



UNIVERSITY OF  
BIRMINGHAM

BIRMINGHAM  
BUSINESS  
SCHOOL

**PRME** Principles for Responsible  
Management Education

*an initiative of the United Nations Global Compact*

# Meeting the Challenge of Responsible Business

**Birmingham Business School  
Sharing Information on  
Progress Report 2019–2020**



‘Triple-crown’ accredited

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# Introduction

At Birmingham Business School (BBS), the belief that business is not just a profitable entity but also creates impact and value for society and the environment, is at the heart of what we do. This report covers the years 2019 and 2020. The year 2020 turned out to be one which none of us could have imagined, but one in which our ambition to work towards a responsible future has become even more important.

In this report, we feature the key events undertaken over the last two years, some of them planned and others which developed in response to the outbreak of Covid-19 and the changed circumstances in which we were all operating.

We highlight the importance of business schools being able to respond at times of crisis and the relevance of the research we undertake here at Birmingham to the challenges in these turbulent times.

This is our second Principles for Responsible Management Education (PRME) Sharing Information Report (SIP) report. In our previous report, we set ourselves targets across the areas of Education, Research and Organisation. We report on the progress made to date on each of these objectives and demonstrate how the six principles of PRME: Purpose, Values, Method, Research, Partnership and Dialogue cut across all of our areas of activity.

As a school, we continue to work on our overall responsible business strategy and vision to promote curiosity and thought leadership for responsible business. As we do so we remain strongly committed to the principles and networks of the PRME signatories.



# Birmingham Business School key highlights 2019–2020

## April 2019

Responsible Business Tracker® launches. Professor Ian Thomson of the Lloyds Banking Group Centre for Responsible Business launches the Responsible Business Tracker®, a tool created in collaboration with Business in the Community (BITC). This tool translates Sustainable Development Goals into key actions and enables companies to track improvements.



## June 2019

The first Sustainable Financial Innovation Centre (SFIC) conference takes place. It is co-hosted by Birmingham Business School and the *Journal of Corporate Finance*. The aim of the conference is to promote both theoretical and empirical research around the conference theme of 'Developments in Alternative Finance'.



## June 2019

Taught Masters programme review. Our new portfolio of 16 programmes is agreed following an internal evaluation of our postgraduate provision and the decision to develop an ambitious new suite of programmes. There is agreement across the School that every programme should have a strong emphasis on responsible business.

## September 2019

First Birmingham Business School Responsible Business Academic Symposium. The one-day symposium attracts nearly 100 participants, with the aim of showcasing the work of researchers at the School and bringing together diverse disciplines, methods and perspectives to debate the future of responsible business.

## October 2019

Birmingham Business School hosts a film screening of the Netflix documentary 'The 34th: The Story of Marriage Equality in Ireland'. This is followed by a panel discussion on marriage equality and LGBTQ rights in Ireland, with contributions from academic staff from both Birmingham Business School and Birmingham Law School.



## January 2020

Work Inclusivity Research Centre (WIRC) launches. WIRC brings together researchers and partners interested in the study of equality, diversity and inclusion in employment, guided by the principles of social justice. The centre is led by Co-Directors Professor Jo Duberley and Dr Holly Birkett.



## September 2019

The Lloyds Banking Group Centre for Responsible Business receives research funding from the following organisations:

- Procter & Gamble to work on sustainable consumption behaviour;
- Danone to develop their SDG reporting;
- ANC to explore effective carbon reporting practices and;
- IAA Business Boost to develop research into Artificial Intelligence

## December 2019

The Lloyds Banking Group Centre for Responsible Business holds its second Annual Conference on Actions and Decisions for Responsible Business. They welcome speakers from Lloyds Banking Group, Business in the Community, colleagues from the University of Birmingham, Laura Paterson from ThoughtWorks and Lord Victor Adebowale, Chair of Social Enterprise UK and CEO of Turning Point.

## February 2020

New extension to University House opens. University House was constructed in 1908 and is a grade II listed building, which has been home to Birmingham Business School since 2004. The extension provides office accommodation over four floors built around a central atrium. Photovoltaic panels are incorporated into the design and now produce an estimated 8% of the building's electricity. *Image courtesy of Holly Sambridge, BBS student (BSc Business Management) and President of the University of Birmingham Business & Accounting Society.*



## February 2020

*The Financial Times* publishes a list of business school research with social impact. Included in the list is 'Where's Dad? Exploring the low take-up of inclusive parenting policies in the UK'. The article is published in *Policy Studies* in 2019 and is written by Dr Holly Birkett of the Management department and Dr Sarah Forbes of the Marketing department.



## February 2020

Exhibition launches at the Confederation of British Industry's headquarters in London, sharing the responsible business research conducted by Birmingham Business School academics. We highlight our work on fair workplaces with the aim of encouraging business leaders to make their organisations more inclusive.

## February 2020

Professor Ian Thomson, Director of Lloyds Banking Group Centre for Responsible Business, is awarded the British Accounting and Finance Association's Distinguished Academic of the Year Award for 2019. This award recognises Professor Thomson's substantial and direct contribution to the UK academic accounting and finance community.

## September 2020

The first four of our new MSc programmes launch for student recruitment (MSc Accounting and Finance, MSc Financial Management, MSc Investments and MSc Financial Technology). Plans continue to develop four further new programmes, this time in the disciplines of marketing and human resource management.



## November 2020

Birmingham Business School is shortlisted for the Business School of the Year Award at the 2020 *Times Higher Education* (THE) Awards. The nomination recognises that as a School we have built a culture around our vision of 'working for a responsible future' amongst our staff and students, and engage our community in all that we do. We are delighted to receive this recognition of the progress we have made.



## July 2020

Birmingham Business School sponsors the award for 'Excellence in Responsible Business' at the annual Greater Birmingham Chambers of Commerce Awards. The ceremony is held online and the award is presented by Professor Cathy Cassell, Dean of the Business School.

## October 2020

The Vice-Chancellor of the University of Birmingham, Professor Sir David Eastwood sends a letter to the Secretary-General of the United Nations confirming the University's support for and commitment to the UN Global Compact. The pledge to participate in and engage with the Global Compact includes an agreement to report on progress every two years.

# Statement from the Dean



Here at Birmingham Business School, we are working for a responsible future, and our commitment to PRME and its principles continues to play a highly important role in this mission. Now, with the implementation of our strategy firmly underway, I am delighted to introduce our second Sharing Information on Progress report.

Over the last two years, we have continued to drive responsible business activities across the School. This includes our research, such as launching our Work Inclusivity Research Centre in January 2020, as well as in our education, most notably by embedding issues of ethics, sustainability, and responsibility throughout the re-designing of our postgraduate portfolio. A particular highlight for the School has been being shortlisted for the *Times Higher Education* 'Business School of the Year' Award, recognising our work in the area of responsible business.

Of course, the world in which we write our second report is very different from previous years, and never has our dedication to the PRME principles, such as purpose, values, and dialogue, been more crucial. Many of the challenges in society brought about or heightened by the Covid-19 pandemic are being explored through our research, and in turn, we endeavour for our graduates to leave us equipped with the skills and knowledge to become responsible leaders as business emerges from the crisis.

Personally, I am thrilled to have been appointed for a second term as Dean of Birmingham Business School, not least because there is still so much for us to do as part of our responsible business strategy. I look forward to further instilling the principles of PRME within our School as we realise our ambition to be thought leaders and sector-leading educators in the area of responsible business.

*Catherine Cassell*

**Professor Catherine Cassell**  
Dean, Birmingham Business School





# PRME at Birmingham Business School – review 2019–2020

At Birmingham Business School, our mission is to promote curiosity and thought leadership for responsible business across all of our world-class teaching and research activities.

## We work to meet this aspiration through continued focus and effort to deliver:

- A distinctive student experience where students have the opportunity to engage with industry professionals and world-leading researchers, and feel part of an international learning community
- Internationally recognised research focusing upon and providing responses to the key challenges around responsible business that face our economy and our society regionally and globally
- An environment where both staff and students are able to thrive and achieve their best work

Birmingham Business School is already globally renowned for the quality of our research and teaching. Our programmes are taught in Birmingham, Dubai and Singapore, attracting students from 106 countries. With an international faculty conducting research all over the world, and a global alumni community of around 44,000 graduates, we have a global footprint that ensures worldwide impact. From helping local communities to influencing global debate, our research contributes valuable insight into worldwide issues, helping our work to have a real impact. We implement responsible business into the core of our work, and our research centres are informing business transformation.

Our commitment to the responsible business agenda is evident in our partnership with the Lloyds Banking Group to develop the Centre for Responsible Business.

The Centre aims to help businesses in their progress towards the UN Sustainable Development Goals by working with numerous organisations to develop resources focused on making businesses more responsible. The Centre conducts rigorous research into responsible business practice and how this research can be implemented into real-life business environments.



The six PRME principles are aligned with our mission and ambitions as a business school and we are fully committed to implementing them to develop the managers and business leaders of tomorrow. Being a signatory of PRME enables us to continue building our responsible business strengths through diverse stakeholder engagement and collaborations. We believe PRME's six principles provide a powerful, values-driven framework for upholding excellence in responsible management education and research, including how we engage with all of our stakeholders both internally and externally.



# Birmingham Business School

## Key Statistics

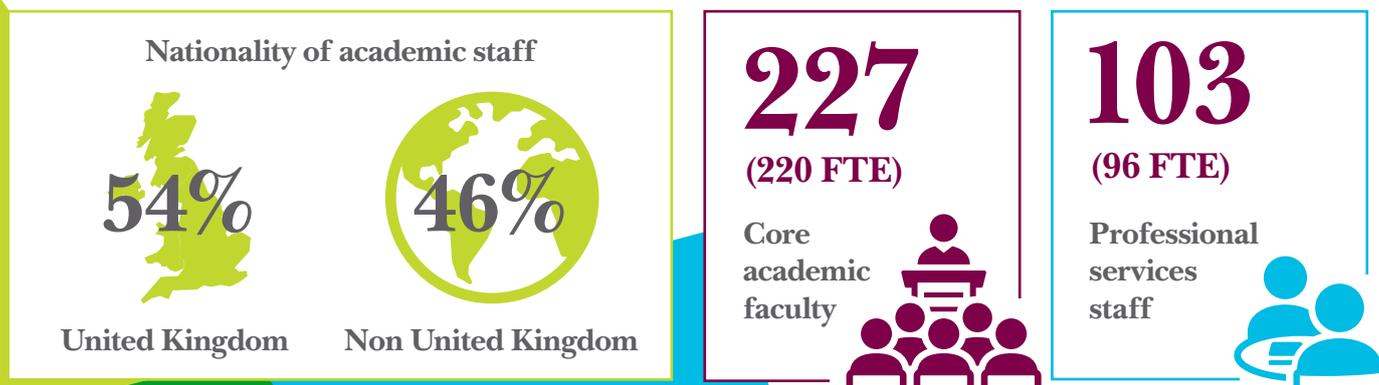
### Our student population

Total number of students (across all campuses)				
				
	Undergraduate	Postgraduate (taught)	Postgraduate (research)	
2019–20	3,230	2,807	98	Total 6,135
2020–21	3,576	1,994	119	Total 5,689

### Nationality of our students (for year 2020–21)



### Our staff



**OUR ACADEMIC STAFF ACROSS  
2019 AND 2020 PRODUCED A TOTAL OF**

**417**  
**journal articles**



**The University of Birmingham is an outstanding global University.  
It is currently ranked:**

**87th**  
**IN THE 2021 QS  
GLOBAL RANKINGS**

**13th**  
**IN THE COMPLETE UNIVERSITY  
GUIDE LEAGUE TABLE 2021**



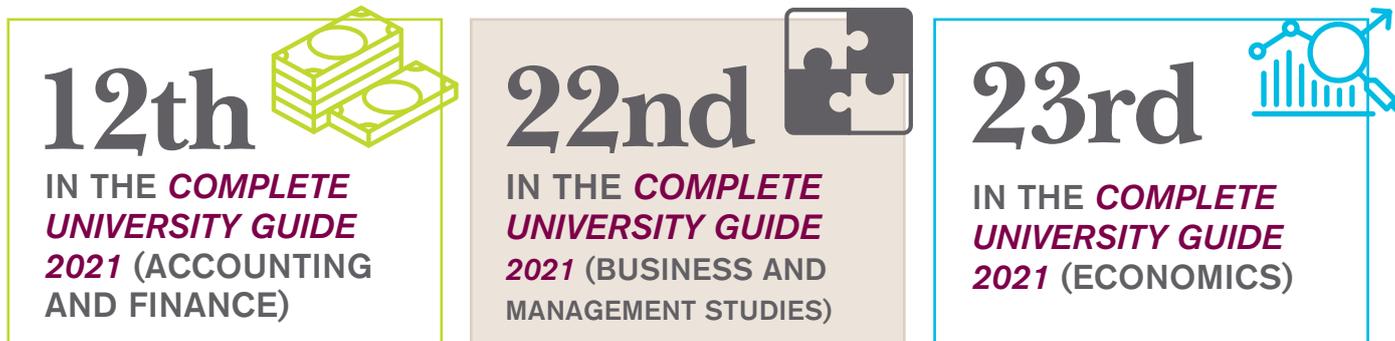
## Birmingham Business School postgraduate programmes are ranked:



Once again, all of our programmes performed well above the QS mean scores for employability and diversity.



## Birmingham Business School undergraduate programmes are ranked:



## Graduate employment (following completion of undergraduate study) for Birmingham Business School students graduating 2017–18

Activity Measure	Number of Graduates	% of Total
<b>Work</b>	194	<b>70.55%</b>
Work and Study	41	14.91%
<b>Study</b>	11	<b>4%</b>
Other	15	5.45%
<b>Due to Start Work/Study</b>	4	<b>1.45%</b>
Unemployed	10	3.64%



# Birmingham Business School meeting the challenge of Covid-19

During 2020, in common with organisations all around the world, Birmingham Business School has been required to adjust and adapt to the conditions surrounding the Covid-19 pandemic.

Staff within the School have worked hard to enable our teaching to continue and to support our students. In response to this upheaval, Birmingham Business School and the wider University implemented a range of support systems to help students at all levels of study. This has included the recruitment of community representatives to help students to create small communities online and in halls of residence, production of short videos updating students on the Covid-19 restrictions and things they needed to know, and additional support for students who were required to self-isolate.

Our research staff from the School have also been sharing their expertise on topics pertinent to the pandemic through blogs, seminars and talks and undertaking research to understand the impact and effects of this health and economic emergency.



- A research project was undertaken by **Dr Holly Birkett** (Management department) and **Dr Sarah Forbes** (Marketing department), along with colleagues from the University of Kent, to understand experiences of homeworking during the Covid-19 lockdowns and future attitudes to flexible working. This involved two surveys, one with employees and one with managers. Specifically, the employee survey explored how employees perceived the support they received from managers and organisations, how families shared housework and childcare (if applicable) as well as the impact on productivity and future attitudes to flexible working.

The data collected for the survey confirmed mothers were taking on a lot more housework and childcare during lockdown. In fact, during lockdown, mothers were also likely to undertake their paid work in the evenings to cope with the increased childcare. However, our research also found that fathers also took on additional load, taking on more childcare during the lockdown period. Interestingly, the data also showed that fathers who took more than two weeks' paternity leave after the birth or adoption of their child were more likely to have their female partner report that childcare was being shared equally during lockdown. Finally, the data showed that the majority of respondents intended to work flexibly in the future.

The data collected for the managers' survey showed managers were more supportive of flexible working since their experiences of managing those working flexibly during lockdown and that they intended to encourage more flexible working in the future, including for senior roles.





- Professor of Enterprise and Economic Geography, **John Bryson** investigated the impacts of Covid-19 on global supply chains. This led to one of the first papers to be published in this area and informed company practice through webinars delivered from the US, UK and UAE. Detailed research was also undertaken on organisational adaptation focussing on churches and the shift to online pastoral care and church services during the pandemic. The resultant paper informed government policy during subsequent periods of lockdown in the United Kingdom in November 2020 and January 2021, respectively. It also led to an ongoing project that is exploring innovations by faith-based organisations intended to support people through the Covid-19 pandemic.

Professor Bryson has also published a paper on best practice approaches to online teaching during the pandemic in the *Journal of Geography in Higher Education* and is one of the editors on a forthcoming book *Living with Pandemics: People Place and Policy*, Cheltenham: Edward Elgar. The latter is a volume that provides an integrated approach to understanding Covid-19 impacts and related adaptations, innovations and improvisations. All of Professor Bryson's Covid-19 research has informed the development of the West Midlands Combined Authority's Covid-19 recovery roadmap, supporting the development and implementation of regional policy designed to create better outcomes for people.



- Building back better was the theme of a virtual accounting forum organised by **Dr Robert Charnock**, Lecturer in Accounting in September 2020. Speakers from the universities of Strathclyde, Edinburgh and Bristol gave talks on climate finance and specifically greening the Covid-19 recovery. The session concluded with a discussion, led by Professor Ian Thomson of the Lloyds Banking Group Centre for Responsible Business, on engaging with the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, and how Covid-19 may influence work on the Sustainable Development Goals.



- A research submission by **Dr Eric Shiu** of the Marketing department has been published as evidence by the Covid-19 House of Lords Committee as part of their inquiry on life beyond Covid-19. Dr Shiu's study showed that for organisations which are more involved in social media technologies and their concomitant platforms, the performance of newly developed products would be significantly better than for counterparts which are less involved in the use of these technologies.

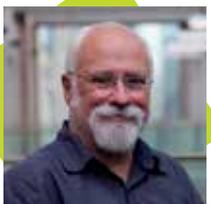




■ **Dr Danny McGowan** from the Finance department and the Sustainable Financial Innovation Centre has obtained research funding from UKRI/ESRC for a project entitled 'Did the Furlough Scheme and Mortgage Holidays Prevent Mortgage Default?' This research will help understand the effectiveness of the furlough and mortgage holidays policies, and will provide guidance to tailor and optimise their future design.



■ **Dr Anandadeep Mandal** has been conducting research into the uptake of Covid-19 vaccinations. This work, which is currently in pre-print with *The Trials*, is the largest survey study in the UK examining vaccine trial-uptakes. This study has key importance with Covid-19 mutant (VOC) B117 acquiring mutant E484. The study examines the various factors affecting participation in trials, including geographical locations in England. His latest research, which is collaborative work with the NIHR clinical trials network, is the largest Covid-19 Vaccine Uptake study in the UK that has explored the key drivers and barriers to Covid-19 vaccine acceptance. This study provides valuable insights into supporting and promoting uptake in a subsequent population-wide vaccine programme. The study was among the top ten most downloaded papers for *SSRN LANCET* as of 1 January 2021. Results of both of these studies were shared with the UK government's Vaccine Task Force in December and November 2020, respectively.



■ **Professor Mark Saunders** has been communicating throughout the period of the pandemic on the importance of trust in the workplace during times of crisis. This includes a podcast for Greater Birmingham Chambers of Commerce, available at: <https://audioboom.com/posts/7561429-maintaining-trust-in-a-virtual-workspace>. He has also co-authored two blog posts: one with Dr Margarita Nyfoudi on the importance of organisational leaders communicating during a crisis in ways that are open, competent, benevolent and demonstrate integrity, and one with Dr Colin Hughes on ways to maintain trust between team members and between employees and their managers.

Dr Mandal has also conducted research to examine the impact of Covid-19 on patients who receive chemotherapy. Findings have shown that chemotherapy does not adversely affect Covid-19-positive patients and have been widely used and acknowledged across the National Health Service in the UK and published in the journals *BLOOD* and *British Journal of Haematology*.





**Professor Jo Duberley is one of the Co-Directors of WIRC**

- The Work Inclusivity Research Centre (WIRC) organised a series of three online seminars during 2020, providing early exploration of the effects and implications of the Covid-19 pandemic for work and the people who do it. The seminars focused on care responsibilities and work, occupational and labour market inequalities, and inclusive leadership during the pandemic. Each was attended by around 50 people, including academics, policy-makers and practitioners. Speakers presented original research and raised policy/practice implications of changes to working practices before, during and after the pandemic.

A further WIRC seminar was held in December 2020, bringing together trust scholars from around the world to explore the theme of 'trust in challenging work environments'. Speakers were from the USA (University of Miami), Germany (University of Witten/Herdeke) and the UK (University of Glasgow) and industry (Capgemini) and attracted over 100 attendees.



- **Professor Siddhartha Bandyopadhyay**, Professor of Economics and Director of the Centre for Crime, Justice and Policing has co-written a commentary on a Public Health Approach to managing domestic abuse during the Covid-19 pandemic. This has been published in *The Lancet Public Health*, *The Conversation* and also featured in the Chartered ABS and ITN launch film 'Business Schools for Good' <https://charteredabs.org/chartered-abs-and-itn-launch-business-schools-for-good-film/>. In these articles, Professor Bandyopadhyay highlights the under-reported and hidden nature of both domestic violence and child maltreatment and the cost of these crimes both to the victims and the public health system, concluding that during periods of lockdown in response to Covid-19, these crimes are increasing with potentially devastating consequences. He progresses to discuss ways to combat them through health surveillance.

# Birmingham Business School – achievements and progress on PRME objectives

## Education

Key objectives and goals 2019–2020	Progress and achievements	Progress
We will introduce a core module on responsible business into all undergraduate programmes in 2019.	The 'Responsible Business: Theory and Practice' module has been designed within the new suite of undergraduate programmes that was launched in September 2019.	Achieved 

## Teaching responsible business

The 'Responsible Business: Theory and Practice' module is a 20-credit compulsory module, which is now being delivered at intermediary (Year 2) level across all undergraduate programmes.

In addition, we have designed a new 20-credit 'Responsible Marketing and Consumption' module, which is now being delivered as a final-year optional module across all undergraduate programmes.





**Dr Christoph Biehl** is a lecturer in Responsible Business at the University of Birmingham and part of the Lloyds Banking Group Centre for Responsible Business.

Here, he discusses his approach to teaching responsible business, the challenges faced and the progress he has made introducing this module across programmes.

*'The academic year 2020–21 will present a special milestone for the teaching of responsible business at Birmingham Business School. From this academic year on, there will be a core module in responsible business at undergraduate, postgraduate and MBA levels. This means that by the end of this year, more than 800 students will have received an introduction to the issues surrounding responsible business, preparing our students for the business challenges of the future.'*

*'The modules aim to connect cutting-edge research outcomes with best practice in the industry. In order to achieve this aim, I have chosen the blended learning approach to teaching, an approach that I was using even before the current pandemic hit. This allows me to provide our students with insights into decision-making processes that directly influence the field of responsible business.'*

*'Each session of the course is built on leading academic literature. To make it easier for students to engage with the literature, I have secured access to interviews with leading researchers about their work. On this robust foundation I then build the critical analysis through case studies.'*

*'The case studies come to life through our pre-recorded video interviews with Members of Parliament, industry leaders and NGO experts on key topics of responsible business. These topics include inter alia modern slavery, climate change and biodiversity loss. Students learn to understand complex situations from a variety of different perspectives, based on the solid foundation of academic research.'*

*'There are several challenges that I face teaching topics in the area of responsible business. One challenge is the complexity and interdisciplinarity of the issues, that go far beyond standard business teaching. For example, how did a renewable energy law in Germany contribute to bee decline and an increase in food prices in Mexico? To address this challenge, I have chosen the flipped classroom approach: functioning as curator of information, discussant and devil's advocate, I give my students the freedom to explore the complexity of the topics in their own time. During the teaching sessions, they can ask me questions and we can explore the topics together in more detail. This approach works well and helps to support the students' exploration and sensemaking of complex topics.'*

*'An additional challenge that I see in responsible business teaching is the "experience gap". Most of my students have – luckily – never experienced the challenges that I analyse as part of the courses. In my teaching, I try to find ways to connect students to these challenges – What does deforestation look like? How can you create sanitation in a remote village in Nepal? It is possible for students to explore both of these case studies through the use of virtual reality. Immersing my students into the situation can help bridge the "experience gap" and it allows students to link abstract concepts to visual and emotional impressions. This approach has been very well received by students but has been put on pause for the moment due to the lack of face-to-face teaching during the Covid-19 pandemic.'*

# Focus on undergraduate students of Birmingham Business School, past and present

It is always exciting to keep up with our students after they graduate from Birmingham Business School (BBS) and see how their careers progress. Here, we introduce three of our former students who, following completion of their undergraduate degrees, have put their responsible business learning into practice and one who is pursuing her responsible business agenda while still completing her course of study.



Upon graduation, **Josh Turner** (BSc Business Management) started Stand4Socks, a multi-award-winning social enterprise. It supports 12 of the UN Sustainable Development Goals, as well as homelessness in the UK. All yarn used for the socks is sustainable, and the socks are produced in a factory audited and accredited by Sedex. The premise of the business is 'buy one pair of socks, give one to someone in need'. To date, over 130,000 pairs of socks have been donated to those in need. Josh can be found in this University of Birmingham video, giving more details of his time at Birmingham and his business. <https://youtu.be/cO5GjTPyITw>



Business School alumnus **Pablo Perversi** (BSc Manufacturing and Economics) is a Director and Chief Innovation, Sustainability & Quality Officer for Barry Callebaut, the world's largest chocolate supplier. He is also a Board Member of WBCSD (World Business Council for Sustainable Development). He has returned to campus on numerous occasions to share his expert knowledge with students.



**Hazel Culley** studied Commerce and French at Birmingham Business School. Her subsequent career has seen her establish herself as an expert in ethical supply chains, first with Sainsbury's, then Sedex (a world-leading ethical trade provider) and for the past 13 years, with Marks & Spencer. Her current role is Head of Food Sustainability, which has a strong focus on corporate social responsibility. In October 2019, she returned to the University of Birmingham to give a guest lecture to MSc Marketing students on the topic of 'Managing sustainable global supply chains'.

Since arriving at Birmingham Business School, current student Harriet Noy has developed an interest in living more sustainably and an app that helps fellow students to do the same.

Third-year Economics student **Harriet Noy**, wouldn't describe herself as having had a lifelong passion for sustainability but since arriving at the University of Birmingham, she has been inspired by others, particularly her housemate Sarah, to think about this issue more seriously. Together with Sarah, Harriet set up 'Plastic free UoB' in her second year. This is a student society which organises sustainable activities around campus, for example, cleaning the local canal and also examines the way the University operates, suggesting more sustainable alternatives. However, it was when she found herself ordering a new costume to wear each week at the themed Sports Night at The Student Guild that inspiration for her business venture struck. As sports clubs have a new theme each week for their Wednesday night event, she found that this meant that she was ordering a new costume on a weekly basis, then no longer needing it, and that everyone else was doing the same. Convinced there must be a more sustainable alternative, she looked for ways that students could easily exchange costumes with others.

From this, Hazaar was born, an online marketplace, where students can trade goods and hand them over in person, so no wasteful packaging or travel miles are required. Initially launched at the University of Birmingham and running through Facebook marketplace, Hazaar has since spread to 35 universities across the UK with over 15,000 student members. As well as costumes, students can trade clothing, textbooks and household items, enabling goods to be recycled and students to reduce their carbon footprint.

As Hazaar has grown, Harriet has networked widely within the Tech Entrepreneur community, seeking opportunities to learn from others. This convinced her that a change was needed to take Hazaar to the next level. A successful funding pitch enabled her to raise £20,000 and reach a further cash and equity deal with Niam Marketing. This means that she can now develop an app that will make Hazaar

even more accessible and enable her to easily respond to students' changing needs. The app is currently under development and will launch at the University of Birmingham at Easter 2021 and across the UK the following September.

Once she graduates, Harriet will be moving to Manchester, where she has already secured office space, to concentrate on developing Hazaar further. Convinced that her own experience and understanding of student life has been key to the innovations and success of Hazaar, she plans to retain essential links with universities through the appointment of a 'Head of Hazaar' at each university, who will help organise trading, community events and encourage support for sustainable living.



# Birmingham Business School Postgraduate Teaching

Key objectives and goals 2019–2020	Progress and achievements	Progress
Ensure all postgraduate courses have an element of responsible business teaching.	The Birmingham Business School is part-way through a process that will see the redesign of existing programmes, in addition to the launch of new postgraduate programme offers.	In progress 

We have taken a two-stage approach to ensure our postgraduate students have access to responsible business teaching. In the short-term, we have looked to introduce new modules into our existing programmes; we have also commenced a review and relaunch of all our MSc programmes across the School.

### New modules in existing programmes

As an example of the new modules within existing programmes, a new ten-credit optional module Responsible Marketing and Society was launched in 2019 and is now an option for all students on the MSc Marketing suite of programmes. Responsible marketing entails ideas of sustainability, ethics and moral accountability in the marketplace and this module aims to expose students to criticisms of, and responsibility challenges in, marketing and consumption, through both theoretical and practical perspectives.

The module also seeks to enable students to consider the approaches that they can use to respond to such challenges reflectively and responsibly. In doing so, the module seeks to encourage future marketing practitioners to develop their own well-informed understanding of, and position on, responsible marketing and consumption.

The following insights reflect on these developments on our MSc Marketing suite as well as other programmes.



Birmingham Business School alumni **Oyinkansola Adebayo** (MSc Development Economics) has co-founded Niyó Enterprise <https://niyoenterprise.com/>, a multi-faceted technology organisation that prides itself in using hair, beauty and programmes as tools to economically empower underserved black women. She is also one of the founders of Black Codher, which provides training and opportunities for black females to progress into digital occupations.

# Former students on the MSc Marketing programmes discuss their experiences



**Thomas Byrne,**  
Marketing Manager at Steps to Work  
*'Ethical responsibility was emphasised throughout the course of the MSc programme, with particular focus being placed upon ethical best practice amongst marketing professionals. Given that the organisation I work for focuses on the delivery of services to individuals from marginalised groups, including those with disabilities and members of the BAME community, as well as those who identify as LGBTQ+, care has to be taken to ensure that such individuals are not taken advantage of. For example, it is imperative that informed consent is obtained when utilising service users for promotional purposes and that they are not being represented in a manner that may be deemed offensive or detrimental to their wellbeing. Furthermore, compliance with data protection regulations, such as GDPR, is of critical importance, with due care being taken to ensure that personal information is used only for intended, pre-disclosed purposes.'*



**Jiayu Qian**  
*'I have been very influenced by the Responsible Marketing and Society module. One day, I hope to do something regarding women, power and other ethical issues in the Chinese market when I am capable of doing so. I used to think that responsible or ethical marketing were just ways in which companies promoted their brands. However, I have gradually understood that ethical marketing is more than that. First of all, it can be a win-win strategy, as consumers of this generation tend to care about ethical issues. We love to support the brands that practise ethical marketing. In addition, I think it is important for companies to pay attention to ethical marketing, since there are so many issues to be solved in this world.'*



**James Wilson:**  
*'I have always had a strong interest in sustainability and the Responsible Marketing and Society module has furthered my passion. I am far more aware of corporate practices and relevant responsibility issues. The module has made me think first and foremost about the responsibility of a company within a market and also my responsibility within my professional remit. I am currently applying for jobs and one of my first items to research is how transparent the company is with their operations and also their impact within their community.'*



# Responsible Business in our Graduate Diploma

The Business Planning and Entrepreneurship course is an introductory level module on our Graduate Diploma in Business Administration programme. The aim is to give students a general understanding of corporate and individual entrepreneurship. For module leader Dr Inci Toral, it is important that students understand how entrepreneurship can function within the current social, economic and environmental challenges of the contemporary world, an approach that fully supports the Business School's Responsible Business agenda.

## Student experiences 2019–2020

For students taking the module in 2020, Dr Toral developed an assignment based on the challenge posed by AIM2Flourish (<https://aim2flourish.com/>). Using the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as their lens, students were tasked with identifying an innovation that helps to achieve one or more of the SDGs, conducting an interview with the relevant business leader and then developing a video presentation to communicate the key learning points. The key aim was to help students understand the importance of entrepreneurial processes which can be profitable and caring for the environment and society at the same time.

One group identified an organisation called the Brown Button Foundation to focus on for their project, led by founder and CEO, Adepeju Jaiyeoba. The Foundation works across rural communities in Nigeria to enable mothers to give birth safely. Nigeria has one of the highest numbers of maternal death rates in the world and, after losing a close friend during childbirth, Adepeju left her job as a lawyer to find ways to address this problem. One of the Foundation's initiatives is the mothers' delivery kit project, which provides a sterilised and affordable birthing kit containing essential and safe equipment for both mother and child. These kits can be supplied to health centres, hospitals and traditional birth attendants as well as maternal and child health organisations across the country. To date, approximately 550,000 kits have been supplied, allowing the Foundation to move closer towards their aim that in Nigeria, every baby will get the opportunity to live to his or her potential and every mother will get the opportunity to watch her baby grow.

Reflecting on what she learned from the project and the module, group member, Olatomide Obaniyi said, *'Although I was conscious of the United Nations commitment to improving human rights and living standards, if I am completely honest I was unaware of the United Nations 17 Sustainable Development Goals. It was really good to understand how these goals can drive business activity across the world and at the same time improve people's lives.'*

She added, *'The project opened my eyes to the great work that some entrepreneurs are doing to support the United Nations' goals. It was really interesting to learn the creative ways you can make changes through the use of a "good" business model. There are many impressive and inspiring qualities that I admire in Adepeju. She is constantly innovating and finding new ways to address issues within her country. Recently, she started a new venture called Colourful Giggles; this project produces and distributes baby cereals, which help reduce malnutrition. Adepeju's work is truly enlightening and pushes me to think how I too can make a difference. The team and I are grateful to have had the opportunity to discuss her business and learn from her. Her work is really making a difference in many parts of Nigeria.'*





# The role of role play: An integrative learning and teaching ethics project

Dr Ann-Christine Frandsen discusses a research project undertaken by staff in the Accounting department that explores using role play to teach professional ethics.



The 'role of role play' is an ongoing, exciting and integrated research and teaching and learning project undertaken by nine members of the Accounting department: Dr Ann-Christine Frandsen, Dr Gabriela Rozenfeld, Dr Wafa Ben Khaled, James Brackley, Dr Idlan Zakaria, Dr Elisavet Mantzari, Dr Madlen Sobkowiak, Professor

Keith Hoskin and Professor Ian Thomson. The research project was initiated in 2019, following the introduction of a professional ethics module entitled Professional Integrity and the Reflective Practitioner (PIRP) in 2016–17, which is now a compulsory module in our MSc International Accounting and Finance programme. As the teaching team reflected on how best to engage students in first-person ethical dilemmas, we proposed engaging them in scenarios where they could act out and then reflect on ethical dilemmas in

a range of ways. Hence, we turned to role play as a key component of the module. Working with professional actors, one of whom was a University of Birmingham MBA graduate, we jointly designed and delivered the first session introducing the students to role play. Subsequently, funding was obtained from the Alumni Impact Fund, and from Birmingham Business School, enabling us to expand the project further and run a two-day workshop.

Day one was a warming-up preparatory session, introducing role play scenarios where actors and staff played and then switched roles in dilemma situations, with the added challenge of improvising dialogue and reactions as the situation unfolded. The preparation then began for day two, where each group would role play being senior executives in an oil company having to decide how to handle the aftermath of a major oil rig explosion and oil spill, balancing commercial versus public relations concerns. Students were asked to dress professionally, as they would for real-life settings, to get properly 'into role'.

On day two, students were briefed on how to 'get inside' the characters, visualising themselves as a 'CEO', a 'line manager', a 'safety engineer', a 'customer' or a 'supplier'. The idea was to give them just enough structure but then enable them to improvise, becoming the author of how each role was played in interaction with their peers.





*'Before the role play, I think it's just quite clear that I should behave legally but when I play a role in this activity, I find that there are some things that people in a firm need to do [which] is like legal but unethical: it is complicated, more complicated than I thought before. So [it] is a complex problem then, more complex than just [having] to think about the information that's in [our] lessons.'*

(Student A)

## Preliminary insights and results

From the observations and interactions, plus subsequent focus group interviews and analysis of student engagement in the role play, we have excellent preliminary data indicating a number of positive outcomes. The activities proved good at helping students problematise and diagnose dilemmas. It also helped create an understanding of the different perspectives you gain through playing different roles and in generating some sense of the potential complexity of future professional work experiences and identities.

We also had evidence of interactive and evolving appreciation of complex ethical problems, both on the day and in focus groups. It was also clear that the role playing had created shared memories.

One thing that stands out is how the experience generated reflectiveness: it made students think. And these reflections were not only about things 'out there' but generated some 'inner voice' speaking about themselves in relation to the dilemma. In particular, many students remarked on how the experience brought home how ethical dilemmas are complex, or have no easy right answers.

A key aim of this project has been to make role play a permanent part of our teaching and learning, included in the PIRP module. Next year (2021), the event will be set up online because of Covid-19. This will be particularly challenging but also opens up new possibilities for discovering how role play can be inclusive, engaging, fun and a great learning experience about professional ethics [and beyond]. The research also has important potential applicability beyond the current degree programme to students and degree programmes more generally who are seeking effective ways to develop ethical understanding and professional integrity in their students, and

to learn about the role of the teacher(s) in these ways of learning. Hence, the next step is to provide a framework for how role play can be integrated into modules, large as well as small, across the University of Birmingham starting with Birmingham Business School.

# Our new suite of Masters programmes

Our taught postgraduate programmes have been one of the strengths of Birmingham Business School, attracting growing numbers of students from across the world each year. In 2018, we commenced an internal evaluation of our postgraduate provision to develop an ambitious new suite of programmes to ensure that our offering remains cutting edge. Our aims are to offer students the knowledge and skills required for the contemporary workplace, reflect the research focus and specialism of our staff and develop specialist programmes for students seeking advanced levels of study.

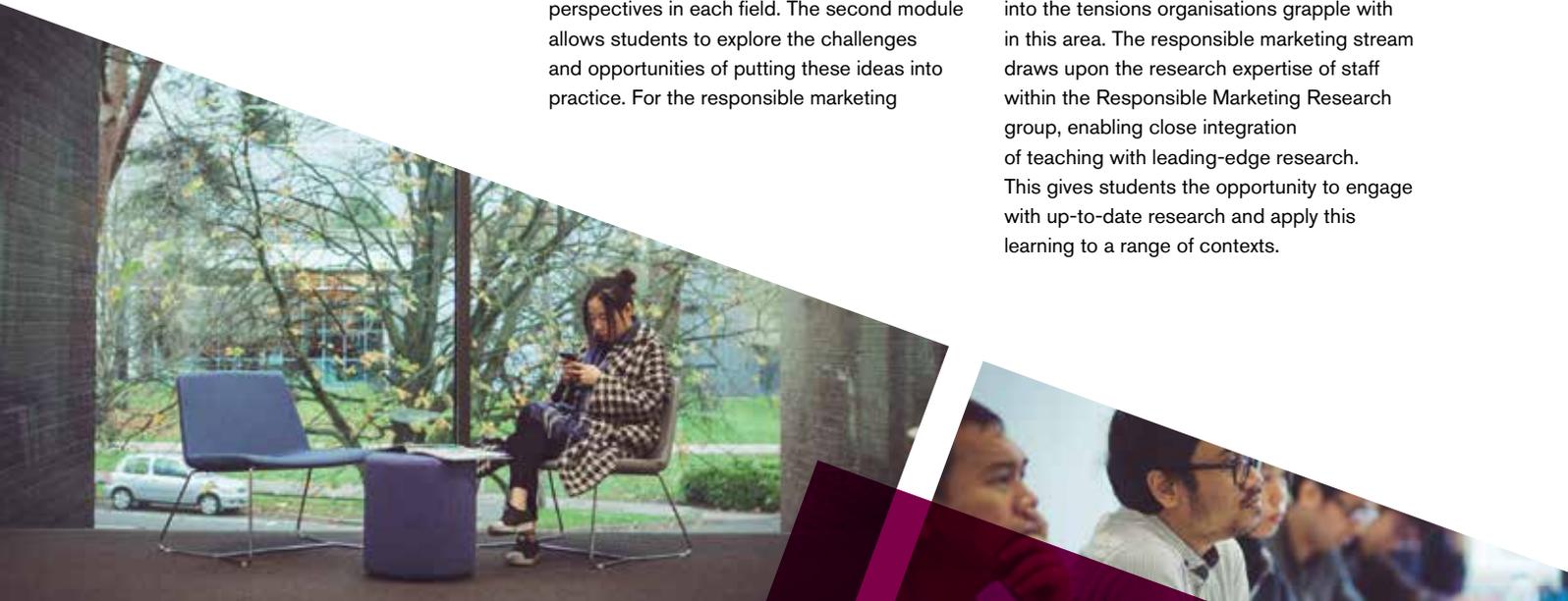
We are currently part-way through this process, which will be implemented over the course of five years, with all new programmes in place and welcoming students by 2024. As part of this process, we started with a School-wide consultation on what the new portfolio should contain. One of the outcomes was that every programme should have a strong emphasis on responsible business. This can either be through dedicated modules or through embedding the principles of responsible business across the majority of the modules on the programme. Here, we highlight how the Department of Marketing has built responsible business into one of their new programmes.

In addition to adapting to lockdown arrangements, which dominated much of 2020 and required developing new ways of delivering

their teaching online, the Marketing group worked hard during the lockdown months to review and redesign their postgraduate programmes. Both the theory and practice of responsible marketing already featured across the programmes, but the opportunity to review the programmes provided the chance to make this a core theme throughout the postgraduate offering. The new MSc Marketing is aimed at students new to the marketing discipline, structured in teaching blocks to provide a broad understanding of the subject, while also allowing the development of specialist knowledge. In the second semester, students can select a specialist stream on which to focus their studies. They are able to choose between digital marketing, international marketing and responsible marketing. Each stream has two modules, the first one focusing on the theory, frameworks and key perspectives in each field. The second module allows students to explore the challenges and opportunities of putting these ideas into practice. For the responsible marketing

stream, the first module taken by students is 'The Ethics of Markets and Marketing Ethics'. This module introduces students to ethical theory and concepts and considers how these relate to the operation and activities of the market, organisations and marketing practitioners as well as consumers, and includes students reflecting on their own role as consumers.

The second module 'Marketing and Sustainability', focuses on the application of theories, concepts and frameworks as a means to address wicked problems and achieve more responsible outcomes in marketing and consumer behaviour that have an overall beneficial effect for all stakeholders. During the modules, students will attend workshops run by industry experts, including Birmingham Business School (BBS) alumni, to delve further into the tensions organisations grapple with in this area. The responsible marketing stream draws upon the research expertise of staff within the Responsible Marketing Research group, enabling close integration of teaching with leading-edge research. This gives students the opportunity to engage with up-to-date research and apply this learning to a range of contexts.





Dr Angela Marqui, Senior Lecturer in Business Education, who supported the Marketing group in the development of the new programme said, *'As part of the development of the new marketing programmes, we undertook consultation with both students and senior leaders from the marketing and advertising industry. All were excited and reassured about the focus on responsible marketing. Those from industry recognised the need for graduates to be able to understand and operate within an increasingly dynamic and complex business environment. They identified the growing momentum among consumers' ethical and sustainability concerns and businesses' need to be able to respond and create value in ways that reflect and respond to this.'*

Dr Nicki Newman, Birmingham Business School Director of Postgraduate Taught Programmes said, *'Revising our taught postgraduate programmes has provided an exciting opportunity to introduce new modules, bring in innovative forms of assessment and explore what the School's focus on responsible business might mean in the context of each of our subject areas. We have received very positive feedback from both students and industry practitioners. Our graduates face a challenging business environment and we want to prepare them for it in the best way we can.'*



# Birmingham Business School MBA programme

Key objectives and goals 2019–2020	Progress and achievements	Progress
<p>The current Responsible Business MBA module to be made compulsory, after further development through focus groups with students.</p>	<p>The Responsible Business MBA module has now been approved as a compulsory module. It will become a requirement starting 2020–2021 for all students taught on the Birmingham campus.</p>	<p>Achieved </p>

One of the key outcomes of responsible management education is in the actions and decision-making of our students. As our PRME journey develops, we are extremely proud to hear stories of our alumni as they develop their careers and embrace the School's vision to promote curiosity and thought leadership for responsible business in their chosen area of activity. Here we introduce a selection of Birmingham Business School MBA alumni and the difference they are making in the world.





**Gary Wroe (Executive MBA)** is Managing Director of Hockley Mint, one of Europe's largest jewellery manufacturers. Gary is passionate about ethical business and was instrumental in launching the Fairtrade Gold Ambassador Scheme. Hockley Mint was also one of the first large jewellery producers to supply Fair Trade Gold alternatives to its usual products. They also promote traceable diamonds. Gary has also returned to Birmingham Business School to share his knowledge and experience on numerous occasions. He participated as a panellist at the Responsible Business Academic Symposium in September 2019, and gave a guest lecture to our new MBA Cohort in September 2020.



Since graduation, MBA alumni **Priyadi Nugrahadi** has returned home to Indonesia and set up the social enterprise Husna Persada (see <https://husnapersada.com/>) on the tiny island of Lombok. The company produces sustainable skincare products with the mission 'to become a strong and sustainable global social enterprise that benefits and grows with the community.' The skincare products are produced using fair trade principles when sourcing raw ingredients and for every ten bars made, one is donated to the local community.

When sales of the soap reached 10,000 bars, Priyadi celebrated by building a toilet block for locals. When the local area was hit by a major earthquake in 2018, the company provided immediate disaster relief; supplying medicine and clothes, and establishing a temporary toilet block. Further initiatives he has undertaken include initiating a proposal to help surrounding islands preserve water using Biopore technology and infiltration wells, proposing a plan to create 'zero waste' on the island by creating food for livestock which would in turn benefit those in food poverty, and creating a 'walking library' with volunteers taking books to outlying villages.



**Peter Awongo** received the Birmingham Business School African MBA scholarship award for the academic year 2019–2020. After passing with a Distinction, he has returned home to develop his business and is beginning new projects to support the logistics of 17,000 United Nations troops for a peacekeeping mission through Kenya, Uganda and South Sudan. Peter said, 'Through the MBA at the Birmingham Business School, I acquired a new skill set to upscale my businesses and to invest into new ventures with confidence and understanding of the mechanics of running a business sustainably.'



**Rishi Sher Singh (MBA 2014)** is based in Bangalore in India and runs a Management Consultancy, specialising in ethical supply chains and Human Rights Due Diligence. For the past four years, Rishi has also mentored students, and worked with academics, especially in the UK, to share his insights.



# Responsible Business Workshops for Education

Key objectives and goals 2019–2020	Progress and achievements	Progress
The Business Education Group will deliver an annual workshop for staff showcasing how to include responsibility in the curriculum.	The Business Education Group now has a virtual learning environment (VLE) page titled 'BBS Learning and Teaching Seminars and Workshops,' which is accessible to all academic staff within the Business School.	Achieved 

Responsible business workshops delivered to date include 'Engaging International Students in Our Teaching' and 'Cultural Awareness in Learning and Teaching.' The workshops sought to expose staff to culturally inclusive approaches to engaging students with learning content, creating debate and discussions around existing and potential teaching practices across our curricula. We also hosted a PRME workshop addressing 'Innovative Pedagogy for Responsible Business Teaching'.

## PRME Workshop: Innovative Pedagogy for Teaching Responsible Business

Our workshop on Innovative Pedagogy for Responsible Business Teaching took place in May 2019. The half-day workshop enabled academics and educators to present and discuss innovative ways to engage students with responsible business learning content. The event included presentations from four professors, our corporate relations manager and a Birmingham-based non-profit organisation whose work is in the field of responsible leadership.



Six different approaches to teaching responsible business were presented on the day. The first was role play, which enables students to live out ethical dilemmas, encouraging ethical thinking and decisions. Action learning, the second approach, gives students the opportunity to learn by engaging in a real-life micro-investment decision to make a live, sustainable micro-investment. The third approach, namely social action campaigns, enables students to create real social campaigns, including relevant campaigning materials and bidding for campaign funds.

The fourth approach involves virtual reality material (VR), giving students the opportunity to have an immersive experience through a sustainability case. Another approach was alternative reality gaming, involving a game where students can make ethical and sustainability decisions in alternative reality situations. In this approach, students also have the opportunity to see the consequences of their decisions. The final approach entailed using factual video and news resources to enhance student understanding of complex

sustainability problems. Students are encouraged to apply theoretical knowledge to real-life case examples.

The day also enabled participants to reflect on the common challenges we face when teaching responsible business topics. For example, we discussed the challenges of engaging students as active and reflective learners, particularly where student groups have different levels of prior knowledge of sustainability and business ethics. Another discussion topic was how to make modules appealing to greater numbers of students when responsible business is offered as an optional subject.

The event also generated a range of questions for future exploration. For instance, questions were raised about how to integrate these new technologies and approaches within assessments, as well as how to generate student engagement with these approaches among students who prefer the more traditional modes of learning and teaching.

*Text adapted from: Weybrecht, G. (2019) Innovative Pedagogy for Responsible Business Teaching – PRME UK and Ireland Chapter, 27 June 2019. Accessed 8/2/20. Available at: <https://primetime.unprme.org/2019/06/27/innovative-pedagogy-for-responsible-business-teaching-prme-uk-and-ireland-chapter/>*



# Birmingham Business School – achievements and progress on PRME objectives

## Research

Key objectives and goals 2019–2020	Progress and achievements	Progress
We will increase the number of research-active staff to carry out responsible business-related research.	During the period 2019–2020, we employed a total of 54 new core academic staff, 23 of which are currently engaged in responsible business research.	Achieved 

Key objectives and goals 2019–2020	Progress and achievements	Progress
We will ensure every department has responsible business-related research outputs and at least three of our research centres will have responsible business-related research outputs.	A list of research outputs relating to responsible business for 2019–2020 can be found in the Appendices (pages 56–61 of this publication).	Achieved 

We are pleased that despite the impact of Covid-19 on university budgets, we have been able to expand the number of academics undertaking research in the area of responsible business. The publications listed at the end of this report and the work featured here identify the quality, breadth and impact of our research activities in this area.



### Equal Parenting Project

**Dr Holly Birkett** from the Management group and **Dr Sarah Forbes** from the Marketing group continue to develop The Equal Parenting Project at Birmingham Business School.

One aspect of their research is focused on breaking down barriers to encourage more fathers to care for a child in the first year after birth or adoption. This would allow families to spend more time together, fathers to bond more with their children early on and support gender equality in the workplace.

The 'Fathers in the Workplace Toolkit' is a practical guide, developed to help organisations to better support fathers in achieving this. The toolkit contains a variety of resources around communications, which can be adapted according to the needs of a particular business or its employees.



**Professor Jan Bebbington** is working closely with the Seafood Business for Ocean Stewardship (SeaBOS) initiative (<https://seabos.org/>). **SeaBOS** is a peer-to-peer co-designed learning initiative made up of the CEOs of the ten largest seafood companies in the world who are seeking to be 'ocean stewards'. These firms have been characterised as 'keystone actors' – globally large companies who have a disproportionate impact on the ocean. They are economically very large (as measured by turnover), as well as being ecologically significant.

The working hypothesis behind the initiative is that by working together, keystone actors can transform their own impacts and (due to their size and global reach) will also transform seafood business across the globe. Aligned to this partnership, there is an ongoing programme of research to address critical issues related to seafood production, involving both natural scientists alongside accounting and finance scholars. Professor Bebbington's academic publications from this project include explorations of the accounting/organisational issues faced by this organisation as well as papers that specifically focus on how science and business can interact with each other. In addition, this work has fed into the High Level Panel for a Sustainable Ocean Economy (<https://www.oceanpanel.org/>) with the publication of a 'blue paper' on ocean equity.



As part of a multidisciplinary team, **Dr Charika Channuntapipat**, a lecturer in the Department of Accounting, undertook a project exploring Thailand's Current Achievement in the 17th Global Sustainable Development Goal (SDG). This involved looking at Localized Indicators/Measures for Thailand to enhance partnerships and collaborations through Finance and Trade. The project was funded by The Thailand Research Fund and SDG Move Thailand. The findings suggest that the primary focus should be on target 17.3. Then the focus should be on target 17.1, target 17.11, target 17.2 and target 17.4, respectively. The interlinkage and prioritisation are used to form policy recommendations to achieve Goal 17 in the aspects of finance and trade. The study not only makes policy recommendations, but also provides suggestions on data collection and the method of analysis for prioritising targets under other SDGs.



# Trust (and distrust) research

Trust within and between organisations has been shown to be the lubricant which enables business to function. In organisations where there are high levels of trust, employees are more productive and collaborative, have more energy and are more likely to stay longer. Arguably as important, if not more so, they are also more likely to be happier in the workplace and with their lives generally.

In the Birmingham Business School's Workplace Inclusivity Research Centre, the Trust research stream explores issues of employee trust and distrust both within and between organisations as well as between organisations and those who interact with them. Within our work, trust is defined as the willingness to become vulnerable to another based upon favourable expectations of their intentions and behaviour. This trust is demonstrated through a risk-taking act.

The conceptual and empirical research in the trust stream advances our understanding of the role and dynamics of trust and distrust, its development in organisations and its impact on both those in the workplace and those who interact and engage with them.



## Trust and distrust

Professor Mark Saunders has been researching the nature of trust and distrust and, in particular, understanding whether they are simply opposites or are based upon differing expectations and anticipated manifestations. Mark has found that the ways in which employees make trust and distrust judgements is shaped significantly by managerial actions and that, rather than being simply trusting or distrustful, employees can be ambivalent – neither trusting nor distrustful of their managers.

Mark has found that the actions that are important in shaping trust and distrust differ, rather than just being opposites. In many instances, employee distrust is prompted by incidents of injustice or harm, such as feeling the employer is malevolent or dishonest. In contrast, employees who feel neither trusting nor distrustful relate this to their leaders' calibre, in particular their lack of competence. In such situations, employees are likely to disengage and distance themselves from their work. Where employees are trusting, in general confident and willing to take the initiative, this is enhanced by their managers' competence and benevolence. Fairness and regular communications, undertaken with candour and integrity are vital.





# The Centre on Household Assets and Savings Management (CHASM)



The aim of CHASM is to explore the ongoing changes to personal financial wellbeing by providing a focus for world-class research on the role of financial assets and their distribution in people's lives from pensions to housing to savings.

The centre has three cross-cutting themes running throughout its research:

- Variations across countries;
- The impact of demographic change, including population ageing; and
- The role of the state, financial services sector, employers, third sector and individuals/families.

Among the current projects being undertaken within the centre, Professor Andy Lymer and Dr James Gregory have completed a three-year research project in partnership with East Devon District Council (EDDC) and Live West Housing. The project explored the relationship between housing tenure, wellbeing and life-chances.

Professor Andy Lymer has also completed a project with Birmingham City Council's Financial Inclusion Partnership members (funded by the Money and Pension Service) over the last year, looking to help them develop local provision of savings and appropriate credit use support to various communities across the city as part of a pathfinder project. It has explored how they might better deliver local organisational support as part of their new 20-year strategy.

During the unprecedented circumstances encountered across the globe in 2020, the CHASM research briefing series #Buildbackbetter has been an open invitation for academic colleagues to contribute short pieces that offer policy suggestions for government on what they should be considering in order to shape the economy coming out of the Covid-19 pandemic. The series highlights how we can make the most of this opportunity to re-assess how our economy supports the most financially vulnerable and adequately reward those whose contributions to society we most value. [www.birmingham.ac.uk/research/chasm/research/projects/social-housing-and-life-chances.aspx](http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/research/chasm/research/projects/social-housing-and-life-chances.aspx)



**Gender Norms in the UK Public Sector**

Three members of the Department of Management and Work Inclusivity Research Centre (Dr Holly Birkett, Professor Jo Duberley and Dr Scott Taylor) completed a six-month project, focused on discriminatory outcomes attributed to gender norms in the UK public sector. The project received funding of £20,000 and involved two postdoctoral research assistants (Dr Julie Whiteman and Dr Henry Price). It followed on from an annual internal organisational wellbeing and stress survey that identified differential experiences in these areas for women in senior positions. Analysis of interviews and audio-diaries showed that despite a significant number of recent equality, diversity and inclusion initiatives, gender norms continue to influence the organisation of work and working cultures, and that there continues to be a masculinised 'ideal worker' expectation for senior staff. The project report, currently confidential, concluded with a shortlist of recommendations, to consolidate existing initiatives and to target future efforts on this damaging dynamic.



**Responsible use of AI**

Dr Immaculate (Mac) Motsi-Omoijiade, the Lloyds Banking Group Centre for Responsible Business's resident AI expert, is researching how AI is used responsibly in banking. The use of AI in banking is not new and in a recent webinar on the subject, Mac talked through the various ways in which banks are already using this technology in areas such as customer support, credit and loan decisions or fraud protection. While there are challenges abundant in the use of AI, Mac suggests it can be seen as both 'the curse and cure'. In the time of a global pandemic, AI has been a powerful tool in helping banks support the needs of customers while also ensuring the security of business networks.

**'A Journey Through Time'**

**Cheryl Greyson** of the Marketing department worked with Ramsey Neighbourhood Trust on a project to develop and evaluate their biannual Heritage Open Days and to help create a resilient and sustainable heritage offer for Ramsey, a market town in the Cambridgeshire Fens. Ramsey Neighbourhood Trust is run by volunteers and uses local knowledge to get people actively involved in the decisions that affect them. This includes working closely with local government, schools, health professionals, businesses, statutory and the voluntary sector to provide a voice for people on local issues.





Dr Rosalind Jones

## Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty

Seed-corn funding from Birmingham Business School is supporting research in Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) with the National Association of AONBs (NAAONB).

The project aims to support the NAAONB by working with them to help them deliver their five-year strategic plan. AONBs strategic objectives focus not only on environmental landscape improvements, which will in the long-term benefit society, but also there is a focus on improving rural economies for the benefit of local rural communities.

Dr Rosalind Jones is leading on this project with a fellow colleague from the Marketing department Dr Inci Toral and Dr Liz Heyworth-Thomas of Liverpool John Moores University. Dr Jones observes, *'Rural businesses in these areas are a vital source of employment for rural communities and tourism is a key driver of income into these regions. Therefore, sustainable small tourism businesses are a vital source of income generation for these regions. While AONBs work to encourage tourist visits and enable those in cities and towns to experience the countryside for health and wellbeing, at the moment this has had to be postponed.'*

The project began in 2019 but was disrupted last March due to the pandemic. It has now refocussed on examining impact and possible solutions for business support during and post-pandemic in AONB regions.

While tourism usually generates income into the region, another important sector is farming and agriculture. During the pandemic, there were supply chain disruptions impacting on vital farm income. The upside is that there has been an increased demand for local shopping and a renewed popularity for using farm shops. With this has come new farm shop start-ups.

It is hoped this early study during the pandemic will lead to a larger research study, which will inform government policy and DEFRA as to the barriers for rural businesses, digitisation as a possible solution and, how best to ensure that tourism, farming and retail sectors can become resilient and sustainable in these beautiful landscapes.



## Sharing our research through partnership and dialogue

Continuous dialogue and public engagement are a core component of our School's endeavours. This is achieved through a programme of activities including conferences, seminars, exhibitions and blog posts and through the work of our research centres. Here are a few examples:

- In 2020, the number of views of the Birmingham Business School blog increased by 74% to an annual total of 39,000
- Ten articles were published in *The Conversation* by researchers from the Birmingham Business School during the course of 2020, attracting a combined readership of over 171,000

### Lloyds Banking Group Centre for Responsible Business

The Lloyds Banking Group Centre for Responsible Business is founded on a shared belief that responsible businesses are vital for a sustainable world, but recognise that many businesses do not fulfil this potential. The Centre's work is underpinned by the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Activities during 2019–2020 include:

#### Development of the Responsible Business Tracker®

The Lloyds Banking Group Centre for Responsible Business has partnered with Business in the Community (BITC) on the development of the Responsible Business Tracker®. This tool enables companies to track their improvement as responsible businesses. Professor Ian Thomson has worked collaboratively with BITC to design the tool, by analysing the data to extract insights and promoting the learning and good practices.

The Tracker translates the Sustainable Development Goals into key business actions, facilitates new business thinking and is an innovative way to measure performance.

This year, 94 companies completed the Tracker across 24 different sectors. This is an increase of 47% from the 64 participants involved in the pilot last year and future plans are to continue to scale-up business participation, which will strengthen the data and enable production of a greater number of insights.

Summarising insights from 2019–2020's Tracker results, Professor Thomson said:

*'The 2019/2020 Tracker data points to more needing to be done, particularly in relation to sustainable product and service innovation, performance measurement, accountability, resource productivity, climate change and healthy ecosystems. Business and our common future would be significantly improved if we could replicate for these Tracker elements the reported performance in purposeful leadership, leadership at all levels and healthy communities, even though here too, there remains much still to do.'*



**Professor Ian Thomson**

#### **IMPACT20: The National Conversation**

At the end of September 2020, Professor Ian Thomson was invited by the Cabinet Office and the Department for Digital Culture, Media and Sport to attend IMPACT20: The National Conversation. IMPACT20 is an annual gathering of senior government ministers, CEOs, entrepreneurs and civic leaders with one goal: to provide a platform for collaboration that will help organisations find ways to do more together and accelerate tangible impact across society, post Covid-19.

#### **The Sustainable Financial Innovation Centre**

The Sustainable Financial Innovation Centre (SFIC) is a research centre focusing on financial technology and financial innovation, with sustainable finance as a key theme.

Throughout 2020, SFIC hosted 12 seminars with guest speakers from around the world, including:

- Death, Destruction, and Manipulation by Professor Douglas Cumming – DeSantis Distinguished Professor of Finance and Entrepreneurship, College of Business, Florida Atlantic University and visiting Professor at Birmingham Business School, Department of Finance, October 2020;
- 'Do ESG strategies enhance bank stability during financial turmoil? Evidence from Europe' by Professor Claudia Girardone (Essex Business School) in March 2020; and

- 'Lehman Sisters' by Professor Renée Adams (Saïd Business School, University of Oxford), January 2020.  
[www.birmingham.ac.uk/research/sfic/seminar-series.aspx](http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/research/sfic/seminar-series.aspx)

The first SFIC conference took place in 2019 with the theme 'Developments in Alternative Finance'. It was co-hosted by Birmingham Business School and the *Journal of Corporate Finance*, with the aim to promote both theoretical and empirical research on the challenges and opportunities, developments and dynamics of alternative finance and its impact on traditional financial markets' liquidity and performance. The Keynote Speaker was Professor Raghavendra Rau (Sir Evelyn de Rothschild Professor of Finance at Cambridge Judge Business School).



# Confederation of British Industry (CBI) Exhibition

In February 2020, Birmingham Business School launched an exhibition highlighting our work in the area of fair workplaces at the Confederation of British Industry's headquarters in London, aimed at encouraging business leaders to make their organisations more inclusive.

The exhibition explored how our research makes a difference, taking a look at how our researchers develop outcomes that are relevant to today's society, and bringing responsible business to the forefront. The research included demonstrated that the best way to improve workplace wellbeing is through better job quality, and that to improve job quality, organisations should focus on flexibility, pay and other benefits, levels of autonomy, sense of purpose, job security, and working relationships.

Another aspect explored how and why more and more businesses are starting to invest in their diversity and inclusivity policies, and what this means more widely for inclusivity at leadership levels. A lack of supportive diversity policy and practice hinders economic and social inclusion, and the exhibition showed how we are making diversity everyone's business by helping to provide businesses with access to mentoring, management and support.

Our exhibition also explored how businesses can develop employee trust within organisations.

We showed how research at Birmingham Business School is helping to define trust and distrust as well as identifying factors that can shape the nature of an organisation's culture.

Our researchers and academics support businesses to develop trust across all levels of their organisation. A culture of trust can be a company's biggest road to success.

During challenging times and unfamiliar patterns of working, we are encouraging workplaces that are fair, inclusive, and equal. More about the exhibition can be found on our website: [www.birmingham.ac.uk/BBSResponsible](http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/BBSResponsible)



# ESRC Festival of Social Science

The ESRC's Festival of Social Science is an annual, week-long series of engagement events held across the UK, which celebrate research that helps us understand and shape the society we live in.

Part of the 2019 ESRC Festival of Social Science, The Future of Society Festival took place at the University and various locations across Birmingham, between 2–9 November.

The Festival sought to attract diverse audiences through an invitation to discover how research from the University is helping to better our future. Throughout the week, we hosted a series of free events including talks and debates, exhibitions showcasing work from local communities, and even an intergalactic musical experience, which was meant to awaken the force within us! Of the 13 University-led festival events, three were on responsible business.

One workshop as part of the festival, called Empowering the next generation: localising sustainable development goals, was run by Dr Nana O Bonsu, Dr Jennifer Tyree-Hageman and Dr Juliet Kele of the Lloyds Banking Group Centre for Responsible Business. They invited local sixth form students to create future scenarios, taking into account issues such as sustainable transportation and sustainable consumption patterns. Research conducted by the centre showed that such an approach enables participants to better understand what the future could be. A published discussion of this exercise can be found in issue 12 of the journal *Sustainability* (2020).

In 2020, we hosted our first-ever online ESRC Festival of Social Science, which in total had over 1,500 people register for events. A number of events highlighted our work in responsible business and societal good, including; 'The impact of COVID-19 on the early years childcare market in England' from Clare Crawford, and Daniel Wheatley on remote work and worker wellbeing in the post-Covid-19 era.

There was also an event from the Lloyds Banking Group Centre for Responsible Business, which focused on plastic pollution. The Centre set a competition asking school-aged children to design a poster detailing how they would tackle the problem of plastic pollution. Entrants demonstrated their commitment to reducing plastic pollution in innovative and inspiring designs, ranging from diagrams of new uses of AI to use of natural materials, such as seaweed, for packaging.

As part of the ESRC Festival, we also developed a series of short videos focusing on Black celebrity activism. The videos explored the influential roles that prominent Black figures have had by using their platforms to raise awareness of various issues.

Find out more and watch recordings of the events on our website: [www.birmingham.ac.uk/foss-2020](http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/foss-2020)



# Current PhD researchers in responsible business

Key objectives and goals 2019–2020	Progress and achievements	Progress
<p>We will promote the recruitment of new scholarships for PhDs in the area of responsible business, through the generation of research topics and scholarships for talented applicants.</p>	<p>The economic difficulties and uncertainty created by the Covid-19 pandemic have meant that plans to implement the scholarships have had to be put on hold for the time being. It is hoped this is something we can return to in the future.</p>	<p>On hold </p>

The School had developed a number of new full-time PhD scholarships, which were planned to commence in the 2020–21 academic year. These scholarships were focused on three of the School's core research themes, namely responsible business, work inclusivity and regional economic development.

The Covid-19 pandemic and the series of enforced lockdowns which have occurred in the UK and many other areas of the world, have created an environment of economic difficulty and uncertainty. The higher education environment has not been immune from these effects and it has meant that we have had to put on hold our ambitious plans to grow our PhD scholarships in the area of responsible business.

Meanwhile, we continue to attract and work with many PhD students whose work is informed by and will inform progress towards the sustainable development goals, as seen in the highlights here.



**Kaiying Li**

*'My research investigates the role of trust-related cognitive, emotional and cultural factors in Chinese consumers' decision-making process when purchasing infant formula. Health and safety problems regarding infant formula have constituted critical and long-term challenges for both the Chinese government and consumers themselves. Therefore, the overall aim of the research is to enable a deeper understanding of the lived experiences of Chinese consumers who have had to make decisions on formula feeding, including which infant formula to buy and how to buy it, regardless of the intensive and long-term safety and quality problems of dairy products in China. The purpose is to apply such knowledge to help support the wellbeing of Chinese consumers including parents and grandparents. My research reveals severe ethical problems in the Chinese infant formula market. The findings make theoretical contributions to the field of consumer trust and risk perceptions and also practical implications related to developing effective marketing communications and policy for China's dairy market.'*





### Katharina Stolley

*'My research is about branded entertainment, a sophisticated type of product placement, in which the brand is characterised as a storyline component, starting with the intention of developing a story to promote a brand or product. My research aims to understand the "fabrication" of branded entertainment, including the creation and production of branded entertainment as well as the deceptive attributes it may encompass. One particular focus of this research is the ethics of branded entertainment, including the deceptive and unjust influence branded entertainment content can have over consumers. On the one hand, it is vital to understand whether the persuasiveness and subtleness of branded entertainment strategies are appropriately regulated by governmental agencies. On the other hand, it can be argued that other key stakeholders are also responsible, as the creative industries (eg, film, creative and communications agencies), brands and consumer groups have an integral part in this. My research addresses these issues of responsibility and ethics.'*



### Xuxiangru Fan

*'My PhD research focuses on the transmission of traditional Chinese culture following the extensive economic and cultural changes that have taken place in contemporary China in recent years through the processes of globalisation and consumerism. In particular, it looks at the production and consumption of cultural and creative commodities (CCCs) in this process. CCCs are artefacts which consumers purchase from various cultural venues such as heritage sites, museums and cultural fairs. The purchases made by consumers have enabled traditional Chinese culture and heritage to be given a second life as these commodities become a means through which traditional culture is understood and reinterpreted outside of its original time and space. The findings of my research will provide key insights to producers, marketers, and policy-makers within the cultural and heritage sectors in China and across the world and add to understandings of cultural sustainability.'*



### David Dowson

*'I am a University of Birmingham alumnus having completed my undergraduate degree in natural sciences in 2006. Since graduation, I have been working in business and industry as an expert in environmental management. I have now returned to the University of Birmingham to complete my PhD in the area of non-financial and sustainability reporting.'*

*A significant barrier to the disclosure of the severity and frequency of single, local pollution incidents such as fuel spills is the absence of a simple and universal method for classifying incidents. My research aims to help overcome this barrier by producing a standardised, universal scheme that will permit organisations to disclose details of their incidents in annual reports and provide necessary clarity to investors. This requires extensive industrial collaboration and builds on the limited scientific literature which discusses similar frameworks used for the effective disclosure of environmental information.'*



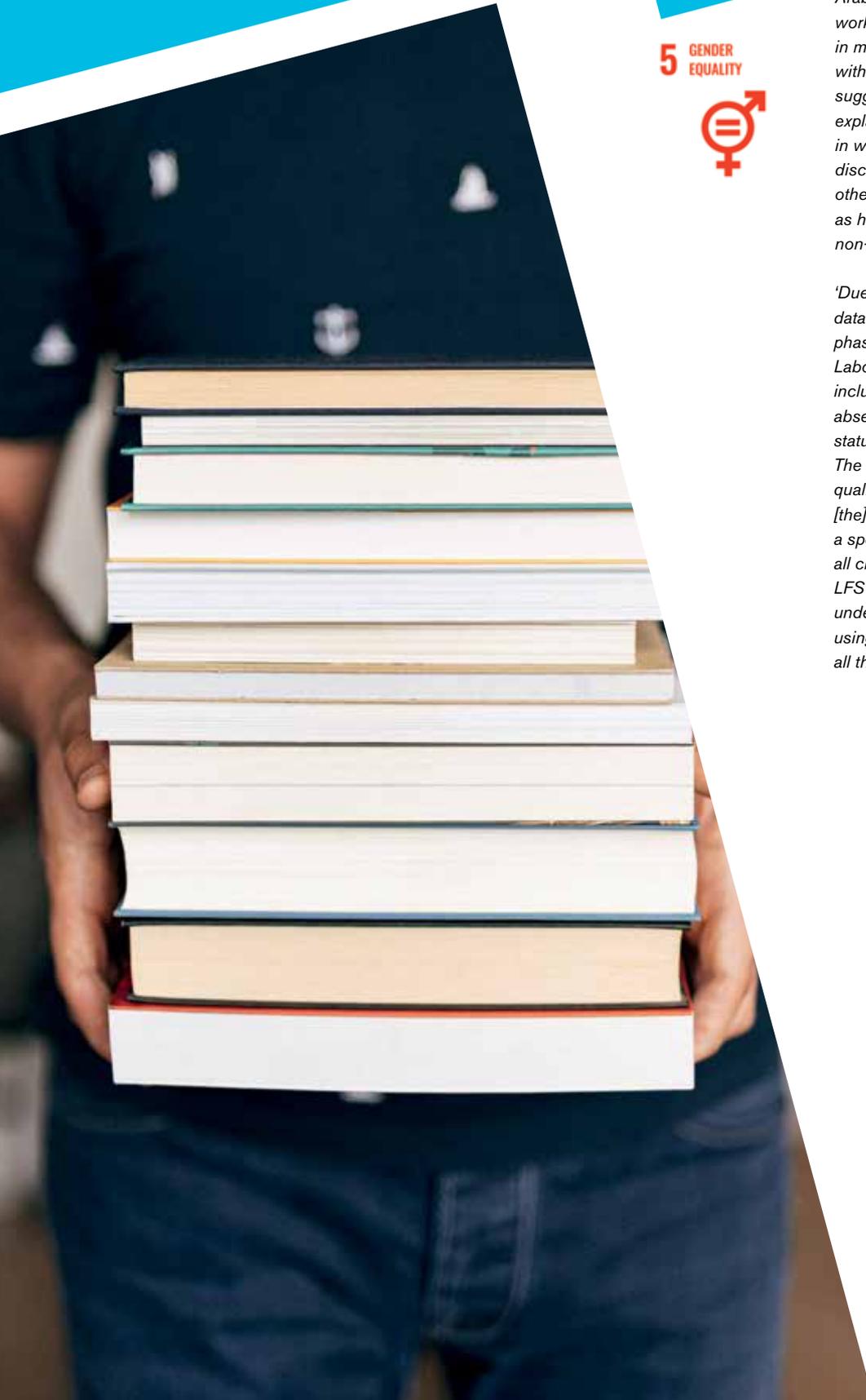
#### Hind Alsudays

*'My research investigates the determinants of the gender pay gap between men and women in Saudi Arabia. For the first stage of my research, I used the General Organization for Social Insurance (GOSI) database for Saudi Arabia. The findings show that the addition of work experience makes a significant increase in males and females wages (ie, earnings rise with work experience). Overall, the results suggest that gender is the primary factor explaining the large proportion of the variability in wages. This could be explained either from discrimination in the Saudi labour market or other unobservable factors, such as human capital characteristics and other non-cognitive skills.'*

5 GENDER  
EQUALITY



*'Due to the absence of variables in the GOSI dataset for Saudi Arabia, in the second phase of my research, I used a complete UK Labour Force Survey (LFS), analysis which includes all the important variables that are absent in the GOSI database (ie, marital status, actual hours, training/education, etc.). The results indicate that experience, training, qualifications, managerial position, working in [the] public sector, being married/living with a spouse, and the region or place of work are all closely linked to wages. Thus, by using the LFS dataset, the research provides a better understanding of the real gender effect by using a regression technique that controls for all the other important socio-economic factors.'*



# Birmingham Business School

## Responsible Business Academic Symposium

Key objectives and goals 2019–2020	Progress and achievements	Progress
<p>We will hold an annual Responsible Business Symposium.</p>	<p>We held the first Birmingham Business School Responsible Business Academic Symposium in 2019.</p> <p>Plans for the 2020 event were put on hold because of Covid-19, but planning is currently underway for the 2021 Symposium, which will take place on 21–23 September.</p>	<p>Achieved and ongoing </p>

In September 2019, the School piloted its first Responsible Business Academic Symposium, showcasing research from the Birmingham Business School, the University and beyond.

The aim of this one-day symposium was to provide a new collective forum for researchers working in this broad field, by bringing together diverse disciplines, methods and perspectives to conceptualise, examine and address the future of responsible business. Further, we showcased how teaching and research at the University of Birmingham is changing the ways in which businesses can work towards a responsible future and is developing the next generation of responsible leaders. Concepts for future teaching and research collaborations were at the forefront of discussions.

The symposium attracted just under 100 registrations and included a keynote speech by Professor Giana M Eckhardt, now Professor of Marketing at King's Business School, King's College London. Professor Eckhardt addressed why consumers fail to translate pro-social and pro-environmental attitudes into purchasing choices, and the challenges that this brings to businesses seeking to pursue a responsibility agenda. The symposium also

included an industry panel with business leaders from Lloyds Banking Group, Hockley Mint and Craftspace, and an academic panel with professors from Accounting, Economics, Management and Marketing. The paper sessions that followed included presentations on both research and pedagogy for responsible business. They were organised according to selected Sustainable Development Goals and included speakers from the Business School, the wider University and external academics.



# Birmingham Business School – achievements and progress on PRME objectives

## Organisation

Key objectives and goals 2019–2020	Progress and achievements	Progress
We will develop a dignity at work statement through a task and finish group and formally launch it within the School.	The College has developed the statement on supporting a positive working environment (our new term for dignity at work), in consultation with various internal stakeholder groups and the College's Leadership Team.	Achieved ✓

Key objectives and goals 2019–2020	Progress and achievements	Progress
We will prepare and enter a School submission to the Athena Swan Charter.	We have prepared and entered a Birmingham Business School submission to the Athena Swan Charter.	Achieved ✓



# Equality, diversity and inclusivity at Birmingham Business School

There has been a great deal of work in the School during the last two years in relation to diversity and equality. One of our key aims was to develop a dignity at work statement, which we could launch across the School.



We are delighted to report that the 'Framing a statement about dignity at work' sessions were held, led by the College of Social Sciences (CoSS), as this initiative has become wider than the Birmingham Business School. The sessions were held at the end of 2018 and beginning of 2019. Since this time, the dignity at work initiative has been renamed 'supporting a positive working environment'. In consultation with various internal stakeholder groups and the College's Leadership Team, a statement outlining the rights and responsibilities for all employees in ensuring a positive working environment has been drawn up and is currently under review.

The School also submitted and entered an application to Athena Swan in April 2019. Although not successful on this occasion, the process has proved beneficial to the School on many levels. We continue to implement the Athena Swan action plan drawn up as part of the submission and this has inspired and informed a range of projects. The School's recognition of its responsibility to promote equality and diversity in the workplace has been further enhanced through the appointment of Dr Juliet Kele (pictured) as Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity (EDI) Lead

in the School, a role that forms part of the School's Senior Management Team.

Dr Kele was asked to reflect on some of the initiatives undertaken since she has been in post. She said, 'I think there are three key activities that the EDI group has undertaken over the last two years. One of the important projects we have implemented in the Business School is the launch of "inclusivity workshops", which I have run with Jo Highton from People and Organisation Development here at the University. The aim of these sessions was to gain an understanding of what inclusion looks like, establish an inclusion pledge for the School and develop a plan as to how to promote it. We also used these sessions to provide feedback on the College's Positive Working Environment document. These sessions were originally intended to run as face-to-face workshops, but following the onset of Covid-19, we redesigned and rescheduled these to run online, with four sessions in total in September and November. These were also accompanied by a Canvas Course designed to aid learning and reflection on EDI issues. In total, we had 54 colleagues attend and were overwhelmed by the positive feedback and insightful suggestions. They went so well that CoSS is considering rolling out these workshops to other Schools within the College.'

'The second important activity is the launch of the Birmingham Business School's Equality and Diversity website, which happened in November 2019. In addition to providing information about policies and procedures, the site is also a means for interacting with staff about equality and diversity issues. It contains an online suggestion box, where staff can anonymously raise concerns as well as share thoughts and experiences. For example, the periods of lockdown during the pandemic have

meant that many staff have been working at home, away from the University, our students and their colleagues. The site has enabled us to gather suggestions from colleagues as to how we can promote inclusion and create a supportive working environment in this changed circumstance.'

'The final activity I wanted to share is the change that the EDI group have made in respect of the terminology used within the School. It was felt that, while grouping together those who are most subject to discrimination in the UK, the "BAME" terminology previously used in the School has severe limitations, homogenises experience and reproduces unequal power relations. We proposed replacing this term with "minority ethnic or ethnic minorities", a proposal that was unanimously accepted by the Senior Management Team and has now been adopted throughout the Business School.'

'We also have exciting plans for further activities in the coming years, including developing a Staff Voice Group, to enable colleagues to raise day-to-day equality and diversity issues. We also will be running an EDI Assembly, following on from the success of the listening event run by Professor Jo Duberley and launching a mini-series called 'Diversity in Business', initially targeted at Business School students but also open to CoSS students, which we are running in conjunction with our Student Experience Officers and the School Alumni team. A central EDI objective for the Business School going forward is to assist in the implementation and delivery of the goals of the University's Race Equality Action Plan 2019, specifically, in ensuring that our minority-ethnic students develop a sense of belonging to the School and working with colleagues to improve academic support for minority-ethnic students.'



Key objectives and goals 2019–2020	Progress and achievements	Progress
We will introduce a paperless programme policy to reduce printing within the School.	We launched our paperless policy at the end of 2018.	Achieved 

The School introduced a paperless programmes policy in July 2018 with the aim of reducing the 2.5 million sheets of paper used for printing and copying the previous year. Throughout the School, academic colleagues were asked to provide students with electronic alternatives to induction materials, lecture notes, and handouts in advance of teaching sessions.

Following a trial period, feedback on the policy was invited from staff. The policy was subsequently amended to permit printing in certain cases in order to support student learning, for example, to support in class teaching using case studies or for teaching subjects of a technical nature.

During the pandemic, as staff have been required to work at home, the ability to assess the success of this policy has been obscured and is something that we will continue to monitor as normal working practices resume.

Key objectives and goals 2019–2020	Progress and achievements	Progress
We will introduce a 'Responsible Business Forum' for staff to raise and discuss topics relating to responsible business with an aim to make changes and improvements to our workplace.	We have held three Responsible Business Forums, one on volunteering, another on inclusivity at work and the third on a carbon-neutral business school.	Achieved 

Birmingham Business School holds a number of Responsible Business Forums per year, focusing on some of the key topics that affect the workplace and wider society.

The events provide Business School staff with the opportunity to discuss and take action on how we, as a school, can become more responsible in a number of areas. Staff are encouraged to voice their ideas and actions to be taken forward are agreed during the forum.

To date, our forums have focussed on volunteering, inclusivity and the carbon-neutral business school. These events have included a panel discussion between sector experts and experienced professionals and researchers, giving a real-life perspective on the issues at hand.



The image shows the site before and after the BBS volunteers built the steps

### Forum on Volunteering

The forum on volunteering included hearing from some of our very own volunteers in the School, a panel discussion on effective volunteering, brainstorming sessions and information on how to get involved. Since the forum, we have produced case studies to document how staff are contributing to the wider society outside of their working lives by volunteering for good causes (examples include volunteering for the National Trust and the Bournville Warriors, a local football team).

Feedback produced from the event suggests that staff were very keen to begin volunteering. Birmingham Business School (BBS) is committed to providing staff with opportunities to contribute to the wider society through volunteering, utilising the University-wide, one-day volunteering allowance as well as longer-term opportunities.

The volunteering allowance is available for staff to use for their current volunteering positions, new opportunities or for a staff-volunteering day organised by the School.

Following the forum, the School organised a day for Professional Services staff to volunteer at Ackers Adventure Trust. The Trust, which puts on activities such as canoeing, climbing and skiing for school groups and the local community, relies on groups of volunteers to help maintain and develop their vast site. The group from the Business School spent the day building a set of steps, painting picnic benches and clearing overgrown woodland.

The feedback gathered from BBS volunteers has been unanimously positive. Comments from those who were involved include: *'Productive and very enjoyable experience. Brilliant opportunity to meet new people and enjoy the outdoors. Stress release!'* and *'It was a great day – I thought I would get a great sense of achievement (I did!) but it was also really fun doing something different and working with people I don't usually get a chance to.'*

### Forum on Inclusivity

Following the success of the Responsible Business Forum on volunteering, staff were invited to a second forum focussing on inclusivity. During the brainstorming session at the forum, a number of equality and diversity-related proposals were discussed. For example, issues relating to accessibility, terminology and awareness were raised, which have been and will continue to be addressed by the School. In direct response to ideas proposed at the forum, an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Group (EDI Group) has been created within BBS. The core purpose of the group is to champion the School's policies and procedures in relation to equality and diversity, monitoring any relevant developments in this area, including new legislation and any new guidance from relevant internal or external sources.

Going forward, the group will disseminate and raise awareness of equality and diversity issues as appropriate. It will also encourage collaborative discussion and training among staff, to develop an understanding of inclusion and of what an inclusive work environment looks like. The School has set up a new Equality and Diversity website and committed to two further actions as a result of the forum: to introduce a Staff Voice Group, and to launch an 'inclusivity pledge' across the School.

### Forum on a Carbon-Neutral Business School?

Our third forum was themed around the question of whether we could achieve a carbon-neutral business school. This event included speakers from across the University, including the Policy and Environmental Services Manager, the Sustainability Manager, and the Director of Facilities Services. We were also joined by one of our alumni, Silvana Centy, a Senior Manager at the Carbon Trust.

This event helped make crucial links across the University that would enable us to access data and start tracking our carbon footprint more effectively. It was also agreed that the School could implement a Food Waste Policy, which has since been initiated by our Responsible Business Student Ambassadors. Food waste occurs from the catering that takes place for meetings, seminars and other events, as well as from the onsite Café 1902. Further action to implement this has, by necessity, been put on hold during the pandemic while staff and students are based at home, but will be monitored further once we are all back working in the buildings once again.



# Birmingham Business School moving forward – goals for 2021–2022

As we move onto the next stage of our PRME journey, we plan to build on the successes and strengths achieved to date as well as set ourselves new targets for the future. The signing of the UN Global compact by the University of Birmingham provides opportunities for collaboration and support across the University as we continue to work and grow in the area of responsible business.

## Research



### PRME principles 4. Research, 5. Partnership and 6. Dialogue

The Covid-19 pandemic has brought many issues relevant to responsible business to the fore. Its effect has led us to reflect as to how we move forward on our PRME journey.

- We feel that now is the time to focus our research activity on responding to the emerging challenges faced by business. These include climate change, health and wellbeing post-Covid-19, issues pertaining to equality and decolonisation and the increasing levels of wealth and other inequalities. This will be achieved through our research centres as well as the research undertaken by our respective departments.
- We will continue to run and develop the Responsible Business Symposium as an important way to communicate our research and generate dialogue with a wide range of stakeholders.



## Education



- PRME principle 3. Method**
- We will invite applications for the positions of Responsible Business Student Ambassadors to encourage student participation and engagement with responsible business activities, providing opportunities for leadership.
  - We will launch an annual 'responsible business student challenge', open to all students in the Business School.
  - We will revisit the School's learning objectives to identify how they can be more closely aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In phase one, we will implement these across the following programmes:
    - MSc programmes – as new programmes are developed
    - Undergraduate programmes – pilot implementation in one discipline area
    - MBA programmes – as part of current review
  - We will work to increase EDI/diverse applications in the postgraduate research application process.
  - We will find ways to work more closely with our alumni working in the area of responsible business to enrich our curriculum and the educational experiences for our students.

## Organisation



- PRME Principles 1. Purpose and 2. Values**
- We will find ways to work more closely with our alumni working in the area of responsible business to build dialogue with practitioners.
  - We will work together with the central University to align PRME with University of Birmingham Global Compact activities.
  - We will review the Birmingham Business School travel policies with a view to making them more sustainable.
  - We will resubmit the Athena Swan application in November 2021.
  - We will create an inclusivity pledge and launch this across the School.
  - We will launch the Staff Voice Group (SVG), a forum for all Birmingham Business School staff, at all grades, to raise issues under the 'inclusion umbrella'.
  - We will launch a mini-series called 'Diversity in Business', starting in January 2021, initially targeted at Business School students but also open to College of Social Science students, which will run in conjunction with our Student Experience Officers and the School Alumni team.
  - We will deliver training across the School on decolonising the curriculum.

# Appendices

The Birmingham Business School Blog regularly features articles relating to responsible business. You can see the latest stories here: <https://blog.bham.ac.uk/business-school>

## Selected research publications and activity per Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 2019–2020

1 NO POVERTY



### SDG 1 – No Poverty

New CHASM Research Project: The Impact of Housing Quality on Wellbeing, by Dr Halima Sacranie, Dr James Gregory and Professor Andy Lymer <https://www.birmingham.ac.uk/research/chasm/news/2019/housing-quality-wellbeing.aspx>

2 ZERO HUNGER



### SDG 2 – Zero Hunger

De Propriis, L, Veldhuis, A, Glover, J, Bradley, D, Behzadian, K, Cottee, J, Downing, C, Ingram, J, Leach, M, Farmani, R, Butler, D, Pike, A, Purvis, L, Robinson, PK, and Yang, A, 2019, 'Re-distributed manufacturing and the food-water-energy nexus: Opportunities and challenges', *Production Planning & Control*, vol. 30, no. 7, pp. 593–609. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09537287.2018.1540055>

Laycock Pedersen, R, Robinson, Z, and Surman, E, 2019, 'Understanding Transience and Participation in University Student-Led Food Gardens', *Sustainability*, 11(10), 2788; <https://doi.org/10.3390/su11102788>

Surman, E, and Hamilton, L, 2019, 'Growing consumers through production and play: a phenomenological exploration of food growing in the school foodscape', *Sociology*, vol. 53, no. 3, pp. 468–485. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0038038518789542>

3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING



### SDG 3 – Good Health and Wellbeing

Brackley, J, 2020, 'Public Health interventions in English Local Authorities: Constructing the facts, (re)imagining the future', *Accounting, Auditing & Accountability Journal*.

Carmichael, F, Darko, C, and Vasilakos, N, 2019, 'Health and wellbeing of young people in Ethiopia, India, Peru and Vietnam: life course impacts', *Journal of Development Studies*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00220388.2019.1626835>

Chandan, J, Thomas, T, Gokhale, K, Bandyopadhyay, S, Taylor, J, and Nirantharakumar, K, 2019, 'The burden of mental ill health associated with childhood maltreatment in the UK, using The Health Improvement Network database: a population-based retrospective cohort study', *The Lancet Psychiatry*. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S2215-0366\(19\)30369-4](https://doi.org/10.1016/S2215-0366(19)30369-4)

Maddison, D, Rehdanz, K, and Welsch, H, (eds.) Handbook on Wellbeing, *Happiness and the Environment*, Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.

Wheatley, D, and Bickerton, C, 2019, 'Measuring changes in subjective well-being from engagement in the arts, culture and sport', *Journal of Cultural Economics*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10824-019-09342-7>

## 4 QUALITY EDUCATION



## SDG 4 – Quality Education

Darko, C, and Carmichael, F, 2020, 'Education of biological and fostered children in Ghana', *Journal of International Development*. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jid.3465>

Fearon, C, Furlotti, M, van-Vurren, W, and McLaughlin, H, 2019, 'Developing new opportunities, entrepreneurial skills and product/service creativity: a 'Young Enterprise' (YE) perspective', *Studies in Higher Education*, pp. 1–18. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03075079.2019.1672643>

Granter, E, and Hyde, P, 2020, 'Upon the gears and upon the wheels': terror convergence and total administration in the neoliberal university', *Management Learning*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1350507620924162>

Smith, C, and Lenssen, G, (eds) 2019, *Managing Sustainable Business: An executive education case and textbook*. Springer.

## 5 GENDER EQUALITY



## SDG 5 – Gender Equality

Bell, E, Meriläinen, S, Taylor, S, and Tienari, J, 2019, 'Time's up! Feminist theory and activism meets organization studies', *Human Relations*, vol. 72, no. 1, pp. 4–22. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0018726718790067>

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Carmichael, F, Duberley, J, and Allsmail, S, 2019, 'Female employment in hotels in Saudi Arabia and UAE', *Gender in Management*. <https://doi.org/10.1108/GM-11-2017-0151>

Cohen, L, and Duberley, J, 2020, 'Women in extraordinary times', *Journal of Professions and Organization*. <https://doi.org/10.1093/jpo/joaa019>

Kenny, E, and Donnelly, R, 2019, 'Navigating the gender structure in information technology: how does this affect the experiences and behaviours of women?', *Human Relations*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0018726719828449>

McCarthy, L, Soundararajan, V, and Taylor, S, 2020, 'The hegemony of men in global value chains: Why it matters for labour governance'. *Human Relations*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0018726720950816>

Smolovic-Jones, O, Smolovic-Jones, S, Taylor, S, and Yarrow, E, 2020, 'I wanted more women in, but...': Oblique resistance to gender equality initiatives'. *Work, Employment & Society*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0950017020936871>

Smolovic-Jones, S, Smolovic-Jones, O, Taylor, S, and Yarrow, E, 2020, 'Theorising gender desegregation as political work: The case of the Welsh Labour Party', *Gender, Work & Organization*. <https://doi.org/10.1111/gwao.12445>



## SDG 6 – Clean Water and Sanitation

Blog post: World Water Day 2019: Leaving No One Behind, by Dr Nana O Bonsu <https://blog.bham.ac.uk/business-school/2019/03/21/world-water-day-2019-leaving-no-one-behind/>



## SDG 7 – Affordable and Clean Energy

Ahmed, R, Chaudhry, S, Shafiullah, M, and Huynh, T, 2020, 'The Impact of Carbon Emissions on Country Risk: Evidence from the G7 Economies'. *Journal of Environmental Management*, 265: 110533.

Bebbington, J, Schneider, T, Stevenson, L, and Fox, A, 2020, 'Fossil fuel reserves and resource reporting and unburnable carbon: investigating conflicting accounts', *Critical Perspectives on Accounting*, 66. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cpa.2019.04.004>

Mandal, A, Moreira Barreto de Oliveira, A, and J, Power, G, 2019, 'A primer on the pricing of electric energy options in Brazil via mean-reverting stochastic processes', *Energy Reports*, vol. 5, 206, pp. 594–601. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.egy.2019.03.010>

Padhan, H, Padhang, PC, Tiwari, AK, Ahmed, R, and Hammoudeh, S, 2020, 'Renewable Energy Consumption and Robust Globalization(s) in OECD Countries: Do Oil, Carbon Emissions and Economic Activity Matter?' *Energy Strategy Reviews*, 32:

Smith, C, Rassia, M, and Mukerjee, A, 2019, 'More than hot air: community biogas as social innovation', *Stanford Social Innovation Review*

Sun, P, Zhu, T, and Elliott, R, 2019, 'Electricity prices and industry switching: Evidence from Chinese manufacturing firms', *Energy Economics*, vol. 78, pp. 567–588. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.eneco.2018.11.029>

## 8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH



### SDG 8 – Decent Work and Economic Growth

Ben Khaled, W, and Gond, J-P, 2019, 'How do external regulations shape the design of ethical tools in organisations? An open polity and sociology of compliance perspective', *Human Relations*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0018726719828437>

Hye Lee, S, Mellahi, K, Mol, M, and Pereira, V, 2020, 'No-Size-Fits-All: Collaborative Governance as an Alternative for Addressing Labour Issues in Global Supply Chains', *Journal of Business Ethics*, 162: 291–305. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-019-04198-5>

Lawton, C, Pickford, R, Rendall, J, and Wheatley, D, 2019, Laying the foundations of a good work city: mapping Nottingham's employment, Nottingham Civic Exchange, Nottingham Trent University. [http://irep.ntu.ac.uk/id/eprint/36257/1/13686\\_Lawton.pdf](http://irep.ntu.ac.uk/id/eprint/36257/1/13686_Lawton.pdf)

Wood, A, Graham, M, Lehdonvirta, V, and Hjorth, I, 2019, 'Good gig, bad gig: autonomy and algorithmic control in the global gig economy', *Work, Employment and Society*, vol. 33, no. 1, pp. 56–75. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0950017018785616>

Wood, A, Graham, M, Lehdonvirta, V, and Hjorth, I, 2019, 'Networked but commodified: the (dis)embeddedness of digital labour in the gig economy', *Sociology*, vol. 53, no. 5, pp. 931–950. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0038038519828906>

## 9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE



### SDG 9 – Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure

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# PRME and responsible business at Birmingham Business School

## Writing of the PRME SIP report 2019–2020

This report was written under the supervision of Professors Matthew Cole and Isabelle Szmigin, the two Deputy Deans, and with the help and support of the Responsible Business Committee and staff, students and other stakeholders across Birmingham Business School. We would like to thank them all.

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