

PRiME

*an initiative of the
United Nations Global Compact*

Sharing Information on Progress 2026

University of Lancashire

September 2026

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About the Principles for Responsible Management Education (PRME)

The Principles for Responsible Management Education (PRME) is a United Nations-supported initiative founded in 2007 that aims to raise the profile of sustainability in their classrooms through Seven Principles focused on serving society and safeguarding our planet.

PRME engages business and management schools to ensure they provide future leaders with the skills needed to balance economic and sustainability goals, while drawing attention to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and aligning academic institutions with the work of the UN Global Compact. Driven by its mission to transform management education, PRME equips today's business students with the understanding and ability to deliver change tomorrow. As a voluntary initiative with over 800 signatories worldwide, PRME has become the largest organized relationship between the United Nations and management-related higher education institutions.



“*The PRME initiative was launched to nurture responsible leaders of the future. Never has this task been more important. Bold leadership and innovative thinking are needed to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).*

Antonio Guterres

Secretary-General (2017 - Present)

United Nations

”

Principles of PRME



Purpose

We advance responsible management education to foster inclusive prosperity in a world of thriving ecosystems.



Values

We place organizational responsibility and accountability to society and the planet at the core of what we do.



Teach

We transform our learning environments by integrating responsible management concepts and practices into our curriculum and pedagogy.



Research

We study people, organizations, institutions, and the state of the world to inspire responsible management and education practice.



Partner

We engage people from business, government, civil society, and academia to advance responsible and accountable management education and practice.



Practice

We adopt responsible and accountable management principles in our own governance and operations.



Share

We share our successes and failures with each other to enable our collective learning and best live our common values and purpose.

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

In September 2015, all 193 Member States of the United Nations adopted a plan for achieving a better future for all – laying out a path over the next 15 years to end extreme poverty, fight inequality and injustice, and protect our planet. At the heart of Agenda 2030 are 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and 169 related targets that address the most important economic, social, environmental and governance challenges of our time. The SDGs clearly define the world we want – applying to all nations and leaving no one behind. Successful implementation of the SDGs will require all players to champion this agenda; the role of higher education is critical to this.





Getting Started

This section provides foundational information about University of Lancashire, including key details and basic institutional data.

Mission

The School of Business Mission reads: "We empower future leaders to serve local and global communities by creating opportunities for growth and success through responsible management education, applied research and business engagement".

Vision

The School of Business Vision reads: "To be recognised nationally and internationally as the most inclusive and transformational business school in the UK".

Strategy

sustainability-strategy

[View document](#)  [Download document](#) 

Strategy Alignment

Mission driven alignment with advancing sustainable development, the common good and quality education.

Our strategic alignment with sustainable development, the common good and quality education is enshrined within a mission driven focus.

We empower future leaders to serve local and global communities by creating opportunities for growth and success through responsible management education, applied research and business engagement.

The mission influences decision making by giving strategic focus to influence our priorities. It puts people at the heart of our work: learners, external stakeholders in business, our colleagues within the academic faculty and professional services. The mission commits us to creating inclusive and accessible opportunities with equitable outcomes for all stakeholders, in our provision with learners and business in the UK, and internationally through our campus and partners overseas. It also articulates the future role that our learners will play, as global citizens, in doing the same within the businesses and regions within which they work. As a civic institution, the mission demonstrates our role within the University, as a driver of social mobility and regional economic prosperity, and for regions across the world through partners. It also articulates the principal dimensions of activity through which we'll work to achieve it: education, research and business engagement. Developed through stakeholder consultation, our mission ensures that it is appropriate for our relevant constituencies and informs intentional consideration of its contribution to learners, diversity, business and society. This is outlined in the table below

Constituent	Appropriateness of the mission	Contribution
Learners	Providing quality education for learners from all backgrounds, including those currently in work on professional and executive education courses. It is informed by applied research and enriched by business engagement for contemporary and authentic teaching, learning and assessment. Our deep connection with business ensures courses are career focused and develop the necessary knowledge, skills and behaviours learners need to secure initial graduate roles and foster a career of continuous professional development.	Our learners gain knowledge, skills and behaviours to secure employment, contributing positively to business success and regional economic growth, as well as potential social mobility for their families. Our faculty contributes to the advancement of business education through dissemination of pedagogic innovation through national and international business school and discipline specific networks, conferences and publications.
Employers	Providing work-ready graduates who have the knowledge, skills and behaviours to address skills needs and boost business performance and productivity. Our degree apprenticeships and executive education also offer tailored courses for employers to offer to their employees to gain qualifications while working. Providing business solutions, through research and knowledge exchange, to improve business performance and productivity.	Our graduates go on to secure graduate roles, with over 50% remaining within Lancashire to support economic development and business growth. International students who leave the country take similar benefits to their destination countries' regions. Our research promotes innovation and the generation of new ideas. Through knowledge exchange, we promote the applied dissemination of knowledge and practice to business in the private, public and voluntary sectors. It also informs curricular development.
Local, regional and national government	Influencing policy at local, regional and national levels through the impact of our research and knowledge exchange.	Our research and knowledge exchange activity and engagement of partners <u>provides</u> insights that influence policy through purposeful consideration of the impact of activity at the outset. This ensures the dissemination of diverse ideas to shape public policy for societal good.
Partners	Providing an innovative and engaging portfolio of courses that have relevance to the learner constituents, supporting the achievement of their strategies and their regional business skills needs. Engaging in collaborative research and knowledge exchange to amplify its impact globally.	Our courses and collaborative work with partners in supporting delivery and continuous quality improvement leads to learner success and the dissemination of diverse ideas in business education to diverse communities of people. Our collaborative research and knowledge exchange supports improved business practice in the regions where partners are based and informs policy in context internationally.
Our faculty	Committing to providing an inclusive workplace, with a structured framework for professional development, to nurture excellence in teaching and research, and support career success and progression.	Our faculty deliver innovative, high quality business education and applied research that ensures stakeholders succeed, within an academic environment that fosters their own personal success.

The mission was developed to give our School clear strategic focus and, as part of a wider institution, to contribute to the mission of the University: 'We transform lives by delivering an outstanding educational experience, creating prosperity and opportunity in the communities we serve'. This alignment means that, in developing a strategy to deliver the mission, our strategic plan translates the University's six strategic priorities within a business school context:

1. Student opportunity and success
2. Leading the way in modern learning
3. Our people experience
4. Real-world research and innovation
5. Our place in the world
6. Future-proofing our University

The alignment means that we have autonomy to progress our strategy to deliver our mission whilst synergistically contributing to the achievement of the wider University's mission. It provides the framework by which expected outcomes are agreed, in the setting of Key Performance Indicators, which are also informed by external UK regulatory benchmarks. In this way, our mission provides connection for School participants: connecting actions and providing a common understanding in the School (and in co-working with stakeholders across the University) in achieving our mission and its expected outcomes.

Institutional History

A History of the University of Lancashire Business School: Inclusion, Opportunity and Responsible Management Education

The University of Lancashire traces its origins to 1828, when it was founded in Preston as the Institution for the Diffusion of Knowledge. Established during a period of significant social and industrial change, the institution was created to extend educational opportunities beyond traditional elites and provide access to learning for working people. This commitment to widening participation and social mobility has remained a defining characteristic throughout its history and continues to underpin the University's contemporary mission.

From its earliest years, the institution embodied principles that would today be associated with inclusive and responsible education. It sought to equip individuals with practical knowledge and skills that could improve both personal circumstances and wider society. Through successive transformations into the Harris Institute (1882), Harris College (1956), Preston Polytechnic (1973), Lancashire Polytechnic (1984), and finally the University of Central Lancashire following the granting of university status in 1992, the institution consistently responded to evolving societal and economic needs while retaining its founding ethos of opportunity for all.

The University's development reflects the wider evolution of British higher education, particularly the expansion of technical, professional and vocational learning. Its polytechnic heritage fostered strong connections with industry, public service and local communities, ensuring that education remained relevant to contemporary challenges. This emphasis on applied knowledge, social impact and engagement with stakeholders provided fertile ground for the development of business and management education that prioritises not only economic performance but also ethical and societal responsibility.

The Business School occupies a central place within this tradition. Building on Lancashire's industrial and commercial heritage, the School has developed a portfolio of programmes designed to prepare graduates for leadership in complex and rapidly changing environments. Its long-standing focus on professional relevance, employer engagement and practical learning reflects the University's historic commitment to serving regional, national and international communities. The School's extensive links with professional bodies, businesses and public-sector organisations ensure that students develop both managerial competence and an understanding of their wider responsibilities as leaders.

Importantly, principles of inclusion, sustainability and responsible management education are not recent additions to the University's identity but rather contemporary expressions of its foundational values. The Business School's commitment to the United Nations Principles for Responsible Management Education (PRME) demonstrates how the University's historic mission has evolved to address twenty-first century global challenges. Since becoming a PRME signatory in 2018, the School has embedded sustainability, ethical decision-making, inclusivity and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals within its teaching, research and external partnerships.

Viewed in historical perspective, responsible management education at the University of Lancashire is a continuation of a nearly two-century-long commitment to creating educational opportunity, fostering social progress and responding to societal need. From the Institution for the Diffusion of Knowledge to a modern international university, the University's enduring purpose has been to empower learners from diverse backgrounds to contribute positively to business, communities and society. The Business School's contemporary focus on responsible leadership therefore represents not a departure from tradition, but a direct continuation of the principles upon which the institution was founded in 1828.



The photograph shows the Technical School which became the Harris Institute. This building is still part of the University of Lancashire.



The University as it is now with the Harris Building in the centre bottom of the photo.

Graduates & Enrollment

2025 Statistics	Number
Graduates	2040
Faculty & Staff at the University	3367
Faculty & Staff at the Institution	297
Student Enrollment at the University	26112
Student Enrollment at the Institution	4377
Undergraduate Attendance	1301
Masters-Level Postgraduate Attendance	2445
Doctoral Student Attendance	523
Certificate, Professional Development, or Continuing Education Attendance	108

Degrees Offered

Bachelor Programs

-  Bachelor of Science (B.Sc. or B.S.)
-  Bachelor of Arts (B.A.)

Masters Programs

-  Master of Science (M.Sc. or M.S.)
-  Master of Arts (M.A.)
-  Master of Business Administration (M.B.A.)

Doctoral Programs

-  Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.)
-  Doctor of Business Administration (D.B.A.)



Purpose

We advance responsible management education to foster inclusive prosperity in a world of thriving ecosystems.

Letter of Commitment



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September 2026



As Dean of the University of Lancashire Business School, I am delighted to introduce the Sharing of Information Progress Report for 2026 and to reaffirm our commitment to the Principles of Responsible Management Education.

Through our mission, vision, values and purpose we remain committed to PRME through our curriculum, research, business engagement and our culture within the Business School and the University.

In 2026, our commitment to responsible management education, our work with business and our contribution to regional prosperity and social mobility was recognised when we were named 'Business School of the Year' at the Educate North Awards.

Our 'Student Working Lives' project has gained national recognition and has been jointly published with the Higher Education Policy Institute (HEPI) and has influenced the questions asked by Advance HE in its annual student experience survey. Faculty in the School are trailblazing the responsible use of AI in education and we continue to stand for equality, diversity and inclusion.

This report outlines many more developments and achievements which demonstrate our commitment to the PRME principles and which support our regional, national and international impact. As Dean of the University of Lancashire Business School, I am proud to reaffirm our commitment to PRME and endorse this Sharing of Information Report.

Professor Steven Rhoden

Dean of the University of Lancashire Business School

Definition of Purpose

Our purpose is enshrined in our mission.

Institutional Engagement

76% - 100% of faculty at University of Lancashire actively contribute to our work with PRME, advancing responsible management education, or addressing sustainable development challenges through their work.

Continue telling your story

Business School of the Year - Educate North Awards

Business School of the Year: University of Lancashire Business School.

The University of Lancashire Business School was awarded Business School of the Year 2026 at the Educate North Awards for its strategically coherent, evidence-driven transformation across education, research, and business engagement. The judges praised our clear vision, strong academic foundation, and demonstrable impact on student attainment, satisfaction, and regional economic growth.

They also commended our well-evidenced approach and integrated model, highlighting robust outcomes, innovative curriculum development, and a compelling systems-level strategy that delivers benefits for learners, businesses, and society.



**University
of Lancashire**
Business School

**BUSINESS SCHOOL
OF THE YEAR
WINNER**

SPONSORED BY





(Centre L-R) Dr Zemin Chen, Professor Adrian Wright, Louise McArdle and Professor Steven Rhoden, collect the Business School of the Year Award.



Values

We place organizational responsibility and accountability to society and the planet at the core of what we do.



How We Define Values

Our Values are defined institutionally and are reflected in our Mission and Vision Achieving Together, Being Proud, Creating Opportunity and Supporting All

Who Champions Responsible Management Education at Our Institution

- ❖ Disciplinary efforts within business school
- ❖ Interdisciplinary efforts across business school
- ❖ Interdisciplinary efforts across parent organization
- ❖ Research or issue group, society, or club leading sustainability efforts

Student Voices

The following narratives demonstrate how University of Lancashire has influenced students' academic journey and personal growth.

David Moulding, DBA Student Studying Consumer Responses to Sustainability Messaging in Performance Sportswear

During my DBA studies within the Business School at the University of Lancashire, my research has increasingly focused on the relationship between sustainability communication, consumer behaviour, and performance sportswear. The project explores how consumers interpret and respond to sustainability messaging within an ultra-running context, particularly where technical performance and environmental responsibility may appear to compete.

The research is strongly connected to my own long-standing relationship with outdoor environments. Since childhood, I have spent much of my life in the mountains and natural landscapes of the UK, experiences which later developed into a sustained involvement in endurance running and ultra-distance events. Over time, this connection to the outdoors led me to reflect more critically on sustainability, consumption, and the role brands play in shaping environmentally responsible behaviour.

My research project examines how trust, identity, and perceived product performance influence consumer responses to sustainability claims in performance sportswear. The aim is not only to contribute academically to understanding sustainability communication within specialist sporting markets, but also to generate practical insight that may help organisations communicate environmental responsibility more credibly and effectively.

Completing a DBA alongside full-time professional responsibilities has been both challenging and rewarding. The experience has strengthened my academic development considerably and has allowed me to combine personal interests, professional practice, and sustainability-focused research within a meaningful and applied doctoral study.



Student reflection on understanding in sustainability by Lucky Onyebuenyi

My academic journey began with a Bachelor's Degree (BSc) in Urban and Regional Planning, where I learned that the physical layout of a city significantly influences its environmental and social well-being. This programme provided me with a solid understanding of sustainability as both a spatial and environmental necessity. In that context, sustainable development was primarily concerned with land-use efficiency, infrastructural resilience, and the mitigation of urban sprawl.

Before enrolling in the MRes in Sustainability and Management, I viewed sustainability largely as an environmental issue. My focus was on areas such as energy conservation, traffic reduction, and land protection. However, this course has added an entirely new dimension to my understanding. It has shown me that sustainability is also about how organisations are managed, how ethical decisions are made, and how people are treated. I learned that true sustainability requires effective governance, accountability, and a genuine commitment to honesty and fairness.

I now understand that the environment cannot be separated from the people who inhabit it. This course taught me that social equity, inclusion, and ethical practice are fundamental pillars of a sustainable world. An environmentally friendly city can only be truly successful if everyone within it feels valued and has an equal opportunity to thrive.

A city may have the most innovative green buildings and expansive parks, but if the people living there do not feel included or treated fairly, it cannot be considered genuinely sustainable. This course reinforced the idea that social justice and ethical leadership are just as important as environmental planning.

My perspective has evolved to embrace progressive, people-centred approaches such as:

1. **Nature-Based Solutions (NbS)** that work with natural ecosystems, such as urban wetlands for flood management, permeable streets, and biodiversity corridors.
2. **Urban restructuring that prioritises localised, walkable, and transit-oriented development**, ensuring that residents can access work, healthcare, and leisure opportunities within a short walk or cycle, thereby significantly reducing vehicle emissions.
3. **Inclusive governance**, whereby local communities actively participate in the design of spatial policies, helping to ensure equitable outcomes and greater social justice.

Moving forward, my goal is to help build communities that are not only green and clean but also fair, inclusive, and welcoming. I do not simply want to be a technical planner; I aspire to be an ethical leader who takes a holistic view of sustainability challenges and opportunities.

My objective is to lead initiatives that create environments that are not only ecologically resilient but also socially equitable and economically viable for future generations.



Student Reflection on the Critical Issues in Sustainability and Management Module by Sonu Nepali

I already held a degree in Rural Development and was quite familiar with discussions surrounding development and environmental issues. However, sustainability in the context of business was something I had never explored. Prior to starting the course, I primarily associated sustainability with environmental concerns.

Through engaging topics such as the Triple Bottom Line, carbon footprint, and the circular economy, covered in the Critical Issues in Sustainability and Management module, I gradually developed an understanding of how sustainability connects with business practices, consumer behaviour, ethics, governance, and social responsibility. Moreover, Dr Paulina MacKrell's engaging teaching style encouraged me to think more critically about these issues. The knowledge and insights I gained consistently challenged my long-held assumptions and prompted deeper reflection.

This transformation in my perspective was not limited to the classroom. I still remember being surprised when I was first asked to pay for a plastic bag at Tesco, as this was something I had never encountered in my home country. Although seemingly insignificant, experiences like this prompted me to reflect on how policies, social norms, and institutional practices can subtly influence individual behaviour and contribute to broader sustainability goals.

As my understanding of sustainability deepened, I came to appreciate how people, profit, and the planet are interconnected, and why achieving a balance between them is essential. Beyond broadening my knowledge of sustainability, this course has strengthened my curiosity about how external factors shape decision-making across different contexts and have helped define my professional aspirations. It has inspired me to pursue a career in corporate social responsibility (CSR), where business, society, and sustainability intersect.

Student Awareness

51% - 75% of students at University of Lancashire are aware that we are a PRME Signatory Member.

Student Engagement

26% - 50% of students at University of Lancashire actively contribute to our work with PRME, advancing RME, or addressing sustainable development challenges through their work.

Values Voices

LinkedIn Post by Jan Foo Contributor to Business School Discussion Panel at the RKE Festival

Statement by Jan Foo, Founder & CEO ReGenerate:

Thank you, Dr Maria Sherrington for stewarding such an important conversation today and including me on your panel.

The challenge is not one issue in isolation; climate, food, energy, biodiversity, mental wellbeing and economic inequality are all interconnected as we heard today from our fellow panellists.

The organisations that will thrive between now and 2050 will be the ones capable of adapting, collaborating and thinking long term. The question is no longer whether business should help solve these challenges, but whether business can afford not to.

LinkedIn Reflection by Mich Bondesio on Attending the University of Lancashire RKE Festival

Mich Bondesio, Founder of Creating Cadence and University of Lancashire Business School Entrepreneur in Residence:

Still processing the fun, fruitful and favourable week of learning and connection spent at the University of Lancashire's RKE Festival last week. The highlights (and what I had time to see and do) included:

1. Participating in a lovely conversation as part of a business sustainability panel hosted by Dr Maria Sherrington alongside fellow panellists Celia Gaze, Joanna Fianu and Jan Foo, as part of my Entrepreneur in Residence role at the Business School.
2. Learning about the latest mind-boggling AI technologies being applied by past graduates of the university in various fields of commerce, medicine and science, including the Lego Smart play system, health diagnostics and quantum physics.
3. Celia Gaze, of The Wellbeing Farm (and fellow EIR) presenting an excellent session on the benefits of sustainability for your business, for the Centre for SME and Enterprise Development Business Breakfast.
4. Learning more about the challenges and benefits of Deep Fake AI technology in an excellent session by Tom Stables (and his multilingual avatars).

5. Viewing the interesting post-graduate research posters and presentations, and the life-size astronauts made of paper, in the Foster Building. And marvelling at the excellent the research photo exhibition at the Student Centre.

6. Learning more about the fascinating research impacting food security outcomes from members of the Institute for Planetary Resilience & Community Transformation (PACT).

7. Enjoying the One Health: Common Ground presentations on ways members of the university are working towards improving human, animal and planetary health through the Arts and Sciences, in collaboration with communities, private business, public institutions, and government organisations.

I unfortunately didn't get to day 4 and 5 of the Festival, and there was more I wanted to see/do had time allowed, but I was inspired by the sheer quantity of fantastic, ground-breaking and important research and innovation taking place at the University and across Lancashire.

Thinking back to the sustainability panel I was on, one of the key themes that came out of that conversation was that COLLABORATION NOT COMPETITION, is what will help us to sustain, thrive and innovate in increasingly volatile and uncertain environments. I certainly saw plenty of examples of the power of collaboration across the RKE Festival elements, and that is so encouraging to see.

Proud to have these types of events taking place in my adopted home, and so thankful to have the opportunity to be involved and to experience this.

Celebrating Values

The following demonstrates a way in which our institution celebrates values in various specializations.

Rethinking Inclusion: Race, Ethnicity and Equity in Business Education

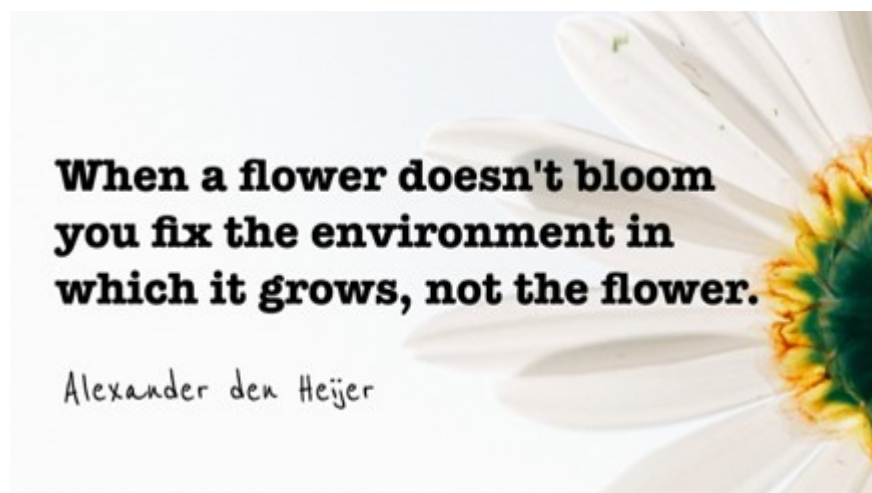


Photographed: Dr Uracha Chatrakul Na Ayudhya, Professor Sally Everett, Louise McArdle, Professor Rob Binns.

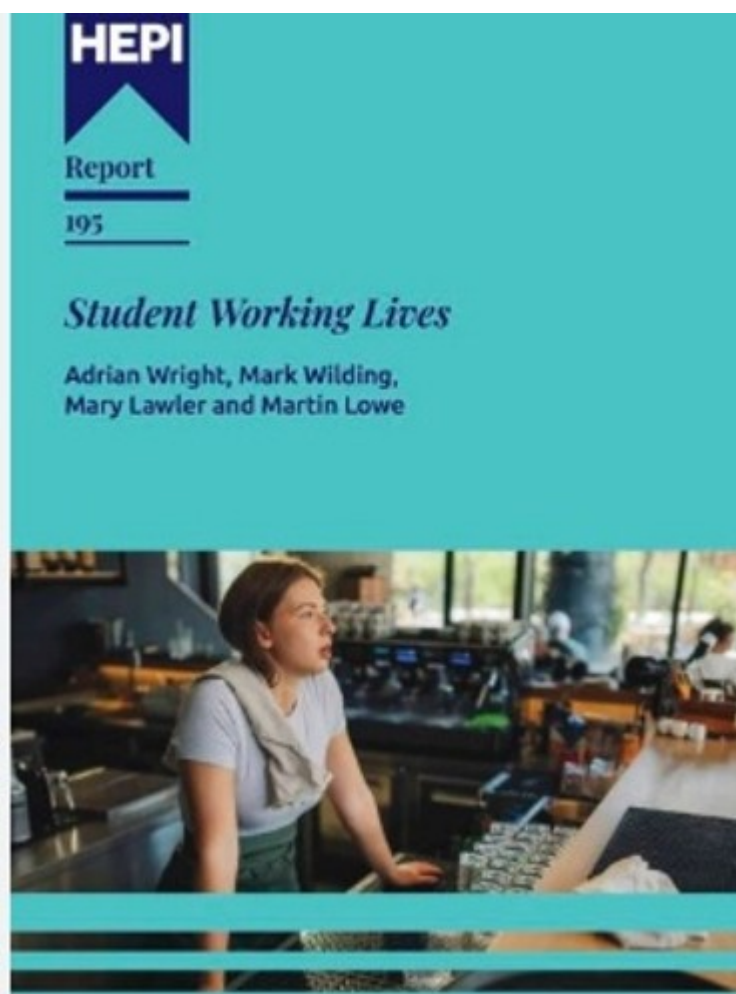
In March we welcomed Professor Sally Everett from Kings Business School and Dr Uracha Chatrakul Na Ayudhya from Birkbeck University, London as keynote speakers at a symposium entitled 'Rethinking Inclusion: Race Ethnicity and Equity in Business Education'. The event was attended by more than 60 people from across the School and the University and was chaired Louise McArdle and Professor Rob Binns. Louise, Associate Dean for Academic Leadership, posed the question, 'What makes an inclusive Business School?'. By way of response, it is more than 'having' policies. Inclusivity is fostered through the enactment and embodiment of policies and action plans designed to foster equity.

"We must be concerned about not only what we teach, but how we support teaching and learning and build an infrastructure around the student experience which is lived by our students and which fosters an inclusive environment promoting a culture where everyone can meet their potential and know they are valued".

Professor Sally Everett spoke about the challenges facing EDI in Business Schools and highlighted some of the prejudice and aggression she has faced for promoting EDI in a difficult political environment. She also highlighted how she has developed an inclusive culture at King's Business School evidence by narrowing awarding gaps. She also endorsed fostering an inclusive environment to allow all to thrive.



Dr Uracha Chatrakul Na Ayudhya shared her journey as an educator who has been able to work with her students to uncover the hidden curriculum of Selection and Assessment, particularly ways in which she can work in community with students and fellow educators to take notice and collectively take action against colonial and neoliberal capitalist logics and structures that normalise the ongoing dehumanisation and violence enacted by the imperial west.



Dr. Mark Wilding and Mary Lawler spoke about the inclusivity paradox experienced by first-in-family, international, and carer university students who work. Building on the Business School's nationally recognised 'Students Working Lives Project' which was featured in the SIP 2025, they highlighted how the need to engage in paid work to support studies and other commitments can often take priority over studies, impacting academic performance.

Dr. Kamalavelu Velayutham spoke about heutagogy in relation to mentor-based pedagogy for PG student's wellbeing. This approach has been developed following a project between Student Mental Health and Wellbeing Services and internal postgraduate students which was designed to increase engagement with the service. The project also included undergraduate students (as reported in SIP 2025) who acted as consultants to provide practical solutions to increase engagement. Mike Summersall outlined the solutions posed by the students which have contributed to the newly introduced student mental health charter. The outcomes are having significant impact and continuing over a three-year period working with Student Mental Health and Wellbeing Services. The project has also supported a significant closing of differential attainment gaps between UK and international student detail of which is reported in the 'Teach' section of this report.



Dr. Jenni Barrett spoke about the importance of understanding social relationship and dynamics within the classroom to foster student participation and engagement. Jenni highlighted that traditional pedagogical methods such as asking students to answer questions in class may alienate students whose learning style may be affected by power imbalances, cultural norms or identity and previous validation or rejection. Non responsiveness is not necessarily about non engagement but an indicator of a social system which unintentionally excludes some participants. This raises fundamental questions about pedagogical styles and inclusive learning environments:

1. What are the differences between the ways synchronous and asynchronous learning can support different learning styles and outcomes?
2. How does subgroup cohesiveness or intergroup conflict limit or support inclusion and engagement?
3. Are there any demographic differences in patterns of interactional inclusion and engagement in classroom learning activities?
4. Are those who always have their hand up necessarily the ones who are most engaged in learning?
5. How can online learning environments be used to support inclusion?

Jenni will be conducting data collection in the classroom and undertaking analysis for publication in due course. Outcomes will be reported in the SIP as appropriate.

Posting on LinkedIn about the day, Professor Sally Everett commented,

"I left with new ideas, new collaborators and allies, and a renewed enthusiasm to 'rethink' inclusion as we embrace and explore concepts of heutagogy, social systems and culturally sustaining pedagogies. A rich and energising day despite the external challenges we all face with this work and fight for inclusion and equity".

For more information you can contact:

Louise McArdle LMcArdle@lancashire.ac.uk

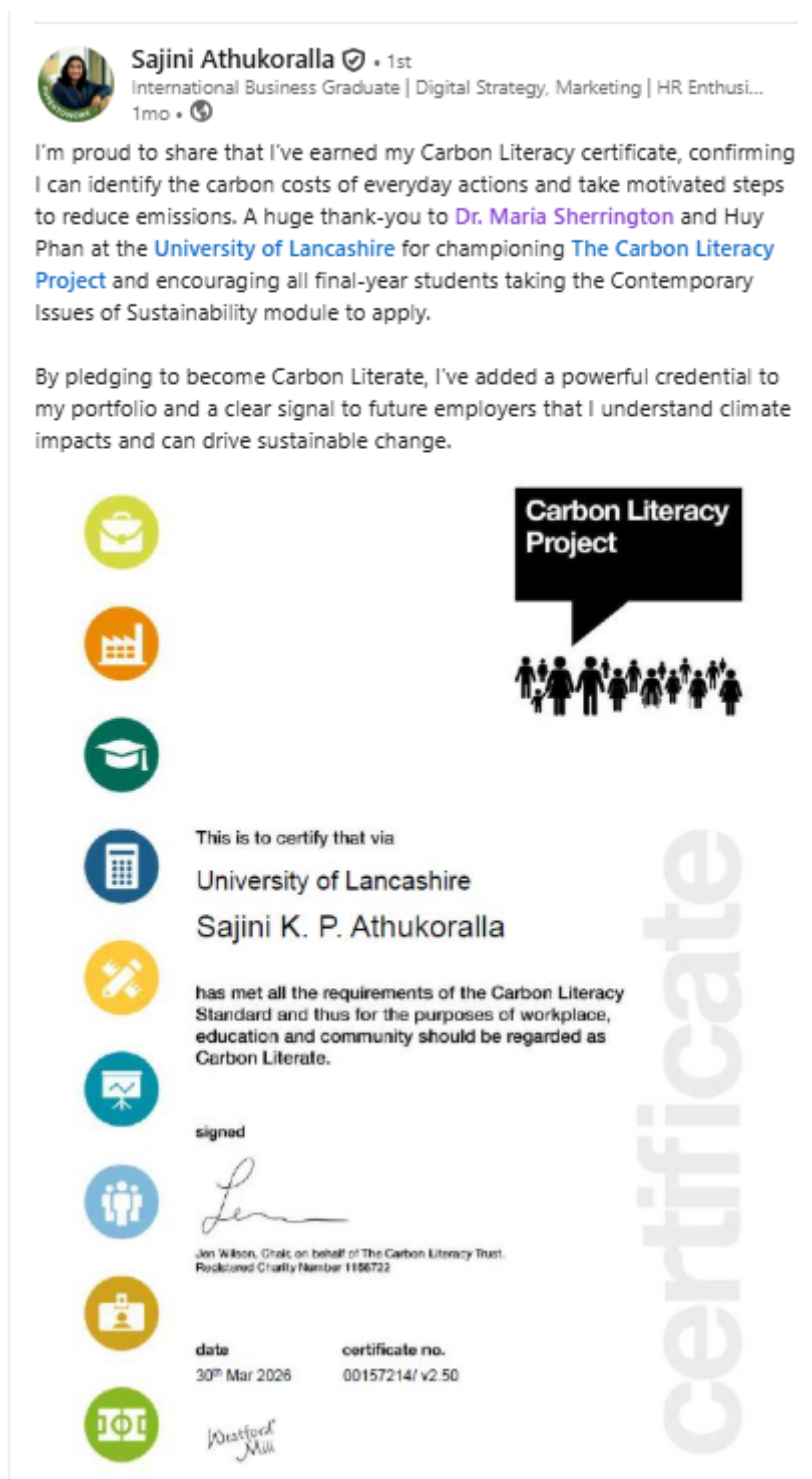
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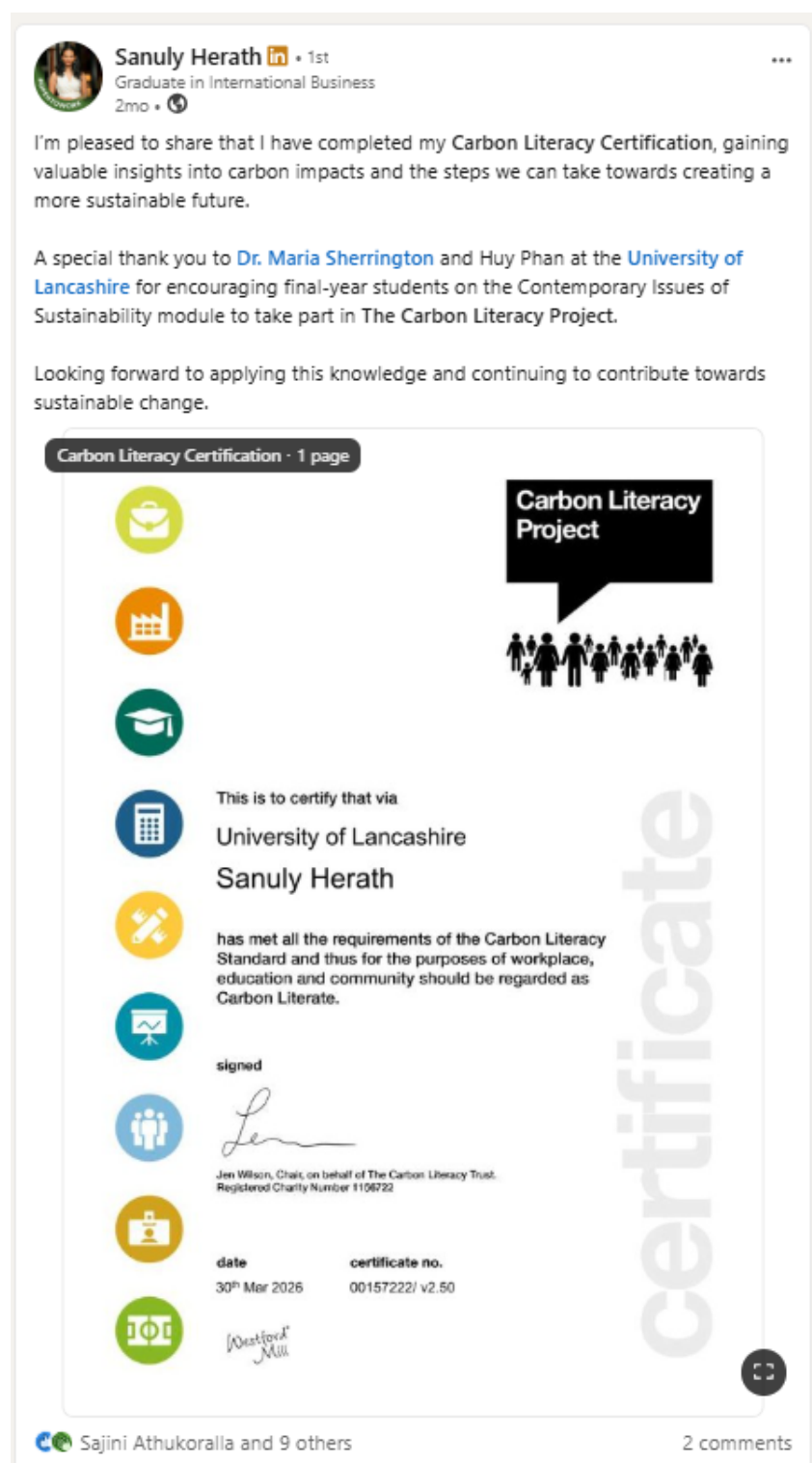
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Mike Summersall MSummersall@lancashire.ac.uk

Continue telling your story



Sajini Athukoralla's LinkedIn post announcing gaining Carbon Literate Status



Sanuly Herath's LinkedIn Post announcing gaining Carbon Literate Status

EDI Poster Campaign

The Business School is committed to fostering an inclusive environment where all can thrive and achieve their potential. In the current, often challenging, political climate celebrating diversity and reducing prejudice are fundamental to promoting a multi cultural space for students, faculty and all stakeholders. As a contribution to EDI and inclusivity, during the academic year, the School engaged in a 'myth-busting' and information sharing campaign through a series of posters for faculty and

students. The posters, designed by Dr Candan Celik, focussed on, among other things, gender, sexual orientation, race and ethnicity, neurodiversity and mental health. They also provided advice about pronouncing student names and avoiding micro-aggressions. Feedback about the posters was extremely positive, particularly the poster about micro-aggressions which resonated with many members of faculty and their lived experience. We will be sharing the posters with our new cohorts of students at Welcome Week in September 2026.

Myth:

"Allyship just means supporting people privately."

Fact:

True allyship is visible action.

It means speaking up when stereotypes appear, challenging exclusionary behaviour, and amplifying under-represented voices in meetings, group work, and projects.

Real allyship is active, consistent, and public enough to create change

Why This Matters for Us

Visible allyship encourages respect, removes barriers in group work, and creates a safer, more supportive space for everyone.

It reflects our EDI commitment.

As a Business School, we aim to model inclusive behaviours that reflect the diverse workplaces our graduates will enter. Allyship is central to this mission.

Be a good ally – and take action.

If you want to learn more, or if you experience or witness behaviour that causes harm or exclusion, you can confidentially report concerns here:

<https://reportandsupport.lancashire.ac.uk/>



University of Lancashire
Business School

Understanding Microaggressions



What is microaggression?

A microaggression is a subtle, often unintentional comment, question, or behaviour that expresses bias, prejudice, or stereotypes toward someone because of their race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, disability, or other identity.

Even though it may seem small, its impact can be powerful and hurtful — especially when repeated over time.

Why it's not always intentional

Microaggressions usually happen when someone speaks without awareness of their assumptions or cultural bias.

They are often said with no intention to harm — but intent does not erase the impact.

The key is to be open to learning and reflecting, not defensive.

How microaggressions affect others

- Create feelings of exclusion or inferiority
- Cause stress, frustration, or anxiety
- Make people feel they don't belong
- Damage trust and teamwork in the workplace or classroom

How can we avoid microaggressions?

- Listen more than you speak
- Avoid assumptions based on appearance or accent
- Ask yourself: "Would I say this to anyone?"
- Be open if someone gives feedback about your language
- Learn to apologise sincerely and reflect if you get it wrong

Why it's important

Creating awareness around microaggressions helps build a culture of belonging, respect, and empathy.

When we communicate thoughtfully, we make others feel seen, safe, and valued — and that benefits everyone.

Examples

- **"Where are you really from?"**
Suggests they don't belong here.
- **"You don't look gay."**
Assumes there is a "right" way to look gay.
- **"You sound angry when you talk."**
Misinterprets directness or tone from a different communication culture
- **"Can you take notes for the meeting?" (said repeatedly to women)**
Reinforces gendered roles.
- **"You're so inspiring!" (said to a disabled person doing everyday work)**
Reduces a person to their disability.
- **"Why are you fasting? That must be hard!"**
Can make someone feel spotlighted or 'othered.'



Gender Pronouns & Inclusive Language

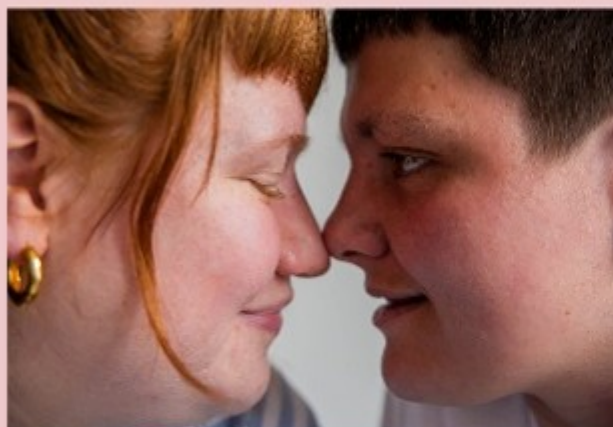
What are pronouns?

Pronouns are the words we use instead of someone's name — such as she/her, he/him, or they/them.

Using the right pronouns is a simple way to respect someone's identity.

Why pronouns matter

- They affirm people's identities
- They help everyone feel seen and valued
- They reduce assumptions based on appearance or voice
- They create inclusive spaces for all



Language to Rethink & Inclusive Alternatives

Some everyday words make assumptions about gender. Even when well-intended, they can make people feel excluded. Small changes make a big difference.

What if you're unsure?

- Share your own pronouns first
- Ask politely if appropriate
- Listen and use what you're told
- If you make a mistake, apologise briefly and move on

Instead of... Try...

- Ladies and gentlemen - Everyone / All
- Lads / Girls - Team / Folks
- Guys (for mixed groups) - Everyone
- Boys and girls - Students / All of you
- Miss / Sir - Name / They
- Addressing a group - Friends / You all



University of Lancashire
Business School

PRONOUNCING STUDENT NAMES

HOW DO YOU HANDLE STUDENT NAMES YOU CAN'T PRONOUNCE?

1. "But I can't say that name"

Be humble. Ask for help. We ask our students all the time to do things they think they can't do. Model what you want them to do when they get something they think they can't do.

2. "I give them a nickname."

Names reflect our families, cultures, and identities. When students' names are mispronounced or changed, it can make them feel invisible and disrespected — even like a subtle form of bias.

Our students have at least 2–3 teachers — imagine hearing your name mispronounced that many times a day. Imagine if many teachers also thought they had the right to rename you.

3. "They tell me it is OK to call them..."

There can be several reasons for this. First, they see that you are uncomfortable and try to make you feel more at ease. They often give in because they have grown used to no one even trying to say their name.

4. "I just give them 'the English version' of their name."

See points 1–3 combined. Giving someone an "English version" of their name may seem helpful, but it erases part of their identity. Our families choose names that carry meaning, history, and love. Learning to say them correctly shows respect and inclusion.

Myth: "Real men don't struggle with mental health."

Fact: Men experience anxiety, depression, and stress just as much as anyone else — they're simply less likely to talk about it due to stigma and cultural expectations.

Key Facts About Men's Mental Health

Men are less likely to seek help.

Men are significantly less likely than women to access psychological therapies, even when experiencing the same symptoms. (Mental Health Foundation, 2023).

Suicide rates are highest among men.

In the UK, around 3 in 4 suicides are men, making male suicide one of the most serious public health issues (OxS, 2023).

Work-related stress hits men hard.

Men report high levels of stress related to employment, financial pressure, and performance expectations, which can worsen mental health.

Early support saves lives.

When men access support early — whether through talking therapies, helplines, or peer support — outcomes improve significantly, and crisis risk decreases.



if you need someone to talk to, please reach out — you are not alone.

Reaching out for help is a sign of strength. You deserve support, understanding, and a place where you feel safe and heard. We are here for you.

Well-being Support Team (For students)

Call: +44 (0) 1772 893020

They offer confidential support, guidance, and someone who will listen.

Samaritans - 24/7

Call: 116 123

A safe space to talk any time, day or night.

Shout - 24/7 Text Support

Text SHOUT to 85256 to speak with a trained volunteer via text.



Myth

Neurodivergent people can't succeed in fast-paced academic or workplace environments.

Reality

Neurodivergent students bring incredible strengths — creativity, deep focus, new perspectives, strategic thinking, and brilliant problem-solving abilities.

Facts That Should Inspire You

Neurodivergent teams are more innovative and more productive (Deloitte, 2023).

Students with ADHD, autism, dyslexia and other neurodivergent profiles often show exceptional creativity, resilience, and original thinking — skills that employers actively seek (HBR, 2024).

Many of the world's most successful minds are neurodivergent — including Elon Musk, Ingvar Kamprad, Agatha Christie, Richard Branson, and Emma Watson — showing that thinking differently is a superpower, not a barrier.





DID YOU KNOW?

The "Pink Pound" in the UK is worth about £6 billion a year, and global LGBTQ+ buying power hits \$3.7 trillion.

Brands like IKEA (launching rainbow shopping bags), Absolut Vodka (long history of Pride campaigns), and Levi's (gender-inclusive collections) have tapped into this market - gaining strong loyalty from LGBTQ+ consumers. On the flip side, companies seen as "rainbow-washing" without real action often face boycotts.



Inclusion isn't just ethics. it is smart strategy.

UNIVERSITY OF LANCASHIRE BUSINESS SCHOOL - EDI





Teach

We transform our learning environments by integrating responsible management concepts and practices into our curriculum and pedagogy.



How We Define Teach

Teaching provides the foundation of learning and encourages curiosity, critical thinking and aspiration leading to development and empowerment.

Courses that support RME

University of Lancashire reports 2 courses in 2025 that support responsible management education and sustainable development goals.

The Responsible Marketer | BM2017

This course examines corporate social responsibility (CSR) in the context of marketing. It also explores the principles and practice of social marketing. The course aims to develop students' understanding that organisations carry responsibility for how their marketing activities impact society. Further, the course is concerned with the role social marketing plays in, for instance, encouraging attitudinal and behavioural change. It aims to encourage students to reflect on the importance for marketers to develop both the empathy and skills required of the successful, responsible marketer.

In the words of Alba Jimenez, student on the course:

Before taking the Responsible Marketer course, I thought of marketing primarily as a commercial tool - a way to sell products and drive consumption. This course completely shifted my perspective. For the first time, I began to understand marketing as a force that can genuinely shape society for the better, influencing behaviours in ways that benefit both people and the planet. One of the most eye-opening aspects of the course was discovering the world of sustainability - a topic I honestly knew very little about before. Learning how deeply interconnected our everyday choices are with broader environmental challenges was both humbling and motivating. It gave me a real sense of purpose. This came to life most vividly through the group project we had to do as an assignment, in which we designed a social marketing intervention aimed at encouraging people across the UK to recycle flexible plastic. Rather than simply promoting a product, we were tasked to take meaningful action on a real and pressing sustainability issue. It was a very different kind of marketing challenge - one rooted in values, behaviour change, and community impact - and it taught me more than any traditional campaign brief ever could. Beyond the academic content, my time at the University of Central Lancashire Business School as an exchange student was truly remarkable. The environment was welcoming and intellectually stimulating, and engaging with peers and faculty from different backgrounds enriched my learning in ways I did not expect. I leave with a deeper understanding of responsible marketing, and with perspectives I will carry far beyond the classroom.



Contemporary Issues in Sustainability | BM3009

This module will explore the key issues in sustainability, and ethics. It will encourage students to apply this knowledge to critically appraise the complex interactions and trade-offs between environmental, economic, social objectives. Students will consider the role of stakeholders including business, organisations, policy makers, financial institutions and individuals in developing and embedding sustainability in every aspect of business and society. Students will be guided toward sources of up-to-date information to allow them to expand their knowledge of the major developments, threats and opportunities arising from the sustainable agenda.

Through the delivery of BM3009 Contemporary Issues in Sustainability, I equip students with the knowledge, critical thinking skills, and practical tools needed to engage with complex sustainability and ethical challenges facing contemporary organisations. Students develop the ability to evaluate the interconnected environmental, social, and economic impacts of business decisions, critically analyse real-world sustainability practices, and formulate evidence-based recommendations for change. By integrating current affairs, case studies, stakeholder perspectives, and carbon literacy principles into learning activities, I foster graduates who are not only academically capable but also socially responsible, ethically aware, and prepared to contribute to sustainable business practice and policy development at local, national, and global levels. The module supports students in becoming reflective practitioners who can confidently apply sustainability concepts to professional contexts and make informed decisions that create positive impacts for business, society, and the environment.



Educator Recognition

At University of Lancashire, we recognize educators for quality of teaching in the following ways:

- ❖ Annual teaching excellence awards
- ❖ Course evaluation scores

- ❖ Institutional recognition events
- ❖ Publication or research support
- ❖ Student-nominated teaching awards

Teaching Voices

The following statements demonstrate ways in which educators at University of Lancashire support sustainability and responsible management in their classrooms.

Reflection by Dr Paulina MacKrell, Course Leader for MRes in Sustainability and Management

As the course leader for the MRes in Sustainability and Management, I view the programme as strongly aligned with the Principles for Responsible Management Education (PRME), particularly in including a balanced mix of values and responsible research into the heart of the student learning journey. The programme was designed in mind to develop insightful, critical and ethical researchers who don't only understand the core definitions of sustainability and sustainable development but also are able to contribute to sustainable value creation and addressing complex societal, environmental and managerial challenges through research.

One of the key features of this alignment is the core module, 'Critical Issues in Sustainability and Management Research'. This module offers a dedicated space for students to learn about and connect with contemporary debates around sustainability, responsibility, and the role of management research in society and wider spaces. It enables critical reflection on central paradigms, power structures, and the implications of research for policy and practice, thereby supporting PRME principles related to purpose, values, and the development of responsible leadership and practice.

The programme also benefits from a highly international student cohort, with participants from diverse geographical contexts, including Africa and Southeast Asia. This diversity enriches the learning experience, enabling the inclusion of a wide range of perspectives, examples and lived experiences. Using international case studies and comparative discussions, students are encouraged to engage with sustainability challenges as they are being observed across different institutional, cultural, and economic backgrounds and locales. This approach reinforces inclusivity and supports the development of contextually sensitive and globally relevant research to support responsible and diverse knowledge production.

Overall, the MRes contributes to the PRME agenda by developing critically aware, ethically responsible researchers whose work is attentive to sustainability and societal impact. The programme demonstrates how responsible management education can be embedded within postgraduate research training, supporting both academic rigour and a clear commitment to positive global outcomes.

Dr Douglas Martin's reflection on the integration of RME into the assessment on the Critical Issues in Business and Management module

For their first assessment on the Critical Issues in Business and Management module, our students on the Masters in Research in Management and the Doctor of Business Administration programme present a themed discussion on a research article. The assessment allows students both to evaluate an academic journal to gain a better understanding of academic writing and to reflect on how the article could assist them in their future research project. The format of the assessment consists of each student in a group of around five students initially delivering a short summary of the article followed by a themed discussion where they are encouraged to engage in debate and critical reflection. Although assessed in a group setting, students are graded individually according to their contribution and interaction with others on the Teams call allowing them to give a range of different views relative to their own country.

For the journal, I chose Goumaa and El Ayouby (2023)'s article in the Journal of Management Development entitled, 'Developing responsible management in the Middle East and North Africa region: reviewing PRME progress'. The article had several benefits. As part of the assessment, it allowed students to reflect on the development of responsible management in the MENA region, the area of the world in which the students reside. Their critical observation of the article brought out the variations in practice across the region, but equally the potential for developing responsible management education within local business schools.

The level of engagement with the assessment was gratifying, not only in terms of the very strong marks achieved, but in the ways in which these students could apply responsible management principles in the research that would underpin their thesis or dissertation. The cohort taking this Critical Issues in Business and Management module have senior roles within their organisations in the MENA region. Using an assignment that is both culturally relevant and encourages students to reflect on how responsible management might be used outside of a Western context has significant value in keeping PRME principles at the forefront of our teaching, learning, assessment, and research.

Barriers to Innovative Curriculum

In 2025, University of Lancashire identified the following barriers to innovating, updating, or taking risks in existing curriculum:

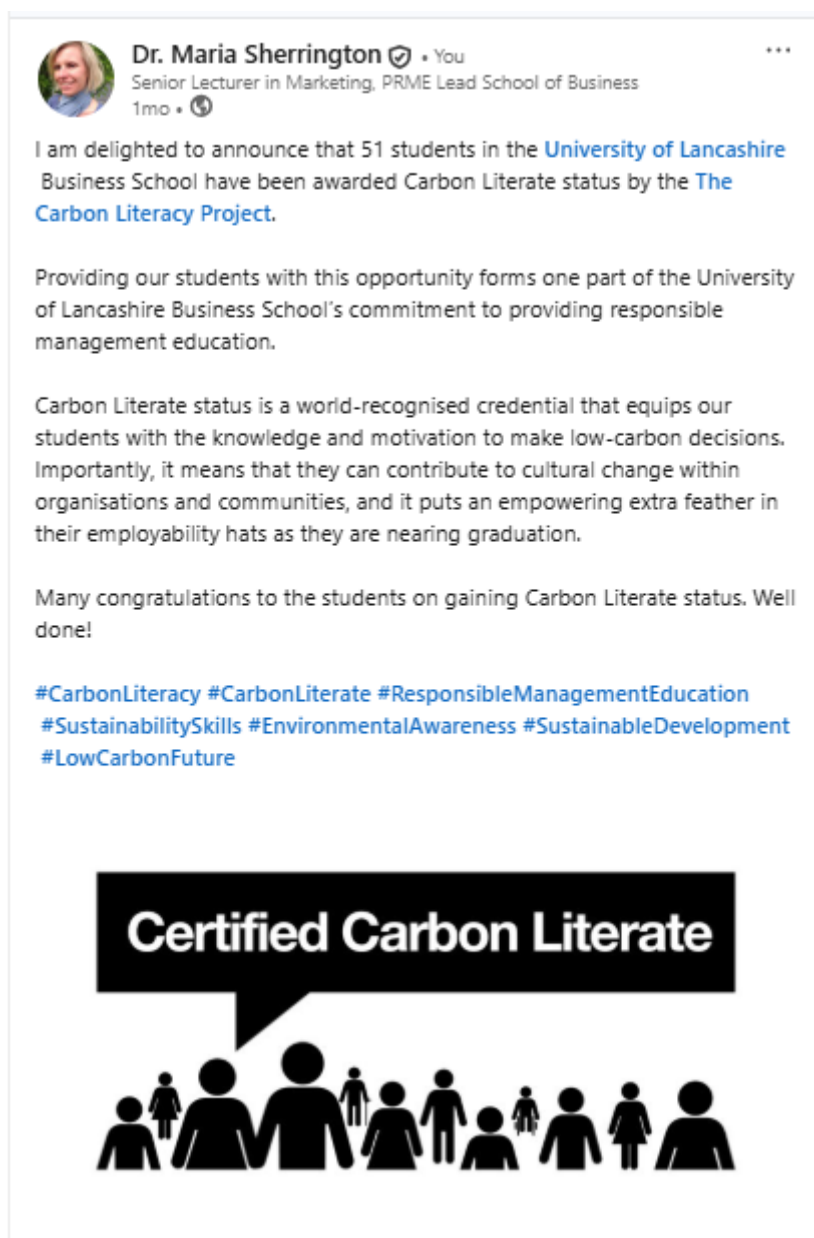
- ❖ Measurement and benchmarking issues
- ❖ Institutional culture
- ❖ Administrative resistance

Barriers to Innovative Pedagogy

In 2025, University of Lancashire identified the following barriers to innovating, updating, or taking risks in existing pedagogy:

- ❖ Change resistance
- ❖ Classroom infrastructure limitations
- ❖ Budget constraints
- ❖ Faculty resistance
- ❖ Administrative hurdles
- ❖ Risk aversion

Continue telling your story



LinkedIn post celebrating Carbon Literate students

Guest Lecture by Ian Steel, Owner of Atkinsons Coffee Roasters

During a guest lecture delivered by Ian Steel, the owner of Atkinsons Coffee Roasters, students on the Contemporary Issues in Sustainability module found out what genuine commitment to a sustainable coffee supply chain looks like. Atkinsons Coffee Roasters, based in Lancaster, is a long-established, family-owned business that integrates sustainability into its core values, operations, and growth strategy. Founded in 1837 and revitalised by the Steel family, the company combines heritage with innovation, underpinned by a strong commitment to transparency, traceability, and trust across its global coffee supply chain.

From a values perspective, Atkinsons is explicitly purpose-driven, aiming to create a “sustainable platform...for the benefit of people and planet” while pursuing profit in an ethical way. This reflects a holistic approach to sustainability that considers impacts across workers, communities, the environment, and customers. The business maintains strong links with both its local Lancaster community – through events, education, and partnerships – and its global producer network, where it prioritises long-term relationships and pays premium prices to support sustainable farming practices.

In terms of activities, Atkinsons operates as a speciality coffee roaster and tea merchant, supplying products through cafés, retail outlets, and wholesale operations, while promoting high-quality, ethically sourced coffee. Sustainability is embedded in these operations through concrete practices such as using energy-efficient roasting technology, renewable energy, recyclable and carbon-neutral packaging, and waste-reduction initiatives. The company also engages in broader environmental and social initiatives, including improving carbon footprint tracking and supporting climate-resilient coffee research.

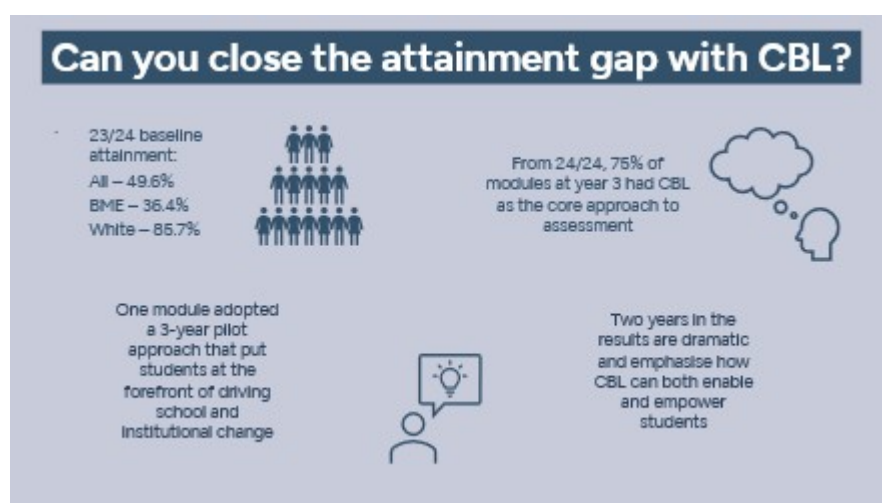
Importantly, Atkinsons is a certified B Corporation, achieving a score above the required threshold and committing to high standards of social and environmental performance, accountability, and transparency. Overall, it represents a strong example of how a traditional business can evolve into a modern, sustainability-led enterprise, balancing quality, community engagement, and environmental responsibility.



LinkedIn post announcing guest lecture by Ian Steel, Owner of Atkinsons Coffee Roasters

Closing the Attainment Gap with Challenge Based Learning (CBL)

Can you close the Attainment Gap with Challenge Based Learning (CBL)?



In 2023/24, BA (Hons) Business and Management faced a significant attainment challenge, with overall attainment standing at 49.6%. While white students consistently achieved attainment rates between 80% and 90%, attainment among BME students had fallen to 36.4%, with the largest disparities evident among international student groups, in particular Indian males at 29%. As part of various actions to address this, an assessment redesign was introduced across Level 6 modules in the School, with 75% of core modules adopting Challenge-Based Learning (CBL) approaches centred on authentic, real-world projects. One module, Business and Management Project, was also selected as a 3-year pilot study to explore whether student-led, challenge-based assessment could improve engagement, achievement, and progression outcomes.

The module was redesigned to position students as active contributors to school and institutional change projects. Rather than completing traditional assessments, students engaged with real challenges, worked collaboratively with stakeholders, and produced outputs with genuine impact. Assessment was delivered through a patchwork approach, enabling more frequent checkpoints, earlier identification of student issues, and targeted support throughout the learning process. As a result, students were given greater choice and autonomy.

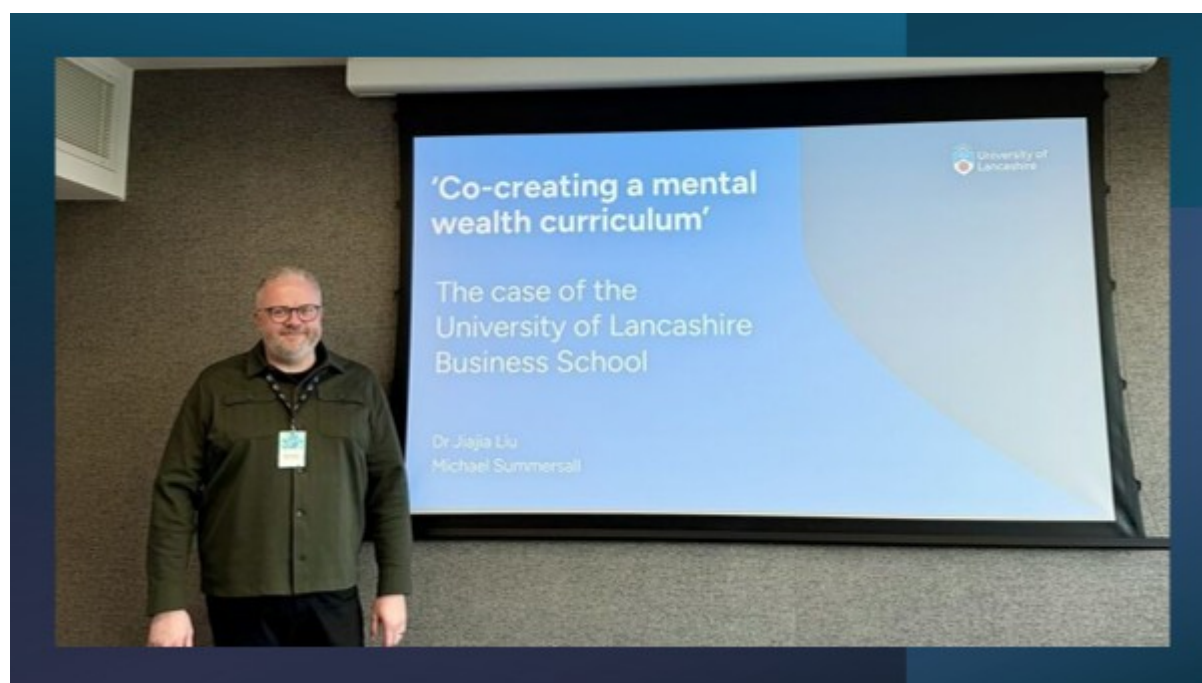
The outcomes over the following two years were encouraging. First-time submission rates increased from 91% to 100%, while first-time pass rates rose from 88% to 100%. Average module grades increased from 50% to 65%, and the proportion of students achieving good honours classifications rose from 22% to 68%. Particularly notable was the increase in first-class grades, from 6% at baseline (2023/24) to almost 50% of the cohort. International student performance also improved considerably, with average grades rising from 46% to 65%.

At a wider course level, the pilot coincided with a substantial reduction in attainment disparities. One particularly notable example was the performance of male Indian students, whose attainment increased from 29% to 88% over the two-year period. For the academic year 2025/26, overall attainment had risen to 91% with the attainment gap between white and BME students now at 6% (42%). These improvements (in the table below) suggest that authentic assessment, student ownership, and meaningful challenge can increase engagement and academic success, particularly for groups that have traditionally been underrepresented in higher attainment outcomes.

While CBL presents challenges, including increased workload, managing group contributions, maintaining motivation, and securing stakeholder buy-in, these were mitigated through structured scaffolding, transparent assessment criteria, regular feedback opportunities, peer evaluation, and strong collaboration with project partners. Overall, this case demonstrates how a carefully designed challenge-based learning approach can enhance student engagement, improve academic performance, and contribute to narrowing longstanding attainment gaps.

Single module impact			
Metric	2023/24 (baseline)	2024/25	2025/26
Student number taking the module	99	106	97
First time submission	91%	100%	100%
First time pass %	88%	99%	100%
Overall module grade average	50%	62%	65%
Good honours %	22%	65%	68%
First class %	6%	49%	48%
International student average	46%	64%	65%

Mike Summersall who redesigned the assessment and worked with the students presented this research at the Chartered ABS Learning, Teaching and Student Experience Conference in April 2026. The presentation was well received and Mike has been invited to talk about his and the students' achievements in a number of fora.



Pictured: Mike Summersall getting ready to present at the Chartered ABS Learning, Teaching and Student Experience Conference in April 2026

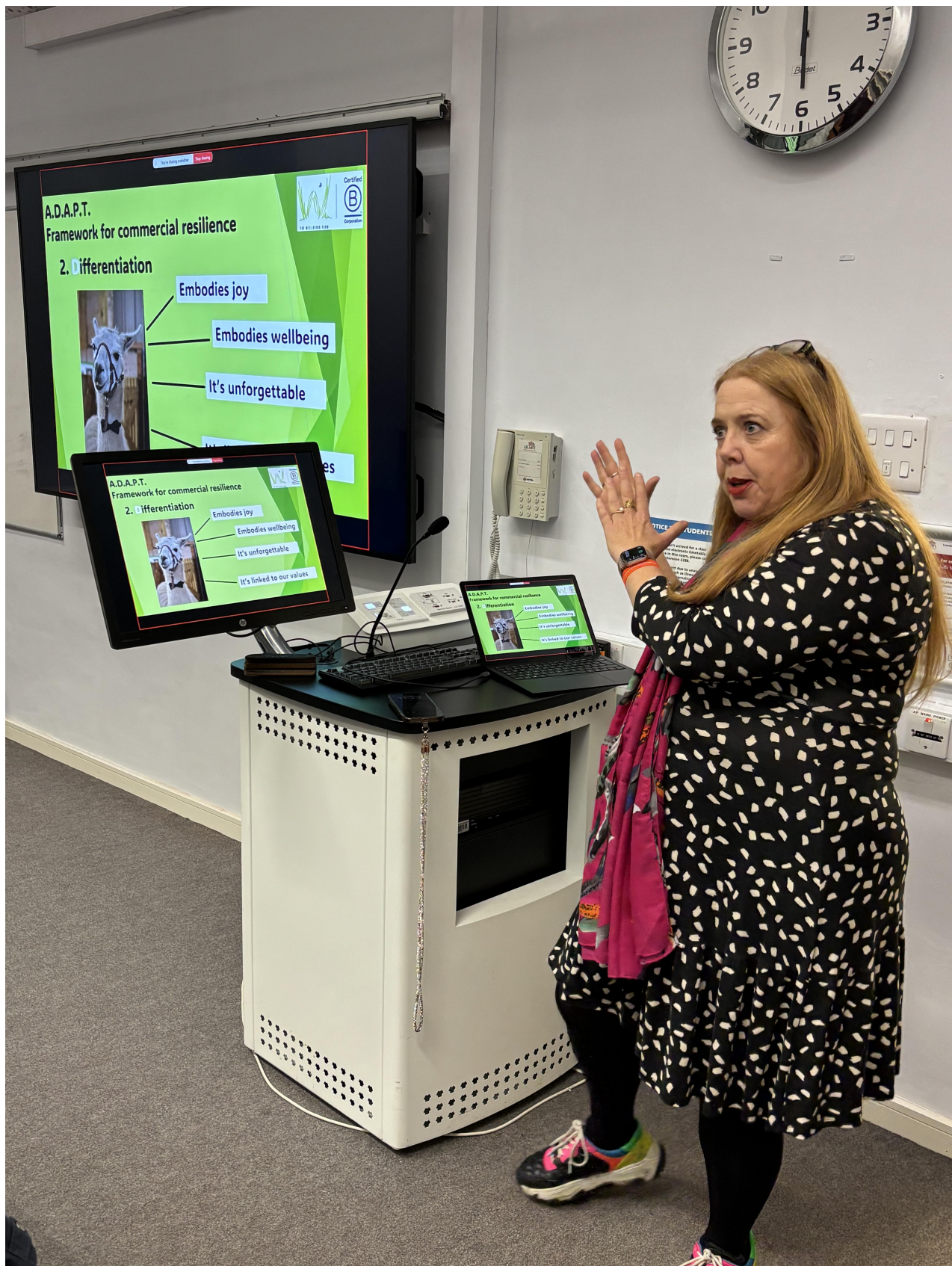
For more information contact Mike Summersall MSummersall1@lancashire.ac.uk

Guest Lecture by Celia Gaze, CEO and Founder of the Wellbeing Farm

The students on The Responsible Marketer module had the opportunity to learn practical implementation of sustainability values during a guest lecture by Celia Gaze, CEO and Founder of the Wellbeing Farm. The Wellbeing Farm, based in Lancashire, is a purpose-driven wedding and events venue that exemplifies sustainability in practice through its values, operations, and business model. Founded by Celia Gaze, the business was transformed from a rundown farm into an award-winning venue built on the principles of wellbeing, sustainability, and community impact.

At its core, the farm embraces a values-led approach that prioritises *people, planet, and purpose* alongside *profit*. This is reinforced by its B Corp certification, which recognises organisations that meet high standards of social and environmental performance, transparency, and accountability. The business actively seeks to create positive outcomes for stakeholders, including employees, local communities, and the environment, reflecting a commitment to inclusive and responsible practice. In terms of its activities, The Wellbeing Farm operates as a hospitality and events venue, hosting weddings, corporate events, and celebrations, while embedding sustainability into every aspect of its service offering. Its approach demonstrates how experiential services can also promote environmental awareness and behaviour change.

The farm's sustainability practices are extensive and practical. These include generating renewable energy through a wind turbine, reducing waste through composting and reuse systems, sourcing local and seasonal food, and adopting circular economy initiatives such as upcycled décor and shared event materials. It also promotes biodiversity through tree planting and wildlife-friendly land management.



The Responsible Marketer Assignment 2 – The Group Presentation on a Social Marketing Intervention Encouraging Recycling of Flexible Plastic

This assessment requires students to work in small groups to deliver a 15-minute presentation (plus 5-minute discussion) in which they design a social marketing intervention aimed at changing consumer behaviour. Specifically, the task focuses on encouraging people in the UK to recycle flexible plastics (e.g., bread bags, crisp packets) by taking them to supermarket collection points.

To complete the assignment, students must apply marketing theory and research to develop a structured, evidence-based campaign. This includes analysing the current situation and key stakeholders, identifying and profiling target consumer segments, and positioning the recycling behaviour in a way that creates clear value and motivates engagement. Students are also required to define SMART behaviour-change objectives, grounded in an appropriate behaviour change theory, and explain the relevance of social marketing as an approach.

A major component of the task is the design of practical intervention strategies, using the marketing mix (with particular emphasis on promotional activities), to create a realistic and creative campaign that could be implemented in practice. Finally, groups must facilitate a short, meaningful class discussion linked to their proposal.

Overall, the assessment tests students' ability to integrate theory and practice in responsible marketing, demonstrating how marketing can be used to address real-world sustainability challenges through behaviour change.

Students Gaining Carbon Literate Status on the Module Contemporary Issues in Sustainability

Carbon literacy is a central component of the Contemporary Issues in Sustainability assessment, forming Part 2 of the individual report (approximately 1,000 words). In this section, students are required to demonstrate a clear understanding of the climate crisis and the actions needed to achieve a zero-carbon society, moving beyond theory to practical application. This is achieved through three structured elements aligned with the Carbon Literacy Project's evidence framework: (1) a reflection on the "big picture" of societal change, (2) a personal carbon reduction pledge, and (3) a collaborative group action, each supported by explanation of their expected impact on greenhouse gas emissions. The emphasis is on meaningful, new, and measurable behaviour changes, ensuring students engage critically with carbon reduction in real-world contexts.

Importantly, this part of the assessment is explicitly designed to support students in applying for Carbon Literate status. The assignment mirrors the official Carbon Literacy Project submission format, and students receive targeted feedback to refine their responses prior to application. The School of Business further supports this process by funding the application fee, providing structured teaching

sessions and workshops, and offering formative guidance to ensure that students meet the required standards. Attendance and engagement with feedback are emphasised as essential to success, as final certification is externally assessed.

Overall, the integration of carbon literacy into the Contemporary Issues in Sustainability module ensures that students not only develop academic understanding of sustainability, but also gain a recognised professional credential and the capability to enact practical, impactful climate action. Whereas we cannot require the students to make a final submission of an application for Carbon Literate status to the Carbon Literacy Project, there was a 100% success rate among the students that did so.



Research

We study people, organizations, institutions, and the state of the world to inspire responsible management and education practice.

How We Define Research

Research and critical enquiry leads to positive societal impact and advocacy for responsible management education

Research vs Research for RME/Sustainable Development



Research Funding

In 2025, University of Lancashire was awarded funding for research that is:



Local



Regional



National

Socializing Research

In 2025, University of Lancashire contributed research findings to:

- ❖ Community organizations
- ❖ Government and policy makers
- ❖ Industry and business networks
- ❖ National media
- ❖ Local media
- ❖ Open-access platforms
- ❖ International media
- ❖ Public events and lectures
- ❖ Social media and digital outreach

Research Projects

In 2025, University of Lancashire reported 2 research projects that implemented responsible or sustainable activities.

Work in Lancashire

Period Covering: September, 2025 - September, 2026

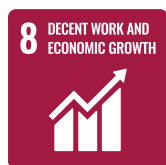
Department: Management | Human Resource Management

Work in Lancashire 2026 examines the experiences of employees and managers across the county at a time of significant economic, technological and labour market change. Set against the CIPD Good Work framework, the findings provide important insights into the relationship between job quality, workforce wellbeing and organisational performance, alongside Lancashire's ambitions for productivity, economic inclusion and sustainable growth. The evidence presents a complex picture. Lancashire benefits from a workforce that remains largely committed to its organisations and generally confident about job security. Many employees report positive workplace relationships and access to training and development opportunities. However, the findings also highlight persistent challenges around pay fairness, workload pressures, employee wellbeing, flexibility, career development, autonomy and meaningful work. Collectively, these issues suggest that there remains significant potential to enhance the quality of work in the region.

A central feature of the findings is that management capability emerges as a critical influence on employee experience, shaping perceptions of fairness, development opportunities, wellbeing, employee voice, flexibility and workplace relationships. The evidence suggests that line managers increasingly determine whether organisational investment in skills, wellbeing and workforce development delivers its intended impact. Importantly, the report demonstrates that improving organisational performance extends beyond addressing skills shortages or investing in technology, emphasising the importance of organisations developing, engaging and utilising their workforce. Where employees lack opportunities to contribute, exercise autonomy, develop their capabilities or find value in their work, organisations risk underutilising existing talent, constraining both performance and growth. These findings have particular significance given Lancashire's ambitions to build a more productive, inclusive and resilient economy.

As regional priorities increasingly focus on innovation, skills, workforce participation and economic growth, the evidence suggests that equal attention must be given to the quality of work through which these outcomes are ultimately realised. The report positions job quality as a strategic enabler of growth. Its central argument is that Lancashire's future competitiveness will depend on attracting investment and developing skills and, importantly creating workplaces that enable people to perform

at their best. Strengthening management capability, improving job design, enhancing employee voice and supporting career development should therefore be viewed as organisational priorities and fundamental components of Lancashire's long-term economic success and prosperity.



Spotlight on Dr Maria Sherrington: Manningtree - A Tiny Town Addressing Global Sustainability through Local Action

Period Covering: June, 2025 - September, 2026

Department: Marketing

For Dr Maria Sherrington, Senior Lecturer in Marketing, research is most meaningful when it connects academic insight with the lived experiences of communities. Her latest research does exactly that, shining a light on how one of England's smallest towns, Manningtree, is tackling one of the world's biggest challenges, climate change.

Through an ethnographic study of PACE Manningtree (Practical Actions for Climate and the Environment), Maria explored how local communities can build environmental sustainability and resilience through collective action. Rather than focusing on national policies or global agreements, her research examines what happens when residents take practical climate action right on their doorstep.

Spending time in Manningtree, interviewing residents, volunteers, business owners, local leaders and campaigners, Maria uncovered a powerful connection between place, community and environmental stewardship. Her findings reveal that people are more likely to engage with climate action when it is rooted in places they know and care about. From protecting the River Stour and improving biodiversity to promoting sustainable food systems and community-led environmental initiatives, PACE Manningtree demonstrates the impact that highly localised action can achieve.

By combining academic research with real-world engagement, Maria's work highlights an important message: meaningful climate action does not only happen on the global stage. It can begin in neighbourhoods, on local high streets, along riverbanks and in community spaces, where people come together to protect the places they call home.

About the Research

The study investigates how place-based, community-led initiatives support sustainability and resilience, using PACE Manningtree as a case study to explore the growing importance of hyperlocal climate action.

Maria presented her research at The International Conference on Social Responsibility, Ethics and Sustainable Business (ICSR 2025) in Alicante Spain.

This presentation addressed how sustainability practices are developed and promoted using a local, place-based approach. Manningtree is the smallest town in England and home to PACE Manningtree, a charity that works to build local resilience against the effects of climate disruption and threats to the natural world. PACE Manningtree has implemented a strategy involving 'practical actions for climate and the environment' (PACE) which encapsulates how the charity works with the local community to increase understanding and take positive actions to address climate change and loss of biodiversity. The presentation delivered interim findings to two research questions: (1) What virtues can localisation bring to the development of responsible and sustainable practices? (2) How can a localisation of practice be an agent of resilience in the face of challenges associated with the implementation of sustainability?



Manningtree – A Tiny Town Addressing Global Sustainability through Local Action

International Conference on Social Responsibility, Ethics and Sustainable Business (ICSR 2025)
11-12 September 2025, University of Alicante

Dr Maria Sherrington
University of Lancashire, UK
AMSherrington@lancashire.ac.uk





Research Awards

In 2025, University of Lancashire was awarded 1 research award for responsibility- and/or sustainability-related research.

Dean's Recognition Award - 8-10-12

Granter: University of Lancashire Business School

Grantee: Dr Maria Sherrington

Award Description:

Dr Maria Sherrington was awarded the Business School's Dean's Recognition award for 8-10-12. The Deans recognition Awards are given each summer to members of the School and the University to recognise exceptional work in a number of different areas. The 8-10-12 award is directly linked to our areas of societal impact which we have identified for AACSB accreditation. the 8-10-12 correspond with SDGs 8,10 and 12 as reported in SIP 2025. Maria was given this award in recognition for her work on responsible production and consumption. She has carried out research into food waste, the impact of disposable coffee cups and associated waste and he is currently carrying out a research project which considers how Manningtree, a town in Essex is fostering a culture of sustainability and environmental management. On receiving the award Maria stated:

I was both surprised and deeply honoured to receive the 8-10-12 Award from Professor Steven Rhoden, Dean of the University of Lancashire Business School, as part of the Dean's Recognition Awards 2026.

The award recognises contributions to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals championed by the Business School, specifically Goals 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), 10 (Reduced Inequalities) and 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production). Receiving this recognition was particularly meaningful because sustainability has become a central thread running through my research, teaching, and wider academic activities.

Throughout my academic career, I have been motivated by a desire to better understand how everyday consumer behaviours shape sustainability outcomes. My research explores sustainable consumer

behaviour and consumption practices, especially within areas such as food, coffee, and convenience cultures. At its core, this work seeks to understand how marketing can encourage more responsible consumption patterns while supporting sustainable production systems.

Equally important to me is ensuring that sustainability is embedded within the student learning experience. I aim to encourage students to think critically about the ethical, environmental and social implications of business and consumer decision-making, and to consider the broader impact of their actions as future managers, marketers and leaders.

I was especially pleased that the citation also recognised my contribution to the School's support for the Principles for Responsible Management Education (PRME). Promoting responsible management education is something I am genuinely passionate about, as it provides an important framework for integrating sustainability, ethics and social responsibility into both teaching and research.

Hearing the award citation read aloud was a proud and humbling moment. Recognition such as this is always appreciated, but it is particularly rewarding when it acknowledges work that aligns so closely with one's values and aspirations as an academic. The award has reinforced my commitment to continuing research, teaching and engagement activities that contribute to a more sustainable future.

Publications Related to RME and/or Sustainability

Humanitarian supply chain operations and COVID-19: the roles of data-driven innovations

| [DOI](#)

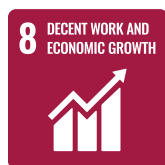
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Date of publication: December, 2030

Department: Management | Supply Chain Management

The COVID-19 pandemic revealed a poor level of preparedness by the manufacturing sector in building resilient operations and logistics framework to respond to severe global supply chain disruptions. This research focuses on the effectiveness of data-driven innovation strategies in mitigating the impacts on humanitarian operations of Covid-19 related supply chain interruptions. The review is supported by the outcome of a major conceptual issues and uncovered two main topics of debate notably (i) the significant role of big data analytics and Artificial Intelligence in boosting firm performance by untangling supply chain disruptions and (ii) the paucity of research in this emerging area of literature. Consequently, this paper proposes a conceptual model for humanitarian supply chain operations to

highlight how big data analytics and AI technologies could be deployed by firms to gain a competitive advantage by responding promptly and effectively to severe disruptions akin to those experienced during recent COVID-19 pandemic.



Impact of the Increasing Adoption of a Commercial Approach on Microfinance Institutions.

| [DOI](#)

Authors: Dr Sanjib Sherpa, University of Lancashire | Dr Tolu Olarewaju, Staffordshire University | Dr Inya Egbe, University of Birmingham

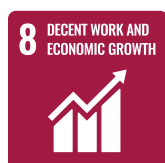
Date of publication: March, 2026

Department: Business Administration | Finance

This study aims to examine the impact of the increasing adoption of a commercial approach on the financial performance and outreach of microfinance institutions (MFIs). Drawing on institutional theory, it investigates whether commercialisation enhances MFIs' financial performance and outreach while also considering the risk of mission drift.

Results show that commercialisation has no significant effect on the financial performance of MFIs. However, commercialisation is positively associated with breadth of outreach, as reflected in an increased number of active borrowers and with the depth of outreach, as reflected in larger ALSs. The increase in ALS suggests a shift away from serving the poorest clients, indicating mission drift. Additional results reveal that overall, commercial MFIs are moving towards larger scale and profitability but with reduced focus on their traditional social mission.

This paper extends the debate on commercialisation and mission drift in microfinance by using a large cross-country data set and multiple outreach measures, going beyond previous region-specific studies. It challenges the effectiveness of new outreach indicators such as MSBA in dynamic panel models and highlights the trade-offs between social and financial goals. The findings provide valuable implications for policymakers and practitioners, suggesting the need for frameworks that encourage MFIs to balance legitimacy, scale and sustainability with their original poverty alleviation mission.



Rethinking DEI: towards a contextualised, practice-based agenda | [DOI](#)

Authors: Dr Dorota Marsh, University of Lancashire, UK | Dr Matyna Sliwa, University of Bath, UK | Dr Ajnesh Prasad, Audencia Business School Nantes, France

Date of publication: May, 2026

Department: Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Purpose

Critiques of the anti-DEI (diversity, equality/equity and inclusion) movement have focused predominantly on the consequences it poses to the United States. This article considers how backlash against DEI is manifesting in other parts of the world, analysing it as locally mediated practices that undermine women's and LGBTQIA+ rights through distinct political, legal, cultural and material arrangements.

Design/methodology/approach

Applying social practice theory to illustrative cases from Europe, Africa and Asia, we conceptualise backlash against DEI as emerging through context-specific practices rather than as a uniform global phenomenon.

Findings

This article finds that backlash against DEI emerges from and through local configurations of practices: economic precarity and status anxiety in some European contexts, colonial legacies and transnational conservative networks in some African contexts and coercive state practices amid war and institutional collapse in some Asian contexts. These examples demonstrate that exclusion is enacted differently depending on how practices are organised locally.

Social implications

This article advances an understanding of the societal importance of DEI, and draws attention to the need for localised action and solutions.



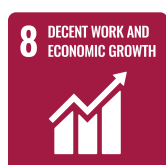
Deflated in shame and puffed up in pride: How affective practices matter for entrepreneurship | [DOI](#)

Authors: Dr Dorota Marsh, University of Lancashire, UK | Dr Helen Ecclestone, Edge Hill University, UK | Dr Martyna Sliwa, University of Bath, UK

Date of publication: June, 2025

Department: Entrepreneurship

At the heart of the processual term 'entrepreneurship' lies something inherently optimistic: a belief that a better world could be reached beyond the actual. Embracing this perspective, we move away from a focus on entrepreneurial mastery and seek conditions for entrepreneurship understood as social change, foregrounding its affective dimension. We do so by researching and writing differently; in adopting (and adapting) the ethnography of practices (praxiography), we centre the body as the cause, subject and instrument of the stories we tell. By reading affect with (posthumanist) practice theory, we expand the notion of affective practices to inquire how shame and pride *matter* for entrepreneurship within small family businesses. Employing a visceral, sensory and embodied style of crafting our text, we invite readers to *sense* as well as interpret. The article contributes to the literature in two ways: first, it proposes a novel methodological approach for studying and writing about affective practices; second, it builds an understanding of how affective practices disrupt the already organised and make room for better futures yet to come.



The digital platform assessment matrix: developing a framework for evaluating digital platforms and systems for children and young people's mental health support | [DOI](#)

Authors: Dr Amran Chen, University of Liverpool, UK | Dr Anna Smirnova, Edge Hill University, UK | Dr Fei Chen, University of Liverpool, UK | Dr Rhoda Madu, Edge Hill University, UK | Dr Shaun Liverpool, Edge Hill University, UK | Dr Zarnie Khadjesari, University of East Anglia, UK | Dr Ella Pereria, Edge Hill University, UK | Professor Marcello Trovati, University of Lancashire, UK | Dr Vicki Karkou, Edge Hill University, UK

Date of publication: January, 2026

Department: Computer Information Systems | Digital Technology

Purpose

Digital platforms and systems (DPS) are increasingly used as effective resources to help address the mental health needs of children and young people (CYP). However, appropriate assessment tools to evaluate the quality of DPS remain limited. This study aims to develop a comprehensive evaluation framework for DPS that provides access to mental health support for CYP, with the goal of identifying their strengths and weaknesses and promoting best practices.

Design/methodology/approach

The authors used a four-step multi-method approach comprising: an extensive literature review and content analysis of existing guidelines; the identification of essential qualities and characteristics of effective DPS; consultation with over 50 stakeholders to ensure the applicability of the evaluation framework; and pilot testing on 53 DPS to refine its structure and functionality.

Findings

The resulting evaluation framework, referred to as the digital platform assessment matrix (DPAM), comprises 65 criteria for assessing the functional, technical and social features of DPS. The authors propose both a comprehensive version of the DPAM and a shortened version, allowing for flexible use across different contexts and stakeholder groups. Future testing and iterations are also explored.

Originality/value

The DPAM offers the first comprehensive and operational framework for evaluating DPS that facilitates access to mental health services and resources for CYP in the UK. Its multiple criteria ensure that digital platforms can best serve their users, be compatible with existing health systems and sustainable over time. The DPAM also underpins the development of the new digital platform, which aims to provide CYP with streamlined access to place-based arts initiatives that support their mental health.



Explainable AI–Based Semantic Retrieval from an Expert-Curated Oncology Knowledge Graph for Clinical Decision Support

| [DOI](#)

Authors: Dr Sameer Mushtaq, Edge Hill University, UK | Professor Marcello Trovati, University of Lancashire, UK | Dr Nik Bessis, Edge Hill University

Date of publication: October, 2025

Department: Computer Information Systems | Digital Technology | Artificial Intelligence

The modern oncology landscape is characterised by a deluge of high-dimensional data from genomic sequencing, medical imaging, and electronic health records, negatively impacting the analytical capacity of clinicians and health practitioners. This field is not new and it has drawn significant attention from the research community. However, one of the main limiting issues is the data itself. Despite the vast amount of available data, most of it lacks scalability, quality and semantic information. This work is motivated by the data platform provided by OncoProAI, an AI-driven clinical decision support platform designed to address this challenge by enabling highly personalised, precision cancer care. The platform is built on a comprehensive knowledge graph, formally modelled as a directed acyclic graph, which has been manually populated, assessed and maintained to provide a unique data ecosystem. This enables targeted and bespoke information extraction and assessment.



Integrating mindful organizing and organizational learning to enhance sustainability performance of exporting firms

| [DOI](#)

Authors: Dr Tooba Ahmad, COMSTATS University, Pakistan | Khuram Shazad, University of Lancashire, UK | Mohit Kukreti, University of Technology and Applied Sciences, Oman | Dr Muhammad Rehan Shaukat, University of Technology and Applied Social Sciences, Oman | DR Abdul Sami, University of Jhang, Pakistan

Date of publication: January, 2025

Department: Business Administration | Management | Leadership

Purpose

Sustainability is a pressing global issue that affects everyone on the planet. This study aims to provide a deeper understanding of the nuanced interplay between mindful organizing (MO), organizational learning capability (OLC), leadership commitment to sustainable development goals (SDGs) and sustainability performance, adopting the theoretical foundation of organizational learning.

Design/methodology/approach

The survey data from 728 middle management employees of exporting firms in Pakistan were collected at two points. The mediated moderation analysis was performed through structural equation modelling in AMOS 26

Findings

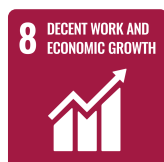
The results indicate a positive relationship between MO and sustainability performance. The mediating effect of OLC highlights that firms that acquire, assimilate and apply knowledge and insights leverage their MO strategies to improve sustainability performance more effectively. Additionally, the leadership commitment to SDGs amplifies the positive effect of OLC on sustainability performance.

Practical implications

These results have important implications for managers and policymakers who seek to promote sustainability in organizations. The findings suggest that cultivating a mindful organizational culture and investing in learning capability enhance sustainability performance. Exporting firms should develop comprehensive learning programs that embed mindfulness and sustainability into the core of organizational culture. More interdisciplinary research is needed to integrate insights from environmental science, psychology, management and organizational behavior.

Originality/value

This research stands out for its integrative approach, practical relevance, empirical examination of important concepts and alignment with global sustainability goals. Exporting firms must understand how organizational learning capabilities and MO can be harnessed to achieve sustainable outcomes.



The Tool, the Pet, the Carer & the Warden: A Conceptual Framework of How Older Adults Perceive Socially Assistive Robots

| [DOI](#)

Authors: Dr Laura Pemberton, University of Lancashire, UK | Dr Nikolay Mehandjiev, University of Birmingham Dubai Campus, UAE | Dr Michelle Carter, University of Manchester, UK

Date of publication: January, 2026

Department: Computer Information Systems | Artificial Intelligence

As the population of older adults in the UK grows, Socially Assistive Robots (SARs) are increasingly important for supporting independence and enhancing quality of life within the home. This study draws on the Computers Are Social Actors (CASA) framework to explore how older adults perceive and interact with anthropomorphized SARs. We present a framework that categorizes these devices into four roles: Carer, Pet, Warden, and Tool. The framework reflects relationship tolerance and autonomy, capturing the varied relational and emotional interactions older users have with SARs. Using qualitative methods, including interviews with 13 older adults in a virtual reality smart home setup, the findings reveal diverse user expectations. Devices like Alexa and a robotic cat align with the Pet role, providing companionship and emotional comfort, while humanoid robots fit the Warden role, offering oversight without attachment. Design implications emphasize customizable anthropomorphic features, enabling devices to adapt to users' emotional and practical needs, ultimately fostering autonomy and quality of life for aging individuals.



Independent Female Directors and Green Innovation in China: The Moderating Roles of Ownership Structure and Market Competition

| [DOI](#)

Authors: Dr Muhammad Usman, University of Lancashire, UK | Dr Muhammad Jameel Hussain, Northwestern Polytechnical University, China | Dr Isaac Nana Akuffo, Glasgow Caledonian University, UK | Ifeoma Rita Ezedebeogo, University of Lancashire, UK | Dr Ernest Ezeani, Herriot-Watt University, UK

Date of publication: January, 2026

Department: Business Administration | Management | Leadership

This study examines the impact of independent female directors (IFD) on green innovation (GI) among Chinese-listed firms from 2008 to 2023. Additionally, we investigate the moderating effects of ownership structure and market competition on the relationship between IFD and GI. Using a total of 22,091 firm-year observations and fixed-effects regressions, we find that IFD are significantly and positively associated with GI, suggesting that IFD promote environmentally friendly activities. Furthermore, the results show that ownership structure and market competition influence the relationship between IFD and GI, with the association being more pronounced in state-owned enterprises (SOES) and weakening when market competition is high. Moreover, we divided our sample and discovered that IFD foster GI activities in polluting industries more than in non-polluting ones. Our findings remain robust across various statistical procedures. The results highlight the vital role of IFD in advancing GI and indicate that its effectiveness depends on institutional and competitive factors. Unlike previous research, this paper moves beyond overall board gender diversity by focusing specifically on IFD, while identifying ownership structure and market competition as key contextual factors in an emerging economy. This study offers important implications for policymakers in China by demonstrating that board independence can be strengthened through the appointment of IFD and that it can effectively promote GI, especially in SOES and environmentally sensitive industries.



Bridging Governance and Integrity: The Consequence of CSR Committee and Audit Committee Characteristics on Anti-Corruption Disclosure in Saudi Arabia

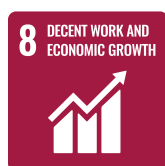
| [DOI](#)

Authors: Dr Nusa Ghazwani, Jazan University, Saudi Arabia | Dr Rami Salem, University of Lancashire, UK | Dr Muhammad Usman, University of Lancashire, UK | DR Ali T Somaili, Jazan University, Saudi Arabia

Date of publication: March, 2026

Department: International Business | Management

The current article tends to examine the effect of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) committee and audit committee characteristics on anti-corruption disclosure quality (ACDQ) among listed firms in Saudi Arabia. Understanding corporate governance's impact on ACDQ becomes crucial with ongoing governance reforms like establishing the National Anti-Corruption Commission (Nazaha). Our study uses a data consists of 117 non-financial firms from 2016 to 2023, making it a total of 936 firms- observations. Our study showed that the existence of a CSR committee has a positive impact and significantly associated with ACDQ. Also, the findings show that audit committee characteristics (size, independence, and rotation) positively influence ACDQ. However, audit committee expertise does not exhibit a significant impact on ACDQ. Our outcomes assert that firms with well-structured CSR and audit committees demonstrate greater transparency in their ACDQ. Our paper contributes to CSR and corporate governance literature by delivering empirical evidence from an emerging market context, where governance reforms are evolving rapidly. It extends prior literature by examining the influence of CSR and audit committee characteristics on ACDQ. The findings enhance the understanding of corporate governance mechanisms to endorse transparency and accountability within firms. This study offers invaluable insights for regulators, corporate leaders, and policymakers to strengthen governance mechanisms and anti-corruption efforts in alignment with Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030. Our paper highlights the crucial role of corporate governance in fostering transparency and informs future policy development to enhance ethical business conduct.



Algorithmic inclusion? The role of AI-assisted inclusive leadership in shaping gendered outcomes in multicultural academic teams

| [DOI](#)

Authors: Dr Iram Tahir, University of Bolton, UK | Dr M Sebnem Ensari, University of Lancashire, UK | Khuram Shahzad, University of Lancashire, UK | Rahat G, Kazmi, Global Banking School/ University of Bolton, UK | Dr Ahmad Abu-Arja, University of Lancashire, UK

Date of publication: June, 2026

Department: Business Administration | Management

Artificial Intelligence (AI) adoption across Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) has gained considerable momentum, and is now being used for faculty recruitment, promotion, workload allocation, research impact evaluation and student assessments. Notwithstanding the objectivity and efficiency that AI brings, its deployment within historically gendered academic institutions raises concerns about the perpetuation and reproduction of structural inequalities. This conceptual paper proposes a governance framework for AI-assisted inclusive leadership focused on gender equality in multicultural teams. AI systems operate within institutional contexts and mediate the relationship between leadership, governance and equity. The paper proposes four institutional solutions; human-in-

the-loop deliberation, transparent AI protocols, routine equity audits, and interdisciplinary oversight committees, as mechanisms for mitigating algorithmic bias and enhancing institutional reflexivity. The paper also introduces a four-stage governance maturity framework as an iterative approach to ethical AI inclusion in inclusive leadership of multi-cultural teams. The paper argues that only through a strategic thought-leadership approach to AI inclusion in Higher Education Institutions can structural gender inequalities in multicultural teams be addressed through redesigning of productivity metrics, recognition of emotional and invisible labour, and by addressing gender-embeddedness in institutional systems.



Constructing non-hegemonic entrepreneurial masculinity: the case of Black men doing entrepreneurship in a predominantly white context

| [DOI](#)

Authors: Dr Tayo Korede, University of Lancashire, UK

Date of publication: November, 2025

Presented at: National or international issue or theme-specific conference

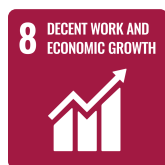
Department: Entrepreneurship

Purpose – The literature on entrepreneurial masculinity has primarily focused on how hegemonic masculinity is constructed and performed in entrepreneurship. Little is known about how non-hegemonic masculinity is performed by male entrepreneurs who do not fit the dominant and traditional form of masculinity in a specific context. Focusing on a cohort of Black male entrepreneurs who practised entrepreneurship in a predominantly white context, this paper explores how non-hegemonic entrepreneurial masculinity is constructed.

Design/methodology/approach – The study uses Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) to analyse qualitative data collected through semi-structured interviews with nine Black male entrepreneurs living and doing business in the Northeast of England.

Findings – The study found that Black male entrepreneurs construct a distinct form of entrepreneurial masculinity by leveraging the identity of White women to construct a respectable entrepreneurial masculinity. The form of masculinity the men engaged in is theorised as transactional masculinity. This is enacted through relationships with White women which is seen as a symbol of respect and social acceptance, and as a “rite of passage” in entrepreneurship. The study presents a model of entrepreneurial masculinity to explain how transactional masculinity is constructed in relation to femininity and other forms of masculinity.

Originality/value – The study theorises how non-hegemonic entrepreneurial masculinity is enacted through the concept of transactional masculinity. It presents a model of entrepreneurial masculinity and gives voice to the experiences of male entrepreneurial actors with non-hegemonic masculinity.



Dark events and remaking our lifeworld. | [DOI](#)

Authors: Dr Philip Stone, University of Lancashire, UK

Date of publication: April, 2026

Department: Tourism

Death is universal, yet dying is not. Death is the culmination of life and living, and as finite biological beings – as we shall live, we shall die. Indeed, our 'lifeworld' encompasses our sense of mortality as a part of the pre-reflective, taken-for-granted realm where we interact. In our lifeworld, a dynamic and constantly evolving backdrop exists that offers us context for understanding social interactions, communication, and the reproduction of social structures. Some of this lifeworld involves facing the inescapable notion of death. Yet while death will come to all of us, the societal process of dying – namely the deathbed – is a culturally fluid and dynamic ritual system that transforms between places and through time. This chapter addresses the cross-cultural and globally dynamic case examples in this book, suggesting dark events are formed within diverse ontological contexts and, subsequently, layered with social functions to help form our existential lifeworld. Presenting dark events as a response to shifting landscapes of culture, environments, and emotions, this chapter affirms that in a world that appears to spin ever faster with global anxieties and cultural transformations of the deathbed, dark events allow us to make our own lifeworld – in the face of inevitable mortality.



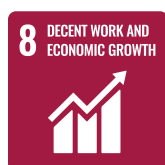
Bridging the gap: how business education shapes employability in architecture engineering students in Jordan | [DOI](#)

Authors: Dr Andy Clarke, University of Lancashire, UK | DR Deyala Altarawneh, University of Jordan, Jordan | Dr Paulina MacKrell, University of Lancashire, UK | Dr Ahmad Abu-Arja University of Lancashire. UK

Date of publication: August, 2025

Department: Entrepreneurship

This study explores the impact of business skills education on architecture engineering students at a Jordanian university, with a focus on how such education shapes students' understanding of human capital, value creation, and employability. Grounded in human capital theory, this study investigates how entrepreneurial competencies contribute to students' perceived value in the labour market. Using a case study design, we compare students who participated in the Marsam 006 business programme with those who did not. Survey data were collected to assess whether exposure to business-focussed learning enhanced entrepreneurial competencies, including self-awareness, problem-solving, and strategic thinking.



Unlocking value: exploring the impact of ESG performance and board gender diversity on mitigating stock price crash risk

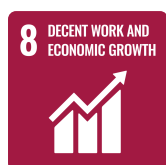
| [DOI](#)

Authors: Dr Mohamad Marie, Cairo University, Egypt | Dr Adel Elgharbawy, Qatar University, Qatar | Dr Rami Salem, University of Lancashire, UK

Date of publication: June, 2025

Department: Business Administration | Finance

We examine the role of environmental, social and governance performance (ESGP), board gender diversity (BGD), and their interactive effect on stock price crash risk (SPCR). Using a dataset of Chinese companies listed in the A-share market between 2015 and 2022 and employing three-stage least squares statistics to address the endogeneity issue, we found that ESGP is negatively associated with SPCR. Notably, BGD exhibits a positive association with SPCR. However, the interaction between ESGP and BGD reveals a negative relationship with SPCR, suggesting that ESGP moderates the positive effect of BGD on crash-related risk. Our results still hold even after conducting a series of robustness checks, such as using a fixed effect model, a two-step GMM estimator, and alternative measures of ESGP and BGD. This study contributes to the governance and sustainability literature by highlighting the influence of ESGP and BGD on SPCR and their interactive role in mitigating crash risk through enhanced transparency, stronger stakeholder relations, and improved risk management. It offers valuable organisational and policy implications, suggesting that Chinese listed companies can leverage ESGP to effectively reduce SPCR and strengthen corporate governance practices.



Student Working Lives

Authors: Professor Adrian Wright, University of Lancashire, UK | Dr Mark Wilding, University of Lancashire, UK | Mary Lawler, University of Lancashire | Martin Lowe, University of Lancashire

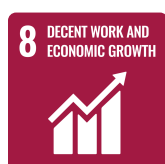
Date of publication: November, 2025

Presented at: National or international issue or theme-specific conference

Department: Access and Participation

Student Working Lives (HEPI Report 195), written by Professor Adrian Wright, Dr Mark Wilding, Mary Lawler, Martin Lowe, draws on extensive research to show how students are juggling study, employment and caring responsibilities in the midst of a deepening cost-of-living crisis. The findings paint a striking picture of students for whom paid work has become a necessity, not a choice. Findings suggest two-thirds of students work to cover their basic living costs, and 26% of students work to support their families.

The report looks at the type of work students are employed in, as well as the impact this has on their study. It calls for systemic reform across the higher education sector to design a higher education that moves away from assuming a full-time residential model, and supports student realities.



Employment Determinants of the Poor Mental Wellbeing of Student Workers in England

| [DOI](#)

Authors: Dr Mark Wilding, University of Lancashire, UK | Professor Adrian Wright, University of Lancashire, UK | Mary Lawler, University of Lancashire, UK | Louise Hoole, University of Lancashire, UK

Date of publication: February, 2026

Presented at: National or international issue or theme-specific conference

Department: Access and Participation

Purpose

Research on the increasing phenomenon of student paid work has tended to focus on the impact on studies or employability and reveal less about working conditions and their consequences. Given the rise in reported work-related poor mental wellbeing across England, there is a need to understand how employment affects student wellbeing. As such, this study investigates which aspects of work impact the mental wellbeing of student workers and to what extent.

Design/methodology/approach

Logistic regression analysis was used to examine 271 survey responses from Business School students at a post-1992 English university. The model coefficients were then exponentiated so that they could be interpreted as changes in the odds of experiencing work-related stress, anxiety, or depression.

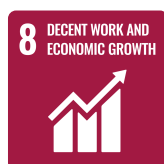
Findings

The findings reveal several work-related variables to have a statistically significant impact on mental wellbeing. More specifically, the logistic regression models pinpoint control, guidance, work hours and job security, along with the demographic variables of ethnicity and age, as making significant contributions to the odds of experiencing work-related poor mental wellbeing.

Originality

This study contributes to the literature by improving understanding of student working conditions and work-related wellbeing. In bringing together these topics, the findings underscore the importance of examining how the organisation and conditions of student work impact mental wellbeing.

Recommendations are made for how employers and universities can address factors affecting student workers' mental wellbeing.



From Prediction to Insight: Understanding Drivers of UK Tourism Demand with Machine Learning | [DOI](#)

Authors: Dr Athanasia Dimitriadou, University of Lancashire, UK | Professor Theophilos Papadimitrou, University of Thrace, Greece | Dr Periklis Gogas, University of Thrace, Greece

Date of publication: April, 2026

Department: Tourism Management

This study forecasts inbound tourism demand for the United Kingdom, using monthly data from February 1989 to February 2020. In the empirical analysis, we evaluate and compare the performance of five machine learning models (Decision Trees, Random Forests, XGBoost, and Support Vector Regression with the RBF and Linear kernels) against a more traditional linear SARIMA regression model. Forecasting performance metrics included MSE, RMSE, MAE, R^2 , and MAPE. The SVR RBF kernel model achieves the highest accuracy, with a MAPE of 0.014% on the training set. To enhance

model interpretability, feature importance analysis is applied to identify the most influential predictors of tourist arrivals. This research offers significant policy implications, aiding government policymakers and private industry stakeholders to optimize their planning and decisions, deploy better long-term business strategy and tourism-related services, optimise the allocation of public and private resources to support the tourism sector.



Research Barriers

In 2025, University of Lancashire identified the following barriers to conducting research related to sustainability and/or responsibility:

- ❖ Funding challenges
- ❖ Skills and expertise gaps
- ❖ Time constraints

Continue telling your story

How our Research and Knowledge Exchange Activity Supports our SDG 8-10-12 Framework

Our Research and Knowledge Exchange Centres Deliver Responsible Management Education and Impact



The SIP report 2025 outlined the focus for our areas of societal impact linked to AACSB accreditation and our commitment to making positive impact in society framed under SDGs 8-10-12 as three pillars which provide the thematic focus for our societal impact work. They are delivered through the School's three main areas of activity: curriculum, scholarship, and engagement. The 8-10-12 framework is fundamental to the three research and knowledge exchange centres in the School:

- Centre for SME Development
- Institute for Research on Work and Employment
- Centre for Business Futures.
-

As outlined below, the activities and work of the centres aligns with 8-10-12 and the mission aligned commitment to responsible management education.

A central theme across all three centres is the growing emphasis on research that delivers tangible benefits beyond academia. Rather than viewing research as an isolated scholarly activity, each centre demonstrates a commitment to creating societal value through partnerships with businesses, policymakers, communities and students. This impact-oriented approach reflects the essence of responsible management education: producing knowledge that supports sustainable development while preparing future leaders to address complex societal challenges. The infographic below and the accompanying narrative summarises this work.



SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth

The Centre for SME and Enterprise Development plays a particularly important role in supporting entrepreneurship and regional economic development. During the review period, more than 1,300 students participated in enterprise activities, leading to the creation of 63 student and graduate start-ups. The Centre's support contributed to an impressive three-year business survival rate of 77%, highlighting its effectiveness in fostering sustainable enterprise creation. Programmes such as Help to Grow, the Propeller Hub, Business Breakfasts, Growth Circle events and the Entrepreneurs in Residence initiative have strengthened entrepreneurial ecosystems across Lancashire.

These activities are significant from an RME perspective because they connect students directly with entrepreneurs and local businesses, enabling experiential learning while contributing to economic growth. Research-informed enterprise support helps students develop responsible leadership capabilities while supporting job creation and innovation within the regional economy.

iROWE contributes to SDG 8 through its focus on employment quality, organisational effectiveness and workplace wellbeing. Its Student Working Lives Project has generated important evidence on student employment experiences, mental wellbeing and labour market challenges. The project has influenced institutional practice and informed wider policy discussions, demonstrating a clear pathway from research to societal impact.

In addition, iROWE has delivered management development programmes, organisational change initiatives and Employment Rights Act workshops for employers. These activities help improve management capability, leadership effectiveness and workforce development, supporting the creation of more productive, healthy and equitable workplaces. The Future Leaders Programme further enhances professional development by preparing managers to lead responsibly within increasingly complex organisational environments.

The Centre for Business Futures supports SDG 8 through innovation-led growth and business transformation. Initiatives such as the Agile Prototyping and Incubation Project (APIP), Knowledge Transfer Partnerships, consultancy activities and the development of commercial propositions demonstrate how academic expertise can enhance productivity and competitiveness. Research in areas such as artificial intelligence, business analytics and digital transformation supports organisations in adapting to changing economic conditions while improving performance and resilience.

SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities

The Centre for SME and Enterprise Development provides notable examples of inclusive entrepreneurship. Its collaboration with Preston City of Sanctuary has created opportunities for refugees and asylum seekers to engage in enterprise activity and develop economic self-sufficiency. By extending support beyond traditional business communities, the Centre helps reduce barriers to economic participation and demonstrates how entrepreneurship can support social integration.

The Centre's work with SMEs also contributes to a more equitable economy. Smaller businesses often lack access to leadership development, innovation support and research expertise. Through programmes such as Help to Grow and SME networking initiatives, the Centre enables these organisations to access resources typically available to larger firms, helping reduce inequalities within the business ecosystem.

iROWE contributes significantly to SDG 10 through research focused on workplace inclusion, organisational inequalities and employee wellbeing. Research on gendered organisational spaces, labour market experiences and workplace inclusion generates evidence that informs policy, management practice and organisational development. By highlighting underrepresented experiences and providing evidence-based recommendations, iROWE supports the development of more inclusive workplaces.

The Student Working Lives Project is particularly important in this regard. Student workers often experience precarious employment while balancing educational commitments. By examining their working conditions, wellbeing and economic pressures, the research provides insights into a frequently overlooked population. Its influence on institutional policy and public debate demonstrates the potential of research to address structural inequalities and improve outcomes for disadvantaged groups.

The Centre for Business Futures contributes through its focus on regional development, collaboration and capacity building. The Centre actively seeks to strengthen partnerships that support Lancashire's economic and skills priorities, while creating opportunities for early career researchers and wider stakeholder engagement. This place-based approach helps extend the benefits of research and innovation beyond the university and into communities and businesses that may otherwise have limited access to such resources.

SDG 12: Responsible Consumption and Production

The Centre for Business Futures demonstrates the clearest alignment through its research themes of sustainability, environmental responsibility, digital innovation and operational improvement. By exploring how organisations can use technology, analytics and innovation to improve decision-making and efficiency, the Centre supports more responsible approaches to resource management and organisational performance.

The Centre's approach to commercialisation also reflects principles of responsible innovation. Through APIP and related activities, mechanisms have been established to ensure research translation is guided by governance, stakeholder value and demonstrable impact. The systematic collection of impact evidence encourages accountability and helps ensure that innovation delivers benefits for businesses and society.

The Centre for SME and Enterprise Development contributes indirectly through its promotion of responsible entrepreneurship and sustainable business growth. Through mentoring, networking and enterprise support, businesses are encouraged to adopt long-term approaches to innovation,

resilience and growth rather than focusing solely on short-term outcomes. Knowledge-sharing initiatives enable SMEs to access best practice and implement more sustainable management approaches.

Similarly, iROWE's work on employee wellbeing, ethical leadership and responsible employment supports the social dimension of sustainability. Sustainable organisations require not only environmental responsibility but also healthy workplaces and fair employment practices. Research and professional development activities that strengthen these areas contribute to more responsible systems of production and organisational performance.

Research Impact and Knowledge Exchange

The most distinctive feature of this RKE activity is the central role of research impact and knowledge exchange as drivers of responsible management education.

The Centre for SME and Enterprise Development has developed extensive mechanisms that connect research, teaching and business engagement. Students, entrepreneurs, SMEs and community organisations benefit from opportunities to collaborate, share knowledge and address practical challenges. These activities transform academic expertise into real-world value while enhancing student learning through direct engagement with practice.

iROWE champions research that influences policy, organisational practice and professional development. The emergence of a REF Impact Case Study from the Student Working Lives Project illustrates how rigorous research can generate meaningful social change. Knowledge exchange activities, including workshops and management development programmes, ensure that research findings are translated into improved workplace practices and leadership capability.

The Centre for Business Futures has embedded impact within its approach to innovation and commercialisation. Through consultancy, Knowledge Transfer Partnerships, industry collaboration and spin-out development, research findings are being transformed into practical tools, processes and services that support business improvement. This demonstrates how academic research can directly contribute to economic and societal outcomes.

Importantly, the integration of research and knowledge exchange enhances educational provision. Students gain exposure to live business challenges, practitioners contribute to learning activities, and research informs curriculum development. This strengthens the preparation of graduates who understand not only business performance but also the wider social, economic and environmental implications of management decisions.

Mapping Activities to SDGs

Driving Sustainable Economic Impact through Our Activities

Our initiatives contribute to inclusive and sustainable economic growth in line with the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

Activity / Initiative	SDG 8: Decent Work & Economic Growth	SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities	SDG 12: Responsible Consumption & Production
1. Student enterprise programmes and start-up support	✓ Entrepreneurship, business creation and job generation	✓ Widening access to entrepreneurial opportunities	✓ Encourages sustainable business practices
2. Help to Grow programme	✓ SME productivity and growth	✓ Supports smaller firms with limited resources	✓ Promotes long-term business resilience
3. Propeller Hub and SME networking	✓ Business development and innovation	✓ Access to expertise for underrepresented businesses	✓ Knowledge sharing on responsible business practice
4. Preston City of Sanctuary partnership	✓ Economic participation through enterprise	✓ Supports refugees and asylum seekers	
5. Student Working Lives Project	✓ Improved understanding of employment quality	✓ Addresses inequalities affecting student workers	✓ Supports socially sustainable employment
6. Management development and Future Leaders programmes	✓ Workforce skills and productivity	✓ Inclusive leadership development	✓ Promotes ethical and responsible management
7. Employment Rights and workplace wellbeing research	✓ Better quality employment	✓ Fairer and more inclusive workplaces	✓ Social sustainability in organisations
8. Agile Prototyping and Incubation Project (APIP)	✓ Innovation-led economic growth		✓ Supports responsible innovation and resource efficiency
9. Knowledge Transfer Partnerships	✓ Productivity and competitiveness	✓ Knowledge access for SMEs	✓ Improved operational efficiency
10. Research on AI, analytics and digital transformation	✓ Economic resilience and growth	✓ Builds regional capability	✓ Supports efficient and sustainable decision-making
10. Commercialisation and spin-out development	✓ Business innovation and job creation		✓ Impact-focused and responsible innovation

Together, these activities advance decent work, reduce inequalities and promote responsible consumption and production for a better future.



DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH



REDUCED INEQUALITIES



RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION





Partner

We engage people from business, government, civil society, and academia to advance responsible and accountable management education and practice.

Institutional Partnerships

- ❖ AACSB (Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business)
- ❖ Local institutions and associations
- ❖ Chartered Association of Business Schools
- ❖ Chartered Management Institute

Student Organization Partnerships

- ❖ None



Practice

We adopt responsible and accountable management principles in our own governance and operations.

Institutional Policies and Practices

- ❖ Accreditation body recommendation documents
- ❖ Buildings/real estate
- ❖ Carbon reduction or offset commitments
- ❖ Curriculum guidelines
- ❖ Ethical leadership or good governance policies
- ❖ Faculty hiring, tenure, and promotion guidelines
- ❖ Local staff/student/faculty transportation
- ❖ Ministry of education recommendation documents
- ❖ Open-access guides
- ❖ Professional training opportunities
- ❖ Student equity, diversity, inclusion
- ❖ Sustainability strategy or strategic plan (school or university level)
- ❖ Travel guides

Policy Documents Related to RME and/or Sustainability

Ethical Principles for Teaching, Research,
Consultancy and Related Activity

[View document](#) [Download document](#)

University Handbook 2025/26

[View document](#) [Download document](#)

Practice Awards

In 2025, University of Lancashire received 1 award for responsible and/or sustainable practices.

Dean's Recognition Award - Team of the Year

Granter: University of Lancashire Business School

Grantee: The Grounds Keeper Team

Award Description:

The Dean's Recognition Award for the Team of the Year award in 2025/26 was awarded to the University Grounds Maintenance Team for their work cultivating and nurturing the successful development of wild flowers around campus. One particular section of the campus has provided a outstanding display of wild flowers which make people stop and look and take photographs. The award demonstrated appreciation of the incredible work which the Grounds Maintenance Team do all

year round and which enhances the on campus experience for all staff, students and visitors. The wild flowers are a haven for bees and butterflies.



Share

We share our successes and failures with each other to enable our collective learning and best live our common values and purpose.



How We Define Share

By sharing our success and best practice we can influence positive outcomes for stakeholders

Engagement Opportunities

University of Lancashire offers transparent engagement opportunities for members of our institution and community to contribute to our sustainability and responsibility efforts in the following ways:

- ❖ Boards and advisory committees
- ❖ Annual reports
- ❖ Feedback mechanisms (e.g., surveys, suggestion boxes)
- ❖ Public events and panel discussions
- ❖ Student and staff volunteer programs

Communication Audiences

University of Lancashire communicates its policies and progress on sustainable development and responsibility with:

- ❖ Accreditation bodies
- ❖ Boards and advisory committees
- ❖ Chamber of commerce and local communities
- ❖ Faculty and staff
- ❖ Prospective and current students
- ❖ Research and academic networks
- ❖ students

Communication Barriers

University of Lancashire faces the following barriers in transparent communications:



**Bureaucratic
delays**



**Inconsistent
updates**

Continue telling your story

University of Lancashire Research and Knowledge Exchange Festival 2026

The Business School showcased responsible management education at the University's annual research and knowledge exchange festival in May 26. The accounts below highlight the contributions made to knowledge sharing as well as the contributions to the Research and Knowledge Exchange Image competition made by faculty in the Business School.

Trust, Truth and Technology: Inside the Deepfake Detection Lab

When Tom Stables took to the stage, he opened not with an introduction but with a video of himself, or something that looked remarkably like him. The session that followed, Trust, Truth and Technology: Inside the Deepfake Detection Lab, drew business professionals from across the region for sixty minutes of hands-on engagement with one of the most consequential challenges facing organisations today: the growing inability of individuals and institutions to distinguish authentic from fabricated media.

Tom, a Lecturer in Digital Marketing in the Business School, made himself the subject throughout, cloning his own voice using voice synthesis technology, generating fabricated video evidence using AI video generation models, and producing synthetic memories animated from still photographs. The use of his own likeness made the technology immediate, personal, and impossible to dismiss as someone else's problem. It also surfaced questions that sit at the heart of responsible management education: about consent, about evidence, and about the processes organisations use to verify what they believe to be true.



The live audience data illustrated the scale of the challenge. When participants were asked whether their employees could recognise a deepfake fraud attempt, 94% said no. Confidence in identifying synthetic content averaged 52% on a five-point scale, while suspicion of content in professional and social media contexts averaged 76%. The gap of organisations being highly alert to risk but poorly equipped to address it, was the session's most actionable finding.

Responsible management education, the session argued, is not a module or a framework. It is a disposition. The ability to question what you see, verify where it came from, and make decisions under conditions of uncertainty is, increasingly, a core organisational competency. Synthetic media fraud falls hardest on those with least access to AI detection tools, cryptographic provenance standards, and content watermarking infrastructure. Small businesses and regional economies are softer targets than large enterprises and closing that gap is an economic equality issue as much as a security one. (SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth; SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities; SDG 12: Responsible Consumption and Production)

Grounded in the Lancashire Growth Plan's identification of AI and digitisation as transformative forces for the regional economy, the session positioned the University as a credible, practical partner for Lancashire businesses navigating a rapidly changing digital landscape. Trust, Truth and Technology was responsible management education in practice, honest about complexity, grounded in evidence, and designed to leave its audience better equipped than it arrived.

The Wellbeing Farm – Small Changes Lead to Business Sustainability.

The Centre for SME and Enterprise Development hosted a Business Breakfast Networking Event as part of the Festival. The event brought together small business owners, entrepreneurs, students, academics, and regional stakeholders to exchange insight, foster collaboration, and promote responsible business practices. The event directly contributed to the University of Lancashire Business School's commitment to the RME and supports the 8-10-12 framework.



Pictured, Celia Gaze promoting sustainability as good business sense.

The highlight of the session was a keynote from Celia Gaze, Entrepreneur in Residence at the University of Lancashire Business School, Founder and CEO of The Wellbeing Farm, an award-winning and B Corp-certified events venue in Lancashire known for embedding sustainability, wellbeing, and social responsibility into its business model. The School's Entrepreneurs in Residence programme brings real-world expertise and entrepreneurial practice to students, academics and SMEs who receive support from the University.

During her keynote session, Celia Gaze drew upon her entrepreneurial journey transforming a neglected Lancashire hill farm into a nationally recognised sustainable events venue - providing a compelling case for embedding sustainability as a driver of commercial success and illustrating how responsible practices can enhance competitiveness, build resilience, and open new markets for SMEs.

Celia focused on realistic, low-cost actions and "quick wins" that smaller businesses can implement without significant financial burden. By demystifying sustainability and positioning it as achievable and economically advantageous, the session empowered attendees to integrate responsible practices into their operations.

Going Beyond Just Words: Delivering Real Impact on Sustainability

The discussion panel “Going Beyond Just Words” at the Research and Knowledge Exchange Festival provided a thought-provoking exploration of how sustainability has evolved in both meaning and practice. A central theme was the shift from a traditionally narrow environmental focus to a much broader, more integrated perspective. Panellists emphasised that sustainability now encompasses not only planet, but also people and profit, reflecting the widely recognised triple bottom line. However, the conversation moved further to highlight the growing importance of a quadruple bottom line, where purpose is elevated as a defining element of organisational strategy and impact, rather than an optional add-on.



The panel also underscored the critical role of the human dimension in sustainability. Supporting employees through trust, flexibility, and empowerment was framed as essential for fostering resilient and high-performing organisations, reinforcing the idea that long-term sustainability depends on people as much as environmental or economic considerations.

Practical examples helped ground these ideas. Initiatives such as Fairtrade illustrated how sustainability frameworks can directly empower producers and communities, while B Corp certification demonstrated how organisations can be held accountable to measurable standards of social and environmental performance, transparency, and purpose. These examples highlighted that sustainability is not merely conceptual but can be operationalised in tangible and impactful ways.

Overall, the panel concluded that sustainability is no longer optional. Instead, it is a fundamental strategic imperative for organisations seeking to remain relevant and responsible while contributing to the long-term wellbeing of both society and the planet.

Images Saying a Thousand Words

The RKE festival holds an annual RKE image competition and this year there were three contributions from the Business School.

Woman and Child



The photo 'Woman and Child' was submitted by Dr. Philip Stone and is published in his '111 Dark Places in Scotland That You Shouldn't Miss' (2025): a book about dark tourism that engages the public to visit difficult heritage sites. The subject is also part of the research informed teaching agenda that promotes responsible management of contested heritage and dark tourism to students. Philip's teaching agendas includes issues of responsible memorialisation and the politics of remembrance within global visitor economies.

The Woman and Child statue in Edinburgh's Festival Square stands as a quiet act of witness. Its presence signals Scotland's solidarity with those who lived under South Africa's former apartheid system. The bronze memorial, sculpted by Anne Davidson and unveiled in 1986, captures an African woman in humble dress, her gaze cast toward far horizons, one arm gently sheltering a young girl who clings to her side like a fragile flicker of hope. The photo captures not just two figures, but an emotional truth: the instinct to protect and to endure, but also one of fear. Yet the statue's message stretches beyond South Africa. It quietly urges us to notice where similar patterns of division have appeared—or still appear—in the United States, Northern Ireland, India, and the Israeli-occupied Palestinian territories. By standing with the figures in bronze, we are asked not only to remember, but to feel, and to consider what it means to inherit histories of injustice. Woman and Child is therefore more than a memorial; it is an invitation to empathy—an opening for anyone passing by to pause, reflect, and imagine a world where such protective gestures are no longer born out of necessity.

Manningtree – A Tiny Town Addressing Global Sustainability through Local Action



This image shows how, by monitoring the local moth population, the residents of Manningtree in Essex, can track changes in the local environment. Dr Maria Sherrington's research focuses on understanding how communities can take effective local action against the problem of global warming. The research explores the initiatives of PACE Manningtree, a local environmental charity that takes practical action against climate change and promotes biodiversity by working with a range of partners, including residents, businesses, schools, farmers and the local councils.

The "Dark Side" of Disabled Academic Life



This image entered by Claire Ashworth in the Business School forms part of Claire’s autoethnographic account of studying as a disabled postgraduate research student. The jar of empty medication packets represent the material trace of what Olsen et al. (2020) conceptualise as “shadow barriers”: the concealed labour, embodied negotiations, and emotional costs that disabled students and academics continually manage. In her narrative, Claire adopts Star Wars as a metaphor to articulate the ongoing, internalised struggle between her “light side” (professional identity, resilience, agency) and the “dark side” (pain, fatigue, and the chronic conditions that quietly govern daily functioning). The accumulating medication remnants symbolise the relentlessness of this hidden battle and the private strategies required to remain professionally presentable. Within the context of a Doctorate in Education, this work contributes to knowledge exchange by exposing the often-unseen infrastructures of survival that shape disabled academic life, challenging normative expectations of performance, productivity, and visibility in the sector.

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Welcome Week Activities and Celebrating 'Fly to Flag for the SDGs' September 2025

Flying the Flag for the SDGs: Welcome Week September 2025

In September 2025 we welcomed over 500 new students to the Business School and celebrated our commitment to Responsible Management Education. We invited new students to share our commitment and pledge one thing that they would do to support responsible management education and sustainability. Their pledges were written on handprints and displayed during Welcome Week events. The students were also given a card to take away reminding them of the SDGs and our PRME Signatory status. The pledges demonstrated the wide range of commitments our students are making to sustainability and responsible business education from reducing single use plastic by using a reusable water bottle to eating less red meat and working hard to ensure they complete their studies successfully. It was great way to socialise the SDGs with our students and raise awareness of what underpins our commitment to RME.



Pictured: Faculty from the Business School Flying the Flag on the University Square, September 2025

This commitment is translated into curriculum development and innovation. The School's AACSB Assurance of Learning (AoL) framework embeds responsible management and the principles underpinning the UN SDGs within the competencies expected of every graduate. Competencies at level 6 require learners to demonstrate professionalism, integrity and reflective practice, and to make responsible decisions that recognise organisational, societal and global impacts. These expectations are mapped through the curriculum and assessed through authentic tasks requiring students to consider ethics, sustainability, stakeholders and wider consequences.

AoL then provides systematic evidence of how well students develop these capabilities and drives improvement where gaps are identified. First-cycle findings have already led programme teams to strengthen stakeholder consideration, sustainability, trade-offs and unintended consequences within teaching and assessment. In this way, the SDGs are embedded not only in what the School teaches, but in what students are expected to demonstrate and what the School measures and improves.



Pictured: Professor Steven Rhoden and Louise McArdle, Flying the Flag for the SDGs at the Business School Welcome Event in September 2026

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