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**Overview**

This standard is about researching the background and experiences of the client in order to effectively manage the initial interaction with the individual or business. It requires you to identify appropriate sources of information, make sense of the collected information and use this meaning in ways which assists you in developing a relationship with the client.

For the purposes of this standard, business support refers to assistance which is received from individuals or organisations outside of the business, related to a specific business problem or opportunity and/or development of the business. Enterprise support refers to assistance which is received by individuals considering starting their own business. A 'business' can mean an independent entity such as a private sector business, a social enterprise, a charitable or voluntary organisation, or a significant operating unit, with a relative degree of autonomy, within a larger organisation. It can also refer to a formal partnership where two or more businesses are working together towards common goals.

This standard is recommended for individuals and organisations providing assistance to support the development of individuals considering starting their own business and existing businesses, either on a voluntary or commercial basis.

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**Performance  
criteria**

- You must be able to:
- P1 identify the type and range of information required about the client
  - P2 identify and evaluate the sources of information for their contribution to researching the background of the client
  - P3 approach sources of information with a clear explanation of the purpose of the research
  - P4 ascertain the procedures that are required to access the information
  - P5 specify the risks associated with the sources of information identified from the research
  - P6 identify any problems with the collection of necessary information and take appropriate action to deal with them
  - P7 access the sources of information according to agreed procedures
  - P8 collect information in line with the requirements of the research
  - P9 apply information methods correctly and consistently
  - P10 ensure the methods for making sense of the information are appropriate to the information and the aims of the research
  - P11 analyse information accurately according to the appropriate methodology
  - P12 make sense of the outcomes and develop suitable conclusions
  - P13 identify any unexpected surprises and suggest reasons for them
  - P14 consider creative ways of collecting information to address any gaps in what you need to know about the client
  - P15 present the outcomes of the research in a manner appropriate to its aims and objectives
  - P16 acknowledge sources of information used in undertaking the research
  - P17 review the progress and outcomes of the research with the appropriate people
  - P18 protect confidential information in accordance with agreements and procedures
  - P19 evaluate the success of the research against the identified objectives
  - P20 record the collected information and outcomes of the research in the appropriate systems

**Knowledge and understanding**

**Identify sources and availability of information**

You need to know and understand:

- K1 why it is important to be clear about the research being undertaken
- K2 what types of information are required
- K3 what are the potential sources of information
- K4 how the sources of information have co-operated in the past
- K5 what are the access procedures for different sources of information
- K6 the rules of confidentiality relating to different sources of information
- K7 what are the different risks that should be considered
- K8 what problems could occur and the actions required to address these problems

**Collect information to achieve research objectives**

You need to know and understand:

- K9 what are the agreed procedures for accessing information
- K10 which information collection procedures are required
- K11 why it is important to apply collection methods correctly and consistently
- K12 what types of problem could occur and what actions are required to address them
- K13 what are the systems for recording information and the procedures relating to the use of these systems

**Make sense of the information collected from the research**

You need to know and understand:

- K14 how to use different methods to make sense of the outcomes from the research
- K15 the advantages and disadvantages of different methods for making sense of the outcomes from the research
- K16 the way in which less traditional approaches can be used to make sense of the outcomes from research
- K17 why it is important to provide a rationale for the results from research
- K18 what types of result are expected and the possible reasons for any unexpected outcomes
- K19 who should be involved in reviewing the outcomes from the research

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**Use the outcomes of the research**

You need to know  
and understand:

- K20 how to present the outcomes from the research
- K21 who should be involved in using the outcomes from the research
- K22 what types of information should be protected
- K23 what types of information may be confidential
- K24 what criteria can be used to for evaluating the success of the research
- K25 what types of system can be used to record the outcomes from the research  
and the procedures that relate to the use of these systems

**Comply with guidance**

You need to know  
and understand:

- K26 the appropriate guidance and codes of conduct relating to undertaking  
research and using the outcomes
- K27 why it is important to comply with appropriate guidance and codes of conduct
- K28 what are the consequences of not complying with appropriate guidance and  
codes of conduct
- K29 how to obtain information on appropriate guidance and codes of conduct

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**Additional information**

**Behaviours:**

- 1 confidence about your own knowledge and ability
- 2 strive to add value by achieving results in the best way
- 3 develop yourself to improve outcomes
- 4 remain positive and maintain effort despite setbacks, changes or ambiguities
- 5 achieve results through the guided actions of others
- 6 recognise when plans need to be adapted and act accordingly
- 7 respect the client's need for information, commitment and confidentiality
- 8 seek to understand the needs and motivations of individuals considering starting their own business and/or existing businesses
- 9 comply with, and ensure that others comply with, legal requirements, industry regulations, organisational policies and professional codes
- 10 invite a two-way exchange of information and feedback with clients and others
- 11 show integrity, fairness and consistency in decision making

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