Our Commitment

Hertfordshire Business School is pleased to reaffirm commitment to the principles of responsible management education and is delighted to produce this statement of progress towards the PRME principles.

Hertfordshire Business School, in its role as the business faculty of the University of Hertfordshire provides high quality educational, research and workplace facilities and is committed to embedding environmental management and improvement into its business model and organisational ethos. The University of Hertfordshire is pleased to exercise a leadership role in developing the environmental stewardship of staff, students and visitors to integrate sustainable principles into all its activities.

Of particular note the University of Hertfordshire achieved EcoCampus Platinum and ISO14001 at the end of 2012. To continue our development in managing the environmental aspects, impacts and risks we have committed to:

- Ensuring compliance with all relevant environmental legislation, regulations and other requirements as a minimum standard
- Reducing the University’s negative impact on climate change through implementing various projects (including a Carbon Management Plan)
- Reducing the environmental impact of the University’s digital environment through implementing a Green ICT Plan
- Reducing waste production and promoting resource efficiency through implementing a Waste and Resource Management Strategy
- Encouraging the implementation of a Travel Plan to reduce dependency on single occupancy car travel to and from the University and between sites
- Taking account of sustainable construction principles in new builds and refurbishment through implementing sustainable construction guidance
- Reducing the environmental impact of procurement through implementing a sustainable procurement plan
- By maintaining Fairtrade status and supporting ethical procurement
- Preventing pollution by managing and reducing emissions to air and discharges to water
- Managing and reducing water consumption wherever possible
- Managing the University’s grounds to create and enhance wildlife habitats through implementing a Biodiversity Action Plan
- Publishing an Environmental Report on an annual basis that summarises our environmental performance.

The University of Hertfordshire has also developed a **Sustainable Living Partnership** with Lafarge Tarmac Aggregates that is focused on ‘sustainable living’. Lafarge Tarmac is funding the Centre for Sustainable Communities at the University of Hertfordshire, with funded work aimed at generating and publicising practical and useful results through applied research and dissemination. A post-doctoral Fellow will contribute to academic scholarship and applied research outcomes to influence national debate.

Jerry Forrester  
**Dean**  
**Hertfordshire Business School**
Major Achievements

The UNPRME principles are embedded into all management areas across strategic management modules. Significant focus has been placed across a number of undergraduate modules directly on ethics and corporate social responsibility in large organisations. This has also prompted the opportunity to develop detailed student discussions in tutorials. Students are typically introduced to the key literatures and current debates in modules. Drawing on competing perspectives they learn how to evaluate the good and bad practices of contemporary business from a critical and informed position. Through class exercises focused on a range of ethical dilemmas for modern employees and managers and which draw, for example, on the utilitarian, deontological and Kantian positions, we explore the notion of being a ‘good corporate citizen’.

Our Collaborative Enquiry undergraduate module whose students are predominantly mature and already working in organisations have found it particularly fulfilling to work in groups on CSR focused assignments. Students are also reminded about the importance of sustainability in the marketers’ role, particularly in the development of new products and packaging. An innovative module on the challenges of managing in the Third Sector charges students to find a 50 hour placement in a Third Sector organisation. This both expands the student learning environment and benefits the local community.

On HR modules we have strongly made the case for responsible HR practice and the importance of students representing themselves with integrity. Students have been tasked with researching real organisations as a continuous role play exercise which includes issues of ethics and corporate responsibility. Modules on enhancing employability also challenge students to refer to current business issues from a corporate responsibility and sustainability perspective to develop STAR frameworks.

Students at all levels are provided with opportunities to engage with business leaders and leading academics on a range of topics including business ethics. By recording these talks we have also been able to offer these as a resource more widely across the Business School.

We have close links with IBM and its Smarter Planet initiative for sustainable development. Sustainable case studies have been developed and used in lecture and tutorial material. These include Toyota Prius, M&S Schwopping and Books for Free. We have also involved alumni guests in the delivery of some modules in order to provide additional examples of industry practice.

Assessment of one module has been sponsored by Telefonica O2 and the Managing Director (Wholesale) presented to students about how the company experimented with the use of flexible working (including home working). The company had assessed how reducing heating and lighting had enabled them to reduce their
carbon footprint. The assessment asked students to consider the issues of environmental impact related to homeworking.

Students have responded well to the philosophical discussion we’ve incorporated into two accounting and finance modules on ethics and business culture which examines self-interest versus public interest. Our module on sustainable marketing explores the drivers towards sustainability, such as legislation, competitive advantage and CSR, and in particular the role of marketing in educating and convincing the customer to consume less and recycle more. This module is delivered through the use of blended learning methods. A final year module on Contemporary Issues in Marketing explores trading relationships along supply chains. It covers fair trade and considers the problems of creating and appropriating value through economic exchange. Students may opt to base their final assessment on sustainability, ethical consumption or fair trade.

At postgraduate level our MBA students have the opportunity within a leadership and change module to engage with a community project as part of their assessment. We have found that this deepens the student learning and provides another opportunity to engage with sustainability and CSR. Postgraduate students are also introduced to the global dimensions of CSR with student led class discussions and use of case studies. The Contemporary Issues in Marketing postgraduate module is entirely devoted to corporate responsibility and requires students to link principles with their own company and to produce a report or conference paper as the assessment of the module.

Alongside the academic staff we have a strong team of visiting lecturers within the Business School who bring current organisational examples from the public, private and third sectors (and board level roles) into their teaching and curriculum development activities. Students are also able to benefit from the diverse interests and experience of our Visiting Lecturers’ which inform their academic practice. For example, running a UK digital network of small businesses interested in social responsibility; and programme management of a climate change programme for a large London Borough.
**Research** within the Business School which contributes to PRME principles includes:

- The evaluation of attempts made by Malaysian organisations to improve sustainability in the palm oil industry, comparing multinational enterprises with micro enterprises.
- Unsuitable products for a vulnerable consumer
- The relationship between environmental degradation and poverty in the developing world
- Reconnection in Food Policy: The impact of the turn to the market in food and farming policy on domestic production of vegetables in England. This research explores the marketing/policy interface and examines how a food and farming policy underpinned by notions of sustainable development encourages domestic vegetable growers to become more market oriented, competitive and collaborative
- Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) in the UK Construction Industry

**Partnership and dialogue** roles with which the Hertfordshire Business School are involved include:

- Programme Advisory Committee (PAC) member of the Malaysian Palm Oil Board. This Committee brings together Board level business leaders, academics, smallholder representatives and policy makers, meeting in Kuala Lumpur once a year to review issues and research findings. In 2013 a public lecture was given for the PAC on ‘Smallholders and Sustainability’. This was then repeated for staff and students of the School of Sustainable Agriculture, Universiti Malaysia Sabah.
- Attendance at workshops organised by organisations such as the Evolution Institute which seeks to connect the world of evolutionary science to public policy formulation.
- Interaction with leading utility companies on health and safety.
- Membership and dialogue with the Chartered Institute of Public Relations
- Presentation of a paper at an Academy of Marketing Conference entitled: *A turn to the market: a decade of food policy and its impact on domestic production of fruit and vegetables*. This explores how government policy on food and farming may support/hinder the marketing of sustainable production.
Knowledge Transfer projects the Hertfordshire Business School are involved with include:

- DEMCO project – work based learning for graduate researchers involving the delivery of a market research based report on procurement strategies in the converted and sponsored academies sector
- MBA projects in the Collective Enterprise module involve over 50% work based learning activities around sustainability projects such as Parasol Renewable Systems, WaterGull Orchards, DEMCO Europe and Grace Kennedy. The projects looked at the most sustainable strategies for the businesses to take that would be socially, economically and environmentally acceptable.
- Action based learning for business partners and writing reflecting-on-action research articles from collaborative projects
- Innovation Vouchers and Knowledge for Business projects are being delivered over high value select collaborations with micro to small businesses in the area. Examples include marketing strategies and marketing communications.

Key Objectives

Having carried out an audit of activity to inform our SIP report, and drawing on the ‘Integrating Sustainability into Business Schools’ (ISBIS) project by the Higher Education Funding Council England (HEFCE), we have identified four priorities to focus our development on in the next twenty four months.

- Increase communication about the UNPRME initiative within HBS
- Develop a clear strategy for organisational learning about, and reflection on, sustainability and socially responsible business practices within HBS
- Review current teaching practice on sustainability and share best practice from within HBS and across the sector
- Increase sustainability related research and collaboration

Increase communication about the UNPRME initiative within HBS

We will draw up a communication plan to support the development of the UNPRME initiative within HBS. The plan will support the UNPRME organisational learning strategy and develop engagement between teaching staff, Visiting Lecturers, undergraduate and postgraduate students, the local community and wider business and community interests.
Develop a clear strategy for organisational learning about, and reflection on, sustainability and social responsible business within HBS

We will develop a strategy to drive our organisational learning and facilitate reflection. This will engage academic staff to further embed good practice across Hertfordshire Business School and we will run a PRME focused workshop at the HBS Learning and Teaching Conference in 2014. This will draw on good practice within the Business School as well as learning from PRME and the Higher Education Academy.

Review teaching practice and share best practice

Over the next twenty four months the Hertfordshire Business School will continue to build a strong focus on ethics and CSR through learning, teaching and assessment. Overall we expect to build in more case studies including sustainability and CSR in order to give students an opportunity to engage with these topics in more depth. UN Global Compact values will be explicitly introduced in lectures and students will evaluate the strategic challenges involved in living up to these within MNEs. We are also working with the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales on using their thought leadership work in module teaching and assessment. The ICAEW research seeks to take a different approach to corporate governance by looking at the wider social responsibilities of companies.

We expect to evaluate new learning and teaching methods, including the use of more role play activities and to extend the use of existing innovation such as bringing in external speakers with relevant industry practice. We are also looking to trial some investigative assessment related to ethics and corporate responsibility.

Increase sustainability related research and collaboration

We will be building on and extending our collaboration and partnership activities with IBM and other corporations with the help of our alumni. Hertfordshire Business School also anticipates extending the Challenges of Responsibility event which is designed to help students engage with the wider business community. Through collaboration we wish to develop this engagement across a number of undergraduate modules.

The Business School has found it particularly enriching in the past to work with social enterprises collaboratively on projects and we plan to develop this activity further, particularly for modules such as Collaborative Enquiry.
Desired Support

Overall we would ask PRME to continue to advocate for increased focus on environmental and corporate social responsibility to publishers of core texts and case study libraries. We would also ask for the focus on dissemination of good practice in learning, teaching and assessment to continue.

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