



Guide 14: Sustainability and Business Development

Key Definitions

Business sustainability – managing environmental, social and financial demands to ensure that a business can keep running long-term.

Business development – pursuing strategic opportunities to grow a business.

Product development – modifying/creating new products to satisfy a customer want/market niche.

Learn

The Three Pillars of Sustainability

Sustainability is about the **long-term processes and practices** in your business that keep it running continuously. This involves three main areas or ‘pillars’ of sustainability working together in harmony: **Social, Environmental and Financial (Economic)**.

Social Sustainability

Social Sustainability is about meeting your customers’ needs and contributing positively to society, both now and in the future. Discuss the following questions as a team: Will the product/service you are selling be required in the future? How will you make sure your customers continue to keep choosing you over your competitors? How will you make sure you have the right staff to run and grow your business in the future?

Environmental Sustainability

Environmental Sustainability is about making responsible decisions that will reduce your business’ negative impact on the environment. Consider these questions: Will you continue to have access to the raw materials you need to make your product/service in the future? What processes can you set up to reduce your negative impact on the environment? E.g. ‘Every time we use a tree for our paper business, we will plant a new one’.

Financial Sustainability

Financial Sustainability is your ability to make continuous profits over the years, in order to keep the business running. To be financially sustainable, your students will need to think about: **How will you increase your income over time?** For example, will you sell more products or lower your costs? How will you manage these changes?

Business Development and Thinking Forward

Business development is about pursuing strategic opportunities to grow your business, for example through partnerships, a new product line or expanding into a new market. Successful business development will enable you to make a good profit and run a sustainable business.

Think: What do you need to do to ensure your business can run sustainably for at least the next year? For example: **mentor new students** to continue the business, ensure that 25% of **profits are reinvested** in the business, **plan an event** to increase community support, or **revisit and adapt your 4P’s** from your **Marketing & Sales plan**.

Product Development

Product development is the process of designing, creating and marketing new products or services in order to benefit your customers. This involves either **improving an existing product**, or **developing a new product**. Here are some tips for identifying **when you need new products**: (i) You are experiencing **slow or no growth** for an extended time (ii) Your top customers are **buying less than usual** – they may be going to a competitor (iii) You are under increasing **pressure to lower your prices** (iv) **Customers are asking for product changes** you cannot or do not want to make (v) Some of your **competitors are leaving the market**.

Check

Try answering these questions to check what you have learned. If you are not sure of the answers, go over this guide again before you move on.

1. **What is the difference between social, environmental and financial sustainability?**
2. **Name 3 different examples of business development strategies.**
3. **Describe 3 different signs that suggest you may need to improve your product/service or develop a new one.**

Do

Once you have launched your school business, reflect on how it is having a positive impact on the environment and your community and plan how you could continue to run it sustainably next year.

After at least three months of running your school business, complete the following sections on your **Silver Annual Report template**.

Do these activities:

Fill in your Silver Annual Report template: **Done** 

1	Reflect on how your business has a positive impact on the environment and community	Section E: Sustainability & Business Development (Question 7)	
2	Plan how your business can run sustainably next year	Section E: Sustainability & Business Development (Question 8)	

Submitting your Silver Annual Report

Before you submit your Silver Annual Report, make sure you: **answered ALL the sections** of the template in **depth and detail**, double-checked all the **calculations in your Financial Reporting**, and **included photos** in the Appendix, **showing your students taking the lead** in running the business. Then, **SUBMIT your SILVER Annual Report!**

What happens next? In the coming weeks, we will be reviewing all Annual Reports, sending you **certificates** to recognise your achievements and **announcing the top prize winners**.



Well done you have launched and run your own **school business!**
Keep running it and develop it further next year!

