



ESG Ratings Management Course: Rater Methodologies, Questionnaires and Score Improvement



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Introduction:

ESG ratings management course covering rater methodologies, questionnaires and score improvement, held over 5 days for sustainability, investor relations and strategy teams at listed companies and bond issuers, ending with an ESG Ratings Response and Improvement Roadmap for a case company. Issuers often receive divergent scores from different rating agencies, answer long questionnaires under deadline pressure and cannot explain to investors why a score fell. Nominees already gather ESG data or handle investor and rater requests, and work through case files of rating reports, questionnaire extracts and peer scorecards. CoreConcept Training Center delivers this ESG ratings management course.

Course Objectives:

- Explain how ESG risk ratings and ESG performance ratings are built, weighted and scaled, and why scores for the same issuer diverge between agencies
- Map the public disclosures, company-submitted data and controversy sources each rater draws on, and identify gaps in the issuer's own evidence trail
- Prepare evidence-backed responses to corporate sustainability assessment and environmental disclosure questionnaires on climate, water and forests
- Review draft rating reports and data verification requests, and challenge factual errors through each agency's issuer feedback process
- Benchmark the issuer's scores against sector peers to locate the indicators that drive the gap
- Build an ESG ratings response calendar and score-improvement roadmap with owners, evidence and investor messaging

Target Audience:

- Teams responsible for coordinating responses to ESG rating agencies and sustainability questionnaires
 - Teams responsible for investor dialogue on ESG scores, index inclusion and stewardship questions
 - Teams responsible for corporate strategy and sustainability targets that rating outcomes influence
 - Teams responsible for climate, water and environmental performance data submitted to raters
 - Teams responsible for governance policies and controversy handling that raters screen
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Course Outline:

Day 1: ESG Ratings Landscape and Issuer Baseline

- ESG Risk Ratings Versus ESG Performance Ratings Distinctions
- Rating Agency, Index Provider and Data Vendor Roles Mapped
- Investor Uses of ESG Scores in Screening and Stewardship
- Issuer Ratings Inventory Covering Agencies, Scores and Trends
- Current-State Gap Diagnostic Against Latest Rating Reports

Day 2: Rater Methodologies, Weights and Score Divergence

- Industry Materiality Maps and Key Issue Weighting Methods
- Exposure Versus Management Scoring Logic in Risk Ratings
- Controversy Screening Severity Scales and Score Deductions
- Letter Grade, Percentile and Risk Score Scale Conversion
- Score Divergence Analysis Across Agencies for One Issuer

Day 3: Questionnaire Responses and Rater Data Management

- Corporate Sustainability Assessment Questionnaire Structure and Evidence Rules
- Climate, Water and Forests Disclosure Questionnaire Scoring Levels
- Response Owner Matrix and Questionnaire Submission Calendar Build
- Public Document Evidence Library Linking Answers to Sources
- Rater Data Verification Requests and Issuer Portal Updates

Day 4: Rating Review, Challenge and Peer Benchmarking

- Draft Rating Report Review Checklist for Factual Errors
- Issuer Feedback Submissions With Evidence and Correction Requests
- Peer Score Benchmarking Matrix by Indicator and Theme
- Score Driver Analysis Separating Disclosure Gaps From Performance Gaps
- Rating Downgrade Investor Messaging and Questionnaire Fatigue Prioritisation

Day 5: Case Study ESG Ratings Response and Improvement Roadmap

- Case Company Ratings Inventory and Divergence Review
 - Case Questionnaire Answer Drafting With Evidence Library
 - Case Peer Benchmark and Score Driver Prioritisation
 - Case Improvement Actions With Owners and Score Impact
 - ESG Ratings Response and Improvement Roadmap Completion
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Skills You Will Gain:

- ESG Methodology Interpretation
- Score Divergence Analysis
- Questionnaire Evidence Management
- Rating Report Review
- Issuer Feedback Drafting
- Peer Score Benchmarking
- Score Driver Prioritisation
- ESG Investor Messaging

Why Attend This Course:

- Deliver an ESG Ratings Response and Improvement Roadmap for a case company to the sustainability head and the investor relations lead for approval
- Decide which ratings and questionnaires deserve full responses, which need data corrections only and which can be declined
- Avoid score drops caused by missed submission windows, uncorrected rater errors and answers without public evidence
- Equip data owners across functions with the response owner matrix, evidence library and draft-report review checklist

Conclusion:

Back at work, the participant presents the ESG Ratings Response and Improvement Roadmap to the sustainability head, the investor relations lead and the strategy function. They use it to agree which ratings and questionnaires to prioritise, which data owners supply evidence, and which disclosure or performance actions to fund for score improvement. After the next questionnaire cycle and the following round of draft rating reports, the unit should review answers accepted, corrections achieved, movement against peers and whether investor questions on ESG scores have changed.

Frequently Asked Questions FAQ:

What should participants know before the ESG ratings management course?

Participants should already collect ESG data, coordinate questionnaire responses or handle investor ESG queries. No rater platform access is needed; recent rating reports, questionnaire submissions or peer scorecards from their own organisation help with the case work.

How does ESG ratings management differ from sustainability report preparation?

It deals with how external raters score the issuer: methodologies, questionnaires, draft-report review and score improvement. Report preparation courses cover drafting disclosures against reporting standards, while investor relations courses cover the equity story, results and guidance.

Why do ESG ratings management teams see different scores from different agencies?

Agencies choose different key issues, weights, data sources and scales, and some measure unmanaged risk while others measure policies and outcomes. A company can therefore rank well with one rater and poorly with another without an error on either side.

What do participants take back from the ESG ratings management course?

Participants take back an ESG Ratings Response and Improvement Roadmap for a case company, with a ratings inventory, response owner matrix, evidence library, peer benchmark and prioritised improvement actions they can adapt to their own organisation.