Abstract for the 3rd UK PRME Chapter Conference: Track 1

**Laying the foundations: Developing future leaders and managers’ capacity to contribute to sustainable development**

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The need for the transformation of management education in order to meet the increasing demand for responsible business is becoming increasingly clear. The challenge for business schools is how to develop effective management education that equips future leaders with capabilities for sustainable development and responsible management practice. The first step must be to ensure students have appropriate knowledge of the social, environmental and economic issues faced by business and society. Whilst many business schools have made significant progress in arming students with the necessary skills required to engage in ethical and responsible business, knowledge of social and environmental issues among business and management undergraduates remains low.

This paper argues that introductory to management courses are an essential component in setting the foundations for developing future managers and leaders with the capabilities and knowledge necessary to contribute to sustainable development and responsible management practices. It draws on an ongoing research project that reviews business ethics and sustainability curricular of 200 top ranked business schools who provide undergraduate education to establish if, how, where and when responsible management and sustainable development topics are explicitly dealt with within programme curricula. The study finds that whilst many business schools have made significant progress on developing courses that expose students to responsible management issues, more than half do not explicitly identify sustainability in their introductory level curricula.