

Introduction

Summary

This unit is about establishing, maintaining and improving quality assurance systems. These systems can either be 'in-house' – devised by the organisation itself, or externally validated, such as QUEST or ISO 9000.

The unit is divided into two parts.

The first part (pages 2-4) describes the three things you have to do. These are:

A56.1 Establish quality assurance systems

A56.2 Maintain quality assurance systems

A56.3 Recommend improvements to quality assurance systems

The second part (pages 5-6) describes the knowledge and understanding you must have.

Target Group

This unit is for people working in management or development at middle manager level.

A56.1

Establish quality assurance systems

The National Standard

What you must do

To meet the national standard, you must:

- 1 make sure your analysis of processes is sufficient to determine appropriate **quality assurance systems** and measurements
- 2 present your recommendations and rationale for establishing **quality assurance systems** to **relevant people** with the appropriate level of detail and degree of urgency
- 3 agree implementation plans, taking account of feedback from **relevant people**
- 4 provide opportunities for those involved in **quality assurance systems** to contribute to their development
- 5 set up **systems** that clearly specify the processes, procedures and measurements required to ensure products and services are within the limits of acceptable quality
- 6 set up **quality assurance systems** that are capable of making sure that agreed customer requirements are consistently met
- 7 **communicate** the establishment or modification of **quality assurance systems** in a way which is clear, detailed and allows adequate time for preparation
- 8 **communicate** the results and benefits of assuring quality at times most likely to gain the commitment of **relevant people** to the **systems**

What you must cover

This element covers the following:

- a quality assurance systems**
 - 1 externally validated
 - 2 devised and validated in-house
- b relevant people**
 - 1 team members
 - 2 colleagues working at the same level as you
 - 3 higher-level managers or sponsors
 - 4 specialists
- c ways to communicate**
 - 1 spoken
 - 2 written
 - 3 using images

A56.2

Maintain quality assurance systems

The National Standard

What you must do

To meet the national standard, you must:

- 1 present information on **quality assurance systems**, procedures and responsibilities to **relevant people** at a time and place and in a format appropriate to their needs
- 2 confirm **relevant people's** understanding of, and commitment to, **quality assurance systems** at appropriate intervals
- 3 collect and **evaluate** information, and report the results at required intervals, using agreed methods and against specified performance measures
- 4 take prompt and effective action to clarify inadequate, contradictory or ambiguous information
- 5 actively encourage **relevant people** freely to report actual and potential variations in quality
- 6 take timely and effective action, consistent with **quality assurance** procedures, to rectify unacceptable variations in products and services

What you must cover

This element covers the following:

- a **quality assurance systems**
 - 1 externally validated
 - 2 devised and validated in-house
- b **relevant people**
 - 1 team members
 - 2 colleagues working at the same level as you
 - 3 higher-level managers or sponsors
 - 4 specialists
- c **ways to evaluate**
 - 1 qualitative
 - 2 quantitative

A56.3

Recommend improvements to quality assurance systems

The National Standard

What you must do

To meet the national standard, you must:

- 1 provide opportunities for **relevant people** to suggest improvements to **quality assurance systems**
- 2 base your **recommendations** on sufficient, valid and reliable information on the effectiveness and efficiency of **quality assurance systems**
- 3 make **recommendations** have the potential to improve the contribution which **quality assurance systems** make to the organisation and its customers
- 4 present your **recommendations** to **relevant people** clearly, logically and in time to be of use
- 5 where **recommendations** are not accepted, establish the reasons and present these to **relevant people** in a manner which maintains morale and motivation.

What you must cover

This element covers the following:

- a **quality assurance systems**
 - 1 externally validated
 - 2 devised and validated in-house
- b **relevant people**
 - 1 team members
 - 2 colleagues working at the same level as you
 - 3 higher-level managers or sponsors
 - 4 specialists
- c **recommendations**
 - 1 in response to a request
 - 2 on own initiative

What you must know and understand

To be competent in this unit, you must know and understand the following

Communication

- K1 how to communicate effectively to colleagues, team members and higher level managers and sponsors on quality assurance issues
- K2 how to develop and argue an effective case for change

Continuous improvement

- K3 the importance of continuous improvement to the effectiveness of the team and organisation and your role and responsibilities in relation to this

Customer relations

- K4 the importance of customer focus in managing quality
- K5 the importance of customer focus in managing activities

Information handling

- K6 how to validate information which may be inadequate, contradictory and ambiguous
- K7 how to collect and validate sufficient information on the effectiveness of quality assurance systems to make recommendations on improvement

Involvement and motivation

- K8 how to develop and present an effective case for the introduction of quality assurance systems
- K9 the importance of consulting on the introduction of quality assurance systems and how to do so effectively
- K10 how to gain the commitment of staff for quality assurance systems
- K11 how to maintain staff commitment to quality assurance systems
- K12 how to encourage and enable feedback on quality
- K13 how to encourage and enable feedback on quality systems

Quality management

K14 the importance of quality assurance and your role and responsibility in relation to this

K15 the meaning of quality in the context of managing activities (Element A56.1)

K16 the principles underpinning effective quality assurance systems and how to apply them

K17 the range of quality assurance systems available and their relative advantages and disadvantages to the activities for which you are responsible

K18 how to analyse work processes and determine the most appropriate quality assurance systems and measurements

K19 how to specify the requirements of a quality assurance system

K20 the importance of maintaining quality assurance systems and the procedures required to do so

Working relationships

K21 how to resolve disagreements and disputes in ways which maintain morale and motivation