

## Workshop 9: Embedding SDGs in Marketing Curriculum: Examples from the Current Practice

### **Embedding Sustainability into UK HEI Business Curriculum: Opportunities and Challenges**

The embedding of UNSDGs within business and marketing education curriculum and research can help address global challenges and work towards a more sustainable and equitable future (Ávila et al., 2017). The current curriculum in the UK may still lack in preparing students to be effective change agents (Elizabeth Aiken & Van Coller-Peter, 2018). This could be attributed to the ineffectiveness of the assessment methodology or even the lack of practical engagement with real-world sustainability challenges. Whether it is authentic assessment strategies or even enterprise related activities, fostering partnerships with businesses, NGOs, and communities is essential to provide students with hands-on experiences and opportunities to apply sustainability principles in real-world contexts (Shayan et al., 2022; Thorpe & Rawlinson, 2014).

Comparatively, business schools in Europe like Sweden and Germany have dedicated sustainability modules and strong connections with the corporate sector (Shayan et al., 2022). In Spain, the 2015 University Strategy highlighted the need for “social responsibility of the university system” (Andrades Peña et al., 2018) and the Spanish government introduced the “Organic Law” on universities, which aims to incorporate sustainability in areas such as management and accountability on Sustainable Economy (Bautista-Puig & Sanz-Casado, 2021).

Within the field of marketing, key concepts like social entrepreneurship (Lozano et al., 2017), sustainable innovation (Elizabeth Aiken & Van Coller-Peter, 2018) and global citizenship (Seraphin et al., 2021) educate students about the global economy and society interconnectedness, innovative solutions creation from diverse cultural perspectives, and responsibility for addressing global challenges. Hence, Rompay-Bartels & Tuninga (2023) introduced a comprehensive wholistic model of global citizenship combining research, professional field and education which encapsulates transformations digitally, socially and environmentally.

However, there are still gaps and several challenges identified (Ávila et al., 2017) which may hinder the full integration of sustainability principles and practices into business education. This paper investigates these challenges which includes 1) superficial coverage of sustainability topics by faculty member who lack expertise (Haertle et al., 2017), 2) limited focus on addressing systemic sustainability challenges, such as environmental degradation and social inequality (Thorisdottir & Johannsdottir, 2020; Thorpe & Rawlinson, 2014), 3) vast misconception with the definition of sustainability often focusing around environmental issues alone (Kriewaldt & Lee, 2022) and 4) the incomplete incorporation of sustainability principles into campus operations (Robinson et al., 2015; Saha et al., 2021).

From these gaps, this paper proposes following opportunities to ensure successful embedment of sustainability into the business and marketing curriculum; 1) comprehensive approach to sustainability education, requiring collaboration and coordination among different departments to integrate sustainability topics across various disciplines (Lozano et al., 2017; Mendoza et al., 2019), 2) the development of robust assessment methods to gauge students' sustainability-related knowledge, skills, and attitudes accurately (Miotto et al., 2020), 3) recognising the global nature of sustainability challenges and the diversity of stakeholders affected by business decisions (Thorisdottir & Johannsdottir, 2020); and 4) a comprehensive

sustainability approach taking into account institutional practices, such as energy consumption and waste management (Haertle et al., 2017).

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