31st January 2017

Dear Colleagues

This year marks the 10th Anniversary of PRME and so throughout 2017, many events and initiatives are planned to celebrate and reflect on this important milestone, and search for ways for PRME to play a key role in the global business agenda of the Sustainable Development Goals both locally and globally. As a PRME Regional Chapter, we set out with the intention of providing resources and support to signatory schools to implement the Principles by providing a forum to foster development of research and pedagogic initiatives for the benefit of our faculties, students and institutions.

In June 2016, the 3rd Annual PRME UK & Ireland conference was a combined effort by two Universities (Nottingham and Nottingham Trent) and two related networks (PRME and the European Business Ethics Network EBEN). These collaborations attracted 120 delegates for the 2 conferences that ran in parallel, with a rich international presence comprising 12 nationalities. There were thought provoking contributions from Senior Academic Ed Freeman, and Head of the PRME Secretariat, Jonas Haertle, as well as a broad range of presentations and workshops. Resources from all our conferences are available on our Chapter website (http://unprme.org.uk).

We are delighted to confirm that the 4th PRME UK & Ireland Chapter Conference and AGM will be held on June 26-27th, hosted by Newcastle Business School, Northumbria University. As 2017 marks PRME’s 10th Anniversary year, the theme of the conference is “Envisioning the Future of Responsible Management Education in the era of the Sustainable Development Goals”. In line with previous years, there will be high profile Keynote speakers from academia, business and civil society. The conference will offer opportunities to share their work with peers in both interactive workshop sessions and paper presentations, create space for networking with advocates of responsible citizenship, management and leadership from universities and institutions across the UK and Ireland and beyond. The call for papers for the 2017 Conference is attached (and on our website), and we would appreciate if you circulate it as widely as possible amongst your colleagues and networks.

Following the UK and Ireland Chapter Conference in June, there is of course the PRME Global Forum in New York on 18-19 July, where our global community will celebrate the first ten years, and look forward to the next ten. It would great to see Deans, school champions and faculty from the UK and Ireland in New York for this landmark event. Full details are available on the main PRME website (http://www.unprme.org and the Chapter website).
The global nature of the PRME movement offers many opportunities for international collaboration. In addition to active engagement in the UK & Ireland Chapter, we encourage faculty in signatory schools to get involved in the research-led PRME Working Groups (http://www.unprme.org/working-groups/index.php), or innovative pedagogical initiatives such as the UN-supported Sustainability Literacy Test (Sulitest). Over 55,000 students worldwide have taken this simple test since it was launched two years ago, and with a much improved Version 2 being launched in October 2016, it offers a straightforward way of both encouraging and assessing the ‘sustainability literacy’ of our students. If you would like help to introduce the Sulitest in to your Institution, members of the Chapter Steering Committee will be pleased to provide hands-on support in doing so as part of our service to members. Basic information about the test is on the Chapter website.

As PRME is an initiative of the business-facing United Nations Global Compact, the UK & Ireland Chapter is exploring ways to bring academics in UK business schools closer to practitioners in the fields of sustainability and corporate responsibility. For this reason, we are delighted to advise that Chapter members are working in partnership with the Global Compact UK Network to deliver a series of Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Workshops in the first half of 2017, in the form of a ‘SDG Roadshow’. The aim of the Roadshow is to raise awareness of the SDGs and motivate business, academic, government, and third sector communities around the UK to contribute to achieving them. Full details of the Roadshow will be available on the Chapter website in the near future, and you are welcome to participate in an event in your area. Following completion of the first 10 or so events, we plan to make available to members a report on what we learned. Assuming positive outcomes, it is our hope that we can work with the UN Global Compact UK Network, to take the SDG Roadshow to many more cities around the UK and Ireland.

In terms of UK and Ireland activity in PRME and Global Compact networks, you may be interested to learn that there is a small but increasing number of UK academic institutions that is engaging in both. There are 66 members in the PRME UKI Chapter and 7 UK university members of the Global Compact UK Network (GCN-UK). In addition to this, there are 2 Universities that are UN Global Compact signatories on a global level (there is no fee to join as a non-business participant), that are not members of GCN-UK. If you would like to learn more about the potential benefits to you of joining the Global Compact UK Network, please visit their website (http://www.globalcompact.org.uk).

The Chapter is very happy to support and promote PRME-focussed events and activities around the UK and Ireland, so please do get in touch if you have any plans to organise something in your school or region, or would like to ‘go national’ with something you are already doing. One example of the type of thing we support is the Responsible Business and Management PRME UK & Ireland Writing Competition, organised by Oxford Brookes, seeking to showcase the work of our students. Details are available on the Chapter website – deadline this year is February 28th.

Speaking to Chapter members it is clear that there is a lot of great PRME-agenda work going on in our Schools, but not everyone knows about it. In order to enhance awareness amongst members of what is happening in all of our Chapter institutions, we would like each Chapter member to provide a PRME profile of their Institution, and we shall be sending you a template to complete to gather this information very soon. We are hoping that by making these profiles available on the Chapter website,
we can promote the great teaching, research and external engagement that is going in your School, and at the same time open up networking and opportunities for collaboration.

Of course, the work of the UK & Ireland Chapter would not be possible without financial support of Chapter member institutions, and so we will shortly be sending you an invoice (£400) for 2017 membership (Jan-Dec 2017). As many Institutions require a purchase order request (POR) number to be quoted on invoices we would kindly ask you to arrange to send your POR to Chapter Administrator Tessa Valentine at your earliest convenience (Tessa.Valentine@winchester.ac.uk). Alternatively, the PRME UK & Ireland Chapter invoice can also be paid by credit card (details also available by email from Tessa).

If you have any questions about any of the above, or indeed any other matter, please do not hesitate to get in touch. We very much look forward to your continued engagement with, and support for, the PRME UK and Ireland Regional Chapter.

Yours sincerely

Carole Parkes (Chair)
Alec Wersun (Vice Chair & Treasurer)
David Clemson (Secretary)