

# Sustainability For Business Growth

## Lesson Plan

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### 1. Clarity of Learning Objective

By the end of this lesson sequence, students will be able to:

- Understand and articulate the importance of sustainability as a business growth strategy.
- Conduct sustainability assessments of local businesses using Brownee.io to identify strengths, areas for improvement, and opportunities for integrating sustainable practices.
- Develop strategic recommendations for businesses to enhance their sustainability efforts, demonstrating the principles of environmental, social, and governance (ESG).

### 2. Lesson Sequence / Instructional Strategies

*Note: Have students complete the associated student worksheet as they progress through this lesson*

#### Step 1: Evaluation of Prior Knowledge

Introduction/Classroom Discussion (15 minutes)

To gauge students' existing knowledge, the teacher will begin with a brief discussion centred on the following questions:

Before commencing the main content of the lesson, the teacher will engage students in a brief discussion focused on their understanding of sustainability in the context of business/commerce.

Key questions could include:

- What does sustainability mean.
- Why would a business be interested in Sustainability?
- Can you think of any businesses that talk about being environmentally friendly or having a commitment to be good social citizens?

After the discussion, the teacher can use a quick formative assessment to gauge students' initial comprehension of sustainability concepts and relevant terminology.

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*Optional Resource: Sustainability for Business Quiz, to support classroom discussion, attached in classroom resources pack.*

## **Step 2: Setting the Scene – Sustainability for Business**

Video Presentation and Discussion (20 minutes)

### **Video Presentation**

- Video 1: CCEN Sustainability for Business: Setting the Scene - Guido Toepfer
  - o <https://vimeo.com/1101453269>
- Video 2: ESG 101 - Guido Toepfer
  - o <https://vimeo.com/1101710290>

In these video interviews with Guido Toepfer, Co-Founder and Executive Chairperson of Brownee, students learn about the value of businesses embracing sustainability and the tool his company has created to help small and medium-sized businesses accelerate their assess sustainability in their business.

The introduction and ESG explanation video will set the scene for students to become trainee business sustainability consultants, using the Brownee tools to assess a business and then make recommendations for them to adopt or take action on sustainability initiatives.

*As set out in the student worksheet, the teacher will inform the students that they should take notes on:*

- *Sustainability in the context of business*
- *Why sustainability in business is important*
- *The importance of building trust with customers*
- *How does a business win or grow by building sustainability into their operations.*
- *What is ESG?*

### **Classroom Discussion**

The teacher will lead a guided discussion, asking students:

- What businesses or brands do you know of that talk about their approach to Sustainability with their customers?
- Would you be more inclined to buy products or work for a business that thinks and acts in a Sustainable way?
- How do you think we, as customers, could check that businesses are doing the Sustainability things that they might claim to be doing
- What do you think might be the potential barriers to businesses being sustainable, and how might a business overcome them?
- Do you know of any businesses on the Coast who are good at Sustainability?

## **Step 3: Looking Local – Sustainable Businesses on the Central Coast (40 mins)**

## Video Presentation and Discussion

### Video Presentation

In these videos students are introduced to three Business on the Central Coast who embrace sustainability in their business.

- Video 1: Signarama – From the Coast to the Olympics (5.23 min).
  - o <https://vimeo.com/1097723459/>
- Video 2: TrendPac – Making a BIG statement about Central Coast sustainability internationally. (9.21 min)
  - o <https://vimeo.com/1097698444>
- Video 3: Bioaction – A Day 1 commitment to sustainability (6 mins).
  - o <https://vimeo.com/1101180866>

*As set out in the student worksheet, the teacher will inform the students that they should take notes on:*

- *The type of businesses*
- *How sustainability contributed to business growth*
- *How have their employees reacted*
- *What is their recommendation for other businesses to embrace sustainability*

### Classroom Discussion & Reflections

The teacher will lead a guided discussion, asking students:

- What was the most surprising or impactful thing you learned today about how local businesses are approaching sustainability, and why did it stand out to you?
- Thinking about the businesses you heard from today, what do you think would be the **biggest hurdle for a new business** trying to implement sustainable practices from the start, and what advice might you offer them based on what you've learned?
- Beyond just being "good for the environment," what are some of the tangible benefits (e.g., financial, reputational, operational) that these businesses mentioned they've experienced by embracing sustainability?
- If you were to start your own business tomorrow, what is one sustainable principle or practice you would make central to its operations from day one, and why?
- Based on what you heard, do you believe that embracing sustainability is becoming a necessity or simply a choice for businesses in our local area, and what makes you say that?

## Main Activity: Students Perform a Sustainability Assessment (60-90 minutes)

### Note:

- To complete this activity, students will be required to access the website <https://brownee.io> and enter information.
- If you are having the students complete the optional second half of this activity (Generalisation Activity), where the students will access more indepth information sustainability information in the Brownee platform for the business they are assessing, students will need to register on the website using and validating an email address (refer to Video 1 Teacher Guide\_Brownee: <https://vimeo.com/1101705249>.)
- Computers/laptop with internet access (for student/student groups)

### Introduction:

**Sustainability Consultants:** Students will become Sustainability Consultants, assessing local businesses and providing recommendations on how can activate sustainability practices for their business.

### Step 1: The Assessment Tool – Brownee

Video Presentation & Assessment via website

#### Video Presentation

Students will learn about Brownee, the platform for business assessment.

- Video 2: Introducing the Brownee.io Platform:
  - o <https://vimeo.com/1101425750>

*Note: if the students are not going to register, they must copy and save information from the sustainability assessment before closing the web browser/tabs. If students are registering for the site using an email address, have them do this before closing or their assessment will be lost.*

#### Business Assessment

##### 1. Business Selection:

- a. Each student will either choose a local business or select a fictional business to assess.

*Note: Teacher Resource: Fictional Business Profiles (download from the resources area on the website)*

##### 2. Sustainability Assessment Using Brownee.io:

- a. Students go through the process of navigating Brownee.io.

- b. Student complete sustainability assessments, making notes in the workbook to review findings

*Note: If there are problems registering the business name in Brownee, simply change this to another name, as another school may have used this example (just change the name).*

### 3. Group Discussion:

#### Video Presentation

##### - Business Assessment - Classroom Discussion

- <https://vimeo.com/1101705679>

- a. Encourage students to work in small groups to share findings and discuss assessment results.

Questions to be explored by the group(s).

- What type of business did you assess?
- What were the focus (sustainability) areas recommended to you in Brownee?
- Why do you think areas were chosen for the business?
- What areas will you choose for your business to activate?

### Step 2: Generalisation Activity (30 minutes)

#### 1. Report Development:

**Video presentation** (*use this presentation if students can create account and validate their email address in Brownee*)

##### - Making Your Recommendations

- <https://vimeo.com/1101708303>

- a. Students will use Brownee.io to select 2-3 sustainability recommendations for the business, then create a presentation/report on their findings.
- b. Emphasise the importance of clear communication and visual aids in their final presentations.
- c. The presentation will include:
- i. High-level introduction of business
  - ii. Sustainability recommendation chosen, and why.
  - iii. What impact will the implementation of these practices have on the business?

*Students can create a document (report) or presentation deck - PowerPoint, Canva, Google Slides)*

### **Step 3: Reflection and Presentations (30 minutes)**

#### **1. Presentation of Reports:**

- a. Students will present their findings and recommendations to the class. Allow 2-3 minutes per presentation.
- b. Encourage peer feedback and questions after each presentation.

#### **2. Career Pathways Discussion:**

- a. Lead a reflective discussion on various careers related to sustainable business practices, corporate responsibility, and environmental management.

### **Step 4: Credential**

Have students complete the Central Coast Education Networks online reflection log to be awarded the 'Central Coast Education Networks – Career Ready 2025, digital credential

## **3. Adaptation for More/Less Confident Pupils**

For More Confident Pupils:

- Encourage depth in their analysis by asking them to examine global sustainability trends alongside local practices.
- Challenge them to propose innovative sustainability initiatives based on recent industry advancements.
- Allow them to take the lead in presenting their findings to the class, mentoring their peers during the mapping process.

For Less Confident Pupils:

- Provide scaffolding by offering templates for their reports and assessments.
- Assign pairs or small groups where they can collaborate closely to share ideas and support one another in their analysis.
- Offer additional resources, such as guides on Brownee.io functionalities and simplified case studies to enhance their understanding.

## **4. Assessment Strategies**

Assessment will be multifaceted, including:

#### **1. Formative Assessments:**

- a. Observations during discussions and pair work to assess student engagement and understanding.
- b. Monitoring progress through Brownee.io and providing feedback on their assessments.

## 2. Summative Assessment:

- a. Sustainability report/presentation will serve as the principal summative assessment. The report will be evaluated based on:
  - i. Clarity of analysis and recommendations.
  - ii. Application of sustainability principles.
  - iii. Quality of presentation (including visuals, organisation, and engagement).

*The marking rubric for the Assessment is included in the teacher's resources.*

3. **Peer Feedback:** Implement a structured peer feedback session after presentations to promote reflective learning and critical evaluation skills.

## 5. Incorporation of Technology

- **Brownee.io:** Central to the lesson, this platform will be used for conducting assessments and creating reports. Teachers will provide a mini-tutorial on how to use the platform before students engage independently.
- **Presentation Tools:** Students can utilise cloud-based tools like Google Slides or Canva for their presentations, fostering creativity and collaboration.
- **Explainer Videos:** Use curated videos from industry partners to enhance understanding and provide real-world context to sustainability practices.
- **Virtual Engagement:** Plan for potential guest speaker sessions via video calls, allowing students to interact with professionals in the sustainability field.

## 6. Resources Needed

- Computers/laptop with internet access (for student/student groups)
- Access to Brownee.io
- Projector and screen/smart board for presentations
- Learning sequence video content – watch from online resources, Vimeo or download from Vimeo to a school device.

## 7. Key Vocabulary

- **Sustainability:** Practices that meet current needs without compromising future generations' ability to meet theirs.
- **ESG (Environmental, Social, Governance):** Criteria used to measure the sustainability and societal impact of an investment in a company.
- **Stakeholders:** Individuals or groups that have an interest in a business's performance.

## 8. Disciplinary and Substantive Knowledge

Students should know the following key principles:

- The role of sustainability in modern business practices.
- How ESG principles are applied in assessing a company's market position.
- The various elements of a sustainable business framework.
- The significance of local businesses in the context of global sustainability trends.

Through this lesson, students can develop a robust understanding of how sustainability contributes to business growth while equipping them with practical tools to assess and contribute to sustainable practices within their communities.