

HOW DOES YOUR AREA OF EMPHASIS RELATE TO SUSTAINABILITY?

Students at Leeds in every major will find that sustainability skills are differentiators in the workplace, regardless of the job type.

Some key sustainability skills:

Ability to make a business case for sustainability and knowledge of market trends

Ability to communicate and influence effectively across multiple stakeholders

An understanding of values-based decision-making approaches

Deep understanding of social and environmental risks and opportunities

Here are some ways that students should use their area of emphasis to lean into sustainability and become the business leaders of tomorrow.

Accounting

In recent years, most major corporations have begun publishing a sustainability report. Understanding the landscape of reporting, measurement and verification of ESG initiatives is an important skill for accountants, even if a job is not specifically related to ESG. Companies need workers who can navigate the complexity of tax credits for renewables and take advantage of policy changes. In particular, the big four accounting firms—Deloitte, EY, KPMG, and PwC— [are staffing up and training workers](#) to accommodate the rulings from the SEC on emissions reporting. Companies that work in the EU are already beholden to strict reporting rules on emissions. General knowledge of ESG reporting should be encouraged for all accounting majors, though students who are particularly interested should go deeper with carbon accounting and reporting training.

Finance

Finance majors may see a variety of opportunities in the sustainability space. Sustainable finance (also called impact investing or responsible investing) refers to an instrument that considers environmental, social and governance factors in its investment strategy. Some companies, like Nuveen, consider ESG alongside competitive returns in all of their investment decisions. With more than \$300B invested in these funds, their presence is not going away any time soon. Other financial instruments like [green bonds](#) or natural asset companies are changing the industry and students should be aware of these shifts as they enter the job market.

Finance students should also understand climate risk. Shifts in weather patterns have led to

John Doerr and Sergei Brin have all prioritized climate in their funds. Additionally, project finance for clean energy is a growing sector as is tax equity.

Business Analytics

Business analytics students are extraordinarily well positioned for jobs in sustainability. The transition to a less resource intensive and more sustainable business world requires mass collection of data and analysis. Adaptation to climate change leans heavily on AI generated models to predict future outcomes. Climate tech driven companies demand advanced algorithms to be one step ahead of their competitors. Students who go into consulting will find that many of their clients will be faced with regular questions about sustainability and climate regardless of sector.

Management and Entrepreneurship

We are on the precipice of an enormous shift in the way we do business. Both AI and climate change combined are creating challenges, but also an incredible windfall of opportunity for the business community. Students who are well versed in the economics of the energy transition and the risks of climate change may find climate tech a ripe area for entrepreneurial exploration. Students in leadership management and supply chain management should recognize the need to incorporate sustainability in their operations.

Marketing

Despite inflation and claims of greenwashing by corporate America, a [new study from NYU](#) suggests that sustainability—especially as it relates to health and wellness—is still one of the main motivators for consumers. Indicators suggest that sustainability marketed products [represent 17%](#) of the consumer goods market and the share is growing much more rapidly than conventional products. Gen Z has repeatedly stated they are more concerned with the social,