
Overview

This unit is important as quality can give your business a competitive edge and can help you to keep and gain more customers. Quality can affect:

1. the performance of your business overall
2. your marketing and sales activities
3. how you develop and produce or provide your products or services
4. how you keep business records
5. how you deal with customers

You might do this if you:

1. have recently reviewed your business or social enterprise
2. have identified poor quality in activities or outputs to which you need to react

This unit involves improving the quality of products or services:

1. making sure you give your customers the level of quality they expect
2. making sure your quality is equal to, or higher than, that offered by your competitors
3. continually monitoring and improving quality

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Improve the quality of products or services

Performance criteria

You must be able to:

- P1 find out what quality your customers expect and if they would like your business to have a quality award
- P2 check what you currently do to measure and improve quality in the operational, technical and management parts of your business and compare it to what your competitors do
- P3 set or review targets for quality for all parts of your business that take account of your customers' expectations
- P4 plan how to deal with faults and complaints and use the information you get to improve products or services
- P5 decide whether to use a quality recognition scheme to improve your business's performance
- P6 take advice from experts when you need it
- P7 check that quality improvements are happening as you wanted
- P8 regularly check progress by sampling products, services and processes and asking for the views of all those involved
- P9 assess the skills and attitudes of any staff to improving quality
- P10 check whether resources are helping to improve quality
- P11 identify any problems in making improvements, and take prompt action to deal with them
- P12 identify new opportunities and threats and change quality plans as necessary
- P13 use the results of monitoring to review the effectiveness of your business

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Improve the quality of products or services

Knowledge and understanding

You need to know and understand:

Quality management

- K1 how quality helps your business aims and targets and how to bring it into your business
- K2 what information from your business is useful when looking at quality (for example, views of staff and customers, information about the products or services you deliver)
- K3 how to explain what quality and quality management are to those people involved (for example, staff, customers, backers and professional advisers)
- K4 how to measure quality (for example, the number of faults in products or complaints about services)
- K5 how you can find out what your customers expect in relation to quality and how they view poor quality
- K6 how you can find out about what your competitors do about quality
- K7 where to look in your business for quality improvements, staff skills and attitudes in day-to-day activities (for example production, service delivery, sales, marketing, customer relations, supplies, maintenance and administration)
- K8 how you should state the detail of quality you expect in products, services and processes
- K9 the schemes for recognising quality that are relevant to your business, the benefits of each and where to find out about them
- K10 how to judge that your products or services meet the level of quality that you have set
- K11 how to sample products, services and processes to carry out quality checks
- K12 what potential problems you could face when you try to improve quality in your business (for example, change in market conditions, resource difficulties, staff or competitor activity)

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Additional Information

Links to other NOS

1. WB1 Check what customers need from your business
2. WB5 Sell your products or services
3. WB11 Decide how you will treat your business customers
4. WB12 Deliver a good service to customers
5. BD4 Carry out a review of your business
6. BD6 Make changes to improve your business
7. BS2 Monitor the quality and use of supplies and equipment in your business

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