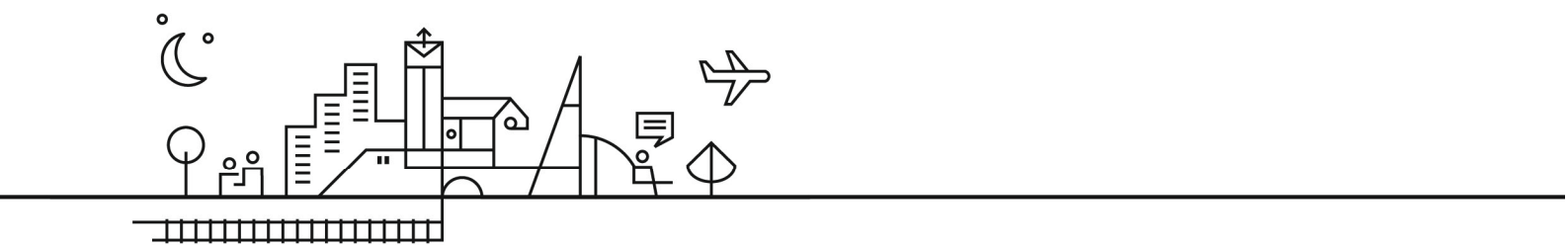
IEMA Transforming the world to sustainability

Course Specification

Foundation Certificate in Environmental Management



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1. ABOUT US

IEMA is the membership body for more than 15,000 environment and sustainability professionals worldwide.

We support individuals and organisations in setting and achieving globally recognised standards for sustainable practice, in turn driving the development and uptake of sustainability skills.

We add value for our members by providing the knowledge, connections and recognition necessary to lead change within organisations at all levels.

We are independent and international. We apply the combined expertise of our members to provide evidence and influence decision-making, working towards our vision of transforming the world to sustainability.

2. COURSE BACKGROUND

This course has been developed to provide learners with a foundation of environmental and sustainability knowledge to build upon. The wide range of environmental, sustainability and governance principles covered ensures that learners appreciate and understand the breadth of the sustainability agenda, and the focus on specific management tools and skills provides learners with an introduction to practical application that they will need when working within this arena.

3. COURSE DURATION

The Guided Learning Hours for the Foundation Certificate in Environmental Management course is a minimum of 40 hours (excluding breaks and assessment). Course delivery can be approved in a number of forms including classroom, e-learning or applied learning.

Classroom-based taught courses will normally be delivered over a period of five consecutive days, but can also be split over a reasonable period, with IEMA approval. E-learning or applied learning based courses must be completed within the time period that IEMA Affiliate membership is valid.

Please see the Policy Manual in the *Guide to becoming an IEMA Training Centre* for further details regarding Guided Learning Hours, course delivery length and different forms of learning.

4. WHO IS THIS COURSE FOR?

This course is aimed at learners who are initiating a career in environmental management and want a solid foundation of environment and sustainability expertise to build on. The achievement of IEMA Associate membership, IEMA's entry professional membership level, helps provide evidence of this knowledge as well as commitment to this career pathway.

There are no formal entry requirements for learners to enroll onto this course.

5. MATERIALS

Training Centres that deliver this course have the option to either develop their own training course materials for approval by IEMA or purchase training materials that have been developed by IEMA.

Please contact training@iema.net for further details.

6. CERTIFICATION & MEMBERSHIP

Successful completion of this course and of the assessment confirms that candidates have met the IEMA Associate membership standard. A certificate of course completion and IEMA Associate membership will be provided once candidates have registered and paid the appropriate fees (see section 8).

Payment for 1 year's IEMA membership is required as part of this course registration unless otherwise agreed by IEMA. Affiliate membership will be granted until the assessment has been successfully completed, upon which membership can be upgraded to Associate.

7. ASSESSMENT

Assessment is via a 1 hour open-book online multiple-choice exam.

The course is assessed in English.

Candidates for whom English is a second language are advised that their reading and writing skills should be equivalent to at least Level 6 of the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) Test for Non-Native Speakers of English. Candidates may obtain information on this language testing service from the IELTS website (www.ielts.org).

Candidates for whom English is a second language may also apply for a Reasonable Adjustment (see below).

Paper-based exams are only offered to IEMA Training Centres in exceptional circumstances and may incur additional costs. Please see section 9 for further details on applying for this through the reasonable adjustments process.

8. CANDIDATE REGISTRATION

IEMA Training Centres must register candidates with IEMA using the relevant booking form and supply accurate candidate details and the appropriate fees at the time of booking. They must give at least 15 working days (three weeks) notice of their intention to hold an examination, to ensure exam access and candidate details as well as IEMA membership are processed in time.

Training Centres must communicate to candidates that they are to complete their examination within 28 days from the start of their chosen examination period and must have access to a device with a reliable internet connection. Candidates will receive log in details to their registered e-mails prior to their examination period starting. Candidates are responsible for undertaking the examination in accordance with IEMA regulations.

9. REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS

Where necessary, IEMA endeavours to make reasonable adjustments for candidates with particular requirements to enable them to have access to fair assessment and to demonstrate achievement. Candidates may require reasonable adjustments for a number of reasons including a permanent (long term) or temporary disability or medical condition; communication and interaction needs; where English is an additional language.

Reasonable adjustments are made to ensure that candidates receive recognition of their achievement without compromising the equity, validity and reliability of the assessment. They are not concessions to make assessment easier for candidates, nor advantages to give candidates a head start.

The Reasonable Adjustments Policy and Application Form can be downloaded from IEMA's website. Candidates requiring reasonable adjustments for their assessment must submit a Reasonable Adjustment Application Form at the earliest possible opportunity and no later than 15 working days (three weeks) prior to the examination date, except in exceptional circumstances, e.g. injury in the days leading up to the examination.

10. SPECIAL CONSIDERATION

Special consideration may result in an adjustment to the marks of candidates who have not been able to demonstrate attainment because of exceptional circumstances during the examination itself.

Candidates requiring special consideration for their examination must submit a Special Consideration Application Form within five working days of the examination.

11. MALPRACTICE

The fairness of the assessment depends upon all parties acting in good faith and adhering to the highest professional standards of conduct. Any evidence of deviation from such standards may lead to disqualification of candidates. Plagiarism and collaboration are considered to be malpractice. Training providers should make their candidates aware of the Malpractice Policy which can be found in the Examination Handbook. IEMA reserves the right to verify the identity of any candidate during the examination.

12. RE-SITS

Candidates may re-sit the examination by re-registering either directly through IEMA or by re-registering through their IEMA Training Centre and sitting the examination at the next available date.

There is no limit to the number of re-sits a candidate can take; the first re-sit can be taken free-of-charge but thereafter re-sit fees apply.

13. TRAINER REQUIREMENTS

In addition to the trainer requirements set out in the policy manual of the *Guide to becoming an IEMA Training Centre*, trainers are required to be a Full member of IEMA, or as a minimum have equivalent knowledge and experience that has been assessed against the IEMA Environmental Skills Map at the managerial level.

Trainers must have practice experience of sustainability, environmental management or assessment and maintain subject and training expertise through Continuing Professional Development.

14. LEARNING OUTCOMES

There are 13 Learning Outcomes for this course which are as follows:

Learning Outcome	Recommended Guided Learning Hours (GLH)
1. Outline the implications of global trends for the environment, for society, for the economy and for organisations	6
2. Outline sustainable business/governance principles and their relationship with organisations, products and services	6
3. Outline environmental principles and their relationship with organisations, products and services	6
4. Outline major policy and legislation and their implications for organisations, products and services	8
5. Outline major tools, techniques, systems and practices used to improve sustainability performance	14
6. Outline the role of innovation and other leading practices in developing sustainable products and services and providing sustainable solutions	To be incorporated within the above learning outcomes where appropriate
7. Collect data, perform analysis, and evaluate information	
8. Research and plan to provide sustainable solutions	
9. Deliver effective communication and capture feedback	
10. Engage with stakeholders	
11. Outline tools and techniques that identify opportunities and risks	
12. Identify and propose ways to improve performance	
13. Support change and transformation to improve sustainability	
TOTAL	**40**

Detailed assessment criteria and scope for each learning outcome are provided on the following pages.

A number of Command Words are used within the Learning Outcomes and associated Assessment Criteria to help IEMA Training Centres and learners understand the level of detail required. These include:

Identify: Stating the name or identifying the characteristics/main point of something. Normally a name, word or phrase will be sufficient, provided the reference is clear.

Recognise: Same meaning as Identify.

Outline: Stating the most important features of something. Equivalent to a thin description but involves more than simply listing.

Describe: Providing a thorough description and enough detail about an item for a learner to have a clear picture of it.

Explain: Providing a detailed response (definition and explanation). 'Explain' may involve giving reasons for something, linking causes and effects, drawing parallels, pointing to relationships or showing how theory can be applied.

Learning Outcome (the learner will…)	**Assessment criteria** (the learner will be able to demonstrate knowledge by…)	**Prescribed Content** (the learner will be familiar with…)
CORE KNOWLEDGE		
Fundamentals of Sustainability		
1. Outline the implications of global trends for the environment, for society, for the economy and for organisations	1.1. Outlining the global **mega-trends** driving the need to transform the world to sustainability 1.2. Outlining the concept of **sustainable development** 1.3. Outlining the UN's Sustainable Development Goals 1.4. Describing the five **sustainable capitals** and the dependencies between them 1.5. Outlining the concept of **environmental limits** 1.6. Recognising that economic activity regularly creates unintended environmental and social consequences, locally and globally 1.7. Recognising that delivering sustainable outcomes involves applying **sustainability skills** to overcome internal and external challenges	**Mega Trends:** Climate Change (GHG and climate consequences), population, global middle class, urbanisation, pivot to asia-pacific market, resource scarcity, biodiversity loss **Sustainable Development:** Brundtland definition; triple bottom line (environment, society and economy) **Sustainable Capital:** Natural, Social, Human, Financial and Manufactured/Built **Environmental Limits:** Planetary boundaries concept (Stockholm Institute) **Sustainability Skills:** IEMA Skills Map
Fundamental Business and Governance Principles and Issues		
2. Outline sustainable business/governance principles and their relationship with organisations, products and services	2.1. Outlining the role of ethics in individual and organisational decision making 2.2. Outlining the importance of accountability, equalities (incl: gender equality), inclusivity, integrity, stewardship, transparency, cultural context and engagement	
TECHNICAL KNOWLEDGE - ENVIRONMENT		
Fundamental Environmental Issues and Principles		
3. Outline environmental	3.1. Outlining the importance of **natural cycles, ecological**	**Natural Cycles:** Carbon, Nitrogen, Phosphorus

Learning Outcome (the learner will…)	**Assessment criteria** (the learner will be able to demonstrate knowledge by…)	**Prescribed Content** (the learner will be familiar with…)
principles and their relationship with organisations, products and services	**systems, ecosystem services** and **environmental limits**, and their impact on your organisation 3.2. Outlining the impact of human interventions on natural ecological systems, habitats, species and individuals 3.3. Describing **pollution sources, pathways and receptors**	and Water **Ecological Systems:** Plants and animals and their interactions with non-living components including energy **Ecosystem Services:** Supporting, Provisioning, Regulating and Cultural **Environmental Limits:** Planetary boundaries concept (Stockholm Institute) **Pollution Sources, Pathways and Receptors:** Including the concept of pollution linkages
Policy, Regulation and Legislation		
4. Outline major policy and legislation and their implications for organisations, products and services	4.1. Outlining how sustainability issues link to policy 4.2. Outlining the main **types of law** and the relationship between international, national and sub-national law 4.3. Identifying key **policy instruments** in place and how they are used to achieve sustainable change 4.4. Outlining key environmental **principles** that form the basis of policy 4.5. Outlining key **environmental legislation** 4.6. Outlining the role of **environmental regulators** and **penalties** for non-compliance	**Types of Law:** Common, Statute, Civil and Criminal law (in jurisdictions where they exist) **Policy Instruments:** Fiscal, legislative, market and voluntary instruments **Principles** of environmental policy: Polluter Pays, Precautionary Principle, Best Available Technique, Hierarchy Approach, Producer Responsibility, Lifecycle Thinking **Environmental Legislation:** Legislation in relation to natural environment, air, water, land, energy, waste, resources, climate change, planning and producer responsibility

Learning Outcome (the learner will…)	**Assessment criteria** (the learner will be able to demonstrate knowledge by…)	**Prescribed Content** (the learner will be familiar with…)
	4.7. Identifying relevant stakeholders that influence environmental issues and policy development 4.8. Outlining the benefits and opportunities organisations can achieve in moving beyond compliance	**Environmental Regulators:** National regulators appropriate to country or region of operation/activity (in jurisdictions where they exist) **Penalties:** Civil and criminal sanctions (in jurisdictions where they exist)
Management and Assessment Tools		
5. Outline major tools, techniques, systems and practices used to improve sustainability performance	5.1. Outlining major **environmental management tools**, techniques, systems and practices, their advantages and disadvantages 5.2. Outlining the concept of lifecycle thinking, its benefits and challenges 5.3. Identifying the different roles **people** play in delivering sustainable outcomes 5.4. Outlining the tools, techniques, systems and/or practices used by organisations to manage compliance and non-compliance	**Environmental Management Tools:** Focus within this course should be on Environmental Management Systems (EMS) and Audit covering the main applicable standards and key elements/steps within the tools as well as advantages and disadvantages. Brief coverage of the following: Impact Assessment, Lifecycle Thinking and Corporate Reporting covering main features, advantages and disadvantages only. **People:** Sustainability profession, leaders (organisational), wider professions, everyone
Innovative and Leading Practices		
6. Outline the role of innovation and other leading practices in developing sustainable products and services and providing sustainable solutions	6.1. Identifying examples of innovation and other leading practices in developing sustainable products and services or providing sustainable solutions	
KNOWLEDGE OF SKILLS		
Analytical Thinking		
7. Collect data, perform analysis,	7.1. Identifying relevant sources of **data** and describing	**Data:** Absolute and Normalised data, Qualitative

Learning Outcome (the learner will…)	**Assessment criteria** (the learner will be able to demonstrate knowledge by…)	**Prescribed Content** (the learner will be familiar with…)
and evaluate information	techniques used to collect, process, and store accurate data 7.2. Explaining the importance of relevant and accurate data 7.3. Describing how to analyse and interpret data / information to draw appropriate conclusions and make practical recommendations that improve sustainability performance 7.4. Describing methods to monitor a programme to improve sustainability performance	and Quantitative data
Problem Reframing and Resolution		
8. Research and plan to provide sustainable solutions	8.1. Identifying the benefits of research, planning and keeping up-to-date with **innovations** providing sustainable solutions	**Innovations:** Academic research, developments by competitors, other sectors and wider stakeholders, new business models
Effective Communication		
9. Deliver effective communication and capture feedback	9.1. Explaining the role effective communication plays in achieving sustainable outcomes 9.2. Identifying a range of **internal and external stakeholders** 9.3. Identifying different communication methods that provide information and capture feedback	**Internal Stakeholders:** Leadership Team, Operations, Finance, Other Specific Departments, All Staff **External Stakeholders:** Partners, Clients, Customers, Suppliers, Shareholders, Regulators, Local Community
Relationship Development		
10. Engage with stakeholders	10.1. Identifying the benefits of collaboration and cooperation in responding to sustainability challenges, particularly when facing similar issues	
Resilience, Risk and Continual Improvement		
11. Outline tools and techniques that identify opportunities and risks	11.1. Outlining tools and techniques that can be used to identify **risks and opportunities**	**Risks and Opportunities:** At an operational and organisational level, risks and opportunities to the environment, risks and opportunities presented by a changing environment

Learning Outcome (the learner will…)	**Assessment criteria** (the learner will be able to demonstrate knowledge by…)	**Prescribed Content** (the learner will be familiar with…)
	Delivering Sustainable Solutions	
12. Identify and propose ways to improve performance	12.1. Outlining how a long-term vision for sustainability, with milestones and targets, can improve sustainability performance 12.2. Identifying key project management techniques that, when used, can deliver sustainable outcomes 12.3. Outlining how a financial return on investment and wider benefits can create a business case for sustainability 12.4. Outlining how contracting and procurement can be a vital component of improving sustainability performance	
	Leadership for Change	
13. Support change and transformation to improve sustainability	13.1. Outlining the principles of change management	

15. PROGRESSION AFTER THIS COURSE

Learners wishing to progress after this course should consider taking the following membership option with linked course:

- IEMA Practitioner membership through the IEMA Certificate in Environmental Management

16. CONTACT US

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