

# Research Assignment – Jackie’s Ask

## Overall Grade

Please refer to the *Course Information > Weekly Addendum* on *Learn@Seneca* (Blackboard) for the weight of this assignment. (Late Submission Policy: 5 marks deducted per 24 hours)

## Submission

- Please refer to the *Course Information* section on *Learn@Seneca* (Blackboard) for the due date of this assignment.
- **Do not email your assignment.** Upload your assignment to *Learn@Seneca*.

## Assignment Overview & Questions

This is an **individual** assignment.

Through this research assignment, you will explore the relevant sustainability literature and become familiar with the specific context and sustainability priorities. You will also identify the maturity level of businesses in terms of sustainability and be better prepared for the reality of the market.

## The Scenario

You are working for a **fictional company** from a **sector of your choice** (such as agriculture, manufacturing, services, telecommunications etc.) based in a **country of your choice** (you are encouraged to select a country you are NOT familiar with, e.g. Canada if you are an international student).

Jackie (she/her), the owner and CEO of the company, was recently invited to a conference and heard a very inspiring talk on sustainability and how it was becoming the “new normal” for businesses in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. She would like her company to do more about it, but she is not entirely convinced that there is a business case, and she is also afraid that this could be very difficult.

Jackie remembered that you had some training on sustainability and assigned you to research the matter further. She asked you to prepare a **short research report, video presentation, or infographic** on sustainability and how it relates to the company, so she can decide whether to pursue the matter further.

## The Content

After some thought, you decide that your research should answer the following questions so that Jackie can make an informed decision:

1. **What is sustainability and CSR?**  
*This provides Jackie with the necessary context to follow the rest of your report.*
2. **What are the top three sustainability challenges in your sector/industry? Why?**  
*Identify three major challenges and explain why they are relevant.*
3. **What are the businesses in your sector doing to manage those challenges?**  
*For **each challenge** identified in Q2, describe best practices by individual companies.*

#### 4. What should Jackie do?

Based on the above, describe **three sustainability actions you would recommend** to Jackie for the company to undertake.

#### Clarifications

- **Company:** You should choose a **specific fictional company** from the sector of your choice (e.g. ACME Automobile Manufacturing in the automotive sector) and describe it in your report/infographic/video. Refer to Appendix A1, B1 or C1 below.
- **Audience:** Remember that your audience is Jackie from the scenario. Not the professor. You should explicitly address it to her as if you are working in the company of your choice.
- **Question 3:** When mentioning best practice examples, you should focus on what the **specific companies** do (or say they do). Best practices may include specific actions, initiatives, projects, programs, policies and strategies, or even innovative products, services, and solutions.
- **Use of acronyms:** Remember that Jackie has NO Idea about acronyms we have discussed in class, such as CSR, SDGs, etc. Therefore, you have to explain them the first time you use them (including in the Executive Summary). For example, *Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)*.

### Next Steps and Assignment Structure

- Conduct research to understand how to answer the questions for Jackie.
- **Choose ONE of the following three mediums** to present your research findings to Jackie
  - **Option A: Research Report** (guidelines in [Appendix A](#))
  - **Option B: Infographic** (guidelines in [Appendix B1 and B2](#))
  - **Option C: Video** (guidelines in [Appendix C1 and C2](#))
- Follow the guidelines in the Appendices, according to your choice of medium.
- Refer to the *Sustainability Library Tutorial* menu link at *Learn@Seneca* to find help and appropriate sources for your assignment.

**Important:** It is the contents that count, rather than the length of the report/infographic/video. We strongly recommend you follow the guidelines in the Appendices for each question/section, especially the grading criteria.

**A five (5) mark bonus will be given for using either the infographic or video mediums.**

## Appendix A – Guidelines & Grading Criteria for Research Report



If you choose to submit a research report, please download and use the [Research Assignment Report Template](#) to prepare your report.

The assignment will be assessed based on the [Evaluation Rubric](#) (in *Learn@Seneca*).

1. **Title Page & Introduction:** 10 marks
2. **Description of Sustainability/CSR (Q1):** 20 marks
3. **Main sustainability challenges in your sector and their relevance (Q2):** 20 marks
4. **What the sector is doing to address sustainability (Q3):** 20 marks
5. **Recommendations (Q4):** 20 marks
6. **Report presentation quality** (Proper writing style, references, in-text citations, grammar, structure and format): 10 marks

### Submission

Submit a **PDF version** of your report.

### Important:

- Any **section without in-text citations** will only have a **maximum mark of 50%** for that section.
- If the **entire report does not have ANY in-text citations**, your assignment will **NOT be graded** since this would constitute a possible case of plagiarism, a form of academic integrity violation.

## Appendix B1 – Guidelines for Infographic



1. Review the instructions and guidelines for creating infographics:

- a. [Creating Infographics \(Seneca Sandbox\)](#)
- b. [Infographics \(Digital Skills Hub\)](#)
- c. [Free Images](#)

**Note:** You should not use ready-made CSR/Sustainability infographics from the web. You should develop the infographic on your own.

2. Create an infographic that has the following seven sections:

**a. Title**

The title of your infographic should be informative and creative to draw the reader's attention.

**b. Four sections corresponding to the four research questions above**

You should create an infographic that answers all the above research questions. Make sure you do not just copy-paste text from your notes or your sources and that you provide citations (see below). The infographic should be visually appealing and communicate your findings in an engaging manner.

**c. Appendix**

Include an appendix section that answers the following questions in bullet or similar format:

1. *What does the company do? What are its products and/or services? Who are its customers?*
2. *What business sector is your company in?*
3. *In which country is your company located?*

**d. Sources.** Use the Guidelines [found here](#)

to provide citations to your sources and images **directly below each component (preferable)** and/or **at the end of the infographic**. It is expected that a **minimum of five references** will be required for this kind of assignment.

**Submission**

Submit a **PDF version** of your infographic.

# Research Title

## Research Question 1



(Daniel Zeevi)

## Research Question 2)



(Mabillard)

## Sources (Optional)

1. Daniel Zeevi, "What Makes a Good Infographic?" <https://www.flickr.com/photos/dashburst/8448339735>
2. Mabillard, Amanda. Shakespeare Online, "[www.shakespeare-online.com](http://www.shakespeare-online.com)"

## Appendix B2 – Infographic Grading Criteria



The assignment will be assessed based on the [Evaluation Rubric](#) (in *Learn@Seneca*).

1. **Title:** 5 marks
2. **Description of Sustainability/CSR (Q1):** 10 marks
3. **Main sustainability challenges in your sector and their relevance (Q2):** 25 marks
4. **What the sector is doing to address sustainability (Q3):** 25 marks
5. **Recommendations (Q4):** 20 marks
6. **Appendix:** 5 marks
7. **Overall visual impact, organization/appropriateness, quality of media resources (see Additional Infographic Rubric on next page):** 10 marks

**Potential Deductions:** Improper citations, frequent grammar and spelling mistakes – maximum 10 marks

**Important:**

- Any **section without citations** to your sources and images **directly below it** will only receive a **maximum mark of 50%**.
- If the **entire infographic does not have ANY citations or sources**, your assignment will **NOT be graded** since this would constitute a possible case of plagiarism, a form of academic integrity violation.

**HELP!**

Refer to the Sustainability Library Tutorial menu link at Learn@Seneca to find help and appropriate sources for your assignment.

## Additional Infographic Rubric

Criteria	Exceeds Expectations 80-100%	Meets Expectations 50-79%	Does Not Meet Expectations 0-49%
<b>Organization/ Appropriateness</b>	Information is clear, organized and easy to follow. Clear visual hierarchy of information. Content and tone is very appropriate for the audience and the topic.	Information is mostly clear and easy to follow. Some evidence of a plan for visuals and layout, but more thought is needed. Visual hierarchy is mostly clear. Content and tone is somewhat appropriate for the audience and the topic with some areas for improvement.	The information is challenging to follow. Little to no evidence of a plan for visuals and layout. Visual hierarchy of information is unclear. Content and tone is not appropriate for the audience and the topic.
<b>Quality of Media Resources</b>	Images are clearly visible with little to no quality degradation. Resources are from appropriate websites.	Images are mostly visible and of a fair quality. Resources are mostly from appropriate websites.	Images are poorly selected, are of poor quality and/or from inappropriate websites.
<b>Grammar/ Spelling</b>	No or very few grammatical and/or spelling errors	Some grammatical and/or spelling errors.	Many grammatical and/or spelling errors.
<b>Citation/Credits and Copyright</b>	All sources cited in preferred style. No or very few citation errors. Credits are listed for visuals. Visuals selected are obtained legally and licensed appropriately.	Some sources not cited accurately. Some credits for visuals are missing or missing details. Some sources are not licensed appropriately.	Many sources are not cited accurately. No or few credits given for visuals. Several or all sources not licensed appropriately.

## Appendix C1 – Guidelines for Video Presentation



1. Review the instructions and guidelines for creating videos:
  - a. [Creating Videos \(Seneca Sandbox\)](#)
  - b. [Videos \(Digital Skills Lab\)](#)
  - c. [Free Images](#)

**Note:** You should do the presentation and narration of the video. You should not use animated video software (such as Powtoon).
2. Create a **4-6 minute** video about your research findings. The video should be informative and visually interesting, using [royalty-free images and music](#), live-action, and narration. Film short live-action clips and use royalty-free [stock videos](#) to make your video more interesting. **You can use small amounts of texts sparingly.** Ensure your video is either closed captioned (it will caption automatically if uploaded to a streaming video site, just be sure to edit the captions) or provide a written transcript.
3. The video will include the following information. Please **add title slides** to identify each section:
  - a. **Introduction [30 secs]**

You should introduce yourself, address Jackie and briefly explain the topic of your video.
  - b. **Four sections corresponding to the four research questions above [around one minute per section]**

Make sure you do not just copy-paste text from your notes or your sources and that you provide citations (see below).

### c. **Appendix [30secs]**

Include a final slide at the end of your video that answers the following questions in bullet or similar format:

1. *What does the company do? What are its products and/or services? Who are its customers?*
2. *What business sector is your company in?*
3. *In which country is your company located?*

### 4. **Include Your Sources**

Use the Guidelines [found here](#) to provide citations to your sources and images directly below each section of the video. If it looks too cluttered, provide a *Sources* section at the end. It is expected that a **minimum of five references** will be required for this kind of assignment.

### **Submission**

Upload your video directly to Learn@Seneca. If you encounter a problem:

1. Upload your video to [OneDrive](#) (free for Seneca students)
2. Share the link in your Learn@Seneca submission.
3. **Important:** check the video-sharing settings and make sure the link is working!

**HELP!**  
Refer to the Sustainability Library Tutorial menu link at Learn@Seneca to find help and appropriate sources for your assignment.



## Appendix C2 - Video Grading Criteria



The assignment will be assessed based on the [Evaluation Rubric](#) (in *Learn@Seneca*).

1. **Introduction:** 5 marks
2. **Description of Sustainability/CSR (Q1):** 10 marks
3. **Main sustainability challenges in your sector and their relevance (Q2):** 25 marks
4. **What the sector is doing to address sustainability (Q3):** 25 marks
5. **Recommendations (Q4):** 18 marks
6. **Appendix:** 5 marks
7. **Captions/Transcript Included:** 2 marks
8. **Overall visual impact, transition, sound/music, narration (see Additional Video Rubric):** 10 marks

**Potential Deductions:** Improper or lack of citations, frequent grammar and spelling mistakes – maximum 10 marks

**Important:**

- Any **section without citations** to your sources and images **directly below each slide or scene** will only receive a **maximum mark of 50%**.
- If the **entire video does not have ANY citations or sources**, your assignment will **NOT be graded** since this would constitute a possible case of plagiarism, a form of academic integrity violation.

## Additional Video Rubric

Criteria	Exceeds Expectations 80-100%	Meets Expectations 50-79%	Does Not Meet Expectations 0-49%
<b>Layouts/ Transitions/ Effects</b>	Layouts, transitions and/or effects are used, are not distracting and enhance and support the content.	Layouts, transitions and/or effects are used somewhat and do not distract.	Layouts, transitions and/or effects distract from the content.
<b>Visual Elements: Images, Colours, Text</b>	Many images/graphics are used, are well chosen and reinforce the content. Fonts and colours are used consistently and add to the message/tone of the video. Text on screen is used thoughtfully, is concise and legible. Screencasts, if used, add to the content, are clear and show only necessary content on the screen.	Some images/graphics used. Images/graphics used do not distract from the content. Fonts and colours are not distracting. Some scenes have excessive amounts of text or text may be somewhat difficult to read. Screencasts, if used, do not distract from the content, some unnecessary content (browser bookmarks, taskbar, etc.) shown	No or few images/graphics used. Images/graphics chosen are distracting/inappropriate for the content. Fonts and colours are distracting. Text is excessive, inappropriate and/or very difficult to read. Screencasts, if used, are distracting, unclear and/or show a lot of unnecessary content (browser bookmarks, taskbar, etc.).
<b>Sound: Music, Narration, Other</b>	Narration is clearly audible and well paced. Music, if used, selected adds to the tone and pacing of the video. Music volume is balanced with narration or other sounds.	Narration is fairly clear, some pacing issues. Music, if used, does not distract from the video. Music volume is sometimes overpowering other sounds.	Narration is difficult to hear and/or has many pacing issues. Music, if used, is distracting or inappropriate for the video. Music volume is often overpowering.
<b>File Format, Submission, Captions/ Transcript</b>	Video is submitted in the appropriate file format/through the appropriate platform. Captions and/or a transcript are provided and are accurate.	Video is submitted in the appropriate file format/through the appropriate platform.  Captions and/or transcript are provided with some minor accuracy issues.	Video not submitted in the appropriate file format/through the appropriate platform.  Captions and/or transcript are not provided or have many inaccuracies.
<b>Citation/ Credits and Copyright</b>	All sources cited in preferred style. No or very few citation errors. Credits are listed for visuals/audio including music, images with all required elements. Visuals/audio selected are obtained legally and licensed appropriately.	Some sources not cited accurately. Some credits for visuals or audio are missing or missing details. Some sources not licensed appropriately.	Many sources not cited accurately. No or few credits given for visuals or audio. Several or all sources not licensed appropriately.