

**A4                    Contribute to improvements at work (Management Standards)  
(SQA Unit Code- F8JY 04)**

Element A4.1 Improve work activities  
Element A4.2 Recommend improvements to organisational plans

**Overview**

This standard was produced by the Management Charter Initiative and is one of several units covering management competence in the work place.

This standard is about making significant contributions to improving team and organisational performance. It covers making improvements in your own area of responsibility as well as making recommendations for improvements to organisational plans.

This standard is for you if you are a manager with responsibility for

- allocating work to others
- achieving specific results by using resources effectively
- carrying out policy in your defined area of authority
- controlling limited financial budgets, and
- contributing to broader activities such as change programmes and recruitment

This standard contains two elements

*A4.1 Improve work activities*

*A4.2 Recommend improvements to organisational plans*

In order to improve work activities, you need to monitor activities, trends and developments and invite others to come forward with their suggestions for improvements. You need to plan the change, check people's understanding and commitment to the change and monitor the implementation of your plans to ensure the intended improvements are achieved. You also need to ensure that work quality is maintained to an acceptable standard during the period of change.

In order to recommend improvements to organisational plans, you need to support your recommendations with reliable information and check that these recommendations support your organisation's mission and objectives. You then need to present these recommendations to relevant people and discuss them positively and constructively.

**What you must be able to do:**

- 1) give opportunities to **relevant people** to make recommendations for improvements to work activities
- 2) **monitor** activities at intervals most likely to identify potential improvements
- 3) gather information on **trends and developments** which is relevant, reliable and sufficient to identify potential improvements
- 4) present your recommendations for improvements in activities to **relevant people** at an appropriate time
- 5) present your plans for implementing change to **relevant people** at an appropriate time, level and place
- 6) confirm **relevant people's** understanding of the implications of the change and their commitment to their role in it
- 7) carry out **monitoring** which is sufficient to ensure the intended improvements are achieved
- 8) report the results of the change to **relevant people** in the agreed format and timescale
- 9) make sure the quality of the work for which you are responsible continues to meet the agreed standards throughout the period of change

**This standard covers:****A. relevant people:**

- (i) higher-level managers or sponsors
- (ii) colleagues working at the same level as yourself
- (iii) specialists

**B. monitoring methods:**

- (i) direct observation
- (ii) considering oral information
- (iii) considering written information

**C. trends and developments:**

- (i) inside your organisation
- (ii) outside your organisation

**You must know and understand:**

*Change management*

- (a) how to recommend improvements and how to make and argue an effective case for change
- (b) how to plan for the management of change in a way which minimises adverse effects
- (c) how to identify the broader implications of change for the work of the organisation and its component parts
- (d) the importance of monitoring change and its effects, and how to undertake such monitoring

*Communication*

- (e) how to communicate effectively with colleagues, line managers and specialists

*Continuous Improvement*

- (f) the importance of continuous improvement in activities and plans for organisational effectiveness and your role and responsibility in relation to this
- (g) how to assess current work activities and identify areas for improvement

*Involvement and motivation*

- (h) the importance of empowering other staff to make recommendations and methods to encourage them to do so
- (i) how to motivate others to be committed to change

*Organisational context*

- (j) the internal and external trends which have a bearing on the future improvements

**Element A4.2      Recommend improvements to organisational plans  
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**What you must be able to do:**

- 1 base your **recommendations** for improvements to organisational plans on sufficient valid and reliable information
- 2 make sure your **recommendations** support the achievement of the organisation's mission, aims and objectives
- 3 accurately identify and record the implications of the recommended changes
- 4 clearly present your **recommendations** to the people in the organisation most likely to act on them
- 5 handle **discussions** relating to **recommendations** positively and constructively

**This standard covers:**

A. make the following types of **recommendations**:

- (i) spoken
- (ii) written

B. **discussions**:

- (i) one-to-one
- (ii) group meetings

**You must know and understand:**

*Involvement and motivation*

- (a) how to construct and argue an effective case for change, both in writing and orally

*Organisational context*

- (b) how to proceed if recommendations are at variance with the mission, aims and objectives of your organisation
- (c) your organisation's mission, aims and objectives
- (d) people in your organisation who are likely to act on recommendations

*Planning*

- (e) the principles of organisational planning and the models which may be used
- (f) the types of information which are required to make reliable recommendations to plans and the planning process
- (g) how to plan within the framework of the organisation's mission, aims and objectives
- (h) how to identify the likely implications of alterations to plans for the organisation

*Working relationships*

- (i) how to handle discussions, actual and potential disagreements in a positive and constructive manner.