

# **Unit 20: Manage Knowledge in an Organisation**

**Unit reference number: A/506/2032**

**QCF level: 4**

**Credit value: 5**

**Guided learning hours: 34**

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## **Unit summary**

Knowledge is one of the most important assets an organisation will have but many organisations do not pay sufficient attention to how this knowledge is shared, stored or used effectively. The concept of knowledge management is relatively new and highlights how the management of knowledge is just as important as managing finances or resources.

In this unit you will learn how effective knowledge management will help an organisation become more successful and achieve its objectives. You will gain an understanding of how knowledge management is about systematically making use of the knowledge within the organisation to make decisions and avoid making the same mistakes.

As a manager you will need to know the importance of utilising and managing the knowledge in your organisation. You will need to be able to identify this knowledge and implement processes that capture, share and store it knowledge effectively.

## 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 the principles of knowledge management</p>	<p>1.1 Explain the concept, scope and importance of knowledge management</p> <p>1.2 Explain the concept of intellectual property</p> <p>1.3 Identify the business drivers that lead to effective knowledge management</p> <p>1.4 Explain the risks associated with knowledge management and their potential implications</p> <p>1.5 Explain the importance of engaging others and communicating knowledge management issues and activities</p> <p>1.6 Explain best practice principles and techniques for effective knowledge management</p> <p>1.7 Describe strategies to manage tacit and explicit knowledge</p>
<p>2 Be able to identify knowledge to be managed within an organisation</p>	<p>2.1 Identify the criteria against which knowledge will be managed</p> <p>2.2 Engage colleagues in identifying the knowledge to be managed</p>
<p>3 Be able to manage knowledge within an organisation</p>	<p>3.1 Implement actions in accordance with the knowledge management plan</p> <p>3.2 Adhere to security processes for the collection, storage and retrieval of knowledge</p> <p>3.3 Evaluate the extent to which current knowledge management systems and processes are fit for purpose</p> <p>3.4 Recommend improvements to processes and systems to manage knowledge</p> <p>3.5 Assess the likely impact and implications of the loss of knowledge</p>

## Unit amplification

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### **AC1.1: Explain the concept, scope and importance of knowledge management**

- *Knowledge management*: e.g. strategies and processes designed to identify, capture, structure, value, leverage, and share an organisation's intellectual assets to enhance its performance and competitiveness
  - Underpinning principles: promotion of creating, sharing and applying knowledge; incorporating valuable lessons learned and best practices into corporate memory and processes; applying a collaborative and integrated approach
  - Quality of knowledge: features, e.g. accurate, detailed, classified, fit for purpose, complete, accessible
- *Scope*: individual, group and organisation levels; tacit and explicit knowledge; systems and procedures to capture, document and disseminate information
- *Importance*: leverage knowledge to the organisation's advantage; reduces reinvention of the wheel; minimises loss of corporate memory through attrition and retirement; increases scope for innovation in products and/or services and processes; identifies critical resources and critical areas of knowledge; supports risk management; better efficiency and enhanced effectiveness; cost reduction

### **AC1.2: Explain the concept of intellectual property**

- *Intellectual property*: unique creations, e.g. inventions, literary and artistic work, design and symbols; organised knowledge that can create wealth, e.g. know-how, know why, experience and expertise
  - Types of intellectual property: copyrights; patents; trademarks; industrial designs; geographical indications
- *Protecting intellectual property*: importance of protection; benefits for organisation; disputes over intellectual property; legal action; role of the Intellectual Property Office

### **AC1.3: Identify the business drivers that lead to effective knowledge management**

- *Business drivers*: organisational culture, e.g. trust and willingness to share; organisational structure, e.g. flexible, collaborative and decentralised; people with the right skills and attitudes, e.g. T-shaped skills; effective information and technology systems, e.g. intranets, extranets, groupware, databases; use of knowledge to strengthen the strategic plan

**AC1.4: Explain the risks associated with knowledge management and their potential implications**

- *Risks:* e.g. technological malfunction in IT systems, attrition of key employees, system supplier insolvency, uncontrolled and unreliable information, confidentiality of business critical data, intellectual property rights
- *Potential implications:* e.g. loss of money, disillusioned staff, impact on business continuity, impact on brand reputation

**AC1.5: Explain the importance of engaging others and communicating knowledge management issues and activities**

- *Engaging others:* engagement approaches including structured and coordinated, planned, formal and informal; features, e.g. decision-making, problem solving, gathering and disseminating information
- *Importance:* e.g. enable access to tacit knowledge, validation of knowledge, develop a culture of sharing and collaboration, capture knowledge and expertise across different levels of the organisation, motivate and empower staff, transfer of knowledge, encourage commitment and participation

**AC1.6: Explain best practice principles and techniques for effective knowledge management**

- *Best practice principles:* corporate strategy assessment; knowledge audit; knowledge and business strategy alignment; identification of knowledge opportunities; value-benefit analysis; organisational culture review; approval for knowledge management activities; risk reduction techniques
- *Techniques:* peer assists; After Action Review (AAR); Communities of Practice; knowledge centres; exit interviews; social network analysis; Rapid Evidence Review (RER); collaborative technologies, e.g. groupware; expert directories; knowledge mapping

**AC1.7: Describe strategies to manage tacit and explicit knowledge**

- *Distinction between tacit and explicit knowledge:* definition of each; differences
- *Managing tacit knowledge:* personalisation strategy; addresses storage of knowledge in human minds; transfer through person to person, e.g. storytelling, Communities of Practice, work shadowing, coaching
- *Managing explicit knowledge:* codification strategy; allows knowledge to be codified and stored in databases; access to knowledge through IT applications, e.g. intranets and the internet
- *Tacit versus explicit:* how the advantages of one approach can be used to help offset the disadvantages of the other

## Information for tutors

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### Suggested resources

#### Books

Becarra-Fernandez I and Sabherwal R – *Knowledge Management: Systems and Processes* (M E Sharpe, Inc, 2010) ISBN 9780765623515

Davenport T H and Prusak L – *Working Knowledge: How Organizations Manage What They Know* (2nd edition) (Harvard Business Press, 2000) ISBN 9781578513017

Frappaolo C – *Knowledge Management* (2nd edition) (Capstone, 2006) ISBN 9781841127057

Nonaka I (Ed.) – *Knowledge Management: Critical Perspectives on Business and Management* (Routledge, 2005) ISBN 9780415340298

#### Websites

[www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk) – UK government website: guide on intellectual property and how to protect ideas and inventions

[www.knowledge-management-tools.net](http://www.knowledge-management-tools.net) – An educational knowledge management site: an introduction to and overview of knowledge management

[www.unc.edu](http://www.unc.edu) – University of North Carolina website: provides an introduction to knowledge management and the impact it can have on an organisation

#### Assessment

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 meet the assessment criteria, centres should apply the *Unit assessment guidance* provided and the requirements of the Assessment Strategy given 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 the Skills CFA Assessment Strategy for Business Administration, Customer Service and Management and Leadership 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.

Evidence to demonstrate achievement of learning outcomes 2 and 3 is likely to come from a combination of a review of the learner's work products, witness testimony and professional discussion or reflective account.

The learner's work products could include records detailing the criteria for managing knowledge (AC2.1), report/notes detailing the fitness for purpose evaluation of the current knowledge management systems and processes (AC3.3) and records of relevant communications to colleagues or line manager, for example a report/an email recommending improvements to systems and processes (AC3.4). The learner's work products may contain commercially sensitive information and this needs to be considered in the use of these documents.

The evidence from the work products should be supported by a reflective account or professional discussion to corroborate the learner's competence as well as meet the knowledge requirements in learning outcome 1. Within the reflective account or professional discussion, the learner could comment on the process used to decide on the criteria for managing knowledge, the criteria used to evaluate the fitness for purpose of the systems and processes and how the outcomes of this review relate to the improvements recommended (AC2.1, AC3.3 and AC3.4). The learner could also describe the relevant security processes for the collection, storage and retrieval of knowledge and explain the actions they have taken to comply with these (AC3.2). Witness testimony could also be used for learning outcomes 2 and 3 to provide supporting evidence for the learner's competence over time.

Evidence to demonstrate achievement of learning outcome 1 would best come from a reflective account or professional discussion. The assessment of this learning outcome could be integrated into the assessment of the underlying knowledge and understanding for learning outcomes 2 and 3. This gives the learner the opportunity to link and apply their knowledge to workplace activities, as well as easing the burden of assessment for both the assessor and the learner. For example, the learner could explain the best practice principles and techniques for managing knowledge in an organisation and relate this to their evaluation of the fitness for purpose of the systems and processes in their own organisation. This links the knowledge for AC1.6 to the learner's activities for AC3.3. Similarly, the learner could explain the importance of engaging others in the context of how they went about engaging colleagues to identify the knowledge to be managed (AC1.5 and AC2.2).

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.