



UNSW Course Outline

COMM5709 Corporate Responsibility and Accountability (Online, Online) - 2024

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General Course Information

Course Code : COMM5709

Year : 2024

Term : Term 1

Teaching Period : T1

Is a multi-term course? : No

Faculty : UNSW Business School

Academic Unit : UNSW Business School

Delivery Mode : Online

Delivery Format : Standard

Delivery Location : Kensington

Campus : Sydney

Study Level : Postgraduate

Units of Credit : 6

Useful Links

[Handbook Class Timetable](#)

Course Details & Outcomes

Course Description

Corporate Responsibility and Accountability is a specialist course for the Graduate Certificate in

Social Impact and an elective for those undertaking the Master of Commerce or MBA or MBT Programs. It examines how business manages its social, environmental and economic impact on society. The course first reviews the historical evolution and development of the concept of Corporate Social Responsibility and Corporate Citizenship and why it is now a key part of managing the business enterprise. Second, the course examines what acting responsibly means for corporations in terms of the market, community, environment, workplace and government. Issues covered include business and human rights, business-community partnerships, corporate philanthropy, the human resource management implications of CSR, business and the environment and businesses' relationship with government. Third, the course examines how business accounts for its behaviour and impact in society through sustainability reporting and the role of external assurance and outlines debates on the appropriate role of government policy in either regulating and/or enabling responsible corporate behaviour.

Course Aims

The course will examine:

- The historical evolution and development of the concept of CSR/CC and why it is now a key part of managing the business enterprise;
- What acting responsibly means for corporations in terms of the market, community, environment, workplace and government;
- How business accounts for its behaviour and impact in society through sustainability reporting and assurance;
- The role of government and policy in regulating and enabling responsible corporate behaviour.

Relationship to Other Courses

COMM5709 Corporate Responsibility and Accountability aims to:

- develop your understanding of key concepts and frameworks of corporate social responsibility (CSR) and accountability.
- examine how business manages its social, environment and economic impact on society.
- explore business ethics, corporate citizenship, sustainability, strategy and governance to give you a solid understanding of why social and environmental sustainability is central to corporate management and strategy

Course Learning Outcomes

| Course Learning Outcomes |
|--|
| CLO1 : Describe and critically evaluate the concepts of Corporate Responsibility and Accountability, and future trends in the role of the corporation in society |
| CLO2 : Describe the key drivers behind its adoption by business |
| CLO3 : Analyse and understand a corporation's impact in the social, workplace, market, environment and political spheres; |
| CLO4 : Apply Corporate Responsibility theories and frameworks to critically evaluate corporate responsibility performance; |
| CLO5 : Evaluate and apply ethical and accountability issues and frameworks in business |

| Course Learning Outcomes | Assessment Item |
|--|--|
| CLO1 : Describe and critically evaluate the concepts of Corporate Responsibility and Accountability, and future trends in the role of the corporation in society | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Participation• Business Case Report• Consulting report |
| CLO2 : Describe the key drivers behind its adoption by business | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Participation• Business Case Report |
| CLO3 : Analyse and understand a corporation's impact in the social, workplace, market, environment and political spheres; | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consulting report• Participation• Business Case Report |
| CLO4 : Apply Corporate Responsibility theories and frameworks to critically evaluate corporate responsibility performance; | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consulting report• Participation |
| CLO5 : Evaluate and apply ethical and accountability issues and frameworks in business | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Business Case Report• Consulting report• Participation |

Learning and Teaching Technologies

Moodle - Learning Management System

Learning and Teaching in this course

Learning activities and teaching strategies:

In order to maximise the collaborative and experiential nature of this course a collaborative learning and teaching approach will be used that will help to support deeper student engagement and outcomes. The "collaborative" approach means you do reading and researching independently and use discussion forums for active and interactive learning. Each

Unit (topic) will include a range of activities that you will complete. You have three major resources to help you learn:

1. The course materials, comprising readings, references, insights and commentary for each Unit. You will do much of your learning independently by working through the course materials and by completing the learning activities.
2. Your discussions are conducted on the online Moodle site each week. Your facilitator's role is to guide your learning by conducting class discussions, answering questions that might arise after you have done the week's work, providing insights from practical experience and understanding of theory, providing you with feedback on your Assessments, and directing discussions that will occur between you and your co-participants.
3. Your co-participants are an invaluable source of rich learning content for you. Their work and life, and their willingness to question and debate the course materials, your views and those of the facilitator, represent a great learning opportunity. They bring much valuable insight to the learning.

Additional Course Information

Links to all required and optional resources are on the reading list for your course in the UNSW Library's Leganto system, which you can access via your Moodle course. Please note you will need to login and may be required to enter your UNSW zID and zPass in order to access the library site.

Required readings consist of core texts and their applications. Readings are chosen to provide both theoretical foundation and to illuminate their meaning and usage in professional contexts. The readings are not to be studied in detail but designed to initiate thinking and understanding of key themes in social systems and change.

Assessments

Assessment Structure

| Assessment Item | Weight | Relevant Dates |
|---|--------|---|
| Participation Assessment Format: Individual | 40% | Start Date: Not Applicable Due Date: Not Applicable |
| Business Case Report Assessment Format: Individual | 25% | Start Date: Not Applicable Due Date: 24/03/2024 11:59 PM |
| Consulting report Assessment Format: Individual | 35% | Start Date: Not Applicable Due Date: 28/04/2024 11:59 PM |

Assessment Details

Participation

Assessment Overview

Participation in the online course is assessed through your contributions to the weekly online asynchronous discussion forums

Course Learning Outcomes

- CL01 : Describe and critically evaluate the concepts of Corporate Responsibility and Accountability, and future trends in the role of the corporation in society
- CL02 : Describe the key drivers behind its adoption by business
- CL03 : Analyse and understand a corporation's impact in the social, workplace, market, environment and political spheres;
- CL04 : Apply Corporate Responsibility theories and frameworks to critically evaluate corporate responsibility performance;
- CL05 : Evaluate and apply ethical and accountability issues and frameworks in business

Detailed Assessment Description

Participation marks will be assessed according to your contributions made in the online discussion forums. Active participation and interaction with peers is a vital ingredient in learning and is assessed on the quality not just the quantity of your contributions to the group discussions of the learning activities in the course. You need to incorporate the concepts and theories from the course when expressing your own ideas, experience and opinions, and when responding to comments and contributions from your fellow students. In this way we develop a learning environment that is supportive, dynamic and informative.

Note that your facilitator may set specific interactive tasks for you to complete as part of this assessment.

Assessment Length

max 250 words per contribution

Assignment submission Turnitin type

This is not a Turnitin assignment

Business Case Report

Assessment Overview

Analysis of a corporate sustainability report

Course Learning Outcomes

- CL01 : Describe and critically evaluate the concepts of Corporate Responsibility and Accountability, and future trends in the role of the corporation in society
- CL02 : Describe the key drivers behind its adoption by business
- CL03 : Analyse and understand a corporation's impact in the social, workplace, market, environment and political spheres;
- CL05 : Evaluate and apply ethical and accountability issues and frameworks in business

Detailed Assessment Description

The task for Assessment 2 is an individual assessment and there are two parts. You must carry out a critical assessment of a published corporate sustainability report.

The purpose of this assessment is to engage with the concepts and tools on assessing sustainability in organisations that are concerned with non-financial performance reporting, draw conclusions about the robustness of the chosen sustainability report and to consider the perspective of an alternate stakeholder group.

Assessment Length

1500 words (+ / - 10%)

Assignment submission Turnitin type

This assignment is submitted through Turnitin and students can see Turnitin similarity reports.

Consulting report

Assessment Overview

Consulting report

Course Learning Outcomes

- CL01 : Describe and critically evaluate the concepts of Corporate Responsibility and Accountability, and future trends in the role of the corporation in society
- CL03 : Analyse and understand a corporation's impact in the social, workplace, market, environment and political spheres;
- CL04 : Apply Corporate Responsibility theories and frameworks to critically evaluate corporate responsibility performance;
- CL05 : Evaluate and apply ethical and accountability issues and frameworks in business

Detailed Assessment Description

You are a consultant at an organisation which specialises in providing advice to clients on current trends and changes relating to corporate responsibility and accountability. Select one of the two options below:

Option 1

You and your client were diligently following the revelations during the Royal Commission into Misconduct in the Banking, Superannuation and Financial Services Industry.

Following the conclusion of the Royal Commission, your client is seeking a report about the implications for corporate responsibility and accountability in the financial services sector including the topic Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG). Your client refers to the fact that in years gone by the Australian big four banks have been globally recognized for their leadership in corporate responsibility.

Draw upon the knowledge gained from this course, academic literature and your own research and share your perspective on the banking royal commission in relation to corporate responsibility and the financial services sector. Make recommendations back to your client about the type of initiatives they should consider undertaking post the Royal Commission and explain why you recommend them.

Option 2

Your client is seeking a report on what the key implications of this act are on the retail sector, why a Modern Slavery Act was considered and what this will mean for his organisation.

Drawing upon your knowledge gained from this, key literature and your own research, your client is seeking recommendations about initiatives they should consider in response to the legislation and the current debate around corporate responsibility and accountability in the retail industry in Australia and globally.

Assessment Length

2,000 words (+/- 10%)

Assignment submission Turnitin type

This assignment is submitted through Turnitin and students can see Turnitin similarity reports.

General Assessment Information

Full details for all assessments can be found in the Assessment Handbook on Moodle

The use of Generative AI tools for your assessments:

For these assessment tasks, you may use standard editing and referencing software, but not

Generative AI. You are permitted to use the full capabilities of the standard software to answer the question (e.g. Microsoft Office suite, Grammarly, etc.).

If the use of generative AI such as ChatGPT is detected, it will be regarded as serious academic misconduct and subject to the standard penalties, which may include 00FL, suspension and exclusion.

Grading Basis

Standard

Requirements to pass course

In order to pass this course, you must:

- achieve a composite mark of at least 50 out of 100;
- achieve a satisfactory result on any essential assessment components; and
- meet any additional requirements described in the Assessment Summary section.

You are expected to attempt all assessment requirements in the course.

Course Schedule

| Teaching Week/Module | Activity Type | Content |
|------------------------------------|-----------------|--|
| Week 1 : 12 February - 18 February | Online Activity | Topic: Corporate responsibility: History and Key Concepts Detail/engagement: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Webinar 1 (attendance not compulsory) • Readings and course materials on Moodle • Weekly forum post to be completed |
| Week 2 : 19 February - 25 February | Online Activity | Topic: Business Models for Sustainability Detail/engagement: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Readings and course materials on Moodle • Weekly forum post to be completed |
| Week 3 : 26 February - 3 March | Topic | Topic: The Drivers and Business Case for Corporate Responsibility Detail/engagement: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Readings and course materials on Moodle • Weekly forum post to be completed |
| Week 4 : 4 March - 10 March | Online Activity | Topic: Accountability and Reporting Performance and Assurance Detail/engagement: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Webinar 2 (attendance not compulsory) • Readings and course materials on Moodle • Weekly forum post to be completed |
| Week 5 : 11 March - 17 March | Online Activity | Topic: Environment, Natural Resources and Ecosystem Services Detail/engagement: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Readings and course materials on Moodle • Weekly forum post to be completed |
| Week 6 : 18 March - 24 March | Online Activity | Topic: Corporate Community Involvement and Social capital Detail/engagement: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Readings and course materials on Moodle • Weekly forum post to be completed |
| | Assessment | Assessment 2: Business Case Report due Sunday 24th March by 11.59pm |
| Week 7 : 25 March - 31 March | Online Activity | Topic: Supply Chain Management, Traceability and Transparency Detail/engagement: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Webinar 3 (attendance not compulsory) • Readings and course materials on Moodle • Weekly forum post to be completed |
| Week 8 : 1 April - 7 April | Topic | Topic: Environment, Social and Governance (ESG) and the Investment Community Detail/engagement: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Readings and course materials on Moodle • Weekly forum post to be completed |
| Week 9 : 8 April - 14 April | Online Activity | Topic: Governance and the Board Detail/engagement: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Webinar 4 (attendance not compulsory) • Readings and course materials on Moodle • Weekly forum post to be completed |
| Week 10 : 15 April - 21 April | Online Activity | Topic: Corporate Political Activity, Corporate Responsibility & The way forward: Future & current trends Detail/engagement: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Readings and course materials on Moodle • Weekly forum post to be completed |
| Week 11 : 22 April - 28 April | Assessment | Assessment 3: Consulting Report due Sunday 28th April by 11.59pm |

Attendance Requirements

Attendance in this course is through participation in the online asynchronous discussion forums. Students are expected to contribute to the discussion on a weekly basis.

Webinar attendance is not compulsory but is strongly encouraged.

General Schedule Information

Course delivery occurs asynchronously over the 10-week session through the online e-Learning platform Moodle. In addition, there will be 3 webinars over the term (dates will be confirmed on Moodle at the start of the term), which give you the chance to meet your facilitator and other students and also have the opportunity to seek clarifications on the course material and assessments. You are encouraged to develop an inquiry based approach to your learning with your Course Authority guiding your learning. The online units will set the scene, framework and context for the topics that are examined in more detail in class.

Course Resources

Prescribed Resources

The University and the Business School provide a wide range of support services for students, including:

Centre for Social Impact (CSI)

<http://www.csi.edu.au/>

Please direct any CSI education program, enrolment and administration queries here

Email: csistudents@unsw.edu.au **Phone:** (02) 8936 0990

Business Student Centre

<https://www.business.unsw.edu.au/students/resources/student-centre>

The Nucleus: Student Hub

<https://nucleus.unsw.edu.au/en>

Location: Level 2, in the Main Library. (UNSW map location F21) **Phone:** (02) 9385 8500

Moodle eLearning Support

For online help using Moodle, go to: <https://student.unsw.edu.au/moodle-support>

For technical support, **Email:** itservicecentre@unsw.edu.au ; **Phone:** (02) 9385 1333

Academic Skills Support

[Academic Skills Support | UNSW Current Students](#)

Provides academic skills support services, including workshops and resources, for all UNSW students. See website for details.

Library services and facilities for students

[Students \(unsw.edu.au\)](#)

IT Service Centre

<https://www.myit.unsw.edu.au/>

Provides technical support to troubleshoot problems with logging into websites, downloading documents, etc.

IT Walk-in Service Centres: **Upper Campus IT Hub** - Room G06, D26 Biological Sciences Building (Next door to XS Cafe) ; **Middle Campus IT Hub** - G008, Ground Floor H13 Anita B Lawrence Centre

Phone: (02) 9385 1333

UNSW MindHub

<https://www.student.unsw.edu.au/mindhub>

Provides support and services if you need help with your personal life, getting your academic life back on track or just want to know how to stay safe, including free, confidential counselling via Mental Health Connect

Office: Level 2, East Wing, Quadrangle Building; **Phone:** (02) 9385 5418; **Email:** counselling@unsw.edu.au

Equitable Learning Services (formally Disability Support Services)

<https://student.unsw.edu.au/els>

A free and confidential service that provides practical support to ensure your mental or physical health conditions do not adversely affect your studies.

Phone: (02) 8374 9201; **Email:** els@unsw.edu.au

Nura Gili Student Success Team

<https://www.indigenous.unsw.edu.au/current-students/student-success>

Our Student Success Team aim to enhance the student experience at UNSW. We work to equip all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students at UNSW with the skills they need to thrive in an ever-changing and innovative world.

Phone: (02) 9385 3805; **Email:** nuragili@unsw.edu.au

Course Evaluation and Development

Student response:

Past feedback from students has been very positive. One suggestion made was to have an additional webinar to discuss the assessments.

Response to student feedback:

Additional Webinars have been provided as needed.

Staff Details

| Position | Name | Email | Location | Phone | Availability | Equitable Learning Services Contact | Primary Contact |
|-------------|---------------|-------|----------|-------|----------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Facilitator | Elliott Bowen | | | | By appointment | Yes | Yes |

Other Useful Information

Academic Information

COURSE POLICIES AND SUPPORT

The Business School expects that you are familiar with the contents of this course outline and the UNSW and Business School learning expectations, rules, policies and support services as

listed below:

- Program Learning Outcomes
- Academic Integrity and Plagiarism
- Student Responsibilities and Conduct
- Special Consideration
- Protocol for Viewing Final Exam Scripts
- Student Learning Support Services

Further information is provided on the [key policies and support](#) page.

Students may not circulate or post online any course materials such as handouts, exams, syllabi or similar resources from their courses without the written permission of their instructor.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

The Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs) – under the Outcomes tab – are what you should be able to demonstrate by the end of this course, if you participate fully in learning activities and successfully complete the assessment items.

CLOs also contribute to your achievement of the Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs), which are developed across the duration of a program. PLOs are, in turn, directly linked to [UNSW graduate capabilities](#). More information on Coursework PLOs is available on the [key policies and support](#) page. For PG Research PLOs, including MPDBS, please refer to the [UNSW HDR Learning Outcomes](#).

Academic Honesty and Plagiarism

As a student at UNSW you are expected to display [academic integrity](#) in your work and interactions. Where a student breaches the [UNSW Student Code](#) with respect to academic integrity, the University may take disciplinary action under the Student Misconduct Procedure. To assure academic integrity, you may be required to demonstrate reasoning, research and the process of constructing work submitted for assessment.

To assist you in understanding what academic integrity means, and how to ensure that you do comply with the UNSW Student Code, it is strongly recommended that you complete the [Working with Academic Integrity](#) module before submitting your first assessment task. It is a free, online self-paced Moodle module that should take about one hour to complete.

Submission of Assessment Tasks

SPECIAL CONSIDERATION

You can apply for special consideration when illness or other circumstances beyond your control interfere with your performance in a specific assessment task or tasks, including online exams. Students studying remotely who have exams scheduled between 10pm and 7am local time, are also able to apply for special consideration to sit a supplementary exam at a time outside of these hours.

Special consideration is primarily intended to provide you with an extra opportunity to demonstrate the level of performance of which you are capable. To apply, and for further information, see Special Consideration on the UNSW [Current Students](#) page.

Special consideration applications will be assessed centrally by the Case Review Team, who will update the online application with the outcome and add any relevant comments. The change to the status of the application immediately sends an email to the student and to the assessor with the outcome of the application.

Please note the following:

1. Applications can only be made through Online Services in myUNSW (see the UNSW [Current Students](#) page). Applications will not be accepted by teaching staff. The lecturer-in-charge/course coordinator will be automatically notified when your application is processed.
2. Applying for special consideration does not automatically mean that you will be granted a supplementary exam or other concession.
3. If you experience illness or misadventure in the lead up to an exam or assessment, you must submit an application for special consideration, either prior to the examination taking place, or prior to the assessment submission deadline, except where illness or misadventure prevent you from doing so.
4. If your circumstances stop you from applying before your exam or assessment due date, you must apply within 3 working days of the assessment or the period covered by your supporting documentation.
5. Under the UNSW Fit To Sit/Submit rule, if you sit the exam/submit an assignment, you are declaring yourself well enough to do so and are cannot subsequently apply for special consideration.
6. If you become unwell on the day of – or during – an exam, you must stop working on your exam, advise your course coordinator or tutor and provide a medical certificate dated within 24 hours of the exam, with your special consideration application. For online exams, you must contact your course coordinator or tutor immediately via email, Moodle or chat and advise

them you are unwell and submit screenshots of your conversation along with your medical certificate and application.

7. Special consideration requests do not allow the awarding of additional marks to students.

Further information on Business School policy and procedure can be found under “Special Consideration” on the [key policies and support](#) page.

LATE SUBMISSION PENALTIES

For assessments other than examinations, late submission will incur a penalty of 5% per day or part thereof (including weekends) from the due date and time. An assessment will not be accepted after 5 days (120 hours) of the original deadline unless special consideration has been approved. An assignment is considered late if the requested format, such as hard copy or electronic copy, has not been submitted on time or where the ‘wrong’ assignment has been submitted.

For assessments which account for 10% or less of the overall course grade, and where answers are immediately discussed or debriefed, the LIC may stipulate a different penalty. Details of such late penalties will be available on the course Moodle page.

FEEDBACK ON YOUR ASSESSMENT TASK PERFORMANCE

Feedback on student performance from formative and summative assessment tasks will be provided to students in a timely manner. Assessment tasks completed within the teaching period of a course, other than a final assessment, will be assessed and students provided with feedback, with or without a provisional result, within 10 working days of submission, under normal circumstances. Feedback on continuous assessment tasks (e.g. laboratory and studio-based, workplace-based, weekly quizzes) will be provided prior to the midpoint of the course.

Faculty-specific Information

PROTOCOL FOR VIEWING FINAL EXAM SCRIPTS

UNSW students have the right to view their final exam scripts, subject to a small number of very specific exemptions. The UNSW Business School has set a [protocol](#) under which students may view their final exam script. Individual schools within the Faculty may also set up additional local processes for viewing final exam scripts, so it is important that you check with your School.

If you are completing courses from the following schools, please note the additional school-

specific information:

- Students in the **School of Accounting, Auditing & Taxation** who wish to view their final examination script should also refer to [this page](#).
- Students in the **School of Banking & Finance** should also refer to [this page](#).
- Students in the **School of Information Systems & Technology Management** should also refer to [this page](#).

COURSE EVALUATION AND DEVELOPMENT

Feedback is regularly sought from students and continual improvements are made based on this feedback. At the end of this course, you will be asked to complete the [myExperience survey](#), which provides a key source of student evaluative feedback. Your input into this quality enhancement process is extremely valuable in assisting us to meet the needs of our students and provide an effective and enriching learning experience. The results of all surveys are carefully considered and do lead to action towards enhancing educational quality.

QUALITY ASSURANCE

The Business School is actively monitoring student learning and quality of the student experience in all its programs. A random selection of completed assessment tasks may be used for quality assurance, such as to determine the extent to which program learning goals are being achieved. The information is required for accreditation purposes, and aggregated findings will be used to inform changes aimed at improving the quality of Business School programs. All material used for such processes will be treated as confidential.

TEACHING TIMES AND LOCATIONS

Please note that teaching times and locations are subject to change. Students are strongly advised to refer to the [Class Timetable website](#) for the most up-to-date teaching times and locations.