CFAM&LCA1
Identify and evaluate opportunities for innovation and improvement

Overview

This standard is about identifying opportunities to develop new products/services or markets or processes or to improve existing products/services, markets or processes. It also covers evaluating potential innovations and improvements against agreed criteria.

This activity is rarely carried out by one person alone. A diverse range of people within the organisation and other key stakeholders – including, for example, customers and suppliers – may need to be engaged both in identifying and evaluating opportunities for innovation and improvement.

This standard is relevant to managers and leaders who are responsible for identifying and evaluating opportunities for innovation and improvement across the organisation or within their particular area of responsibility.

This standard links closely to all the other standards in key area CA *Facilitate innovation and change*.

Performance criteria

You must be able to:

P1 Engage appropriate people within your organisation in identifying and evaluating opportunities for innovation and improvement.

P2 Identify and pursue opportunities to work in collaboration with external experts and other organisations to generate and develop ideas.

P3 Monitor trends and developments in your organisation's operating environment.

P4 Monitor the performance of your organisation's products/ services and processes and benchmark with comparable organisations.

P5 Identify potential new products/services, new markets, new processes and improvements to existing products/services and processes.

P6 Agree with key stakeholders clear criteria for evaluating potential innovations and improvements.

P7 Gather sufficient, valid information to allow potential innovations and improvements to be evaluated.

P8 Evaluate potential innovations and improvements against agreed criteria.

P9 Communicate your evaluation to key stakeholders in ways that help them appreciate the potential value of innovations and improvements.

P10 Communicate your evaluation to those involved in ways that reinforce their commitment to seek opportunities for innovation and improvement.

P11 Take action to protect the intellectual property rights of innovations, where required.

Knowledge and understanding

You need to know and understand:

General knowledge and understanding

K1 How to engage employees and stakeholders in identifying and evaluating opportunities for innovation and improvement.

K2 Monitoring principles, methods, tools and techniques.

K3 Benchmarking principles, methods, tools and techniques.

K4 Change management principles, methods, tools and techniques.

K5 How to develop and gain consensus on criteria for evaluating potential innovations and improvements.

K6 How to gather and validate information.

K7 How to evaluate potential innovations and improvements against criteria.

K8 Innovation principles, methods, tools and techniques.

K9 The principles and methods of effective communication and how to apply them.

K10 How to protect the intellectual property rights.

You need to know and understand:

Industry/sector specific knowledge and understanding

K11 Comparable organisations in your sector.

K12 Current and emerging trends and developments in your sector.

K13 Sources of information in your sector.

You need to know and understand:

Context specific knowledge and understanding

K14 Individuals within your area of work, their roles, responsibilities, competences and potential.

K15 Political, economic, social, technological, legal and environmental factors that affect your organisation.

K16 Your organisation’s operating environment.

K17 External experts and other organisations with which you may collaborate to generate and develop ideas.

K18 Your organisation's business processes.

K19 Your organisation's markets.

K20 Your organisation's products and services.

K21 Your organisation's stakeholders, their interests and expectations.

K22 Change management frameworks and methods used in your organisation.

Behaviours

When performing to this standard, you are likely to demonstrate the following behaviours:

1. Seize opportunities presented by the diversity of people
2. Seek opportunities to improve performance
3. Constructively challenge the status quo and seek better alternatives
4. Encourage, generate and recognise imaginative and innovative solutions
5. Present information clearly, concisely, accurately and in ways that promote understanding
6. Keep people informed of plans and developments in a timely way
7. Support others to make effective use of their abilities
8. Give feedback to others to help them maintain and improve their performance
9. Use cost-effective, time-effective and ethical means to gather, store and retrieve information
10. Check the accuracy and validity of information
11. Communicate clearly the value and benefits of a proposed course of action
12. Anticipate likely future scenarios based on a realistic analysis of trends and developments
13. Identify the range of elements in a situation and how they relate to each other
14. Specify the assumptions made and risks involved in understanding a situation

Skills

When performing to this standard, you are likely to demonstrate the following skills:

- Analysing
- Assessing
- Benchmarking
- Building consensus
- Communicating
- Consulting
- Empowering
- Evaluating
- Forecasting
- Information management
- Innovating
- Involving others
- Learning
- Monitoring
- Networking
- Presenting information
- Providing feedback
- Scenario building
- Thinking creatively
- Valuing and supporting others

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Originating organisation	CFA Business skills @ work
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Relevant occupations	Managers and Senior Officials
Suite	Management & Leadership
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Evidence Requirements for the Unit

To achieve this unit you must provide evidence that you have consistently met all the performance criteria and have the necessary knowledge and understanding and skills to identify and evaluate opportunities for innovation and improvement.

Evidence must be provided:

- from a genuine work situation
- in line with all relevant legislative requirements

Simulation must not be used, except in exceptional circumstances where natural work evidence is unlikely to occur. Agreement must be gained from SQA for the use of any simulation and evidence of this decision retained for External Verification. If simulation is used, it should be used sparingly and should only form a small part of the evidence for the qualification.

Evidence for this unit may include:

- observation
- product evidence eg notes and records of meetings you have led or instigated, relating to the identification and evaluation of innovative products, services and processes in your organisation, notes of discussion with colleagues, criteria you have agreed for evaluating potential innovations and/or improvements, examples of various methods of communication you have used to communicate with people in the organisation and other key stakeholders etc
- personal statements
- witness testimony
- questioning
- professional discussion

Assessing knowledge and understanding

Knowledge and understanding are key components of competent performance. Where knowledge and understanding (and the handling of contingency situations) is not apparent from performance evidence, it must be assessed by other means and be supported by suitable evidence.

SQA's Guide to Assessment is designed to provide support for everyone who assesses for SQA qualifications. It looks at the principles of assessment, and brings together information on assessment in general as well as on best practice in assessment. The Guide to Assessment can be downloaded free from SQA's website www.sqa.org.uk