Unit 9: Support Environmental Sustainability in a Business Environment

Unit reference number: R/506/1954

QCF level: 4

Credit value: 4

Guided learning hours: 38

Unit summary

Sustainability and environmental issues are a growing concern for businesses. The impact of business activity on the environment and corporate behaviour has resulted in organisations exercising responsibility by integrating their operations with social and environmental concerns. Waste reduction and resource efficiency are important environmental issues to be addressed and organisations need to implement policies, procedures and audits to manage the impact and damage of work practices on the business environment.

In this unit you will investigate management of sustainability and the management of environmental issues within the context of a business organisation. You will demonstrate your understanding of the main concepts, environmental standards and legislation that apply to a business environment which minimise environmental impact and meet the requirements of Duty of Care. You will demonstrate understanding of the importance of corporate social responsibility (CSR) and how this can be applied to promote and improve organisational environmental sustainability initiatives and targets within the organisation and the wider community. You will demonstrate effective techniques to evaluate sustainable working practices and develop a culture of commitment to environmental sustainability.

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
1 Understand the principles supporting environmental sustainability in a business environment	1.1 Describe current legislation in relation to environmental sustainability in a business environment
	1.2 Explain government incentives that support environmental sustainability in a business environment
	1.3 Analyse the relationship between environmental sustainability and corporate social responsibility
	1.4 Explain the health and safety considerations for environmental sustainability and waste management
	1.5 Explain techniques to evaluate the impact of an organisation's environmental and sustainability policies and procedures
2 Be able to implement best practice in environmental sustainability in a business environment	2.1 Identify the environmental standards that are relevant to an organisation
	2.2 Evaluate the impact of an organisation's business on its environment
	2.3 Promote a culture of efficient consumption of energy in line with an organisation's energy management policies
	2.4 Establish procedures to minimise waste and maximise the recycling of materials
	2.5 Establish procedures to meet hazardous waste regulations
	2.6 Adhere to organisational policies and procedures, legal and ethical requirements when implementing best practice in a business environment

Unit amplification

AC1.1: **Describe current legislation in relation to environmental sustainability in a business environment**

- *Environmental sustainability:* definition; managing waste and recycling; using sustainable resources; reducing carbon footprint; improving work activities and production processes; pollution; monitoring impact of activities; identifying improvements

- *Current Legislation:* e.g. Environment Protection Act 1990; Duty of Care; handling, transporting and disposing of waste, e.g. hazardous and non-hazardous waste; Licensed Waste Contractors; Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment Regulations 2006, Packaging Waste Regulations 2007; building regulations

AC1.2: **Explain government incentives that support environmental sustainability in a business environment**

- *Government incentives:* tax relief schemes, e.g. landfill; feed-in tariffs, e.g. renewable energy; grants, e.g. energy efficiency finance, motoring and transport, low carbon technologies

AC1.3: **Analyse the relationship between environmental sustainability and corporate social responsibility**

- *Corporate social responsibility:* definition; how organisations integrate social and environmental concerns into business operations; corporate governance; stakeholder and community engagement; human rights; 'green' initiatives; importance of ethical codes of practice, e.g. in sales and marketing, intellectual property; role and responsibility of the facilities manager, e.g. energy awareness training and signage, publishing initiatives, targets and results

- *Relationship:* commitment, e.g. environmental sustainability policies; environmental sustainability strategies; organisation values; reporting and disclosure

AC1.4: **Explain the health and safety considerations for environmental sustainability and waste management**

- *Waste management:* waste types, e.g. hazardous, non-hazardous; reusing and recycling; handling waste, e.g. protective clothing; disposal

- *Health and safety considerations:* current legislation; legal compliance; people, e.g. culture, commitment, training and development; environment, e.g. internal, external, ventilation, light, noise; equipment and machinery; accident prevention; fire protection

AC1.5: **Explain techniques to evaluate the impact of an organisation's environmental and sustainability policies and procedures**

- *Techniques:* environmental standards, e.g. ISO14001, Eco-Management Audit System (EMAS); Energy Efficiency Scheme; integration of standards with wider management systems; environmental review; environmental strategies and planning; benchmarking; internal audit and compliance

- *Management systems:* methods and systems of waste and energy management, e.g. using suitable tools, materials and equipment, setting targets, regular maintenance of equipment, re-use and recycling; benefits and methods of waste reduction; minimising risk of waste disposal to people and organisations; responsible purchasing; using eco-friendly products; importance of auditing; minimising environment impact through the supply chain; procedures for dealing with environment incidents; policies and practices to improve environmental awareness

- *Impact of issues:* legal compliance and statutory duties; loss of reputation, poor publicity; types of damage; methods for minimising impact of damage; corrective actions; monitoring impact of activities; identifying improvements

Information for tutors

Suggested resources

Books

Robertson M – *Sustainability Principles and Practices* (Routledge, 2014)
ISBN 9780415840187

Therivel R – *Strategic Environmental Assessment in Action* (2nd edition)
(Routledge, 2010) ISBN 9781849710657

Websites

www.gov.uk – UK Government website: for all environment related departments,
legislation and policies

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. Centres can adapt the guidance for learners and the particular assessment context, as appropriate.

The primary source of evidence for meeting the requirements of learning outcome 2 is direct observation of the learner carrying out their work activities relating to supporting environmental sustainability in a business environment.

The evidence from any direct observation for learning outcome 2 could be supported by examining work products such as development and implementation of policies, procedures and processes, environmental sustainability strategy documents, policies and processes, reports and non-verbal communication to colleagues and/or managers, e.g. emails etc. – this provides further evidence to meet the requirements, for example AC2.1, AC2.3, AC2.4 and AC2.5. To achieve AC2.6, learners need to provide evidence of adhering to organisational policies and procedures, legal and ethical requirements when implementing best practice environmental sustainability in a business environment either through checklists and/or forms. Witness testimony could be used to support the evidence from direct observation for this assessment criterion as well as for AC2.1, AC2.3, AC2.4 and AC2.5.

The primary source of evidence for meeting the requirements of learning outcome 1 could come from a questions and answers (Q&A), (AC1.1), or professional discussion where the learner demonstrates an understanding of the principles of supporting environmental sustainability in a business environment (AC1.2, AC1.3, AC1.4 and AC1.5). Learners responses during the professional discussion must be at the appropriate breadth and depth to meet the level of demand for the knowledge assessment criteria; for example, the responses must have sufficient detail about government incentives that support environmental sustainability in a business environment (AC1.2), the relationship between environmental sustainability and corporate social responsibility (AC1.3), the health and safety considerations for environmental sustainability and waste management (AC1.4) and techniques to evaluate the impact of an organisation's environmental and sustainability policies and procedures (AC1.5). Reflective account can be used to support the evidence from professional discussion for learning outcome 1 as well as AC2.2 and AC2.3.

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.