Kemmy Business School

Sharing Information on Progress 2014
As Executive Dean of the Kemmy Business School (KBS), I am delighted to reaffirm our commitment to the six Principles for Responsible Management Education espoused in UN PRME.

KBS has always been very connected to our external stakeholders, particularly business and local community, voluntary and school groups, and these connections speak directly to the principles of partnership and dialogue. The integration of a key graduate attribute of responsibility in all of our programmes and our development of new curricula and key activities provide opportunities for our students to develop their own potential as responsible members of society.

Our research across all disciplines of the school integrates issues of sustainability, human and labour rights, ethics and responsibility, and we aim to ensure that this research is widely disseminated to stakeholders through our KBS Research Bulletin, media engagement and other impact measures. Perhaps most fundamentally, we seek to reflect the values inherent in PRME in our own practice as a School.

These ambitions and values are articulated in the School’s new strategic plan, and we look forward in its implementation to playing our part in advancing responsible management education.

Dr Philip O’Regan
Executive Dean
EDITORIAL

Working to advance the cause of management education

The Kemmy Business School at the University of Limerick has been a member of PRME since 2008, and recently joined both the PRME Champions group and the UK & Ireland PRME Regional Chapter. The principles and spirit of PRME resonate with the ethos of the School, and we present in this SIP Report some detail on how we are currently implementing the six principles of PRME, and how we plan to progress this in the coming years.

Our involvement with PRME has brought us into contact with a broad network of excellent schools working to advance the cause of management education, and we are delighted to be able to join in this work internationally through the GRLI, 50+20 Innovation Cohort, the UK & Ireland Chapter and the PRME Champions and the PRME Advisory Committee. It has also brought a focus to our work with stakeholders, which has always been a feature of the Kemmy Business School, particularly with business and civil society groupings. We continue to involve our students in PRME-related activities both in the classroom and outside, and issues of ethics, sustainability, responsibility, human rights and labour rights are significant and growing elements of our teaching and research.

We view our reporting as a way of communicating what we do, sharing ideas both within the wider PRME network and with our stakeholders, and as presenting an opportunity for us to review our own progress and refine plans for the coming years. We would be happy to enter into dialogue on any of the initiatives described here.

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Working to advance the cause of management education
The University of Limerick was founded as the National Institute for Higher Education in Limerick in 1972 and attained university status in 1989. The Kemmy Business School (KBS) was established within the University at its foundation in 1972 as the College of Business. In 2003, the College became the Kemmy Business School, named in honour of the late Jim Kemmy, former Alderman and Mayor of the City of Limerick. Jim Kemmy spent his life working for the betterment of all in society, and the school’s mission statement and values reflect our view of education as a contributor to social good as well as a means to economic prosperity.

Our mission, developed in 2013 as part of a new Strategic Plan for the School, reads as follows:

> As a leading Irish business school in a public university system, KBS is committed to excellence in teaching and to fostering knowledge and understanding of business and society within a diverse, research-active and socially engaged environment.

The development of a strategic plan for a business school must be informed by the key strengths of the school and by a firm and honest recognition of current challenges. Above all, the plan must be guided by key principles, and in this context our membership of PRME since 2008 informed our reflections. Moreover, as a business school devising a strategic plan in the aftermath of a serious financial crisis and at a time when new technological and pedagogical challenges and opportunities are emerging, there was a need for some reflection on the role a business school should play.

These considerations inform the manner in which we address the needs and aspirations of our various stakeholders, including the business community, wider societal interests and, especially, our students.

In these contexts and against the background of some very significant challenges and opportunities, KBS has identified four key goals through which we aim to enhance our national and international reputation:

- To provide an outstanding and distinctive student-centred education
- To strengthen excellence in research
- To further internationalise all relevant aspects of KBS
- To provide leadership in economic, social and community development

These strategic goals reflect long-established core values of KBS, which find expression in a commitment to:

- Promote learning and discovery
- Focus on students
- Ensure social responsibility and ethical behaviour
- Foster academic freedom
- Enhance knowledge
- Promote access and diversity
- Foster international perspective
- Support staff and self-development
- Facilitate involvement of industry
- Continually improve

As a leading Irish business school in a public university system, KBS is committed to excellence in teaching and to fostering knowledge and understanding of business and society within a diverse, research-active and socially engaged environment.
The fourth strategic goal of KBS is to provide leadership in economic, social and community development. We understand this to mean more than the immediate hinterland of Limerick. Accordingly, we acknowledge our responsibility to make a contribution to the development of the locality, the region, the country and, where feasible, of targeted communities overseas, as well as to communities of practice in our various disciplines.

Drawing on Jim Kemmy’s legacy as a political and community leader, KBS aims to foster the development of a viable and sustainable Ireland based on the principles of fairness, equality of opportunity, community solidarity and active citizenship. As a business school, we are particularly focused on the role of business practices, financial structures and fiscal policies – all of which are key elements of our teaching and research – in delivering on this goal. We also recognise the need to prepare our students to participate in this society as active citizens. Because this carries with it both rights and responsibilities, we will actively involve our students in targeted initiatives to promote their engagement and participation in the decision-making processes of society. We will also look at how our key resources, both tangible and intangible, can best be deployed in the service of our wider group of stakeholders.

KBS became the first Irish PRME Signatory in 2008, and we have reported on our progress twice since then. In 2013, we were delighted to join both the PRME Champions group and the UK & Ireland Regional Chapter of PRME.
Part Two

Progress

This section sets out our progress towards the implementation of each of the six principles of PRME in turn.
PRINCIPLE 1

PURPOSE

We will develop the capabilities of students to be future generators of sustainable value for business and society at large and to work for an inclusive and sustainable global economy.

The Kemmy Business School aims to provide all of our students with opportunities and challenges that will engage and equip them with the tools to critically think about sustainability issues in the economy and society. Here are some examples of recent initiatives.

— KBS students across all levels in disciplines are encouraged to participate in the University’s President’s Volunteer Awards (PVA), which links them into projects with external stakeholders including community groups and charities, where they can work in a self-managed process to moderated guidelines to deliver some social change. A target in the new KBS Strategic plan is to significantly increase the number of KBS students participating in the scheme over the coming years.

— Undergraduate marketing students undertake an annual 24 hour sustainability challenge in collaboration with students studying product and interactive design, focused on developing sustainability innovations for the University. Recent ideas include developing a university farm, a sustainable eco village and a car pooling app.

— Postgraduate students in financial, tax, risk and management disciplines are presented with discipline-specific ethical dilemmas which need to be discussed and resolved in groups or individually.

— Tourism postgraduate students work with the Burren Eco Tourism Network, gaining practice experience of stakeholder interaction with this issue-based network.

— Marketing students have engaged with the Limerick Milk Market, the largest farmers market in the region, to consider the social and cultural significance of the market.

— Undergraduate marketing students engage in a ‘live’ project in which they develop a marketing campaign on a key ethical/social issue relevant to students and incorporate issues relating to ethical consumption, ethical/fair trade consumption etc. For instance, this year students designed a responsible drinking campaign for a leading brand of beer.

— KBS faculty also contribute to a number of key student-run activities, such as contributing content on responsibility and ethics to a Student Union-run course on leadership.

Our work in this area extends beyond our own students to younger students in local schools, particularly those serving areas of disadvantage. Noteworthy contributions in this area are the ICE programme, which develops qualities of innovation, creativity and entrepreneurship among teenagers, and an enrichment programme for gifted children from disadvantaged backgrounds.
PRINCIPLE 2 | VALUES

We will incorporate into our academic activities and curricula the values of global social responsibility as portrayed in international initiatives such as the United Nations Global Compact.

Teaching quality and the student experience are key to both the University of Limerick and the Kemmy Business School. We are committed to incorporating issues relating to ethics and responsibility into teaching curricula. In particular, one key graduate attribute to be integrated into all programmes across the campus is Responsible.

This is defined as:
‘adopting a responsible, civically aware and engaged approach to their actions and decisions at work and in society; exploring issues of corporate and social responsibility, ethical practice and sustainability; adopting a global perspective, recognising both the local and global impact of decisions and actions; being personally and professionally responsible, orientated towards making substantial and positive contributions to society.’

These are not just words. KBS values of ensuring social responsibility and ethical behaviour and promoting learning and discovery come to the fore in how this is implemented. The attribute is already being integrated at curriculum level, and in the coming year will be more formally articulated in programme and module learning outcomes. For example, in a recent review of the main KBS undergraduate business programme, faculty were asked to evidence how the attribute of responsibility would be developed at a module level, and revision of learning outcomes and content was facilitated by workshops lead by the University’s Centre for Teaching and Learning.
KBS also seeks to embody these values in all of our academic activities, and actively encourages and celebrates staff involvement in such initiatives. For example, at our annual end-of-year event, staff achievements during the year are recognised, with an emphasis not only on academic achievement, but also various community and social involvements. The School operates to high standards in dealing with our own employees and stakeholders, and has a wide range of policies in effect to reflect this. These include:

- The Code of Conduct for Employees sets out the ethical principles under which work is carried out at the University of Limerick. The Code asserts initially that: “The University of Limerick values integrity, honesty and fairness and strives to integrate these values into its teaching, research and business practices.”

- The Dignity and Respect Policy explains that the University “is committed to the development and maintenance of a positive working environment, in which all employees have the right to be treated with dignity and respect.” To this end, the policy sets out guidelines on preventing bullying, harassment, and victimization and is supported by a comprehensive set of training programs for all employees and line managers.

- The Equality and Diversity Policy asserts that the University “believes in the principles of social justice, acknowledges that discrimination affects people in complex ways and is committed to challenging all forms of inequality.” Specifically, the policy sets out nine grounds on which the University is particularly committed to equality in line with national legislation. These are gender, marital or civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religious belief or lack of religious belief, age, disability, membership of the Traveller Community, race, colour, nationality or ethnic origin;

- The Undergraduate Student Charter identifies the foundational belief under which the University operates: that teaching and learning is a partnership in which the University and students have a shared responsibility. The charter identifies 12 responsibilities of UL relating to the content, delivery, and support services that students can expect from the University.

- The UL Student Handbook includes a Code of Conduct which sets out the conduct expected of University of Limerick students, particularly around respect for people and property, honesty, fraud, compliance with university and national laws, weapons, alcohol, the environment, driving, etc. The Code places particular emphasis on the prevention of academic cheating, which is identified as a major disciplinary offence.

- KBS has a comprehensive procedure around research ethics, with the Research Ethics Committee meeting monthly during the academic year. Students at all levels within the School are made aware of the ethical issues around primary research, and are required to obtain ethics approval for any work involving human subjects, including direct experimentation, surveys or questionnaires, interviews, or the use of data derived from individual records where individuals might be identified.
PRINCIPLE 3 | METHOD

We will create educational frameworks, materials, processes and environments that enable effective learning experiences for responsible leadership.

The Kemmy Business School has continued to broaden and deepen our incorporation of issues relating to ethics, sustainability responsibility and human rights in teaching curricula. Some examples from the period since our last SIP include:

— Undergraduate and postgraduate students studying human resource management and organisational behaviour engage with issues relating to social exclusion, gender equality, precarious work, labour rights including labour laws, minimum wages and conditions, sweatshops, employee representation and voice and prejudice and discrimination. Students undertake class debating challenges, ‘real life’ case analyses and role plays with the aim of developing students to become responsible and ethical decision makers in workplaces.

— Undergraduate Law and Accounting students study corporate transparency and business ethics as a capstone module in their final year.

— Postgraduate students in taxation, financial services, marketing, international management, risk and entrepreneurship study issues of corporate social responsibility, sustainability and ethics in a specialist module.

— Issues of stakeholder interaction are widely taught on our business programmes, with opportunities moderated where possible to enable student engagement.

— Shorter seminars and lectures were widely offered over the last twelve months as part of the student engagement strand of the President of Ireland’s Ethics Initiative.

— Accounting students are exposed to issues relating to creative accounting and the role of ethics and whistleblowing, corporate misconducts and the need for a stakeholder theory approach to corporate governance, environmental (sustainability) accounting, ethics in reinsurance and alternative risk transfer.

— Students studying international management analyse the ethical issues arising from globalisation such as pollution, sustainability and the impact on broader societal issues.

— Postgraduate enterprise students analyse issues on consumer ethics/ethics and social responsibility in marketing, advertising, and social media.

— Students on the MSc in Project Management analyse effective knowledge management practices on humanitarian projects.

— Undergraduate and postgraduate students in economics are taught and assessed on ethics and finance and sustainability in macroeconomic models.

— Sustainability, responsibility feature prominently in subjects on the MBA, for example, sustainability in product and service innovation, creating sustainable long-term financial value for corporations, the role of CSR in corporate cultures and financial reporting, in project evaluation and governance elements.

— Students on human resource management and organisational behaviour programmes undertake professional skills training and critical thinking involving case studies and role plays on ethics in human resource management decision making, ethical negotiation tactics and destructive leadership.
PRINCIPLE 4  | RESEARCH

We will engage in conceptual and empirical research that advances our understanding about the role, dynamics, and impact of corporations in the creation of sustainable social, environmental and economic value.

The research interests of KBS faculty are diverse, and can best be understood by looking under both themes and more discipline-specific areas. The four main themes of our research are: Work, Knowledge and Employment; the Services Economy and Tourism; Entrepreneurship, Innovation and Marketing; and Public policy, Enterprise, Governance and Sustainability. In addition to these four themes, each of the four constituent departments of KBS has an active research culture. The four departments are Accounting & Finance, Economics, Management & Marketing, and Personnel & Employment Relations. Across all of these areas, faculty are engaged in research on ethics, sustainability, human rights, labour rights, responsibility and governance, with a focus not only on business and its role in society, but also on public policy, trade unions and on the non-profit sector. The appendix to this report sets out a sample of relevant publications over the last two years.

There is particular strength in the area of labour rights under the Work, Knowledge and Employment theme, especially in the areas of trade union recognition by multinational firms, precarious work, gender and workplace bullying. The Services Economy and Tourism theme is concerned with the changing nature of consumption and production in modern societies, and incorporates questions of sustainable or eco-tourism as well as growing focus on ethics in financial services and in nanotechnology research and development. The theme of Entrepreneurship, Innovation and Marketing incorporates work on sustainable consumption, marketing ethics, sustainable SMEs, CSR reporting by small firms, and diversity issues in entrepreneurship.

Finally, the theme of Public Policy, Enterprise, Governance and Sustainability has a broad range of work on the impact of debt and austerity on Europe, social exclusion, post-crisis corporate governance and regulation, and a focus on policies and practices which promote and facilitate sustainability and equality. This work spans economics, taxation, accounting and other disciplines, and has been effectively disseminated to a wider stakeholder group through active engagement with the national print and broadcast media by a number of KBS faculty.

There is considerable cross-disciplinary work on sustainability more generally, and a small but growing agenda on human rights, with work on non-profits featuring here. We also research sustainable change management in organizations as well as innovation and change for sustainability, new business models and sustainable consumption. Another cross-cutting dimension is research on educational practices and pedagogies, and in this sphere faculty published work on questions of play-based methods for teaching and learning corporate responsibility, teaching cases on accountability and responsibility, teaching values and ethics and the development and implementation of research ethics standards in business schools.

Research ethics policies are rigorously applied in KBS, with all students and faculty requiring ethics approval for any work involving human subjects. We try to ensure our research has real impact on business practice and policy as well as within academic circles, by disseminating suitably reframed summaries of key contributions to a range of relevant stakeholders via the monthly KBS Research Bulletin.
PRINCIPLE 5 | PARTNERSHIP

We will interact with managers of business corporations to extend our knowledge of their challenges in meeting social and environmental responsibilities and to explore jointly effective approaches to meeting these challenges.

The Kemmy Business School continues its tradition of remaining close to business, and of working closely with business leaders. All undergraduate students at KBS complete an eight-month period of cooperative education or work experience in a business setting during their programme of study. This is useful not only in giving the students an invaluable edge when they graduate, but in bringing us closer to the business community, and giving us a channel of communication through which we can work to ensure we understand their needs.

Business leaders are directly involved in KBS through their involvement with our International Advisory Board, and through the course boards and programme boards of a wide range of our undergraduate and postgraduate programmes. We have a policy of encouraging guest lectures from practice and business on a semi-regular basis throughout the academic year, and this keeps our focus and content relevant.

As part of our strategic plan, we commit to making the facilities of the School available to local stakeholders such as business managers. Twice a year, we host a business breakfast at the school, celebrating a story of success and creating a networking opportunity for business. These very vibrant events are organised in collaboration with the local Chamber of Commerce. Our faculty are regular speakers at the continuing professional development programmes of local accounting chapters, and we have frequent interactions with a number of local companies with which we have built up multi-layered relationships over the years.

Some members of our faculty are very involved in business networks or professional organisations at a national or local level. Examples include the Enactus programme, Social Entrepreneurs Ireland, the Certified Public Accountants (CPA) of Ireland, the Burren Eco Tourism Network, Limerick Chamber of Commerce, Limerick City of Culture, the Paul Partnership, the Project Management Institute, the Limerick Milk Market, the City of Limerick Business Transformation Programme, the Limerick Community Grocery Cooperative, the Global Peace Foundation, the Irish Tax Institute, Business in the Community Ireland and the newly-established National CSR Stakeholder Forum.

Smaller firms in the region interact with the school through the work of entrepreneurship postgraduate students who are facilitated in working with the firms to develop marketing strategies and business growth plans.
We will facilitate and support dialogue and debate among educators, students, business, government, consumers, media, civil society organisations and other interested groups and stakeholders on critical issues related to global social responsibility and sustainability.

KBS supports dialogue and debate at a number of levels. Locally, the School hosts a series of seminars, public lectures and events which are in general open and inclusive, addressing issues of responsibility, ethics and sustainability. Recent external speakers on these issues include Professor Georges Enderle of Mendoza College of Business, University of Notre Dame, USA; Dr Thomas O’Connor, National University of Ireland, Maynooth; Dr. Justin Doran, University College Cork. The School also hosts meetings and events by groups such as MBA Ireland on a range of topics, including sustainability and responsibility.

KBS also hosts panel or half-day discussions, opening these to the public at large where possible. Two half day discussion groups took place in 2013 on ‘The Euro Crisis and Politics’. This event saw a mixture of academics, journalists and the general public hold debate on the current economic crisis, with a particular focus on political and ethical forces within the crisis. KBS also hosted a one day conference entitled ‘Ethics and Moral Agency in Finance and the Financial Sector: Critical Perspectives’ in April 2014. This consisted of a combination of traditional presentations of academic papers and also a roundtable event of debate on the possibility or indeed the desirability of ethics and moral agency in finance.

Another example of fostering debate is the dissemination of student work, where feasible. A recent example is the showcasing of projects by business students in developing live marketing campaigns on issues of responsibility and sustainability in a public student exhibition where the student groups showcased their promotional campaigns on ethical/social issues to the UL community. Such events are generally well-covered in local media.

Nationally, a number of KBS faculty are very active in print and broadcast media on issues of the impact of debt, economics, austerity, tax policy on equality, sustainability and social justice in Ireland. This debate is informed by research across the school. KBS faculty have also contributed to debate directly in the national parliament on policy issues related to the sustainability of our national debt and equality-related economic and human rights issues.

Internationally, KBS faculty engage on issues of the ethics and sustainability of global tax avoidance, making contributions through the international media and the UN Committee of Experts on Taxation, and on debt and demographics at a European level. We are also closely involved in the 50+20 Innovation Cohort, seeking to have a transformative impact on management education worldwide, and are active in the UK & Ireland Regional Chapter of PRME, the PRME Champions group and on the PRME Advisory Committee.
Part Three

Future

Issues related to all of the PRME principles are key elements of our new Strategic Plan, and so we are confident that our work in this area will continue to expand over the coming two years.
We continue to work on new programme and module offerings in the area. In the coming years, we hope to roll out some new cross-cutting modules which will broaden the curriculum not only for business students but across the University. One example in development concerns the application of social media for social good, and involves connecting groups of students to local social entrepreneurs to work on developing their effectiveness and visibility using social media and new technology. Another planned offering is a Summer School in Responsible Management which we hope to run for an international cohort of students.

We aim to integrate our research with our stakeholder engagement where possible. A planned development which illustrates this is some interdisciplinary research scheduled for Summer 2014 involving both students and faculty in research on the development of healthy and sustainably cities. This will be co-organised from the KBS, but will involve business and health sciences students and faculty. Another example is an inaugural conference to be held at KBS in late 2014 on the application of project, programme and knowledge management tools to the work of non-profits.

This should bring together a wide range of national and international non-profit groups, facilitating learning and networking and enabling KBS faculty to dialogue effectively with this group. Similarly, threads and seminars on ethics and responsibility are planned for mainstream management conferences hosted by the School. Further research is also planned in the key areas illustrated by the publications listed in the appendix, with notable work in progress on human and labour rights, social enterprises and policy sustainability.

We intend to roll out the Sustainability Literacy Test at the earliest possible opportunity, initially with our postgraduate students but eventually integrated to all undergraduate students across the university. We are the first university in Ireland to integrate this into our student orientation.

Our work with international bodies in PRME and the PRME-related space should offer us opportunities to make a really useful contribution internationally. For example, through the 50+20 Innovation Cohort we aim to produce some useful perspectives on the implementation of ethics, responsibility and sustainability in business schools which we plan to share as widely as possible. We have recently joined the Global Responsible Leadership Initiative as full members, and look forward over the coming years to making a contribution there. Our involvement with the PRME Champions group and on the PRME Advisory Group presents us with the opportunity to engage on an international level on PRME issues, and to make an impactful contribution. We also serve on the steering committee of the UK & Ireland Regional Chapter of PRME, and aim to use that forum to bring more Schools into the PRME community and advance the cause of responsible management education.
APPENDIX

Sample of KBS Research in Ethics, Responsibility, Sustainability, Human Rights and Labour Rights

Across all disciplines of the KBS, research is carried on that concerns itself with the 10 principles of the UN Global Compact, and, in the dynamics and impact of corporations in the creation of sustainable social, environmental and economic value. There is also a significant stream of research on public policy issues that address social justice and welfare. This appendix highlights a sample of relevant KBS research since 2012, loosely arranged under the headings of Responsibility, Ethics, Sustainability and Human Rights & Labour Rights.

RESPONSIBILITY

Peer reviewed published articles


Books and Published Reports


Book chapters, conference and working papers


ETHICS
Peer reviewed published articles

Conference papers and reports

Invited Lectures
HUMAN RIGHTS AND LABOUR RIGHTS

Peer reviewed published articles and special issues


Conference and invited presentations


Books and Published Reports


**SUSTAINABILITY**

**Peer reviewed published articles**


**Conference papers**


**Book Chapters**


**Presentations and invited lectures**


