

Unit 14: Collaborate with Other Departments

Unit reference number: M/506/1931

QCF level: 3

Credit value: 3

Guided learning hours: 14

Unit type: Competence

Unit summary

An organisation cannot overlook the importance of collaboration and communication between departments. Business innovation and improvement requires collaboration amongst a variety of departments.

In this unit, you will learn how to collaborate with other departments. Work completed by one department with total disregard of the importance of that work to others and to the organisation as a whole is a thing of the past. Collaboration is important, especially as organisations become more widespread and complex. The unit will also equip you with the ability to identify opportunities for collaboration between variety of departments, from research and development to production to marketing to customer service, and the ability to collaborate with departments, all to better the work and achieve the desired outcomes of the organisation.

Learning outcomes and assessment criteria

To pass this unit, the learner needs to demonstrate that they can meet all the learning outcomes for the unit. The assessment criteria outline the requirements the learner is expected to meet to achieve the unit.

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria
<p>1 Understand how to collaborate with other departments</p>	<p>1.1 Explain the need for collaborating with other departments</p> <p>1.2 Explain the nature of the interaction between their own team and other departments</p> <p>1.3 Explain the features of effective collaboration</p> <p>1.4 Explain the potential implications of ineffective collaboration with other departments</p> <p>1.5 Explain the factors relating to knowledge management that should be considered when collaborating with other departments</p>
<p>2 Be able to identify opportunities for collaboration with other departments</p>	<p>2.1 Analyse the advantages and disadvantages of collaborating with other departments</p> <p>2.2 Identify with which departments collaborative relationships should be built</p> <p>2.3 Identify the scope for and limitations of possible collaboration</p>
<p>3 Be able to collaborate with other departments</p>	<p>3.1 Agree Service Level Agreements (SLAs), objectives and priorities of collaborative arrangements</p> <p>3.2 Work with other departments in a way that contributes to the achievement of organisational objectives</p>

Unit amplification

AC1.1: Explain the need for collaborating with other departments

- *Collaboration*: definition i.e. cooperative arrangement in which two or more parties work jointly towards a common goal; techniques, e.g. brainstorming, affinity sorting/affinity diagrams, ranking
- *Need for collaboration*: reasons, e.g. cross-disciplinary skills and insight, innovation, builds trust, communication, stakeholder/team buy-in, greater productivity

AC1.2: Explain the nature of the interaction between their own team and other departments

- *The knowledge to meet this AC depends on the learner's own role and the particular organisational context. Learners need to apply the knowledge specific to their organisation to meet this AC.*

AC1.3: Explain the features of effective collaboration

- *Features*: e.g. shared goals, respect for all perspectives, empowerment of individuals, open communication, equal access to information, a collective mind set

AC1.4: Explain the potential implications of ineffective collaboration with other departments

- *Potential implications of ineffective collaboration*: e.g. conflict between individuals and departments, wasted resources, organisation's competitive ability is weakened, delays, inefficiencies, poor lines of communication

AC1.5: Explain the factors relating to knowledge management that should be considered when collaborating with other departments

- *Knowledge management*: i.e. strategies and processes designed to identify, capture, structure, value, leverage, and share an organisation's intellectual assets to enhance its performance and competitiveness
- *Factors to consider*: tacit and explicit knowledge to be managed; availability of IT systems to support the process e.g. intranets, databases; organisational culture, e.g. trust and willingness to share knowledge; suitability of engagement approaches; intellectual property; collaborative technologies to manage knowledge, e.g. groupware

Information for tutors

Suggested resources

Books

Taylor S. and Woodhams C – *Studying Human Resource Management* (CIPD, 2012)
ISBN 9781843983125

Websites

www.forbes.com – Forbes, has a useful article on the habits of collaborative organisations by Jacob Morgan titled The 12 Habits of Highly Collaborative Organizations

www.kmworld.com – KMWorld supplies information on knowledge management. A recommended article is: What is KM? Knowledge Management explained by Michael Koenig. A subscription is required for full access to the site

www.cipd.co.uk – CIPD has a range of factsheets to provide introductory guidance on a range of HR issues. Membership is required for full access

Other

The Economist – has a good (subscription) archive that includes specialist features and articles on management topics.

How the workplace can improve collaboration – Steelcase has a 360 white paper publication on how the workplace can improve collaboration on their website at www.steelcase.com

Assessment

This unit is internally assessed. To pass this unit the evidence that the learner presents for assessment must demonstrate that they have met the required standard specified in the learning outcomes and assessment criteria and the requirements of the Assessment Strategy.

To ensure that the assessment tasks and activities enable learners to produce valid, sufficient, authentic and appropriate evidence that meets the assessment criteria, centres should apply the *Unit Assessment guidance* and the requirements of the Assessment Strategy below.

Wherever possible, centres should adopt a holistic approach to assessing the units in the qualification. This gives the assessment process greater rigour and minimises repetition, time and the burden of assessment on all parties involved in the process.

Unit assessment requirements

This unit must be assessed in the workplace in accordance with Skills CFA Business Administration, Customer Service and Management and Leadership Assessment Strategy in *Annexe A*. Simulation is not allowed for this unit. All evidence of occupational competence should be generated through performance under workplace conditions; this includes evidence of achievement for knowledge-based learning outcomes and associated assessment criteria.

Unit assessment guidance

This guidance supports assessors in making decisions about how best to assess each unit and the evidence needed to meet the assessment requirements of the unit. Centres can adapt the guidance for learners and the particular assessment context, as appropriate.

The main sources of evidence to meet learning outcomes 2 and 3 are a review of the learner's work products, witness testimony and professional discussion.

For learning outcome 2, the learner's work products could include their notes or formal documentation relating to the department(s) with which collaborative relationships should be built, including the scope for and limitations of the potential collaborations (AC2.2 and AC2.3). These work products should be reviewed by the assessor to confirm that they meet the requirements of the specified assessment criteria, and could be used as the basis for the professional discussion with the learner to meet the requirements of AC2.1 as well to evidence the knowledge and understanding underpinning the learner's competence. For example, within the professional discussion the learner could explain the reasons for selecting the specific departments for collaboration in relation to the roles and responsibilities of those departments and the opportunities for synergies (AC2.2 and AC2.3).

For learning outcome 3, a combination of a review of the learner's work products, professional discussion and witness testimony could be used. Examples of work products could include the documented agreed SLAs, priorities and objectives of the collaborative arrangement or meeting notes indicating these (AC3.1). These work products should be reviewed by the assessor to ensure that they meet the requirements of the assessment criterion. The professional discussion could cover the content of SLAs and the process of developing the SLAs with the relevant departments. Witness testimony could also be used to provide evidence of the agreed SLAs as well as provide evidence that the learner can work with other departments in a way that contributes to the achievement of organisational objectives (AC3.2).

Evidence to confirm the achievement of learning outcome 1 could be integrated into the professional discussion for learning outcomes 2, providing the opportunity for the learner to link and apply their knowledge to the workplace activities. For example, the learner could be asked to explain the features of effective collaboration (AC1.3) in the context of how they have used them in collaborating and working with other departments (AC3.2). The learner's responses to meet the requirements for AC1.1 – 1.5 must be at a sufficient depth and breadth to meet the level of demand expected from an explanation. For example, the learner's response on the features of effective collaboration (AC1.3) should go beyond just statements but should include reasoning around why these features make the collaboration effective.

Evidence of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) can also be used within the unit to confirm competence. Wherever possible, the learning outcomes in this unit should be assessed holistically across the qualification.