

**Programme Specification 2024-25****MASTER OF STUDIES IN SUSTAINABILITY LEADERSHIP**

<b>Awarding body</b>	University of Cambridge
<b>Teaching institution</b>	Cambridge Institute for Sustainability Leadership
<b>Accreditation details</b>	Master of Studies
<b>Name of final award</b>	Master of Studies
<b>Programme title</b>	MSt in Sustainability Leadership
<b>HECoS code(s)</b>	100469 (environmental management) 100088 (leadership)
<b>Relevant QAA benchmark statement(s)</b>	None
<b>Qualifications framework level</b>	7 (Masters)
<b>Date specification produced</b>	November 2023

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 30,000 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.

	Postgraduate Certificate in Sustainable Business		Postgraduate Diploma in Sustainable Business		Master of Studies in Sustainability Leadership	
<i>1. The changing global context, the case for a radical shift from current systems, and the role of business</i>						
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 radical shifts in current systems to address challenges and opportunities
LO1C	Understand...	+	Analyse...	+	Assess and generate...	...the case for business leading systemic change
<i>2. A sustainable future, and the potential synergies and tensions in achieving it</i>						
LO2A	Understand...	+	Analyse...	+	Assess...	... conceptualisations of sustainability and key dimensions of a sustainable future, such as regeneration, inclusion, net zero carbon and resilience
LO2B	Identify...	+	Analyse...	+	Evaluate and generate responses to address...	... synergies and tensions between dimensions of a sustainable future
<i>3. Potential levers, leverage points and pathways to achieve change both within and beyond organisations to achieve sustainability</i>						
LO3A	Identify and apply...	+	Analyse and apply...	+	Evaluate and apply a broad and deep range of...	...research and best practices on levers and leverage points for embedding sustainability <b>within</b> organisations
LO3B	Identify and apply...	+	Analyse and apply...	+	Evaluate and apply a broad and deep range of...	...research and best practices on levers and leverage points that are applied <b>beyond</b> organisations for wider system change
LO3C	Identify... and apply...	+	Analyse... and apply...	+	Evaluate... and apply a broad and deep range of...	...pathways... ...change theories and innovations within and beyond an organisation and at a wider system level

	<b>Postgraduate Certificate in Sustainable Business</b>		<b>Postgraduate Diploma in Sustainable Business</b>		<b>Master of Studies in Sustainability Leadership</b>	
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<i>4. Personal and collective leadership and effective action as an agent of change</i>						
LO4A	Identify and demonstrate...	+	Develop...	+	Assess and apply advanced concepts that enhance...	...the thinking, values and practices that support effective personal and collective leadership
LO4B	Identify and demonstrate...	+	Develop...	+	Generate impact through...	...personal contribution to effective action as an agent of change
<i>5. Sustainability insights, knowledge, and research for specific contexts</i>						
LO5A	Identify and apply...	+	Analyse and apply...	+	Evaluate and apply a broader and deeper range of...	...existing academic and practitioner insights and knowledge to address sustainability challenges and opportunities in specific contexts
LO5B	Generate...	+	Generate further...	+	Generate advanced...	... sustainability-relevant research in an individual and group context
<i>6. Communication and engagement, individually and collaboratively, to advance the sustainability agenda</i>						
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.

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

- Residential workshops explore course modules through face-to-face learning opportunities.
- A programme of online learning between the residential workshops supports 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

## 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 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 supervisors.
- 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 co-learning environment.

**Support and mentorship:** A dedicated CISL team and expert 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 supervisors.

## 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 these assignments.

### **Entry and/or progression requirements**

Academic 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.
- endorsement from their employer or, if independent, from an organisation that will be the focus of their 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 supervisor 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 supervisor 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 Essay
- Fixed MSt students and Stage 3 Flexible MSt students are members of colleges 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 30,000 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/>