



The University of Southern Queensland

Course specification

The current and official versions of the course specifications are available on the web at <http://www.usq.edu.au/coursespecification/current>.
Please consult the web for updates that may occur during the year.

Description: Finance and Accounting for Sustainability

Subject	Cat-nbr	Class	Term	Mode	Units	Campus
ACC	8101	91038	2, 2009	EXT	1.00	Toowoomba

Academic group:	FOBUS
Academic org:	FOB008
Student contribution band:	3A
ASCED code:	080101

STAFFING

Examiner: Christina James-Overheu
Moderator: Geoff Slaughter

OTHER REQUISITES

Students are required to have access to a personal computer, e-mail capabilities and Internet access to UConnect. Current details of computer requirements can be found at <http://www.usq.edu.au/ict/students/standards/default.htm>.

SYNOPSIS

Business is now under increasing scrutiny by both the public and governments and is being called to account for activities that have social and environmental implications. Fundamentally however, the business objective of profitability and thus maximising returns to shareholders must still apply, hence the triple bottom line approach where business needs to be managed both for public benefit and private good. This course focuses on the external reporting aspects of corporate social and environmental sustainability. It begins by examining the ethical considerations and corporate social responsibility issues of environmentally sustainable and unsustainable business practices. This theme is embedded in an exploration of business activities including how investors and lenders evaluate the sustainability of business activities before committing funds; the issues surrounding the reporting of environmental impacts of a business's operations and its sustainability initiatives to external stakeholders on a voluntary and legislative basis; the processes and methods by which these external reports can be verified for accuracy and integrity; and the internal and external issues that are likely to challenge sustainable business strategy in the future.

OBJECTIVES

On successful completion of this course, students should be able to:

1. demonstrate ethical research and enquiry by critically evaluating issues relating to corporate social responsibility and ethics in the context of environmentally sustainable business activities

2. demonstrate an understanding of the relevance of sustainable business activities for investors, lenders, employees, consumers, governments and the wider community and appreciate the global nature of sustainability
3. demonstrate academic and professional literacy by understanding and critically evaluating current accounting methods and processes that are used to report greenhouse emissions under Australia's National Greenhouse Reporting Regulations (NGER), including those methods currently required by the International Accounting Standards Board
4. demonstrate problem-solving skills through the identification and resolution of issues with external reporting processes for environmental sustainability relating to financial and non-financial aspects of business activities with the aim of making more informed, appropriate choices
5. demonstrate the use of problem-solving skills to understand and apply the auditing and assurance framework to resolve issues in the context of corporate environmental sustainability and legislative requirements
6. demonstrate an understanding of the strategic and financial implications of business sustainability and what future challenges are likely to emerge in terms of community expectations and legislative regulations
7. demonstrate the capacity for written communication using the appropriate format and structure.

TOPICS

	Description	Weighting (%)
1.	Business ethics: a social and environmental sustainability perspective	10.00
2.	Sustainable financing and investing	20.00
3.	Sustainable operating and reporting	50.00
4.	Sustainable auditing and assurance services	10.00
5.	Future directions for corporate sustainability	10.00

TEXT and MATERIALS required to be PURCHASED or ACCESSED

ALL textbooks and materials are available for purchase from USQ BOOKSHOP (unless otherwise stated). Orders may be placed via secure internet, free fax 1800642453, phone 07 46312742 (within Australia), or mail. Overseas students should fax +61 7 46311743, or phone +61 7 46312742. For costs, further details, and internet ordering, use the 'Textbook Search' facility at <http://bookshop.usq.edu.au> click 'Semester', then enter your 'Course Code' (no spaces).

REFERENCE MATERIALS

Reference materials are materials that, if accessed by students, may improve their knowledge and understanding of the material in the course and enrich their learning experience.

Readings will be provided via the course web site (accessed through USQConnect) during the course. This is intended to ensure that the course remains relevant and topical.

Deegan, C 2006, *Financial accounting theory*, 2nd edn, McGraw Hill, Sydney, New South Wales.

- Deegan, C 2007, *Australian financial accounting*, 5th edn, McGraw Hill, Macquarie Park, New South Wales.
- Desjardins, JR 2007, *Business ethics and the environment: imagining a sustainable future*, Prentice Hall, Upper Saddle River, New Jersey.
- Fishman, C 2006, *The Wal-Mart effect: how an out-of-town superstore became a superpower*, Allen Lane, New York.
- Gallhofer, S & Haslam, J 2003, *Accounting and emancipation: some critical interventions*, Routledge, London.
- Grace, D & Cohen, S 2005, *Business ethics: Australian problems and cases*, 3rd edn, Oxford University Press, South Melbourne, Victoria.
- Gray, R, Owen, D & Adams, C 1996, *Accounting and accountability*, Prentice-Hall, London.
- Haigh, G 2006, *Asbestos house: the secret history of James Hardie Industries*, Scribe Publications, Carlton North, Victoria.
- Hawken, P 1993, *The ecology of commerce: a declaration of sustainability*, Harper Collins, New York.
- Henderson, S, Peirson, G & Herbohn, K 2008, *Issues in financial accounting*, 13th edn, Pearson Education, Frenchs Forest, New South Wales.
- Hillary, R (ed) 2000, *Small and medium-sized enterprises and the environment: business imperatives*, Greenleaf, Sheffield, England.
- Himmelstein, JL 1997, *Looking good and doing good: corporate philanthropy and corporate power*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, Indiana.
- Korten, D 2001, *When corporations rule the world*, 2nd edn, Kumarian Press and Berrett-Koehler, Bloomfield.
- Ledgerwood, G 1997, *Greening the boardroom: corporate environmental governance and business sustainability*, Greenleaf Publishing, Sheffield, England.
- Ledgerwood, G 1997, *Greening the boardroom: corporate environmental governance and business sustainability*, Greenleaf Publishing, Sheffield.
- Schlosser, E 2002, *Fast food nation: what the all-American meal is doing to the world*, Penguin Books, London.

STUDENT WORKLOAD REQUIREMENTS

ACTIVITY	HOURS
Assessments	40.00
Directed Study	56.00
Private Study	69.00

ASSESSMENT DETAILS

Description	Marks out of	Wtg (%)	Due date	Objectives assessed	Graduate skill	Level assessed
ASSIGNMENT 1	20.00	20.00	26 Aug 2009	1, 2		
ASSIGNMENT 2	30.00	30.00	07 Oct 2009	2, 3, 4, 7		
2-HOUR EXAMINATION	50.00	50.00	END S2 (see note 1)	2, 3, 5, 6, 7		

NOTES

1. The examination is scheduled to be held in the end-of-semester examination period. Students will be advised of the official examination date after the timetable has been finalised.

IMPORTANT ASSESSMENT INFORMATION

- 1 Attendance requirements:
If you are an international student in Australia you are advised to attend all classes at your campus. Failure to attend may infringe the conditions of your student visa. For all other students, there are no attendance requirements for this course. However, it is the students' responsibility to study all material provided to them or required to be accessed by them to maximise their chance of meeting the objectives of the course and to be informed of course-related activities and administration.
- 2 Requirements for students to complete each assessment item satisfactorily:
To satisfactorily complete an individual assessment item a student must achieve at least 50% of the marks. (Depending upon the requirements in Statement 4 below, students may not have to satisfactorily complete each assessment item to receive a passing grade in this course.)
- 3 Penalties for late submission of required work:
If students submit assignments after the due date without prior approval of the examiner, then a penalty of 5% of the total marks gained by the student for the assignment may apply for each working day late up to ten working days at which time a mark of zero may be recorded.
- 4 Requirements for student to be awarded a passing grade in the course:
To be assured of receiving a passing grade a student must achieve at least 50% of the total weighted marks available for the course.
- 5 Method used to combine assessment results to attain final grade:
The final grades for students will be assigned on the basis of the aggregate of the weighted marks obtained for each of the summative assessment items in the course.
- 6 Examination information:
This will be an open examination. Candidates may have access to any printed or written material and a calculator during the examination. In line with regulation 5.6.4.2 'Use of Electronic Devices during Examinations', laptop and notebook computers are not permitted.
- 7 Examination period when Deferred/Supplementary examinations will be held:
Any Deferred or Supplementary examinations for this course will be held during the next examination period.
- 8 University Regulations:

Students should read USQ Regulations 5.1 Definitions, 5.6 Assessment, and 5.10 Student Academic Misconduct for further information and to avoid actions which might contravene university regulations. These regulations can be found at <<http://www.usq.edu.au/corporateservices/calendar/part5.htm>>. Students should also read the Faculty of Business Procedures which can be found at <<http://www.usq.edu.au/business/aboutfob.htm>>.

ASSESSMENT NOTES

- 1 Assignments: (i) The due date for an assignment is the date by which a student must despatch the assignment to the USQ. The onus is on the student to provide proof of the despatch date, if requested by the examiner. (ii) Students must retain a copy of each item submitted for assessment. This must be produced within 24 hours if required by the examiner. (iii) In accordance with university policy, the examiner may grant an extension of the due date of an assignment in extenuating circumstances. (iv) Assignments are to be submitted in the appropriate assignment folders. (v) The examiner will normally only accept assessments that have been written, typed or printed on paper-based media. (vi) Students who do not have regular access to postal services or who are otherwise disadvantaged by these regulations may be given special consideration. They should contact the examiner to negotiate such special arrangements. (vii) In the event that a due date for an assignment falls on a local public holiday in their area, such as a show holiday, the due date for the assignment will be the next day. Students are to note on the assignment cover the date of the public holiday for the examiner's convenience.
- 2 Referencing in assignments: Harvard (AGPS) is the referencing system required in this course. Students should use Harvard (AGPS) style in their assignments to format details of the information sources they have cited in their work. The Harvard (AGPS) style to be used is defined by the USQ Library's referencing guide at <<http://www.usq.edu.au/library/help/referencing/default.htm>>.
- 3 Course weightings: Course weightings of topics should not be interpreted as applying to the number of marks allocated to questions testing those topics in an examination paper. The examination may test material already tested in assignments.
- 4 Deferred work: Students who, for medical, family/personal, or employment-related reasons, are unable to complete an assignment or to sit for an examination at the scheduled time may apply to defer an assessment in a course. Such a request must be accompanied by appropriate supporting documentation. One of the following temporary grades may be awarded: IDS (Incomplete - Deferred Examination); IDM (Incomplete Deferred Make-up); IDB (Incomplete - Both Deferred Examination and Deferred Make-up).

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