Programme Specification 2022-23
POSTGRADUATE CERTIFICATE IN SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS

Awarding body	University of Cambridge
Teaching institution	Cambridge Institute for Sustainability Leadership
Accreditation details	N/A
Name of final award	Postgraduate Certificate in Sustainable Business
Programme title	Postgraduate Certificate in Sustainable Business
HECoS code(s)	100079 (business studies)
Relevant QAA benchmark statement(s)	None
Qualifications framework level	FHEQ Level 7
Date specification produced	August 2022

The University of Cambridge Institute for Sustainability Leadership (CISL), an institute within the School of Technology, has run executive development programmes in sustainability for 30 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 20,000 senior leaders from business, government and civil society.

CISL also offer a Master of Studies in Sustainability Leadership and a Postgraduate Diploma in Sustainable Business.

The Postgraduate Certificate in Sustainable Business is a nine-month, part-time master's-level programme. This programme has been offered for over 20 years and is a challenging and inspiring programme which addresses many of the key challenges being experienced by organisations seeking to embed sustainability principles and practices into mainstream business operations. Project-based learning to support strategy development and implementation is a key feature of the programme. It is targeted at current and future business leaders, particularly those in mainstream business roles.

Aims of the Programme

The Postgraduate Certificate in Sustainable Business aims to equip business professionals with:

- a robust knowledge of global social, environmental and economic trends, and the ability to develop the strategic business case for organisational change/ embedding sustainability across value chains
- knowledge of how to develop the strategic business case for organisational change/embedding sustainability across value chains;
- the critical skills and confidence to embed sustainability into business action at an organisational or value chains level how to lead organizational change
- new approaches, tools and techniques for developing resilient and sustainable value chains (value chains stream only)
- how to influence and engage customers, to shape the market connect and embed sustainability across value chains (value chains stream only).

Learning Outcomes of the Programme

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By the end of the programme, successful students should have enhanced their ability in accordance with the learning outcomes shown below. While all of the learning outcomes will be

addressed through the course, a number will be reinforced through the assignments. The table also demonstrates the progression in learning outcomes for students who continue to further sustainable business programmes offered by CISL.

	Postgraduate Certificate in Sustainable Business		Postgraduate Diploma in Sustainable Business		Master of Studies in Sustainability Leadership	
1. The changing global context, the case for a radical shift from current systems and structures, and the role of business						
LO1A	Understand…	+	Analyse…	+	Evaluate structural dimensions of…	…global economic, environmental and social pressures and trends from a multi-disciplinary and systems perspective
LO1B	Articulate…	+	Analyse…	+	Evaluate and establish…	…the need for a radical shift from current systems and structures to address complex systems-related problems and opportunities
LO1C	Understand…	+	Analyse…	+	Assess and generate…	…the case for business leading systemic change
2. A sustainable future, and the potential synergies, tensions in achieving it						
LO2A	Understand…	+	Analyse…	+	Assess…	… conceptualisations of sustainability and key dimensions of a sustainable future, such as regeneration, inclusion, net zero carbon and resilience
L02B	Identify…	+	Analyse…	+	Evaluate and generate responses to address…	… synergies and tensions between dimensions of a sustainable future
3. Potential strategies and pathways to leverage change both within and beyond organisations to achieve a sustainable future						
LO3A	Identify and apply…	+	Analyse and apply…	+	Evaluate and apply a broad and deep range of…	…research and best practice on levers for change for embedding sustainability *within* organisations
LO3B	Identify and apply…	+	Analyse and apply…	+	Evaluate and apply a broad and deep range of…	…research and best practice on levers for change *beyond* organisations for wider system impact
LO3C	Identify and apply…	+	Analyse and apply…	+	Evaluate and apply a broad and deep range of…	…theories of change and innovation at an organisational and system level
	Postgraduate Certificate in Sustainable Business		Postgraduate Diploma in Sustainable Business		Master of Studies in Sustainability Leadership	

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4. Personal leadership and effective action as an agent of change						
LO4A	Identify and demonstrate…	+	Develop…	+	Assess and apply advanced concepts that enhance…	…the thinking, values and practices that support effective personal leadership
LO4B	Identify and demonstrate…	+	Develop…	+	Generate impact through…	…personal contribution to effective action as a change agent
5. Sustainability insight, knowledge and research for specific contexts						
LO5A	Identify and apply…	+	Analyse and apply…	+	Evaluate and apply a broader and deeper range of…	…existing academic and practitioner knowledge on a range of fields and topics to address sustainability challenges and opportunities in specific contexts
LO5B	Generate…	+	Generate further…	+	Generate advanced…	….sustainability-relevant research in an individual and group context
6. Communication and engagement, individually and collaboratively, to advance the sustainability agenda						
LO6A	Create… …entry-level academic and specific organisational contexts	+	Create… …academic and specific organisational contexts	+	Create… …an advanced academic level, and organisational contexts	…clear, concise and logically ordered written and verbal communications appropriate to …
LO6B	Contribute to…	+	Contribute further to…	+	Generate…	…effective and collaborative engagement with peers and wider networks as part of a learning community

Programme Structure

In recognition of the practical challenges of students undertaking study whilst holding down a full-time job, the programme does not require prolonged periods away from the workplace. Besides the short residential workshops, the core of the programme is an individual piece of work-related research and the development of a strategic action plan that is relevant to the student'sorganisation.

A group project helps to ensure that as much inter-organisational learning takes place as possible. An online Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) facilitates communication and collaboration between the short, intensive workshops.

The course runs for nine months and encompasses the following key elements:

1. A three week preparatory phase, involving pre-reading and identification of a sustainability challenge/opportunity within students' organisational contexts;
2. Two 4 day workshops, all held in Cambridge and each preceded by pre-workshop reading and preparatory activities;
3. A work-based, collaborative research project (assessed);
4. Two individual tasks based on the identified sustainability challenge/opportunity: an Analysis Paper and a Strategic Action Plan (both assessed).
5. Support and facilitation from a team of programme tutors;
6. Informal and formal collaboration with fellow students via email, teleconferences, face-to-face meetings, and the VLE

The following themes will be covered:

		Organisational stream	Value Chains stream
Workshop 1	Understanding the global challenges and opportunities, and what needs to change	• Environmental, social and economic pressures and drivers • Sustainability concepts and frameworks • Systems thinking • Sustainability challenges and opportunities • A sustainable economy • The business response to sustainability • Leadership for sustainability •	• Environmental, social and economic pressures and drivers • Sustainability concepts and frameworks • Systems thinking • Sustainability challenges and opportunities • Critique of existing tools and enablers • Building the business case for sustainable value chains • Leadership for sustainability •
Workshop 2	Catalysing change in and beyond the organisation/across the value chain	• Strategic planning for action • Levers for system level change • Communication and influence • Leadership for change	• Partnerships and collaboration • Business model innovation • Leveraging change across the value chain • Communication and influence • Leadership for change

Teaching methods

The primary approaches to teaching and learning are:

• taught plenary and small group sessions by academics and practitioners, who are thought-leaders and/or case study contributors;
• group work, involving dialogue, debate and presentations throughout the taught modules, as well as a group research assignment;
• experiential techniques including role plays, simulations, debates and field trips;
• individual work, involving structured reading and reflection, 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;
- and an E-learning component, including an online module, and structured reading and preparation.

Since students come from a wide range of functions, sectors, and locations, peer learning is a key feature of the programme. Sharing experiences and insights can help to build a deeper understanding of how the business world can respond to the challenges of sustainability.

Assessment

Assignment	Length (words)	Contribution to final grade
Analysis Paper	3000	33%
Strategic Action Plan	3000	33%
Group Project	7000	33% including a % for personal contribution to group project

Students are required to achieve a pass grade on all written work. If one piece of individual work is graded a fail, students will be given detailed guidance by their Tutor and allowed to re- submit. One only resubmission opportunity is allowed. At the discretion of Examiners, a fail at Grade D in the group project or a borderline (59%) fail in an individual assignments can be compensated by a high level of competence in the other assessed work.

Entry Requirements

Prospective students must be able to demonstrate:
- possession of an undergraduate degree from a recognised university, or evidence of equivalent work experience/achievement and ability to read for a master's-level programme;
- an acceptable ability in written and spoken English (evidence will be required of applicants' proficiency if English is not their first language);
- a minimum of three years' work experience after graduation;
- An endorsement from their employing institution supporting their application, required time commitment for the programme and ideally support for the assignments being undertaken in the context of a sustainability challenge/opportunity relevant to the organisation, or – if independent – from an acceptable institution familiar with their work;
- interest in and commitment to sustainability;
- academic and/or professional excellence;
- commitment to using learning from the programme to lead or influence change within their business context;
- access to appropriate computer technology and internet software; and
- the ability to pay the course fees or identify a sponsoring institution;
- ability to attend both workshops.

In exceptional circumstances applicants who do not meet the academic entry requirement can be offered a place when it is clear that their professional experience and knowledge outweighs the fact that they do not have the appropriate degree required for entry.

Managing Teaching Quality and Standards

The University ensures high quality of teaching and learning in the following ways:

- Scrutiny of the External Examiners Reports for all teaching programmes
- Encouraging student engagement at both the local level, through involvement in Faculty and Departmental Committees, and at a central level by participation in nationally-benchmarked surveys

- Participation in the biennial Education Monitoring and Review Process to explore provision, share good practice and suggest constructive courses of action
- Mentoring, appraisal, and peer review of staff, and encouraging staff participation in personal development programmes

Student Support

Students are provided with significant support, including:

- course handbook and assignment guidelines;
- an online Virtual Learning Environment;
- a dedicated CISL team to handle enquiries and deal with any issues that may arise;
- a Tutor who has primary responsibility for supporting their academic work on the programme. Tutors are available at and beyond workshops (via phone and email, and where necessary for face to face meetings).

Graduate Employability and Career Destinations

On completion of PCSB, students are invited to join the CISL Network which brings together over 20,000 senior decision- makers, thought-leaders, policy-influencers and executives from across the world who share an interest in and a commitment to creating a sustainable future.

There is a perceived growth in 'green collar jobs' in the UK and internationally. This programme enhances the ability of candidates to secure, and to perform well in those jobs. Companies are also increasingly requiring candidates for mainstream jobs to have a sophisticated understanding of sustainability issues and responses, and the PCSB programme therefore increases candidates' general employability.

It is understood that PCSB is now acknowledged to be the leading accredited sustainability leadership programme in the UK, and possibly internationally.

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.