

Embedding Sustainability Skills in Responsible Management Education: Pedagogical Innovations and Student Perspectives from a Regional University

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Abstract

There has been a growing emphasis on the environmental, social, and governance (ESG) factors and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in business schools. International bodies and accreditation agencies intensified the focus on SDGs and there is a need to embed sustainability competencies within responsible management education. Gaining these competencies means fit-for-purpose and remains competitive in the jobs market. However, questions remain regarding how ESG skills are conceptualised, contextualised and effectively integrated into curricula to improve students' experience.

This study addresses these gaps through a two-stage research design. First, a systematic literature review synthesises existing scholarship on sustainability competencies, responsible management education (RME), and pedagogical innovations in business schools. The review identifies key skill domains and highlights prevailing teaching approaches aimed at fostering critical thinking, ethical reasoning, systems thinking, and applied decision-making.

Second, the study presents a case analysis of a responsible management (MM203 & MM503) offered by the University of New England (UNE), a regional business school in Australia. The case study examines how sustainability skills are embedded through curriculum design, assessments, and experiential learning activities. Drawing on student engagement data and feedback, the study evaluates perceived learning outcomes and the effectiveness of pedagogical innovations in enhancing sustainability-related competencies.

The findings provide practical insights for business educators seeking to move beyond symbolic integration of sustainability toward meaningful skill development. The study contributes to the responsible management education literature by offering an evidence-informed framework for embedding sustainability skills in business curricula and aligning educational practices with industry and societal expectations.



About the presenter:

Dr Md Shahiduzzaman is a Lecturer of Management at the University of New England Business School (UNEBS). His expertise spans sustainability, strategy, and the digital economy, and he teaches management, economics, and finance courses at UNE. Shahid is UNEBS United Nations Principles of Responsible Management Education (PRME) Lead. He is also an active member of the ANZAM Sustainability and Responsible Management Group. Dr. Shahiduzzaman has led over 10 research projects funded by internal and external grants and has published extensively in *A* and A-ranked journals*, including *Energy Economics*, *Global Environmental Change*, *Renewable and Sustainable Energy Reviews*, and *the Journal of Business Ethics*. His research has also been featured in major media outlets such as *The Conversation*, *Brisbane Times*, *Australian Financial Review* and *the Armidale Express*.