

Unit 29:

Conduct Quality Audits

Unit reference number: T/506/1994

QCF level: 4

Credit value: 3

Guided learning hours: 21

Unit summary

In this unit you will learn how to prepare and conduct quality audits. In order to do this you will understand the importance of quality management in an organisation and how this contributes to meeting organisational objectives. This unit is important as in today's business world customer satisfaction is seen to be fundamental to success and as technology and communications become more powerful everyone can more easily compare standards.

By examining the advantages and limitations of using different quality techniques you will understand how customer satisfaction drives continuous improvement to meet standards, as well as exploring the consequences of not meeting standards on an organisation's reputation. This unit will introduce you to the concept of 'Total Quality Management (TQM)' and how this approach depends on the need to embed a quality culture in an organisation.

In order to carry out the quality audit you will prepare a plan, agree quality criteria and requirements with those who will be involved in the audit, and use relevant documentation. Upon completion of the audit you will identify where improvements could be made to processes, procedures, or standards by agreeing remedial actions.

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 underpinning the management of quality</p>	<p>1.1 Analyse the principles of quality management</p> <p>1.2 Analyse the purpose and requirements of a range of quality standards</p> <p>1.3 Analyse the advantages and limitations of a range of quality techniques</p> <p>1.4 Assess how the management of quality contributes to the achievement of organisational objectives</p>
<p>2 Be able to prepare to carry out quality audits</p>	<p>2.1 Establish the quality requirements applicable to the work being audited</p> <p>2.2 Develop a plan for a quality audit</p> <p>2.3 Prepare the documentation needed to undertake a quality audit</p> <p>2.4 Specify data requirements to those who will support the audit</p>
<p>3 Be able to conduct quality audits</p>	<p>3.1 Confirm that any previously agreed actions have been implemented</p> <p>3.2 Analyse information against agreed quality criteria</p> <p>3.3 Identify instances where business processes, quality standards and/or procedures could be improved</p> <p>3.4 Agree actions and timescales that will remedy non-conformance or non-compliance</p>

Unit amplification

AC1.1: Analyse the principles of quality management

- *Quality management Theories:* W Edwards Deming - PDCA Cycle; Joseph M Juran - quality trilogy; Kaoru Ishikawa – total quality viewpoint, 7 basic tools of quality; Philip B Crosby – 14 steps to quality improvements, Zero Defects, Quality is Free; A V Feigenbaum – total quality control
- *Quality management terminology:* e.g. fitness for purpose, Total Quality Management (TQM), Quality Assurance (QA), continuous improvement (Kaizen), quality indicators, quality measures (financial measures, customer-based measures)
- *ISO9001 8 Principles of quality management:* customer focus; leadership; involvement of people; process approach; system approach to management; continual improvement; factual approach to decision-making; mutually beneficial supplier relationship

AC1.2: Analyse the purpose and requirements of a range of quality standards

- *Quality standards:* e.g. International Standards ISO9000 series, British Standards Institute (BSI) BS5750, Investors in People, CE marking, Royal warrants
- *Analysis to include:* purpose, requirements, application and benefits in business operations

AC1.3: Analyse the advantages and limitations of a range of quality techniques

- *Quality techniques:* e.g. Six Sigma, TQM, Quality Circles, statistical process control, benchmarking

AC1.4: Assess how the management of quality contributes to the achievement of organisational objectives

- *Contribution to achievement of organisational objectives:* by promoting a quality culture, e.g. self-managed teams and quality circles, 'interlocking teams'; product innovation and quality; improved customer relationship; partnerships with suppliers; external auditing
- *Management of quality:* leadership and commitment; action planning on areas for improvement; setting clear organisational objectives; empowering, mentoring, counselling; delegating; responding to feedback

Information for tutors

Suggested resources

Books

Bicheno J and Holweg M – *The Lean Toolbox: The Essential Guide to Lean Transformation* (4th edition) (Picsie Books, 2008) ISBN 9780954124458

Hoyle D – *ISO 9000 Quality Systems Handbook* (Butterworth-Heinemann, 2009) ISBN 9781856176842

Webber L and Wallace M – *Quality Control for Dummies* (John Wiley and Sons, 2007) ISBN 9780470069097

Slack N et al – *Operations Management* (7th edition) (Pearson, 2013) ISBN 9780273776208

Websites

www.efqm.org – the European Foundation for Quality Management: promotes the Excellence Model through forums, training, events and information

Other

Benchmarking: An International Journal, Emerald – this journal has many articles on total quality management

Management Today, Haymarket Business Media – this magazine provides information on the latest management thinking

Professional Manager, Chartered Management Institute – the official magazine of the CMI aimed at equipping managers with management knowledge and skills

The TQM Journal, Emerald – this journal provides guidance and discussions around Total Quality Management principles

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, 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 achieve this unit should come from the learner's work activities in preparing to and carrying out quality audits.

Evidence to demonstrate achievement of learning outcomes 2 and 3 is likely to come from a combination of witness testimony, learner work products and professional discussion or reflective account. The learner's work products could include their quality audit plan, the relevant documentation for the quality audit, meeting minutes, communications to colleagues regarding data requirements and an audit report detailing the audit outcomes and any remedial actions. The work products should be reviewed by the assessor and used to support the professional discussion to evidence the knowledge and understanding underpinning the learner's performance. Within the professional discussion, the learner could discuss the criteria used for establishing the quality requirements applicable to the work being audited and how they went about analysing the information gathered against the agreed quality criteria (AC2.1 and AC3.2). Alternatively a reflective account could be used in a similar manner to assess the underpinning knowledge and understanding. Witness testimony from colleagues and the line manager should also be used to confirm that the learner has consistently met the requirements over a period of time, as well as met organisational requirements.

Due to the cognitive demand of the assessment criteria in learning outcome 1, the evidence to confirm achievement would best come from a reflective account. If a reflective account is used for learning outcomes 2 and 3, it would be best to integrate the assessment of this learning outcome, giving the learner opportunity to link and apply their knowledge to workplace activities. For example, the learner could reflect upon the advantages and limitations of quality techniques which they have applied and how the management of quality has contributed to the achievement of objectives within their organisation (AC1.3 and AC1.4). The learner's reflective account must be in sufficient depth and breadth to meet the level of demand of the operative verbs within AC1.1 to AC1.4. For example, for AC1.3, the learner needs to explain in depth a range of quality techniques, the advantages and limitations they have found with using these quality techniques and how they would use different techniques to improve on their practice in future quality audits.

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.