



## Welcome to the March edition of the BCU Business School Newsletter!

In this month's newsletter, we explore the importance of **overcoming obstacles in your business**. As a business owner, it is easy to feel overwhelmed by any problems or hurdles that you meet. While it may seem impossible at times, the right planning and assistance can help you overcome almost anything.

At Birmingham City University, we have plenty of ways to support you during these unprecedented times.

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## Birmingham City Business School reaccredited with the Small Business Charter Award



We are delighted to announce that we have successfully completed our reassessment for the **Small Business Charter Award** and will continue to hold this prestigious accolade for a further 5 years.

Having been assessed through the SBC's virtual assessment process and demonstrated our continued excellent work in **supporting businesses, student entrepreneurship and the local economy**, Birmingham City Business School are proud of this much-valued award.

Here at Birmingham City Business School, we offer **high-quality support to SMEs** and our '[Promoting Sustainable Performance](#)' project has even been awarded "exemplary status" for the work it's done in supporting over one thousand businesses in the West Midlands, Canada and Indonesia. Findings from this project have been used as the basis for practical interventions in support of SMEs and also helped the Business School to develop an executive education programme for SME owners and managers. This initiative is a great example of how business schools can blend research interests and business engagement to support SMEs.

**Anne Kiem OBE**, Executive Director of the Small Business Charter and Chief Executive of the Chartered Association of Business Schools, said:

*"We are delighted that the Birmingham City Business School have again demonstrated the incredibly valuable contributions they make to small businesses and their local economy. The work that they do to help businesses grow and to support students into entrepreneurship has lasting impacts in their regional economy. Having a business school like this on the doorstep of local businesses is fantastic for our recovery, regionally and nationally. Following the announcement that the nationwide **Help to Grow: Management programme** will be delivered through business schools accredited by the Small Business Charter, we are pleased that the Birmingham City Business School will continue to be a part of the SBC."*

**Professor Deborah Lock**, Head of Birmingham City Business School, said:

*"We take pride in Birmingham City Business School playing a pivotal role in the University's vision of being a university for Birmingham. To be awarded the Small Business Charter once again is a fantastic achievement for the School. I am extremely proud of the hard work and commitment of colleagues, and this award is well-deserved recognition of the great work they do in supporting the small businesses of Birmingham and the West Midlands."*

If you would like to find out how we can assist your business then please contact us at

**BCBS Business Services** [bcbsbusiness.services@bcu.ac.uk](mailto:bcbsbusiness.services@bcu.ac.uk)

The Small Business Charter Award provides recognition to business schools

that play an effective role in supporting small businesses, local economies, and student entrepreneurship. 33 UK business schools hold the Small Business Charter Award.

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## Help to Grow: Management



Obstacles can often feel as if they're stopping your business's growth in its tracks. The Help to Grow: Management programme will help you withstand and overcome these concerns.

Join 30,000 senior leaders taking part in a practical management training programme delivered by **Birmingham City University** and other world-class business schools, accredited by the Small Business Charter.

**Help to Grow: Management** will support senior managers of small and medium-sized businesses to **boost their business's performance, resilience, and long-term growth.**

The **12-week programme is 90% funded by the Government** and has been designed to allow participants to complete it alongside full-time work.

Benefits to your business include:

- Enhance your management and strategic capabilities
- Produce a growth plan for your business
- Build resilience to future shocks
- Learn how to innovate in your business
- Adopt digital technologies to boost productivity and operational agility
- Develop your value proposition and reach into growth markets

- Improve employee engagement and responsible business practices

To join **Help to Grow: Management**, your business must:

- Be a Small or Medium-sized Enterprise (SME) based in the United Kingdom
- From any business sector, employing between 5 and 249 people
- Have been operational for at least one year
- You must be a decision-maker or member of senior management
- Not be a charity

[Express Your Interest Here](#)

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## Are you looking for new ideas to take your business forward?

### Business Innovation Workshops

**Wednesdays: 14 April 2021 - 26 May 2021**

**10.00am – 1.00pm**



Coming up with new ideas for your business can be a great way to overcome obstacles, and can lead to the realisation of new products, services and processes.

Sometimes it can be hard to implement this on your own, and this is where our **Business Innovation Workshops** can help to introduce you to new ways of thinking, tools and techniques to try, and a great space to generate and share your ideas with like-minded professionals.

Our business support specialists will help SMEs develop new knowledge, experiment with practical exercises, and drive innovation across three specific topics:

- **Envisioning Growth for Innovation**
- **Strategy and Leadership for Innovation**

- **Marketing for Innovation**

You will gain an understanding of the concepts, tools, and techniques needed to create a culture of innovation and develop a framework to implement in your own company to drive business growth.

During our **7-week online programme**, we will help you to identify, understand, and assess your company's strategic and cultural abilities, and create a business environment of innovation and growth:

- Developing a Strategy for your Business
- The BIG 10 Capabilities of Growth
- Marketing in Turbulent Times and Understanding Customers
- Innovation, Leadership and Culture for Innovation
- Entrepreneurial Process, Competitive Positioning, and Business Modelling
- Scanning and Analysing your Environment
- Understanding and Developing your Value Proposition

The programme comprises 7 topics and participants need to cover all sessions across the workshops to gain the full benefit of the content.

Innovation is crucial to the success of any organisation.

[Register Your Interest Here](#)



SMEs in need of a cash injection to drive innovation and growth could be eligible for **up to £2,500 match-funding** through the Innovation Vouchers scheme.

The programme is only available to those businesses **located within the GBSLEP area**: Birmingham, Solihull, Cannock Chase, East Staffordshire, Lichfield, Tamworth, Bromsgrove, Redditch, and Wyre Forest, through funding from GBSLEP partners and the European Regional Development Fund.

[Find Out More](#)

# Promoting Sustainable Performance



**So, you want to grow your business, but things are holding you back?**

Just as we start to take action towards achieving our goals, life seems to have a knack for throwing obstacles in our way.

This is the stage where people are most likely to give up or compromise on their ambitious plans. Unless you are ready to overcome obstacles, the chances are you are limiting the growth of your company.

At times like these, it is **essential to put a strategy in place to help you to deal with the issues, giving you back a sense of control and allowing you to focus on your end goal, adapt your plans, and keep on track towards that all-important growth stage.**

We can support you through this most challenging phase, and our **Promoting Sustainable Performance** diagnostic tool can help you.

One businesswoman, facing obstacles, and able to benefit from the business diagnostic is **Jane Miller**. A consultant and trainer in childcare and education, with over 18 years of experience, but due to the Covid-19 restrictions, Jane had to assess how her business could progress digitally.

***“During lockdown, I realised my business wasn’t sustainable. I didn’t have a Plan B,” she says. “I’ve had to start elements of my business from scratch by creating fresh online programmes.”***

Our business analysis tools are designed to allow SMEs to gain a snapshot of their business, **help them to overcome obstacles and barriers to growth and to identify new opportunities for development, and ways to increase their sustainable performance.**



Our in-depth analysis and facilitated review are offered by one of our experienced business advisors who will share the results and identify new areas for development and growth. This is followed by **12 hours of free advice and assistance** to create a comprehensive business strategy to help SMEs grow quicker, work more effectively, and thus perform more competitively.

Jane believes that business analysis tools helped provide a clearer idea of what she wanted.

***“The sessions helped me create new ideas,” she reveals. “I now have a clear purpose and vision. Plus, it’s all written down, so I can review it at all times and build on it.”***

Our team are here to guide you through the process to overcome your obstacles.

For more information, please contact [Vivien.Hall@bcu.ac.uk](mailto:Vivien.Hall@bcu.ac.uk)

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## **Business Advice Centre - Can we assist your business in overcoming obstacles through our Student Live Projects?**



Birmingham City University can assist you and your business through our Live Student Projects, where our undergraduate and postgraduate students get the opportunity to **put theory into practice by working on a real-life business challenge provided by businesses like yours**. We will work with you in scoping the project around **marketing, accounting, finance, economics and**

**other industry sectors** to provide a **business solution or growth opportunities**. A fresh set of eyes on an obstacle in your business can give you the insight to solve it.

*"It was an absolute pleasure to work with the students at BCU. They helped my business with two pivotal projects on leadership and marketing. **The students were terrific, hardworking and conscientious.** They provided some **excellent advice and recommendations** and also really brightened up my day whenever I talked to them."*

## JLEC Ltd

Your business could benefit by:

- An **in-depth analysis of commercial insights** that help support your business goals.
- **Free, no-cost** support around high-quality research, data analysis and resolving outcomes carried out by **motivated, young professionals supported by sector- experienced academics**.
- Practice-based methodologies used to facilitate strategic aims and **encourage increased revenue and growth**.

*"The BAC project is the first time the Company has engaged in this kind of collaborative venture outside Zimbabwe. The Directors of the company felt that the project with Birmingham City University Business School represented **an excellent opportunity not only to support student learning but also to develop a relationship with an institution with international reach.***

*We feel that **all key objectives have been achieved** and we would like to pass on our compliments and thanks to the students for the **hard work and diligence** which they have applied to the preparation of their excellent reports."*

## Managing Director - Copperwares Pvt Ltd. Zimbabwe

If you would like further information about our Student live Projects then please just email: [BAC@bcu.ac.uk](mailto:BAC@bcu.ac.uk)

Or visit:

<https://www.bcu.ac.uk/business-school/services-for-business/business-advice-centre-businesses>

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If you would like any further information on any of the items contained in this newsletter, or on how we may be able to assist you and your business, then



please contact us at [bcbsbusiness.services@bcu.ac.uk](mailto:bcbsbusiness.services@bcu.ac.uk) or [visit our website](#).

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