

Programme Specification 2016-17

MASTER OF STUDIES IN SUSTAINABILITY LEADERSHIP

1	Awarding body	University of Cambridge
2	Teaching institution	Cambridge Institute for Sustainability Leadership
3	Accreditation details	Master of Studies
4	Name of final award	Master of Studies
5	Programme title	MSt in Sustainability Leadership
6	JACS code(s)	N190
7	Relevant QAA benchmark statement(s)	None
8	Qualifications framework level	7 (Masters)
9	Date specification produced	July 2016

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.

The MSt in Sustainability Leadership is offered by CISL in association with the Departments of Architecture, Engineering, Geography, Land Economy and the Judge Business School.

CISL also offer Postgraduate Certificates in Sustainable Business and Sustainable Value Chains and a Postgraduate Diploma in Sustainable Business.

Aims of the Programme

The programme aims to:

- Develop leaders who have a wide awareness and deep understanding of the social, environmental, ethical and economic challenges facing the world, and equip them to respond more effectively in their executive roles.
- Expose leaders and future leaders to a range of best-practice cases of how business, government and civil society are responding to these challenges.
- Help leaders to make a compelling 'business case' for sustainability in their sector and/or institutional context, and understand how best to put sustainability policies into practice.
- Give leaders insights into the academic debate on sustainability, including some of the key scientific and technological issues, and equip them with research skills relevant to sustainability.

Learning Outcomes of the Programme

By the end of the programme, successful participants should be able to/ have:

General knowledge, understanding and awareness:

- Articulate the evolution of the sustainability debate and the conceptual frameworks that underpin it.
- A broad knowledge of the key sustainability challenges.
- Obtained multi-disciplinary perspectives on sustainability.
- A clear understanding of the 'business case' arguments for sustainability, and their limitations.

Leadership and Change

- Understand a range of theories of organisational change and analyse their own organisation's approach to change.
- Gained knowledge on the different theories, types, actors and levels of change and to be able to apply these to a sustainability context.
- Embodied the characteristics of a change agent for sustainability, especially the ability to identify, package and 'sell' sustainability-related ideas.
- Developed the ability to communicate sustainability-related messages effectively to non- sustainability target audiences.

Critical evaluation and analysis:

- The ability to be reflective and reflexive regarding sustainability worldviews or paradigms and the assumptions that shape those views.
- Understand and interpret academic and practitioner theory and apply this to an organisation.
- Engage with complexity and contradictions in the knowledge base, challenge and critically review evidence, and apply their own opinions and judgement to sustainability issues.
- Competently follow and contribute to academic and practitioner debates on sustainability issues.

Engagement and collaboration:

- Work collaboratively across subject disciplines, institutional sectors and functional silos in order to advance sustainability goals.
- Work effectively in a group and to learn from this experience.

Innovative, creative and strategic response:

- Develop an appreciation for a variety of leadership responses to sustainability, including policy development, international agreements, partnerships, advocacy, etc.
- Apply learning from best-practice cases of how business, government and civil society are responding to complex sustainability challenges.
- Frame and develop business strategies that address sustainability challenge(s).

Academic Research:

- An appreciation of research methods and associated research skills.
- Access leading-edge insights and research on sustainability from leading Cambridge academics and other thought-leaders.
- Demonstrated the ability to undertake sound sustainability-relevant research using an appropriate research methodology.
- Write reports in an academic style.

Teaching and Learning Methods

The primary approaches to teaching and learning are:

- Taught sessions by academics and practitioners, who are thought-leaders and/or case study illustrators.
- Group work, involving dialogue, debate and presentations throughout the taught modules, as well as a group research assignment.
- Individual work, involving research and written presentation of findings on selected topics.
- Support and facilitation by a CISL-led team of faculty, tutors and supervisors from within the University.
- Intensive and collaborative E-learning programmes, including E-modules, on-line webinars and content-based discussions to maximise knowledge sharing.

Assessment Methods

Students will complete:

- a) Three written assignments: an Analysis Paper of 3,000 words, a Strategic Action Plan of 3,000 words, and a Group Project of 5,000-7,000 words (45% of the overall MSt result).
- b) A 15,000 word (including notes and appendices) Dissertation and presentation on a topic proposed by the candidate and approved by the Degree Committee (55% of the overall MSt result).

Successful completion of the Programme requires that candidates:

1. Attend all the Residential Workshops.
2. Participate fully in the Workshops and Group Project.
3. Participate fully in the E-learning Modules and programme, and Virtual Tutorials and Supervisions
4. Submit and pass the three Assignments. (One failed assignment may be resubmitted.)
5. Submit and pass the research Dissertation.

Award

The Examiners may recommend that the Degree Committee recommends the Institute of Sustainability Leadership Management Board award a Postgraduate Certificate to candidates who have satisfactorily completed the requirements specified above (point a) and who do not complete, or fail to reach the required standard, in the thesis.

Postgraduate Certificate in Sustainable Business PCSB alumni since 2008 are exempted from the first workshop and the three assignments. This part of the MSt is equivalent to the PCSB. (The PCSB and MSt are currently run as two separate programmes and candidates for the MSt cannot be awarded the PCSB by completing only the first part of the MSt.)

Programme Structure

ACADEMIC YEAR 1

- Module 1: Introduction to Sustainability Challenges
- Module 2: Introduction to The Business Case for Action
- Module 3: Introduction to Leadership for Sustainability
- Module 4-6: Three thematically-focused Modules (see list, below)
- Three-weekly E-learning activities
- Research Skills E-Learning Module
- At least two Virtual Tutorials
- Tutorial for Group Project
- Research Seminars / Research Support sessions
- Submit Dissertation Proposal Form with final title (not assessed)
- At least one Virtual Dissertation Supervision

ACADEMIC YEAR 2

- Module 7-12: Six thematically-focused Modules (see list, below)
- Leadership for Sustainability E-learning Module
- Philanthropy E-learning Module
- Three-weekly E-learning activities
- Two face to face dissertation supervisions, three virtual dissertation supervisions
- *Submit Dissertation*

List of Thematically-Focused Modules:

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

The order in which they are presented at the workshops varies from cohort to cohort depending on scheduling.

Standard Programme Admission Requirements

Candidates are assessed and accepted on the basis that they have:

1. At least a 2.i honours degree from a UK University or an equivalent standard from an overseas institution;
2. A minimum of three years' work experience;
3. Demonstrable enthusiasm and/or aptitude for sustainability leadership;
4. Good ability in written and spoken English language;
5. Endorsement from employer or, if independent, from an organisation that will be the focus of work on the programme;
6. Access to appropriate computer technology and internet software;
and
7. The ability to pay the course fees or to identify a sponsoring institution.

Exceptional applicants who do not meet the standard admission criteria of a 2.i honours degree will be assessed on an individual basis and may be required to provide further materials in support of their application.

Managing Teaching Quality and Standards

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 tutor handbooks, speaker briefings, and norming exercises to ensure tutors are all marking to the same standard.

Participants rate each workshop – including every taught session – and these feed into an evaluation of the teaching, content, process and the extent to which these meets participants' learning objectives. The programme team and tutors review this feedback and take it into account when planning future workshops.

The Programme Director of the MSt is advised by a Teaching and Academic Advisory Committee, which comprises representatives from the five associated departments, student representatives and CISL directorship.

Student Support

- Students receive briefing materials and a participant handbook ahead of the first workshop.
- Programme materials and supplementary materials are all available electronically on the programme specific Virtual Learning Environment.
- Students are assigned to project groups for the duration of the first year of the Programme, which provide a tutor and peer support network
- Students have personal access to the Programme Director and Programme contributors
- The residential workshops include sessions on research skills, to help students prepare for their dissertations
- The residential workshops include visits and inductions to the University Library resources to help students to prepare for their dissertations
- Regular (2-3 weekly) online discussions are held between residential workshops
- Each student will be allocated a Director of Studies for the duration of the programme, and an academic Supervisor during the dissertation phase (2nd year).

Graduate Employability and Career Destinations

As the MSt is a part-time degree, the participants will mostly be in employment and will use the programme to improve their career prospects. The programme takes an applied approach to knowledge, with both the teaching and assignments oriented towards relevance to their work situation.

It is also clear from our research into the sustainability market that this is a growing field of work, both as a result of the high profile global policy developments (such as those around climate change) and significant financial stimulus investments in the “green jobs” sector.

The Careers Service maintains links with employers and takes their needs and opinions into account in the services which it provides for students. The Careers Service also allocates a Careers Adviser to each College, faculty and department to act as a point of contact.

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