

UNIT SUMMARY

What is the unit about?

This unit is about preparing for, and participating in, quality audits of your area of responsibility as part of a formal quality management system, such as ISO9001:2000 or sector-specific systems.

The key to a successful audit outcome is to ensure that work consistently meets quality standards and complies with relevant procedures. Preparation for the audit involves checking all relevant documentation is up to date and readily available for the audit, whilst active participation in the audit can ensure that any nonconformances are addressed and potential improvements to business processes, quality standards and/or procedures are identified.

Who is the unit for?

The unit is for managers working in environments with formal quality management systems who are required to participate in quality audits.

Links to other units

This unit is linked to units **F13. Manage quality systems** and **F15. Carry out quality audits** in the overall suite of National Occupational Standards for Management and Leadership.

Skills

Listed below are the main generic 'skills' that need to be applied in carrying out quality audits. These skills are explicit/implicit in the detailed content of the unit and are listed here as additional information.

- Communicating
- Monitoring
- Planning
- Presenting information
- Reporting
- Researching

OUTCOMES OF EFFECTIVE PERFORMANCE

You must be able to do the following:

1. Establish clearly the quality standards and procedures that apply to your area of responsibility.
2. Monitor work in your area of responsibility to ensure it consistently meets quality standards and complies with procedures.
3. Check that all relevant records and documentation are complete, up to date and accessible.
4. Check that any corrective actions agreed in previous audits have been taken and that any recommendations have been considered and acted upon, where appropriate.
5. Provide the auditor with access to all relevant information, records and documentation.
6. Discuss with the auditor the results of the audit and agree appropriate corrective actions to remedy any nonconformances and the date by which the actions should be carried out.
7. Discuss with the auditor any areas where business processes, quality standards or procedures could be improved.
8. Plan to carry out any agreed corrective actions and ensure that these are carried out by agreed dates.

BEHAVIOURS WHICH UNDERPIN EFFECTIVE PERFORMANCE

1. You find practical ways to overcome barriers.
2. You listen actively, ask questions, clarify points and rephrase others' statements to check mutual understanding.
3. You present information clearly, concisely, accurately and in ways that promote understanding.
4. You keep people informed of plans and developments.
5. You comply with, and ensure others comply with, legal requirements, industry regulations, organisational policies and professional codes.
6. You show respect for the views and actions of others.
7. You act within the limits of your authority.
8. You use cost-effective, time-effective and ethical means to gather, store and retrieve information.
9. You make appropriate information and knowledge available promptly to those who need it and have a right to it.
10. You present information clearly, concisely and accurately and in ways that promote understanding.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING

You need to know and understand the following:

General knowledge and understanding

1. Quality management principles and methods.
2. How to monitor work to ensure it consistently meets quality standards and complies with procedures.
3. The importance of ensuring that records and documentation are complete and up to date and how to make these readily accessible to auditors.
4. How to identify areas where business processes, quality systems or procedures could be improved.
5. How to plan and monitor to ensure that corrective actions are carried out by agreed dates.

Industry/sector specific knowledge and understanding

1. Industry/sector requirements for quality management and auditing.

Context specific knowledge and understanding

1. The quality standards and procedures that apply to your area of responsibility.
2. The records and documentation required for your area of responsibility.
3. Corrective actions agreed in previous audits.
4. Recommendations for improvements made in previous audits.