

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

Name, title and level of final qualification(s)	MSc Corporate Responsibility and Sustainability (Level 7)
Name and title of any exit qualification(s)	PG Dip, PG Cert
Awarding Body	University of London
Teaching Institution(s)	Birkbeck, University of London
Home school/other teaching departments	Birkbeck Business School (home), School of Social Sciences.
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) September
Professional, statutory or regulatory body	N/A
QAA subject benchmark group(s) Higher Education Credit Framework for England	N/A
Birkbeck Course Code	TMSCORSS_C
HECoS Code	100079
Start date of programme	October 2013
Date of programme approval	Spring 2013
Date of last programme amendment approval	October 2024
Valid for academic entry year	2023-24
Date of last revision to document	09/10/24 (p/t year 2 only)

Admissions requirements

- 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.

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.

Course aims

Corporate responsibility and Sustainability have become significant issues for a wide range of organisations and for the managers that work within them. A broad range of reasons underpin this increase in significance: high profile failures in corporate governance; a growing need to demonstrate accountability and transparency; a decreasing tolerance for corporate excess and irresponsibility; climate change and an increasing interest in environmental sustainability; as well as the need to protect corporate reputation and to develop brand loyalty and competitive advantage. The MSc Corporate Responsibility and Sustainability considers many of these issues and builds upon the educational provision currently offered by the Departments of Management and Geography.

The main aim of the programme is to provide a high level offering in corporate responsibility/sustainability, which attracts high quality, highly motivated students. Those undertaking the programme of study are provided with a comprehensive understanding of a range of issues including environmental, social, governance, labour, and ethical issues that impact on the operation of organisations. The programme of study links theory and practice and is of benefit to those individuals that either have already acquired an appreciation of corporate responsibility/sustainability and wish to develop further insights into the subject or those individuals that have limited knowledge of the subject and wish to develop their understanding and appreciation of it or use the knowledge gained to embark on a career within this sector. The programme is of interest to various stakeholders and many multinational corporations as well as a range of for-profit and not-for-profit organizations have sponsored and/or recruited students from the programme. Critical thinking and problem focused decision-making are key components of the programme of study.

Course structure

Level	Module Code	Module Title	Credit	Comp Core/ Option	Likely teaching term(s)
Full-time - 1 year					
Year 1					
7	MOMN028H7	Corporate Governance	15	Compulsory	T1
7	SSGE025S7	Environmental Science for Environmental Management	30	Compulsory	T1
7	MOMN039H7	Corporate Responsibility	15	Compulsory	T2
7	MOMN011H7	Research Methods in Management (Postgraduate)	15	Compulsory	T2
7	MOMN009H7	International Business Strategy	15	Compulsory	T2
7	MOMN032H7	International Business Ethics	15	Compulsory	T3
7	BUMN173H7	Legal Perspectives on Governance	15	Compulsory	T3
7	BUMN184Z7	PG Dissertation Preparation	0	Compulsory	7
7	BUMN061D7	MSc Dissertation	60	Core	T1-3
Part-time – 2 years					
Year 1					
7	MOMN028H7	Corporate Governance	15	Compulsory	T1
7	MOMN039H7	Corporate Responsibility	15	Compulsory	T2
7	MOMN009H7	International Business Strategy	15	Compulsory	T2
7	MOMN032H7	International Business Ethics	15	Compulsory	T3
Year 2					
7	BUOB037H7	Research Methods	15	Compulsory	T1
7	SSGE025S7	Environmental Science for Environmental Management	30	Compulsory	T2
7	BUMN173H7	Legal Perspectives on Governance	15	Compulsory	T2
7	BUOB042D7	Research Project	60	Core	T1-3

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.

Your learning for this course will be organised around the activities outlined below.

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)

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

Subject Specific:

- Identify different theoretical perspectives and the implications on the role of business within society.

- Describe the different types of social, environmental and ethical responsibilities of organisations.
- Consider the different managerial challenges in relation to CR/Sustainability including implementation, stakeholder engagement, communication and measurement.
- Critically challenge the way organisations address CR/Sustainability.
- Evaluate the business case for CR/Sustainability.
- Critically analyse the processes underpinning CR/Sustainability decision-making within organizations.
- Undertake research in the area of CR/Sustainability.

Intellectual:

- Interpret complex ethical/social issues faced by organisations by linking theory and practice.
- Critically assess the theoretical literature on CR/Sustainability
- Interpret and place in context CR/Sustainability related research.
- Acquire the necessary learning and research skills, and competencies that are viewed as transferable and career enhancing.

Practical

- Demonstrate library and citation skills including the ability to conduct relevant literature searches using electronic databases.
- Compile and analyse data.
- Write a management report.
- Demonstrate an appropriate level of analytical/numerical and IT skills.
- Write an extended dissertation in the area of CR/Sustainability.

Personal and Social

- Demonstrate oral and written presentation and communication skills
- Work in teams and independently
- Demonstrate confidence to lead others and implement decisions

Careers and further study

You will find Corporate Responsibility and Sustainability graduates in the following kinds of roles: CSR/sustainability managers, CSR/sustainability consultants, CSR/sustainability analysts. Graduates have also been involved in sustainability work within the non-profit sector or public sector organisations. Some graduates have also started their own businesses as social entrepreneurs. The MSc 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](#).

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