Southampton Business School

University of Southampton

The Practical Aspects of Sustainability Reporting

Facilitated by

8th May 2026

Facilitated by

Professor Ven Tauringana

Southampton Business School

University of Southampton

Session 1



1. The training course is Guidance, not a requirement.
2. Remember, ‘One size does not fit all’.
3. This training is meant to show you a starting point to produce a full sustainability report.
4. Writing a report is an art, not a science.
5. If you are writing the report as a consultant, write as an INSIDER.
6. Read and learn from as many sustainability reports as possible to ‘up your game’.

Southampton Business School

University of Southampton

Preparation: What information will you need

To report in accordance with GRI standards

Paymaster Ltd

Requirement No.	Requirements	Required Information
Requirement 1	Apply reporting principles	Assume these have been complied with
Requirement 2	Report the disclosures in GRI 2: General Disclosures	Required disclosures (2.1 to 2.30) given in the handout
Requirement 3	Determine material topics	**Given as GRI 401- Employment 2016 & GRI 404 - Training and Education 2016**
Requirement 4	Report the disclosures in GRI 3: Material Topics 2021 (3.1, 3.2, 3.3)	**GRI 3: Material Topics 2021 (3.1, 3.2, 3.3) given in the handout**
Requirement 5	Report disclosures from the GRI Topic Standards for each material topic (GRI 401- Employment 2016 & GRI 404- Training and Education 2016)	**GRI 401- Employment 2016 & GRI 404- Training and Education 2016 disclosures given in handout**
Requirement 6	Provide reasons for omissions for disclosure and requirement that the organisation cannot comply with	If any information is missing provide any of the 4 reasons allowed under GRI standards (not applicable, legal prohibitions, confidentiality, information unavailable/incomplete
Requirement 7	Publish GRI Content Index	**GRI Content Index proforma given in handout**
Requirement 8	Provide a statement of use	**Given in handout as part of GRI Content Index**
Requirement 8	Notify GRI	Not going to notify GRI since this is not a live company

Southampton Business School

University of Southampton

Collecting the required information

1. Send a proforma of GRI 2, GRI 3 for SME to fill in (SMEs are very busy)
2. Getting information from the website (if available)
3. Meet to discuss
4. A combination of these

Southampton Business School

University of Southampton

Information Available

Paymaster Limited

GRI 2 disclosures (2.1 to 2.30)
GRI 3 disclosures (3.1, 3.2)

Material Topics
GRI 401: Employment 2016
GRI 3.3. Management of Employment

GRI 404: Training and Education 2016
GRI 3.3 Management of Training and Education

***Assumptions**
Please assume that the information supplied is all that is available, and any information not provided is irrelevant to the company. Please feel free to use any of the 4 reasons for omission allowed to prepare the report 'In accordance with GRI standards'.

Southampton Business School

University of Southampton

CREATING A SUSTAINABILITY REPORTING DOCUMENT
Recommended Steps

1. **Create a Word document**

2. **Write the title of the report on the first page as follows:**

Paymaster Limited
Sustainability Report 2024

3. **Write 'Table of contents' at the start of the second page and leave it blank**

Southampton Business School

University of Southampton

Recommended Steps (Cont)

4. **Write ‘Message from CEO’ on the third page and leave it blank**
5. **Copy and paste all 5 headings of GRI 2 disclosures on the fourth page and use them as subheadings**

The organization and its reporting practices

Activities and workers

Governance

Strategy, policies and practices

Stakeholder engagement

Southampton Business School

University of Southampton

Recommended Steps (Cont)

6. Copy and paste all responses to disclosures 2-1 to 2-5 on the GRI 2 pro forma to your document under the first subheading as follows:

Disclosure 2-1	**Organizational details**	**Company Name: Paymaster Ltd** **Nature of ownership – Limited by shares** **Legal form – Private limited company** **Location of headquarters – Southampton** **Countries of operation – UK**
Disclosure 2-2	Entities included in the organization's sustainability reporting	Do you have any subsidiaries, joint ventures, affiliates and minority interested to be included in this SR? a. No subsidiaries b. No difference c. No
Disclosure 2-3	Reporting period, frequency and contact point	a. 1 January 2024 to 31 December 2024, annually b. 1 January 2024 to 31 December 2024 c. 31st March 2025 d. John Paymaster@paymaster.com
Disclosure 2-4	Restatements of information	Since this is the first ever SR report, restatements are N/A
Disclosure 2-5	External assurance	a. No assurance for the first two years and after that, board to be informed and pass a resolution for management to seek assurance b. (i)- (iii) the report not externally assured

Southampton Business School

University of Southampton

Recommended Steps (Cont)

7. Now write up Section 1 of GRI 2. The following is an example of how you can do this.

The organization and its reporting practices

Paymaster Ltd is a private limited company limited by shares trading from Southampton, UK [2-1]. The company has no other company included in its sustainability reporting. There are no differences between entities in the financial statements and the sustainability report. Paymaster Ltd uses no consolidation approach since it is a single entity[2-2]. This sustainability report covers the period 1 January 2024 to 31st December 2024 and the reporting period is annual.. This is the same period covered by the company's financial statements. The publication date for the sustainability report is 31st March 2025. Our contact person is John Paymaster, and his email address is John.paymaster@paymaster.com [2-3]. There are no restatements since it is our first sustainability report [2-4]. The company's policy is not to seek external assurance of the sustainability report for the first two years. After that, the board of directors must be informed and pass a resolution authorising management to ensure the sustainability report is assured. The report has not been externally assured [2-5].

Please note the references 2-1, 2-2, 2-3.2-4,2-5 refer to GRI disclosures. This is necessary to make it easy to find the location of the information when preparing the GRI content index. After finishing the write-up, you can delete what you cut and pasted from the Paymaster pro forma.

Southampton Business School

Recommended Steps (Cont)

University of Southampton

8. Now, repeat steps 6 and 7 with Sections 2 to 5 of GRI 2.

You have approximately one and a half hours to write up as many sections as possible.

Southampton Business School

University of Southampton

Session 2: GRI 3 Disclosures Write Up



Southampton Business School

University of Southampton

Session 2: GRI 3 Disclosures Write Up (Cont…)

1. Write ‘Our Material Impacts’ on a fresh page after GRI 2 section 5 disclosures write-up

2. Below that, write ‘Process to determine material impacts’

3. Next, type ‘List of material impacts’

Southampton Business School

Writing up GRI 3 disclosures (Cont..)

University of Southampton

4. Next, type 'GRI 401: Employment 2016' and under this subheading, type:

GRI 3-3 Management of material impact
Required disclosures for GRI 401

5. Next, type 'GRI 404: Training and Education 2016 and under this subheading, type:

GRI 3-3 Management of material impact
Required disclosures for GRI 404

Southampton Business School

Writing up GRI 3 disclosures (Cont..)

6. After steps 1-5 your document should look like the following:

Our Material Impacts
Process to determine material impacts

List of Material Impacts

GRI 401: Employment 2016
GRI 3-3 Management of material impact
Required disclosures for GRI 401

GRI 404: Training and Education 2016
GRI 3-3 Management of material impact
Required disclosures for GRI 404

Southampton Business School

University of Southampton

Writing up GRI 3 disclosures (Cont..)

7. Next cut and paste responses from GRI 3.1, 3.2, GRI 3.3, GRI 401 and GRI 404 as follows:

Our Material Impacts
Process to determine material impacts
(Cut and paste GRI 3.1 responses from Paymaster Ltd and paste here)

List of Material Impacts
(Cut and paste GRI 3.2 responses from Paymaster Ltd and paste here)

GRI 401: Employment 2016
GRI 3-3 Management of material impact
(Cut and paste GRI 3.3 responses relating to GRI 401 from Paymaster Ltd and paste here)

Required disclosures for GRI 401
(Cut and paste all required disclosures for GRI 401 responses from Paymaster Ltd and paste here)

GRI 404: Training and Education 2016
GRI 3-3 Management of material impact
(Cut and paste GRI 3.3 responses relating to GRI 404 from Paymaster Ltd and paste here)

Required disclosures for GRI 404
(Cut and paste all required disclosures for GRI 404 responses from Paymaster Ltd and paste here)

After cutting and pasting, please write up and edit so that the sections are readable

Southampton
Business School

University of Southampton

Session 3 -Linking material topics to SDGs and finding suitable pictures



Southampton Business School

University of Southampton

Recommended Steps

1. Open the document '*Linking the SDGs and the GRI Standards*'. It can be accessed here: (Link in your handout also) https://www.globalreporting.org/media/lbvnxb15/mapping-sdgs-gri-update-march.pdf
2. Go through all 17 SDGs listed on the left, starting from page 3, and look at the right side to determine if the GRI standard relating to Paymaster Ltd's material topics is listed. If it is, then take note of those SDGs for inclusion in your report.
3. For example, GRI 401 – Employment 2016 is identified under SDG 3,4, 5, 8
4. Google, cut and paste the four SDGs (3,4,5 &8) pictures under the material topic 'GRI 401- Employment 2016' and discuss how Paymaster Ltd contributes to meeting those SDGs.

Southampton Business School

University of Southampton

Recommended Steps (Cont..)

5. Do the same for GRI 404: Training and Education 2016
6. You also need to find appropriate pictures for your GRI 2 disclosures e.g. for governance, put a board of directors' photo, under 'employees' put employees' pictures, for 'activities', put pictures of products or clients with their permission. For the purpose of today, google and put any appropriate pictures given the line of business of Bates Limited.
7. You have an hour and a half to complete the two tasks.

Southampton
Business School

University of Southampton

Session 4 -CEO Introductory Statement briefing



Southampton Business School

University of Southampton

CEO Introductory Statement Overview

- The CEO/Chairman sustainability report introductory statement is voluntary, but most companies include one
- Seen as a way of highlighting the organisation's sustainability achievements.
- Can also talk about sustainability strategy
- Include a picture of the chairman if possible
- Please remember to put a date.

Southampton Business School

CEO Introductory Statement Task

University of Southampton

In groups of two, read the two Chairman sustainability statements for Interzero and Minor International and compile a list of key themes in those statements. Share your list with the group. The two chairman's statements can be accessed using the following links:

https://sustainability.interzero.de/en/strategy-and-management/chairmans-statement/

https://www.minor.com/en/sustainability/chairmans-message

You have 30 minutes to complete this task.

Southampton Business School

CEO Introductory Statement Themes

University of Southampton

Some common themes

1. Vision
2. Strategy
3. Sustainability achievements of the year
4. Plans
5. Initiatives
6. Commitments (e.g. Net Zero)
7. People
8. Stakeholders
9. Sustainability

Southampton Business School

CEO Introductory Statement write-up

University of Southampton

Task

Now, write the CEO's sustainability statement for Bates Limited.

It should be 1-2 pages or at least 1,000 words long.

Southampton Business School

University of Southampton

Session 5: GRI Content Index



GRI STANDARD / OTHER SOURCE	DISCLOSURE	LOCATION	OMISSION		
			REQUIREMENT(S) OMITTED	REASON	
General disclosures					
GRI 2: General Disclosures 2021	2-1 Organizational details		*A gray cell indicates something t relates to the 'Omission' and 'G colum*		
	2-2 Entities included in the organization's sustainability reporting				
	2-3 Reporting period, frequency and contact point				
	2-4 Restatements of information				
	2-5 External assurance				
	2-6 Activities, value chain and other business relationships				
	- -	- -	- -	- -	

Southampton Business School

University of Southampton

GRI Content Index

- GRI Content Index is a requirement to report ‘In accordance with GRI standards’
- You need to prepare the GRI index to show the GRI standards that have been used
- If there is a sector standard, list all the sector-likely material topics that do not apply to the organisation at the bottom of the GRI content index and explain why they are not material.

Southampton Business School

GRI Content Index (Cont…)

University of Southampton

Task

Prepare a GRI content index for the GRI standards you have used so far in your draft sustainability report.

Southampton Business School

University of Southampton

Session 6:
GRI Standards Compliance
Checks/Corrections/Professional presentation/Sign off/Publication



Southampton Business School

University of Southampton

GRI Standards Compliance checks/Corrections/Professional presentation/Sign off/Publications

Compliance Checks

Compliance checks of your sustainability report draft are necessary at this stage before proceeding to professional presentation, as changes to designs when major changes are necessary can be costly.

The GRI Content Index prepared in the last session should help you with the compliance checks.

Southampton Business School

University of Southampton

GRI Standards Compliance checks/Corrections/Professional presentation/Sign off/Publications (Cont..)

Compliance checks (Cont..)

- Some of the things that need to happen at this stage are as follows:
- Checks to make sure the information is accurate
- Checking that all GRI 2/Sector/Topic disclosures are in the report and are sufficient
- If any information is wrong, get it corrected
- If any information is missing or insufficient, go back to the client or find the missing information
- Check with the person who will sign off to make sure they will be happy to sign off the reports as being ‘in accordance with GRI standards’

Southampton Business School

University of Southampton

GRI Standards Compliance checks/Corrections/Professional presentation/Sign off/Publications (Cont..)

Professional Presentation

- Graphs and bar charts can also make your sustainability report look appealing as part of a professional presentation so consider using them.
- Once satisfied that everything is order, you need to proceed to design your sustainability report so it is presented professionally.
- Being able to use professional publishing software can add value. For example, the cost of designing a sustainability report can range from US$5,000 to US$60,000, depending on the size of the client.
- Some publishing software is easy to use and also not very expensive.

Southampton Business School

University of Southampton

GRI Standards Compliance checks/Corrections/Professional presentation/Sign off/Publications (Cont..)

Professional Presentation (Cont..)

Some of the professional publishing software

	Publisher Name	
1	Adobe Indesign	US$59.99 per month
2	QuarkXpress	US$259 per year
3	Scribus	Free
4	Canva	US$120 per year
5	Serif Affinity Publisher 2	US$54.99 per month
6	Vegas pro. Suite 365	US$119.88

Southampton Business School

University of Southampton

GRI Standards Compliance checks/Corrections/Professional presentation/Sign off/Publications (Cont..)

Professional Presentation

Tasks

1. Perform a compliance check with Section 1 of the GRI 2 disclosures, GRI 3.1 and GRI 3.2 disclosures and advise your next course of action as a consultant.
2. Professionally present your report (e.g. table of contents, attractive pictures on front page and inside, graphs, tables, pie charts, bar charts)
3. Get the report signed off and agree on the publication date

THE END

