

# 2025 Sharing Information on Progress **(SIP) Report**

Karlstad Business School

December 2025

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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.

## SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS





# Getting Started

This section provides foundational information about Karlstad Business School, including key details and basic institutional data.

## Mission

Karlstad Business School (KBS) mission statement is:

"We educate responsible professionals and conduct research with high societal impact".

## Vision

Karlstad Business School aims to be influential and highly visible in society - the first choice for students, employees, and partners.

## Strategy

### KBS Strategy Overview

To better implement the mission, KBS has a revised strategic plan for 2024-208 with three strategic goals and nine strategic initiatives. This strategic plan is built on our previous plan.

The goals are:



#### 1) Attracting and educating employable students to a high academic standard.

Aligned with Karlstad university's strategic goals:

- We have strengthened our attractiveness among current and future students and as an attractive workplace
- We are profiled of reputable academic environments of the highest level where research and education are close interconnected

#### 2. Co-producing competitive education and research with organizations and society at large.

Aligned with Karlstad university's strategic goals:

- We are profiled of reputable academic environments of the highest level where research and education are close interconnected
- Our education and research are characterized by close relations with the surrounding society
- Our research training is increasing in scope and quality

#### 3. Empowering faculty to contribute to solutions in society

**Aligned with Karlstad university's strategic goals:**

- We are profiled of reputable academic environments of the highest level where research and education are close interconnected
- Our education and research are characterized by close relations with the surrounding society
- We demonstrate a larger degree of internationalization in our operations

We develop knowledge for a social, financial and environmentally sustainable society.

[strategic plan 2019-23](#)[View document](#)  [Download document](#) [strategic plan](#)[View document](#)  [Download document](#) 

## Strategy Alignment

### Strategic Priorities Aligned with Sustainable Development, the Common Good, and Quality Education

Karlstad Business School (KBS) is committed to educating responsible professionals who contribute positively to society by integrating sustainable, ethical, and inclusive values into their knowledge, decisions, and actions.

Our strategic priorities align closely with key UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)—including:

- Quality Education (SDG 4)
- Gender Equality (SDG 5)
- Decent Work and Economic Growth (SDG 8)
- Responsible Consumption and Production (SDG 12)
- Climate Action (SDG 13)
- Partnerships for the Goals (SDG 17)

These goals are embedded in our degree programs through research-based and researcher-led teaching. The curriculum is enhanced by the intellectual contributions of faculty, including frameworks, tools, and policy recommendations. This ensures students gain critical and applied knowledge to address real-world sustainability challenges.

KBS actively engages with both business and society through partnerships with public and private organizations, supporting sustainable innovation and transformation. Our engagement is guided by four core perspectives: *internationalization, equality, collaboration, and sustainability*.

To support the development of responsible professionals, KBS emphasizes key competencies, including:

- Self-management
- Sustainable behavior
- Analytical thinking
- Ethical decision-making
- Communication
- Teamwork

These competencies are cultivated through applied learning, leadership opportunities, and reflective practice. To support the development of responsible professionals, KBS emphasizes core competencies such as self-management, sustainable behaviour, analytical thinking, ethical decision-making, communication and teamwork. These skills are cultivated through applied learning experiences, leadership opportunities and reflective practice. Thought leadership is driven by impactful research by academics in KBS and from the Service Research Center (CTF), which explores value creation through service innovation guided by circularity and sustainability. Through this strategic alignment, KBS empowers students to become change agents in a global society, prepared to lead responsibly and contribute to a more sustainable future.

Students benefit from *experiential learning* through interdisciplinary projects, global exchanges, and collaborative initiatives. These experiences foster critical thinking, ethical leadership, and social responsibility. A strong *Code of Conduct* underpins expectations for responsible behavior both in academic contexts and professional interactions. Through this strategic alignment, KBS empowers students to become change agents in a global society, equipped to lead responsibly and contribute to a more sustainable future.

## Institutional History

### Karlstad Business School History

KBS was established in 2009 as part of Karlstad University, making it one of Sweden's youngest business schools. However, its academic roots date back to 1968, when business education was first offered through the then Karlstad University College, a branch of the University of Gothenburg. Today, KBS offers education at all three levels: undergraduate, master's, and doctoral degrees.

KBS is guided by the vision of becoming "*The Responsible Business School*," where all education, research, and engagement activities are grounded in sustainability, ethics, and responsibility. The School's mission is to "*educate responsible professionals and conduct research with high societal impact*," and it aims to be influential and highly visible in society, as well as the first choice for students, employees, and partners.

As a young school with a clear strategic direction, KBS's history reflects a strong commitment to the implementation of its vision and to challenge-driven transformation. The School has undertaken a deliberate and systematic process of change by continuously assessing the needs of students, staff, and external stakeholders in order to develop a curriculum grounded in sustainability and responsibility. A key ambition has been to integrate curriculum development, research, stakeholder dialogue, and accreditation efforts into a cohesive and mutually reinforcing model for responsible management education. This ongoing transformation ensures that both teaching content and institutional processes are oriented toward long-term societal impact.

In support of this strategic direction, KBS became a signatory to the UN Principles for Responsible Management Education (PRME) in 2017, marking an important milestone in the School's development. PRME has since served as a strategic framework and guiding platform, enabling KBS to align its vision and mission with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and to systematically integrate responsible management principles across education, research, and engagement activities.

In parallel with its PRME commitment, the School has initiated the process of accreditation with AACSB, and accredited in 2021 to reinforcing its ambition to strengthen academic quality, societal relevance, and global engagement, and to position itself as a responsible and impact-oriented business school.

**Commitment to PRME and the SDGs:** KBS's sustainability journey began even before becoming a member of PRME, through a general audit of the departments and an engagement initiative known as Sustainability Day. The first official Sustainability Day was announced in October 2016, culminating in its formal PRME membership in February 2017. The school's first SIP (Sharing Information on Progress) report was published in 2019, revealing that many of its existing education and research initiatives were already well aligned with the six PRME principles.

Since then, PRME has guided KBS in embedding sustainability throughout its operations and in strengthening the connection between education and research.

**Focus on Key SDGs:** Following a participatory process during the third Sustainability Day in 2018, KBS prioritized four core SDGs:

- SDG 4: Quality Education
- SDG 5: Gender Equality
- SDG 12: Responsible Consumption and Production
- SDG 13: Climate Action

These became the focus of implementation starting in January 2019 and were later joined by:

- SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth (2021)

- SDG 17: Partnerships for the Goals (2023)

Together, these six SDGs now form the foundation of KBS's education, research, and outreach. SDG 17, in particular, is seen as central to coordinating activities and enabling synergies across all other goals.

KBS defines a responsible professional as someone who contributes to society through knowledge, dialogue, and action—grounded in sustainable social, environmental, and economic values.

**Research and Pedagogy:** KBS promotes student-active learning, research-integrated education, and close collaboration with external stakeholders. Its pedagogical models prioritize critical thinking, real-world problem-solving, and interdisciplinary learning.

Working closely with the Service Research Center (CTF) and international partners such as the PRME Nordic Chapter, KBS has hosted events including Sustainability Days and the Nordic Responsible Management Education Symposium, creating platforms for dialogue and shared learning.

**Culture, Accreditation, and Continuous Improvement:** KBS is built on a culture of responsibility, where values and processes are as important as outcomes. The integration of PRME and the SDGs reflects not only a commitment to what is taught, but also to how it is taught and implemented.

Aligned with AACSB accreditation standards—particularly around sustainability, responsibility, and societal impact—KBS continues to enhance its quality assurance processes.

## Graduates & Enrollment

2024 Statistics	Number
Graduates	453
Faculty & Staff at the University	1387
Faculty & Staff at the Institution	142
Student Enrollment at the University	17700
Student Enrollment at the Institution	2856

2024 Statistics	Number
Undergraduate Attendance	1297
Masters-Level Postgraduate Attendance	1525
Doctoral Student Attendance	34

## Degrees Offered

### Bachelor Programs

 Bachelor of Science (B.Sc. or B.S.)

### Masters Programs

 Master of Science (M.Sc. or M.S.)

### Doctoral Programs

 Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.)

## Undergraduate Degree Programmes

-  Business and Economics  Human Resource Management and Working Life  Law Programme
-  Global Sustainable Business  Real estate management  IT, Project management and ERP Systems
-  IT-design: enterprise systems and economy  IT-Design: Information Systems Design
-  Web Developer

## Masters Degree Programmes

-  Accounting and Control  Management: Sustainable value creation  Marketing  Economics
-  Information systems

## Postgraduate Degree Programmes

 Business Administration

 Working Life Science

 Working Life Science

 Information systems

 Information systems

 Business Administration

 Law

 Law



# Purpose

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

## Letter of Commitment

### Word of the Head of the School



At Karlstad Business

School (KBS), we aspire to create a vibrant environment where students, faculty, researchers and professionals come together to co-create knowledge that truly matters for society. Knowledge - and the ability to use it - is central to the transformation we should all embrace as individuals, organizations and communities. Education and research must always remain independent of political influence and academic freedom safeguarded.

Along with other Nordic business schools, we have demonstrated globally our commitment to fundamental principles, with a strong emphasis on diversity, equality, and inclusion. It is deeply meaningful to us that our research seeks to make a real difference - exploring broader perspectives and developing solutions that advance sustainability in all its dimensions. We ensure that our students engage with ethical dilemmas throughout their education, preparing them for the complex decisions they will face in their future careers. We all need the ability to navigate an increasingly complex and globalized world.

We value the dialogue and collaboration within the PRME network, which inspires us to continue driving education and research that are inclusive, sustainable, and impactful. At KBS, we offer research-

based and research-led education that fosters diverse and inclusive learning environments. We invest in training our faculty in sustainable development and collaborate with industry partners to challenge traditional learning models, for example by:

- Working with authentic cases where conflicts of interest, sustainability dilemmas and even misinformation must be addressed in real time.
- Collaborating in multicultural teams, building trust and psychological safety across time zones, cultures and communication styles.

We strive to prepare the next generation of leaders to develop the ability to lead with a clear sense of purpose within a lifelong learning journey. True leadership grows in environments where different perspectives are reflected and welcomed - where inclusion is not just a principle but a lived practice. KBS strives to contribute in strengthening the intellectual and ethical foundations on which our society depends.

A handwritten signature in black ink.

*Associate Professor Marie-Therese Christiansson  
Head of Karlstad Business School*

## **Definition of Purpose**

At KBS, we are committed to responsible management education by integrating sustainability, ethics, and social responsibility into everything we do. Our purpose is to develop responsible leaders who create sustainable value for business and society, contributing to an inclusive global economy and addressing the world's most pressing challenges.



# Values

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

## How We Define Values

At KBS, we educate responsible professionals by placing societal and environmental accountability at the core. Our values emphasize integrity, impact, and inclusive—striving to be a visible, influential institution and the first choice for students, staff, and partners committed to sustainable and ethical business.

## Who Champions Responsible Management Education at Our Institution

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

## Values Voices

### Implementing research into education

In a divided world where negative attitudes towards disabilities persist, promoting equality, diversity and inclusion has become an urgent priority in working life - placing new demands on organizations. With approximately 1.3 billion people living with disabilities globally, they represent the world's largest minority (WHO, 2024). In Sweden, the employment rate among people with disabilities remains lower than among those without disabilities (SCB, 2024). Furthermore, one in three individuals with disabilities report having experienced discrimination in working life (SCB, 2024). Research is important and needed to deepen the understanding and complexities about inclusion and disabilities. My research focuses on inclusion when working from home, with a particular emphasis on disabilities. Research shows a need to strengthen disability competence both in education and within organizations (e.g., Millmark et al., 2025; MDF, 2024). In response to this need – and with the goal of creating great future leaders - disability research has been integrated into lectures at Karlstad Business School. This initiative aims to equip future HR professionals with essential knowledge about disability and inclusion. This is a way to enhance and expand educational programs to meet current societal challenges. Additionally, to strengthen the possibilities for a lifelong learning, a national course for HR practitioners in Sweden is currently being developed to enhance competence in

disability and other grounds of discrimination, delivered through lectures, seminars and workshops. This is a part of improving the quality of business education and making an impact, according to the values of Karlstad Business School.

By advancing the conversation about inclusion and disability both in research and in practice, this work of implementing research into education seeks to contribute to more inclusive education, organizations, and ultimately, a more inclusive society.

*Suzanne Millmark, Doctoral student, Karlstad Business School*

## Celebrating Values

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

### Celebrating Values and Ethical Commitments

Karlstad Business School (KBS) demonstrates its core values through concrete actions grounded in ethical responsibility, equality, and sustainability. These values guide decision-making, resource allocation, teaching practices, and engagement with society.

Ethics, diversity, and equality are integrated into both policy development and daily operations, with active student involvement. KBS reinforces these values through targeted work on **gender equality (SDG 5)** and sustainable transformation. In 2023, KBS appointed a development lead for gender equality and sustainable transformation, strengthening ethical awareness through courses, events, and faculty development initiatives. KBS actively promotes equal representation in leadership roles, teaching, marketing, and academic forums, and subject groups report annually to Karlstad University (KAU) on how gender equality is considered in the allocation of time and resources. The Student Support Unit has completed LGBTQ+ awareness training to ensure that communication and support mechanisms are inclusive and welcoming to all. KBS also monitors overall progress in gender mainstreaming.

An ethical framework for resource allocation and staff planning is under development to ensure fairness, transparency, and predictability in workload distribution, career development, and promotion opportunities. Targeted analyses focus on research leadership roles and senior lecturers' opportunities for PhD supervision, with data structured to distinguish gender-related patterns from other factors such as experience and academic rank.

Aligned with KAU's gender mainstreaming policy, KBS invests in strengthening faculty competence in equality and inclusion. Norm-critical training and courses such as *Inclusive Teaching – Norm-Critical Pedagogy* support reflective teaching practices, challenge exclusionary norms, and foster learning

environments in which students are free to define themselves. KBS promotes inclusion and accessibility through flexible educational formats, accessible digital services, mentoring programmes, and adapted assessment practices. One example of practical action to support diversity is that when a student has a formal decision from KAU regarding targeted educational support due to a documented disability, the examiner may offer an adapted examination or an alternative form of assessment. The introduction of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) in 2024 further strengthens KBS's ethical commitment to equitable and accessible education.

Beyond education, KBS contributes to societal impact through active participation in regional and national gender equality networks and through research addressing ethical challenges in working life. Research on customer sexual harassment in Nordic service workplaces has informed policy discussions at the Nordic Council of Ministers, reinforcing KBS's role as a responsible business school committed to ethics, equality, and sustainable societal development.

The commitment to ethics and inclusiveness is further demonstrated through participation in the Erasmus+ programme, aligned with national goals to make international mobility more accessible and sustainable. The university offers additional scholarships for participants with children, health-related needs, or from lower socio-economic backgrounds, as well as incentives for those who choose greener travel options and avoid flying during their mobility periods. These opportunities are communicated transparently through multiple channels, in both Swedish and English, to ensure broad outreach. Participants who receive additional support are encouraged to share their experiences and promote these opportunities to future participants.

Through inclusive educational formats, accessible digital services, adapted examination methods, and active engagement in gender equality networks and research, KBS demonstrates its ethical commitment to diversity, equality, and social responsibility. Together, KAU and KBS uphold their values by embedding ethics, inclusion, and sustainability into education, research, and organizational practice.



# Teach

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

## How We Define Teach

Through engaged, research-informed teaching, we educate responsible professionals and connect academic knowledge with professional practice, enabling learners to apply theory responsibly while contributing to research and learning with high societal impact.

## Courses that support RME

Karlstad Business School reports 3 courses in 2024 that support responsible management education and sustainable development goals.

### **Environmental Law and Social Sustainability | JPAH02**

The course aims to provide advanced knowledge in environmental law. The course primarily covers environmental law applicable in Sweden, including the Environmental Code and parallel legislation related to human health, natural resources, and ecosystem services. EU law is part of the Swedish legal system and is therefore treated as an integrated part of it. The course also covers aspects of international environmental law, particularly concerning issues such as civic participation, human rights, climate change, and area protection. The course addresses the goal of sustainable development, which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. In order to ensure the opportunities of future generations, this also involves the management and protection of natural resources and the environment. The interaction between legal regulations and environmental sciences, among other insights, is discussed. The teaching is based on various forms of instruction, such as lectures and seminars. (Translated from Swedish)

This course significantly enhances students' learning by promoting experiential learning and fostering a lifelong mindset of professional growth. Students engage with real-world environmental conflicts, where legal, environmental, and social issues intersect, and develop their legal reasoning by analyzing ongoing legal cases through the lens of current environmental legislation, ethical frameworks, and comparative examples. This approach helps students build critical thinking skills and refine their ability to propose viable legal solutions in high-stakes, morally complex situations. Through interdisciplinary teaching—drawing on ecology, ethics, policy, and indigenous perspectives—students are encouraged to think beyond the traditional confines of law. The course structure, which includes lectures, seminars, debates, and article-based discussions, not only deepens their understanding of environmental law but also challenges them to consider broader societal implications of legal decisions, such as sustainability, justice, and social inequality. Additionally, the course encourages students to remain lifelong learners, staying informed on evolving environmental issues like climate justice and planetary boundaries. They are taught to approach legal challenges with humility and openness, recognizing the limits of legal expertise and understanding the broader ethical responsibilities they carry as future legal professionals. Reflective assignments help students

consider their role in reinforcing or challenging societal structures, fostering a sense of professional ethics that extends beyond the classroom. The teaching method blends in-person lectures with real-world engagement, promoting active participation in civic discourse and emphasizing law's role in society. This method cultivates empathetic, context-sensitive legal reasoning, particularly when addressing justice, risk, and responsibility. By considering sustainability, ecological limits, and intergenerational justice, students are encouraged to reframe their understanding of law's potential and limitations. In summary, the course prepares students to become responsible legal professionals who understand the complex relationship between law, the environment, and society. It equips them with the knowledge, ethical awareness, and interdisciplinary thinking necessary to navigate and address global sustainability challenges in an adaptive, forward-thinking manner.

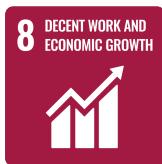


## International Project Management Methodology | IEGA68

The course includes discussion of individual projects from the perspective of the project manager. There is a focus on projects in different professional contexts. Special emphasis is placed on project goals and advantages and the planning and organisation of individual projects, as well as the interaction between managers and groups in the organisation of the project. The coursework is characterised by students being responsible for working actively in groups with authentic cases, and the course involves co-creation in workshops with students and lecturers. Students gain insight into the role of networks in projects through interviews and workshops. This is a distance course for national and international students. The course includes visits from international guest lecturers, which makes possible discussions that involve many different perspectives on projects, project management, and project methods in an international context.

The course is grounded in experiential learning. Student teams simulate real-world consulting teams, addressing project challenges from an external, professional perspective. These teams are expected to interact much like actual project teams in industry—planning, executing, and evaluating their work collaboratively across borders, time zones, and disciplines. Assignments are designed to mirror real-world dynamics, encouraging students to navigate ambiguity, define goals, and tailor their solutions to realistic client expectations. This simulation of professional practice enhances both the technical and interpersonal skills essential for international project management. **Teaching and Learning That Promotes a Lifelong Learning Mindset** The course emphasizes the importance of adaptability in project management. Students are encouraged to recognize that the profession must remain agile and responsive to external changes, including climate change, technological evolution, and shifting stakeholder demands. A strong focus is placed on self-reflection—both individually and within teams—as a core element of professional growth. Students are urged to carry forward lessons learned from

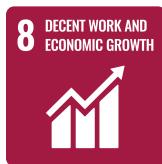
one project to the next, to foster a habit of continuous improvement. The course also supports the development of global professional networks, helping students connect with peers and experienced project professionals, laying the foundation for ongoing learning and career development.



## Human Resource Management in a Global Context | AVGI10

The course introduces a critical approach to International Human Resource Management (IHRM), with a special focus on the importance of considering issues of work and employment in a global context. Aspects such as sustainability, gender, diversity, technological development, changing global relations, and the potential role of HR are presented and discussed. Instruction is in the form of lectures and seminars where different themes related to International Human Resource Management are treated.

The course encourages students to question conventional HR practices and view the employment relationship through a critical and reflective lens. Through lectures and workshops, students develop a portfolio of cases and reflections throughout the semester, supporting an ongoing learning process. This structure promotes deeper engagement with real-world HRM challenges and aims to cultivate responsible, critically aware practitioners who can question, reinterpret, and improve current practices. Experiential learning is a core component of the course. Each week, students analyze and reflect on real-life international HRM cases that involve conflicting interests and complex global dynamics. These cases address moral, social, and organizational dilemmas that HR professionals often face. By working through such ambiguous and context-dependent scenarios, students build their analytical, problem-solving, and ethical reasoning skills. The course culminates in the development of a student-designed case study and a corresponding theoretical analysis, enabling learners to apply what they've learned in a practical and creative way. **Teaching and Learning That Promotes a Lifelong Learning Mindset** The course supports lifelong learning by embedding continuous reflection and peer feedback into its structure. Weekly assignments and the learning portfolio encourage students to assess their development over time, cultivating habits of critical inquiry and self-evaluation. By engaging with global and evolving themes such as sustainability, technological transformation, and diversity, students are equipped to remain adaptable and thoughtful throughout their careers. The final case study assignment reinforces independent application of theoretical knowledge—an essential competency for continued academic or professional growth.



## Teaching Awards

In 2024, 1 award was given to faculty and educators at Karlstad Business School.

### Teacher of the Year

**Granter:** Karlstad University Student Union

**Grantee:** Jonas Axelsson

#### **Award Description:**

Karlstad Student Union has awarded Jonas Axelsson, Senior Lecturer in Working Life Science at the Business School, the title of Teacher of the Year 2024. The award was presented by Jonathan Strömberg, the Student Union's Head of Educational Affairs. The jury was particularly impressed by student nominations that highlighted Jonas's ability to deliver not only interesting and engaging lectures but also his efforts to strengthen students' critical thinking skills. He was also praised for continuously developing his teaching based on student feedback, showing a genuine commitment to pedagogical improvement. Jonas emphasized three key factors that have shaped him as a teacher. First, the students—who generously share their own experiences, allowing him to constantly learn more about today's working life. Second, his own role model, Jan Ch Karlsson, who inspired Jonas's approach to lecturing. Third, colleagues at the Business School for their strong spirit of collaboration and teamwork. Jonas shared that he loves spending time at the university library, not just for the atmosphere but also because it gives him the opportunity to connect with students who may have questions or want to discuss ideas. He also mentioned that one of his examination methods involves lecture reflections submitted by students—an approach that both helps him improve his teaching and allows him to keep learning. Jonas noted that he always sets the bar high for his lectures, and this award is a clear sign that students truly value his dedication.

## Educator Recognition

At Karlstad Business School, we recognize educators for quality of teaching in the following ways:

- ❖ Course evaluation scores
- ❖ Faculty promotion and tenure consideration
- ❖ Pedagogical innovation grants
- ❖ Professional development opportunities
- ❖ Publication or research support
- ❖ Student-nominated teaching awards

## Teaching Voices

The following statements demonstrate ways in which educators at Karlstad Business School support sustainability and responsible management in their classrooms.

### **Innovative Course on Business Development: Addressing Global Challenges and Integrating SDGs**

*Business Development from a Process and Partnership Perspective* (Course Code: ISGC06), shares the innovative approach to organizing and teaching the course, addressing global challenges and illustrating how it integrates the SDGs.

This course is based on experiential learning focuses on process-oriented business development for digital transformation within and across organizations. It emphasizes methods and practices in business process management for developing and procuring digital solutions, supported by a theoretical framework drawn from a critical review of key concepts in literature and applied to real-life cases. Practical components include conceptual modeling, process mapping, and operational improvement, culminating in a Proof-of-Concept using industry-standard business modeling tools. Students learn to create quality-assured process maps and conduct analyses incorporating sustainability perspectives based on the UN's SDGs.

Through engagement with complex environmental and ethical issues, students enhance analytical skills and broaden their foundation for developing digital solutions to address societal challenges. Teaching combines lectures, guided readings, videos, and various forms of supervision. Team assignments involve collaboration with private and public organizations, complemented by workshops. The course concludes with a seminar featuring industry professionals, where students present well-reasoned digitalization proposals linked to analyses and business models, demonstrating impacts and limitations in relation to SDGs.

#### **Continues responsible learning and the merging sustainability issues**

The course emphasizes continuous learning in the evolving field of digital transformation. Through team-based and case-based analysis, real-world engagement, and individual reflection, it prepares future business and system developers to work responsibly and adaptively in a changing business environment. Course content addresses current and emerging sustainability issues in digital solutions, referencing SDGs such as Gender Equality (SDG 5), Decent Work and Economic Growth (SDG 8), Responsible Consumption and Production (SDG 12), and Climate Action (SDG 13). Students deliver a Proof-of-Concept to the case-company that includes recommendations for a digital transformation within and across organizations, outlining implications for business- and business process management. Additionally, students provide feedback on the sustainability report strengths and weaknesses, reinforcing the importance of continuous improvement and lifelong learning - an insight for future employments.

## Method of Teaching and Learning

The course combines in-person lectures, diverse supervision formats, workshops, and a real-life case based on a company's sustainability report, culminating in a final seminar with industry practitioners. Students apply research-based principles of process orientation and business process management to the empirical case in developing a Proof-of-Concept. Rich dialogue and collaborative learning are supported through extensive tutoring and teamwork. Key activities include:

- Capturing and articulating organizational goals for digital transformation, linked to SDGs.
- Defining and visualizing the selected business area or subprocess and its stakeholders.
- Creating a quality-assured process map describing the current state.
- Applying appropriate methods for process analysis to drive innovation.
- Designing a future-state process map that demonstrates the proposed digital solution, its stakeholder impacts, and its alignment with SDGs.

## Teaching and Learning Goals

After completing the course, students will be able to:

- Summarize and visualize the concept and impact of process-oriented business development.
- Explain the relationship between business management and business process management.
- Apply process orientation principles to propose digital transformation solutions.
- Create a quality-assured process map for business-driven digitalization.
- Integrate sustainability (SDG 5, SDG 8, SDG 12) and sustainable development (SDG 13) into the analysis and development of digital innovations.
- Conduct conceptual modeling and process mapping, and evaluate methods and practices for process management.

Through problem-solving in real-life cases, students explore what digitalization could look like when prioritizing process orientation - focusing on customer value and holistic business- and system development with sustainability at its core.

## Summary

This course aligns with the Principles for Responsible Management Education (PRME) by preparing students to become responsible business and systems developers who understand and engage with the complex interplay between business strategy, organizational goals, and daily operations. It promotes business-oriented development with inter-organizational awareness and a holistic, global perspective on transparency throughout the entire value chain, underpinned by a strong commitment to sustainability.

*Marie-Therese Christiansson, Assct. Prof. Course Lader*

## Implementing PRME i5 and the SDGs in Business Ethics and Sustainable Business Course

The course *Business Ethics and Sustainable Business* (FEGB34) at Karlstad Business School (KBS) provides students with a comprehensive understanding of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), ethics, and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Through innovative teaching methods, the course integrates the PRME i5 framework to ensure that students not only learn about ethical business practices but also gain hands-on experience in applying sustainability principles to real-world challenges.

The course content is designed to prepare students for the complexities of sustainable business development. It addresses economic, social, and ecological sustainability within organizations, guiding students through the process of developing sustainable business models that integrate ethical practices and promote SDG alignment. Achieving sustainability often requires a deep organizational transformation, particularly in areas such as business development and marketing communication. Many organizations lack a clear understanding of how to adapt effectively, and this course equips students with the tools to bridge that gap.

A key feature of the course is its focus on experiential learning. Students participate in group work, where they collaborate to develop sustainable business models. This group-based approach is designed to foster a sharing experience, with a mix of local and international students coming together to engage in collaborative problem-solving. The students are encouraged to adopt a holistic perspective, analyzing and identifying ethical issues related to current events or phenomena that resonate with the course content.

The course also integrates the **PRME i5 framework**, with a strong emphasis on creating an engaging, dynamic, and impactful learning environment. The PRME i5 (impactful five) principles guide students in developing actionable solutions for organizations and individuals committed to the SDGs. This approach encourages critical thinking, collaboration, and practical application of sustainability principles.

To further enrich the learning experience, the course includes guest lectures and discussion groups, where the insights on sustainable business practices and the real-world challenges organizations face discussed. These sessions provide students with valuable perspectives and a chance to engage in meaningful discussions on how businesses can create lasting positive change.

Through its innovative teaching methods, the *Business Ethics and Sustainable Business* course at KBS empowers students to become responsible leaders in business who are committed to advancing the SDGs. By incorporating the PRME i5 principles, the course creates a platform for students to learn, collaborate, and develop practical solutions that can drive sustainable transformation in organizations worldwide.

*Samuel Petros Sebhatu, PhD. Senior Lecturer - Course Leader*

## **Responsible Management in Practice: Experiential Learning for Circular Economy Leadership**

During **Sustainability Day 2024**, master's students in Business Administration participated in an experiential and innovative learning activity as part of the course *Responsible Management and Leadership (FEAD58)*. Sustainability Day is an obligatory component of the course and is designed to bridge theory and practice by immersing students in real-life sustainability challenges. Through this format, students were encouraged to apply responsible management principles, critical thinking, and creativity in a live societal context.

The day was structured to combine hands-on case work with broader academic and public engagement. In the morning, students worked in groups on a real case study and developed poster presentations. In the afternoon, they attended open lectures and keynote speeches while exhibiting their posters to fellow students, invited guests, and the general public. This structure allowed students not only to analyze sustainability challenges but also to communicate their insights to a wider audience—an essential leadership skill in sustainable development.

During the afternoon program, students attended keynote speeches and a panel discussion featuring representatives from industry, academia, and the public sector, with a particular focus on recycling and circularity. Industry perspectives were further highlighted by Marie Carlsson, Vice President of Electromobility Business Solutions at Volvo Buses. From an academic perspective, Natascha Radclyffe-Thomas, Professor of Marketing and Sustainable Business at the British School of Fashion, delivered a digital keynote on sustainability challenges in the textile and fashion industry. The panel brought together actors from private entrepreneurship, public organizations, and municipal leadership, illustrating how collaboration across traditional boundaries is essential for sustainable transformation. Reflecting on this cooperation, Henric Barkman emphasized the learning gained through cross-sector collaboration, stating: *"We have learned a lot from working together and across traditional boundaries. We need to keep striving for innovation, in both a short-term and long-term perspective."* Emma Sundh added that *"Rundgång has given us a glimpse into the future."*

In 2024, the selected case was **Rundgång**, a circular economy popup gallery located in the Mitt i City shopping center in Karlstad. Running from October to December, Rundgång was launched as a collaborative initiative between the municipality, local businesses, and citizens, following a citizen proposal and political motion. The initiative aligned with Karlstad's ambition to become climate neutral by 2030 and functioned as a testing ground for sustainable consumption models within a mainstream retail environment.

To gain a deep understanding of the case, students visited Rundgång in groups before Sustainability Day. These visits enabled them to observe the venue firsthand, interact with the shop environment, and reflect on consumer behavior, business models, and stakeholder collaboration. Rundgång showcased curated secondhand products, remade goods from reclaimed materials, refurbished technology, and creative remake workshops. Beyond retail, it aimed to stimulate dialogue around resource efficiency, waste reduction, and the emotional value of reused items.

Building on this real-life case, students were tasked with creating poster presentations addressing four reflection questions focusing on scalability, governance and stakeholder roles, impact measurement beyond financial metrics, and the balance between circular and traditional retail. The assignment challenged students to think critically, propose innovative solutions, and reflect on how circular economy initiatives can be embedded in cities and urban systems. *Through this experiential approach, Sustainability Day 2024 exemplified how responsible management education can inspire action and prepare future leaders to shape sustainable transitions in society.*

Course: Responsible Management and Leadership (FEAD58)

## 💡 Fostering Innovation



### To a great extent

Teaching and learning at our institution strongly foster innovation.

## 💡 Experiential Learning



### To a great extent

Teaching and learning at our institution strongly encourage experiential learning.

## 💡 Learning Mindset



### To a great extent

Teaching and learning at our institution strongly promote a lifelong learning mindset.

## Method of Teaching and Learning



### In person

Traditional classroom-based learning with face-to-face instruction.



# Research

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

## How We Define Research

Research at KBS is defined as intellectually rigorous inquiry into people, organizations, institutions, and the implementation of the SDGs, aimed at generating high-quality knowledge with clear societal relevance, high societal impact, and inspiring responsible management and educational practice.

## Research vs Research for RME/Sustainable Development

**55** Peer-reviewed articles were published by Karlstad Business School from this past calendar year.

**vs** **31** Peer-reviewed articles were published by Karlstad Business School from this past calendar year in support of RME.

## Research Funding

In 2024, Karlstad Business School was awarded funding for research that is:



## Socializing Research

In 2024, Karlstad Business School contributed research findings to:

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

## Research Awards

In 2024, Karlstad Business School was awarded 1 research award for responsibility- and/or sustainability-related research.

### **Robert Johnston Highly Commended Paper Award**

**Granter:** Journal of Service Management

**Grantee:** Prof. Ingo Karpen and Prof. Bo Edvardsson

#### **Award Description:**

Robert Johnston Highly Commended Paper Award from the Journal of Service Management for the article the article by HHK/CTF researcher Karpen, I. and Edvardsson, B. with their co-authors Tronvoll, Jaakkola, and Conduit The article by Karpen, Edvardsson, Tronvoll, Jaakkola, and Conduit (2023), "Circular service management: toward conceptual understanding and service research priorities for a more sustainable future," presents a significant conceptual contribution to service research. The study addresses the growing need for sustainability-oriented strategies in service management by focusing on circularity as a means of saving, extending, and regenerating resources within service systems. While circularity has received increasing attention in sustainability discourse, the authors identify a substantial gap in service research, where the concept remains comparatively underexplored. Drawing on interdisciplinary literature in sustainability, circular economy, and service research, the authors develop an initial conceptual understanding of circular service management. The study integrates insights from prior research and industry best-practice examples to identify illustrative circular service management strategies and related research priorities. In doing so, the article positions circular service management as a framework through which service thinking can more effectively contribute to environmental, social, and financial sustainability. A central contribution of the article is its argument that service research has largely overlooked the role of circularity in service businesses, with existing studies often appearing outside core service journals and rarely advancing service theory. To address this gap, the authors outline four types of circular service management strategies and demonstrate how service research can inform the design and management of circular service systems and operations. The article further advances the field by proposing a research agenda that links managerial challenges and opportunities with key priorities for service research on circularity. By offering a structured roadmap for scholars, practitioners, and policymakers, the study provides guidance for advancing both theory and practice in circular service management and supports the transition toward more sustainable service systems. In recognition of its scholarly contribution and relevance to the service discipline, the article received the Robert Johnston Highly Commended Paper Award from the Journal of Service Management.

## Research Presentations Related to RME and/or Sustainability

In 2024, Karlstad Business School gave 1 research presentation related to RME and/or sustainability.

### Exploring business model innovation for sustainability transitions | [DOI](#)

**Authors:** Andrey Abadzhiev, CTF—Service Research Center, Karlstad Business School, Karlstad University, Sweden. | Alexandre Sukhov, CTF—Service Research Center, Karlstad Business School, Karlstad University, Sweden. | Mikael Johnson, CTF—Service Research Center, Karlstad Business School, Karlstad University, Sweden.

**Date of publication:** June, 2024

**Presented at:** National or international discipline-specific conference | National or international issue or theme-specific conference

**Department:** Business Administration

Sustainability transitions are a significant challenge that requires established industries to adopt innovative ways of doing business. Research suggests that while this is possible through business model innovation (BMI), risk avoidance by regime actors and high levels of future uncertainty act as barriers to successful transitions. Specifically, we lack knowledge about how established companies innovate their business model (BM) to reduce uncertainty related to sustainability transitions. We explore the case of a large forest-based manufacturing company in the construction industry, Stora Enso. We find that, by pursuing transformative BMI and combining multiple value creation logics, a company can reduce different types of uncertainty while shaping its business ecosystem towards more sustainable opportunities. We show that the BM can serve as an organizational tool for collectively exploring new knowledge, reducing uncertainty and driving change in a business ecosystem.



## Research Voices

The following statements demonstrate ways in which researchers at Karlstad Business School bring sustainability and responsible management into their research.

### Life Long Learning

#### Lifelong Learning and Competence Development

Lifelong learning is a central pillar of Karlstad Business School's (KBS's) mission to contribute to sustainable societal development and a competitive business sector. Within this framework, the initiative *ISE – Improving Value Creation through Service Education*, led by CTF (Service Research Center), plays a key role in supporting competence development for professionals through flexible, research-based education at an advanced level. ISE is designed to meet the evolving needs of working professionals while strengthening collaboration between academia, businesses, and public organizations. ISE contributes to lifelong learning by translating cutting-edge service research into practical, accessible courses tailored to professionals who wish to enhance their skills while remaining active in their careers. The initiative also serves as a strategic platform for knowledge exchange between the university and the business sector, ensuring that education remains relevant, practice-oriented, and aligned with real-world challenges.

The period since the launch of ISE has been characterized by both growth and adaptability. A defining feature of ISE is its close collaboration with external partners. Throughout the years, numerous meetings and workshops have been held with companies and organizations, whose contributions of expertise, experience, and feedback have been essential to course development. This co-creative approach ensures that the courses address genuine competence needs while maintaining a strong academic foundation. Collaboration has also extended internally within the university, involving administrative staff and other departments to jointly develop routines for admissions, marketing, course communication, and digital production.

The ISE portfolio has continued to expand steadily. Courses based on CTF's research have been developed, offering professionals opportunities to build competence in areas such as service and business development, digitalisation, innovation, and sustainability. Senior lecturer at KBS and researcher at CTF, Carolina Camén, Programme Manager for ISE, emphasizes the importance of continuous skill development in a rapidly evolving labor market. By offering short, flexible courses throughout the year, ISE supports professionals in staying relevant while promoting the principles of lifelong learning.

In 2024, ISE further strengthened its position as a national platform for professional education. A total of 15 courses were offered, attracting more than 150 participants. New courses included *Innovation Processes for More Sustainable Business*, *Transformation for Sustainable Development*, *Servitization from Theory to Practice*, and *Data-Driven Innovation*. Quality improvement remained a strong focus, alongside increased engagement in external dialogue and policy discussions on lifelong learning and workforce transformation.

ISE also gained increased national visibility. Camén represented the initiative at events hosted by the Confederation of Swedish Enterprise, contributed to public debate articles, and participated in forums at Almedalen and events organized by the KK Foundation, Svenskt Näringsliv, and TCO. As a result, ISE and its courses have gained recognition among key labor market stakeholders and decision-makers.

Overall, ISE represents an ongoing innovation and development process. Through continuous quality enhancement, strong partnerships, and a clear commitment to lifelong learning, ISE contributes to competence development that creates lasting impact for professionals, organizations, and society at large.

## Service Research Center - CTF

A key partner in Karlstad Business School's (KBS) research and educational mission is the Service Research Center (CTF), whose work plays a central role in supporting Responsible Management Education as outlined in the Principles for Responsible Management Education (PRME).

In the 2024 annual report, the Director of CTF, Prof. Per Kristensson, highlighted the excellence and dedication of CTF's researchers, paving the way for the center to become a significant leader in scientific thought, a magnet for external collaborations, and a catalyst for societal relevance and impact. CTF's research is deeply embedded in the core values of responsible management and sustainable value creation. Through interdisciplinary studies on service innovation, value creation, and organizational transformation, CTF contributes significantly to the development of knowledge that addresses global challenges such as sustainability, social equity, and digitalization.

CTF prioritizes research that not only advances academic thought but also generates real-world solutions that organizations can apply to achieve a positive societal impact. This focus is in line with *PRME Principle 4 (Research)*, which encourages academic institutions to promote research that drives social, environmental, and economic progress. CTF's research outputs are regularly published in top-tier journals and have received recognition at international conferences, establishing the center as a leader in the field of service research.

Furthermore, CTF's research aims to bridge the gap between theory and practice. By addressing pressing issues in service management, sustainability, and innovation, we ensure that our findings have tangible applications for businesses, public organizations, and policymakers. Through this work, we contribute to *PRME Principle 5 (Partnership)*, actively collaborating with external stakeholders—such as industry leaders, governmental bodies, and research institutions—to ensure that our research remains relevant to the challenges faced by society and the business sector.

The ongoing success of CTF's research is also driven by *PRME Principle 6 (Dialogue)*. Kristensson emphasizes the belief that continuous dialogue with research partners and external stakeholders is essential for maintaining the relevance and impact of our work. By engaging with industry professionals, policymakers, and global research networks, CTF ensures that our research responds to evolving societal needs and drives positive change.

As we look to the future, Kristensson stresses the commitment to advancing research that aligns with the PRME principles, remaining at the forefront of CTF's mission. CTF aims to continue producing high-quality, impactful research that not only furthers academic understanding but also contributes to the development of responsible, sustainable business practices capable of addressing the world's most urgent challenges.

## Research Barriers

In 2024, Karlstad Business School identified the following barriers to conducting research related to sustainability and/or responsibility:

- ❖ Funding challenges
- ❖ Publishing barriers



# Partner

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

## How We Define Partner

At KBS, all stakeholders are partners—such as a private company, public organization, civil society actor, or alumnus—engaged in a collaborative, reciprocal relationship with the school. Partnerships are integral to co-producing knowledge, educating responsible professionals, and advancing research with meaningful societal and industry impact.

### Institutional Partnerships

- ❖ AACSB (Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business)
- ❖ IAU (International Association of Universities)
- ❖ Ministries of Education, Higher Education, or similar national bodies

### Student Organization Partnerships

- ❖ None

### Partner Voices

The following statements from our partners demonstrate ways in which our collaborations at Karlstad Business School support sustainability and responsible management education.

### PRME Nordic Chapter Symposium – Hybrid

The PRME Nordic Chapter Symposium, launched in 2020 in Karlstad, has grown into an exceptional platform for sharing research on Responsible Management Education (RME), pedagogical methods, educational tools, paper development, and for networking among educators, researchers, and industry professionals. With a focus on the intersection of education and societal impact, the symposium aims to unite the PRME Nordic community and foster collaboration and partnerships grounded in the PRME principles.

At its annual meeting, the PRME Nordic Chapter highlights the impact of education and research conducted by Nordic researchers and educators working within the PRME framework. Members of the PRME Nordic Chapter, together with colleagues from sister chapters in Europe, share their research and showcase innovative teaching methods. This creates a strong collegial environment that encourages collaboration and engagement in responsible management education. Notable examples include showcases of innovative pedagogy for sustainability education, such as best practices from BI

Norwegian Business School, Norway, and the Inner Development Goals (IDGs) game presented by Jönköping International Business School (JIBS), in the 2024 symposium. JIBS, for instance, presented a real case of implementing the IDGs with students.

Building on this engagement, Karlstad Business School (KBS) has hosted and led the annual PRME Nordic Chapter Symposium, establishing it as a key event in advancing the chapter's mission. The symposium has included workshops on research publications as well as PRME i5 in-person training sessions. Over the past two years, the event has featured keynote speakers from partner organizations, such as the Vice President of Electromobility Business Development at Volvo Buses and the Head of Sustainability at Löfbergs, who explored how PRME values can drive organizational change toward sustainability. The symposium has also included insightful contributions from regional and international academic experts, such as, David Sloan Wilson, President, Prosocial World.

In addition to the keynote sessions, the event hosted a PRME i5 Workshop in which participants engaged in hands-on, interactive activities exploring practical tools and methods for applying the "Impactful Five" principles to their own educational and professional contexts. The symposium fostered rich discussions, encouraged collaboration, and facilitated the exchange of ideas among educators, researchers, and professionals from various sectors.

The hybrid format enabled broad participation, bringing together stakeholders from across the Nordic region and beyond to advance PRME's collective mission of integrating responsible management principles into business education, research, and practice for a more sustainable future. Overall, the event served as a catalyst for new partnerships, innovative solutions, and practical initiatives aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the broader PRME framework.

See the full program of the 4th PRME Nordic symposium at:

[https://www.kau.se/files/2025-03/4th%20symposium\\_%20full%20program\\_250325.pdf](https://www.kau.se/files/2025-03/4th%20symposium_%20full%20program_250325.pdf)

## Sustainability Day

**Sustainability Day** is one of the annual activities at KBS aimed at fostering dialogue and engagement with our partners. It reflects our commitment to SDG 17 by bringing knowledge and experience into the classroom and connecting academia with real-world practice. The 10<sup>th</sup> Sustainability Day- 2024 theme was *sustainability and innovation*, with a particular focus on *circularity*.

The event featured inspiring lectures and discussions across key areas. One highlight was *Rundgång*, a second-hand shop in central Karlstad that challenges perceptions of reuse and circular consumption. Emma Sundh, circular entrepreneur and project manager, emphasized the importance of making reuse attractive and relevant: "It's a matter of skill—we breathe new life into old things, and

that keeps Rundgång interesting.” Starting the shop came with hurdles, but strong collaboration and timing made it possible. Henric Barkman, environmental strategist at Karlstad Municipality, noted the long-term value of pioneering such projects, while Malin Pettersson from Karlstad Energi praised the confidence it has created for future innovation.

Marie Carlsson, VP at Volvo Buses, spoke about the impact of electric public transport: “Noise-free, emission-free buses change how cities feel and function.” She also presented Volvo’s four vision zeros: no emissions, no noise, no accidents, and no poor working conditions.

Natascha Radclyffe-Thomas, Professor at the British School of Fashion, addressed the challenges of sustainability in fashion. She highlighted how global supply chains and decreasing garment usage make reuse and recycling difficult, calling it one of the industry’s biggest challenges.

The day also included poster work and displays by master’s students as part of the course *Responsible Management and Leadership* (FEAD58). Sustainability Day 2024 offered valuable insights into how partnerships, innovation, and interdisciplinary collaboration can drive sustainable transformation - Beyond 2030.

Read more about Sustainability Day here: <https://www.kau.se/en/news/reuse-electric-buses-and-fast-fashion-sustainability-day>



# Practice

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

## How We Define Practice

At KBS, we adopt responsible and accountable management principles in our governance and operations. We are committed to responsible management education by integrating sustainability, ethics, and social responsibility into all aspects of our teaching, research, and institutional activities.

## Institutional Policies and Practices

- ❖ Accreditation body recommendation documents
- ❖ Buildings/real estate
- ❖ Campus operations guides
- ❖ Carbon reduction or offset commitments
- ❖ Climate action plan
- ❖ Curriculum guidelines
- ❖ Employee equity, diversity, inclusion
- ❖ Environmental stewardship policies
- ❖ Ethical data sourcing guides
- ❖ Ethical leadership or good governance policies
- ❖ Faculty hiring, tenure, and promotion guidelines
- ❖ Greenhouse gas emissions
- ❖ Local staff/student/faculty transportation
- ❖ Ministry of education recommendation documents
- ❖ Open-access guides
- ❖ Professional training opportunities
- ❖ Responsible procurement policies
- ❖ Student equity, diversity, inclusion
- ❖ Sustainability strategy or strategic plan (school or university level)
- ❖ Travel guides
- ❖ USGBC building guides
- ❖ Environment and Sustainable development Karlstad University

## Practice Voices

The following statement from stakeholders at Karlstad Business School demonstrates our commitment to sustainable and responsible practices.

### **Karlstad University's Environmental Commitment: A Holistic Approach to Sustainability**

Karlstad University embraces a profound responsibility in contributing to sustainable development. With a clear vision for the future, the university is dedicated to ensuring a healthy and thriving living environment for both current and future generations. This commitment extends to the responsible use of resources and is embedded in every aspect of the university's operations.

To guide and manage its environmental impact, the university has established a comprehensive *Environmental Management System (EMS)*. This system is a strategic tool used by university leadership to integrate sustainability—particularly environmental concerns—into the broader governance framework. It outlines how planning, implementation, and follow-up are conducted to foster continuous improvement.

The EMS at Karlstad University comprises several key components: organizational structure and responsibilities, environmental policy, environmental objectives and action plans, education, monitoring and evaluation, and environmental assessments.

### **Leadership and Responsibility**

The Vice-Chancellor holds the overall responsibility for the university's environmental and sustainability efforts. This responsibility is delegated to the University Director, who ensures that the EMS is implemented, maintained, and regularly reviewed. Oversight and coordination are carried out by the Environmental Management Group, which includes representatives from faculties, support functions, and students. The delegation framework clarifies the roles of faculties and support units in promoting sustainable development. Matters related to sustainability are addressed by the university's Executive Management Council.

### **Environmental Policy**

The university's environmental policy reflects its vision and ambition in sustainability. It defines the scope of environmental efforts and serves as a guiding document for all related activities.

### **Environmental Objectives and Action Plans**

Karlstad University sets three-year environmental objectives aimed at reducing negative environmental impacts and enhancing positive ones. These objectives steer local environmental efforts and are designed to be measurable wherever practically possible. Each objective is supported by specific actions, designated responsibilities, timelines, and environmental indicators. The objectives and action plans are formally approved by the Vice-Chancellor. Currently, the university is developing new objectives for the 2026–2028 period.

### **Education for Sustainability**

The Educational Development Unit offers training programs focused on sustainable development, ensuring that sustainability is integrated into teaching and learning across disciplines.

## Monitoring and Evaluation

As part of its EMS follow-up, the university conducts annual legal compliance checks, reports to the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency, and performs internal environmental audits. At least once a year, the Executive Management Council reviews the results in a formal management review.

The latest audit found that the university meets regulatory requirements for environmental assessments and sustainable procurement. However, deviations were noted in the formulation of environmental objectives, which lacked clear measurability even where practical. This affects the annual follow-up, as it becomes difficult to assess whether objectives have been achieved.

Further deviations were identified in the action plan, responsibility distribution, and documentation. Specifically, the role of institutional-level responsibility and the Environmental Management Group were not clearly defined in the EMS document. The action plan also requires revision under current regulations. Additionally, auditors highlighted the need for a structured and recurring process to inform and train staff on environmental initiatives.

## General Observations and Initiatives

Despite these challenges, auditors acknowledged that Karlstad University is actively engaged in sustainability efforts across multiple levels. The university is working to systematically integrate sustainability into all educational programs. Notable initiatives include the acquisition of an electric vehicle to support sustainable travel between Campus Ingesund and Campus Karlstad, and several sustainability-focused activities by the Business School, such as Sustainability Day, memberships, and accreditation.

Two new academic programs with a focus on sustainability have also been launched within business administration: the Bachelor's Program in Global Sustainable Business and the Master's Program in Management for Sustainable Value Creation.

## Environmental Assessment and Future Directions

The EMS is grounded in the environmental assessment conducted in accordance with Swedish regulation 2009:907 on environmental management in public agencies. This assessment is updated regularly—at least every five years or when significant changes occur.

The 2025 environmental assessment highlights several strengths: the university has made significant progress since the 2020 assessment, maintains a functioning EMS, and has advanced efforts to align education with the UN's Agenda 2030. Sustainability research across various university environments is also recognized as a strength.

However, challenges remain. These include the need for more strategic environmental work with measurable goals, improved coordination between education and research, and systematic professional development for staff. Tracking the climate impact of business travel is also difficult when bookings are made outside the university's contracted travel agency.

The 2025 assessment includes several recommendations:

- Strengthen follow-up of environmental objectives with clear structure and responsibility.
- Clarify local responsibilities within departments and divisions.
- Evaluate the need for a university-wide structure for chemical management.
- Explore the possibility of introducing food waste sorting in student areas.

A key conclusion is that the EMS should be more closely integrated with the university's broader sustainability efforts. To enhance governance, environmental objectives should be formulated to be clear, measurable, and traceable.

Karlstad University is actively working to address the recommendations from both the environmental audit and assessment, demonstrating its ongoing commitment to sustainability and continuous improvement.

**Görel Augustsson**

*Organizational Development Officer - Sustainability, Karlstad University*



# 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

We foster a culture of collective learning by openly sharing both successes and failures with our stakeholders. This transparency strengthens engagement, allowing us to reflect, grow together, and best embody our shared values and purpose, driving continuous improvement and alignment with our mission and vision.

## Engagement Opportunities

Karlstad Business School 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
- ❖ Partnerships with local organizations
- ❖ Public events and panel discussions
- ❖ Sustainability-focused research and collaboration Opportunities

## Communication Audiences

Karlstad Business School communicates its policies and progress on sustainable development and responsibility with:

- ❖ Accreditation bodies
- ❖ Alumni and donors
- ❖ Boards and advisory committees
- ❖ Business and industry partners
- ❖ Faculty and staff
- ❖ Government and policy makers
- ❖ Prospective and current students
- ❖ Research and academic networks

## Sharing Voices

The following statement from stakeholders at Karlstad Business School demonstrates our commitment to sharing and learning from sustainability and responsible management practices.

## Multi-Channel Communication

KBS places strong emphasis on communicating its knowledge, insights, and activities to a broad range of stakeholders in order to support societal development, informed dialogue, and sustainable business practice. Through a coordinated communication strategy, KBS ensures that its work reaches audiences within academia, industry, and wider society in accessible and relevant ways.

Communication at KBS is carried out through multiple channels, combining academic, professional, public, and digital platforms. Media engagement further strengthens this communication effort, with faculty members contributing expert perspectives through interviews, opinion pieces, and commentary, thereby enhancing public understanding of key issues in business, sustainability, and management.

Public-facing events and forums play a central role in KBS's communication approach. Initiatives such as Sustainability Day, the PRME Nordic Research Symposium, Sustainable Tomorrow, and other seminars and workshops create arenas for dialogue, interaction, and mutual learning among researchers, students, practitioners, and external stakeholders. These activities continuously communicate to reinforce transparency and openness while encouraging collaboration across sectors.

Digital communication is an integral component of KBS's communication strategy. The School actively uses its website, social media platforms (including LinkedIn, Instagram, Facebook, and CTF's YouTube), podcasts, and video channels to communicate insights, events, and expert contributions in accessible formats. These channels enhance visibility, timeliness, and engagement, allowing KBS to reach diverse audiences and sustain ongoing dialogue.

Overall, through structured, multi-channel communication and stakeholder engagement, KBS demonstrates a clear commitment to openness, dialogue, and societal impact in line with the PRME principles.

SIGNATORY

# Karlstad Business School

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## Website

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