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### Overview

This unit is about collecting and analysing information, and then using it to make important decisions. This unit could cover a very wide range of activities that you could be involved with. Examples would be: carrying out customer surveys to decide on whether to alter certain services, analysing the use of facilities to decide whether more effective use could be made of them, analysing jobs to decide what types of skills, knowledge and experience your staff should have, looking at journals and researching the local market to decide whether to introduce new services, collecting and analysing financial information to develop a business plan etc.

The unit is divided into three parts. The first part describes the four things you have to do. These are:

1. obtain information for decision making
2. record and store information for decision making
3. analyse information to support decision making
4. advise and inform others

The second part describes the knowledge and understanding you must have.

The third part gives some examples and explanations of some words we use in this unit.

The unit is for people who have some responsibility for managing information as part of your work role.

### Performance criteria

*You must be able to:*

#### **Obtain information for decision making**

- P1 identify the information you need to make the required decisions
- P2 use sources of information which are reliable and sufficiently wide-ranging to meet current and likely future information requirements
- P3 use methods of obtaining information that are reliable, effective and make efficient use of resources
- P4 use methods of obtaining information that are consistent with organisational values, policies and legal requirements
- P5 obtain information that is accurate, relevant and sufficient to support decision making
- P6 take prompt and effective action to deal with information that is inadequate, contradictory or ambiguous

*You must be able to:*

#### **Record and store information**

- P7 use systems and procedures for recording and storing information that are suitable for the purpose and make efficient use of resources
- P8 record and store information in a way that complies with organisational policies and legal
- P9 record and store information so that it is readily accessible in the required format to authorised people only
- P10 provide opportunities for team members to make suggestions for improvements to systems and procedures
- P11 make recommendations for improvements to systems and procedures to the relevant people
- P12 take into account organisational constraints

*You must be able to:*

#### **Analyse information to support decision making**

- P13 identify objectives for the analysis that are clear and consistent with the decisions that need to be made
- P14 select information that is accurate, relevant to the objectives of the analysis, and sufficient to arrive at a reliable decision
- P15 use analysis methods that are suitable to achieve the objectives you identified
- P16 analyse the information so that you correctly identify the patterns and trends
- P17 support the conclusions you draw from the analysis with reasoned argument and appropriate evidence
- P18 differentiate clearly between fact and opinion when presenting the results of the analysis
- P19 keep records of the analysis that are sufficient to show the assumptions and decisions made at each stage

*You must be able to:*

#### **Advise and inform others**

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- P20 research the advice and information needs of your recipients in a way which is appropriate and sufficient and takes account of organisational constraints
- P21 provide advice and information at a time and place and in a form and manner appropriate to the needs of your recipients
- P22 provide information that is accurate, current, relevant and sufficient;
- P23 provide advice that is consistent with organisational policy, procedures and constraints
- P24 support advice with reasoned argument and appropriate evidence
- P25 confirm their recipients' understanding of the advice and information you have given
- P26 maintain confidentiality according to organisational and legal requirements;
- P27 use feedback from recipients to improve future provision of advice and information

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#### Knowledge and understanding

*You need to know and understand:*

- K1 how the playwork principles underpinning your sector specifically relate to this unit

#### **Analytical techniques**

- K2 how to judge the accuracy, relevance and sufficiency of information required to support decision making in different contexts
- K3 how to identify information that may be contradictory, ambiguous or inadequate and how to deal with these problems
- K4 different approaches to, and methods of, analysing information and how to select methods appropriate to decisions which the manager has to make
- K5 how to analyse information to identify patterns and trends
- K6 how to draw conclusions on the basis of analysing information
- K7 the difference between fact and opinion, how to identify these and present them accordingly

#### **Communication**

- K8 different formats for presenting qualitative and quantitative information which may be required
- K9 how to select a format appropriate to different purposes and recipients of information
- K10 how to develop and present a case based on the outcomes of an analysis
- K11 how to communicate advice and information effectively both orally and in writing
- K12 how to develop and present a reasoned case when providing advice to others
- K13 why it is important to confirm the recipient's understanding of information and advice provided and methods which may be used to ensure this

#### **Continuous improvement**

- K14 how to assess the effectiveness of current methods of collecting and storing information and what procedures to follow in order to make recommendations on improvements

#### **Information handling**

- K15 the importance of information management to the team and organisational effectiveness and your role and responsibilities in relation to this
- K16 the types of qualitative and quantitative information that are essential to your role and responsibilities and how to identify these
- K17 the range of sources of information that are available to you and how to

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- ensure these are capable of meeting current and likely future information requirements
- K18 how to identify new sources of information that may be required
- K19 the range of methods of gathering and checking the validity of such information and their advantages and disadvantages
- K20 different methods of recording and storing information and their advantages and disadvantages
- K21 how to ensure that information is organised in a way that makes it readily accessible
- K22 principles of confidentiality - what information should be made available to which people
- K23 the importance of the effective analysis of information and your role and responsibility in relation to this
- K24 types of information, both qualitative and quantitative, which you need to be able to analyse
- K25 how to select information relevant to the decision to be made and ensure such information is accurate and relevant
- K26 the importance of record keeping to the analysis of information and how such records should be kept and used.
- K27 why it is essential to check the validity of advice and information provided to others
- K28 how to ensure accuracy, currency, sufficiency and relevance
- K29 the principles of confidentiality when handling information and advice - what types of information and advice may be provided to what people

#### **Involvement and motivation**

- K30 why it is important to provide opportunities for team members to make recommendations on improvements to systems and procedures
- K31 how to encourage and enable such recommendations

#### **Organisational context**

- K32 organisational policies and legal requirements which have a bearing on the recording and storage of information and how to interpret these
- K33 organisational policies, procedures and resource constraints which may influence advice given to others

#### **Providing support**

- K34 why it is important to provide advice and information and your role and responsibilities
- K35 the types of advice and information which people may require
- K36 how to identify information needs
- K37 situations in which it is appropriate to act on one's own initiative in giving information and advice
- K38 why it is important to seek feedback on the quality and relevance of the advice and information you provide

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### Additional Information

#### Scope/range related to performance criteria

1. **information**
  - 1.1. quantitative
  - 1.2. qualitative
  
2. **sources of information**
  - 2.1. people within your organisation
  - 2.2. people outside your organisation
  - 2.3. internal information systems
  - 2.4. published media
  - 2.5. specially commissioned research
  
3. **methods**
  - 3.1. listening and watching
  - 3.2. reading
  - 3.3. spoken questioning
  - 3.4. written questioning
  - 3.5. formal research conducted personally
  - 3.6. formal research conducted by third parties
  
4. **systems and procedures**
  - 4.1. organisation wide
  - 4.2. specific to the candidate and their team
  
5. **organisational constraints**
  - 5.1. organisational objectives
  - 5.2. organisational policies
  - 5.3. resources
  
6. **analysis**
  - 6.1. formal and planned
  - 6.2. informal and ad hoc
  
7. **decisions** concerning
  - 7.1. day to day operations
  - 7.2. changes in organisational policy that affect operations
  
8. **advice and information**
  - 8.1. in response to a request
  - 8.2. on your own initiative
  
9. **recipients**
  - 9.1. team members
  - 9.2. colleagues working at the same level

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- 9.3. higher level managers and sponsors
- 9.4. people outside your organisation

#### 10. forms

- 10.1. spoken
- 10.2. written

## Glossary

### **Qualitative**

Something that is not summarised in numerical form, such as minutes from meetings and general notes from observations. Qualitative data normally describe people's knowledge, attitudes or behaviours and is often more subjective

### **Quantitative**

Something measured or measurable by, or concerned with, quantity and expressed in numbers or quantities

### **Resources**

For example, finance, advice and information, physical resources (such as equipment and materials, buildings etc), training and development



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