

CS39A0140 Sustainable Performance Management - Blended teaching

Exam, Lahti 29.01.2026 (16:30)

General Instructions:

1. This is a “closed book” examination. Thus, using reference materials or consulting notes, books, or articles during the examination is prohibited.
2. The exam must be completed in three hours.
3. This exam consists of
 - I. Section A: Multiple-choice questions
 - II. Section B: Essay-type questions.
4. Section A: Multiple choice questions
 - I. This section comprised 11 questions.
 - II. Each question is multiple-choice with two or four answer choices.
 - III. Read each question and answer carefully by choosing the ONE best answer.
 - IV. You can attempt ten or all eleven questions, but we will consider only the ten correct answers for grading purposes.
 - V. In general, if you have some knowledge about a question, please try to answer it. The grading does not involve any negative marking for guessing or wrong answers.
5. Section B: Essay-type questions.
 - I. This section has three questions; you must answer any two questions in this exam.
 - II. Candidates must write with a blue or black ballpoint pen and are responsible for ensuring that their submission is readable.
 - III. General instructions on **How to answer Essay-type questions**
 - a. Read the question carefully to identify keywords such as “Discuss” or “Define” or “Critically evaluate” or “Argue”
 - b. Plan before you write, that is, what are the main points to cover? Consider examples or case studies from the study materials. Decide on a logical order for the response.
 - IV. Suggestions for the structure of the answer to essay-type questions. This is just a suggestion; you are free to write the response in your own way.
 - a. **Introduction (10-15%):** Restate the question in your own words and state your position or main argument

- b. **Main Body (70-80%):** Divide the response into paragraphs, each covering one key point. Support the text with **examples** from study material, clearly define the core concept of the paragraph, **and provide evidence** with data, case studies, and theories.
- c. **Conclusion (10-15%):** Summarize the main points. End with a clear **final insight** or implications.

Section A: Multiple choice questions

1. **Under the concept of "weak sustainability," how does an organization justify the depletion of natural resources?**
 - a) By immediately halting all activities that cause environmental degradation.
 - b) By reinvesting profits from those resources into man-made capital.
 - c) By prioritizing social equity overall economic and environmental concerns.
 - d) By fundamentally changing core business assumptions about environmental limits.

2. **According to the CIPD, what is the primary goal of performance management?**
 - a) To create a uniform review system for all global departments.
 - b) To use managerial control as a tool for employee discipline.
 - c) To maximize employee value through their attitudes and performance.
 - d) To replace face-to-face reviews with automated digital monitoring.

3. **Why is the Brundtland definition of sustainability ("meeting the needs of the present without compromising the future") difficult for organizations to implement?**
 - a) It ignores the needs of future generations.
 - b) It uses economic growth as the only measure of success.
 - c) Organizations often treat the social, environmental, and economic goals as trade-offs rather than integrating them.
 - d) It was designed only for global politics and cannot be used by businesses.

4. **Performance management is considered a "strategic tool" primarily because it:**
 - a) is used exclusively to manage freelance and "gig" workers.
 - b) aligns individual employee performance with the organization's overall goals.
 - c) helps managers avoid complex organizational design issues.
 - d) focuses only on "hard" quantitative data and sales metrics.

5. **What is the primary purpose of the "continuum" between strong and weak sustainability?**
 - a) To set the exact speed for an organization to become efficient.
 - b) To show how different views balance economic, social, and environmental goals.
 - c) To provide a legal checklist for compliance officers.
 - d) To remove the need for leadership in corporate decision-making.

6. **A tech firm plans to increase its revenue by 5% while reaching "net-zero" waste through new recycling technology. Which concept does this strategy represent?**
- a) Deep Ecology.
 - b) Ecological Modernization.
 - c) Strong sustainability.
 - d) Pure Economic Growth.
7. **Which of the following best describes a "holistic" approach to performance management?**
- a) Focusing on a single, yearly activity like an annual review.
 - b) Using a simple system to fix minor daily mistakes.
 - c) Connecting various people-management practices to improve performance.
 - d) Prioritizing financial profits over employee wellbeing and attitudes.
8. **Choose the key strategy for sustainable marketing, prioritizing online campaigns over traditional media to reduce waste and environmental impact.**
- a) Green Certifications
 - b) Eco-Friendly Partnerships
 - c) Digital-First Marketing
 - d) Influencer Marketing
9. **In the context of corporate responsibility, which group is primarily seeking "meaningful work":**
- a) Customers who want sustainable and traceable products.
 - b) Investors looking for a positive social impact.
 - c) Employees seeking a sense of purpose in their daily roles.
 - d) Business leaders redefining their company's legal mission.
10. **In the sustainability phase model, what characterizes the "Sustaining Corporation"?**
- a) A focus on reducing waste only to cut costs and increase profit.
 - b) Fully integrating sustainability as a core value and a driver for global change.
 - c) Using financial payments (royalties) to make up for environmental damage.
 - d) Choosing short-term economic growth over the health of the environment.

11. An organization that views sustainability not merely as a cost-saving measure but as a fundamental opportunity to influence regulations and reshape its entire industry's operational standards is operating at which level of transformation?

- a) The efficiency and compliance phase.
- b) The reactive or defensive phase.
- c) The systemic or sustaining phase.
- d) The incremental optimization phase.

Section B: Essay-type questions

1. Evaluate the tensions between "Strong" and "Weak" sustainability discourses and their implications for corporate responsibility.
2. Imagine you are the CEO of a global firm operating in a high-impact industry, such as palm oil production or construction, where you face intense pressure from investors, employees, and customers to define a purposeful and responsible strategy. Your board of directors has asked for a comprehensive proposal on how the organization will transition towards "true sustainability" rather than mere "eco-efficiency"
3. How are modern businesses changing from just tracking their profits to managing their impact on the planet and people? To answer this, compare Sustainability Balanced Scorecard (SBSC) and the integration of ESG KPIs into an Internal Management System (IMS).

Use the following points to guide your answer

- a. Briefly explain why organizations are moving away from pure financial performance measures toward sustainable PM.
- b. Describe how the Sustainability Balanced Scorecard helps align high-level strategy with environmental and social goals.
- c. Explain how an Internal Management System (IMS) uses data-driven ESG KPIs to manage daily operations and compliance.
- d. Explain how the SBSC focuses on strategic vision while the IMS focuses on operational data and accountability.
- e. Summarize how these tools help an organization move toward becoming a "Sustaining Corporation".