

Programme Specification 2023-24

MASTER OF STUDIES IN SUSTAINABILITY LEADERSHIP

Awarding body	University of Cambridge
Teaching institution	Cambridge Institute for Sustainability Leadership
Accreditation details	Master of Studies
Name of final award	Master of Studies
Programme title	MSt in Sustainability Leadership
HECoS code(s)	100469 (environmental management) 100088 (leadership)
Relevant QAA benchmark statement(s)	None
Qualifications framework level	7 (Masters)
Date specification produced	December 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 over 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 27,000 senior leaders from business, government and civil society.

The MSt in Sustainability Leadership is offered by CISL, drawing on academic expertise from, among others, the Departments of Engineering, Geography, Land Economy and the Cambridge Judge Business School.

The MSt in Sustainability Leadership can be taken as a Continuous Route 2-year part-time programme and is also offered as a Flexible Route 3-stage part-time programme comprised of the Stage 1 Postgraduate Certificate in Sustainable Business, the Stage 2 Postgraduate Diploma in Sustainable Business, and the Stage 3 MSt in Sustainability Leadership. Students are required to complete all 3 stages within a maximum 10-year period.

Educational aims

The MSt Sustainability Leadership is part of CISL's mission to empower individuals and organisations to take leadership to tackle critical global challenges.

More specifically, through a combination of interdisciplinary insights, academic analysis, practical business application, peer-learning and personal reflection, the programme aims to develop a community of leaders who have:

- a wide awareness and deep understanding of the social, environmental, ethical and economic challenges and opportunities facing the world
- the vision and ambition to drive business leadership to achieve real systems change;
- the knowledge, experience and ability to critically evaluate a range of strategic levers for change and
- the leadership capacity and confidence at a personal and organisational level to best use these levers to effect transformation.

Learning outcomes

The table below indicates the expected learning outcomes of the programme. The learning outcomes for the PGCert and PGDip are included to show the progression between CISL's portfolio of qualifications.

[illegible]

	Postgraduate Certificate in Sustainable Business		Postgraduate Diploma in Sustainable Business		Master of Studies in Sustainability Leadership	
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	
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 ...

	Postgraduate Certificate in Sustainable Business		Postgraduate Diploma in Sustainable Business		Master of Studies in Sustainability Leadership	
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.

The programme is structured around modules, delivered through a combination of residential workshops, online learning, and remote working:

- Residential workshops explores course modules through face-to-face learning opportunities
- A programme of online learning between the residential workshops to support the face-to-face learning
- Assignments centre around work and developing strong research skills:
- Individual work-based assignments
- A group project around an area of mutual relevance
- An extended piece of research based on a topic of personal interest.

Taught Modules:

The following taught modules are delivered. They comprise both in-person teaching at residential workshops and online learning.

- **Module 1: Foundational concepts** (for sustainability)
- **Module 2: Levers within organisations** (for wider sustainability impact)
- **Module 3: Enabling levers for sustainability** (for sustainability)
- **Module 4: Levers beyond organisations** (for sustainability)
- **Module 5: Leadership for sustainability**
- **Module 6: Academic skills**

Continuous Route Format:

Year 1	Taught Modules	1, 2, 5-a, 6-a (see list above)
	Assignment support	In-person and virtual supervisions ('tutorials')
Year 2	Taught modules	3, 4, 5-b&c, 6-b (see list above)
	Dissertation support	In-person and virtual supervisions

Postgraduate Certificate in Sustainable Business alumni since 2008 are exempted from Module 1 and the three assignments (a). These parts of the MSt are equivalent to the Postgraduate Certificate in Sustainable Business (PCSB).

Flexible Route Format:

Stage 1 (PG Cert)	Taught Modules	1, 5-a, 6-a (equivalent teaching via PCSB)
	Assignment support	In-person and virtual supervisions ('tutorials')
Stage 2 (PG Dip)	Taught Modules	2, 3-a, 5-b (see list above)
	Assignment support	Virtual supervisions
Stage 3 (MSt)	Taught modules	3-b, 4, 5-c, 6-b (see list above)
	Research report essay support	Virtual supervisions

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Teaching and learning methods

- Teaching methods on the programme span different session formats and techniques, to accommodate different learning styles. For example, the MSt features: plenary and small group sessions taught 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
- a collaborative E-learning programme, including online modules, thematic e-units, webinars and content-based discussions to maximise knowledge sharing.

CISL's applied, practitioner-oriented postgraduate programmes are designed to support personal and professional development. The following are key features that underpin CISL's distinctive approach to learning:

Flexible: Programmes are designed for professionals working full time; hence the intensive workshops are blended with remote working on assignments and other course-related activities.

Thought leadership: The speakers, lecturers and facilitators are leading experts and practitioners from academia, business, government and civil society.

Practical relevance: Business case studies and hearing from leading industry figures are an integral part of the taught content, and assignments are focused on organisational contexts; thereby developing skills needed to translate cutting-edge insights into practice.

Topical: The content includes developing a robust 'business case' for sustainability, a focus on sustainability leadership aims and responses, and change management, covering both established and emergent experience.

Interactive: The learning approach is highly interactive, collaborative, interdisciplinary, and designed to encourage reflection and debate.

Diversity of perspectives: Students come from a wide range of functions, sectors, and geographies; hence provide a wide spectrum of insights and opportunities to benchmark against how other organisations are responding to sustainability.

Peer-learning: Shared learning and networking with between peers and the extensive range of contributors together provide a rich learning environment.

Support and mentorship: A dedicated CISL team and expert tutors/supervisors support the learning journey, including by providing feedback on assignments that are focused on organisational contexts.

Personal application: Students are encouraged to identify personal opportunities for leadership and engage in reflective practice throughout the programme, supported by peers and tutors.

Assessment methods

Students on the Continuous Route will complete:

- a) In year 1 - 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 (33.3% of the overall MSt result).
- b) In year 2 - A 15,000 word (including notes and appendices) Dissertation and presentation on a topic proposed by the student and approved by the Degree Committee (66.7% of the overall MSt result).

Students on the Flexible Route will complete:

- a) On Stage 1, The Postgraduate Certificate in Sustainable Business: Three written assignments, as above in (a) (33% of the overall MSt result).
- b) On Stage 2, the Postgraduate Diploma in Sustainable Business: A 4,000 word Case Study Essay and a 3,000 word Literature Review Essay (32% of the overall MSt result)
- c) On Stage 3, MSt Sustainability Leadership Flexible: A 10,000 Research Report and presentation (35% of the overall MSt result)

Assessment is based on written assignments. Students are required to achieve a pass grade on all assignments.

Entry and/or progression requirementsAcademic requirement:

For the continuous route, applicants must have at least a good 2.1 honours bachelor's degree (or successful completion of a master's degree) from a UK University or an equivalent standard from a recognised overseas institution*. (Candidates that do not meet this requirement, then please refer to the notes below.)

For the flexible route, stage 3, applicants must have completed the CISL PG Diploma in Sustainable Business (stages 1 and 2) before the start of the MSt stage. PG Diploma alumni would typically be expected to achieve an overall grade B or above in the Diploma in order to be accepted to the MSt stage 3. Students in the final year of their Diploma studies can apply for the MSt stage 3 ahead of knowing their final overall Diploma grade.

As a minimum, all applicants to both routes must have:

- academic qualification as above
- a minimum of three years' work experience after graduation
- good ability in written and spoken English language. Please see below for more details of the English language requirement
- endorsement from your employer or, if independent, from an organisation that will be the focus of your work on the programme
- access to appropriate computer technology and internet software
- the ability to pay the course fees or to identify a sponsoring institution.

In addition, when reviewing applications, the selection panel will be looking for evidence of:

- demonstrable commitment to and/or enthusiasm and aptitude for sustainability leadership
- ability apply learning to influence change in an organisation, sector or wider system
- awareness of sustainability and/or leadership issues
- potential to benefit from the programme for personal or professional development
- appropriate suggestions for original research of suitable ambition and scope, demonstrated via the research proposal.

Exceptional candidates who do not meet the above standard academic requirements may be considered, based on the ability to demonstrate suitability for postgraduate study through professional and other attainments. The submission of a GMAT (or GRE) score would be useful for supporting your case (achieving at least the 50th percentile in every sub-score e.g. verbal, quants in a single test).

Progression requirements;

Alumni of PCSB (organisational or value chains streams, since 2008) can apply to the MSt Continuous Route. If accepted, they pay a reduced fee and are exempt from the first-year assignments and the first workshop. Alternatively they can apply to the PG Diploma, then the MSt Flexible Route Stage 3.

PG Diploma students cannot transfer to the Continuous Route.

Student support

Students are provided with significant support, including;

- course handbooks and assignment guidelines
- an online Virtual Learning Environment.
- a dedicated CISL team to handle enquiries and deal with any issues that may arise
- project groups for the duration of the first year of the programme, which provide a tutor and peer support network
- sessions and resources on research skills, and inductions to the University Library, to help students prepare for and execute their assessed work
- a Tutor who has primary responsibility for supporting their individual and group assignments
- a Course Director or Director of Studies for the duration of the programme and
- an academic Supervisor to support the dissertation or Research Report
- Fixed MSt students and Stage 3 Flexible MSt students are members of a college and have access to a Tutor and other support from their college.

management of 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.

Graduate employability and career destinations

On completion of the first residential workshop, students are invited to join the CISL Network which brings together over 27,000 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.

As the MSt is a part-time degree, the students 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: <https://www.camdata.admin.cam.ac.uk/>