

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

Name, title and level of final qualification(s)	MSc Organizational Governance and Sustainability (Level 7)
Name and title of any exit qualification(s)	Postgraduate Diploma Postgraduate Certificate
Awarding Body	University of London
Teaching Institution(s)	Birkbeck, University of London
Home school/other teaching departments	Birkbeck Business School
Location of delivery	Central London
Language of delivery and assessment	English
Mode of study, length of study and normal start month	Full-time (1 year) Part-time (2 years) October
Professional, statutory or regulatory body	Not applicable
<u>QAA subject benchmark group(s)</u> <u>Higher Education Credit Framework for</u> <u>England</u>	Not applicable
Birkbeck Course Code	TMSORGGS_C
HECoS Code	100079
Start date of programme	October 2002
Date of programme approval	Spring 2002
Date of last programme amendment approval	February 2026
Valid for academic entry year	2026-27
Programme Director	Prof Sue Konzelmann
Date of last revision to document	05/02/2026

Admissions requirements

We welcome applicants without traditional entry qualifications as we base decisions on our own assessment of qualifications, knowledge and previous work experience. We may waive formal entry requirements based on judgement of academic potential.

- Normally at least a second-class honours degree in any subject area from a UK university or a non-UK equivalent; other qualifications will be considered.
- Non-native English speakers need to provide proof of English language ability: A minimum IELTS score of 6.5 (with a minimum of 6 in the sub-tests) and provide the certificate.
- A professional or other qualification obtained by written examinations approved by the College.

Relevant experience, supporting statements and references may be taken into consideration, especially in the case of non-standard applications.

Course aims

The main aim of the programme is to provide a postgraduate level education for those interested in studying the complex and changing relationships between organizations, business corporations, their stakeholders (shareholders, employees, customers, suppliers etc.) and the societies in which they operate. The economic and financial aspects of Organizational governance relationships have long been of concern to those in business and investment communities. In recent years the social, political and moral aspects of these relationships have also become a major public concern, as has the sustainability of these organizations and the societies and environments within which they operate and are embedded. This programme aims to address these sets of issues and to meet the needs of people wishing to engage critically with the policy aspects of Organizational governance and sustainability. It is also targeted at those wishing to be involved professionally in the direction and regulation of private, public and third sector organizations; the management or trusteeship of pension and other investment funds; and the field of Organizational, social and environmental sustainability. The programme is available one year full-time or two years part-time and will combine coursework and independent research leading to a dissertation.

Distinctive Features:

- The programme is international in scope, recognising both the wide variety of cultures and governance systems within which organizations operate worldwide and the increasing globalization of organizations and finance.
- The programme builds upon the School of Business's research strength in Organizational Governance and Ethics, Corporate Responsibility and Sustainability and Organizational Psychology. This is supported by Birkbeck's Responsible Business Centre and its Centre for Political Economy and Institutional Studies.
- The programme combines an interdisciplinary approach with in-depth research training in Business and Organizational Psychology. And it provides a strong foundation for PhD research in the area.
- The program benefits from the involvement of a number of leading figures in the field including members of national and international committees on Organizational governance, shareholder activists and NGO representatives; and it is a signatory member of the UN's Principles of Responsible Management Education (PRME).

Course structure

Level	Module Code	Module Title	Credit	Comp Core/ Option	Likely teaching term(s)
Full-time – 1 year					
7	MOMN028H7	Organizational Governance	15	Compulsory	T1
7	BUOB037H7	Research Methods	15	Compulsory	T1
7	MOMN039H7	Corporate Responsibility and Sustainability	15	Compulsory	T2
7	BUMN069H7	Institutions, Governance and Development	15	Compulsory	T2
7	BUMN173H7	Legal Perspectives on Governance and Sustainability	15	Compulsory	T3
7		Optional modules – See below (Choose a combination of 15- and 30-credit modules from the list below, totalling 45 credits)	45	Option	T1, 2 or 3
7	BUOB042D7 OR BUOB063D7	Research Project OR The Consultancy Challenge	60	Core	T1-3
Part-time - 2 years					
Year 1					
7	MOMN028H7	Organizational Governance	15	Compulsory	T1
7	MOMN039H7	Corporate Responsibility and Sustainability	15	Compulsory	T2
7	BUMN173H7	Legal Perspectives on Governance and Sustainability	15	Compulsory	T3
7		Optional modules – See below (Choose a combination of 15- and 30-credit modules from the list below, totalling 30 credits)	30	Option	T1, 2 or 3
Year 2					
7	BUOB037H7	Research Methods	15	Compulsory	T1
7	BUMN069H7	Institutions, Governance and Development	15	Compulsory	T2
7		Optional modules – See below (Choose a 15-credit module from the list below)	15	Option	T1, 2 or 3
7	BUOB042D7 OR BUOB063D7	Research Project OR The Consultancy Challenge	60	Core	T1-3
Indicative list of modules for closed options					
7	MOMN010H7	Principles of Organization and Management	15	Option	T1
7	MOOP005H7	Organization and Change Perspectives	15	Option	T1
7	SSGE126S7	Urban Sustainability	30	Option	T1
7	SSGE113S7	Introduction to Geographic Data Science	30	Option	T1
7	SSGE025S7	Environmental Science for Environmental Management	30	Option	T1

7	BUMN072H7	Sustainable Investment	15	Option	T1
7	SSGE103S7	Global Nature Conservation	30	Option	T2
7	BUOB041H7	Managing Organizational Change	15	Option	T2
7	BUOB079H7	Applied Decision Making	15	Option	T2
7	SSGE110S7	Sustainable Business Practice	30	Option	T3
7	LALW081S7	Law, Nature and Planetary Justice	30	Option	T1
7	MOMN032H7	International Business Ethics	15	Option	T3
7	BUOB040H7	Strategy in Practice	15	Option	T3
7	MOOP017H7	Leadership	15	Option	T3
7	SSGE127S7	Critical Infrastructures for Sustainability: London Thames Fieldtrip	30	Option	T3

Core: Module must be taken and passed by student

Compulsory: Module must be taken but can be considered for compensated credit (see CAS regulations paragraph 24)

Option: Student can choose to take this module

How you will learn

Your learning and teaching is organised to help you meet the learning outcomes (below) of the course. As a student, we expect you to be an active learner and to take responsibility for your learning, engaging with all of the material and sessions arranged for you.

Each course is divided into modules. You will find information on the virtual learning site (Moodle, see Academic Support below) about each of your modules, what to expect, the work you need to prepare, links to reading lists, information about how and when you will be assessed.

Teaching on this course is a combination of lectures (pre-recorded) and seminars. Lectures are designed to provide you with an outline or overview of the topic, to engage you with the material and direct you to other resources. They are a springboard for your own learning. Seminars are group sessions where you will be asked to contribute to discussion or group work around the topic, with material set in advance for which you need to prepare.

How we will assess you

The course will use a variety of assessment methods. Assessment is used to enhance your learning rather than simply to test it.

The assessment for each module varies from a combination of coursework and unseen, formal examination, to modules that are assessed by exam only or by coursework only. The length of the coursework and exam will vary depending on whether they are the only mode of assessment for the module or whether they are combined with another mode of assessment.

In regards to the coursework, it can be noted that the student is required to adopt a critical and interpretive approach when answering the question set and the department's marking criteria is adhered to when the examiners mark the scripts. The outline answers provided by the module convenor (to the second marker(s)) act as a standard against which the quality of the work is assessed.

The summative assessment for all modules measures each student's attainment with respect to the learning objectives, and it can be noted that the external examiners are charged with approving the formal, unseen examination papers. The examination questions set ask students to link theory and practice, and critically appraise assumptions. The examination process is rigorous and provides an opportunity to test a student's understanding of the subject matter.

Both the course work assignment and the unseen, formal examination, require students to think logically and to adopt an analytical approach to answering the question. It can be argued that the assessment is balanced and all timetabling takes into account the fact that those students with specific needs, have their needs taken into account and they are not disadvantaged in any way.

Learning outcomes (what you can expect to achieve)

'Learning outcomes' indicate what you should be able to know or do at the end of your course. Providing them helps you to understand what your teachers will expect and also the learning requirements upon which you will be assessed.

On successful completion of the programme, students will be able to:

Subject Specific:

- Gain insight into: Organizational governance and leadership in the private, public and third sectors; systems of governance in the major world economies, the political and economic principles and cultural values on which these are based, and the pressures promoting and resisting their convergence; and the social, environmental and ethical responsibilities of organisations and how they implement, communicate and measure and address sustainability issues.
- Demonstrate a critical understanding of the nature, behaviour and outcomes associated with the social, economic, political and legal systems that govern organizations and sustainability; an understanding of different theoretical perspectives on both the role of organizations in society and sustainability; and an appreciation of the key ethical issues which arise in relation to organizational activity.

Intellectual:

- Demonstrate knowledge of theories and systems of Organizational governance and sustainability
- Critically assess theories and systems of Organizational governance and sustainability
- Assess the reliability and validity of quantitative and qualitative analyses
- Demonstrate imaginative and original approaches to the use of theoretical and methodological tools in different subject areas

Practical:

- Demonstrate library and archive skills including the ability to conduct literature searches using electronic databases such as the Social Science Citation Index and Business Source Premier
- Apply appropriate essay/report writing skills
- Demonstrate an appropriate level of numeracy and IT skills

Personal and Social:

- Through coursework, class discussion and group work the student will gain:
 - Oral presentation and communication skills
 - Writing skills
 - Ability to work in teams

In summary, the postgraduate programmes in Organizational Governance and Sustainability comprise a comprehensive programme of intellectual inquiry and training that develops knowledge, skills, and competencies that are transferable to a wide range of research, teaching and applied situations.

Careers and further study

You will find Organizational Governance and Sustainability postgraduates in the following kinds of roles: organizational governance and sustainability analysts, consultants and policy-makers; corporate governance professionals involved in the direction, strategic management and regulation of organisations in the private, public and third sectors; professional managers or trustees of pension and other investment funds. The MSc Organizational Governance and Sustainability also provides a strong foundation for PhD research in the area.

Birkbeck offers a range of careers support to its students. You can find out more on [the careers pages of our website](#).

Academic regulations and course management

Birkbeck's academic regulations are contained in its [Common Award Scheme Regulations](#) and Policies published by year of application on the Birkbeck website.

You will have access to a course handbook on Moodle and this will outline how your course is managed, including who to contact if you have any questions about your module or course.

Support for your study

Your learning at Birkbeck is supported by your teaching team and other resources and people in the College there to help you with your study. Birkbeck uses a virtual learning environment called Moodle and each course has a dedicated Moodle page and there are further Moodle sites for each of your modules. This will include your course handbook.

Birkbeck will introduce you to the Library and IT support, how to access materials online, including using Moodle, and provide you with an orientation which includes an online Moodle module to guide you through all of the support available. You will also be allocated a personal tutor and provided with information about learning support offered within your School and by the College.

[Please check our website for more information about student support services](#). This covers the whole of your time as a student with us including learning support and support for your wellbeing.

Quality and standards at Birkbeck

Birkbeck's courses are subject to our quality assurance procedures. This means that new courses must follow our design principles and meet the requirements of our academic regulations. Each new course or module is subject to a course approval process where the proposal is scrutinised by subject specialists, quality professionals and external representatives to ensure that it will offer an excellent student experience and meet the expectation of regulatory and other professional bodies.

You will be invited to participate in an online survey for each module you take. We take these surveys seriously and they are considered by the course team to develop both modules and the overall courses. Please take the time to complete any surveys you are sent as a student.

We conduct an annual process of reviewing our portfolio of courses which analyses student achievement, equality data and includes an action plan for each department to identify ongoing enhancements to our education, including changes made as a result of student feedback. Our periodic review process is a regular check (usually every four years) on the courses by department with a specialist team including students.

Each course will have an external examiner associated with it who produces an annual report and any recommendations. Students can read the most recent external examiner reports on the course Moodle pages. Our courses are all subject to Birkbeck Baseline Standards for our Moodle module information. This supports the accessibility of our education including expectations of what information is provided online for students.

The information in this programme specification has been approved by the College's Academic Board and every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information it contains.

Programme specifications are reviewed periodically. If any changes are made to courses, including core and/or compulsory modules, the relevant department is required to provide a revised programme specification. Students will be notified of any changes via Moodle.

Further information about specifications and an archive of programme specifications for the College's courses is [available online](#).

Copyright, Birkbeck, University of London 2022 ©