

PRME Regional Chapter
UK and Ireland
Guidelines for Activity and Governance

May 2013

Preamble

When we were invited to form a UK and Ireland Chapter of PRME, we were tasked with constituting ourselves in a way that would create a formal relationship with the UN Global Compact Office, without imposing upon the Chapter a form of bureaucracy that might detract from its overarching purpose, which is to promote PRME and provide active support for member signatories in the UK and Ireland.

Whilst issues of governance are acknowledged as an important part of any association of this sort, it is our priority that the activities we undertake in the promotion of the Principles take precedence over the form of structure we create.

Background

1.1 In late 2006 The Global Compact Office issued a call to Schools of Business and Management around the world, to come together and develop principles that would guide an ethical approach to management education, and promote research and teaching in 'corporate social responsibility, sustainability and corporate citizenship'. As a result of this initiative, faculty from schools on all continents contributed to the development of the six Principles, and signed up to undertake:

‘...as institutions of higher education involved in the development of current and future managers we declare our willingness to progress in the implementation, within our institution, of the following Principles, starting with those that are more relevant to our capacities and mission. We will report on progress to all our stakeholders and exchange effective practices related to these principles with other academic institutions:

Principle 1 | Purpose: We will develop the capabilities of students to be future generators of sustainable value for business and society at large and to work for an inclusive and sustainable global economy.

Principle 2 | Values: We will incorporate into our academic activities and curricula the values of global social responsibility as portrayed in international initiatives such as the United Nations Global Compact.

Principle 3 | Method: We will create educational frameworks, materials, processes and environments that enable effective learning experiences for responsible leadership.

Principle 4 | Research: We will engage in conceptual and empirical research that advances our understanding about the role, dynamics, and impact of corporations in the creation of sustainable social, environmental and economic value.

Principle 5 | Partnership: We will interact with managers of business corporations to extend our knowledge of their challenges in meeting social and environmental responsibilities and to explore jointly effective approaches to meeting these challenges.

Principle 6 | Dialogue: We will facilitate and support dialog and debate among educators, students, business, government, consumers, media, civil society organisations and other interested groups and stakeholders on critical issues related to global social responsibility and sustainability’

1.2 These Principles (UN-backed PRME) should be placed in the context of the wider Global Compact which was launched in 2000 by the Secretary General of the United Nations, Kofi Annan, to harness the power of collective action in the promotion of responsible corporate citizenship. The Compact provides a framework of 10 principles within which companies are invited to manage their operations:

1. To support and respect the protection of internationally proclaimed human rights;
2. To ensure that business is not complicit in human rights abuses;
3. To uphold the freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right of collective bargaining;
4. To support the elimination of all forms of forced and compulsory labour;
5. To support the effective abolition of child labour;
6. To support the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation;
7. To support a precautionary approach to environmental challenges;
8. To undertake initiatives to promote greater environmental responsibility;
9. To encourage the development and diffusion of environmentally friendly technologies;
10. To work against corruption in all its forms, including extortion and bribery.

1.3 During 2012 and 2013, a number of UK and Ireland based signatories of UN-backed PRME made contact and met to explore the value and possible function of a UK and Ireland Chapter as part of the Global Compact's programme of establishing regional Chapters. It was decided to proceed, and since then there has been a developing programme of activity including:

1. liaison with the Global Compact office and its PRME Secretariat;
2. organising introductory meetings to discuss the establishment of the Chapter
3. exploring a range of events and activities to support existing members and attract new members.;
4. engaging with the Global Compact Local Networks in UK and Ireland (the latter is not yet established)
5. drawing up governance documents for the Chapter

1.4 This document sets out the basis upon which the UK and Ireland Chapter of UN-backed PRME will operate. It affirms its Purpose, Key Objectives, Key Principles, Programme Content, Governance and Management, and the Role of the Secretariat.

2. Purpose of the UK and Ireland Chapter of UN-backed PRME

2.1 The PRME UK and Ireland Chapter ('the Chapter', hereafter) serves as a focal point of coordination and communication for the UK and Ireland based signatories of the UN-backed PRME.

2.2 Key Objectives

The objectives of the Chapter are:

1. to provide UK and Ireland signatories of the UN-backed PRME with a forum to consider and advance the Principles and issues of mutual interest and concern
2. to provide a mechanism through which performance and reporting on UN-backed PRME can be improved by mutual support;
3. to enable participants to share and exchange practice and experience;
4. to provide input to the Global Compact Office and Global Compact Local Networks on its future development and activity;
5. to promote the UN PRME throughout the UK and Ireland business school community;
6. to help promote and support the UN-backed PRME worldwide.

2.3 Key Principles

The activities of the Chapter will take place within the following framework:

1. it will be an initiative led by the signatories to PRME;
2. it will be the collective action of those signatories of the UN-backed PRME that are committed to playing an active part in achieving the objectives of the UK and Ireland Chapter;
3. it will seek long term continuous improvement in the implementation of the UN-backed PRME;
4. it will engage with other business associations, government, and civil society organisations and other PRME Chapters as well as Global Compact Local Networks in the promotion of the UN-backed PRME.

2.4 Programme Content

Led by the Steering Committee (see 4 below) the Chapter and its participants will achieve its objectives through a range of activities to include:

1. ensuring a regular exchange of information between the Global Compact office and Chapter participants;
2. providing appropriate channels of communication among Chapter participants;
3. maintaining a website with links to the Global Compact and other appropriate organisations;
4. providing regular opportunities for Chapter participants to meet and discuss matters of common concern;
5. reviewing and clarifying the application of the UN-backed PRME;
6. developing mutually supportive materials for the application and reporting on the UN-backed PRME
7. providing a forum for dialogue and co-operation with organisations from other sectors;

8. supporting the Global Compact office in the monitoring of the SIPs of Chapter participants;
9. liaising with the local business school community and Chapters in other regions to share experience and practice;
10. undertaking or commissioning appropriate research or information gathering;
11. undertaking activities which will attract new signatories
12. such other activities as the Chapter participants shall decide from time to time.

3 Governance and Management of the UK and Ireland Chapter

3.1 Key Elements

In order to provide continuity, proper governance, and acceptable outcomes for Chapter participants, the following are the key elements in the management of the programme:

1. 'Participants' are signatories of the UN-backed PRME based in the UK and Ireland that agree to participate in the UK and Ireland Chapter;
2. 'Observers' are policy representatives and non-business school participants selected at the discretion of the Chapter Steering Committee; only a limited number of organisations may be granted observer status in the Chapter at any time;
3. the Steering Committee has been formed, in accordance with the Steering Group Terms of Reference by volunteers from the participating organisations to oversee the management and activities of the Chapter. It will determine priorities, approve the activity plan, oversee and advise the Secretariat, and take responsibility for the proper governance of the programme;
4. all aspects of the objectives, activities, governance, and management of the Chapter will be reviewed with the participants each year in order to determine whether and in what framework the programme should continue;
5. working groups or sub-committees drawn from the Chapter participants will be convened from time to time to address particular topics on behalf of the Chapter and to carry out specific aspects of the Chapter's objectives, such as marketing the UN-backed PRME to potential UK signatories, monitoring the performance of existing UK signatories on reporting and compliance with the UN-backed PRME, and representing the Chapter at the UN or elsewhere;
6. the annual fee will be decided by the Steering Committee
7. participants will support the Programme by voluntarily contributing knowledge, information and materials, and an appropriate amount of the time of colleagues to attend programme activities;
8. the Steering Committee is responsible for procuring suitable secretariat services for the Chapter and agreeing the fee for these.
9. Proposals for changes to the constitution can only be agreed at a UK and Ireland Forum. Motions should be forwarded to the steering committee at least 4 weeks in advance the Forum; and must be agreed by a two thirds majority of attendees.

4. Terms of Reference for the Steering Committee of the UK and Ireland Chapter

- 4.1 The Steering Committee of the Chapter will determine priorities, approve the activity plan, oversee and advise the Secretariat, and take responsibility for the proper governance of the Chapter's programme.
- 4.2 It may consist of up to 8 (or other such number as seems appropriate from time to time) members drawn from signatory organisations, but requires a quorum of 3 members to make decisions. Members may be co-opted.
- 4.3 The Steering Committee is answerable to the membership through regular Chapter Meetings.
- 4.4. Specific Responsibilities of the Steering Committee
1. To ensure that the Chapter lives up to the higher standards of responsibility and good practice that are expected from it, as a Chapter committed to the UN-backed PRME and the 10 principles of the UN Global Compact.
 2. To ensure that the Chapter operates on a sound financial basis and to plan the financial resources needed for the organisation to grow and develop. This includes reviewing budgets.
 3. To report appropriately to members on the Chapter's activities.
 4. To produce the UK Annual Chapter Activities Report and file this with the UN Global Compact Office.
 5. To organise such activities as are required to achieve the aims of the Chapter
 6. To develop partnerships and actively co-operate, where appropriate, with other organisations or groups in ways that promote the UN-backed PRME, the UN Global Compact in general and the interests of the Chapter in particular.

4.5 Frequency of Meeting

The Steering Group shall meet as often as required, but no less than twice a year. For this purpose a meeting can be by electronic means

5. Election of Office Bearers of the Steering Committee

- 5.1 The Steering Committee will determine any Office Holders required at any time in addition to the Chair. As a business school led Chapter, there is an expectation that office-holder roles will be filled by representatives from active schools. There is a preference that office holders will be in position for no less than one year and no more than three years, and that elections will be held for vacant roles.
- 5.2 Elections should follow the steps outlined below:
1. Members are asked for nominations for position(s)
 2. Individuals may nominate themselves
 3. Nominated individuals are contacted to determine whether they are willing to stand for role.

4. In the event of multiple candidates, a folded paper (confidential) vote will be taken at the next scheduled Chapter Meeting. Members unable to attend will be able to vote by email via the Secretariat. If the vote results in a tie, the sitting Chair will cast the deciding vote.

5. In the event of there being only one willing, nominated candidate for a role, the appointment will be approved by the Steering committee

6. The Secretariat

6.1 The Secretariat will normally be provided by a Higher Education Institution, holding charitable status with recognised status as a 'fund-holder'. The Chapter will be operated using this document as a control and thereby avoid the costs and administrative processes involved in creating a new legal entity.

6.2 Chapter participants will be asked to sign a 'Statement of Support' for the Chapter of the UN-backed PRME (see page 9) to confirm their agreement and financial support. However, payment of the invoice for Chapter membership fees may be interpreted as agreement with the terms herein.

7. The Role of the Secretariat

7.1 The role of the Secretariat of the Chapter is to facilitate and support the Steering Committee and participants in the achievement of their objectives and can be summarised as being required to:

1. maintain regular contact and exchange with the Global Compact Office and its PRME Secretariat on behalf of the Chapter;
2. keep Chapter participants updated with UN-backed PRME and Global Compact developments;
3. co-ordinate, arrange, and provide documentation for the Chapter and Steering Committee meetings;
4. record and circulate the proceedings of meetings;
5. co-ordinate the activities of any working groups and committees of the Chapter;
6. co-ordinate the maintenance of a website for the Chapter;
7. provide informed input and materials to enhance discussion on the UN-backed PRME;
8. liaise with other appropriate organisations and Chapters as may be required from time to time on behalf of the Chapter;
9. facilitate the direction of queries raised by the Chapter signatories from time to time;
10. invoice participants directly according to the Chapter participant fee schedule herein;
11. hold the funds of the Chapter in accordance with audited fund-holding procedures and report on the receipt and expenditure of funds as required by the Steering Committee;
12. prepare an annual report on the activities and finances of the Chapter.

7.2 Time frame of the Secretariat

The Secretariat will be provided for the calendar years 2013 and 2014 (or as decided at the Foundation Meeting).

7.3 In advance of the end of a term as Secretariat proposals will be sought from Schools interested in taking on the role, and a presentation made to a designated meeting, where thereafter a vote will be taken, the winner being decided by simple majority. In the event of a tie the Steering committee will decide the winner.

8. Obligations on Participants in the Chapter

8.1 To maintain good standing in the Chapter, participants must fulfil the following obligations:

1. maintain their standing as an “active” participant in the UN-backed PRME as defined by the UN; this includes, but is not limited to, the timely submission of a Sharing Information on Progress (SIP) compliant with PRME rules.
2. pay the appropriate fee, as determined by the Steering Committee for participation in the Chapter:
3. Annual Participant fees as of May 2013 are:
 - Business School - £400
 - Observer - No fee will be levied

STATEMENT OF SUPPORT
for
The UK and Ireland Chapter of the UN-backed PRME

This is to confirm that my organisation is a signatory of the UN Global Compact and is in agreement with the purpose, objectives, and principles of the UK and Ireland Chapter of the UN-backed PRME, as set out in the Chapter Guidelines for Activity and Governance.

Furthermore, my organisation commits to pay participant fees as may be set from time to time by the Steering Committee of the Chapter to enable it to carry out the programme content

Signature

Date

Name

Title

Organisation

Email

Telephone