

GD902-60 Workplace Project

22/23

Department

Global Sustainable Development

Level

Taught Postgraduate Level

Module leader

Alastair Smith

Credit value

60

Module duration

22 weeks

Assessment

80% coursework, 20% exam

Study location

University of Warwick main campus, Coventry

Description

Introductory description

This module provides students the opportunity to engage in a work placement within a professional organisation that considers sustainability as part of their business agenda. The placement will be for three months and will take place during the summer. As part of the assessment students will be required to critically reflect on their own performance, analyse the organisation and make suggestions for improvements. As such this module offers a firmly transdisciplinary experience, both through the breadth of potentially relevant academic knowledge learning, and its direct application as the student work within a practitioner community.

Module aims

This module aims to provide students with the opportunity to:

- Get direct practical experience of working within a professional environment
- Develop a better understanding of the contribution and challenges organisations face in achieving the sustainability goals
- Apply their knowledge and skills into practice
- Enhance their professional skills, and provide a deeper reflection into their own strengths and limitations in relation to both personal and professional career development

Outline syllabus

This is an indicative module outline only to give an indication of the sort of topics that may be covered. Actual sessions held may differ.

As this module takes place at an organisation, most of the the learning will take place in the working environment. However, students will have access to online resources (via Moodle) to support their understanding of the working environment and how to thrive within it.

Learning outcomes

By the end of the module, students should be able to:

- Understand how the professional working environment operates, how certain normative agendas for sustainability dominate others, and how this mediates a personal desire for socially and environmentally positive agency.
- Identify, diagnose, and critically analyse the contributions and challenges faced by a real word organisation, in relation to sustainability.
- Design and propose plans to improve the organisational function/model in achieving sustainability aspirations.
- Operate as a reflective practitioner in seeking to promote meaningful and positive change while part of the workforce
- Understand and actively reflect on the concept of personal integrity within professional practices.
- Continually develop ethical praxis, including social and cultural sensitivity
- Articulate critical reflections on personal and organisational agency in the written and oral medium, with the view to promoting further personal and organisational improvement

Indicative reading list

A full reading and resources list will be provided as part of the support for the on-line independent learning component. Indicative content:

Bögel et al. (2019). Linking socio-technical transition studies and organisational change management: Steps towards an integrative, multi-scale heuristic. *Journal of Cleaner Production*, 232.

Domingues et al (2017). Sustainability reporting in public sector organisations: Exploring the relation between the reporting process and organisational change management for sustainability. *Journal of cleaner Production*, 192.

Roscoe et al (2019). Green human resource management and the enablers of green organisational culture: Enhancing a firm's environmental performance for sustainable development. *Business Strategy and the Environment*, 28(5).

Narayanan & Adams (2017). Transformative change towards sustainability: the interaction between organisational discourses and organisational practices. *Accounting and Business Research*, 47(3).

Waddel et al (2019). Organisational Change: Development and Transformation. Cengage: Melbourne.

Research element

Healey & Jenkins (2009) propose that Research-led-teaching design should consider four discrete opportunities. This module has been designed to include one of these opportunities:

Research-based learning, where students develop methodological skills to create original knowledge of their own. Specifically, students will use their first-hand empirical experience to produce and engage in assessments that require a reflective analysis of the organisation as an agent of positive change in the wider world, as well as their own agency within the concrete context. These outputs will be made available to the organisation and will therefore potentially contribute to the organisation's efforts to facilitate positive transformations.

Interdisciplinary

Students will draw on knowledge from a range disciplines to critically reflect on both personal agency within the workplace, and that of the wider organisation in the world, when reflecting on opportunities to promote sustainability at a number of scales. Knowledge will be drawn from the sphere of social (e.g. sociology of organisations, change and management), economic (e.g. financial and organisational economics) and environmental (e.g. management and sustainability) knowledge, as well as more technical disciplines where appropriate.

International

Students are able to organise work opportunities abroad as well as in the UK. Where this happens students will have the opportunity to experience professional practices in other national cultures, governance contexts etc

Subject specific skills

By the end of the module, students will have:

Developed a good understanding of how the professional working environment operates and the different factors that impact its success.

Knowledge of the challenges faced by a real-world organisation, in relation to sustainability transformations

Better self-awareness which will allow them to identify their strengths and areas for development for both personal and professional growth

Developed better social and cultural awareness and an understanding of its contribution in the workforce

Transferable skills

Students will have developed transferable skills such as:

Critical thinking, problem-solving, research, management, effective communication, flexibility, independence, time management, report-writing, team-working and decision-making

Study

Study time

Type	Required
Tutorials	(0%)
Project supervision	6 sessions of 1 hour (1%)
Work-based learning	418 sessions of 1 hour (92%)
Online learning (independent)	30 sessions of 1 hour (7%)
Total	454 hours

Private study description

No private study requirements defined for this module.

Costs

No further costs have been identified for this module.

Assessment

You do not need to pass all assessment components to pass the module.

Assessment group D

	Weighting	Study time
Scoping paper for change and implementation plan	60%	70 hours

Based on their first hand experience, students will be required to critically evaluate their chosen organisation's current business model and operational policies, and propose developments that improve contributions to the Sustainable Development agenda.

Critical Self Evaluation	20%	70 hours
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Based on regular entries in a written reflective diary kept throughout the work placement, students create a consolidated critical evaluation of their personal experience.: considering performance as an agent of positive change, challenges faced in the world of work as well as linking practice to academic learning, research, with overt planning of how to continue this through continuing professional development.

	Weighting	Study time
Oral Report/Presentation on Work Placement	20%	6 hours

This assessment will require the students to reflect/present their experience to a panel. The presentation will involve students discussing their scoping paper, understating of the working environment, challenges within it as well as critically answering questions from the panel.

Feedback on assessment

Students will have the opportunity to get formative feedback via one-to-one consultations (face-to-face, email, Skype, telephone).

Students will get feedback on their assessments via Tabula.

[Past exam papers for GD902](#)

Availability

Courses

This module is Core optional for:

- Year 1 of TGDA-L801 Postgraduate Taught Global Sustainable Development