# ISEP
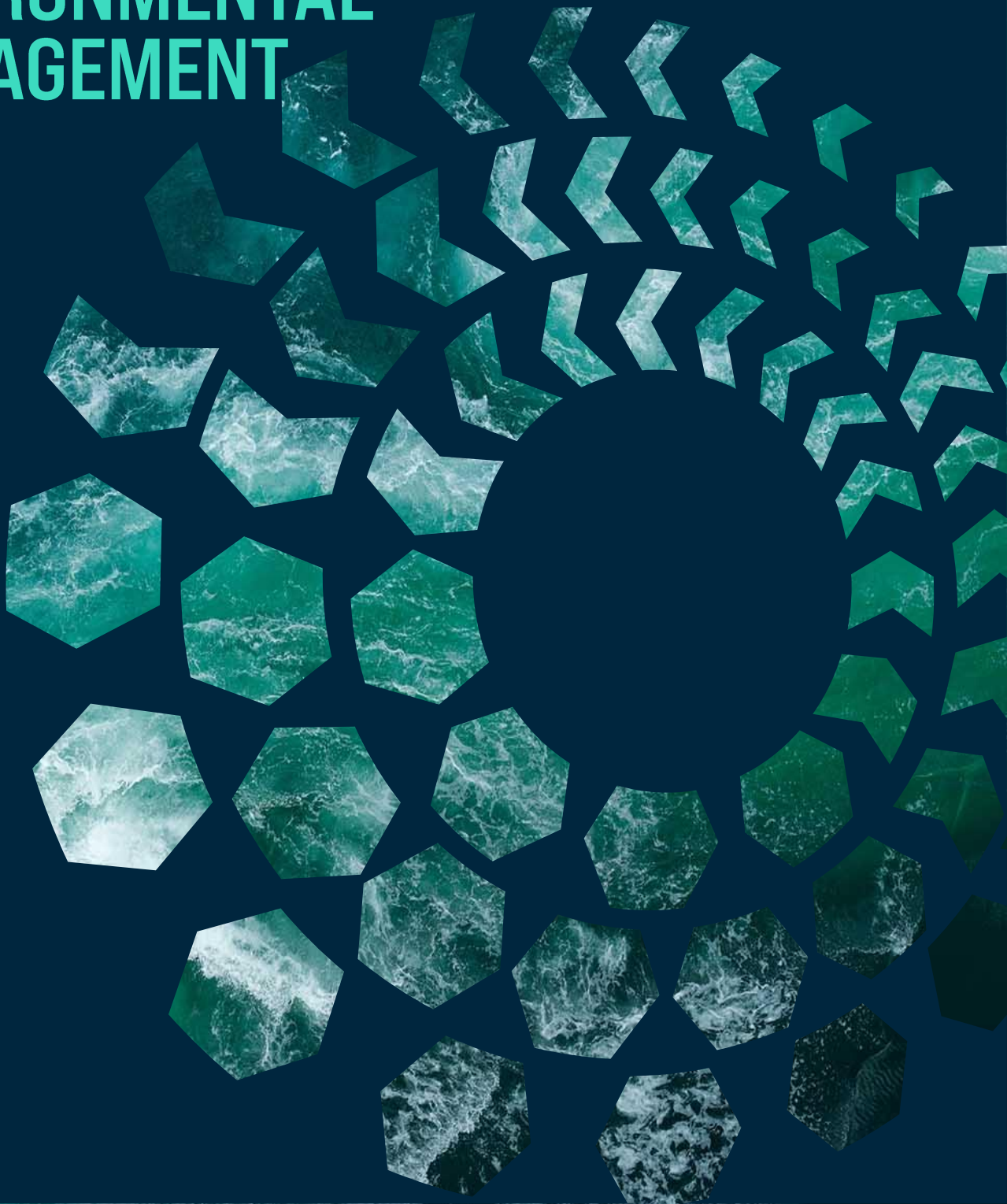## Institute of Sustainability & Environmental Professionals

# FOUNDATION CERTIFICATE IN SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

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# Contents

## 1. About Us

**The Institute of Sustainability and Environmental Professionals (ISEP) is the global membership body for anyone wanting sustainable change that delivers across government, business and society. By harnessing the collective expertise and experience of our global membership, we set the standard in sustainable leadership, knowledge, skills and practice.**

Whether you're an environmental specialist, a sustainability generalist, or just want to be a champion for change in your area – we empower people with cutting-edge evidence and insights, enable with world-class training and guidance, and ensure excellence with unrivalled professional standards and assessment.

We are passionate about uniting talent, creating collaborations and forming networks that influence government policy, drive best-practice within business, and inspire change across society.

No matter what stage you're at in your career or what sector you work in, we can equip you with the skills, standards and support needed to nurture your talent and advance your career.

## 2. Background

The Foundation Certificate in Sustainability and Environmental Management 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 (GLH) for the Certificate in Sustainability and 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, blended 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 ISEP

approval. E-learning or applied learning based courses must be completed within the time period that ISEP Affiliate membership is valid.

Please see the Policy Manual in the Guide to becoming an ISEP 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 ISEP Associate membership, ISEP'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 and Certification

A full range of training materials are available for this course.

This course comes with structured learner workbooks, a trainer manual and an online assessment produced by ISEP.

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

Please contact training@isepglobal.org for further details.

## 6. Certification and Membership

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

Payment for 1 year's ISEP membership is required as part of this course registration unless otherwise agreed by ISEP. 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.

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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 ISEP 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

ISEP Training Centres must register candidates with ISEP 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 ISEP 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 ISEP regulations.

## 9. Reasonable Adjustments

Where necessary, ISEP 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 ISEP'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 an examination/assessment.

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

## 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.

ISEP 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 ISEP or by reregistering through their ISEP 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 ISEP Training Centre, trainers are required to be a Full member of ISEP, or as a minimum have equivalent

knowledge and experience that has been assessed against the ISEP 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 | 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 ISEP Training Centres and learners understand the level of detail required. These include:

**Identify/Recognise:** 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.

**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.

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## Core Knowledge

| Learning outcome (the learner will...) | Assessment criteria (the learner will be able to demonstrate knowledge by...) | Prescribed content (the learner will be familiar with...) |
|---|---|---|
| **Fundamentals of Sustainability** | | |
| 1. Outline the implications of global trends for the environment, for society, for the economy and for organisations | 1.1 Outline the global **mega-trends** driving the need to transform the world to sustainability<br><br>1.2 Outline the concept of **sustainable development**<br><br>1.3 Outline the UN's Sustainable Development Goals<br><br>1.4 Describe the five **sustainable capitals** and the dependencies between them<br><br>1.5 Outline the concept of **environmental limits**<br><br>1.6 Recognise that economic activity creates unintended environmental and social consequences, locally and globally<br><br>1.7 Recognise 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<br><br>**Sustainable Development**: Brundtland definition; triple bottom line (environment, society and economy)<br><br>**Sustainable Capitals**: Natural, Social, Human, Financial and Manufactured/Built<br><br>**Environmental Limits**: Planetary boundaries concept (Stockholm Institute)<br><br>**Sustainability Skills**: ISEP 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 Outline the role of ethics in individual and organisation decision-making<br><br>2.2 Outline the importance of accountability, equalities (incl: gender equality), inclusivity, integrity, stewardship, transparency, cultural context and engagement | |

## Technical Knowledge

| Learning outcome<br>(the learner will…) | Assessment criteria<br>(the learner will be able to demonstrate knowledge by…) | Prescribed content<br>(the learner will be familiar with…) |
|---|---|---|
| **Fundamental Environmental Issues and Principles** | | |
| 3. Outline environmental principles and their relationship with organisations, products and services | 3.1 Outline **natural cycles, ecological systems, ecosystem services** and **environmental limits** and their impact on your organisation<br><br>3.2 Outline the impact of human interventions on natural ecological systems, habitats, species and individuals<br><br>3.3 Describe **pollution sources, pathways and receptors** | **Natural Cycles:** Carbon, Nitrogen, Phosphorus and Water<br><br>**Ecological Systems:** Plants and animals and their interactions with non-living components including energy<br><br>**Ecosystem Services:** Supporting, Provisioning, Regulating and Cultural<br><br>**Environmental Limits:** Planetary boundaries concept (Stockholm Institute)<br><br>**Pollution Sources, Pathways and Receptors:** Including the concept of pollution linkages |
| **Policy, Regulation & Legislation** | | |
| 4. Outline major policy and legislation and their implications for organisations, products and services | 4.1 Outline how sustainability issues link to policy<br><br>4.2 Outline the main **types of law** and the relationship between international, national and sub-national law<br><br>4.3 Identify key **policy instruments** in place and how they are used to achieve sustainable change<br><br>4.4 Outline key environmental **principles** that form the basis of policy<br><br>4.5 Outline key **environmental legislation**<br><br>4.6 Outline the role of **environmental regulators** and **penalties** for non-compliance | **Types of Law**: Common, Statute, Civil and Criminal law (in jurisdictions where they exist)<br><br>**Policy Instruments**: Fiscal, legislative, market and voluntary instruments<br><br>**Principles** of environmental policy: Polluter Pays, Precautionary Principle, Best Available Technique, Hierarchy Approach, Producer Responsibility, Lifecycle Thinking<br><br>**Environmental Legislation**: Legislation in relation to natural environment, air, water, land, energy, waste, resources, climate change, planning and producer responsibility |

| Learning outcome<br>(the learner will...) | Assessment criteria<br>(the learner will be able to demonstrate knowledge by...) | Prescribed content<br>(the learner will be familiar with...) |
|---|---|---|
|  | 4.7 Identify relevant stakeholders that influence environmental issues and policy development<br><br>4.8 Outline 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)<br><br>**Penalties**: Civil and criminal sanctions (in jurisdictions where they exist) |
| **Management & Assessment Tools** | | |
| 5. Outline major tools, techniques, systems and practices used to improve sustainability performance | 5.1 Outline major **environmental management tools**, techniques, systems and practices, their advantages and disadvantages<br><br>5.2 Outline the concept of lifecycle thinking, its benefits and challenges<br><br>5.3 Identify the different roles **people** play in delivering sustainable outcomes<br><br>5.4 Outline the tools, techniques, systems and/or practices used by organisations to manage compliance and non-compliance | **Environmental Management Tools**: Environmental Management Systems (EMS) and Audit covering the main applicable standards and key elements/steps within the tools as well as advantages and disadvantages.<br><br>**Brief coverage of the following:** Impact Assessment, Lifecycle Thinking and Corporate Reporting covering main features, advantages and disadvantages only.<br><br>**People:** Sustainability profession, leaders (organisational), wider professions, everyone. |
| **Innovative & Leading Practices** | | |
| 6. Outline the role of innovation and other leading practices in developing sustainable products and services and providing sustainable solutions | 6.1 Identify examples of innovation and leading practices in developing sustainable products and services or providing sustainable solutions | |

## Knowledge of Skills

| Learning outcome (the learner will…) | Assessment criteria (the learner will be able to demonstrate knowledge by…) | Prescribed content (the learner will be familiar with…) |
|---|---|---|
| **Analytical Thinking** | | |
| 7. Collect data, perform analysis, and evaluate information | 7.1 Identify relevant sources of data and describe techniques used to collect, process, and store accurate data<br><br>7.2 Explain the importance of relevant and accurate data<br><br>7.3 Describe how to analyse and interpret data/information to draw appropriate conclusions and make practical recommendations that improve sustainability performance<br><br>7.4 Describe methods to monitor a programme to improve sustainability performance | **Data:** Absolute and Normalised data, Qualitative and Quantitative data. |
| **Problem Reframing & Resolution** | | |
| 8. Research and plan to provide innovative solutions | 8.1 Identify the benefits of research, planning and keeping up-to-date with innovations that provide 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 Explain the role effective communication plays in achieving sustainable outcomes<br><br>9.2 Identify a range of internal and external stakeholders<br><br>9.3 Identify different communication methods that provide information and capture feedback | **Internal Stakeholders:** Leadership Team, Operations, Finance, Other Specific Departments, All Staff.<br><br>**External Stakeholders:** Partners, Clients, Customers, Suppliers, Shareholders, Regulators, Local Community. |

| Learning outcome<br>(the learner will...) | Assessment criteria<br>(the learner will be able to demonstrate knowledge by...) | Prescribed content<br>(the learner will be familiar with...) |
|---|---|---|
| **Relationship Development** | | |
| 10. Engage with stakeholders | 10.1 Identify the benefits of collaboration and cooperation in responding to sustainability challenges, particularly when facing similar issues | |
| **Resilience, Risk & Continual Improvement** | | |
| 11. Outline tools and techniques that identify opportunities and risks | 11.1 Outline 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. |
| **Delivering Sustainable Solutions** | | |
| 12. Identify and propose ways to improve performance | 12.1 Outline how a long-term vision for sustainability, with milestones and targets, can improve sustainability performance<br><br>12.2 Identify key project management techniques that, when used, can deliver sustainable outcomes<br><br>12.3 Outline how a financial return on investment and wider benefits can create a business case for sustainability<br><br>12.4 Outline 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 Outline the principles of change management | |

## 15. Progression After this Course

Learners wishing to progress after this course should consider taking the following courses:

- ISEP Practitioner membership through the ISEP Certificate in Sustainability and Environmental Management

## 16. Contact Us

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Thinking about quality training that focuses on environmental and sustainable solutions? ISEP provides ISEP Certified and Approved courses through our Training Centres. Whether you're looking for individual training or global business solutions, our team is on hand to help.

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