



**UNIVERSITY
OF HULL**

**FACULTY OF BUSINESS,
LAW AND POLITICS**

Coursework Template

Module Title	Sustainability Reporting and Communication
Module Code	600562
Coursework Element	Individual Report
Module Leader	Dr. Fernando Correia
Word Count	4000 max
First Sit or Resit?	First sit
Reassessment by resubmission or new assessment?	Resubmission
Submission Date	See Canvas site

Assessment Submission (for student information)

eSubmission is the approved method for your programme of study. You must hand in your assessed Assignment(s), for all modules that you are taking during the 2020/21 Academic Year using the Canvas system. Submission of a printed copy is NOT allowed. You should submit via the **Assignments** menu item on the relevant module Canvas site.

Assignments must be submitted by the date and time stipulated. Deadlines will be strictly adhered to. Students submitting late, and who do not have mitigating circumstances approved by the Mitigating Circumstances Panel, will be subject to penalties for late submission specified by the University. Please note that Saturday and Sunday are treated as “working days” for the purposes of the late submission policy.

Assignment Title:
Sustainability Report (Individual Assignment)

This assignment contributes to 100% of the overall mark for the module and is based on a role-playing project scenario but in collaboration with a real company case study.

The assignment is composed of two separate but complementary documents:

- a) a mock 'sustainability report' sample for the client;
- b) an accompanying discussion paper, where you explain your decisions behind what you presented in your mock report.

The overall wordcount across the two elements should not exceed 4000 words. You are free to decide how you want to split the wordcount across the two documents, providing that both aspects of the work have been covered. However, you **must** indicate in each document its wordcount size in its cover page.

Project Scenario

Your role:

You work for a sustainability consultancy company, providing services in sustainability strategy, benchmarking, reporting and communication. You are part of the company's "Reporting and Communications Division", and you were approached by a prospective client who is scanning suitable companies to help them produce their first sustainability report. To help them select the right company to partner with, the client sent a similar brief to various prospective companies with instructions for the production of a 'mock' or 'sample' section of a report. This aims to help the client assess the quality of your work, reporting advice and insights, your understanding of the company, and overall ability to produce a high quality and effective sustainability report. The client will then use the 'samples' received to determine which company(ies) to shortlist and proceed to the next stage of conversations.

Your client: Young's Seafood Ltd.

Young's is a British producer and distributor of frozen, fresh, and chilled seafood. The company was founded in 1805 and has been in continuous growth since, being today the UK's biggest specialist seafood brand. For more than 50 years the company has been based in Grimsby – one of Europe's oldest fishing ports – where it currently employs around 1700 members of the community, and is the town's largest employer. The company has launched a 'Fish for Life' initiative, where it has committed to responsible sourcing and to doing business "in a responsible, sustainable manner that protects our industry and the environment". Recently the company became part of the wider 'Eight Fifty Food Group' parent company, that also owns other food companies. Until now Young's has never published a sustainability report. However, with increasing expectations from investors and other stakeholders for companies to disclose on Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) criteria, Young's is currently considering producing its first public Sustainability Report.

Please note: the scenario above is an exercise aiming to simulate situations of real-world contexts, in order to help students develop competences that can support achieving the module's learning outcomes. The company mentioned has kindly offered to collaborate with this module for this exercise, but is under no obligation to review, comment or feedback on all students' outputs. Communications between the students and the company should only happen through the Module Leader. The Module Leader has the discretion to decide which of the students' submissions can be shared with the company (if any), depending on the quality of the work submitted and if considered appropriate.

Instructions

You need to produce two separate but complementary documents, as follows:

Document A – Sustainability Report (PDF)

- This is your report 'sample' for the client. The sample is a 'mock' exercise and will contain only a small number of sections when compared to a full sustainability report. However, it should look highly professional both on content and style, to help the client judge what your finished overall output could look like.
- Your sample report should, as a minimum:
 - o Present an example of materiality analysis¹ for the company, providing your assessment of the relative importance of material topics for both the company and (selected) stakeholders. This should inform your selection of topics to report on.
 - o Select up to four material topics to report on in an in-depth way. The information presented should follow GRI's 'Reporting Principles for defining report quality' (GRI-Global Reporting Initiative).
 - o Set clearly how the topics selected, any related performance targets, KPIs or other, align to the most relevant SDGs (UN Sustainable Development Goals).
- Your decisions on *what* and *how* to report on your selected topics should be strongly informed by the latest developments in sustainability reporting best-practice and guidance, as well as existing research and theoretical developments in the field. However, you do not need to use references in this document (leave that to Document B).
- You can be as creative as you like with the presentation layout of your sample report, but the overall content and presentation should be as relevant and professional as possible, taking lessons from best-practice in the field.
- You can create the document in any editing software that you prefer and that can better help you with the visual and creative side of the layout (Word, Powerpoint, Publisher, etc). However, you should save and submit it as a PDF document so as to not lose its formatting.

¹ As defined by GRI: "in sustainability reporting, materiality is the principle that determines which relevant topics are sufficiently important that it is essential to report on them" (GRI 2018, p.10).

Document B – Explanatory Discussion

- This document complements the sample report, but here you will explain to the client the rationale behind your decisions and choices for the contents presented in Document A (your ‘sample’ report).
- You should discuss and reflect on *why* your reporting approach can be considered of high quality and provides value to the company and its stakeholders. Ideally, you should also discuss any limitations of the processes, choices or approaches you employed.
- Your reasoning should be strongly informed by evidence of critical review of practitioner and academic literature. Please note that all sources must be properly cited and referenced using the University’s required Harvard Referencing Style.
- As an output for a client, this document should also follow a professional presentation structure, including:
 - Cover/title page (not subject to wordcount)
 - Table of contents (not subject to wordcount)
 - Main body, including an Introduction and Conclusion sections. You are free to decide on any other headings in between those two sections, to help structure and organize your argumentation.
 - References list (not subject to wordcount).
- As Document B is mainly text-based, you can submit this document in either Word or PDF format.

Learning Outcomes

This assignment assesses the module’s learning outcomes listed below. For a successful completion the assignment should evidence ability to:

LO1	Critically evaluate arguments, assumptions and theoretical concepts to comment and make judgements on current corporate sustainability reporting and communication practice.
LO2	Critically evaluate, select and apply appropriate frameworks, techniques and/or indicators to produce or enhance a sustainability report for a selected organization.
LO3	Communicate and report business sustainability information and ideas to both specialist and non-specialist audiences through a variety of forms.

Supporting Resources

You can find a wide range of supporting resources to help you with your writing, referencing, critical thinking, research searches, etc, in the University's online guides developed by our Skills Team. To access the full set of resources, please check the University's website: <https://www.hull.ac.uk/choose-hull/study-at-hull/library/skills>

Some useful guides of particular relevance to this assignment include:

- Referencing your work: Harvard Hull (this is the referencing style you should use for all assignments at Hull University Business School)

- [Writing academically](#)

- [Critical writing](#)

- [Referencing your work](#). Please remember that in the Business School students are required to use the [Harvard Hull referencing system](#).

Check also the remaining [SkillsGuides](#) for other tailored resources that can be useful for your own needs, as well as the University's [Digital Student](#) resources.

The [module Canvas site](#) and reading materials provided throughout the term will also contain additional useful sources and resources to help you with this assignment.

Remember that a good assignment will:

- have a clear structure and presentation, with a good separation of themes through the appropriate use of headings and sub-headings. Your work should be logically constructed, explained and concluded.
- show evidence of clear and original thinking and diligent research. Students should show evidence of wide reading on the subject matter selected and also in-depth understanding through a critical use of secondary research;
- be no more than 4000 words long - the University will normally not mark beyond the stipulated assignment length. You are free to decide how you want to split the wordcount across documents A and B, but you should indicate in each document its wordcount size. Overall wordcount excludes cover pages(s), table of contents, and list of references, as well as charts, graphs or tables.
- demonstrate good word processing and presentational skills;
- Appendices can be used but only for illustrative or non-essential materials – not for main text, as this will not be considered in marking;
- not contain any evidence of plagiarism or poor academic practice. See our skills team guide on [what is plagiarism](#) and how to avoid it.

Feedback: