

BHM301 BUSINESS, ETHICS, RESPONSIBILITY & HUMAN RIGHTS

Number of Aston Credits: 15

Number of ECTS Credits: 7.5

Staff Member Responsible for the Module:

Carole Parkes, Work & Organisational Psychology Group

Main Building South Wing 8016, Extension 3195

Email: c.l.parkes@aston.ac.uk

Availability: See 'office hours'

Or contact the Work & Organisational Psychology Group Administrator:

Mrs Jenny Thompson, Room SW8002, Extension 3257

Pre-requisites for the Module:

Module available on MSc Social Responsibility & Sustainability and as an elective for other courses.

Mode of Attendance:

Full time or part- time

Module Objectives and Learning Outcomes:

To distinguish between ethics, morals, codes of conduct and the law.

To explore ethical theory and related concepts

To understand ethical dilemmas facing individuals and organisations

To explore models that support ethical decision-making and their limitations.

Be aware of different philosophies, perspectives and their implications.

To explore the nature of individual and organisational values

To understand Human Rights principles and approaches

To be aware of Millennium Development Goals and role of Business & Poverty

To understand corporate social responsibility and philanthropy

To study a series of cases focusing on contemporary issues

To apply Ethics, Responsibility and Human Rights approaches to business and organisational contexts

On completion of the module, students should be able to:

- > Understand theories, concepts and approaches relating to ethics, human rights and social responsibility
- > Understand ethical components of managerial decision making
- > Be sensitive to the influence of culture on ethics.
- > Understand the role of personal & organisational values and codes
- > Demonstrate knowledge of Human Rights approaches
- > Understand the nature of Social Responsibility and Philanthropy
- > Develop skills of synthesis evaluation and analysis using ethical, responsibility and human rights frameworks
- > Draw upon a range of models to aid ethical decision-making
- > Apply knowledge of ethics to some of the great international ethical debates, organisational dilemmas and everyday individual issues
- > Apply Human Rights approaches to organisational contexts
- > Use skills of self reflection and reflexivity
- > Demonstrate communication and self presentation skills
- > Apply research skills

Module Content:

Introduction to ethics Why ethics? Why now? Why does it matter?
Perspectives on ethics and ethical theory
Models, concepts and frameworks for decision making
Corporate Social Responsibility and Philanthropy
Human Rights principles and approaches
Business and Human Rights
Millennium Development Goals – Business & Poverty
Giving voice to values – exploring the role of personal & organisational values
How far does the rhetoric match up to the reality?
Workshop and case studies with business professionals
Organisational Ethics & CSR issues. Ethical codes policies and practice

Week 1 Introduction to the module.

The nature of ethics and values. Giving voice to values.
Why are they important and why now?

Week 2 Normative and descriptive ethical theory.

Exploring issues through case studies and current events.

Week 3, Business and Human Rights. The Global Compact, MDGs, Business & Poverty. What is the role of Business?

Week 4 Corporate Social Responsibility and philanthropy - why bother?



Week 5 Individual influences on ethical decision making

Week 6 Pluralism and values, Social Entrepreneurship.

Week 7 Ethics & CSR within the organisation. Ethical codes, policies and practices

Week 8 Workshop: Reflections and 'real life' exploration of issues.

Week 9 Tutorials

Week 10 Assessments

Corporate Connections:

The recent banking crisis and the collapse of economic markets have brought questions about the ethics and responsibilities of organisations sharply into focus. The module draws on the experience of individuals and organisations that work with staff at Aston. For example; The Birmingham Centre for Business Ethics is a registered charity and is run by an elected Council of Management drawn from business organisations in the West Midlands. Drawing members from the corporate world, its members use the opportunity to explore cases based on their own experience with students during the module.

International Dimensions:

The foundation of ethics goes beyond national borders. The interconnectedness between global events and the impact they have on peoples lives has given further impetus to calls for a re examination of the role of business in society. Many of the dilemmas facing managers occur because of developing world issues, such as the globalisation of trade and climate change. International issues become central when comparing Eastern and Western cultures and the module will use case studies and speakers that highlight international issues. The module will also draw upon the experiences of students to explore comparative issues from different cultures.

Contribution of Research:

Tutors draw on their own research and the research of other academics locally and globally to underpin this module. For example; Carole Parkes' research explores issues of ethics, values and human rights, their impacts on social responsibility and sustainability and links to HRM in organisations.

Christine Hemingway's research concerns socially responsible organisational culture, employees' collectivistic personal values and prosocial behavior at work.

Method of Assessment and Feedback:

Formative discussion groups
Written course work

Learning Hours:

Lectures	30
Self study and directed learning	80
Assessment preparation	40
Total	150

Essential Reading:

Crane A. & Matten D. (2010) Business Ethics. Managing Corporate Citizenship and Sustainability in the Age of Globalization, 3rd Edition. Oxford University Press.

Smith R K.M.& van den Anker C (2005)The Essentials of Human Rights Hodder Arnold

Other Reading:

The following texts provide additional material for the areas to be studied.

Blowfield, M. & Murray, A. (2008) Corporate Responsibility – a critical introduction Oxford University Press.

Burchell, J. (2008) The Corporate Social Responsibility Reader. Routledge

Campbell, T. Miller, S. (2004) Human rights and the moral responsibilities of corporate and public sector organisations, Kluwer Academic Publishing, Dordrecht, The Netherlands.

Chryssides George (1996) Essentials Of Business Ethics. McGraw Hill

Crane, A; Matten, D; & Spence, L; (2007) Corporate Social Responsibility: Readings and Cases in a Global Context. Routledge

Ferrell O.C., Fraedrich J., & Ferrell L., (2000) Business Ethics, Ethical Decision Making and Cases. Houghton Mifflin

Fisher, C. and Lovell, A. (2006) (Second Edition) Business, Ethics and Values.

Individual, Corporate and International Perspectives. Pearson Education Ltd

Gentile, M. (2010) Giving Voice to Values: How to Speak Your Mind When You Know What's Right Yale University Press MA

Hendry J., & Sorrell T., (2000) Business Ethics, Butterworth-Heinemann.

Pinnington, A, Macklin, R & Campbell, T. (2007) Human Resource Management.

Ethics and Employment. Oxford University Press.

Sullivan, R. (2003) Business & Human Rights Dilemmas & Solutions Greenleaf Publishing

There are also a number of academic journals in the area of Business Ethics, Corporate Social Responsibility, and Human Rights available through electronic resources of the Library.

Readings are suggested under topic headings and available via Blackboard