Assessment ancillary information

Assessment title: Regenerative Business, Planetary Health and the SDG's (Sustainable Development Goals)

Degree course: Master of Commerce at the University of Western Australia Business School

Course unit name: Principles for Responsible Management

Unit code: MGMT5526

Course level: Postgraduate

Assessment value within unit: 30%

Course structure: The above unit is the capstone unit undertaken in Semester/Term 3 of a three-semester degree. As a capstone unit, it brings much of a student's learning in the Master of Commerce degree program together in the context of responsible business.

Unit description (taken from postgraduate handbook): This unit examines the principles of responsible management and the United Nations Global Compact agreement and its implications for businesses and organisations. As a capstone unit it integrates responsible management with all of the key disciplines involved in successfully managing modern organisations. The unit explores the responsibilities inherent in each of the management functions, combined with both a global (actually, 'glocal', that is local–global) and historical perspective on how these functions fit together. The unit also looks at the roles businesses play in the development of a more sustainable society. Consequently, the unit examines specific knowledge, skills and abilities that managers require to identify and effectively respond to the ethical challenges that sustainable development presents. The focus is on equipping students to make better decisions and how to act on those decisions, as individuals and as practising managers. Regardless of setting, participants in the unit are well positioned to appropriately serve both the goals of organisations and the needs of society and the environment both in the short and long run, giving all consideration to the ethical challenges in question.

Associate Professor Dave Webb
Unit Coordinator and Assessment designer
12 March 2024

Assessment Designer: Associate Professor Dr. Dave Webb

Regenerative Business, Planetary Health, and the SDGs (Sustainable Development Goals)

Image: Paula Prekopova on Unsplash

Background (Text extracted from the Planetary Health Alliance website)

There is no doubt that our global environment is changing – from the hottest years on record, to the worldwide disappearance of pollinators, to the global collapse of fisheries, and to our use of about half of the planet's liveable surface to feed ourselves.

We are now in a new geological era, the Anthropocene, characterized by humanity's dramatic impact on Earth's biophysical conditions. And though the average global citizen's health has improved over the past century, the stability of our planet's life support systems has sharply declined—putting recent public health and development gains at risk.

It is not just climate change; it is everything change! We face not only a disrupted climate system, but the 6th mass extinction of life on Earth; global scale pollution of air, water, and soil; shortages of arable land and freshwater; pervasive changes in land use and cover; and degradation of marine systems.

These anthropogenic environmental changes affect the quality of the air we breathe and of the water we drink, the quality and quantity of food we produce, our exposure to infectious diseases, and even the habitability of the places where we live. Changes to natural life support systems

are already impacting our health and are projected to drive much of the global burden of disease over the coming century, hitting today's most vulnerable people and future generations the hardest.

Everything is connected — changing our planet's natural systems comes back to affect us, and not always in ways that we would expect. Understanding and acting upon these challenges calls for massive collaboration across disciplinary and national boundaries to safeguard our health (Planetary Health Alliance).

Dave comments: When you read above that 'everything is connected', literally, 'everything' means 'everything'. Because of this recognition of the 'interconnectedness' of global systems, you don't have to let your thinking roam too far to recognise that business has a significant role to play in responding positively to the bigger planetary health picture. That's where, not only this unit, but this series of assessment items comes in. So, let's dive straight in and look at what this assessment item is all about.

Assessment – Team-based Regenerative business, planetary health, and the SDG's (Sustainable Development Goals) Written Report (Worth 30 % of the overall mark for this unit)

This is a team-based assessment with 4 - 5 members in each team.

Image: Scott Graham on Unsplash

The organization you work for has made a commitment to become a regenerative business, and indeed, your organization has made some progress in this regard. However, it is a long journey, and there is still much work to be done. As a starting point, your organization has focused its attention on the SDGs as a framework for initiating improvement.

With the above in mind, you are required to prepare a written **professional** business report of 2000 words +/- 5% (1900 – 2100 words) based on a real organization of your choice. The organization you select can be in any country and can be from any industry sector.

IMPORTANT

For this assignment, you are not only an employee of this organization, but you are also part of the management team tasked with writing this report.

The report you are preparing will be a valuable source of information guiding purpose-driven strategy and decision-making for your organization moving forward.

Be careful that you write the report as if it is written by staff members from the organization i.e., it is an internally written report. Your choice of words and use of language must be reflective of an 'internally' written report.

- Wording such as …..At xyz (you replace xyz with the name of your selected organization) we view sustainability as critical to our success. Accordingly, in our efforts to……etc. etc. would be appropriate.
- Wording such as……XYZ have much work to do to achieve sustainability. They need to do abc, (you replace abc with relevant activities) and we suggest that they also do the following……..would not be appropriate.

You see, there's a difference. The first indicates that you are part of xyz, the second sounds like you're an outsider.

- This is just an example. There are many ways to craft text in an appropriate manner. Just be aware who you are when writing this report and write it accordingly.

Image: Ricardo Gomez Angel on Unsplash

Reporting period of interest: This report focusses on the performance of your organization for the two-year period (insert desired period here). The two-year period of interest is intentional for the reason noted below.

Warning: Although it is acceptable to make some reference in the report to your organization's efforts prior to the reporting period of interest, you should stick to the desired reporting period as far as possible. In other words, don't pick an SDG and then start talking in detail about what your organization did in e.g., 2018, or any other time outside of the above stipulated reporting period. This is not what is sought. It is old news, and likely no longer relevant. Thus, pick an

organization that provides you with sufficient accessible information enabling you to write your report covering the period in question.

General task overview:

a. Introduce the 17 UN SDG's, describing briefly what they are, how they came about and their purpose. Also, identify those most 'material/relevant' to your organization. See point 4 below in 'Report Structure'. *To save your word count, you may choose to insert an image of the 17 SDGs in your report, and then use your word count to discuss other key details such as when and why they originated, for whom and so on.*

b. Select two of the SDG's most material/relevant to your organization and describe what your organization is doing to address each SDG. In other words, how is your organization positively contributing to each of the selected SDG areas.

c. Next, present one brief suggestion for each SDG highlighting what your organization could be doing to be even more effective in the future. In other words, what could they do to **move from being sustainable, which is a great start, to being restorative and preferably regenerative, which is even better.** You should provide timelines.

d. Then, considering your organization's total operations, and, thinking about the wider impact that your organization has on the environment and on society (think here about planetary health), what does the organization do that has a negative impact on any of the thus far non-identified 17 SDG areas? Select and comment on one such SDG area.

e. In respect to this SDG, what could your organization do differently to have at the very least a neutral effect, and better still, a net positive restorative or regenerative effect?

f. Finally, what conclusions can you draw about your business as a regenerative business in respect to planetary health.

Image: Eyoel Kahssay on Unsplash

Report Structure

You MUST use the following numbered headings and sub-headings in your submission. The full report would include:

1. **One (1) page Executive Summary** (not included in the word count). Note that this is **not** an introduction. Rather it is an overview of all the key information contained in the report. It is a good idea to write this executive summary after you have prepared everything else.

- Please do your research on what an Executive Summary is if you don't know.

2. **Contents** page (not included in word count).

3. **Introduction (100 words)** – Introduce your organization. Note, from hereon I will refer to your company as xyz.

Image: Casey Horner on Unsplash

This section covers information such as who xyz is, their age, what they do, their purpose, their strategy, and market information such as industry competitiveness, their position, what drives the market and any relevant key customer information.

4. **The United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's)**
   1. Introduction to the 17 SDG's (150 words approximately).
   2. The relevance of the SDG's to xyz (150 words approximately).

5. **Xyz action in response to SDG's –** Select two SDG's and identify what xyz is doing with respect to each (400 words approximately and therefore 200 words for each).
   1. SDG x (Actual SDG number and identity)
   2. SDG y (Actual SDG number and identity)

6. **SDG Improvements** – Discuss what xyz could be doing to be more effective in respect to the above two SDG's (400 words approximately, and therefore approximately 200

words for each). The key here is to explore how xyz can move from just being sustainable, which is a great start, to being restorative and preferably regenerative.

    i. SDG x (Actual SDG number and identity)

    ii. SDG y (Actual SDG number and identity)

7. <u>**Negative business impact**</u> – Identify how xyz is having a negative impact on <u>**one**</u> of the SDG's not discussed above in parts 5 and 6 (200 words approximately).

8. <u>**Addressing negative impacts**</u> - What xyz could do differently in respect to this SDG (mentioned in part 7) to have at the very least a neutral effect, and better still, a positive restorative/regenerative effect? (300 words approximately).

9. <u>**Conclusions**</u> – What conclusions can you draw about your business as a regenerative business and how through what they do they are contributing positively to planetary health (300 words approximately).

10. <u>**References**</u> (Not included in the word count) – All the requirements of referencing (APA style) must be adhered to.

11. <u>**Appendix**</u> **(**Additional materials. Not marked and not included in word count**) –** This could include examples of regenerative businesses that you found doing your research.

Background reading:

Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's)

Before commencing work on this report, you should read and become familiar with the United Nation's pages on Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's). You can access this information via the link:

https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/

Regenerative Business

In terms of regenerative business, you could make a useful start by looking at the following:

https://www.makeapositiveimpact.co/

https://www.awardaroo.io/blog/how-to-create-a-regenerative-business

Image: Pop and Zebra on Unsplash

https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2023/03/regenerative-business-sustainability/

https://www.thinkplace.com.au/articles/how-to-create-regenerative-businesses-an-integrated-mindset-and-business-model-design-approach/

https://www.ey.com/en_au/sustainability/the-ceo-imperative-how-can-you-put-regeneration-at-the-heart-of-creating-value

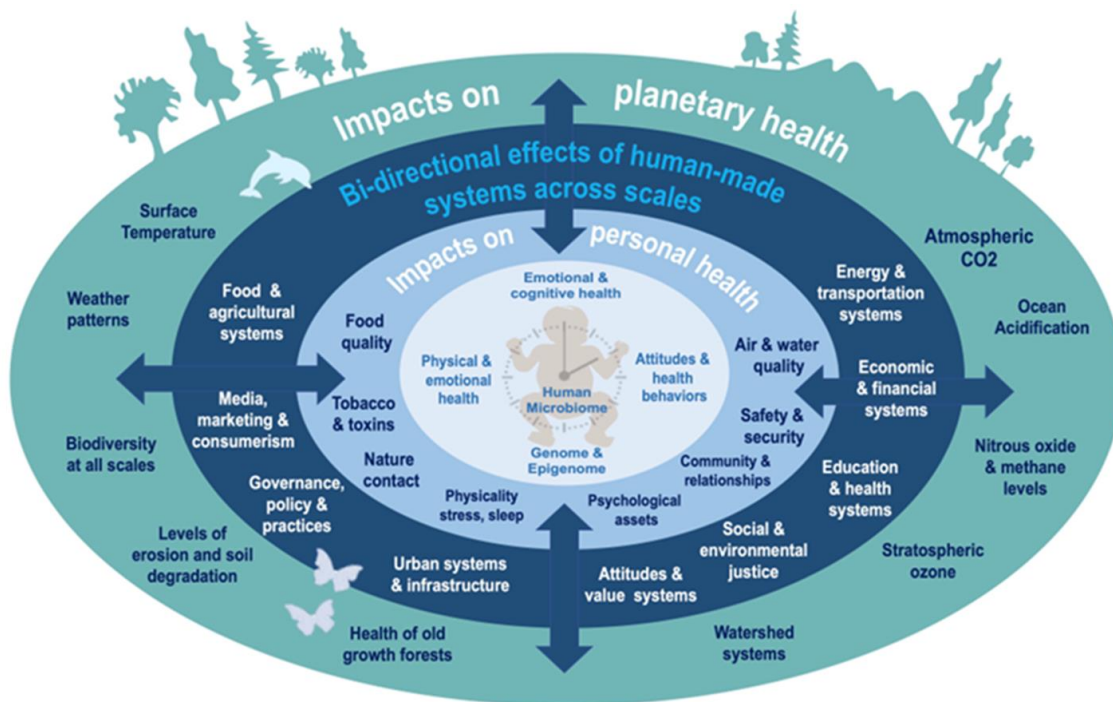https://www.forumforthefuture.org/about-us

Planetary Health

Figure Ref: Prescott, S. L., Logan, A. C., Bristow, J., Rozzi, R., Moodie, R., Redvers, N., ... & Berman, B. (2022). Exiting the Anthropocene: Achieving personal and planetary health in the 21st century. Allergy, 77(12), 3498-3512.

In terms of planetary health, you should start by visiting and exploring the Planetary Health Alliance (PHA) website located at https://www.planetaryhealthalliance.org/

There are many excellent resources available from this site. Also, if you wish, as a student you can also join the PHA. Please note that this is <u>NOT</u> a requirement for this unit. I mention this simply because it might be something that you would like to do to be able to interact with others at other Universities around the world on planetary health issues. Over 400 Universities are now connected to the PHA. Indeed, many of my past students have found the topic to be not only of personal interest, but also important to them for their chosen careers.

The above are just a starting point. If you come across other examples, please make a note of them and include them in your report Appendix section (not included in word count). This would be very helpful to me in compiling a more extensive database of relevant materials and to future students of this and other relevant units.

Note that there are many other materials available that will be useful for you in the preparation of this report. It is up to you to do the required research beyond the above.

Word count: Your team submission should be 2000 words +/- 5% (1900 – 2100 words) in length. All team members will receive the same mark. Please read the penalty conditions in the unit outline for exceeding the accepted limit of 2100 words.

Submission: Please prepare your team submission as a double-spaced 12pt font Microsoft Word Document and save it as follows: e.g., yourteamnumber.doc

IMPORTANT:

Image: No revisions on Unsplash.

1.   Please ensure that you submit your document to Turnitin first via the link provided in the Assessment folder. You need to do this to obtain a similarity index.

2.   I recommend that you do this at least one day prior to the submission due date for this Assessment.

3.   Use of ChatGPT and similar - The use of AI-generated Large Language Models such as Chat GPT or similar, which includes any language translation software, is not permitted for any aspect of any assessment work in this unit.

Additional important information regarding Assessment items 2a and 2b

Personal learning journal (PLJ)
Students are required to keep a personal learning journal (PLJ) in which they record their contributions to class discussions, document any questions or insights that arise during the class, meetings with the unit coordinator, tutor or others, or their own self-directed learning and associated reflections on the content, process of learning and meaning thereof for themselves. Please bring a booklet to each class session and team meeting to make notes on the above.

Although the personal learning journal will not directly be assessed, it will be useful for revision purposes and for providing guidance for self-directed learning as well as discussion with me or others both now and in the future. You will find these learning journals and their preparation a very valuable experience. Please take note that I may request to see your learning journals (though not your own self-reflections, so perhaps keep these in a separate part of your journal i.e., the back).
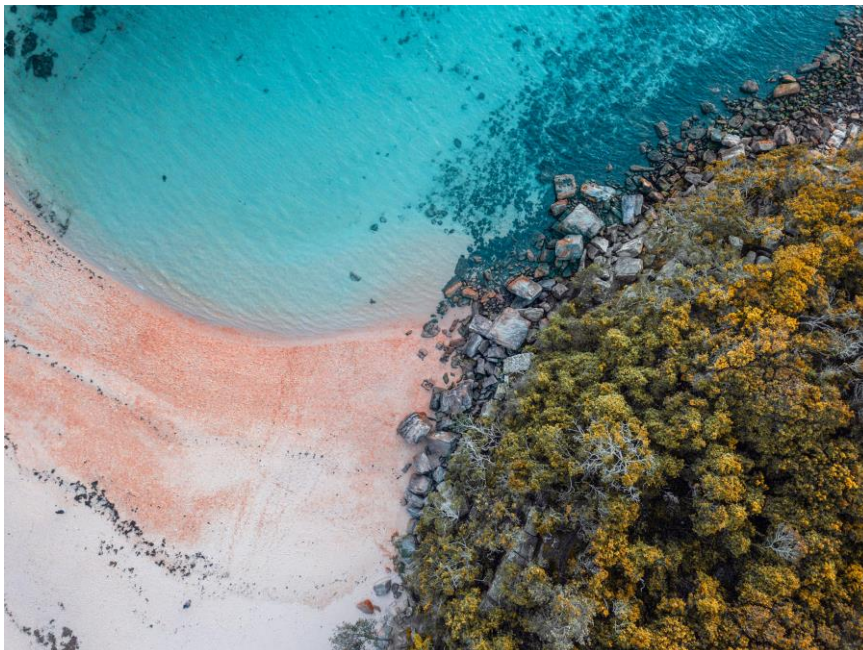
Team project log (TPL)

Further, for the team-based assessment items you should keep a **team project log record** of each meeting held detailing:

  i.   A record of when you met (and plan to meet)
  ii.   A record of what was discussed at each meeting (and will be discussed), and by whom.
  iii. A description of any tasks allocated together with the identification of the person allocated to the task as well as any date-related information i.e., when due, when completed etc.

It is your responsibility to prepare this TPL. You should identify a different meeting facilitator and record keeper for each meeting (noting these details for each meeting in your project log record too). Again, this diary/log is not assessed but you will find it a useful resource for managing your project as well as meetings, and in addition, noting who has done what, or not as the case may be!

Important: It is your responsibility to keep your 1) *individual learning journal* and your 2) *team project log record* up-to-date and to make them available for review if requested by your unit coordinator. While no mark is assigned for completing these documents, failure to be able to provide them when requested would not be viewed favourably and would indicate a lack of commitment to your

Image: Will Turner on Unsplash

team and to your personal learning. Furthermore, depending on the circumstances, failure to provide these documents when called to do so, and any evidence that supports that individuals' have not 'pulled their weight' and contributed fairly to the team, may also be interpreted as unsatisfactory performance in this unit.

Associate Professor Dr. Dave Webb

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References

Planetary Health Alliance: https://www.planetaryhealthalliance.org/planetary-health

Prescott, S. L., Logan, A. C., Bristow, J., Rozzi, R., Moodie, R., Redvers, N., ... & Berman, B. (2022). Exiting the Anthropocene: Achieving personal and planetary health in the 21st century. Allergy, 77(12), 3498-3512.

What planetary health means to us:

"The interdependent vitality of all natural and human made systems, including the attitudes, values, and collaborative actions that promote flourishing of all people, places, and our planet."

Prescott, et al. The Canmore Declaration: Statement of Principles for Planetary Health. Challenges 2018, 9, 31