



Kristianstad
University
Sweden

Kristianstad University

UN Global Compact and PRME Communication on Engagement Report

June 2018–May 2020



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Renewal of commitment

To our stakeholders:

I am delighted to have this opportunity to express continued support for the United Nations Global Compact and to renew the commitment of Kristianstad University (Högskolan Kristianstad) to the initiative as well as its ten principles in the areas of Human Rights, Labour, Environment and Anti-corruption.

Kristianstad University, Sweden, was founded in 1977 and has about 15,000 students and 500 employees. The University is oriented towards professional education and aims to be a leading university in its fields of research and instruction. Our institution offers undergraduate and graduate education in a range of academic professional areas, preparing students for their future working life as, inter alia, teachers, nurses, accountants, HR specialists, and computer engineers. This is our second Communication on Engagement with the United Nations Global Compact.

The values promoted by the Global Compact reflect those long held by our institution: responsible management, equality, accessibility, widening opportunities and working in partnership towards sustainable development. As an academic institution, we have a great responsibility to provide the hundreds of graduates who leave Kristianstad University each year with the skills and knowledge they need to shape the future of our society. In this context, knowledge of sustainable development is essential. It is key that our students develop an understanding of the relevance of sustainable development to their specific fields of study, and we put a great deal of effort into helping them in this regard.



PHOTO: FREDRIK PERSSON.

We are glad to be able to share some of our experiences in this Communication of Engagement. We also look forward to achieving new sustainability objectives over the next two years.

Dr. Håkan Pihl
Vice Chancellor
Kristianstad University

Kristianstad University in numbers

	2019	2018	2017
Number of students in under-graduate and graduate programmes	14 829	14 554	14 591
Student completion/ performance indicator	81	81	79
Number of degrees awarded	1 443	1 310	1 290
Number of professors (Full-time equivalent)	31	27	25
<i>share women (%)</i>	39	39	29
Number of academic refereed publications	151	134	136
Revenue education (MSEK)	486	462	432
Revenue research (MSEK)	93	83	69
Share of external research funding (%)	29	24	23
Revenue (MSEK)	578	546	501

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Preface

In February 2016, Kristianstad University chose a new path for its environmental commitment when we signed up to be a member of the UN Global Compact. Choosing this thematic approach was logical and in line with our views on sustainable development. As we see it, the UN Global Compact plays a central role in promoting concepts that will help in achieving the goals of Agenda 2030.

Kristianstad University also works actively within the voluntary UN-based initiative Principles for Responsible Management Education (PRME) and has yet again been asked to be part of the PRME Champions Programme 2020/2021. We have, moreover, joined the Sustainable Development Solutions Network. All three initiatives (Global Compact, PRME and Sustainable Development Solutions Network) are based on Agenda 2030 and the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

At Kristianstad University, work on sustainable development is an integral part of all of our activities: education, research and community collaboration. This work constitutes a cornerstone of both our overall strategy and our planning. Sustainable development is one of four focus areas within our business development system, where management and faculty representatives reflect annually on how our work on sustainable development should be conducted and further developed.

Kristianstad University is located in one of the first UN Man and Biosphere reserves in Sweden. Large parts of the University's academic and research activities benefit from being situated in a Man and Biosphere reserve, which has

encouraged a strong general interest in sustainable development among staff and students. The University's overall strategy for 2015-2020 also states that the University shall benefit from its location in a biosphere reserve and contribute to solutions that will transform society in a more sustainable direction.

New initiatives for sustainable development

Since 2016, Kristianstad University has operated with a periodical business development system, with annual operational plans and dialogues between university management, programme directors and faculty deans. One particular focus area of the system is how academic programmes can integrate sustainable development into their curricula. Each academic programme submits an operational development plan describing new initiatives in a number of areas, for example, sustainability, gender equality and widening participation in higher education.

The directors of each academic programme and administrative unit define sustainability in relation to the UN's SDGs and suggest new initiatives in the context of their specific professional areas and academic disciplines. Among the common themes, the following can be identified: human rights, anti-corruption, labour issues, social responsibility, environmental issues and gender equality. The development plans are revised annually to ensure that progress is made within the above-mentioned areas. The development plans are also discussed in collegial groups and with the university management, in this way becoming an integral part of the overall planning and budgeting process at Kristianstad University. Some examples of ongoing activities in



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academic programmes will be presented in the following section. As a rule, themes related to sustainability are taken into account when new projects, educational development and external conferences are planned at the University.

In 2018, a project to raise awareness about sustainable development and integrate this knowledge into our activities resulted in a new sustainable development module for teachers. A course entitled “Teaching for Sustainable Development” (*Undervisning för Hållbar Utveckling*) was launched in the autumn of 2018, and its overall aim is to help teachers integrate issues of sustainable development into their teaching, grounded in their own field of study.

The Teacher Lessons Conference (Lärlärdom) was held at Kristianstad University in 2018. The event is a collaborative forum organized by Blekinge Institute of Technology and Kristianstad University and takes place every year, before the start of autumn term. The 2018 theme was Sustainable Development in Higher Education, and the keynote speaker at the conference was Senior Lecturer Sally Windsor, University of Gothenburg. Based on this theme, Windsor established a framework for what sustainability can represent for a modern university and how teachers can reflect on implementing sustainability in their teaching. At the conference, lecturers from Kristianstad University gave a presentation entitled “Quantitative research in sustainability – information competence in pre-school teacher education”.

The University joined the Climate Framework (Klimatramverket) in 2019, a framework in which affiliated Swedish universities and colleges commit themselves to actively contributing to the climate change transition as well as to national and international commitments linked to the 1.5-degree target.

As one of only two Swedish higher education institutions, the university applies an internal environmental fee. The fee is applicable to all flights and is intended to encourage staff to reflect on their transport choices. In 2019, the fee was doubled and now amounts to SEK 200 per metric ton of emitted carbon dioxide. The fees are set aside in a special sustainability fund, to which staff can apply for money to support quality-enhancing projects. At the end of 2019, the sustainability fund amounted to SEK 235,000.

In addition, there was a 10-day exhibition in the library on the 17 global goals that make up the UN’s Agenda 2030. The exhibition took place within the framework of the University’s involvement in PRME Champions and the Sustainability Week was open to students, employees and the general public.

Sustainable development initiatives in the academic programmes

Since the introduction of the business development system, all academic programmes have integrated sustainable development in different ways. All of the programmes address all four sustainability issues to varying degrees. For example, the *Business Programme* focuses more on labour and anti-corruption issues than does the *Environmental Strategist - Soil, Water and Urban Development Programme*, where environmental issues are central. In 2019, the Faculty of Science revised the SDGs for all of their academic programmes to identify possible means of cooperation across programmes within the faculty. The Faculty of Science also began working towards introducing a sustainability track (“hållbarhets-slinga”) into the programme, leading to a Bachelor of Science degree in Biomedical Laboratory Science. Throughout the programme, themes of sustainability are repeatedly addressed in various courses. For the *Teacher Education and Pre-school Education Programme*, sustainable learning and sustainability in the curricula are essential issues.

During 2019, an evaluation – using the SDGs Impact Assessment Tool – of how the programmes in the Faculty of Science relate to the 17 global goals was carried out. (The SDGs Impact Assessment Tool is a free online learning tool that visualizes the results of a self-assessment of how an activity, organization or innovation affects the SDGs.) The evaluation was perceived as fruitful, and plans are now in place to develop the assessment tool used in the study and to apply it to the University as a whole.

For many years, Kristianstad University has offered distance learning courses and programmes. This has several advantages, such as decreased travelling, fewer transports and new ways of working pedagogically.

The Computer Science Programme

Computer science and information and communications technology (ICT) play a fundamental role in improving education, fighting climate change and achieving gender equality. In 2018, the Master’s programme in *Computer Science, Emphasizing Sustainable Development* was introduced. The objective is to provide students with a spectrum of knowledge of the technology required to deal with future challenges related to sustainable development. Students are given the opportunity to explore multidisciplinary contexts that are important to achieving the UN’s SDGs, such as eHealth and water management. During

spring term 2019, the computer science programmes were analysed using the SDG Impact Assessment Tool. The results will be used to optimize the programmes in relation to the SDGs.

The Environmental Strategist Programme

To meet the increasing societal demands of public administration, municipalities and businesses for sustainability goals, Kristianstad University started the programme *Environmental Strategist - Soil, Water and Urban Development* in 2018. The programme emphasizes soil and water, eco-systems, technology and how these areas can be studied in relation to societal demands and development, rules, regulations and the economy. The programme combines theory with practice through work-integrated learning. In an Urban Planning module, students are tasked with connecting, from an equality perspective, National Environmental Quality Objectives and SDGs to a municipality's existing activity plan. The students are also expected to suggest possible improvements to the plan.

The Pre-school Teacher Education Programme

An underlying objective of the *Pre-school Teacher Education Programme* at Kristianstad University is to focus on learning for sustainable development. The definition of sustainable development used by the programme is based on the Brundtland Commission definition, which is also the definition used in the Swedish Higher Education Act. The programme has a coordinator for sustainability who is responsible for monitoring sustainability issues. All courses within the *Pre-school Teacher Education Programme* cover aspects of sustainability. During their first term in the programme, students are familiarized with the concept in a course where the notion of a sustainable preschool is compared to sustainability in the Kristianstad Man and Biosphere Reserve. The SDGs are also presented to the students. In their second and third terms, the students work with social sustainability in relation to the notion of literacy and gender issues. The fourth term involves a course entitled "Sustainable Development in the Preschool" (30 credits), the aim of which is to expand integration of sustainability into the pre-school teacher education curriculum. In the fifth and sixth term, health and sustainability are recurring themes, and in their sixth term, the students study childhood and sustainability from a sociological perspective. During their final term, the students carry out sustainability-oriented developmental work in preschool.

The Nursing Programme and the Postgraduate Diploma in Primary Health Care Specialist Nursing Programme

In 2019, the *Nursing Programme* at Kristianstad University was revised in its entirety. The revised programme now has a module focused on global health science, in which the overarching global sustainability goals are studied and discussed. There is also a theme running through the programme that is focused on gender equality and violence against women. In addition, the programme has three ongoing modules focusing on supervision, ethics, leadership and profession (Handledning, Etik, Ledarskap, Profession) and targeting sustainable labour from a nursing perspective. In the courses, students have opportunities to reflect on sustainability, intersectionality and norm-criticism. Workshops on sustainability have also been held for students and teachers participating in the *Postgraduate Diploma in Primary Health Care Specialist Nursing Programme*. The global goals for sustainability have been clarified in the programme's curriculum, as was intended in the operational development plan for the *Nursing Programme* in 2018.

The Business Administration Programmes

Since March 2016, Kristianstad University has been part of Principles for Responsible Management Education (PRME) and, since 2018, also part of the UN's global network PRME Champion Programme. During 2018, the Master's programme in *Business Administration* was revised in its entirety. The programme now involves the six principles of PRME and the ethics track Work-Integrated Learning. During 2018, a course entitled "Corporate Ethics and Sustainability from a Global Perspective" was also introduced. The *Business Administration Programme* works with sustainability in several ways. The overall goal is to develop business students' ability to relate to aspects of sustainability in organizations and society as well as to develop their capacity for ethical reasoning. The curriculum addresses all four issue areas (human rights, labour, environmental issues and anti-corruption) at different points in the programme. The work of the *Business Administration Programme* is described in more detail below, under the heading PRME.

Sustainability and research

The research conducted at Kristianstad University is challenge driven to a high degree and carried out through close relationships with working life practitioners. Our research endeavours



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are largely intended to have practical implications for, and contribute to developing, a sustainable society. Many of our research groups conduct studies aimed at knowledge development for the advancement of social, economic and environmental sustainability, and they have reported activities with a clear sustainability focus during the 2018-2020 period.

Since 2018, Kristianstad University has been participating in the Vinnova-funded project Agenda 2030 and the Global Sustainable Development Goals as a Framework for Collaboration. The project involves eight Swedish universities and focuses on strategic issues related to how the universities' collaborative processes can contribute to achieving the global sustainability goals. Related to this project, an SDGs Impact Assessment of how the programmes in the Faculty of Natural Science relate to the 17 global goals was carried out. The evaluation was perceived to be fruitful, and plans are now in place to develop the tool used in the study and apply it to the university as a whole. The aim of the effort is to ensure that sustainable development is horizontally integrated into all university activities.

In the research group Man and Biosphere Health, sustainability is a central theme in all of the group's projects. High-profile research in the field of the environmental science is carried out within this group, with a focus on the interplay between ecosystems and human societies and an emphasis on aquatic environments. Many projects are implemented in close collaboration with partners in other societal sectors. The research group also has a strong connection to UNESCO's biosphere reserve concept, and the University's location at the centre of the UN Man and Biosphere reserve in Kristianstad provides unique opportunities to develop research projects.

Our Laboratory for Molecular Analysis is equipped for advanced research in the field of purification of drug residues in water. The techniques developed in the lab are tested and employed in efforts to monitor and purify polluted water resources from, e.g., sewage plants. With some luck, the same techniques can be used to, for example, cleanse the heavily polluted Baltic Sea.

The research group Food and Meals in Everyday Life has been working on a health-and-sustainability theme through a project that explores methods of making food out of insects. The project relates to several of the SDGs in a clear manner, in particular goals 2, 3, 12 and 15.

Another research group with a clear focus on sustainability is Governance, Regulation, Internationalization and Performance. The group's research themes include sustainability and integrated reporting as well as strategies for smart and sustainable cities. Two other research groups, Learning in Science and Mathematics (LISMA) and Relational Pedagogics (FoRP), have focused their attention on issues of sustainable teaching and schooling during the 2018-2020 period.

Several research groups, such as Man and Biosphere Health and PRO-CARE, focus on research on social sustainability in the form of recovery and health-creating workplaces, health-promoting leadership, working conditions and social responsibility as well as the inclusion of vulnerable groups. The University also conducts extensive research related to the third sustainability goal of the 2030 Agenda: to ensure healthy lives and promote well-being at all ages. This includes, among other things, physical activity as well as evidence-based knowledge to improve the health of people with different medical conditions and to promote person-centred health care. The topics of resource efficiency and a specific cross-organizational health economy perspective are also covered.

The Kristianstad University research platforms are in many respects similar to the research groups, but are more likely to be funded by external partners and run in collaboration with other societal stakeholders, such as the county council, municipalities and private companies. Our platform Collaborative Teaching conducts, from a sustainability perspective, an annual assessment of the various research projects associated with the platform, meaning that the issues are continuously highlighted and discussed.

In 2019, a NordPlus collaboration among the five Nordic countries was initiated with the aim of promoting sustainable development in pre-school teacher training in each country.

Number of refereed, scholarly publications

Research area	2019	2018	2017
Humanities/Social science/Business administration	32	30	29
Natural science	27	24	19
Engineering/Computer science	3	8	12
Medicin/Health science	53	62	56
Educational science	36	10	20
In total	151	134	136

PRME

Kristianstad University has been a Principles of Responsible Management Education (PRME) signatory since March 2016. PRME aims to transform business and management education, research, and leadership globally to achieve the UN's SDGs. As a signatory, the Faculty of Business is committed to integrating the UN initiative PRME into its academic programmes. As a testimony to

the faculty's success in this endeavour, the University has been named PRME Champion for 2018/2019 as well as for 2020/2021.

The *Business Programme* at Kristianstad University offers three specialization paths at the Bachelor's level: Accounting and Auditing, Bank and Finance, and International Business and Marketing. Kristianstad University also offers a Master's programme in *Accounting and Interna-*

PRME 2018-2020: Excerpt of activities

2018

- 1st Champions meeting Nantes Business School, France
- Workshop Business Programme, programme days. PRME involvement in connection with Business Programme management meeting, follow-up workshop programme days
- PRME Nordic Chapter meeting University BI Oslo, Norge
- 2nd PRME Champions meeting INCAE Business School, Costa Rica

2019

- 3rd PRME Champions meeting GIBS Business School, Johannesburg, South Africa
- Work-integrated learning business ethics track addressing the SDGs in Master's programmes in *International Business and Marketing*, and the Master's programme in *Advanced Accounting* at the Faculty of Business.
- The University was represented at the Global Swede ceremony, where the theme was sustainable development and Agenda 2030; the ceremony was held at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Stockholm.
- Through the PRME, the University was represented at a roundtable on the theme of the UN's SDGs at the Chamber of Commerce think tank.
- A workshop for teachers at the *Nursing Programme* was conducted within the framework of PRME based on integrating the global goals and Agenda 2030 into programmes and courses.

- Through the PRME, the University was represented at Nederman Future Days, organized by the industrial company PH Nederman AB in Helsingborg.
- PRME Chapter Meeting (Annual Meeting) Jönköping JIBS University, 7th PRME conference.
- Kristianstad University PRME Champions has participated in Carbon Literacy Training and literacy certification for educational development/pedagogical tools useful in teaching. This is to certify that the signed date certificate has met all of the requirements of the Carbon Literacy Standard.
- The University was represented at the 2019 FEKIS (Föreningen Företagsekonomi i Sverige) Conference of Business Administration, and teachers at the *Business Programme* were responsible for a session on sustainability and PRME.
- The PRME Champions meeting 24/10-1/11 La Trobe Business School/Deakin Business School, Melbourne.

2020

- In January of this year, Sustainability Day 2020 was organized together with Master's students at the Faculty of Business, who presented their work-integrated learning project on the theme the UN SDG's and Agenda 2030. Invited guests were the University's partners from industry and organizations, Kristianstad Municipality, the Agenda 2030 coordinator and the local UN association, teachers and students at the University.

tional Business. Given our PRME membership, the Master's programme is based on the six PRME principles, and the programme offers a work-integrated Business Ethics and Sustainability track. The track runs through all courses during the autumn term, and activities are all part of the different course syllabi and are examined through specific assignments. In order to graduate, students at both the Bachelor's and Master's levels carry out research projects and report their project in a Bachelor's or Master's thesis. Sustainability and Corporate Social Responsibility are suggested themes at both levels.

Future progress and outlooks

This report was written during an unprecedented period – a time when the world is struggling to find a way to overcome the coronavirus. In the spring of 2020, the employees at Kristianstad University had to quickly find new ways of working. Digital tools such as Zoom and Microsoft Teams have become standard means of communication. As a result, a sharp decrease in the number of paper printouts has been observed. This connects to an already existing trend at the University. Between 2018 and 2019, the number of printouts per person fell from 191 to 136. Presumably, we can find ways to lower that figure in the future as well. We believe there are lessons to be learned for the future: This crisis may lead to new ways of working in a more sustainable way.

Outcomes

To conclude, Kristianstad University's commitment to the UN Global Compact has led to positive outcomes on several levels.

- Since the introduction of the business development system, academic programmes have integrated sustainable development in various ways, and sustainability is a key feature of the system.
- In 2018, the *Master's programme in Computer Science Emphasizing Sustainable Development* was introduced.
- In 2018, the Bachelor's programme *Environmental Strategist – Soil, Water and Urban Development* was launched.
- Aspects of sustainability are always taken into account when new projects, educational developments and external conferences are planned and implemented.
- In 2019, Kristianstad University joined the Climate Framework (Klimatramverket), in which affiliated Swedish universities and colleges pledge to actively contribute to the climate change transition and national and international commitments linked to the 1.5-degree target. In April 2020, we received news from the International Sustainable Campus Network (ISCN) that the Climate Framework had been selected as a winner of this year's International Sustainable Campus Network Excellence Awards and of the Whole Systems Approach Award. The Climate Framework's entry was selected as a project that clearly exemplifies the principles of the ISCN, and as an example of excellence in implementing holistic approaches to sustainability within higher education institutions.
- To encourage staff to reflect on their transport choices, the university applies an internal environmental fee. The fees are set aside in a special sustainability fund, to which staff can apply for money to support quality-enhancing projects. At the end of 2019, the sustainability fund amounted to SEK 235,000. The university reduced its carbon emissions related to transports by 8% between 2018 and 2019.
- Research conducted at Kristianstad University is largely intended to have practical implications for a sustainable society. Several of the research groups conduct studies aimed at enhancing knowledge for the advancement of social, economic and environmental sustainability and have reported activities with a clear sustainability focus during the 2018-2020 period.



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