RENEWAL OF COMMITMENT TO PRME PRINCIPLES

It is with great pleasure that we present the 2013 Sharing Information on Progress (SIP) report for UTS Business School. Business is under pressure to address the need for a more sustainable economy. Reflecting this need, UTS has developed a new approach to business education that aims to integrate sustainability as a key theme across its teaching and research.

Our Professor of Sustainable Enterprise, Dr Suzanne Benn, has established the UTS Sustainability Working Party, which maps our teaching offerings against sustainability, identifying different approaches that may enable students to embed sustainability in their working and personal lives.

Numerous research projects are under way across UTS Business School that incorporate sustainability concerns, such as collaboration with the Eco Watt Professional Alliance Network and an initiative to improve energy efficiency in accounting and management.

UTS Business School understands sustainability as referring to the long term, to the concept that decisions made now should not impair the quality of life for future generations. UTS Business School aims to contextualise this understanding of sustainability so that students develop the knowledge and critical thinking skills to apply to a future workplace that is increasingly shaped by resource constraints and a need for innovation and flexibility.

Our contributions and commitment to the PRME principles are highlighted in the following report. As we make the move into our new, 5-star Green Star Rated Dr Chau Chak Wing building in late 2014 we will continue to set our goals and strategy to reflect these principles.

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 economy

The revised UTS Sustainability Policy commits UTS to a broader definition of what it means to move towards sustainability. Through its research, teaching and learning, operations and community engagement, UTS aims to move towards sustainability by:

- Minimising the environment impact of its operations and seeking to improve environmental amenity and integrity
- Promoting social justice and equity for current and future generations
- Contributing to human health and wellbeing
- Maintaining its own financial viability

UTS is committed to ensuring that sustainability principles are incorporated into decision-making activities at all levels, and that decisions are informed by evidence-based, integrated analysis that considers the needs of all stakeholders. UTS Business School actively encourages students to participate in events that will develop their ability to lead in a sustainable economy.

UTS Business students have been selected as one of the five finalist teams, from 30 original teams, in this year’s 2013 IIBD Case Competition, jointly organised by IIBD and the Chinese Businesses Case Research Centre, School of Business, Hong Kong Baptist University. The theme of the 2013 competition is The Sustainability of Social Enterprises: Managing the Double Bottom Line. The finalists will be presented with a business case on the morning of November 8, 2013, and each team will have six hours to research, analyse and develop a set of action plans, make recommendations and prepare their presentations.

UTS Student Union Initiative

A weekly pop-up breakfast bar in the foyer of the UTS building, known as the Tower provides a free, healthy breakfast to 1000 students each week. The Bluebird Brekkie Bar is an initiative of the UTS Students’ Association. Its success in encouraging sustainability, supporting student welfare and promoting local producers has been recognised with the International Green Gown Award, announced at a ceremony in London. The cafe won a 2012 Australasian Green Gown Award in September 2012.

Professor Roy Green
Dean, UTS Business School

Associate Professor Chris Burton
Associate Dean, UTS Business School
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 UNPRME

In the wake of the global financial crisis, universities were widely critiqued for schooling their business graduates in narrow tools of business sometimes at the expense of a broader set of skills needed to successfully lead business. UTS Business School responded to this challenge, developing a more integrative approach to its business education. Several working parties were established with the purpose of embedding key themes of sustainability, ethics and creativity into new undergraduate and postgraduate subjects. The working parties represented all of the different disciplinary groups in the Business School (marketing, management, economics, finance and accounting) and they came together to think of ways to map sustainability across a business degree.

Integrating Business Perspectives is a core subject in the Bachelor of Business. It introduces the relationship between the various business disciplines and their contribution to the value of a business and to society. The subject presents students with business design that is both socially and environmentally responsible and considers the impact of all present activities on future generations.

Sustainability is integrated into the curriculum from the beginning of business students’ learning in the Bachelor of Business.

The core subject, Integrating Business Perspectives embeds sustainability by giving students an overview of the business landscape, with its various economic, legal and regulatory dimensions, across the private, public and non-profit sectors. It introduces the relationship between the various business disciplines and their contribution to the value of a business and to society. Students also consider ethical and sustainability issues as they relate to the role of business in society. In addition, the subject incorporates the development of graduate skills for business professionals, in particular those relating to written communication, oral presentations, group work and critical, integrative and creative thinking.

Within this subject, students in the first year of the Bachelor of Business took on the key feasibility, sustainability and viability challenges of a post-carbon economy as part of the industry-funded Wicked Business Competition for 2012. More than 260 project teams developed innovative business concepts and the judges selected the eight best teams to compete in the finals.

The students were asked to consider: “If we are to operate in a carbon economy, how can business capitalise on new market opportunities? How will these opportunities and challenges shape innovative business design?”

A WICKED PROBLEM
UTS Bachelor of Business students took the first prize in the Wicked Problems Competition for 2012. The students were asked to imagine and design a post-carbon business. A UTS team, Refreshing Vending Machines, comprising Aidan Howes, Umer Aslam and Gemma Crawley, took out first prize of $2000, awarded by the New South Wales Business Chamber, for their idea of recycling drink bottles at the point of purchase. The Bachelor of Business students were assisted by a team of MBA students; Baptiste Bachellerie, Hasan Syed, Emil del Rasario and Nathan Wiltshire.

Dr Antoine Hermens, Aidan Howes, Paul Orton (NSW Business Chamber), Gemma Crawley, Umer Aslam.

INTEGRATED BUSINESS CONSULTING - WORKING WITH SUSTAINABLE COMPANIES
James Hutchin, an Associate Professor at the Fox School of Business in the United States, is spending the Spring semester 2013 in Australia as Visiting Professor of Strategy and Consulting in the MBA program at UTS Business School. Hutchin teaches in the Strategic General Management, Entrepreneurship and Risk Management departments at Fox, mainly in the graduate and executive education programs. He also leads the school’s Initiative for Sustainability Strategies and was lead academic for the research conducted for the United Nations Environment Programme Finance Initiative report on The Global State of Sustainable Insurance.

Postgraduate business students were invited to study under Hutchin in the subject Integrated Business Consulting, which is framed as a strategic consultancy, whereby students undertake professional assessment of clients’ needs and challenges so they can provide viable solutions and rigorous business plans. Students are expected to work closely with a client, undertake primary research and analyse secondary data sources to identify business problems and design strategic business solutions. The Integrated Business Consulting subject consults with global corporations, start-ups and not-for-profits to identify suitable projects for students and businesses. The 2012 cohort of students worked with:

Eco Whisper: A start up alternative energy company

Willis Re Australia: A leading risk adviser, insurance and reinsurance broker with more than 17,000 employees in over 400 offices worldwide.

Conservation Volunteers Australia: An Australian not-for-profit conservation organisation that attracts and coordinates volunteers for environmental restoration projects.
INTEGRATING VALUES OF GLOBAL SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Students in the postgraduate subject Management Consulting have an opportunity to use their skills to develop community-based local and overseas projects. This subject takes a critical look at the responsibilities and ethics of consultancy contract management, including project costing, scheduling and reporting. It also looks at the liability and ethical issues involved with consultancy. UTS Business School alumni, who are working as senior management consultants in industry, acted as volunteer ‘Industry Advisors’ on the community projects. The student teams in this subject have delivered almost $1.5 million worth of free consultancy work to the community sector in the past eight years.

PRINCIPLE 3 METHOD

We will create educational frameworks, material, processes and environments that enable effective learning experiences for responsible leadership

UTS is making a $1 billion investment its Sydney City Campus in what is a once-in-a-generation vision to deliver a vibrant and engaging education precinct. The investment will fundamentally change the way UTS delivers teaching, learning and research.

UTS is a founding member of the Green Building Council of Australia, so sustainable principles lie at the heart of the City Campus Master Plan. These principles are driven by an Environmentally Sustainable Development (ESD) Master Plan. This ESD Master Plan is central to UTS’s commitment to a 30 per cent reduction in greenhouse gases by 2020-21.

Seven key themes underpin UTS’s ESD Master Plan: Water, Daylight, Transport, Energy, Flexibility/Adaptability, Work environment, Education product.

The ESD Master Plan explores these themes at two levels: UTS City Campus as a whole: Holistic strategies such as black-water recycling or waste reduction that are either campus-wide or relate to multiple buildings.

Individual buildings: Building-specific ESD strategies such as natural ventilation systems, rainwater capture or photovoltaic panels.

All new buildings delivered under the City Campus Master Plan are targeting a minimum 5-Star Green Star Rating. Major refurbishments will target a minimum 4-Star rating.

The City Campus Master Plan ensures UTS will be an institutional leader in efforts to develop high-performance buildings and in adopting sustainable principles. It will also have direct practical and financial benefits, for example through reduced energy and water usage.

Projects completed in this subject in 2013 are:

CANA Communities: UTS students researched the commercial viability of Cana’s proposed introduction of an organic seedling project, supporting their skills development program while raising revenue for the work of the organisation. Their business plan included measuring production capacity, a proposed business structure and a staged implementation plan.

Groundswell Arts NSW: Groundswell is a new peak, sector-driven organisation with the aim of advancing the arts in the state of New South Wales, through development and advocacy, so that the arts reflect Australia’s culturally diverse society. MBA students worked with Groundswell to determine the most appropriate governance structure for the organisation and developed a three-year business plan.

Mahboba’s Promise: Mahboba’s Promise is an Australian non-profit organisation dedicated to helping the women and children of Afghanistan. It works with widows and children to improve education, offer vocational training and establish them as self-sufficient. The group has started schools for girls in areas where they had no educational opportunities and has worked on projects to provide health services and clean drinking water in rural areas. UTS business students helped develop a three-year strategic plan that addressed risk management, financial sustainability, operations and marketing.

Corporate Social Responsibility and Measuring Social Impact has been introduced as part of UTS Business School’s Community Management program and explores the relative usefulness of various impact assessment methods, including social accounting and audit, social return on investment, log frame techniques and the merits and limitations of existing indices such as the Dow Jones Sustainability Index, Corporate Responsibility Index and Global Reporting Initiative.

Dr Chau Chak Wing Building

UTS Business School is committed to doing more than just preaching responsible principles of sustainable management and is targeting a 5-Star Green Star Educational Building Rating for its new home, the Dr Chau Chak Wing Building, to be opened in 2014. Low carbon emissions will be achieved through: Low-energy air conditioning and lighting – including optimal use of natural light, An energy-efficient façade, On-site tri-generation power, Rainwater capture and minimising water consumption, The use of sustainable building materials.

Student initiatives and learning experiences

Green Week was held from June 3-7 across the Ultimo precinct on the fringe of the Sydney CBD and was a collaboration between UTS Union, TAFE NSW Sydney Institute, Ultimo College and the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC). Green Week activities across the Ultimo precinct included a photo competition and exhibition in the ABC building foyer, a Green Week dinner at TAFE’s Apprentice Restaurant, the Green Heroes Award, an electric car display, free films and talks, the Green Debate, a clothes swap and market stalls.

UTS Union Green initiatives mean that all union outlets use products such as organic, UTZ-certified coffee, sustainable seafood, free-range eggs and reusable cups. Tap water is available in all outlets as an alternative to bottled water.

UTS Enviro Collective is a forum where students can take steps towards improving our future through green projects and workshops.

UTS BUILD is an extra-curricular international leadership development program at UTS. The student program opens up global exchange and volunteering opportunities, internships, study tours, conferences and networking events. Some of the 2012 programs included working with refugees who have returned to Sri Lanka, community development in the Maldives, attending the University Scholars Leadership Symposium and the CSR: Global to local impact program in Malaysia, and experiencing India’s Microfinance organisations.
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.

UTS Business School has an active research culture, with particular strengths represented in our research centres and in the discipline groups of Accounting, Marketing, Management, Economics and Finance. At the school, senior academic staff are supervising doctoral students undertaking research in climate change and investment markets; energy efficiency and organisational change; energy efficiency and institutional change; sustainability narratives and change; sustainability in business in China; and CSR in the creative industries. Some of the UTS Business School academic staff with particular interest in Corporate Social Responsibility and Corporate Sustainability research include:

Professor Suzanne Benn, Professor of Sustainable Enterprise, provides leadership within UTS Business School and across UTS generally, working with other discipline groups and external stakeholders to promote sustainability. Professor Benn has a background in the sciences and the social sciences and has had wide experience working across the range of educational sectors and as a research and industrial scientist. Her current research interests span corporate sustainability and corporate social responsibility, business education for sustainability and organisational change and development for sustainability. Her interdisciplinary academic publications include three books and more than 90 refereed journal articles, book chapters and refereed conference papers.

She has led consultancy and research projects on the topic of corporate social responsibility, organisational change and sustainability for a number of Australian organisations. She has also conducted major Australian Research Council (ARC) grant funded projects on topics such as the communication of corporate social responsibility through social networks, and collaboration and governance for sustainability.

Professor Benn has modified and taught curriculum on sustainable business at the University of Shanghai and led the introduction of these programs into the undergraduate and postgraduate curriculum at UTS and at Macquarie University. She has a strong interest in interdisciplinary curriculum development and holistic approaches to learning for sustainability. Professor Benn supervises a number of PhD students in the area of corporate social responsibility, sustainability and education, learning and change for sustainability.

Dexter Dunphy is Emeritus Professor in the Management Discipline, where he previously held the position of Distinguished Professor. His main research and consulting interests are in corporate sustainability and the management of organisational change. Professor Dunphy has consulted to over 160 private and public sector organisations in Australia and abroad. His consulting includes advising on major organisational transitions, design of human resource strategies and implementing sustainability practices and human resource management.

Dexter is currently advising on corporate change programs and supporting sustainability initiatives within UTS and other organisations.

Professor Thomas Clarke, Professor of Management, conducted an ARC-funded national survey of The Changing Roles of Company Boards and Directors with the national law firm DibbsBarker, and completed a survey of Board Evaluation of leading ASX companies for the Australian Council of Superannuation Investors. He is engaged in the Workplace Gender Equality Agency’s national census of women in leadership, which is surveying women board directors in the ASX 500. His research interests include international comparative corporate governance, corporate governance and innovation, governance and regulation of the financial institutions, corporate social responsibility and sustainability, and the development of the knowledge-based economy.

Professor Clarke has supervised many PhD students in the UK and Australia and often acts as a doctoral examiner for Australian and overseas universities. He is currently supervising doctoral students in the fields of corporate governance in the resources sector; the legal reform of corporate governance; the governance and regulation of international resources corporations operating in Africa; and corporate policies and practices on sustainability.

Professor Clarke has co-edited the SAGE Handbook of Corporate Governance, which provides an eloquent argument for the extension of current definitions of corporate governance to encompass corporate social responsibility and sustainability.

PhD student Patrick Crittenden’s research project, The Energy Efficiency Gap, looks at the implementation of energy efficiency projects in business. His research explains how better support for corporate energy efficiency programs may mean lower electricity bills for all Australians, reducing greenhouse gas emissions along the way. Companies can contribute to higher energy prices by using more energy than they need, meaning additional investment is required in energy infrastructure. As part of his research, Crittenden is analysing case studies presented by representatives of 20 firms at public workshops hosted by the Australian Government in 2012. The analysis provides further evidence that while price signals are important, they only go part of the way towards encouraging the implementation of energy efficiency projects.
PRINCIPLE 5 PARTNERSHIP
We will interact with partners 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 UTS Business School Sustainability Working Party, led by Professor Suzanne Benn, Professor of Sustainable Enterprise, is collaborating on numerous research projects with corporations that incorporate sustainability concerns. EPAN (The Eco Watt Professional Alliance Network) is a select group of accredited Australian and International renewable energy consultants, engineers, manufacturers and installers who have welcomed UTS as a new EPAN member.

UTS Business academic staff Professor Benn, Dr David Bubna-Litic and Dr Ian McGregor produced a series of videos covering the importance of including the issue of sustainability within the courses provided by UTS Business School and the impact on future business activities. There are many benefits from managing energy efficiency, including mitigating risks from rising electricity prices and increased productivity from identifying inefficient organisational practices. Organisations also need to anticipate the impact of laws such as the Clean Energy Scheme, which focuses attention on the carbon footprint of organisational activities.

This means accountants and managers play an important role. UTS Business School is collaborating with major project partner Ernst & Young to produce seminars and webinars to upskill accountants and managers so they can drive organisational change and more energy-efficient practices. These materials will provide an overview of the basic principles underpinning sustainability and energy efficiency, and highlight the risks and opportunities of a low-carbon economy.

UTS and NSW Government join forces to benefit the environment
In November 2012 UTS signed a memorandum of understanding with the New South Wales Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH) to institute a collaborative research program. UTS will work with the NSW state government on joint research in the fields of science, sustainability and environmental protection. The MOU will foster cross-disciplinary collaborations to inform public policy on environmental and scientific challenges in NSW. As well as research, the two organisations will join forces on a series of events and to open up novel opportunities for UTS students, who will have the chance to take up internships, work experience placements and other educational and professional opportunities with the OEH.

Leadership and Change for Energy Efficiency in Accounting & Management Project
This project is funded by the NSW Office of Environment and Heritage and Department of Education & Communities under the Energy Efficiency Training Program. The project will make a significant contribution to the development of skills to support business in the transition towards a low carbon future. The main aim is to develop the awareness, skills and knowledge that current and future accountants and business managers need to progress the implementation of energy efficiency initiatives in the workplace. As the project develops, training material to help accountants and business managers, and educators, will be made available through the Business School website. The major project partner, with UTS Business School, is Ernst & Young. Other partners include Sydney Institute of TAFE, the Chartered Institute of Management Accountants, and Westpac Banking Corporation.

Project Team (from left to right): Paul Thambar (CIMA), Dr Paul Brown, Patrick Crittenden, Prof Sue Benn, Associate Prof David Brown, Dr David Bubna-Litic, Anthony Krithinakis.

OEH Chief Executive Sally Barnes signs the MOU with UTS Vice-Chancellor Professor Ross Milbourne Picture by Lisa Aloisio
PRINCIPLE 6 DIALOGUE

We will facilitate and support dialogue 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.

UTS Business School supports conference participation and workshops for staff and interested members of the public. The following are some of the forums that have been available to staff, students and the public to support dialogue and debate on global social responsibility and sustainability at UTS.

The Australian Centre for Event Management: UTS hosted in July 2013 the workshop Sustainable Events: Policies, Procedures & Practices to improve your performance. The convenor, Cameron Little, has two decades of experience within the environment, sustainability and corporate social responsibility sector and has been providing sustainability support for the events industry for 10 years. Participants gained an overview of the new International Standard for Event Sustainability Management Systems and of free and proprietary online tools such as carbon and ecological footprint calculators and the Sustainable Event Management Systems software.

Dr Suzanne Benn, Professor of Sustainable Enterprise, holds a regular informal discussion forum for staff and research students with an interest in sustainability, CSR and business ethics. Current research topics include climate change and investment markets, energy efficiency and organisational change, energy efficiency and institutional change, sustainability narratives and change, sustainability in business in China, and CSR in the creative industries. Corporate Sustainability research students from the Institute for Sustainable Futures share presentations.

Have your Say on Sustainability – What should UTS: Green mean? UTS’s Sustainability and Compliance branch, in conjunction with Institute for Sustainable Futures, invited students to take part in an open forum to discuss ways to shrink UTS’s energy and water footprint, and to develop courses better covering sustainability.

The Unilever Sustainable Living Plan began in November 2010 as a 10-year journey towards sustainable growth. Unilever Australia’s vice-president for Human Resources, Julia Farrant, spoke at UTS about the plan and what a sustainable organisation (and the world it operates in) needs from leaders now and in the future. She also outlined how the FMCG (fast-moving consumer goods) industry offers graduates the chance to be part of a sustainable future.

Sustaining Business: Will Vision and Leadership be the Keys that Safeguard Corporations in an Uncertain Future? In this UTSpeaks forum, Professor Suzanne Benn, Professor Dexter Dunphy and Dr Bruce Perrott discussed whether the diversity of businesses in Australia make a ‘one-size-fits-all’ strategy for adopting sustainable practices impossible.

FUTURE PLANNING: Key objectives

UTS Business School is preparing its students for a world in which integrative thinking and an entrepreneurial mindset are highly valued.

‘We believe the challenges – including environmental sustainability, business ethics and corporate social responsibility – are important opportunities for our graduates, who are expected to build on specialised knowledge with boundary-crossing skills, such as creativity, teamwork and problem-solving’ – UTS Business School Dean Roy Green.

While other Australian business schools have also signalled a shift towards more ethics-based courses, UTS’s approach is distinguished by its emphasis on integrative thinking, which inspires relevant and rigorous research, innovative partnerships and practice-oriented learning.

Today’s business leaders are grappling with a diverse array of challenges: globalisation, digitisation, climate change, organisational sustainability, a global credit crunch – the list is endlessly evolving. The SIP report outlines how UTS, and UTS Business School, is tackling these issues through curricula, creating opportunities for sustainable student and staff leadership, research and partnerships with organisations who share these values.

As sustainability is a complex and challenging area, UTS Business School adopts an interdisciplinary approach to research to deliver real-world practical outcomes through its faculties, centres and institutes.