

**PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION
POSTGRADUATE DIPLOMA IN SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS**

1 Awarding body	University of Cambridge
2 Teaching institution	Cambridge Institute for Sustainability Leadership
3 Accreditation details	Postgraduate Diploma
4 Name of final award	Postgraduate Diploma in Sustainable Business (120 CAT points)
5 Programme title	Postgraduate Diploma in Sustainable Business
6 UCAS code	N/A
7 JACS code(s)	N190, N215
8 Relevant QAA benchmark statement(s)	None
9 Qualifications framework level	7 (Masters)
10 Date specification produced	Jan-15

The University of Cambridge Institute for Sustainability Leadership (CISL), an institute within the School of Technology, has run executive development programmes in sustainability for 26 years, with open programmes in the UK, Europe, North America, South America, South Africa and Australia, and customised programmes for many leading organisations.. CISL has a global alumni base of over 6,500 senior leaders from business, government and civil society.

CISL also offer a Master of Studies in Sustainability Leadership, a Postgraduate Certificate in Sustainable Business and a Postgraduate Certificate in Sustainable Value Chains.

Programme Structure

The Postgraduate Diploma in Sustainable Business (PGDip) is designed to enable students who have completed a CISL Postgraduate Certificate (PG Cert) to continue their learning and development with the Institute¹. The PGDip offers an alternative to the Master of Studies in Sustainability Leadership (MSt) as an avenue for professional development. It builds on the teaching of PGCerts and will extend participants' knowledge and understanding of key topical sustainability themes and cutting edge responses.

Individuals who have not completed one of the PG Certs can apply directly for the PG Dip. They must then complete part 1 (which involves undertaking one the PG Certs).

Having completed one of the PG Certs , students have three years in which to complete the course. As the students' progress through the programme, they:

- Attend three Sustainability Leadership Laboratories (Labs) in Cambridge.
- Complete a series of assessed assignments and formative assignments.
- Complete one E–module.

¹ Alumni of PCSB and PCSVC who have completed the course since 2008 are eligible for immediate entry on to the PGDip. Alumni prior to 2008 and Alumni of the now defunct Postgraduate Certificate Cross Sector Partnerships are not currently eligible for entry to the PGDip. This is due to the fact that the course they completed did not meet the accreditation standard required for Postgraduate study at a Master's level and therefore they do not have the 60 credits required to enter the PGDip.

Overall Format

Pre-programme

Once enrolled on the PGDip, students will receive a series of documents and introduction to preparatory tasks:

- *Participant Handbook*
This handbook is designed to help students get the most out of their experience on the course. It provides a detailed overview of the PGDip and aims to be the first point of reference for queries. It outlines pre-Lab preparation, assignments and the assessment process.
- *Online/Virtual Learning Environment (VLE)*
Prior to their first Lab students are given access to the course-dedicated VLE. The VLE provides an additional learning resource between the Labs and will be the central avenue for communication between the students and the Programme Team.

The VLE is also used to co-ordinate non-residential learning activities such as access to pre-Lab reading and resources, as well as making available supplementary material, e.g. presenter's slides and links to useful websites, articles etc.

- *Pre-Programme Survey*
Students are required to complete a pre-programme survey, capturing information used to inform parts of the labs.
- *Pre-Reading/Preparation*
Students are provided with preparatory readings and relevant preparatory tasks.
- *Access to Raven and the University Library's E Resources*
Students are granted access to the University's electronic resources. Prior to the first Lab students access their Raven accounts.

Sustainability Leadership Laboratories

In order to successfully complete the PGDip, participants must attend three Labs. These 2.5 day Labs are held biannually. Each Lab will focus on a clearly defined sustainability topic. On enrolling students are provided with an indicative timetable of the forthcoming Labs, of which they will choose three to attend. Students can therefore tailor their participation based on their interest in the subjects offered. This timetable is subject to change, enabling CISL to respond to major global events and advancements in the field.

The Labs provide a mixture of expert input and commentary from academics and corporate practitioners, as well as intensive group work and discussion. Students benefit from interaction with experienced Tutors regarding their assignments. There are opportunities for peer support and informal networking between participants. Students will be responsible for leading some of the Lab content, reflecting the nature of the programme and the seniority/experience of participants. Students have already completed a PG Cert, are working in the field of sustainability and therefore have a great deal of useful content to share with their peers.

The Labs draw on some of the innovative learning approaches that have been developed for the CISL MSt, PCSB and PCSVC. At the same time, the Labs provide an opportunity to develop innovative learning approaches with a strong "co-creation" focus, for example

design thinking and prototyping around solutions in response to specific sustainability challenges.

The Labs are also attended by non PG Dip enrolled individuals who have previously completed one of the CISL Graduate Programmes. Non enrolled participants at the labs only attend 2 days, as the remaining half day provides specialised content for the PGDip students to support their learning.

The themes of the Labs build upon the existing structure of the Master's, but will focus on a specific aspect within these broader categories:

Leadership Responses

- Business Models & Strategy
- International Governance
- Communication, Advocacy & Education
- Sustainable Design & Technology
- Government Policy & Regulations
- Sustainable Finance & Investment
- Culture, Employment & Operational Practices
- Cooperation, Collaboration & Partnerships
- Sustainable Production & Consumption
- Corporate Philanthropy

Crosscutting

- Leadership for Sustainability
- Innovation and Transformation for Sustainability

Sustainability Challenges

- Economic
- Social (incl. Inequality & Poverty)
- Ecosystems & Natural Capital (incl. Biodiversity)
- Climate Change
- Governance

The specific focus of the Labs is shaped around current key sustainability themes as well as timing of significant sustainability events e.g. development of the Sustainable Development Goals or UNFCCC COP 21 Paris 2015, and availability of innovative teaching approaches developed through the Master's programme.

Assessment & Accreditation

Students undertake a number of assessed and non-assessed assignments. They are supported by assigned experts (Tutors) to support the completion of the assignments. Assignments are marked by a group of experienced CISL Faculty.

The assignments are designed to ensure integration of the student's learning with their workplace context. Some of the assignments will relate directly to the theme of the Lab attended. Students:

- Prepare an analytical case study (or 'field report') of up to 5,000 words which demonstrates sustainability leadership in practice within their own or another organisation. Students are encouraged, where appropriate, to base this on their implementation of the Strategic Action Plan produced on the PG Cert. The study

includes a 1,000 word summary suitable for web publication.

- Deliver a Pecha Kucha presentation on their sustainability leadership case study.
- Prepare a poster, blog or video to showcase the case study or another example of sustainability leadership in action.
- Review an article on a topic relevant to sustainability leadership in a business context, drawing on academic and practitioner literature (2,000 words).
- Prepare a short (500 word) article in an accessible format based on the above review for publication as a piece of thought-leadership in an appropriate publication.
- Host an interactive webinar on a particular theme identified in the Lab. Students will also have to participate in a set number of webinars hosted by their peers.
- Produce a short review of the key findings, discussions and content of the Labs attended.

Online/ Remote Learning

In addition to the assignments, students are required to complete one E-module from the CISL portfolio. In the majority of cases this is likely to be on Leadership for Sustainability. This combines lessons, tasks, student-led discussions and written exercises. In this E-module, students gain an insight into prevailing leadership theories and models and how these relate to sustainability leadership. The module is taught via case studies from business, civil society, government, social enterprise and thought leadership. The E-module takes 20-30 hours to complete.

Non-Assessed Work

Participants also complete a non-assessed Personal Sustainability Leadership Plan of up to 3,000 words.

Educational Aims & Learning Outcomes

The programme aims to build on the skills and the broad knowledge that the students gained on the PG Certs. The course:

- Offers a forum for focused professional development, allowing the students to have flexibility in choosing which labs to attend based on their professional needs.
- Provides a 'deep dive' into specific topical critical challenges.
- Includes sessions from high profile academic and practitioner experts intended to update the students' knowledge of cutting edge research and practice.
- Demonstrates interdisciplinary approaches to solving complex problems in relation to sustainability challenges. This includes presentations from individuals in non-sustainability roles with the intention of broadening the way in which the students approach problem solving.
- Enables students to be actively involved in the 'co-creation' of sustainability 'solutions', using creative problem solving techniques and innovative learning approaches.
- Asks students to commit to taking action on these 'sustainability solutions' once they return to the workplace.
- Provides a forum for students to use the skills and confidence gained on the PG Certs to contribute to academic and practitioner debates.
- Furthers the students' ability to undertake sound, applied research in sustainability using a relevant research methodology, and to write up the findings convincingly.

- Advances their leadership skills beyond that gained on the PG Certs, thereby equipping them to respond more effectively in their roles.
- Provides a forum for the students to share their experiences and learn from each other.

Skill Development

The course further develops and provides an opportunity for the students to demonstrate their sustainability skills. Most notably they:

- Develop further a 'systems' perspective in understanding and responding to complex sustainability challenges, drawing on multiple insights and inter-disciplinary insights;
- Build on the PG Cert learning around communication and influence, advancing and practising their ability to communicate sustainability-related messages effectively to non-sustainability target audiences.
- Further enhance their ability as effective change agents within their organisational context, actively putting into practice and refining learning around applying appropriate levers for change.
- Demonstrate their ability to be reflective and reflexive with regard to sustainability world views or paradigms, and the organisational and personal assumptions that shape those views.
- Develop understanding and application of tools and techniques based around co-creating solutions, collaboration, innovation and design.

Teaching and Learning Methods

The following approaches to teaching and learning are used:

- Taught sessions by academics and expert practitioners, to refresh knowledge, stimulate thinking and provide relevant case studies for exploration.
- Interactive peer-learning sessions, expertly facilitated, based on 'design thinking' and generation of solutions in response to particular sustainability challenges and opportunities. The emphasis will be on using the expertise and experience of participants at each lab to 'co-create' appropriate responses to complex issues.
- E-learning, including one remote learning module on Sustainability Leadership.
- Supplementary online materials and collaborative e-platforms to maximise knowledge sharing.
- Individual work, involving research and written presentation of findings on selected topics.
- Peer-to-peer learning, including plenary presentations and informal networking.
- Coaching, support and facilitation by a CISL-led team of Tutors from within the University and externally from corporate practitioners and NGOs.
- Experiential learning drawing on the relevant resources in Cambridge, e.g. Botanical Gardens.
- Field trips where relevant.

Entry Requirements

Acceptance on to the programme relies upon:

- Having completed the Postgraduate Certificate in Sustainable Business or the Postgraduate Certificate in Sustainable Value Chains since 2008.
- Or applying to the PG Dip and successfully completing part 1 (ie one of the PG Certs).
- Access to appropriate computer technology and internet software.
- Ability to pay the course fees or identify a sponsoring institution.
- Ability to complete the PGDip within three years of enrolment.

Student Support

Participants are provided with significant support, including:

- Briefing materials and a course handbook.
- Course materials and supplementary materials available electronically on the programme-specific VLE.
- Regular communication between the Programme Team and the students via the VLE, especially between Labs when the students are undertaking their assignments.
- Regular peer interaction between students via the VLE. Students will be assigned to online learning groups, to provide a dedicated peer support network.
- Coaching and support for assignments provided by an experienced Tutor.
- Personal access to the Course Director and course contributors.
- A dedicated CISL Team to handle enquiries and deal with any issues that may arise.

Other Benefits of Attending

The PGDip provides a forum for students to network with peers and bench mark against other organisations active in the field of sustainability. This is a key element and benefit of the course.

The importance of the University and the city of Cambridge are promoted throughout the programme. Students are given access to the 'Cambridge Experience' including, for example, attending Formal Dinners, attending lectures and events in venues around the city, and optional historic walking tours. The legacy of the history of Cambridge in the advancement of sustainability will be drawn out during these visits.

Management of Teaching Quality and Standards

The facilitation on the programme is predominantly undertaken by members of the CISL Graduate Programmes Team as well as by CISL Fellows and Senior Associates. Contributors are invited based on their knowledge. Speakers are drawn from the University of Cambridge and from industry experts.

CISL is careful in the selection in those involved in delivery of the programme, and provides significant support, guidance and briefing to ensure that delivery is to CISL's high delivery standards. This includes handbooks, speaker briefings, and 'norming' exercises to ensure assessors are all marking to the same standard.

The programme will draw on the successful track record of a similar programme delivered by CISL, namely the PCSB, PCSVC and the MSt.

Assessment Practice

In common with other Faculties and Departments, CISL takes particular care to ensure that common standards are applied across all elements of examinations and across all candidates. This means:

- Assessment is undertaken consistently to ensure that standards are set and maintained at an appropriate level and that the learning outcomes are properly considered.
- Principles, procedures and processes of all assessments are explicit, valid and reliable.
- There are robust mechanisms for marking and for the moderation of marks and that assessment is conducted with rigour, fairness and a due regard for security.

CISL uses the following assessment practices recommended by University guidelines:

i) *Detailed Marking Criteria*

These are devised specifically for the course and provide the benchmark against which the assessors mark work. The criteria are circulated (e.g. in course handbooks and on the VLE) to allow participants to plan their study and reflect on the outcome of their assessment.

ii) *Double Marking*

This ensures robustness of assessment, particularly in more qualitative fields where subjectivity may be involved. CISL has clear guidelines for assessors over what further action is required where marking discrepancies arise

iii) *Model Answers*

In order to guide participants on matters of focus and emphasis, examples of (anonymised) past papers will be posted on the VLE.

iv) *Grading Scheme*

CISL adopts a University-wide grading scheme which aims to assess performance while allowing for appropriate discrimination between candidates.

v) *Mechanisms for the Exchange of Opinion*

CISL ensures that all assessors undertake a 'norming exercise' at the beginning of each course. This entails the grading of identical sets of three sample papers (of varying quality) prior to the course – and then meeting up to compare assessment approaches and the application of criteria and the grading scheme. A second 'exchange of opinion' forum is the Examiners' meeting which takes place 8-10 weeks after the final assignment is submitted – this is an opportunity for 3 examiners to comment on the grading and feedback provided by the assessors, prior to confirming final grades.

Indicators of Quality

After each lab and at the end of the programme, participants are asked for their feedback on speakers, syllabus content, teaching approach, faculty, assignments and pastoral care. This feedback is reviewed carefully by the Programme Team and appropriate suggestions / feedback are acted upon.

A review meeting is held at the end of the programme which is attended by the key course contributors and the programme team. All aspects of the programme are discussed and recommendations for how the programme can be improved are recorded and where appropriate implemented for the next programme.

The Examiner's reports and Examiner's meetings are used by CISL as an indicator of quality and recommendations are incorporated into the programme.

Finally the programme will be incorporated into the University's periodic Learning & Teaching Review.

Graduate Employability and Career Destinations

As the PGDip is delivered on a part-time basis, it is anticipated that the majority of participants will be in existing employment and will use the course to improve their career prospects. The course takes an applied approach to knowledge, with both the teaching and assignments oriented towards relevance to their work situation.

Over the past 15 years there has been an increase, both nationally and internationally, in the 'green collar' jobs market. The continued growth in this area has resulted in a demand for relevant skills in a variety of sectors and organisations. Hence, this programme will appeal to CISL alumni wishing to further enhance their career prospects. Employers will support attendance at the PGDip as it provides the opportunity for attendees to enhance their knowledge in specific areas relevant to their role / organisation.

In a recent CISL Graduate Programmes Alumni Survey, 77% of respondents claimed that their attendance on a CISL graduate programme had impacted their career in some way, of which 40% claimed it had *significantly* advanced their career, and 10% stated that it had *extensively* furthered their career².

Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information in this programme specification. At the time of publication, the programme specification has been approved by the relevant Faculty Board (or equivalent). Programme specifications are reviewed annually, however, during the course of the academical year, any approved changes to the programme will be communicated to enrolled students through email notification or publication in the Reporter. The relevant faculty or department will endeavour to update the programme specification accordingly, and prior to the start of the next academical year.

Further information about specifications and an archive of programme specifications for all awards of the University is available online at: www.admin.cam.ac.uk/univ/camdata/archive.html.

² From 86 respondents.