “Ethical Leadership,” Strategy has become “Strategic Management for Sustainability.” Governance has been linked to corporate social responsibility and risk management. These are core courses common to all post graduate programs and so every student from the Accountant to the HR specialist must engage seriously with these issues as they make their journeys through our courses.

Across the wider university and at undergraduate level, we have developed two highly reflective subjects, which have been running for the past three years and that bring together students from all faculties. These two subjects are focused on our social justice objectives. These are titled *Our World: community and vulnerability* and *Understanding Self and Society contemporary issues*. These units are part of our business courses but transcend business concerns to develop a whole of person approach to learning and a whole of society approach to thinking. In addition, all our undergraduate students do a community engagement unit, where they work practically in support of the vulnerable in our society; embedded in this unit is a compulsory module, ‘Working with children and vulnerable adults’, which ensures that all our students understand the need and what it means to protect the vulnerable.

Over the past three years we have also internationalized both our curriculum and activities. We have a campus in Manila and we work pro bono on the MBAs at Assumption University in Thailand and Divine Word University in Papua New Guinea. The University has a long standing educational program, originally developed by the School of Business, working with refugees along the Thai Burma Border. Even though management of this program has now centralized, we remain a participant.

At the postgraduate level, we run an international Study Tour, where by students may globalize their view on business practice, plus an *International Business Environment* Unit. Again these are core units, which mean that every student must engage with global issues. . In 2014, the students visited New York. In 2016, we will visit Rome. At undergraduate level our students are able to pursue their socially oriented subjects in major cities overseas such as Rome, Florence and Paris.

We are also contributing to institutions of social welfare across sectors: in the Catholic sphere, the other denominational sphere and the secular sphere of welfare provision. We have established Graduate Certificate in the Leadership of Not for Profit Enterprises.

We are currently developing a post graduate program in Church Management for operation in Australia and a similar course in Parish issues for operation globally.

ACU has a policy of encouraging staff into involvement in community based organisations and recognizing them for that contribution. The specific involvements are too numerous to list but in general include service on school boards, quasi autonomous government authorities, voluntary community welfare services, contributions through the popular press and even the provision of food to our students.

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

The educational industry in Australia has become more accessible with the immediate past government achieving its target of expanding participation such that 40 % of Australians would have degree qualifications. This has broadened and diversified the base of our students and made Australian universities necessarily more inclusive institutions. This expansion in the range of our students has required a greater investment in support services. It has also meant that we have needed to work with professional organisations covering the majors to improve the quality of provision, so that the greater participation does not simply translate into greater failure rates and successful completion of the degree translates into successful entry to the relevant profession.

Learning and teaching has become a focus for our innovation and scholarship every bit as important as the primary disciplines from which the academic staff come. In 2015 we are providing whole of School professional development in ‘Transparent Pedagogy’, an evidence-based approach which ensures that low SES and first-in-family students are systematically inducted into what is required for academic success. We are developing more active, authentic and constructionist approaches to learning and assessment. We are also putting much energy into developing highly engaging learning experiences, and good practice student engagement and retention programs designed to address the student as a whole person.

These initiatives grow directly from our conviction that learning should be energizing and inspirational, and also models responsible leadership, ensuring that we teach the principles of responsible leadership within learning and teaching framework that exhibits this approach.

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.*

The Australian Catholic University has concentrated its research focus in a small number of key areas, which operate as research institutes. Of relevance here is the Institute for Social Justice, The key principles of this Institute includes normative reflection and action research.

ACU Faculty of Law and Business prioritizes scholarly endeavors in the fields of Sustainability and Social Values. Amongst others, this objective is evidenced by several recent publications in highly regarded journal outlets, such as Human Resource Management Review, Asian Journal of Management, Human Resource Management (US), Journal of Vocational Behavior and International Journal of Human Resource Management. These empirical and conceptual contributions disentangle the role of sustainable Human Resource Management and employee well-being and introduce the notion of an alternative purpose of Business that goes beyond traditional concerns related to shareholder interests and profit maximization.

Two journals in particular have their editorial home in the school

- The Journal of Global Responsibility has a global focus and has a significant global partnership with the Globally Responsible Leadership Initiative (GRLI), which is on the Steering Committee of PRME. .
- The Asia Pacific Journal Business Administration, which has a mission to mentor early career researchers and thereby help to create the next generation of researchers.

The School is also the home base of the Pacific Rim Editor of the Public Management Review, which is a top tier journal with a public and NGO management focus.

***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.*

We have a number of strands to our partnership strategy. As a Faculty we have relationships with the professional bodies that govern the professions for which our courses provide preparation. These include the Australian Institute of Marketing, the Australian Human Resources Institute, the Australian Computer Society and the various Accounting Bodies including the Certified Practising Accountants, the Institute of Chartered Accountants and the Institute of Public Accountants.

For example, in partnership with the CPA Australia, we developed a pathway through our Vocational Education Sector to completion of an Accounting degree, with a component taught within the vocational college and a component taught within the University. More broadly, we have instituted a wide array of articulation agreements that give students who are either socially or geographically disadvantaged a multiple pathways into and points of entry to the University.

In addition, we liaise with the various Chambers of Commerce that represent business interests in the locations of each of our campuses. We are currently developing a more sophisticated advisory council structure that mirrors our federal structure constituted by a national faculty that is distributed across a number of Australian states. This will provide for both local advice and networking at the state level but also bring together representatives at a national level to provide similar support.

We also have a commonality of interest with and obligation to all of the social welfare agencies that operate within the Australian context. Australian Government policy over the past decades has driven a transfer of responsibility for social welfare provision from the Government sector to the non-Government sector, with church based agencies taking the bulk of the load. It has been estimated that there are over 600 000 non-government organisations in Australia. We have concentrated on partnerships with Catholic Non-Government organisation, but the programs developed in this way have also proved relevant to and popular with non-Catholic NGOs giving the partnerships a positive externality.

***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 ACU has a policy of transferring the knowledge generated by scholarship and research into public dialogue. As a Faculty we could always do more against this principle. As a University we tend to sponsor or directly provide public conferences into which all faculties feed material and provide support. Recent themes of conferences relevant to social responsibility include Civil Society and Human Formation, Reasons and Virtues and Responses to Family Violence.

ACU is this year the sponsor and host of 25th General Assembly of the International Federation of Catholic Universities, which provides a global networking forum and the highest level of leadership among these universities.

Key objectives for the next 24-month period with regard to the implementation of the Principles

We will be focused in our purpose by a Papal Encyclical due out in June or July on the environment. Taken together with our mission we see sustainability in a broader context of global responsibility, where our individual students develop concern for matters wider than the vocational credential they are developing with us. We are building into our curriculum a social vision, systems thinking, critical reflexivity and an appreciation for the sacred in life

We are reviewing our course architecture to increase its potency and appeal to students with regard to responsible management. Asking people to take on a wider, more inclusive array of responsibilities for its own sake is a hard sell and so we will be seeking ways to make it appear to our students as part of the natural order of things.

In particular we are reviewing and enriching our material in systems thinking for online delivery, so that we can reach a wider range of students and make this critical skill for sustainability more pervasive on our curriculum.

Undergraduate units create the professional. Post graduate units develop professionalism. We are strong in undergraduate provision but need to develop the impact of our post graduate provision so that we can engage with more already practicing managers and develop in their minds the arguments for global responsibility.

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