

A Summary of Approaches to Reporting on the Sustainable Development Goals based on the 2018 Sharing Information on Progress Reports

By Giselle Weybrecht

September 2019



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*For more information about this report and how business schools are reporting please contact me at gweybrecht@thesustainablemba.com or www.giselleweybrecht.org. For more information and examples in relation to this report read <http://primetime.unprme.org>

INTRODUCTION

We are almost four years into the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and signatories of the United Nations Principles for Responsible Management Education (PRME) have had time to think about the Goals in relation to the work they are doing as well as in terms of how they report on this work in their Sharing Information on Progress (SIP) reports¹. At the 2017 Global Forum for Responsible Management Education – 10 Years of PRME, I presented a report to the PRME Secretariat outlining how the signatories to PRME were reporting on the SDGs in the SIP reports submitted up until June 2017². At that stage surprisingly few SIP reports made any mention of the SDGs and the vast majority that did only mentioned it once and in passing. I was interested to see what had happened since then given the crucial role that business schools play and need to play in order for the global community to be able to reach these goals.

The following report, which considers all SIPs submitted throughout 2018, provides a summary of how signatories are reporting on the SDGs. Once again rather than provide a roadmap moving forward, this report summarises some of the approaches currently being taken as well as some of relevant initiatives that relate directly to the SDGs. I am sharing this with the wider PRME network with the hope that it will assist schools in preparing their SIPs, in getting the most out of the process of reporting and to push for more comprehensive action and reporting in relation to the SDGs moving forwards. This is only a small part of the information extracted from the reports. Additional insights are being posted on the blog primetime.unprme.org. For additional information please contact me at gweybrecht@thesustainablemba.com.

Which reports were considered?

All SIP reports submitted by Basic, Advanced and Champion signatories throughout 2018 were reviewed. Note that the status of the school is based on their status at the time of submitting their report. In total 243 SIP reports were submitted in 2018. Of these, 104 were from Advanced signatories, 122 were from Basic signatories and 17 were from Champion schools. Of the 243 reports there were 10 reports that were not included in the analysis. This includes 4 reports that would not open and 6 reports that were submitted in Portuguese or German. Therefore the total number of SIPs reviewed for this report is 233.

What was considered?

Only initiatives that specifically made reference to the Sustainable Development Goals, SDGs, Global Goals and/or Agenda 2030 (in English or other languages in which reports were submitted) were considered. I wanted to see which schools are aware and thinking about the SDGs in relation to their engagement in PRME and their SIP and therefore only focus on initiatives that include specific reference to the SDGs.

¹ This report has been prepared for individuals connected with the UN Principles for Responsible Management Education (PRME). Any business schools or universities can sign up to PRME and become a Basic signatory. They are then required to publish a Sharing Information on Progress (SIP) Report every two years that summarizes their engagement. Signatories that pay an annual service fee are considered Advanced signatories. A select group of schools every year are classified as Champion schools.

² The report was presented to the Advisory Council at a meeting at the PRME Secretariat in New York City, USA, in June 2017. Unfortunately, it was never shared widely and does not seem to be available on the PRME website. Please feel free to contact me if you would like to learn more.

There are three additional points to consider. First of all, this material is based on what signatories are choosing to report on in their SIPs. What and how they report depends on the individual who writes the report and the way they choose to write and structure the report. Of course in many of these schools there may be more initiatives that relate to the SDGs beyond those specifically mentioned within the SIP reports.

Second, the number of times the word SDG is mentioned in a SIP does not necessarily correlate to engagement or awareness around the SDGs. Some reports mention the word only once while one has more than 500 mentions. Even when a school mentions the SDGs once, there is a big difference between a school that mentions it in the letter from the President, in relation to a future goal or a strategic project compared to another report that mentions it in passing in a way that does not connect directly with the school (for example a note about how a faculty member attended a conference where the SDGs were presented).

Third, it is also a challenge to get a good idea of the quality or reach of the initiatives outlined as additional details, including impact or results, are rarely reported on. This means that just because a school has done an impressive job reporting on the SDGs, this doesn't necessarily mean that their contributions are more significant than another that didn't mention them at all.

Finally please note that the quotes and examples presented throughout this document do not necessarily represent best practice or what not to do. They are simply meant to illustrate some of the different approaches being taken.

Summary of Findings

Overall there has been a significant increase in the number of SIPs submitted that include the SDGs. The quality of reporting has also increased considerably, and there are a growing number of schools not only focused on embedding the SDGs into their institutions, but also into their reporting process.

However, the majority of the reports, 161 out of 233, either don't mention the SDGs at all or only mention the term once in passing in their reports.

Grouping reports

I divided the reports into three groups based on the degree to which they included or referenced the SDGs and the level of involvement and understanding of the SDGs:

Group 1 is made up of the reports that either don't mention the SDGs at all or only mention it only once in passing. This includes 161 out of the total 233 reports. Of these;

- **93** SIP reports make no mention of the SDGs at all. Of these 31 are Advanced signatories, 61 Basic signatories and 1 is an Association.
- **44** only mention the SDGs once in passing without any connection to their goals or current programmes. Of these 2 are Champions, 10 are Advanced and 16 are Basic signatories.

Group 2 is made up of reports that mention the SDGs one or more times and show a deeper understanding and possible commitment to the goals. This includes 43 out of the total 233 reports. Of these;

- **24** of these reports only mention the SDGs once but in relation to a future goal or in the letter from the highest authority. Of these 5 are Champions, 13 are Advanced and 8 are Basic signatories.

- **20** have some mentions of the SDGs in relation to a specific project or event. Of these 2 are Champions, 10 are Advanced, 5 are Basic signatories and one is no longer a signatory.

Group 3: There are 53 reports that either provide more information in relation to the school's activities around the SDGs or embed the SDGs throughout in some way. Again one cannot comment on the quality but rather the effort and awareness of the SDGs by these schools in terms of their report. Of these 11 are Champions, 25 Advanced and 17 Basic signatories. Of these reports, 16 reports stand out.

Regional variation

I also looked at the regional variations in how schools were reporting on the SDGs. The majority of the reports submitted in 2018 were from European signatories (109), followed by North America (57), South America (27), Asia (26), Australia/New Zealand (13), Africa (6) and MENA (5).

In Asia and in North America few schools make mention to the SDGs (7 out of 26 in Asia and 17 out of 57 in North America). The schools in Australia and New Zealand were the most engaged with 8 out of 11 reports analysed covering the SDGs extensively. Schools in Europe seemed the most aware of the SDGs as well as the importance of the SDGs in relation to their institution and vice versa. Every region had at least one report that covered the SDGs in their reporting process. The full results can be seen below in Figure 1 (note that NC stands for reports that were not considered).

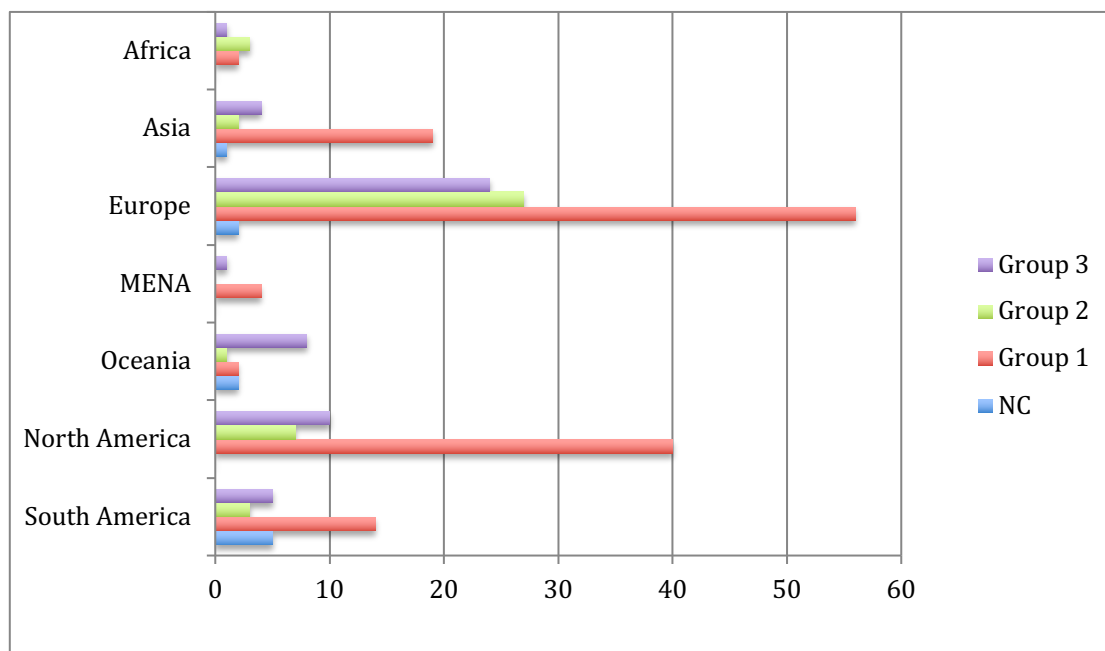


Figure 1 – Regional Variation of SIP reports by group

GENERAL APPROACHES TO REPORTING

Formatting

The most common approach to reporting on the SDGs was to include a mention of the relevant SDG at the end of each initiative. Often this is in the form of one of the 17 official

A Summary of Approaches to Reporting on the SDGs in 2018 SIP reports by Giselle Weybrecht

SDG logos (20 Schools did this) or adding the SDG number to the end of the paragraph outlining the initiative. Some summarized their achievements and goals in relation to the SDGs (e.g. St. Gallen Business School below). Other schools organised this information into tables, with one example of this shown below in Image 3.

The Clarke Group, Inc.: A Leader in Sustainable Enterprise and Innovation for Public Health



Clarke provides products and services for public health. Formerly known as a mosquito control company, Clarke's mission and purpose grew out of a realization that they had the potential to impact public health. A notable example of their services is their innovative "Mobile Response Unit," which enabled them to answer the Zika outbreak in Miami's Dade County in 2016. As a sustainability leader in their industry, Clarke has been a recipient of the US Presidential Award for Sustainable Chemistry.

Image 1 - Weatherhead School of Management



"Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls" (SDG 5)

HSG achievements

- Diversity strategy
- Department of Gender and Diversity: 18 courses offered (Contextual Studies)
- Post-experience Diploma Program: "Women Back to Business"
- Board school with women network
- Research Centers: Diversity & Inclusion, Disability & Integration, Organizational Psychology, Sociology
- Office for Diversity & Inclusion: advisory services for equal opportunities and special needs
- Child care center for HSG members
- Regular gender monitoring reports
- Gender portal on HSG website
- Percentage of women graduating from HSG is slowly increasing (one third), but still lower than at other universities in Switzerland

HSG goals

- Improve "leaky pipeline" among professors through focus on female appointments
- Establish HSG as a recognized center for research and knowledge around women in leadership positions

Image 2 - St. Gallen Business School

GRÁFICO 1: Contribución de la Universidad del Pacífico a los Objetivos de Desarrollo Sostenible

102-12



Image 3 - Universidad del Pacifico

A few schools include boxes throughout the report that highlight specific initiatives that link well to the SDGs or published the results of their SDG mapping exercises. Click [here](#) to see more specific examples of how schools did this.

A Summary of Approaches to Reporting on the SDGs in 2018 SIP reports by Giselle Weybrecht



Image 4 - Kemmy Business School 2018 SIP Report

Notably, a few schools organised their reports around the SDGs, more than in 2017. One example of this was Kemmy Business School (see Image 4 above) that had a special section focused on the school's engagement in the SDGs.

Placement

The following section outlines some of the different places within the report that the SDGs are mentioned.

One school, Grenoble Ecole de Management, included it in the **title of their report** and a few others in the very first few sentences of the report.

51 reports include a mention of the SDGs in the **letter from the highest executive of the organisation**.

"As a signatory of the Principles for Responsible Management, IESE Business School is fully committed to helping fulfil the UN Sustainable Development Goals through its educational activities and research." IESE Business School

"For us PRME is not a general declaration of a moral nature but a holistic vision for the management education based on corporate sustainability as the foundation of a new business paradigm, in the frame of deep strategic orientation toward Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)." Kozminsky University

"An important role of PRME for the La Trobe Business School is focusing on building student capability through a deeper understanding of the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The SDGs and the six PRME principles provide a framework for La Trobe Business School to engage our students in the critical issues of corporate responsibility and sustainability." La Trobe Business School

Several schools mention the SDGs **in relation to their involvement in a PRME related project**, in particular the Sulitest, Aim2Flourish and in a few cases Wikirate. One school reported using the SDG Dashboard. For most of the schools that make mentions to any of these initiatives, this is the only mention they made in relation to the SDGs. Several mention the SDGs in relation to work being done by the Chapters in particular the France-Benelux, UK & Ireland, MENA and Australia & New Zealand Chapters.

Most of the Signatories refer to them as the Sustainable Development Goals or the SDGs. Only a few reports refer to them as the Global Goals or Agenda 2030. There is a wide range of both the **awareness levels of the SDGs** and the importance the school places

on them. Many schools simply mention them in passing in a way where it doesn't seem to be connected with any of the work they are doing. There are others who do not seem to be clear as to what the SDGs are. For example, one report says that the SDGs are a group of 17 initiatives launched at COP21. Another mentions a future goal "to sign the Sustainable Development Goals".



Image 5 - Weatherhead School of Management

Only 16 reports provide any sort of explanation as to **what the SDGs are**. This ranges from a one sentence explanation to a full-page overview that includes the full SDG logo. This is surprisingly given that readers of the report will be left confused as to what the SDGs are and why they are being discussed throughout the report.

The reports are increasingly looking at specific SDGs. The majority of the reports that do include the SDGs are looking at all 17. Some schools are taking this further and focusing in on a handful of goals they feel they contribute the most to. SDG 4 is still the most widely mentioned, although fewer than before focus exclusively on this. SDG 8 is also mentioned often. For example WU Vienna University of Economics and Business outlines how it is focused on the SDGs related to poverty, distribution of justice, economic growth and gender equality. The University of St. Gallen is focused on SDG 4, 5, 7, 12, 13, 16 and 17. BI Norwegian Business School refers to Goals 4,5,8,9,11,12,13 and 17. None of the reports look at specific targets within the SDGs.

58 reports mention the SDGs in their **goals moving forward**, some broadly but many as part of very specific goals. Most of these goals relate to embedding the SDGs into the curriculum or raising awareness.

"Moving forward, we will be adopting the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as a framework for structuring our Principles for Responsible Management Education (PRME) commitment as we continue to work towards achieving the 6 Principles in partnership with our internal and external stakeholders." UNISA

“We also look forward to contributing actively as part of the current cycle of PRME Champions, where we hope to bring particular focus to shared research to deliver on the SDGs.” Kemmy Business School

PRME Principles

Given that the majority of SIP reports are organised around the 6 (7) Principles of PRME, I have structured the findings in a similar manner.

Principle 1: Purpose and Principle 2: Values

Ninety three of the SIP reports mention the SDGs in relation to Principle 1 and 2 or to purpose and values more broadly. The extent and depth of this engagement is quite varied across the reports.

Only a couple of reports comment on the importance of the role of business schools in the SDGs

“We recognise the tertiary sector has a unique role in implementing a coordinated and engaged approach to the SDGs by aligning methodologies and whole-of-sector approaches across our activities including in learning and teaching, research, organisational governance, culture and operations of the university, and are guided by frameworks offered by the Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN) and institutional memberships including with Australasian Campuses Towards Sustainability (ACTS).” La Trobe Business School

Some simply mention that the Goals **already fit into the work the school does**. In many cases these reports do not mention the SDGs again and do not go into any further detail.

“We continue to work towards the achievement of our overall mission which incorporates aspects of the Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations.” London School of Management

Many reports connect being part of PRME, the Global Compact or another international network to being engaged **in the SDGs**. In most cases no further information is given.

“To formalise its commitment to advancing the sustainable development goals, BMEc has joined the UN Global Compact and signed up to the Principles of Responsible Management Education (PRME) in 2016.” University of Sussex

For some the SDGs are integrated into their core values or mission. There are cases of both schools elaborating on how and others who do not.

“Kemmy Business School aims to foster within all of our students an ambition and ability to take their full parts in a society that is focused on achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.”

“The School’s new document titled Our Fundamental Values, adopted by the Faculty Board in 2017, stresses our commitment to the 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).” Gothenburg Business School

A growing number of schools are **integrating it into their strategy** including, but not limited to, Manchester Metropolitan University Business School, University of Sydney, University of St. Gallen, Federation Business School, EUCLID University and Gothenburg University. In some cases more specific information as to how is shared.

“EUCLID University’s 2020 Strategy has Social Responsibility & Sustainability, aligned with the UN Sustainable Development Goals, as one of its strategic aims.”

“Responsibility and sustainability (R&S) are broadly anchored across all activities at our university, and they are deeply ingrained in our culture. This was recently strengthened by adding the UN

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as new areas of impact for our university.” University of St. Gallen

Many reports mention the need to embed the SDGs into their purpose and values as **part of their goals moving forward**

“Over the next ten years we aim to further embed the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDG’s) in every aspect of the University’s practice.” Loughborough University

“The University of Leeds has started to consider its relationship to the SDGs and how they relate to its operations, research and educational mission. The University has extended its sustainability strategy to 2050 and has integrated the SDGs in considering what a sustainable university should look like in 2050.”

A few schools mention having **specific teams responsible for integrating the SDGs**

“SoM Sustainability Team was created in order to strengthen the sustainability culture across SoM by pursuing a bottom up approach and by monitoring, communicating and implementing the SDG framework during daily operations.” Politecnico di Milano School of Management

“Supporting the AUT Directions is a Sustainability Roadmap, currently in review by AUT’s Sustainability Taskforce. The draft Sustainability Roadmap calls for a step-change in the University’s commitment to progressing the Sustainable Development Goals through teaching, research and facilities management.” AUT Faculty of Business, Economics and Law

One school reports the **lack of engagement around the SDGs as a weakness:**

“Lack of explicit focus in the School’s strategy on building the School’s identity and expanding the School’s expertise, teaching and research activities in the areas related to the Sustainable Development Goals.” University of Sussex

Only a couple of reports **specifically comment on the interdisciplinary nature of the SDGs.**

“As we are now in the era of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and it is the framing for all our work in this area, the interdisciplinary nature of the SDGs requires, more than ever, a whole institution approach. At the University of Winchester, we believe that the challenges outlined in the SDGs are important to all subject areas and disciplines as well as the organisation itself. Therefore, the University’s strategic plan will be for the next 15 years (to coincide with 2030 agenda) and use SDGs as a framework for all aspects of our work.” Winchester Business School

Only 1 school refers to the SDGs in relation to **accreditation**

“In seeking accreditation, we will ensure that our processes provide continuing alignment with the UN Sustainable Development Goals.” Exeter Business School

Principle 3: Method

Ninety-three schools mention the SDGs in relation to Principle 3: Method. The range of ways this is mentioned varies greatly.

An increasing number of schools are **conducting surveys to identify how the school is already engaging in the SDGs.** These surveys include curriculum and/or research.

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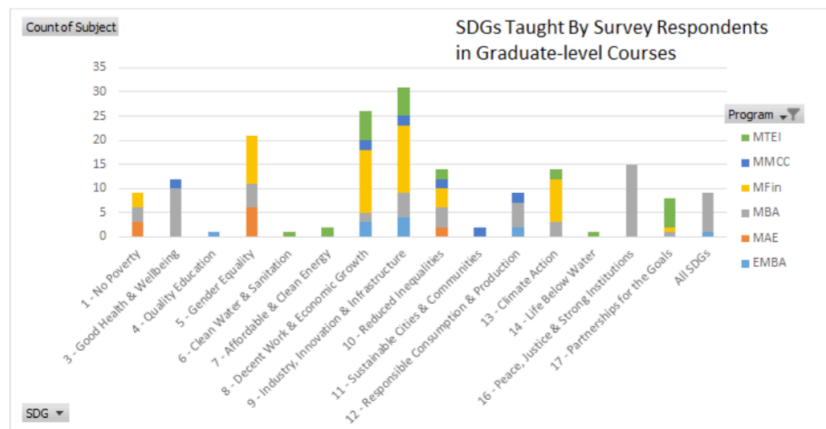


Chart #2 (above): SDGs Taught by Respondents in Graduate-level Courses.

Figure 2 - Sobey School of Business 2018 SIP Report

Most of the schools that report on **curriculum** look at which courses include a **mention of the SDGs** or, more often, an SDG related issue. The University of Liverpool has a list of courses accompanied by the logos of which SDG they relate to. However, for the schools that report on curriculum, it is not always clear whether the goals are specifically mentioned to students within these classes or just the topics explored by the goals.

Most often the SDGs are discussed in relation to sustainability courses (core or elective) and entrepreneurship courses, in particular social entrepreneurship. Other courses mentioned include Marketing, Organisational Behaviour, and Information Management. Only a couple of schools reported having **created specific courses around the SDGs**, including Euclid University. Others such as Universidad de los Andes have future plans to do so.

Several schools mention the lack of specific courses. One looks more specifically at the challenges associated with this.

"How to best integrate the 17 SDGs and not create 'silos' is one of our challenges for the future since one of the aims of Agenda 2030 is to recognise the interlinkages between different sectors, actors and goals. To date, there has been no mandatory course for all undergraduate programme students dedicated to addressing the SDGs or global challenges more generally. However, there are ongoing discussions among faculty and the program management team about introducing a compulsory sustainability course in the business and economics programme." University of Gothenburg

Only a couple of schools mention specifically integrating the SDGs into their **assurance of learning process** either general or for a specific course

"Future Goal To secure a formal commitment across BI, we aim to include the SDGs in our assurance of learning process. This gives us a formal framework and a set of tools to follow up on how the learning objectives are met." BI Norwegian Business School

At the **programme level**, schools primarily mention the SDGs in relation to Bachelor programmes (e.g. BI Norwegian Business School, UNE Business School). Much fewer discuss the SDGs in relation to their graduate level programmes (e.g. ISAE/FGV's Stricto Sensu Programme) although several have plans to do so (e.g. ITB, Aston University). A few schools mention how the SDGs are incorporated into the Executive level (e.g. Gordon Institute of Business Science, Kozminski University) or as a future goal (e.g. Tsinghua SEM). Some schools, such as CENTRUM, have reported having integrated the SDGs into all course syllabi at all levels already.

Schools with degree programmes in sustainable development mention having already embedded the SDGs into their programmes (e.g. University of Sussex MSc in Sustainable Development) as well as certificate programmes (e.g. Haskayne School of Business' Certificate in Sustainability). A few schools are developing new degree programmes that include the SDGs (e.g. Altis Postgraduate School Business & Society). The reports primarily explore the SDGs in relation to their Business curriculum but a few mention other programmes. For example Seattle Pacific University mentions that the SDGs will play a key role in the new "public policy and public administration" concentration that will be offered within the political science major.

Schools report different ways of **engaging their faculty and staff** in the SDGs. This includes primarily staff workshops (e.g. ISAE/FGV). Some signatories have developed tools to assist faculty. Gordon Institute of Business Science reports on a project they are undertaking as a Champion school. ISAE/FGV has a Handbook for Best Practices in the Dissemination of SDGs in partnership with other Brazilian signatories.

There are a range of **different tools being used in the classroom** around the SDGs, including the Sustainability Literacy Test and AIM2Flourish. A range of voluntary and mandatory student projects are integrating the SDGs including projects within the local community (e.g. Goa Business School) or with companies (e.g. Kemmy Business School). New assignments are also being developed around the SDGs.

"Kemmy Business School Students of CSR use the book The Future MBA (Weybrecht) in small groups to draw up their own dream curriculum. They are then presented with the SDGs and locate them within their newly- designed curriculum. This has the effect of broadening their engagement with the SDGs, and seeing how their own passions align."

Different competitions and awards have been developed for students. For example the University of San Diego Global Social Innovation Challenge brings together students from 27 universities to pitch social enterprise ideas related to the SDGs. Kent Business School mentions their involvement in the PRME Writing Competition for the UK and Ireland Chapter which was designed to promote understanding of the SDGs.

Many reports mention this as a **future goal** moving forwards.

"To align curricula and research to the SDG commitments and agenda and to seek more applied research around the SDGs that can create solutions to help businesses be more effective and sustainable." University of Guelph College of Business and Economics
"Goal 1. Innovate the curriculum by more deeply embedding the UN Sustainable Development Goals in our core classes and throughout each of our majors. The faculty will work with the PRME coordinator, department chairs, the curriculum committee, and the faculty development committee to enact this goal." La Trobe Business School

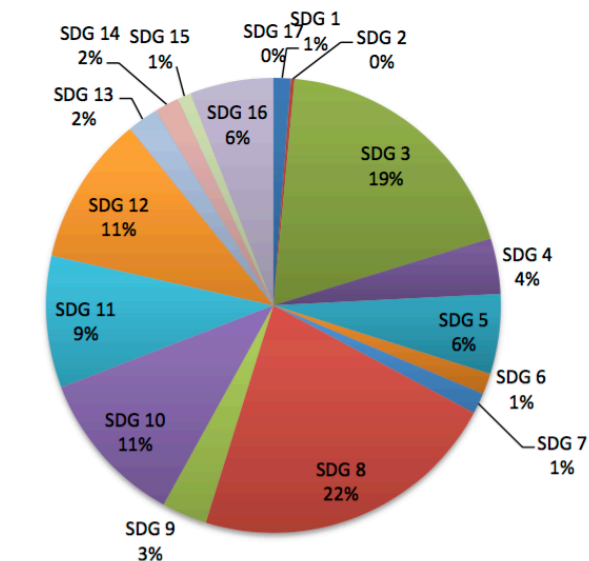
Principle 4: Research

Ninety-four reports mention the SDGs in relation to research.

A number of schools have undertaken a **mapping study to determine which SDGs are being covered by the University's research** (e.g. Politecnico di Milano School of Management and Ca'Foscari University of Venice). Several other schools, including the University of Auckland Business School, report that this is a goal moving forwards.

Some schools report on how they **encourage faculty to do research on SDG related themes**. For example HULT Business Schools faculty are encouraged to consider how ERS themes in general, and the SDGs in particular, could be relevant to their research when submitting research funding proposals. Faculty are also encouraged to articulate how their research considers ERS themes and contributes to the UN SDGs

Some schools are **creating databases or platforms bringing together their SDG related research**. Griffith Centre for Sustainable Enterprise is developing a platform that compiles and categorises all the publications published by Griffith Business School academics based on the sustainable development goals. The University of Sydney has a future goal to develop a webpage showcasing their research work around the SDGs.



**SDG Coverage in LBS Research Output
2016-2017 (n=227)**

Figure 3 - Latrobe Business School

A few schools report on the creation of **new research groups or networks** focused on the SDG. Winchester Business Schools' Sustainability Community of Practice, launched in 2018, aims to enable interdisciplinary discussions and collaborations in relations to the SDGs. The University of Portsmouth has started a Sustainable Development Goals research group and network.

Some schools report working on **research projects focused specifically on the SDGs**. For example, the Sobey School of Business has begun a research project focused on mapping the interactions and relationships between the 17 SDGs. Walden University has also tried, through a 'casual diagram' showing how specific educational and leadership skills might help us reach the SDGs.

Seven schools **mention specific contributions to national SDGs efforts**. For example HHL Leipzig Graduate School of Management is measuring contributions that German companies are making to reach the SDGs. SDA Bocconi research focused on Oceans, which is part of the SDGs platform in Italy. SinoBritish College has a future goal to engage in China's National Plan for Implementing SDGs.

Several schools mention the SDGs in relation to **specific research being conducted by PRME related Centres** on campus (e.g. Peter J. Tobin College of Business and Sheffield Hallam University). La Trobe University opened a new Yunus Social Business Centre looking at the SDGs. The University of San Diego's Centre for Peace and Commerce puts a major emphasis on the SDGs as does the Observatorio Economico Sostenible at the Universidad del Valle de Guatemala.

Some Centres have **partnered with leading SDG organisations around the world**. Universidad de los Andes is home to the SDG Centre for Latin American and the Caribbean which has the goal to develop teaching content and methodologies to include

the SDGs in the advancement of sustainable management education. The Graduate School of Business South Africa Bertha Centre was chosen by the United Nations Development Programme to be part of a group of nine universities worldwide working to develop a research agenda to better leverage private investment to finance the SDGs. Only a couple of schools mention teaching cases focused on the SDGs. (e.g. IESE Case: Rosemberg, Mike; Business and the Sustainable Development Goals, 2017).

Some schools, such as the University of Sussex, outline which **PhD research dissertations relate to the SDG** and report encouraging PhD candidates to conduct research in relation to the SDG. Others, such as Winchester Business School and University of Guelph College of Business and Economics, report that there is a growing number of doctoral research students undertaking PhD's in relation to PRME and the SDGs. Politecnico di Milano School of Management has an annual award for outstanding theses relating to the SDGs.

Only a few schools mentioned the SDGs in relation to future goals in research (e.g. American University of Beirut).

Principle 5: Partnerships

There are 194 schools that report on partnerships in relation to the SDGs. There is very little information shared in regards to these partnerships however, including who they are with and what they are working on.

Several schools are engaging in partnerships with the **Global Compact**. For example, BI Norwegian Business School's engagement in The Global Opportunity Explorer, a joint project of Sustainia, DNV GL and the UN Global Compact focused on the SDGs. Schools such as ISAE/FGV are active in local Global Compact networks and involved in multiple SDG related projects through these. The schools that are part of the UK and Ireland chapter were involved in the SDG Roadshow in cooperation with the UN Global Compact UK Network. It took in 11 of the UK's biggest cities, and brought together business and academics to discuss how to make these Global Goals local. La Trobe Business School did something similar, although at a much smaller scale, in partnership with the University of Wollongong. Some schools report on engaging with the Global Compact being one of their biggest challenges (e.g. Centrum).

Five schools mention their engagement with the Global Alliance, a network of national and international associations working for sustainable development in higher education. This includes KEDGE, GEM and Aalto University. SDA Bocconi mentions that they are engaged in the SDGs through their involvement in ABIS. La Trobe Business School mentions their involvement in the CR3+ collaboration. Iaelyon Business School mentions the International CSR Networks of Schools of Management. UNISA mentions their membership and participation in the Australia/Pacific Regional Network of the Sustainable Development Solutions



Principle 5: Partnership

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

MQFRE engages deeply with our stakeholders as we create and share knowledge that addresses business and societal challenges. In this section, we highlight a number of our key and strategic partnerships with business, professional practice, government and academia through which we make a positive global contribution and impact. Figure 12 summarises the number of partnerships with stakeholders by SDG over the three year period 2015 to 2017.



Figure 12: Mapping our partnership engagements against the SDGs, 2015-17

Funded research partnerships

A number of our staff have partnered with academic, professional and government colleagues to address sustainable development goals. Below is a selection of recent projects that were awarded external funding – an indication of MQFRE's engagement in research of value to business and society.

	Project: Leadership diversity through relational intersectionality in Australia Project member(s): Carl Rhodes, Alison Pullen, Helena Liu Funding/partner organisation: Australian Research Council (ARC) Discovery Project Start year: 2017 Funding: \$270,278
	Project: Preconception carrier screening: providing genetically at-risk families with a chance to have healthy children Project member(s): Deborah Schofield Funding/partner organisation: National Health and Medical Research Council Start year: 2017 Funding: \$845,827

	Project: Project to develop a method of assessing basis risk for longevity transactions Project member(s): Jackie Li, Leonie Tickle, Johnny Li, Chong H Tan Funding/partner organisation: Institute and Faculty of Actuaries, Life and Longevity Markets Assoc. Start year: 2016 Funding: \$103,908
	Project: National survey of remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island artists – Integrating art production and economic development in remote Indigenous communities Project member(s): David Throsby, Katya Petetskaya Funding/partner organisation: Northern Territory Department of Tourism and Culture Start year: 2017 Funding: \$100,000
	Project: Exploring the nexus of energy use, ageing, and health and wellbeing among older Australians Project member(s): Ross Gordon, Gordon Waitt, Paul Cooper Funding/partner organisation: Energy Consumers Australia Limited Start year: 2017 Funding: \$98,394

Network. Several of the Australian Schools specifically mention their contributions to the Australian Government platform around the SDGs.

Given the importance of partnerships, and opportunities they present, it was surprising that there wasn't more written about partnerships in relation to the SDGs.

Principle 6: Dialogue

There were 206 reports that made a mention of the SDGs in relation to dialogue. Most mention that the SDGs are **included in discussions at annual conferences and events or as part of specific events**. Several signatories, including the Scuola Superiore Sant'Anna and the University of Sydney Business School, organised specific conferences focused on the SDGs. Peter J. Tobin College of Business's major event in 2018 was focused on the SDGs and Griffith Business School is planning a Global Goals conference. The most recent edition of DGDW held at IESE centred on the UN's Sustainable Development Goals 2030. The St. Gallen University's Idea Battle for sustainable development was developed in partnership with a Swiss think tank for foreign policy and the Swiss youth delegates to the UN.  Many of these events seem to be one off events rather than annual or regularly occurring events.

The SDGs are also increasingly being included in Sustainability Days or Weeks on campus. The University of Auckland's annual Sustainability Week focused on the SDGs and Doshisha Business School had a special talk on the SDGs as part of their first week of classes. The University of Gothenburg focused on the SDGs during three special Sustainability Days on campus.

Only a few schools reported activities around Global Goals Week. Kent State University asked everyone in the College to make a commitment to the SDGs and to sign their names on a banner. Students and staff at the University of Winchester made individual pledges to take action towards the goals as part of the "#WINCHESTER WORKING FOR THE WORLD" initiative. The University of Leicester organised a Making Global Goals Local Business Day on May 9th in collaboration with the UN Global Compact Network, the UK & Ireland PRME chapter.

Only a few schools report on providing workshops on the SDGs for the **business community**. For example ISAE/FGV offered business workshops focused on the SDGs including "How to include the SDGs in Corporate Strategy to Add Value."

Only three schools mention the **involvement of their student clubs** in the SDGs (e.g. the oikos club at Kent State University and the Enactus club at Federation Business School). Several schools mention **engaging with youth outside of the university**, in particular pre university students.

"In 2017, Laurier's International Education Week included a daylong youth conference on UN Sustainable Development Goals. The youth training sessions were one of 50 about the SDGs being led at post-secondary institutions across Canada by Foundation for Environmental Stewardship (FES), a youth-led, youth- serving sustainable development organization accredited by the UN." Lazaridis School of Business

Some schools developed **awards focused on the SDGs**. ISAE/FGV Ozires Silva Award in Sustainable Entrepreneurship (nominee projects linked to the SDGs) acknowledging the best projects that contribute to the development of society. HULT International Business School continues to host the Hult Prize which is increasingly organised around the SDGs.

Some schools are looking at how to give the SDGs a prominent visual on campus. For example ITB School of Management created a PRME corner at the university that has the SDGs posted on the wall. Discussions of weekly news on “The Future, This Week” (Sydney Business Insights podcast) include topics aligned with the SDGs.

Only a couple of schools report on **platforms to support new solutions around the SDGs** (e.g. Kozminsky University’s Venture Lab).

Several schools mention embedding the SDGs into dialogue as a future goal. For example Macquarie University has a goal to develop a system for collecting information about their activities in supporting dialogue on PRME and the SDGs.

Principle 7: Operations

While a growing number of SIP reports now include information about the school’s operations, only 4 specifically mention the SDGs in these sections. HULT Business Schools reports on how they are implementing several of the SDGs in their campus operations including 3,5,6,7,8,12,13,15 and 16. Their report includes a mix of both qualitative and quantitative information to support this. La Trobe Business School provides information on the development of their energy strategy in line with SDG targets. Manchester Metropolitan University Business School states that all of their campus events relate to one or more of the 17 SDGs.

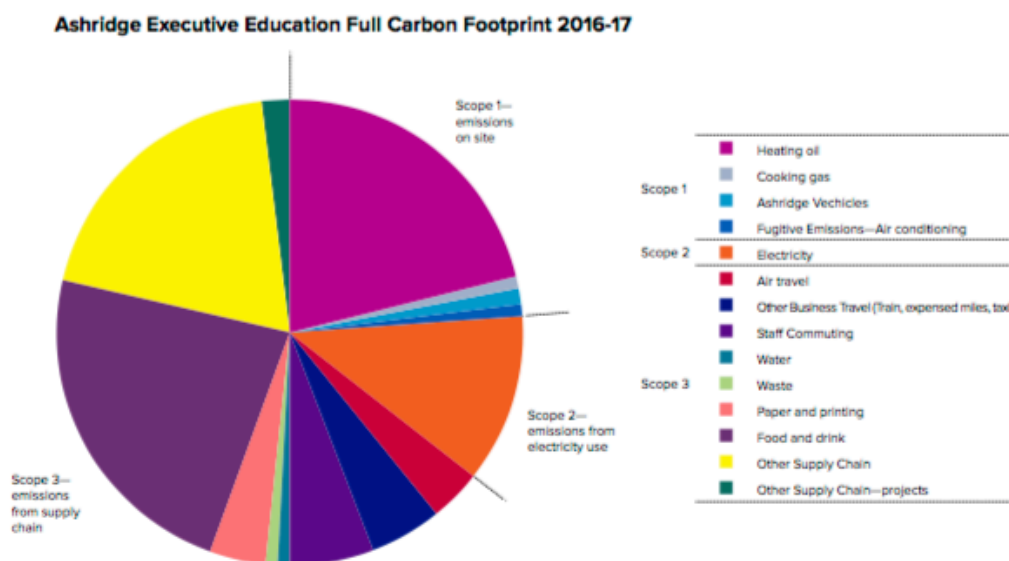


Figure 4 – Hult International Business School

FINAL THOUGHTS

In 2018 there was a significant increase in the number of schools that included the SDGs in their reports compared to the year before. This increase was both in terms of the frequency that the SDGs were mentioned and also, more importantly, the quality of those mentions. This means that the SDGs are increasingly being discussed in connection with programmes, partnerships, curriculum, operations, strategy and other activities that business schools undertake, and not just as something that is happening outside the institutions.

Having said that, I had expected more given the importance of the SDGs, the time that has passed, the engagement of the business sector in these topics as well as the vast array of ways that schools can engage in the SDGs. The SDGs can be a powerful way of connecting an institution's engagement in PRME and responsible management/sustainability more broadly with what is happening in the wider community, which is, ultimately, the point.

With these thoughts in mind, below are 10 common themes that were noted in the reports:

1. **Not enough schools are mentioning the SDGs.** Considering that these reports were written 3 years after the SDGs were set, not enough schools mentioned the SDGs, showed an understanding of what they are and why they are important, or even presented ways that they are engaging in them. The vast majority of the reports didn't provide any explanation of what the SDGs are. Many others included logos for the SDGs without any explanation as to why or how they were connected or important to the school. A few schools even showed clearly through their reports that they don't actually know what the SDGs are (for example, by providing the wrong definition or explanation).
2. **Very few schools specifically mentioned that the SDGs are important for business schools.** Not only are the SDGs relevant to business schools, but business schools play an important and too often underappreciated role in reaching the SDGs. However, only a couple of schools commented on this role and its importance in their SIPs. They also failed to comment on the importance of the SDGs to the reporting institutions.
3. **The SDGs are only mentioned in parts of the report:** In reports that mention the SDGs, the SDGs are mostly mentioned in relation to a sustainability course or centre. Too few reports explore how the SDGs are relevant to, or are being included in, other parts of the school, including other centres, courses (in particular in the core curriculum) and research. This includes in key and strategic partnerships with business, professional organisations, government etc.
4. **Rarely are the SDGs connected to strategy:** Some reports make the assumption that as an educational institution they are automatically and sufficiently engaged in the SDGs (since SDG 4 relates to education). While many reports make no note of how their school is approaching the SDGs, or the importance it places on these, several have clearly connected the SDGs to the school's strategy including putting in place internal goals and targets in relation to the SDGs or that will enable progress on the SDGs in a particular sector, country or globally.
5. **The SDGs are mentioned too often:** While some reports fail to include the SDGs outside of the sustainability course description, some have the opposite issue. Some reports mention the SDGs on every page, at the end of every paragraph. While the SDGs are relevant to many, if not all, of the initiatives taking place in a business school, this doesn't necessarily mean that the school is actively making this connection. Therefore, placing the SDG logo or number everywhere may not be effective either.
6. **Data:** While both qualitative and quantitative information is important in reports, many reports shy away from providing quantitative data of any kind. This is particularly useful if it can be, and is, compared every year through subsequent SIP reports. A few schools are using the Global Reporting Initiative guidelines or

creating Integrated Reports combining both their financial and sustainability reports (including data on the SDGs).

7. **Student engagement:** Students are a central part of any business school. However few schools mention student engagement in relation to the SDGs. This includes not just in the curriculum (in extra curricular activities). Only a few mention student club involvement or extra curricular activities, or even engaging students in efforts the school has underway in relation to the SDGs. There are even a few reports that were written by students or with active student involvement that don't mention the SDGs at all.
8. **Engagement through the school's operations:** While a growing number of schools are presenting how they are engaging students on issues such as climate change in the classroom, surprisingly few are engaged in these issues themselves through their own operations. Only a handful of schools report on their efforts around reducing their carbon footprint, waste reduction and sustainable procurement to name but a few. That being said, those schools that are reporting on this are sharing more and more in-depth information and insights as to how they are engaging in the SDGs through their operations.
9. **Partnerships for the SDGs:** One of the many strengths of the SDGs is that they are a set of goals agreed upon by the broader global community including governments, NGOs, civil society and the business sector. Because of this, all of these different groups around the world are engaging in the SDGs in different ways and often in collaboration with each other. Thus, it is surprising to see how few schools mentioned having any collaborations with external organisations around the SDGs or even playing a role to help raise awareness or engage in relevant research of the SDGs with these different groups.
10. **Impact:** While more reports are mentioning the SDGs, not enough are discussing how the school is impacting the SDGs in their SIPs. This includes the impact not just on student but in particular through research and partnerships as well as the local impact schools can have on and around their campus. Too few schools mention impact as part of their goals either.

Writing a SIP report is a time consuming effort. It is, however, one that if approached in the right way, can be an instrumental part in moving an academic institution forward towards their own sustainability related goals, or closer to what society as a whole needs from academic institutions, in particular with the SDGs. An SIP doesn't need colourful pictures, nor does it need fancy formatting. It can be anywhere from 1 to 100 pages long, saved as a word document or printed as a book. None of that really matters. What does matter is the content, and that it goes beyond just keywords or buzzwords. It should tell the story of where a school stands, how they got there and, most importantly, where they are going, and bring readers along with them on their journey to get there.

While whether or not a school mentions the SDGs in an SIP report may not seem important, if signatories of PRME, the schools that have explicitly stated their commitment to responsible management education, aren't connecting to the SDGs, then the global community is missing out on one of its most important actors in reaching these Global Goals by 2030.

**For more please contact me at gweybrecht@thesustainablemba.com, visit www.giselleweybrecht.com or read primetime.unprme.org.*