

Sharing Information on Progress 2026

Sunderland Business School

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 Sunderland Business School, including key details and basic institutional data.

Mission

At the University of Sunderland, our strategic mission is shaped upon three pillars: Student Focused; Professions Facing; Society Shaping.

At the Faculty of Business and Technology, where the School of Business, Management and Tourism sits, we have our own mission which is "To advance inclusive economic and technological progress through the purposeful integration of business, engineering and computing expertise, delivered with excellence and responsibility across our UK and international provision".

Vision

At the University of Sunderland, our strategic mission is shaped upon three pillars: Student Focused; Professions Facing; Society Shaping.

At the Faculty of Business and Technology, where the School of Business, Management and Tourism sits, we have our own mission which is "To be recognised for excellence in applied learning, interdisciplinary problem-solving and research that addresses pressing economic, societal, technological and environmental challenges, developing graduates who are professionally capable, ethically informed and equipped to make a positive difference in their careers and communities".

Strategy

University of Sunderland - Strategy

The University of Sunderland is integral to the city and our region. Our Strategic Plan 2030 sets out how we will continue to deliver our core purpose of being a truly life-changing university for our students, colleagues, and communities, achieved through three pillars of:

- **Student-Focused:** We put our students at the heart of everything we do.
- **Professions-Facing:** We partner with employers and embrace real-world business challenges, shaping the workforce of tomorrow.
- **Society-Shaping:** We are a catalyst for regeneration with our research and innovation driving economic and social impact.

The work we do at the School of Business, Management and Tourism feeds into that strategy. However, for the purposes of this specific question, it is best to refer to the wider University's Strategic Plans, which govern the overall University's aims, ambitions and actions.

To ensure we have the strongest chance of meeting our goals described in our Strategic Plan 2030, a series of Supporting Plans have been developed with detailed actions listed to explain how this will be achieved. For the purposes of this PRME report, the most relevant of these supporting plans are a range of environmentally-related plans, alongside our People Plan, and our Student Success Plan.

Unfortunately, the full versions of the People Plan and Student Success Plan are not available for external audiences, however our environmental plans can be found on the University's website on the following link:

[Our policies and plans | University of Sunderland.](#)

Strategy Alignment

University of Sunderland - Strategic Alignment

The University of Sunderland is integral to the city and the North East England region. Our Strategic Plan 2030 sets out how we will continue to deliver our core purpose of being a truly life-changing university for our students, colleagues, and communities, achieved through three pillars of being Student-Focused, Professions-Facing, and Society-Shaping.

The Supporting Plans discussed in Question 3 help to ensure we have the strongest chance of meeting our Strategic Plan 2030 goals. Within the Supporting Plans are several references to align our strategic priorities with advancing sustainable development, the common good, and quality education.

One plan is our Student Success Plan 2030, the “overarching ambition” of which is to “advance graduate success through outstanding learning and teaching, and tailored student support”. One of the three ‘Core Aims’ of the plan is to “equip our students with work-ready skills”, with one of the accompanying bullet points describing that our curriculum is “research-informed, innovative and progressive, embedding artificial intelligence and digital technologies, the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs), and intercultural competencies”.

Assisting this is the University’s SPARK Curriculum Model, “which places graduate prospects at the heart of our approach to learning and teaching. Excellence in teaching will advance students’ readiness for graduate success. SPARK will deliver a learning and teaching approach which ensures that graduates are employable and enterprising, ready to advance their personal ambitions and make a society-shaping impact through graduate-level employment. The SPARK approach aims to ensure our students graduate with six different themes, one of which is described below:

“Knowledge-led innovation, insights and ideas. Students will use their discipline knowledge and lived experience to consider sustainable development goals and industrial problems with opportunities to deliver innovation. They will learn how knowledge in their field is generated, exchanged and exploited

in order to benefit business and the community through the creation of economic, cultural and/or social value. Educators will bring their own research priorities and discoveries into their teaching to ensure the curriculum is research-informed and research-active.”

Additionally, the policy pledges to “build on initial work to fully embed sustainability in the curriculum”, with two bullet points suggesting:

“• All programmes will enable students to address the most relevant and material UNSDGs at each programme stage, from identifying and understanding the relevant issues, through to implementing solutions.

• Every student will graduate with the knowledge and skills needed to navigate the increasing environmental and social impacts of their chosen careers.”

Further evidence of the University advancing sustainable development, the common good and quality education can be found in the Environmental Sustainability Plan, the flagship plan dedicated to environmental sustainability and sustainable development matters that translates the main University’s Strategic Plan 2030 into a more specific context.

The Environmental Sustainability Plan is a cross-University plan which sets out key goals and targets focused around six sustainability themes, which are:

1. Energy and Carbon Reduction in Buildings
2. Travel
3. Resource Use
4. Nature and Community
5. Sustainable Education and Research
6. Delivering Environmental Sustainability

The Strategic Environmental Sustainability Group (SESG) was formed in 2020 to drive and co-ordinate a refreshed sustainability agenda across the University and oversee the delivery of the Environmental Sustainability Plan. Chaired by the Director of Estates and Facilities and featuring representation from across the University, including professionals in Finance, Estates and Facilities, and Procurement, as well as academics, professional services colleagues, and the Students’ Union, the group provides governance and oversight of our sustainability planning and delivery.

The group has responsibilities for the development of the Environmental Sustainability Action Plan, for the formation of the subgroups for each of the six sustainability themes, and for monitoring performance against this plan. The SESG will ensure an annual report is produced every year to report against the delivery of the action plan. The SESG and the University Operations Board will approve the annual reports.

The SESG provides senior-level support to progress the many facets of this plan and helps overcome potential barriers and bottlenecks in delivery against the programme.

The Chief Financial Officer provides representation from University Executive level. Representation on the group from the School of Business, Management and Tourism is provided through the Accreditations Manager, who joined the SESG in 2023.

The group has overseen the development of the Environmental Sustainability Plan and is responsible for the formation of the operational groups for each of the six sustainability themes and monitoring performance against the plan. The SESG provides the senior level support to progress the multiple facets of the plan and help overcome potential barriers and bottlenecks in delivery against the programme.

The primary aims of the Strategic Environmental Sustainability group are summarised below. We will:

- Demonstrate leadership and best-practice to enhance the environmental reputation of the University and contribute to climate change mitigation.
- Oversee the development and delivery of sustainability plans and ensure appropriate resources and expertise are in place.
- Implement and modify policies to integrate and facilitate our sustainability aims.
- Raise the profile of sustainability through regular and effective internal and external communications.
- Increase opportunities for engagement and involvement in sustainability for students and staff.
- Develop external partnerships to support and collaborate on sustainable development.
- Monitor and communicate performance.

Additionally, "Education and social responsibility" is referenced in the University's Annual Reports. In the most recent one available, 2024/25 Annual Report, published in December 2025, this section reads as follows:

"The University is acutely aware of the potential environmental impact of its activities and aims to ensure that these are managed in a sustainable way, having due regard to environmental, social and economic considerations.

Guided by our ambitions, which are to be Student-Focused, Professions-Facing and Society-Shaping, we will ensure that sustainability is embedded in all aspects of our university, from our built environment, through to the resources we use, and the courses we deliver.

The University seeks proactive ways to make positive changes to our environment alongside working with partners including Sunderland City Council on our longer-term commitments to environmental sustainability. Sustainability initiatives are embedded across the organisation through the themes of Energy, Resource Use, Travel, Nature and Community and Sustainable Education and Research.

During 2024/25 there have been a wide range of engagement events, including travel weeks, recycling, sustainability week and nature awareness. There were also joint events with the local community, such as litter picks and gardening at A Space to Grow community garden.

During 2024/25 the University achieved Silver Eco Campus standard and the Gold Cycle Friendly Employer award and has been shortlisted for five Green Gown Awards. There have also been a range of carbon reduction initiatives, including LED lighting installations, improvements to Building Management Systems and 700kWp of solar PV arrays at St Peter's Campus. These measures have helped us to exceed our reduction target for carbon emissions from our operations for the year."

It is therefore clear from these University Plans that advancing sustainable development, the common good, and quality education are deeply integrated into the University's ambitions for our students, our colleagues, and our community.

Institutional History

University of Sunderland – Institutional History (2026 ed.)

Located in the North East of England, the City of Sunderland has been an important education nucleus since 674AD when Benedict Biscop built St Peter's Church and Monastery, home to the first stained glass window in the United Kingdom. Among its early students was a seven-year-old boy who became known to history as The Venerable Bede, a renowned scholar and teacher. Nowadays, St Peter's Church is a Grade I listed building and is an important community hub with regular Christian services and numerous activities taking place all-year round within the building and grounds.

The University of Sunderland's modern roots lie in Sunderland Technical College which opened in 1901, becoming Sunderland Polytechnic in 1969. In 1992 we gained full University status, the same year Sunderland was granted city status by Queen Elizabeth II on the 40th anniversary of her accession to the throne.

We have four campuses; Sunderland Campus was joined by St Peter's Campus in 1994 (located beside St Peter's Church and later renamed The Sir Tom Cowie Campus at St Peter's in 2002), London Campus in 2012, and Hong Kong Campus in 2017. Together, with our global partnerships with learning institutions in 16 countries, the University has 28,700 students.

Ranked as a Top 30 University in the Guardian University Guide 2026, we are proud of our long-established commitment to widening participation, our world-leading research, and public and private sector collaborations. We also have a track-record for providing quality student experiences that result in graduates who are the tomorrow-makers of our societies and economies. The University is focused on ensuring our graduates leave equipped with the knowledge, skills, confidence, and connections to make a positive difference in the wider world.

Among our achievements, Sunderland is recognised internationally as a leading University, receiving five stars for teaching, facilities, employability, environmental impact, global engagement, business and management studies, and diversity, equality, and inclusion (QS Stars 2026). The University is also one of the UK's leading widening participation Universities and was named The Times/Sunday Times University of the Year for Social Inclusion 2021. We were also shortlisted as University of the Year by the THE – Times Higher Education in both 2021 and 2024, and the School of Business, Management and Tourism was shortlisted as Business School of the Year in 2024.

The then-Faculty of Business, Law and Tourism become Signatory Members of PRME in August 2018. In 2024, a university-wide restructure occurred, resulting in our Faculty merging with the Faculty of Technology to form the new Faculty of Business and Technology. On a School level, Sunderland Business School merged with the School of Hospitality, Events, Aviation and Tourism to form the School of Business, Management and Tourism. For the purposes of this PRME report, we focus on the activities undertaken under the Schools which now make up our present name, the School of Business, Management and Tourism.

In 2024, the School of Business, Management and Tourism also become members of Business Graduates Association (BGA), part of AMBA & BGA. BGA themselves describe BGA schools as sharing their commitment to responsible management practices, lifelong learning, and delivering positive impact for business school stakeholders, further demonstrating our commitment to responsible management education.

Graduates & Enrollment

2025 Statistics	Number
Graduates	1,499
Faculty & Staff at the University	2,475
Faculty & Staff at the Institution	90

2025 Statistics	Number
Student Enrollment at the University	26049
Student Enrollment at the Institution	3083
Undergraduate Attendance	1271
Masters-Level Postgraduate Attendance	1742
Doctoral Student Attendance	58
Certificate, Professional Development, or Continuing Education Attendance	12

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 (D.Phil.)
-  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



Professor Alex Hope
Pro Vice-Chancellor, Faculty of
Business and Technology

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18 September 2026

PRME Board
c/o PRME Secretariat
United Nations Global Compact Office
685 3rd Avenue, 12th Floor
New York, New York 10017

Dear PRME Board

ADOPTION OF THE PRINCIPLES FOR RESPONSIBLE MANAGEMENT EDUCATION

The School of Business, Management and Tourism at the University of Sunderland proudly became a signatory member of the United Nations Principles for Responsible Management Education in 2018. This was consistent with the University's core purpose to be a life-changing institution, with underpinning ambitions to be student-focused, professions-facing and society-shaping.

As an institution of higher education involved in the development of current and future leaders and managers, the University recognises its ever-growing responsibility to ensure that our students – current and future – are ready to take their place in wider society as responsible employees and citizens.

I am pleased to confirm that the School of Business, Management and Tourism reaffirms its support of the following Seven Principles for Responsible Management Education: Purpose, Values, Teach, Research, Partner, Practice and Share.

In this annual Sharing Information on Progress (SIP) report, we disclose our continuous efforts to integrate the Seven Principles into our institutional strategy, culture, academic activities, and daily operations, and contribute to United Nations goals, particularly in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

We understand that our own organisational practices should serve as example of the values and attitudes we convey to our students, and we encourage other academic institutions and associations to adopt and support these Principles.

There is already a significant amount of excellent work relating to sustainability and sustainable development being undertaken in the School of Business, Management and Tourism and across the University as a whole. We believe that this work can



leverage further opportunities to develop and improve our commitment to the PRME Principles, as well as deepening the University's commitment to sustainability and sustainable development.

We look forward to working collaboratively across the institution, and externally with our partners, to develop this important work further.

My kindest regards.

A handwritten signature in dark blue ink, appearing to read "Alex Hope".

Professor Alex Hope

**Pro Vice-Chancellor, Faculty of
Business and Technology**

alex.hope@sunderland.ac.uk

Definition of Purpose

The University's core strategic mission is to be "life-changing", through transformative experiences for our students, career-focused and professions-facing teaching, and the positive difference we aim to make to society. Achieving this will allow our students to have responsible management at the forefront of their personal and professional minds post-graduation.

Institutional Engagement

51% - 75% of faculty at Sunderland Business School actively contribute to our work with PRME, advancing responsible management education, or addressing sustainable development challenges through their work.



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 our shared principles as a university, and we undertake actions to make them come to life. These are embedded across our university and guide our staff and students to be leaders and role models in a wide range of areas, including RME, sustainability and sustainable development.

Who Champions Responsible Management Education at Our Institution

- ❖ Centralized sustainability 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
- ❖ Senior leadership office
- ❖ Student contributor

Student Awareness

51% - 75% of students at Sunderland Business School are aware that we are a PRME Signatory Member.

Student Engagement

76% - 100% of students at Sunderland Business School actively contribute to our work with PRME, advancing RME, or addressing sustainable development challenges through their work.

Celebrating Values

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

Culture Framework - The University of Sunderland Way

The University of Sunderland's Culture Framework sets out the shared values, behaviours, and ways of working that define our institution. Developed in partnership with colleagues, it reflects what makes the University a unique place to work and study, centred on the values of being Inclusive, Inspiring,

Innovative, and Collaborative in pursuit of excellence. The framework guides how we make decisions, work together, and support one another, and is embedded throughout our people policies and practices to inform how colleagues are managed, recognised, and developed. As a living expression of our culture, it provides a foundation for delivering our strategic ambitions the University of Sunderland way.

As mentioned above, there are five values that contribute to the University's Culture Framework, as follows:

1. Inclusive - Respectful, Authentic, Diversity Champions
2. Inspiring - Enthusiastic, Encouraging, Life-long Learners
3. Innovative - Curious, Creative, Solutions finders
4. Collaborative - Accountable, Committed, Relationship builders
5. Excellence - We are Excellent when we live the values

We strive for excellence in all that we do in teaching, learning, research and knowledge exchange, as well as in the services we provide to students and to each other. To enable us to be excellent, we seek to act in inspiring, inclusive, innovative and collaborative ways.

A copy of our Culture Framework is available in question 5 of this Principle.

Continue telling your story

Culture Framework - The University of Sunderland Way

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Teach

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



How We Define Teach

Our University's strategic mission is to be 'life-changing', ensuring that our students receive a student-focused, professions-facing and society-shaping education. Responsible management concepts and practices complement the University's strategic mission and seamlessly fit into our curriculum and pedagogy, allowing our students to graduate with these at the forefront of their minds.

Teaching Awards

In 2025, 2 awards were given to faculty and educators at Sunderland Business School.

Green Gown Awards UK & Ireland 2025

Granter: Green Gown Awards UK & Ireland

Grantee: University of Sunderland – Various

Award Description:

Established in 2004 in the UK and Ireland, the Green Gown Awards recognise exceptional sustainability initiatives being undertaken in universities and colleges, and over the last 20 years, the awards have been established as the most prestigious recognition of best practice within the further and higher education sector.

Following the University's successful shortlisting in the 'Tomorrow's Employees' category in the 2024 awards, the University encouraged more applications to highlight the continuing great work. This resulted in five entries being shortlisted in five different categories, as follows:

- Benefiting Society - SeaScapes Co/Lab: Curating care for our coastlines
- Creating Impact – 'Recover, Re-use, Repair & Produce' to reduce waste in healthcare technical support
- Next Generation Learning and Skills - Rewilding Education: Empowering future conservation leaders
- Sustainability Champion – Staff - Gary Stubbs
- Tomorrow's Employees – Sustainability in Media Production: helping to create a sustainable screen industry with the filmmakers of the future

The entry shortlisted in the 'Next Generation Learning and Skills' category is a project relating directly to the School of Business, Management and Tourism.

These shortlisted initiatives include a range of activity, from using art to help coastal communities gain a deeper understanding of marine heritage to reducing single-use waste created by healthcare teaching and rewilding projects in partnerships with academics, students and local charities.

Gary Stubbs, Senior Lecturer in Film and Television Production at the University, has also been named a Sustainability Champion (staff) finalist for his efforts in integrating sustainable practice into teaching.

The finals were held at the Library, Birmingham, on 6th November 2025. We are delighted to report that we were successful in winning the "Creating Impact" and "Sustainability Champion - Staff" categories, and were highly commended in the "Tomorrow's Employees" category.

PRME Education Award - Disciplinary Honorable Mention

Granter: PRME

Grantee: Dr Mahtab (Matti) Morovat

Award Description:

At the 2026 PRME Global Forum in Cairo, Egypt, recipients of the 2026 PRME Education Awards were announced. The award recognises business and management school faculty from around the world for their excellence in embedding sustainability and responsible management practices into business education.

The 2026 awardees exemplify what's possible when educators thoughtfully integrate the SDGs and Principles of PRME into teaching, research, leadership, and institutional practice. Their efforts have not only elevated student learning and skill development but also contributed to a more sustainable, inclusive, and globally relevant model of business education.

Our colleague at the University of Sunderland, Dr Mahtab (Matti) Morovat, was awarded a Disciplinary Honorable Mention in the field of 'Project Management' for 'Transformative Pedagogy: Student-Led Projects Driving Social Impact and Responsible Management'.

"I am honoured," Dr Morovat said.

"This recognition reflects the value of embedding experiential learning within responsible management education. Through partnerships with regional charities over the past four years, students connected theory with practice while engaging directly with real social challenges and contributing to meaningful social impact.

"At the heart of this work was a clear aim: to create engaging learning experiences that help students think critically about sustainability and understand their role in shaping a better and more sustainable future. This recognition is both humbling and motivating, and a reminder of what is possible when meaningful learning is supported by committed colleagues, students, and community partners."

Educator Recognition

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

- ❖ Annual teaching excellence awards
- ❖ Course evaluation scores
- ❖ Faculty promotion and tenure consideration
- ❖ Institutional recognition events
- ❖ Pedagogical innovation grants
- ❖ Performance-based teaching fellowships
- ❖ Professional development opportunities
- ❖ Publication or research support
- ❖ Student-nominated teaching awards



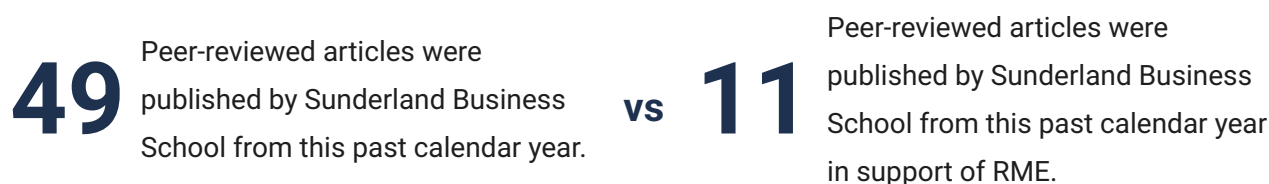
Research

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

How We Define Research

PRME's definition of Research strongly complements our core ethos as a University to challenge ourselves to improve society. Our interdisciplinary approach empowers our researchers and students to develop unique solutions that benefit our communities, the economy and global society, and positively contribute to sustainable development regionally, nationally and internationally.

Research vs Research for RME/Sustainable Development



Research Funding

In 2025, Sunderland Business School was awarded funding for research that is:



**Institution
Specific**



Regional



National



International

Socializing Research

In 2025, Sunderland Business School contributed research findings to:

- ❖ Community organizations
- ❖ Government and policy makers
- ❖ Industry and business networks
- ❖ Local media
- ❖ Public events and lectures
- ❖ Research collaborations
- ❖ Social media and digital outreach

Publications Related to RME and/or Sustainability

Revalorization, frugal innovation, and circularity: A qualitative exploration of African used automotive parts business

| [DOI](#)

Authors: Obinna Alo: Senior Lecturer in Human Resource Management, University of Sunderland | Ahmad Arslan | Jyoti Choudrie | Maria Elo

Date of publication: March, 2025

Department: International Business | Economics | Innovation

This paper aims to analyze the nexus of revalorization, frugal innovation, and the circular economy in the under-explored African used automotive parts business context. Based on 30 in-depth interviews with key players including dealers, mechanics, and jobbers, our findings illuminate how these players leverage modern electronic communication, video sharing apps, and barter trade in African used automotive part business. We further found local players employing unique practices to renovate, restructure, alter, restore, reuse, extend, and recycle these used parts, emphasizing maximum value extraction from minimal resources. This paper is one of the first academic works to highlight the criticality of local independent actors (non-dealerships) in the automotive after market sector, especially in non-western contexts. It further showcases these local actors' contributions to circular economy via revalorization, while at the same time creating social value for the bottom of the pyramid (BoP) consumers. Finally, the paper contributes to several literature streams including circular economy beyond formal systems, scalability of frugal and circular practices, and resource-constrained value creation, among others.



Sustainable supply chain practices as catalyst for energy poverty alleviation in developing countries: a necessary condition analysis

| [DOI](#)

Authors: Augustine Okeke | Ifeanyi Onyemere: Lecturer in Business and Management, University of Sunderland

Date of publication: May, 2025

Department: Supply chain | Energy Poverty

Energy poverty remains a critical obstacle to socioeconomic progress in developing countries, affecting over 733 million people globally. This study investigates how sustainable supply chain practices serve as catalysts for alleviating energy poverty, focusing on efficient logistics, local sourcing, community engagement, regular maintenance, and training programs. Employing Necessary

Condition Analysis (NCA), the research identifies indispensable supply chain conditions for successful renewable energy deployment. The findings reveal that efficient logistics and community engagement have the most significant impact, requiring minimum thresholds to ensure energy access effectiveness. Though moderate in effect size, local sourcing and training programs are equally essential for long-term sustainability. Regular maintenance emerged as a critical factor, underscoring the importance of ongoing support. The study integrates Necessary Condition Theory, Energy Justice Framework, and Socio-Technical Systems Theory to demonstrate that these practices must be complementary rather than substitutive. The results provide actionable insights for managers and policymakers, advocating targeted investments in supply chain resilience and local capacity building. By offering an understanding of the interplay between supply chain management and energy access, this research advances theoretical and practical frameworks for tackling energy poverty. Future studies should explore these dynamics across different sectors to generalise the findings further.



Implementation of regenerative business models in transitioning companies - are middle managers ready for action?

| [DOI](#)

Authors: Florence Gervais | Philippe Coulombel | Okeoma John-Paul Okeke: Senior Lecturer in Management, University of Sunderland

Date of publication: December, 2025

Department: Change management | Organisational change | Sustainability

Purpose– This study aims to address a substantial research gap regarding the implementation of regenerative business models (RBMs). Drawing on complementary organizational behaviour theories, it explores the role of middle managers in this process and how to move them to action.

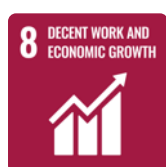
Design/methodology/approach– A sample of 14 French companies, whose CEOs have publicly announced a transition to RBM, was identified. In each company, a middle manager involved in implementing RBM changes was interviewed using a qualitative expert interview methodology.

Findings– The findings confirm the pivotal role of middle managers in achieving business model changes. Three major influencing factors combine to form a typology of middle managers' action-readiness profiles.

Research limitations/implications– This study has limitations that suggest directions for future research. Firstly, while qualitative methods offer valuable insights, they lack the generalizability of quantitative approaches. Secondly, as this study is limited to France, there is a need for similar research in other regions to understand cultural variations in middle managers' interactions with RBMs.

Practical implications– The study identifies three levers to accelerate RBM implementation: introducing collaborative instances, developing strategies to enhance middle managers' action readiness and ensuring an appropriate alignment between middle managers' profiles and the demands of RBM transitions.

Originality/value– The study contributes novel insights into the challenges faced by companies in innovating their business model by taking a regenerative approach.



What is a circular economy champion? Defining a home-grown concept in an emerging field

| [DOI](#)

Authors: Dolores Modic | Sahana Swaroop Chetan | Shajara Ul-Durar: Senior Lecturer in Business and Management, University of Sunderland | Noman Arshed | Marco De Sisto | Nadja Damij: Professor in Business and Management, University of Sunderland

Date of publication: August, 2025

Department: Circular economy

Circular economy, which aims to keep resources in production cycles and minimize waste, has emerged as a viable alternative to the traditional linear model. However, it is often criticized for being under-theorized and lacking indigenous, home-grown concepts, particularly regarding fundamental elements such as actors and actor types. This paper focuses on a specific actor: the circular economy champion. Circular economy champions can drive the transition toward a more circular economy, yet the concept remains under-conceptualized despite a growing body of literature. The aims of this study are twofold: first, to highlight the importance of home-grown concepts in emerging fields; and second, to address the ambiguity surrounding the terminology of “circular economy champion” by providing a novel conceptualization. The paper develops this concept using a family resemblance approach, employing differentiation criteria through a piecemeal method and underpinned by a theoretical review of the literature. By extending both the scope of actor types and, based on their traits, the range of their attributes, activities, and contributions to the circular economy, the concept of the circular economy champion is further delineated from related constructs and firmly defined. This contributes

to circular economy discourse by proposing a novel definition of a key actor within the circular economy system, thus strengthening its theoretical foundations. Moreover, the proposed definition reduces ambiguity in understanding actors' roles within the circular economy, further clarifying its microfoundations.



Clothing Take-Back Program: Why Do Malaysian Consumers Intend to Participate?

| [DOI](#)

Authors: Phaik Nie Chin | Yashar Salamzadeh: Senior Lecturer in Digital Business, University of Sunderland | Rus Harzira Razreen Ruslan

Date of publication: September, 2025

Department: Recycling | Circular economy | Fast-fashion

Purpose - In response to the importance of sustainability in the fashion industry, leaders aim to develop initiatives collaboratively involving consumers, manufacturers, and recycling facilities, such as clothing take-back programs. Recognizing its critical role and impact on the fashion industry's footprint, this study explores factors influencing consumer participation intentions in clothing take-back programs. Extending the theory of planned behavior includes fashion involvement, environmental concern, and recycling convenience, and it integrates responsibility and personal norms from the normative action model.

Methodology - The study utilizes an online questionnaire survey and employs partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) to evaluate the proposed model. The survey was distributed via social media using convenience and snowball methods. It gathered 418 usable responses, achieving an 88.94% response rate. control, and individual norms.

Findings - The results reveal that fashion involvement and environmental concern positively influence attitudes toward participating in clothing take-back programs, and ascribing responsibility significantly impacts personal norms. Consumers' intentions to participate in clothing take-back programs are significantly influenced by their attitude, perceived behavioral

Originality - This study makes novel contributions to the literature. Firstly, it extends the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) by incorporating fashion involvement, responsibility, and personal norm from the Value-Belief-Norm (VBN), providing a more comprehensive understanding of consumer intentions towards CTBP. Secondly, as a pioneer study in the Malaysian context, the study adds to the contextual evidence of this research field. Finally, the findings offer valuable insights for policymakers and industry stakeholders by identifying key factors influencing consumer participation in sustainable fashion initiatives.



The impact of responsible leadership on triple bottom line performance, amid the mediating roles of workforce diversity and organisational inclusion

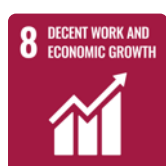
[DOI](#)

Authors: Rong Yao Lim | Yashar Salamzadeh: Senior Lecturer in Digital Business, University of Sunderland | Bahaudin G. Mujtaba | Pelin Vardarlier

Date of publication: September, 2025

Department: Leadership | Inclusion | Diversity

This study investigates the impact of responsible leadership on the triple bottom line (TBL) performance based on the social, financial, and environmental dimensions of service provider organisations within the context of Industry 4.0. It further examines the mediating roles of workforce diversity and organisational inclusion in this relationship. A survey methodology was employed, with data collected from 123 employees of service providers. Structural equation modelling is used to analyse the hypothesised relationships between responsible leadership, workforce diversity, organisational inclusion, and TBL performance. The findings reveal that responsible leadership has a significant and positive direct effect on both social and financial performance. Additionally, workforce diversity was found to play a mediating role in the relationship between responsible leadership and all aspects of TBL performance. This investigation contributes to the literature by examining the mediator roles of diversity and inclusion in the relationship between responsible leadership and performance.



Can sustainable technology features of products stimulate market performance? The perspective of consumer engagement in climate change

[DOI](#)

Authors: Yumeng Luo | Saleh Bazi | Shajara Ul-Durar: Senior Lecturer in Business and Management, University of Sunderland | Marco De Sisto | Nadja Damij: Professor in Business and Management

Date of publication: February, 2026

Department: Electric vehicles | Climate change | Consumer engagement

Climate change has accelerated the adoption of electric vehicles (EVs). However, it remains unclear how EVs shape consumers' climate engagement and market performance. This study uses signaling theory to examine how driving range, a key sustainability signal, influences climate engagement under varying price levels and manufacturer types, and how this, in turn, affects market performance. Drawing on 67,757 EV model-year observations from the Chinese market (2018–2022), it combines emotional analysis of consumer reviews with hierarchical regression models. The findings show that driving range enhances climate engagement, especially for higher-price models and non-domestic manufacturers, which strengthens signal credibility. In turn, climate engagement boosts sales performance and partially mediates the range-sales relationship. Theoretically, the study extends signaling theory to sustainability and clarifies the boundary conditions of effective signals. Methodologically, it introduces a novel measure of climate engagement and practical insights for manufacturers to enhance consumer engagement and market performance in emerging markets.



Estimating digital adaptation and governance in international businesses by targeting environmental sustainability | [DOI](#)

Authors: Marco De Sisto | Shajara Ul-Durar: Senior Lecturer in Business and Management | Noman Arshed | Ashina Sadaf | Alireza Nazarian

Date of publication: September, 2025

Department: Sustainability | Governance | Digital

By aiming at multidimensional environmental sustainability, international firms can venture into digital adaptation for better environmental quality. This study acquired data from Europe, Australia, and the United States of America for five years (2018–2023), comprising 2606 international firms. Robust machine learning panel data analysis uncovered the significant role of digital transformation on environmental sustainability impacting societies. Digital transformation is estimated using capital expenditures, research and development expenses, and cybersecurity policies that encompass technological investments, strategic readiness, and digital governance. The regression outcomes reveal wholistic understanding regarding the role of digital initiatives in environmental sustainability while machine learning provides relative importance of policy options. Both methods address strategic integration and tension between economic decisions and sustainable goals. This study highlighted the importance of digitalization and sustainable development in the context of business internationalization that provides actionable insights into business and policy management of global business sustainability while enhancing environmental quality.



Green Innovation Optimization for Climate Change ESG Business Readiness: Role of Generative AI in BRICS Countries

| [DOI](#)

Authors: Noman Arshed | Yassine Bakkar | Marco De Sisto | Mubbasher Munir | Shajara Ul-Durar:
Senior Lecturer in Business and Management, University of Sunderland

Date of publication: September, 2025

Department: Innovation | AI Adoption

Climate change introduces new challenges for businesses which require them to find ways to be resilient. Green innovations contribute to boost Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG)-readiness leading to just transition without optimization. This study estimates the nonlinear effect of environmental innovation in ESG-readiness against climate change while allowing for the moderating role of citations from regenerative AI-research. We use BRICS countries to conduct the analyses with a machine learning based Panel-QARDL. We find that green innovations trace an inverted U-shaped effect and generative AI shifts this relationship upwards. Findings highlight the role of regenerative AI in boosting green innovation performance.



Balancing Circular Economy Practices and Digitization: Non-Linear Performance of Luxury Firms With Moderating Role of Information Communication Technology

| [DOI](#)

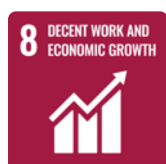
Authors: Shajara Ul-Durar: Senior Lecturer in Business and Management, University of Sunderland |
Mubasher Iqbal | Noman Arshed | Younes Ben Zaied

Date of publication: August, 2025

Department: Circular economy

Luxury firms cater to high-end customers, focusing on minute details in product development. Their global supply chain plays a key role in trade, growth, and innovation. The performance of these firms is sensitive to the adoption of technology and environmental responsibility. This study explored the aggregated performance of luxury firms in the top 10 trading countries from 2009 to 2023. In this way, this study is vital as it provides insights into how global trade dynamics, consumer preferences, and

economic factors shape the performance and competitive advantage of high-value industries in key markets. This study considers the circular economy as a key determinant of luxury firms' performance, aiming to understand how sustainable practices influence profitability, innovation, and consumer loyalty in a high-value, trend-setting industry. This study is guided by Stakeholder Theory and Resource-Based View, where sustainable transformation and digital capabilities co-evolve to influence performance. Empirical findings, using panel quantile regression with Common Correlated Mean Group specifications, have confirmed the inverted U-shaped impact of the circular economy on luxury firms' performance is validated. It advocates that the initial sustainable practices adoption boosts performance but, beyond a certain point, the costs of further sustainability efforts may offset the benefits, thereby leading to diminishing returns. Furthermore, the incorporation of information communication technology (ICT) boosts luxury firms' performance and simultaneously moderates circular practices, leading to an improved impact. As control variables, infrastructure and inflation are key factors in understanding the relationship between circular economy practices, ICT integration, and the performance of luxury firms.



Sustainable financial inclusion through social progress and regularity quality interaction – Implication for least developed countries

| [DOI](#)

Authors: Shajara Ul-Durar: Senior Lecturer in Business and Management, University of Sunderland | Mubasher Iqbal | Shabana Naveed | Alberto Massacci | Irfan Saleem

Date of publication: February, 2025

Department: Inclusive growth | Sustainable development

Sustainable development through social progress is resolute in enhancing financial inclusion through spreading the affordable financial facilities. However, the Social Progress Index (SPI) reflects sustainable development by measuring a country's ability to meet basic human needs, support well-being, and provide opportunities for a better quality of life, beyond just economic growth, and pave the way for spreading access to affordable financial services. This study has considered least-developed countries due to their diverse socio-economic challenges and financial disparities. For this purpose, data from 2011 to 2023 is considered. Estimated results using the Driscoll-Kraay standard error and Panel Quantile Regression methods have validated the inverted U-shaped impact of social progress on financial inclusion. It implies that moderate levels of social progress can enhance financial access. However, excessive focus on social progress without adequate economic growth hinders financial service expansion, ultimately affecting overall economic stability and inclusion. This study incorporates regularity quality as a determinant of financial inclusion and a moderator of social progress. It negatively determines financial inclusion but, as a moderator, it boosts social progress

towards sustainable financial inclusion. Further more, overall productive capacity and technology, mainly through internet usage as the model's control variables, are vital in promoting financial inclusion.



Research Barriers

In 2025, Sunderland Business School identified the following barriers to conducting research related to sustainability and/or responsibility:

- ❖ Administrative barriers
- ❖ Collaboration challenges
- ❖ Data access and management
- ❖ Funding challenges
- ❖ Institutional policies and bureaucracy
- ❖ Participant recruitment
- ❖ Research impact and application
- ❖ Retention and engagement
- ❖ Time constraints

Continue telling your story

Sustainability Research Centre

In November 2025, The University of Sunderland and The Management Development Institute of Singapore (MDIS) announced plans to launch a MDIS-University of Sunderland Centre for Applied Sustainability Research and Innovation, marking the 20-year milestone in our transnational education partnership by unveiling a bold new vision for sustainability-driven education.

Plans for the MDIS-University of Sunderland Centre for Applied Sustainability Research and Innovation have been announced at the *Innovate for a Green Future* event held in Singapore, with a delegation of leaders from the University of Sunderland, including the Vice-Chancellor of the University, Sir David Bell, travelling to the country.

The Centre is a landmark initiative by a private education institution in Singapore in partnership with a UK university. It aims to support Singapore's Green Plan 2030 and the national goal of achieving net-zero emissions by 2050. In addition, the Centre aims to be Asia's leading hub for applied sustainability

innovation, with a focus on development, application, implementation, and workforce development – areas where MDIS and the University of Sunderland bring complementary strengths – the aim would be to create a Centre that serves as a bridge between academic research and real-world practice.

The Centre's research and innovation blueprint is anchored in Singapore's industrial strategy through the following strategic pillars:

- Circular Manufacturing and Resilient Supply Chains
- Green Economy and Business Transformation
- Sustainable Tourism and Urban Hospitality

The Centre would build on the strong foundations of the MDIS-University of Sunderland partnership, which has grown to include campuses in Uzbekistan, Malaysia, and Tajikistan, delivering Sunderland-accredited programmes to thousands of students across Asia.

The planned Centre aims to be not only a testament to the enduring legacy of the Sunderland-MDIS partnership, but also a forward-looking initiative that reflects a shared commitment to excellence, innovation, and global sustainability. Alumni, industry leaders, and educators will play a vital role in shaping the Centre's direction and ensuring its success in creating a new generation of sustainability-savvy graduates.



Partner

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

How We Define Partner

As a University, our focus is to ensure our students graduate equipped with the knowledge, skills, confidence, and connections to make a positive difference in the wider world. To do that effectively, we work collaboratively with a wide range of stakeholders, helping our students to be the changemakers of tomorrow.

Institutional Partnerships

- ❖ AACSB (Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business)
- ❖ EFMD (European Foundation for Management Development)
- ❖ Local institutions and associations

Student Organization Partnerships

- ❖ None

Partnerships

The following provides more details on 10 key partnerships at Sunderland Business School.

SBC - Small Business Charter

We were accredited with the Small Business Charter award in September 2023, in recognition of the great work we do to demonstrate excellence and impact in supporting small businesses, student entrepreneurship, and their local economies.

According to SBC themselves, “the Small Business Charter was established with government support to signpost entrepreneurs and small businesses to business schools in their region with the expertise to help them thrive.

It is a mark of excellence of a business school’s provision of high quality, tailored guidance, education programmes and services to help small businesses and entrepreneurs run successful businesses.”

Since becoming accredited, we have continued to develop our work in this area to ensure we remain a beacon and pillar of support for small businesses and budding entrepreneurs.

In December 2025, we hosted our inaugural government-funded Help to Grow programme, allowing the University of Sunderland to deliver a 12-week programme of knowledge and support to small business owners and leaders, allowing them to gain the appropriate knowledge and skills to be able to

develop their business further, very much supporting SDG 8 – Decent Work and Economic Growth. The programme was a success, with 21 participating, leading to a second cohort commencing in October 2026.

Our accreditation was for a three-year period, expiring in September 2023. We underwent a reassessment in May 2023 and are awaiting the result.

CMI - Chartered Management Institute

Many of our courses at the School of Business, Management and Tourism are supported by professional body accreditations, one of which being the Chartered Management Institute (CMI).

Our portfolio of CMI dual-accredited programmes include undergraduate and postgraduate programmes, as well as degree apprenticeships, which are mapped to CMI's Professional Standard for Management and Leadership. To reflect the ever-increasing focus and importance of ethics and sustainability in contemporary management and leadership practices, CMI have incorporated two elements of this into the heart of their Professional Standard for Management and Leadership, namely "Prioritising the Environment" and "Committing to Sustainability", ensuring that the next generation of managers and leaders have ethical and sustainability concerns at the forefront of their future personal and professional minds.

Of particular interest is the Level 7 Senior Leader Apprenticeship (SLA), where apprentices become eligible for a fast-tracked application for CMI Chartered Manager status upon successful completion of this programme, cementing apprentice's credentials as a present and future responsible manager and leader.

It is an exciting time at CMI with the recent launch of their new Level 3, 5 and 7 qualifications in Sustainability. As part of the consultation process, CMI invited Adam McNall, Accreditations Manager at the School of Business, Management and Tourism, to participate in a roundtable with fellow experts to discuss content of the qualifications and how feasible they would be for a Higher Education context. A copy of the final report can be found attached.

CIPD - Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development

Many of our courses at the School of Business, Management and Tourism are supported by professional body accreditations, one of which being the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD).

Our portfolio of CIPD accredited programmes include undergraduate and postgraduate programmes, as well as degree apprenticeships, which are mapped to the CIPD Professions Map. To reflect the ever-increasing focus and importance of ethics and sustainability in contemporary human resource

management practices, CIPD have incorporated elements of this into the heart of their Professions Map, namely “Environmental Sustainability”, and varying levels of competence to be demonstrated depending on the level of membership (Student Member, Associate Member, Chartered Member, Chartered Fellow), and a whole section of the Professions Map focused on ethical practice. This ensures that the next generation of HR managers and leaders have ethical and sustainability concerns at the forefront of their future personal and professional minds.

CIM - Chartered Institute of Marketing

Many of our courses at the School of Business, Management and Tourism are supported by professional body accreditations, one of which being the Chartered Institute of Marketing (CIM).

Our portfolio of CIM accredited programmes include undergraduate and postgraduate programmes, which are mapped to the CIM qualifications, offering our students exemptions from particular CIM modules should they wish to successfully obtain a CIM qualification post-graduation. At both Level 4 and Level 6, students have an option to study an ethics and sustainability related modules, namely “Responsible Marketing” (Level 4) or “Societal Impact” (Level 6). This reflects the ever-increasing focus and importance of ethics and sustainability in contemporary marketing practices and ensures that the next generation of marketing managers and leaders have ethical and sustainability concerns at the forefront of their future personal and professional minds.

ACCA - Association of Certified Chartered Accountants

Many of our courses at the School of Business, Management and Tourism are supported by professional body accreditations, one of which being the Association of Certified Chartered Accountants (ACCA).

Our undergraduate BA (Hons) Accounting and Finance programme has been externally verified and accredited by ACCA, providing our students with exemptions from particular ACCA modules should they wish to successfully obtain an ACCA qualification post-graduation. This can significantly boost our students’ employment prospects post-graduation.

As part of their studies, students learn about corporate ethics and governance in depth in one final-year module, reflecting the ever-increasing focus and importance of ethics and sustainability in contemporary finance and accounting practices, ensuring that the next generation of accounting and finance managers and leaders have ethical and sustainability concerns at the forefront of their future personal and professional minds.

This will help them in good stead as they progress on their journey as one potential module students need to complete to achieve an ACCA qualification is Ethics and Professional Skills.

CIMA - Chartered Institute of Management Accountants

Many of our courses at the School of Business, Management and Tourism are supported by professional body accreditations, one of which being the Chartered Institute of Management Accountants (CIMA).

Some of our undergraduate and postgraduate finance programmes have received external validation from CIMA, allowing students to claim exemptions from particular CIMA modules should they wish to successfully obtain an CIMA qualification post-graduation. This can significantly boost our students' employment prospects post-graduation.

As part of their studies, students learn about corporate ethics and governance in depth, reflecting the ever-increasing focus and importance of ethics and sustainability in contemporary finance and accounting practices, ensuring that the next generation of accounting and finance managers and leaders have ethical and sustainability concerns at the forefront of their future personal and professional minds.

ICAEW - Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales

Many of our courses at the School of Business, Management and Tourism are supported by professional body accreditations, one of which being the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales (ICAEW), which we become accredited by in 2024.

Our undergraduate BA (Hons) Accounting and Finance programme has been externally validated and accredited by ICAEW, allowing students to claim exemptions from particular ICAEW modules should they wish to successfully obtain an ICAEW qualification post-graduation. This can significantly boost our students' employment prospects post-graduation.

As part of their studies, students learn about corporate ethics and governance in depth, reflecting the ever-increasing focus and importance of ethics and sustainability in contemporary finance and accounting practices, ensuring that the next generation of accounting and finance managers and leaders have ethical and sustainability concerns at the forefront of their future personal and professional minds.

BGA - Business Graduates Association

Business Graduates Association (BGA) is a relatively new professional body, founded in 2019 as a sister brand to the Association of MBAs (AMBA), although they can trace their routes to 1967.

BGA's vision is to be the leading global movement for Positive Impact, Responsible Management and Lifelong Learning. As such, BGA schools share their commitment to responsible management practices, lifelong learning, and delivering positive impact for business school stakeholders.

Additionally, the BGA Charter sets expectations for Member schools, including us at the School of Business, Management and Tourism at the University of Sunderland. BGA Members are expected to engage with the nine guiding principles which form the BGA Charter. These nine principles are inspired by the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), ensuring that the schools align not only with high educational standards but also with global priorities around sustainability, social responsibility, and ethical leadership.

BGA's Vision and Mission complement our own at the University of Sunderland, which is to be a "life-changing" university that is student-focused, professions-facing and society-shaping. We therefore applied successfully to become BGA Members in 2024, becoming the 36th Business School in the United Kingdom to become a BGA Member school.

Since we become BGA Members, we have made our students aware of the free resources and career development tools available to them. Additionally, we enjoyed a visit from a BGA representative who met with the School of Business, Management and Tourism team by attending and presenting at a school meeting.

Going forward, we are looking to work more closely with BGA. Seeking BGA Validation and/or BGA Accreditation is a potential way how we could achieve this, as we progress as a school on our individual accreditation journey.

AACSB - Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business

In recent years, there has been an increasing trend of professional bodies incorporating responsible management and sustainable development as a key criterion for Business Schools to demonstrate when applying for accreditation. This includes AACSB which has "Standard 9 – Engagement and Societal Impact" incorporated as an integral part of the accreditation processes.

The School of Business, Management and Tourism's Accreditations Manager represents the University at the biannual AACSB UK and Ireland Accreditation Group (UKIAG) meetings, to learn more and engage in discussions about these key elements, as well as other aspects of accreditation.

Although the School of Business, Management and Tourism have been an AACSB Educational Alliance Member since 2016, it is anticipated that we will begin the application process for full AACSB Accreditation in future, therefore enabling us to build upon the societal impact and sustainability platform we currently have, in line with the continuous improvement aspects incorporated into the accreditation, delivering further benefits for us at both school level and wider university level.

In January 2026, Professor Alex Hope joined the University of Sunderland as Pro Vice-Chancellor of the Faculty of Business and Technology. Professor Hope is also Vice-Chair AACSB Responsible Management Education Affinity Group.

EFMD - European Foundation of Management Development

We have been members of EFMD since 2009. Although we are only Members, accreditation with EFMD is a future ambition for our school, whether that be EQUIS, EFMDa, BSIS or another EFMD accreditation.

In recent years, there has been an increasing trend of professional bodies incorporating responsible management and sustainable development as a key criterion for Business Schools to demonstrate when applying for accreditation. This includes EFMD, who has "Ethics, Responsibility and Sustainability" incorporated as an integral part of their accreditation processes.

The School of Business, Management and Tourism's Accreditations Manager, and the Faculty's Pro Vice-Chancellor, have represented the University at EFMD events to learn more and engage in discussions about these key elements, as well as other aspects of accreditation.

Although the School of Business, Management and Tourism has been an EFMD Member Institution since 2009, it is anticipated that we will begin the application process for an EFMD accreditation in future, whether that is EQUIS, EFMDa, BSIS or another EFMD accreditation, therefore enabling us to build upon the societal impact and sustainability platform we currently have, in line with the continuous improvement aspects incorporated into the accreditation, delivering further benefits for us at both school level and wider university level.

Continue telling your story

African Business and Students Innovation Summit

In October 2025, the University hosted the African Business and Students Innovation Summit, bringing together students, academics, entrepreneurs, policymakers and innovators.

Organised in partnership with the African Student Union UK, the University's Nigerian Students' Society, and the Students' Union, this year's summit focused on the theme *Smart Africa: AI-Driven Innovations for Sustainable Development, Shaping Africa's Future*. The discussions explored how artificial intelligence and new technologies could support economic growth, education, and sustainable development across the continent.

The event included keynote speeches, panel discussions, and startup showcases, aimed at connecting African students with industry leaders and researchers working on technology and development.

The event featured a lineup of guest speakers, including Uchenna Moses, Digital Project Manager at the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency; Dr Akanimo Odon, Head of African Strategic Partnerships at Lancaster University; Dr Olusola Idowu from Hexis Lab Limited, a company focusing on sustainable and personalised solutions in the cosmetics, personal care, and pharmaceutical industries; Dr Nana Adom, expert in global student recruitment strategies and academic research, and Omoyeni Mebude, Revenue Manager and founder and host of the podcast *The Chronicles of an Immigrant*.

In recognition of his exceptional contribution to the African student community in the UK, Ambassador Yemi Soile, Founder and Head Coordinator of the Nigerian Students' Union UK and Head of the Steering Committee at the Nigerian Youths in Diaspora Organisation, was honoured with an award.

The Right Worshipful the Mayor of the City of Sunderland, Councillor Ehthesham Haque, also attended the opening ceremony alongside the Mayoress, Councillor Lynda Scanlan. The Mayor delivered an inspiring keynote address that set the tone for the day, celebrating Sunderland's diversity, the positive impact of international students on the city, and the shared values of innovation, sustainability, and collaboration that connect Africa and the UK.

In recognition of their remarkable support for African students and their continued encouragement of multicultural integration, the Mayor and Mayoress were honoured with the AUSS Grand Patron of the Year Award, which was formally presented to them at City Hall on Wednesday 5 November.

The University of Sunderland also received a distinguished honour as the Most Hospitable University of the Year, acknowledging its exceptional dedication to inclusivity and student community engagement.

More information can be found on the following link:

[University hosts African Business and Students Innovation Summit | University of Sunderland](#)



Practice

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

How We Define Practice

Our University is integral to the City of Sunderland and wider region and as such, we have a moral and civic duty to adopt responsible and accountable management practices in our own governance and operations. Our strategic plans and values incorporate these practically and greatly influence the way we function.

Institutional Policies and Practices

- ❖ Accreditation body recommendation documents
- ❖ Buildings/real estate
- ❖ Campus operations guides
- ❖ Carbon reduction or offset commitments
- ❖ Climate action plan
- ❖ Curriculum guidelines
- ❖ 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
- ❖ Water
- ❖ Zero-waste guides
- ❖ AI use guide

Policy Documents Related to RME and/or Sustainability

2 - RME Policies - UoS Environmental Policy

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

University of Sunderland - Outline Travel Plan

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

University of Sunderland - Environmental
Sustainability Plan 2025-2030

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

2 - RME Policies - UoS Sustainable Food Policy

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

2 - RME Policies - UoS Sustainable Digital
Infrastructure Plan

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

Practice Awards

In 2025, Sunderland Business School received 8 awards for responsible and/or sustainable practices.

Mental Health Charter Award

Granter: Student Minds

Grantee: University of Sunderland

Award Description:

In 2025, the University of Sunderland successfully achieved the University Mental Health Charter (UMHC) Award, making it one of just seventeen institutions to be recognised at the time*.

The award spotlights institutions that have implemented a whole-community approach to student and staff mental health. The UMHC award panel congratulated the University on its great work to improve wellbeing and mental health outcomes and commended the strong commitment to a whole university approach, highlighting the University's continuous efforts to embed good practice within its wellbeing service and faculties.

In particular, the award spotlighted the University's excellent practice for its inclusivity and intersectionality – showcased by its 24/7 Wellbeing support, the WeCare team, staff networks and drive to create a welcoming and safe environment for all members of the University community. The UMHC calls for universities to consider how they can create an environment that promotes positive mental health and wellbeing for their communities. When accessing the University's mental health services, 95% of students who gave feedback reported that the Wellbeing team has supported them to stay at the University.

Across the UK, 113 universities** have signed up to the UMHC programme that helps support institutions embed good practice. Of those members, 17 institutions*, including the University of

Sunderland, have achieved the UMHC award.

*As of 24th September 2026, the number of institutions to be recognised has increased to 28.

*** As of 24th September 2026, the number of universities who have signed up to the UMHC programme for 2026/27 is 91.

(<https://www.studentminds.org.uk/news-and-updates/91-universities-join-our-2026-27-university-mental-health-charter-programme/>).

Green Gown Awards UK & Ireland 2025

Granter: Green Gown Awards UK & Ireland

Grantee: University of Sunderland – Various

Award Description:

Established in 2004 in the UK and Ireland, the Green Gown Awards recognise exceptional sustainability initiatives being undertaken in universities and colleges, and over the last 20 years, the awards have been established as the most prestigious recognition of best practice within the further and higher education sector.

Following the University's successful shortlisting in the 'Tomorrow's Employees' category in the 2024 awards, the University encouraged more applications to highlight the continuing great work. This resulted in five entries being shortlisted in five different categories, as follows:

- Benefiting Society - SeaScapes Co/Lab: Curating care for our coastlines
- Creating Impact – 'Recover, Re-use, Repair & Produce' to reduce waste in healthcare technical support
- Next Generation Learning and Skills - Rewilding Education: Empowering future conservation leaders
- Sustainability Champion – Staff - Gary Stubbs
- Tomorrow's Employees – Sustainability in Media Production: helping to create a sustainable screen industry with the filmmakers of the future

The entry shortlisted in the 'Next Generation Learning and Skills' category is a project relating directly to the School of Business, Management and Tourism.

These shortlisted initiatives include a range of activity, from using art to help coastal communities gain a deeper understanding of marine heritage to reducing single-use waste created by healthcare teaching and rewilding projects in partnerships with academics, students and local charities.

Gary Stubbs, Senior Lecturer in Film and Television Production at the University, has also been named a Sustainability Champion (staff) finalist for his efforts in integrating sustainable practice into teaching.

The finals were held at the Library, Birmingham, on 6th November 2025. We are delighted to report that we were successful in winning the "Creating Impact" and "Sustainability Champion - Staff" categories, and were highly commended in the "Tomorrow's Employees" category.

PRME Education Award - Disciplinary Honorable Mention

Granter: PRME

Grantee: Dr Mahtab (Matti) Morovat

Award Description:

At the 2026 PRME Global Forum in Cairo, Egypt, recipients of the 2026 PRME Education Awards were announced. The award recognises business and management school faculty from around the world for their excellence in embedding sustainability and responsible management practices into business education.

The 2026 awardees exemplify what's possible when educators thoughtfully integrate the SDGs and Principles of PRME into teaching, research, leadership, and institutional practice. Their efforts have not only elevated student learning and skill development but also contributed to a more sustainable, inclusive, and globally relevant model of business education.

Our colleague at the University of Sunderland, Dr Mahtab (Matti) Morovat, was awarded a Disciplinary Honorable Mention in the field of 'Project Management' for 'Transformative Pedagogy: Student-Led Projects Driving Social Impact and Responsible Management'.

"I am honoured," Dr Morovat said.

"This recognition reflects the value of embedding experiential learning within responsible management education. Through partnerships with regional charities over the past four years, students connected theory with practice while engaging directly with real social challenges and contributing to meaningful social impact.

"At the heart of this work was a clear aim: to create engaging learning experiences that help students think critically about sustainability and understand their role in shaping a better and more sustainable future. This recognition is both humbling and motivating, and a reminder of what is possible when meaningful learning is supported by committed colleagues, students, and community partners."

People and Planet League

Granter: People and Planet League

Grantee: University of Sunderland

Award Description:

People & Planet's University League is the only comprehensive and independent league table of UK universities ranked by environmental and ethical performance. It is compiled annually by the UK's largest student campaigning network, People & Planet.

To determine a university's ranking position, People & Planet use 14 different metrics, as follows:

- Environmental Policy (4% of total score)
- Environmental Auditing and Management System (9%)
- Managing Carbon (7%)
- Sustainable Food (4%)
- Ethical Investment and Banking (7%)
- Ethical Careers and Recruitment (4%)
- Staff and HR (6%)
- Workers' Rights (7%)
- Staff and Student Engagement (5%)
- Education for Sustainable Development (9%)
- Energy Sources (7%)
- Waste and Recycling (8%)
- Carbon Reduction (15%)
- Water Reduction (8%)

To compile the rankings, People & Planet take information from two sources:

- Approximately 55% from information made public on the university website.
- Approximately 45% from information published within the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) Estates Management Record (EMR).

In the 2024/25 edition of these rankings, the University of Sunderland were joint 97th (of 149), and therefore classed as a "2:2 university". This was an increase of 14 places compared to the 2023/24 edition, reflecting our continued sustainability action across our campuses. We scored 70% or more in three areas, namely: 'Environmental Policy', 'Workers' Rights', and 'Education for Sustainable Development'.

The 2025/26 edition of the ranking was assessed in the summer of 2025 and published at the end of that year. The University of Sunderland rose 45 places to 52nd place, achieving a "2:1" classification and further reflecting the ongoing efforts around the university to be more sustainable. In this edition, we scored 70% or more in five areas. In addition to the three aforementioned areas, we also scored 70% or more in 'Auditing and EMS' and 'Sustainability Staff'.

The 2026/27 edition will be assessed over summer 2026, with the results published at the end of this year. We look forward to learning the outcome of this year's assessment.

EcoCampus

Granter: EcoCampus National Award Scheme

Grantee: University of Sunderland

Award Description:

EcoCampus is the environmental management scheme for higher and further education institutions. The EcoCampus Scheme develops, implements and maintains an institution's environmental management system in line with ISO14001, the international management system standard.

In June 2024, the University of Sunderland successfully obtained Bronze standard, and quickly followed up by obtaining a Silver standard in January 2025, and Gold in January 2026. To achieve these awards, the University participated in an audit to prove that its environmental risks are well managed, and action is being taken to minimise them.

Achieving the EcoCampus accreditation is a significant step for the University's environmental sustainability plan that looks at a range of ways to help minimise environmental impact from energy consumption to procurement. Work is well underway to further advance our current Gold certification to Platinum in future.

Estates Facilities Team of the Year - Bronze Award

Granter: Association of University Directors of Estates (AUDE)

Grantee: University of Sunderland / University of Sunderland in London

Award Description:

Our Sunderland and London team have jointly won a Bronze award in the Estates Facilities Team of the Year category at the Association of University Directors of Estates (AUDE) Awards in 2025.

Judges highlighted the team's strong focus on consultation with students and staff throughout the design process. Our London Campus at Harbour Exchange and its facilities will support the delivery of new academic programmes, focused on enhancing student employability. New developments include a nursing simulation suite that is set to train hundreds of medical professional, and a London Stock Exchange Group trading room for the newly launched MSc Fintech and Trading course.

Since opening in January 2025, our new Harbour Exchange campus has welcomed over 2,000 new students and, in March 2025, was officially opened by the then-Secretary of State for Education, The Right Honorable Bridget Phillipson MP.

Defence Employer Recognition Scheme (ERS) - Gold Award

Granter: Armed Forces Covenant

Grantee: University of Sunderland

Award Description:

The University of Sunderland continues to be one of the most supportive organisations for Britain's Armed Forces. We have once again met the gold standard in the 2025 Employer Recognition Scheme (ERS) Gold Awards.

Launched in 2014, the Employer Recognition Scheme recognises employer support for the wider principles of the Defence Armed Forces Covenant and the full spectrum of defence personnel. This includes the reserves, service leavers, wounded injured and sick, cadets, and spouses. It encourages employers to pledge, demonstrate, and advocate support, ensuring members of the defence community aren't disadvantaged in civilian life, with awards signifying significant public recognition for their efforts.

The University first received the Defence ERS Gold Award in 2020 and has now secured the award for another five years following revalidation. This will take the University to 2030, and over 10 years of being recognised as a Defence Employment Recognition Scheme Gold Award holder.

For the recent award application, Garry Heeson, Senior Lecturer in Military Education and Chair of the Armed Forces Staff Network at the University of Sunderland, who is himself a Reservist, and Terry McDermott-Moses, the University of Sunderland Armed Forces Champion, led a dedicated team to provide evidence of how the University supports the Armed Forces community. This commitment is demonstrated through initiatives such as:

- Recruitment and retention of Reservists, who benefit from an additional 10 days' paid leave to attend Reserve training.
- Strengthening community and resilience by collaborating on and designing programmes tailored for the Armed Forces community, including the Cert HE Health, which promotes widening participation across the whole community.
- Innovative partnerships, such as the Delivering Simulation-Based Education in Healthcare programme with the Land Medical Training Centre in York, where educators, mentors, and clinical validators enhance their expertise in simulation delivery to prepare for worldwide deployments.

- Support for service children, as an active member of the Northern Hub of the Service Children's Progression Alliance, recognising the unique challenges service life can have on children and ensuring they are included in widening participation initiatives at Sunderland.

Gold Cycle Friendly Employer

Granter: Cycling UK

Grantee: University of Sunderland

Award Description:

In 2025, we were awarded the Gold Cycle Friendly Employer accreditation by Cycling UK, joining a Europe-wide network of over 1,000 pioneering workplaces championing active travel for more than 1 million employees. This was in recognition of our outstanding commitment to promoting cycling, reducing carbon emissions, and improving staff wellbeing.

The Gold award is the highest level of accreditation available and reflects our ongoing investment in cycling culture, facilities, and staff engagement. It positions Sunderland as one of the UK's leading cycle-friendly workplaces.

Continue telling your story

Carbon Literacy Training

In summer 2025, members of the University's Education for Sustainable Development working group, plus colleagues

The Education for Sustainable Development working group, made up of Sustainability Champions from across the University, is supporting the institution with the aim that every student should graduate with the knowledge and skills needed to navigate the increasing global environmental and social impacts of their chosen careers. Helping to build knowledge and awareness amongst academic and professional services staff is one of the key roles of this group, and rolling out Carbon Literacy training is one way to achieve that.

In total, 10 colleagues participated, including two from the School of Business, Management and Tourism.

An added benefit is that anyone who achieves Carbon Literacy Certification is able to run a Carbon Literacy session

Solar PV Arrays

In the spring/summer of 2025, an array of solar panels were installed on the Reg Vardy Building, home to our School of Business, Management and Tourism.

With around 650 solar panels installed on the roof, it can generate up to 280 kWp, and over a year the array will produce enough electricity to power the equivalent of 90 UK homes. At the time, this brought the number of solar arrays across Sunderland Campuses to ten, with a total output of 1,275 kWp. Together they provide enough electricity to power the equivalent of 420 UK homes, and also save the University around £390,000 per year.

The array was installed as part of the University's drive to reach Net Zero Carbon by 2040. Alongside the solar panels, over 4,000 LED lights have been installed, and along with enhancing its heating and ventilation systems, the University has reduced electricity use by 11% compared to the previous academic year.

An eleventh Solar photovoltaic (PV) array was installed in 2026 on Helen McArdle House, City Campus. The new 90kWp solar array is expected to generate around 78,840 kWh of renewable electricity each year – enough to power the equivalent of 32 average UK homes.



Your food waste can help fuel the future

We take your food waste and convert it by anaerobic digestion into renewable resources

What we CAN accept

- Breads, cakes and pastries
- Tea bags and coffee grounds (no filters)
- Meat & fish (raw & cooked)
- Plate scrapings & peelings
- Egg shells
- Dairy products
- Rice, pasta & cereal
- Bones in small quantities
- Fruit & veg (raw or cooked)
- Liquids such as milk and juice in small amounts

What we CAN'T accept

- Black bags
- Large bones
- Glass
- Compostable packaging
- Metal
- Packaging material or containers

University of Sunderland

University of Sunderland - Food Waste Recycling

Food Waste Recycling

In April 2025, the University of Sunderland introduced food waste recycling in all cafe areas, tea points, staff break rooms and all University-owned accommodation.

The bins are clearly marked with bright pink labels (see separate evidence), and can be used for food waste, including tea bags, plate scrapings, and both raw and cooked food.

The food waste is processed in an anaerobic digester, where it breaks down and releases methane. This methane is captured as biogas and used to generate electricity, heat, or transport fuels. The process also produces organic fertiliser, which is used in agriculture and land regeneration.

These new bins complement the University's existing recycling and waste facilities, with separate bins available for mixed recycling (tins, cans, cartons, plastic pots, tubs and trays), paper, glass, batteries and confidential waste, as well as general waste for non-recyclable items, equally found in cafe areas, tea points, staff break rooms and all University-owned accommodation.

Sustainability Week

In May 2025, the University held its first-ever sustainability week bringing together students, staff and the local community to inspire positive action for a sustainable future.

The week (6th-10th May) saw a variety of workshops, talks, seminars and events spotlighting sustainable topics including biodiversity, reducing waste, low-carbon technology and much more.

As part of the week, the University's sustainability team and Your SU (Students' Union) brought a range of local businesses and organisations together for the University's Sustainability Fair to promote their eco-friendly products and showcase their green initiatives.

Students, staff and the local community also got the chance to hear about the research and projects academics at the University are doing to help create a sustainable future.

For one of the seminars, Dr Nida Naveed, Senior Lecturer and Vice-Chancellor's Research Fellow at the University, shared her expertise in sustainable manufacturing and using recycled material in 3D printing. Other seminars included a reflection on sustainable filmmaking by the University's School of Media and Creative Industries, recent biodiversity projects by students in partnership with Durham Wildlife Trust and many more.



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

As a school and wider-university community, we share and celebrate our successes and demonstrate continuous improvement by learning from occasions where we have fallen short of our high expectations to avoid them being repeated. This philosophy is integrated into our strategic plans, empowering everyone to showcase our values.

Engagement Opportunities

Sunderland 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
- ❖ Community events and consultation forums
- ❖ Feedback mechanisms (e.g., surveys, suggestion boxes)
- ❖ Open faculty and student meetings and town halls
- ❖ Partnerships with local organizations
- ❖ Public events and panel discussions
- ❖ Student and staff volunteer programs
- ❖ Sustainability-focused research and collaboration Opportunities
- ❖ We are currently working to offer engagement opportunities

Communication Audiences

Sunderland 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
- ❖ Chamber of commerce and local communities
- ❖ Faculty and staff
- ❖ Government and policy makers
- ❖ Media and public relations channels
- ❖ Non-governmental organizations (NGOs)
- ❖ Prospective and current students
- ❖ Research and academic networks

Communication Barriers

Sunderland Business School faces the following barriers in transparent communications:



**Data privacy
regulations**

Continue telling your story

UOS-26-Environmental-Sustainability-Report-R1

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SIGNATORY

Sunderland Business School



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