SPOTLIGHTING PROGRESS

How Australian business schools are leading the climate transition 2022–2025

About the ABDC

The Australian Business Deans Council is the collective voice of Australian business schools.

We champion quality and impact in business education and research, driving excellence and innovation to benefit students, industry, and society.

About this report

This report is intended to provide an inclusive overview of how ABDC member business schools are progressing on embedding action on climate change within education, research, partnership and strategic and operational initiatives. It is not a comprehensive evaluation.

This report showcases the breadth of climate action across Australian business schools, 2022–2025.

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Foreword

The transition to a net zero economy is putting key business capabilities in finance, accounting, strategy, governance, marketing, economics, and management in high demand. Meeting renewable energy targets, mandatory climate reporting, and mitigating climate risks will require more graduates with capabilities in carbon accounting, climate risk analysis, ESG reporting and assurance, scenario modelling, clean energy finance, and circular economy strategy. Companies in Australia and regionally will rely on expertise developed by researchers in ABDC-member business schools to address adaptation challenges.

In this report, we document the strategic responses of Australian business schools across standards and accreditation, leadership, partnerships with industry, research and curriculum from 2022 to 2025. Over this short period, climate has become a core in many business schools, and this is a testament both to collective action in the ABDC network, and the success of the coordinating role the ABDC Climate Fellow has played. Associate Professor Melissa Edwards from UNSW Business School's Centre for Social Impact has served in the ABDC Climate Fellow role, establishing networks and forums for ABDC members to collaborate and exchange insights to integrate climate action across business school curriculum, research, graduate competency, and partnerships.

The ABDC's strategic approach to climate action is supported by the ABDC Declaration on Climate Action, which was endorsed in 2022. Through the declaration, member business schools acknowledge the fundamental changes to economy and society that net zero transition necessitates, and the vital importance of business disciplines to navigating the transition. The declaration was made in recognition of the critical role that business schools play in educating the next generation of business leaders and the ABDC's capacity as a peak body to coordinate and pursue a strategic approach to support climate action.

The ABDC has also worked collaboratively with the Australia-New Zealand Chapter of Principles for Responsible Management Education (PRME) to establish a joint working group and community of practice. A key success of this group has been the development of a cross institutional carbon literacy training (CLT) program that has resulted in a community of over 30 business schools certifying over 100 practitioners. This collaboration continues, with biannual community of practice events being a valuable forum to share best practice, resources, and ideas.

From this promising start, ABDC business schools are continuing to embed climate action across business school functions. This report documents the transformational progress made to date and gives a call to action for business schools to position climate capability as a defining institutional strength — preparing the workforce for transition planning and adaptation and leading by example in our climate performance across teaching, research, and operations.

Professor Maryam Omari

President | Australian Business Deans Council

Acknowledgements

The ABDC wish to express sincere gratitude to the many people and organisations whose contributions made this work possible.

To the 36 ABDC member business schools

Thank you for your openness in sharing your initiatives, your willingness to collaborate across institutional boundaries, and your commitment to making Australian business education better for the climate. The breadth and ambition of the work documented in this report is a testament to the collective determination of deans, faculty, professional staff, and students across the country.

To the PRME Australia–New Zealand Chapter

The strategic partnership between ABDC and Principles for Responsible Management Education (PRME) AuNZ has been foundational to the collective impact documented here. Thank you to the co-chairs, secretariat, and all chapter members for the sustained collaboration, shared purpose, and generosity of spirit that has characterised this partnership.

To the ABDC–PRME AuNZ Working Group members

Special thanks to the volunteer working group members from Swinburne Business School, Curtin Business School, Deakin Business School, Federation University Business School, University of Tasmania, University of Sydney Business School, University of Queensland Business School, UTS Business School, UNSW Business School, University of Western Australia Business School, University of Melbourne Faculty of Business and Economics, Macquarie Business School, and University of Canterbury Business School, whose sustained collaboration across multiple cohorts of Carbon Literacy Training and Community of Practice forums created the shared foundation on which this agenda has been built.

To our industry and government partners

Thank you to the members of the ABDC Climate Action Industry Reference Group, the peak bodies who participated in graduate capabilities consultations, and the industry and government partners who engage with business school research and education programs. Your partnership ensures that the capabilities being built in our business schools remain grounded in real-world need and directed toward practical impact.

This report was compiled by Associate Professor Melissa Edwards who had the honor of serving as the inaugural ABDC Climate Action Fellow from 2023 to 2025. In this role, Associate Professor Edwards coordinated the collective efforts of ABDC member business schools on climate action, convened the cross-institutional working group and community of practice, and led the research and engagement activities that underpin this report.

This report is dedicated to all those working — in classrooms, research labs, boardrooms, and communities — to ensure that Australian business education rises to the climate challenge.

Climate action by the numbers

1. Background and context

Section overview

This section explains the ABDC's Declaration on Climate Action, how the sector organised itself to act, and the current global and Australian policy context within which business schools are operating.

1.1 ABDC's climate action initiative

In February 2022, the 37-member business schools of the Australian Business Deans Council (ABDC) unanimously endorsed a Declaration on Climate Action, committing to coordinate strategic responses to the global climate emergency.

Recognising the irrefutable science that human endeavors since industrialisation has contributed to global warming, and the role that business schools will play in global energy transition, the declaration committed ABDC member business schools to identify opportunities to collaborate in the 2022–25 period.

Member schools committed to action across five areas:

- Embedding carbon literacy in curricula across disciplines
- Establishing graduate threshold attributes for climate competency
- Showcasing research programs and centres of excellence focused on business responses to climate change
- Partnering strategically with the PRME Australia–New Zealand Chapter
- Appointing a Climate Action Fellow to coordinate member schools' efforts

To progress this agenda, ABDC appointed a Climate Action Fellow and established a cross-institutional working group and community of practice. Through these structures, member schools shared best practices and embedded foundational climate literacies across education, research, and management, building the collaborative infrastructure on which more ambitious collective action now rests.

This report showcases initiatives from 2022–2025. It is not a comprehensive audit, but a representative picture of the breadth and depth of responses underway, drawn from member surveys, ABDC Transformative Climate Action Award nominations, and AI-assisted secondary research with manual cross-referencing.

1.2 The global and Australian policy context

A world in transition and under pressure

The context for climate action has shifted markedly since 2022. Geopolitical instability, from conflict in Eastern Europe and the Middle East to realignments in US climate policy, has complicated the multilateral architecture for decarbonisation. Scientific evidence has grown more urgent: multiple planetary boundaries have been breached, extreme weather events are intensifying in frequency and cost, and the window for limiting warming to 1.5°C is narrowing.

Yet the energy transition is accelerating. The economics of renewable energy, green hydrogen, and battery storage have transformed faster than most projections anticipated. Investment in clean energy infrastructure continues to grow, driven by policy, investor demand, and corporate strategy.

Australian business schools are responding as pragmatic leaders in this transition, making rigorous, applied contributions to the knowledge, capability, and institutional infrastructure that the transition requires. As significant players in the Asia-Pacific region, business schools are connecting Australian expertise to address adaptation and mitigation needs in the regional and global context.

Highlights: The Australian policy context

Mandatory climate related financial disclosures

- AASB S2 mandatory from Jan 2025 for certain entities.[1]
- Increased demand for climate risk, audit and reporting graduates.

Net Zero Economy Authority

An independent statutory authority in accordance with the Net Zero Economy Authority Act whose role is to support workers, communities and regions in orderly economic transformation. The authority's aims align with business school expertise in governance and workforce transition.

National climate risk assessment[2]

- Disaster costs projected at $40.3 bn p.a. by 2050 (median value).
- Sea-level rise could threaten 1.5m people.
- Business schools preparing graduates to translate risk into strategy.

The transition challenge

The RET sets a target to deliver an extra 33,000 giga-watt-hours (GWh) of electricity from renewable sources every year from 2020 to 2030. Australia has the resources and capacity to reach 82% of electricity generated by renewables energy resources by 2030.[3]

Safeguard mechanism declining 4.9% p.a to June 2030, unless the facility is a trade exposed base line adjusted (TEBA) facility.[4]

The business education opportunity

Mandatory climate-related financial disclosures, escalating abatement requirements, and a growing pipeline of clean energy investment are reshaping the skills landscape across every business discipline. Business schools are building these capabilities now in finance, accounting, strategy, governance, marketing, economics, and management. They are preparing graduates for the defining economic transformation of this decade.

1 Source: https://standards.aasb.gov.au/aasb-s2-sep-2024
2 Source: https://www.acs.gov.au/pages/national-climate-risk-assessment (last accessed June 2026)
3 Source: https://www.dcceew.gov.au/energy/renewable (last accessed June 2026)
4 Source: https://cer.gov.au/schemes/safeguard-mechanism/safeguard-baselines (last accessed June 2026)

2. Business school strategic responses

Section overview

Australian business schools deploy six strategic frameworks, often in combination, to embed climate action across governance, curriculum, research, operations, and partnerships. This section describes each framework with illustrative examples.

Business schools have long embedded sustainability, ethics, and responsibility across their governance, research, curriculum, operations, and partnerships. As climate change intensifies, Australian business schools are integrating climate into core business education, building interdisciplinary research capacity, and partnering with industry, government, and communities to generate applied solutions.

Six strategic frameworks for climate action

Standards and accreditation-driven

AACSB, EQUIS, AMBA and professional standards raising the bar on climate.

Ethics and principles-driven

PRME, values-based frameworks, and mission-led environmental responsibility.

Innovation and green growth

Living labs, green startups, and market-based climate solutions.

Transformational leadership

Climate as core institutional logic; paradigm-level curriculum and research redesign.

Networking and partnership building

Cross-institutional collaboration, industry reference groups, and global partnerships.

Regional resilience and place-based

Geographically tailored research, Asia-Pacific focus, and Indigenous-led approaches.

2.1 Standards and accreditation-driven

Business schools operate within multiple global accreditation frameworks, including AACSB, EQUIS, and AMBA, alongside discipline-specific professional standards. Increasingly, these frameworks are raising the bar on sustainability and climate.

- **AACSB's Standard 9** requires schools to demonstrate impact as "a force for good in society", with human and financial capital allocated to societal priorities. This non-prescriptive framework allows schools to choose their own societal impact focus areas while requiring demonstration of impact through human and financial capital allocation. While the standard does not explicitly mention climate change, it signals that high-quality schools have a positive societal impact by addressing broader social, economic, business, and/or physical environment issues, at a local, regional, national, or international scale. The 2025 technical edits clarify that UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) engagement is encouraged but not mandatory, reflecting a commitment to academic freedom alongside societal engagement.
- **EQUIS** has embedded Ethics, Responsibility, and Sustainability (ERS) as mandatory assessment criteria since 2013. Schools must demonstrate ERS integration across strategy, governance, teaching, research, and community engagement — including decarbonisation strategies, GHG monitoring, and active participation in global sustainability debates.
- **AMBA-BGA's 2024–25 model** requires alignment with three UN SDGs and evidence of teaching impact, linking accreditation directly to measurable climate and sustainability outcomes.

- **Professional accreditation bodies** are also raising expectations. The International Federation of Accountants (IFAC) has shifted its education standards to include sustainability competencies, directly aligning professional qualifications with the demands of mandatory climate-related financial disclosures. The Australian Institute of Company Directors hosts the Climate Governance Initiative Australia and offers a short course in Climate Governance for Australian Directors.

Beyond collegiate accreditation, schools pursue voluntary certifications and rankings as public accountability mechanisms:

- Three business schools hold Bronze Carbon Literate Organisation accreditation from the UK Carbon Literacy Project: Swinburne Business School, Curtin Business School, Deakin Business School.
- University of Tasmania has ranked #1 globally for climate action in the Times Higher Education Impact Rankings for four consecutive years (2021–24)
- Griffith Business School's MBA has ranked #1 globally in the Corporate Knights Better World MBA rankings for five consecutive years
- UNSW ranks #1 in Australia and Oceania in the 2026 QS Sustainability Rankings

Business schools contribute to university-wide initiatives through the Australian Campuses Toward Sustainability (ACTS) and tracking and rating performance through systems such as the international Sustainability Tracking, Assessment &

Rating System (STARS) system. They align with university targets that typically specify timelines like "carbon neutrality by 2025", "net zero emissions by 2029", and "reduce scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions by 60% by 2030" to create accountability mechanisms.

2.2 Ethics and principles-driven

Thirty-two Australian and New Zealand business schools are Principles of Responsible Management Education (PRME) signatories, committed to the Seven Principles of Responsible Management Education, refreshed in 2023 under UN Global Compact governance. The seven framework principles encompass purpose, values, teaching, research, partnership, practice, and sharing. The practice principle explicitly includes GHG measurement, carbon reduction commitments, and sustainability governance.

Several schools ground their climate commitment in explicit ethical or mission-driven frameworks:

- **ACU's Peter Faber Business School** and **Notre Dame's School of Law and Business** frames environmental responsibility through Pope Francis' Laudato Si' encyclical, positioning climate action as an expression of the university's commitment to ethics, social justice, and global responsibility. Notre Dame engages with the international Catholic Consortium for Ecological Economics and the Laudato Si' Action Platform.
- **Torrens University**, a Certified B Corporation[5], embeds social and environmental impact in its institutional identity: "We want to disrupt traditional models of tertiary education and prove that private enterprise can and should deliver significant public good."
- **Victoria University** emphasises planetary health and 'protecting country' themes across its teaching, with research increasingly embedded in digitally rich, industry-immersed programs.

5 https://www.torrens.edu.au/stories/newsroom/b-corp/torrens-university-kickstarts-2023-with-b-corp-recertification

2.3 Innovation and green growth

Business schools are positioning themselves as hubs for green growth, incubating startups, designing market-based solutions, and building living laboratory platforms where campus operations become sites of applied research and student learning. Recently there has been a focus on the integrity of carbon markets and net zero planning and supporting companies in developing credible net zero target and transition plans aligned with new Australian legislation.

- **La Trobe Business School's LEAP platform** (La Trobe Energy AI Platform) is a flagship living AI lab embedded in the university's Net Zero Program. Developed by staff and students in business analytics, LEAP drives real-time energy optimisation across campuses, supports over 600 students annually, and anchors international research collaborations with Aalto University (Finland) and Luleå University (Sweden).
- **Curtin University** co-established the Western Australian GreenTech Hub — a $40 million partnership with the state government and major energy companies — to fast-track green technologies across renewable energy and low-carbon innovation.
- **Adelaide University's Centre for Sustainable Operations and Resilient Supply Chains (CSORSC)** focuses on decarbonising logistics, procurement, and supply chains, addressing one of the most complex challenges in the net-zero transition.
- **Griffith Business School's Centre for Applied Energy Economics and Policy Research (CAEEPR)** applies economic and market analysis to energy transition, carbon pricing, and decarbonisation strategy in partnership with industry.

2.4 Transformational leadership and systems change

Some business schools position climate not as a subject area but as a core operating logic for the design of all programs and partnerships. This is a paradigm shift in economic thinking, encompassing organisational systems redesign for net zero, value chain transformation in partnership with industry and policy makers, and cross-institutional collaboration to shift sector-wide norms.

There are at least four dimensions to this approach:

1. Economic paradigm shift: addressing climate change is positioned as a core operating logic for the design of all programs and partnerships.
2. Organisational systems redesign: restructuring operational and governance systems and processes for net zero.
3. Transforming industries and markets in partnership: working with industry, policy makers and communities to reorganise value chains, and global systems of production and consumption.
4. Cross-institutional systems change: systematically working with other business schools, universities and other institutions to shift norms to center on positive action on climate change.

Transformational leadership is supported by initiatives such as the Globally Responsible Leadership Initiative (GRLI). The GRLI:

> *holds and facilitates an inclusive and collective call for deep systemic change across three domains: how we live and make a living, how we learn, and how we lead. Being consciously connected to one's own self, to others in meaningful relationships and to the whole is a prerequisite for making that change a reality. This emergent paradigm represents a shift in consciousness from "I" to "We", to "All of Us".*

In education

- **Griffith Business School's** MBA program is ranked #1 most sustainable globally for six years running by Corporate Knights. It is designed around the UN SDGs with courses spanning climate risk management, sustainable finance, and ethical leadership.
- **University of Tasmania's** undergraduate certificate in Climate Accounting equips students directly for the mandatory disclosure environment.

In research

- **Monash Business School**: The Green Lab produces applied research for net-zero transition and adaptation across government and industry.
- **QUT's Faculty of Business and Law** identifies climate change and sustainability as one of three core research strengths, spanning climate law, just transition governance, and food systems transformation.
- **University of Queensland's** Net Zero Observatory develops strategies to accelerate decarbonisation and build public trust in transition processes.

2.5 Networking and partnership building

Australian business schools generate significant collective impact through cross-institutional collaboration among themselves, with industry and government, and with international partners.

Industry engagement

In 2023, ABDC convened an industry reference group including the Investor Group on Climate Change, Australian Sustainable Finance Institute (ASFI), the Climate Leaders Coalition, the Australian Academy of Sciences, and others to inform its climate action roadmap. In 2024, in consultation with peak bodies across agriculture, mining, financial services, and professional accounting the ABDC produced a climate capabilities report identifying core graduate skill gaps: carbon accounting, climate risk analysis, ESG reporting and assurance, scenario modelling, clean energy financing, and circular economy strategy. Groups consulted for this report included the National Farmers Federation, Minerals Council of Australia, Australian Industry Group (AiGroup), Australian Hotels Association, Financial Services Council, Chartered Accountants Australia and New Zealand (CAANZ), Certified Practising Accountant Australia (CPA), Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Climate Leaders Coalition, United Nations Global Compact Australia, and the Climate Action Network Australia.

ABDC–PRME AuNZ Working Group and Community of Practice

A volunteer working group spanning 12 business schools, including, from 2025, the University of Western Australia Business School, developed a freely available cross-institutional Carbon Literacy Training (CLT) program. Over 150 participants completed training, resulting in 84 certified practitioners; the 2025 PRME APAC expansion added 65 participants and 44 certifications, creating a community spanning 30+ business schools and 100+ certified professionals. Six community of practice forums (100+ registrants each) covered curriculum embedding, accreditation, industry-informed research, and legislative change.

A spotlight on cross-business school initiatives: ABDC and PRME AuNZ working group and community of practice

Implemented by volunteers from 12 business schools, the ABDC and PRME AUNZ working group and community of practice are exemplars of cross-institutional collaboration. The group developed an accelerated Carbon Literacy Training program, freely available through ABDC sponsorship. It was informed by the University of Queensland Business School CLT model, supported by international partners including the Carbon Literacy Project UK, and adapted for business educators and professional staff. It includes live facilitation, self-study modules, collaboration and knowledge exchange.

The group also conducted six free and open community of practice forums to show that climate action can be undertaken by all academics and professional staff, not only those with climate and sustainability expertise.

The CLT initiative created a foundation for ongoing collaboration, with over 214 EOIs, 150 participants across multiple cohorts, and 84 certified practitioners. The 2025 UNPRME APAC partnership added 65 participants and 44 certifications, creating a community across 30+ business schools and more than 100 certified carbon literate professionals. Three schools obtained Bronze Carbon Literacy certification: Swinburne School of Business, Law and Entrepreneurship, Curtin Business School, and Deakin Business School.

Delivered through an alliance of Australian business schools and coordinated by Swinburne School of Business, Law and Entrepreneurship, the CLT promotes climate action through personal and professional activities. Participants learn climate science, climate change and the economy, sustainability impacts, pathways to a zero-carbon world, systemic and individual solutions including just transitions, climate change communications, and the role of business schools in taking action. They reflect on their values, expertise and capacity to influence, make a pledge, and engage in peer learning.

Pledges covered curriculum, professional and executive education, research, faculty planning, hiring and accreditations, catering and low carbon procurement, mobility and remote work, waste and workplace decarbonisation, engagement, community and societal impact. Participants can complete a test and pledge to the Manchester-based Carbon Literacy Trust for trainer and educator certification. Business schools can embed capability programs, certify senior leaders, and become Carbon Literate Organisations.

- **Curtin University Faculty of Business and Law** embedded CLT as a core educational offering for students and staff. Since 2023, it has delivered three training rounds, certifying 31 participants, with 17 trained staff and student facilitators. Its students as partners model enables student co-facilitation. Curtin received Bronze Carbon Literate Educator accreditation, produced senior leader pledge videos, embedded pledges into sustainable event guidelines and faculty planning, and included the initiative in its Faculty Strategic Plan 2023–2030.
- **Swinburne University School of Business, Law and Entrepreneurship** has delivered CLT since 2021, the first business school in Victoria to do so. Six rollouts reached 120 participants, with 100 certified carbon literates, pledges saving approximately 100 tonnes of CO_2, 75% climate action readiness, and a student-led LinkedIn community of 86+ carbon literacy advocates .
- **Deakin Business School** has certified 20+ staff since 2022, launched the Sustainability and Development major in their Bachelor of Business, established two research centres the Deakin Sustainable Business Centre and the Centre for Disaster Resilience and Recovery, and achieved Bronze Carbon Literate Organisation status in 2025.
- **University of Wollongong** offers Climate Challenge on OpenLearning, a free, self-paced OpenLearning course covering carbon emissions, the carbon cycle, emissions-driving behaviours and organisational practices, and practical steps to reduce individual and collective carbon footprints, with an optional carbon literacy short course to gain certification from the Carbon Literacy Trust.

The community of practice hosted at least two forums annually, each attracting over 100 registrants from 20 business schools. Topics included climate education, CLT, pledges into action, accreditation reporting, interdisciplinary learning thresholds, legislative changes, strategic frameworks, and industry-informed partnerships for net zero transformations and just transitions. It is a virtual space for sharing best practice and coordinating action. The Working Group was established by the ABDC Climate Action Fellow in 2023–24, then coordinated by Associate Professor Chamila Perera and Dr Abhijeet Singh in 2024–25.

Education and research partnerships

- **University of Sydney Business School** delivers Net Zero Masterclasses for senior executives in partnership with the Net Zero Institute, connecting leaders with cutting-edge research and practical emissions reduction tools.
- **Griffith University's** Becoming Climate Ready is a 10-week online course for local government leaders, converting research and policy guidance into accessible, action-focused learning for councils across Australia.
- **Melbourne Climate Futures (MCF)** Short Course Series, co-led by the Faculty of Business and Economics, connects 180+ researchers with industry and policy stakeholders across 11 research themes, with a PhD Academy supporting the next generation of climate researchers.
- **Monash Business School** partners with Fiji National University through PACT (Pacific Action for Climate Transitions), addressing adaptation, carbon finance readiness, and economic resilience across Pacific Island nations.
- **Academic networks**: disciplinary specific with a focus on climate and sustainability issues, including the Accounting and Finance Association of Australia and New Zealand, Environmental, Social and Governance Special Interest Group (AFAANZ ESG SIG), Australia and New Zealand Academy of Management (ANZAM) Sustainability and Responsible Management Special Interest Group, and the Marketing and United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, Australia and New Zealand Network enable discipline-level knowledge exchange across the sector.

2.6 Regional resilience and place-based solutions

Climate impacts are geographically specific, and several business schools have developed regionally tailored research and education responses.

- **Southern Cross University** applies eco-entrepreneurship to circular economy and sustainable regional development challenges.
- Griffith Asia Institute and its **Green Transition and Development Hub** leads work on climate-resilient growth, green energy, and environmental governance across the Asia-Pacific, supporting 50+ research projects in 2024.
- **University of New England Business School** focuses on rural climate adaptation through the Centre for Agribusiness, including smallholder agriculture focusing on controlled environment horticulture, low-carbon agribusiness, and carbon pricing policy.
- **James Cook University's College of Business, Law and Governance** focusses on sustainability challenges facing the tropics and incorporates Indigenous cultural connections to Country in its sustainability work, including research integrating First Nations perspectives in ecosystem accounting.

3. Implementation mechanisms across business school functions

Section overview

This section describes how climate action is being embedded in practice across four core business school functions: institutional governance and operations, curriculum and education, research, and regional and global engagement.

3.1 Institutional commitment

Formal institutional commitment provides the accountability essential for individual initiatives to achieve scale. Across Australian business schools, this takes several forms.

Mission and strategic integration

Climate action features explicitly in the mission statements and strategic plans of many schools. UTS Business School makes an unambiguous public commitment acknowledging "the human-induced climate crisis is the fundamental challenge at this time". Deakin Business School designates carbon literacy and climate action as strategic goals for 2022–25, framed within a mission of being "a positive change that will benefit business, society and our environment". UNSW, Murdoch University, and the University of Sydney Business School each articulate sustainable value creation as a defining institutional purpose. UTS Business School published a statement acknowledging the climate crisis and supporting rapid emissions reductions.

Carbon neutrality targets

Schools have set specific, time-bound carbon targets: carbon neutrality by 2025 (RMIT University); net zero by 2030 (Monash University); carbon neutral by 2029 (La Trobe University). The University of Tasmania has divested from fossil fuel-exposed investments, joined Race to Zero, and achieved certified carbon neutral status through Climate Active, targeting a 50% gross emissions reduction by 2030 from a 2015 baseline.

Operational decarbonisation

- **Deakin University** is establishing a 7-megawatt solar and battery microgrid at Waurn Ponds supplying approximately 54% of campus electricity, with staff and student learning pathways built into the project.
- **Western Sydney University** achieved Climate Active Carbon Neutral certification, installed EV charging infrastructure, and is developing on-campus microgrid systems as a Race to Zero member.
- **RMIT University** and **Macquarie University** have achieved the Fairtrade University Award, embedding sustainable procurement across operations.

Living Laboratories

- **University of the Sunshine Coast**, located within three UNESCO Biosphere Reserves, uses campus solar, water recycling, and biodiversity assets as direct inputs to business coursework.
- **Western Sydney University's** living labs are multidisciplinary by design and span circular economy, nature-positive systems, smart buildings, and water management.
- **University of Newcastle** partners with the University of Samoa on the Moata'a Living Lab, addressing climate resilience and ecosystem protection in the Pacific.

Faculty and student-led initiatives

Faculty with Carbon Literacy certification have committed pledges across curriculum redesign, low-carbon event management, sustainable catering, remote work transitions, and campus waste reduction. University of Sydney Business School's PRME team actively involves students as ambassadors and co-designers, partnering with the Careers and Employability Office to deliver sustainability-focused programs that build career-ready climate capability.

Faculty across business schools who obtained the Carbon Literacy Certification were surveyed, and the following are examples of the types of individual and collective pledges they committed to undertaking in their respective business schools:

- Food Waste Reduction Initiatives: Engaging students and staff in efforts to reduce food waste on campus, such as implementing food rescue programs and promoting plant-based diets within dining halls and cafes.
- Sustainability Pledges and Awareness Campaigns: Creating awareness campaigns to encourage students and staff to commit to sustainability pledges, such as reducing energy usage, recycling more, and minimising their carbon footprints.
- Transitioning to Hybrid and Virtual Meetings: Shifting university meetings and conferences to virtual or hybrid formats to reduce the carbon footprint associated with travel.
- Creating Campus Climate Action Groups: Establishing university-based climate action networks where students, faculty, and staff can collaborate on sustainability initiatives and share carbon-reduction strategies.
- University Sustainability Tours: Organising campus tours for students to highlight sustainable infrastructure, such as recycling facilities, native gardens, and renewable energy sources like wind turbines and electric vehicle charging stations.
- Sustainable Event Management and Catering Guidelines: Introducing sustainable catering practices across universities, including serving vegetarian and plant-based meals, reducing single-use plastics, and promoting reusable materials during university events.
- Carpooling and Sustainable Transport for Faculty and Staff: To reduce carbon emissions from daily commuting, encourage carpooling, cycling, and public transport among university staff and students.
- Promoting Recycling and Waste Reduction on Campus: Organising student groups to raise awareness of proper recycling practices and establish better university waste management systems. This includes reducing contamination in recycling bins and encouraging students to use available recycling facilities.

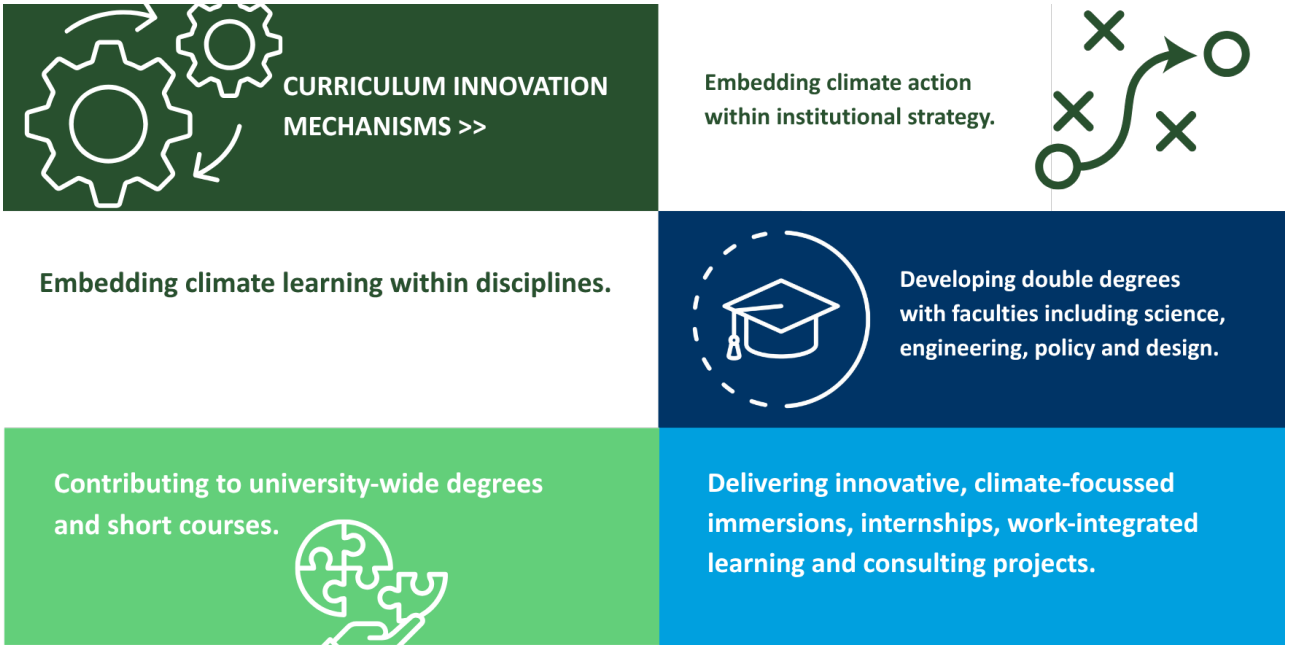
3.2 Curriculum innovation

For students and employers

The programs below produce graduates who can: assess and communicate climate risk; design emissions reduction strategies; interpret mandatory disclosure frameworks; lead transition planning; and apply data analytics to real-world decarbonisation challenges.

Australian business schools are responding to climate change by reshaping the knowledge, skills, mindsets and capabilities developed in graduates. The breadth of offerings spans foundational literacy courses to integrated double degrees, discipline-specific subjects to university-wide programs, and executive masterclasses to student-led consulting challenges. Curriculum innovation is occurring through five main mechanisms:

- Embedding climate action within institutional strategy and across undergraduate, postgraduate, executive education and short courses. Integration varies, with some schools embedding climate content in core subjects, while others offer specialised majors or capstones.
- Embedding climate learning within disciplines such as accounting, finance, governance, strategy, economics and innovation, alongside professional short courses, masterclasses and microcredentials for industry leaders.
- Developing double degrees with faculties including science, engineering, policy and design.
- Contributing to university-wide degrees and short courses.
- Delivering innovative immersions, internships, work-integrated learning and consulting projects focused on real world climate challenges, including partnerships with climate startups and NGOs.



Foundational climate literacy

Business schools provide Carbon Literacy Training for staff, students and partners to build baseline climate capability.

- **University of Queensland Business School** pioneered the Carbon Literacy Training (CLT) program, making materials freely available across the sector as the foundation for the cross-institutional ABDC–PRME AusNZ collaboration.
- **University of Wollongong** offers a free, self-paced, OpenLearning short course called The Climate Challenge. Used by local governments, SMEs, and schools as a training tool, it is the prerequisite for Carbon Literacy, an optional program certified by the Carbon Literacy Trust.
- **University of Tasmania** offers The Climate Shift: Exploring Science, Empowering Action — a free, 20-hour online course providing a comprehensive understanding of climate change and practical tools for action.

Discipline-specific climate change or carbon management subjects

Many schools have developed dedicated subjects embedding climate change within core business disciplines:

- **Monash Business School**: Accounting for Climate Change (ACX5800) and Climate Change and Carbon Management Strategies (BEX5200), covering carbon markets, regulatory frameworks, emissions measurement, and the role of data in climate response.
- **UNSW Business School**: Climate Change and Business Risk Management (RISK5005), a course within the Master of Financial Technology, Master of Risk Management, and Master of Commerce programs covers scenario modelling, portfolio risk, and governance of systemic environmental risk; and Reporting for Climate Change and Sustainability (ACCT3861) on applied mandatory and voluntary disclosure skills.
- **University of Wollongong**: Climate Change and Business Development (BUS 344) strategic and operational implications of climate risk, decarbonisation pathways, and low-carbon innovation.
- **La Trobe Business School** offers dedicated units such as Climate Change Economics and Policy within the business programs, which introduces students to the concept of climate change and its predicted impacts on natural and built environments, national and international policy frameworks, carbon markets, and business implications of mitigation and adaptation.
- **Deakin Business School**: Business and Climate Change unit (MAE233) covers carbon pricing, ESG strategy, environmental cost-benefit analysis, and international climate negotiations.
- **Flinders University**: Policy Analysis for Climate and Environment, where graduates develop "skills for analysing policies aimed at meeting the urgent need to respond to climate change and other challenges to environmental sustainability".
- **Curtin Business School**: optional subjects in the Master of Environment and Climate Emergency, supported by the CUSP Institute, whose academics include IPCC authors and members of the UN Council of Engineers for the Energy Transition.
- **University of Canberra**: Climate Change and Sustainable Business Futures, embedded as a dedicated unit in the Bachelor of Business.

Sustainability-integrated programs, majors, and certificates

The most ambitious curriculum initiatives embed climate and sustainability as organising principles across entire programs, with some schools, such as the Melbourne Faculty of Business and Economics, appointing a fellow for sustainability in the curriculum to steer integration across all disciplines.

- **Griffith Business School's** MBA #1 globally, Corporate Knights, for six consecutive years — integrates sustainability across the program through climate risk management, sustainable finance, and ethical leadership.
- **AGSM at UNSW Business School** offers a MBA (Sustainable and Inclusive Business) to prepare graduates for leadership roles across industries in sustainable and ethical business. The school also offers a Business Sustainability and Social Impact Major (Bachelor of Commerce), and a Global Sustainability and Social Impact Specialisation (Master of Commerce). These interdisciplinary majors develop students' capabilities to critically assess the role of business in addressing sustainability and climate challenges such as biodiversity loss, social inequality, and emissions-intensive growth in a global economy.
- **University of Melbourne's Faculty of Business and Economics** launched a Graduate Certificate in Sustainable Business, to equip managers with skills in sustainable enterprise and climate strategy.
- **Charles Darwin University's** MBA in Sustainable Leadership explicitly trains students in sustainable business practice within the context of Northern Australia and the broader region.
- **University of Tasmania** offers a Graduate Certificate in Sustainable Business (covering ESG, governance, socially responsible investment) and Undergraduate Certificate in Climate Accounting (covering emissions reporting, climate policy, data analysis for the disclosure environment). Postgraduate students can also choose specific units such as Sustainable Finance (BEA704) to study the impact of ESG factors on the financial sector and how to incorporate these factors into financial models and strategies.
- **Deakin Business School** offers a new sustainability and development major in the Bachelor of Business which includes a focus on business decision making incorporating climate and environment within the global economic context. They also introduced a work-integrated learning unit, Business for Social Impact, with internships focused

on social and environmental impact locally and in the region.

- **ACU Peter Faber Business School** introduced content on climate change and sustainable development in various courses and also offers majors in sustainability and a new Bachelor of Social and Environmental Sustainability, which blend climate science, sustainability policy and business strategy.
- **Adelaide University's** Master of Business Administration specialising in Sustainable Futures combines finance, leadership, and ethics with climate science, carbon footprint analysis, and a capstone AICD leadership project.
- **Southern Cross University**: Sustainable Business Management (BUSN3002) covering energy, waste, supply chains, and lifecycle analysis; and Business Practice and Impact (BUSN1008) integrating SDGs across the curriculum. They also integrate sustainability and climate action related specifically to the SDGs through disciplinary subjects such as BUSN1008.
- **Torrens University**: The Graduate Certificate and Master of Economics of Sustainability (co-delivered with Modern Money Lab) offer advanced training in financial systems, ecological economics, and climate policy, with a doctoral pathway.
- **Edith Cowan University**: Graduate Certificate of ESG Leadership prepares students to lead sustainability efforts and advise on environmental and governance practice.

Executive and professional education

As mandatory disclosures and transition planning reshape senior leadership responsibilities, business schools are meeting industry demand with a strong suite of executive programs:

- **UTS Business School**: courses such as Systems Thinking for Climate Risk; Climate Risk and Investment; and Leading Strategic Action on Climate and Sustainability (with Abundium) are designed for senior leaders setting credible net zero goals.
- **AGSM at UNSW Business School**: Climate Risk and Response (UNSW Canberra) is designed for public sector and defense leaders, supporting systems-level thinking on resilience, adaptation, and policy responses to climate threats. Climate Risk: Governance, Strategy, Reporting & Assurance (AGSM) targeted at directors, board members, and C-suite leaders, focusing on fiduciary responsibility, governance frameworks, scenario analysis, and regulatory compliance under climate risk disclosure regimes (e.g., TCFD, ISSB). Climate Risk and Response: A Leadership Imperative (AGSM) equips professionals with the skills to assess organisational climate risk and apply policy insights directly to planning and response.
- **University of Sydney**: Net Zero Sprint equips leaders with carbon accounting, reporting, and reduction strategy tools.
- **University of Queensland**: offers Align with a Net Zero Future, a customisable enterprise program tailored by organisation and sector.
- **Curtin University**: Building Climate-Ready Organisations offers a comprehensive and applied exploration of scope 1, 2, and 3 emissions measurement, reporting, and assurance.
- **ECU Business School**: Climate Literacy Training is a full-day or modular program equipping professionals to lead sustainability efforts.
- **University of Southern Queensland**: Environmental Sustainability in Business microcredential explores sustainable business models and climate-responsive strategy.

Double degrees and university-wide programs

Double degree offerings often are delivered in partnership with science faculties and schools, for example:

- **UTS Business School** in partnership with the Faculty of Science offers a combined Bachelor of Business or Economics with a Bachelor of Sustainability and Environment. The double degree allows students to pair core knowledge in business disciplines or economics with an in-depth understanding of climate change science and how it integrates with economics including environmental externalities, green fiscal policy, and sustainable development goals. These degrees were designed collaboratively between UTS Business School and the Faculty of Science, offering students a rigorous and applied education that spans systems thinking, climate science, and business strategy.
- The **Australian National University's (ANU), College of Business and Economics** offers the Bachelor of Environment and Sustainability / Bachelor of Statistics (BENSU-BSTAT), a unique double degree that combines

environmental science and policy with statistical methods, preparing graduates to be climate-aware, data-capable decision-makers. The BENSU-BSTAT double degree develops a pipeline of graduates trained in quantitative environmental analysis, key for roles in climate policy, finance, risk modelling, and ESG reporting.

- **JCU, College of Business, Law and Governance**: The college contributes to a combined Bachelor of Business and Environmental Science.

University-wide degree offerings: Degrees and short courses

Business schools often contribute to cross-university climate-focused degree programs.

For example, Bond Business School contributes to the Bachelor of Climate Change and Sustainable Action, a whole-of-university degree designed to equip students with the interdisciplinary knowledge and practical skills required to address the global climate emergency.

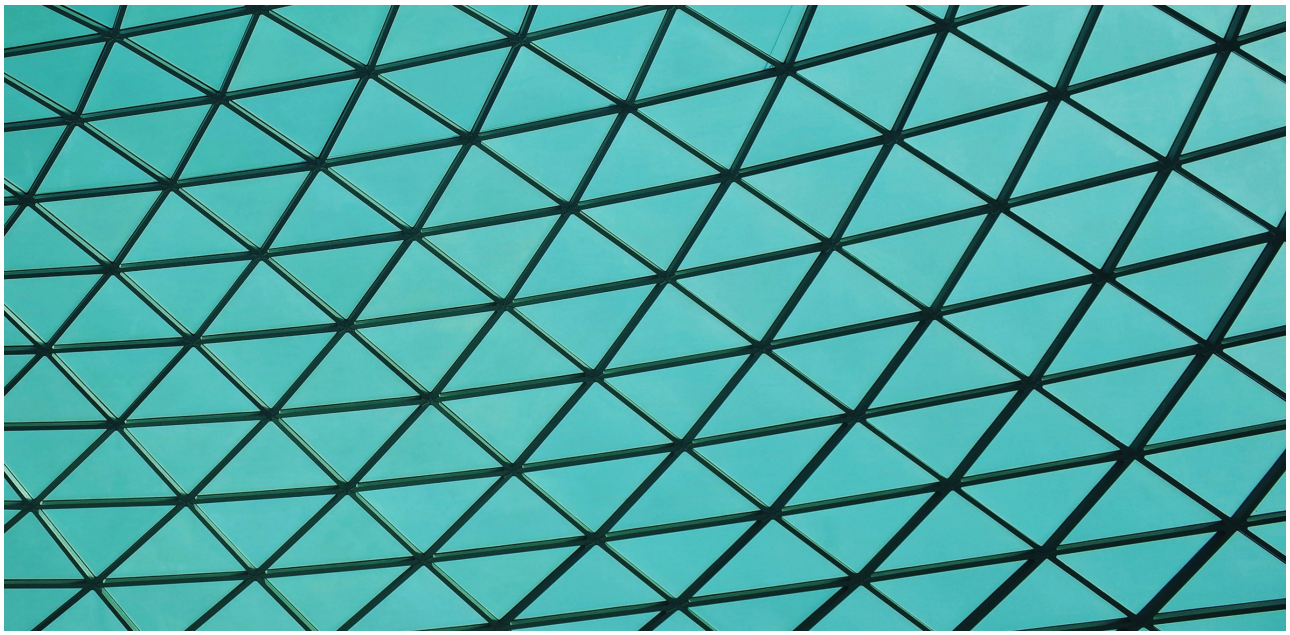
The degree prepares students for careers in sustainability strategy, impact investing, ESG management, and climate policy advisory. Builds capabilities in systems thinking, ethical reasoning, and strategic innovation, all linked to climate resilience and mitigation goals. The program is structured around four pillars:

1. Scientific foundations of climate change;
2. Technological and innovation responses;
3. Social and political drivers and barriers;
4. Business, law, and policy solutions.

The business school contributes expertise in sustainable finance, ethical leadership, economics, and global business strategy, ensuring that students understand how economic systems, corporate governance, and business innovation can support both mitigation and adaptation. Key subject offerings where the business school plays a leading role include Global Strategy and Sustainable Business; Entrepreneurship and Innovation; Social Enterprise and Sustainable Development. Economics and Policy for Sustainability.

Co-curricular and student-led learning

- **Monash Business School's** Climate Career Bootcamp: an intensive, industry-connected immersion equipping students with climate knowledge, networks, and career pathways in the green economy.
- **University of Melbourne's** Melbourne Microfinance Initiative: Australia's largest student-run microfinance organisation, increasingly engaging with green finance and energy transition through international partnerships.
- **University of Sydney's** Engage Asia Challenge: a multi-week, multi-stakeholder competition where undergraduate students co-design sustainability solutions for Asia-Pacific challenges.



3.3 Research

Australian business school research on climate is applied, interdisciplinary, and increasingly policy connected. The strongest initiatives combine expertise across business, science, law, engineering, and data science, with active industry and government partnerships designed to translate knowledge into decision-useful tools.

Major cross-faculty research institutes

- The **UNSW Institute for Climate Risk & Response**: 32 academic staff — 15 from the business school — spanning economics, actuarial science, risk management, marketing, finance, and organisational behaviour. ICRR turns climate models into actionable insights, applies behavioural science to drive climate action, and supports business in climate risk disclosure and assurance.
- **University of Sydney's Net Zero Institute (NZI)**: 180+ researchers, with the business school contributing sustainable finance, ESG disclosure, supply chain strategy, and executive education. Parallel work with the Sydney Environment Institute examines how corporate actors construct transition pathways.
- **ANU Institute for Climate, Energy & Disaster Solutions**: integrated research, teaching, and policy engagement across disciplines, with business school contributions on new business models for sustainability and prosocial behaviour.
- **Griffith University's Climate Action Beacon**: university-wide initiative focused on high-impact knowledge, community resilience, and policy influence. Business school contributions span sustainable finance, carbon accounting, green innovation, and policy advocacy.

Net-zero and climate-focused business school centres

- **University of Queensland's Net Zero Observatory (NZO)** integrates psychology, finance, management, and communication to accelerate industry decarbonisation and build public trust — including developing a Carbon Budget Tracker with Princeton University.
- **UTS's Centre for Climate Risk and Resilience (CCRR)** bridges knowledge and action through research on adaptation, decarbonisation, sustainable finance, climate analytics, and policy impacts. The CCRR currently is developing climate reporting capability guides for ASIC.
- **Monash Business School's Green Lab**: applied research for government and industry on emissions reduction, adaptation, and regional transition. The parallel PACT initiative supports climate governance and finance access across Pacific Island nations.
- **UQ's Business Sustainability Initiative**: interdisciplinary research on decarbonisation, corporate climate adaptation, and resilience, engaging industry and government partners.

Disciplinary research clusters and networks

- **Carbon and Sustainability** (Western Sydney University): researchers are among the top 50 in the field of carbon accounting by way of citations in Business journals. Their paper "Gender Diversity, Board Independence, Environmental Committee and Greenhouse Gas Disclosure" (British Accounting Review, A*) is the most cited (all time) in 2021.
- **AFAANZ ESG Special Interest Group**: accounting and finance academics across Australia and New Zealand collaborating on ESG research and disclosure.
- **ANZAM Sustainability and Responsible Management Special Interest Group**: management academics advancing responsible management practice across disciplines.
- **Marketing and the UN SDGs: ANZ Research & Education**: collaboration at the intersection of marketing and the SDGs across Australian and New Zealand institutions.

Sustainability research centres with climate focus

- **ECU School of Business and Law's Centre for Sustainability and Governance Research (CSGR)** is "committed to… driving innovative solutions for lasting impact…to foster sustainable practices that benefit both people and

the planet." The centre focuses on sustainable development, corporate governance, and AI for sustainability, with research on supply chain emissions and climate disclosure.

- The **Centre for Environmental Governance (CEG)** situated within the Faculty of Business, Government and Law at the University of Canberra: applied policy research on natural resource management and water governance, climate adaptation, disaster recovery and resilience, and the social-environment nexus.
- The **Business Sustainability Initiative**: an interdisciplinary centre, convened by the University of Queensland Business School. Researchers help businesses adapt and transform to accelerate the path to a sustainable future. Industry and government partnerships play a key role, with funded projects that engage stakeholders of all levels, from the public through to small businesses and large enterprises.
- **QUT's Faculty of Business & Law** identifies climate change and sustainability as one of its three core research strengths with associated groups and projects such as the Environmental and Social Governance Research Group (climate law), Energy Transition Centre (sustainable energy systems for net zero transition), Extractive Stakeholder Research Group (social licence), and the Circular Economy Food Project (Internet of Things (IoT) food waste reduction).
- **University of Melbourne's Sustainable Value Creation Institute** (with Melbourne Business School): blended finance roundtables and ESG training at scale, including sustainability training for approximately 300 Bain & Company consultants.
- **Macquarie Business School**: Nature Positive Finance and Business Research Centre; Transforming Energy Markets Research Centre, which seeks to seek to redesign the entire energy system with a focus on energy market design and analytics.
- **Adelaide University**: CSORSC (supply chain decarbonisation); ISER (sustainable finance); Yunus Centre (social innovation); Centre for Markets, Values and Inclusion (climate-proofing accounting standards); C-EDGE (green economy workforce transition).
- **University of Tasmania School of Business and Economics** has a general focus on sustainability and climate issues that are core to Tasmania's economy in its research priorities. Research priorities centred on renewable energy, food and agribusiness, supply chains, and behavioural economics, supported by the Tasmanian Behavioural Lab (tas.be.lab)
- **Griffith Business School**: the Centre for Applied Energy Economics and Policy Research (CAEEPR) is a joint initiative between Griffith Business School and energy-sector partners, focusing on energy market economics, carbon pricing, and decarbonisation strategies; Griffith Asia Institute Green Transition Hub (50+ research projects in 2024 across the Asia-Pacific); the Griffith Institute for Tourism includes a Climate Change Action cluster (carbon modelling and climate risk planning for tourism destinations).
- **Newcastle Business School**: Accounting for Environment and Society research group (climate disclosure and governance) and Sustainable Finance cluster (financial innovation for low-carbon transition).
- **RMIT College of Business and Law** addresses climate change through multiple lenses. One example is the Business and Human Rights Centre (BHRIGHT), which has a theme on climate change and environment, examining the role business plays in critical environmental issues like climate change and biodiversity loss. RMIT business researchers contribute to interdisciplinary projects such as developing nature-based climate solutions.
- The **UNE Business School** contributes to Australia's climate transition through applied research focused on rural resilience, sustainable agribusiness, corporate responsibility, and carbon market policy. Much of this work is channeled through the Centre for Agribusiness, which leads cross-sector research into how agriculture can adapt to environmental change while contributing to low-carbon development.
- **Monash Business School** hosts a multi-dimensional climate research agenda that integrates carbon finance, policy analysis, business strategy, and social science. Initiatives include: the Pacific Action for Climate Transitions (PACT), supporting climate governance and finance access across Pacific Island nations; the Green Lab within the Impact Labs, delivering applied research to help governments and businesses reduce emissions; Climate Change and Business Research Group, provides a hub for coordinated research and community engagement; the Real Carbon Price Index (RCPI), which tracks the implicit cost of carbon priced into Australian equity markets
- **Victoria University**: Centre of Policy Studies (economic impacts of bushfires and the net-zero transition); Institute for Sustainable Industries and Livable Cities; School for the Visitor Economy (tourism and the green economy).

In summary, the key features of business climate-focused research are:

Applied, Place-Based Impact: Initiatives are designed with specific regional, sectoral, or policy goals in mind, such as building climate resilience in Pacific Island nations, or transforming Australia's agricultural insurance landscape.

Policy and Disclosure Influence: Research contributes to shaping climate-related reporting, carbon pricing, ESG standards, and climate risk governance, often in collaboration with national regulators and government departments.

Corporate and Sectoral Collaboration: Many initiatives involve co-designed projects with industry, addressing issues such as decarbonisation in manufacturing, net zero transition planning, or sustainable supply chain redesign.

Interdisciplinary Research and PhD Training: Business schools are hosting or contributing to multi-faculty centres that span economics, law, data science, engineering, science, agriculture, and environmental policy, creating institutional environments where cross-cutting climate research can thrive.

Focus on Capability Building: Research initiatives often include training components for industry, public sector, or student partners, helping scale knowledge and embed climate literacy beyond academia.

3.4 Regional and global industry engagement

Australian business schools exercise globally responsible leadership through research, capability-building, and partnerships that extend well beyond domestic borders — particularly across the Asia-Pacific region.

- **Pacific Action for Climate Transitions (PACT)** — Monash Business School and Fiji National University — focuses on adaptation, carbon finance readiness, and economic resilience across Pacific Island nations, including next-generation climate law reform, nature-based and blue carbon solutions, and the mental health impacts of climate disruption.
- **University of Sydney's Engage Asia Challenge** engages undergraduate students in multi-week, industry-judged challenges to co-design sustainability solutions for Asia-Pacific contexts, building Asia-savvy, climate-capable leaders.
- **JCU's Responsible & Sustainable Transformations** research theme embeds First Nations perspectives in sustainability research, including integrating Indigenous cultural connections to Country into national ecosystem accounting frameworks and valuing ecosystem services in Papua New Guinea.

Business schools also exercise direct policy influence: UTAS academics contributed to Tasmania's Climate Change (State Action) Act; UTS CCRR is developing climate reporting capability guides for ASIC; and UQ's Net Zero Observatory is partnering with the AASB on readiness for climate disclosure.

4. Future directions

Section overview

The 2025 ABDC–PRME AuNZ Community of Practice forum identified six priority themes shaping the frontier of climate action in Australian business education — each one grounded in the current global and Australian context.

The geopolitical and environmental pressures described in Section 1 of this report make the future directions for Australian business schools both more complex and more consequential. A realigning global order, worsening planetary boundary conditions, and an energy transition accelerating unevenly across regions and industries are not background conditions — they are the operating environment in which graduates will work and researchers will publish. The retreat of some major economies from multilateral climate commitments does not diminish the urgency; if anything, it heightens the responsibility of institutions like business schools to maintain scientific rigour, sustain the capability pipeline, and keep the knowledge infrastructure for the transition robust and accessible.

The following priorities, identified at the 2025 ABDC–PRME AuNZ Community of Practice forum, reflect this reality. They are not aspirational additions to an existing curriculum but urgent necessities for preparing graduates and producing knowledge that matters, particularly for Australia's role as a pragmatic leader in the Asia-Pacific energy transition.

4.1 Climate literacy as core business

Climate risk is financial risk. Business schools must treat climate literacy as a core competency embedded within every discipline, not an elective or sustainability niche. Graduates shape decisions in boardrooms, finance functions, supply chains, and public policy. Every graduate should be able to assess climate risk and opportunity, interpret mandatory disclosure requirements, and contribute to credible transition plans.

This means moving climate out of standalone sustainability subjects and into the foundations of finance, accounting, economics, governance, strategy, and innovation. Partnerships with investors, policymakers, and regulators make learning more applied and credible.

4.2 Interdisciplinary research as the standard

The most impactful climate research, on net zero, climate risk, regional transition, and adaptation is interdisciplinary by design. Business schools must build and sustain the institutional conditions for genuine collaboration across faculties: including with science, engineering, law, design, and the humanities.

This is time-intensive and often undervalued in traditional research assessment. The vitality of the centres and institutes described in this report depends on deliberate institutional investment in cross-disciplinary culture and infrastructure.

4.3 Decarbonising supply chains and value systems

Eight global supply chains generate approximately 50% of global emissions. Transport and freight account for 14–18% and that share is growing as other sectors decarbonise. Green transport remains relatively uneconomical to scale in the near term, creating a transition gap that demands innovation, market design, and cross-disciplinary expertise.

Business school graduates need fluency in supply chain redesign, lifecycle analysis, data-driven emissions tracking, and sustainable production systems. The goal is graduates who read emissions data not just for compliance, but as strategic intelligence, to future-proof operations, improve competitiveness, and accelerate transition.

4.4 Digital enablement — with clear eyes on consequences

Big data, AI, blockchain, and digital twins are powerful tools for operationalising net zero, improving emissions tracking, scenario modelling, and governance transparency. Real-time dashboards enable decisive management of carbon footprints across complex organisations.

But the energy consequences of data infrastructure cannot be ignored, particularly when powered by non-renewable sources. Business graduates need both the analytical capability to interpret real-time data and the critical judgment to evaluate the full system consequences of digital solutions.

4.5 Globally responsible leadership

Australia's economic security is bound up with energy and resource systems undergoing the fastest transformation in a generation. Credible transition planning must take seriously the social licence of change, engaging communities whose livelihoods depend on high-emissions industries, and ensuring the pace and design of transition reflects genuine care for regional wellbeing.

Australian business schools have distinctive comparative advantage: deep regional expertise, strong research partnerships in the Asia-Pacific, and established networks for climate finance, adaptation governance, and just transition planning. Programs like PACT, and the ABDC–PRME AuNZ partnership itself, exemplify how cross-institutional collaboration amplifies this advantage.

4.6 The disclosure imperative

Mandatory climate-related financial disclosures are reshaping every business function. As sustainability reporting increasingly shifts to the CFO's office, business schools are partnering with standard setters, regulators, and professional bodies to build the capabilities this demands.

Graduates need literacy in disclosure frameworks and standards (ISSB, AASB S1 and S2), scenario analysis, fiduciary duty under climate risk, and the governance structures that ensure data integrity and prevent greenwashing. The UTS CCRR's partnership with ASIC to develop climate reporting capability guides, and UQ's Net Zero Observatory's collaboration with the AASB, exemplify the kind of regulator-engaged scholarship that directly shapes professional practice.

The initiatives, programs, and partnerships described in this report represent a snapshot of a sector in active, continuous motion. Australian business schools are embedded in ongoing dialogue with industry, government, and communities, and the curriculum, research, and partnerships they build reflect the evolving needs of that dialogue.

As industry needs shift, as environmental and social challenges intensify and change in character, and as the evidence base for effective climate action matures, this agenda will remain dynamic. What this report captures is not a finished picture but a foundation, one that is already being extended, deepened, and revised by the educators, researchers, and partners whose work fills these pages.

Appendix: Research methodology

How this report was compiled

This report provides a high-level, illustrative overview of how ABDC member business schools are embedding climate action across education, research, partnerships, and operations. It is not a comprehensive evaluation of every activity undertaken in every business school, but rather a curated showcase of recent initiatives (2022–25) designed to demonstrate the breadth and depth of responses across the sector.

Primary data sources

Information was drawn from three primary sources:

- BARDsNet Survey (2023): A survey of ABDC member business schools capturing self-reported climate action initiatives across curriculum, research, operations, and partnerships.
- CLT Survey (2024): A survey of participants in the cross-institutional Carbon Literacy Training program, capturing information on individual and school-level pledges, outcomes, and impact.
- ABDC Transformative Climate Action Award Nominations (2022–2024): Nominations submitted by business schools in recognition of significant climate action initiatives, providing detailed case study material.

These primary sources did not capture examples from all 37 ABDC member business schools. A second round of data collection was therefore conducted using AI-assisted secondary research.

AI-assisted secondary research

For each ABDC member business school, a structured prompt was used to conduct a systematic web search. Sources were drawn on in the following priority order:

- Official business school website
- School mission and strategy documents, and PRME Sharing Information on Progress (SIP) reports for signatory schools
- Academic articles and media coverage (secondary pass)

The research was limited to the 2023–25 timeframe. An example of the structured prompt, using Monash Business School as an illustration:

> *"Conduct a general web search for the Monash Business School. Look for specific and detailed information to answer the following question: how and to what extent does Monash Business School describe their research, education, partnerships and other initiatives as related to climate action or climate change? Please write up a summary containing detailed information and specific examples. Use exact quotes and extracted text from the websites and include the source for all evidence. Prioritise official website content and PRME SIP reports. Limit the research timeframe to 2023–2025."*

Manual cross-referencing and verification

All information generated through AI-assisted research was manually cross-referenced against source websites and documents to verify factual accuracy. Hyperlinks to source materials are included throughout the report where available at the date of publication, allowing readers to access primary sources directly.

Thematic analysis

Once school-level summaries were compiled, a thematic analysis was conducted across all summaries to identify common strategic approaches, recurring implementation mechanisms, and sector-wide patterns. This analysis informed the six strategic framework categories used in Section 2 and the implementation mechanisms described in Section 3.

Limitations

Readers should note the following:

- The report is illustrative rather than exhaustive: not every initiative from every school is represented, and the selection reflects what was publicly available and reported during the research period.
- Initiatives described reflect the state of programs as publicly reported in 2023–25; some programs may have evolved, expanded, or concluded since that time.
- AI-assisted research introduces the possibility of omission or framing errors, which manual cross-referencing was designed to mitigate but may not fully eliminate.
- Australian business schools are continuously updating their research and curriculum in partnership with industry; this report should be read as a dynamic snapshot rather than a definitive account.

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