DEVELOP WORKPLACE POLICY AND PROCEDURES FOR SUSTAINABILITY

CANDIDATE RESOURCE & ASSESSMENT
BSBSUS501A
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“There are always two choices. Two paths to take. One is easy. And its only reward is that it’s easy.” Source Unknown

This unit of competency is provided to meet the requirements of BSB07 Business Services Training Package although it can be used in a range of different qualifications. The BSB07 Business Services Training Package does not state how a qualification is to be achieved. Rather, Registered Training Organisations are required to use the qualification rules to ensure the needs of the learner and business customer are met. This is to be achieved through the development of effective learning programs delivered in an order that meets the stated needs of nominated Candidates and business customers.
Qualification requirements include core and elective units. The unit mix is determined by specific unit of competency requirements which are stated in the qualification description. Registered Training Organisations then work with learners and business customers to select elective units relevant to the work outcome, local industry requirements and the qualification level.

All vocational education qualifications must lead to a work outcome. BSB07 Business Services Training Package qualifications allow for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) to vary programs to meet:

- **Specific needs of a business or group of businesses.**
- **Skill needs of a locality or a particular industry application of business skills.**
- **Maximum employability of a group of students or an individual.**

When packaging a qualification elective units are to be selected from an equivalent level qualification unless otherwise stated.
Introduction

“Whether as an individual, or as part of a group, real progress depends on entering whole-heartedly into the process and being motivated to make you a more deeply satisfied human being.”

Source Unknown

This unit of competency is all about being able to develop and implement a Sustainability policy in your workplace. It will help you with the skills you need to demonstrate competency for the unit BSBSUS501A Develop workplace policy and procedures for sustainability. This is one of the units that make up Diplomas in Business.

This manual is broken up into four distinct sections. They are:

1. Develop workplace sustainability policy
2. Communicate workplace sustainability policy
3. Implement workplace sustainability policy
4. Review workplace sustainability policy implementation.

At the conclusion of this training you will be asked to complete an Assessment Pack for this unit of competency. The information contained in this resource will assist you to complete this task.

You will then have demonstrated your ability to establish, maintain and evaluate the organisation’s environmental management strategies and processes in your relevant work area.
Key Points Section 1

- Your organisation’s business plan should be developed in such a way that it reflects the organisation’s policies and commitment to environmental sustainability as an integral part of business operations.

- Ensure that continuous improvement policies and practices monitor and report on the environmental performance of the organisation.

- Your organisation’s activities and products should be designed to minimise life cycle impacts.
Key Points Section 1 continued

- The Financial and Human Resources for the operation of environmental systems must be identified, sought and provided as early as possible in system development.

- Changing trends and opportunities relevant to the organisation must be identified, analysed and taken into account at the planning stage.

- A Sustainability Policy should outline the organisation’s commitment to improving sustainability and provide general guidelines that can be used to meet this commitment.
Sustainability Management

Sustainability Management is the management of a company’s activities that have an impact on the environment. Its objectives are to conserve natural resources, limit emissions of pollutants, environmental hazards and create a safe workplace. These economic activities can have a significant impact on the environment:

- Extracting raw materials from the environment requires water and energy.
- Manufacturing processes including maintenance, transport and packaging create waste and consume energy.
- Supplying and services generate waste pollution and emissions. The majority of products end up rapidly as waste after utilisation.

It is part of the overall management system to continually develop, implement, achieve, review and maintain the environmental policy including:

- Organisational structure and planning activities
- Responsibilities, practices, and procedures
- Processes and resources.

A Sustainability Management System (SMS) is built upon a set of environmental actions and management tools. Those actions depend on each other to achieve a clearly defined goal – environmental protection and sustainability.

An SMS is a continual cycle of planning, implementing, reviewing and improving the environmental performance of an organisation. It helps to initiate environmental management in all areas.

Among the working steps you find:

- Elaboration of a sustainability policy.
- Initial analysis and inventory of the environmental aspects associated with the company’s activity.
- Planning the management system.
- Environmental action program to meet specific objectives.
- Training and awareness programs for all employees.
- Implementation of the system.
- Inventory of the legislative requirements.
- Internal monitoring of the SMS and audits.
- Internal and external communication.
- Independent verification.
- The whole system functions with a view to continuously improve the environmental performance of an organisation.
Part 1: Develop Workplace Sustainability Policy

It means that:

- We go beyond legal compliance
- We have active employee involvement
- We practice honest and true communication
- Our goal is good environmental performance.

Implementing a Sustainability Management System

This is where the sustainability management system stops being a paper entity and starts to affect the day-to-day operations of the organisation. Throughout this manual we will be using ISO 14001 as our guide. This is a global standard for developing sustainability management systems within an organisation.

The first section in ISO 14001 is on ‘Implementation and Operation’ and it contains seven sub clauses to be fulfilled in order to establish your Sustainability Management System. We will begin here by looking at how you can plan to implement an SMS in your organisation.

Sustainability Management Systems are developed using a system called PDCA.

PLANNING
DOING
CONTROL
ACTING

This is the model we will use during this training.

By reviewing existing methods and procedures carefully and adding to what is already there, you’ll minimise the number of additional procedures and methods – and with this, the risk of staff forgetting new procedures.

Implementation and Operation

The environmental management program is your ‘action plan’ but it is only one day-to-day aspect of your environmental management system. The others are the ‘routine procedures’ that are already in place. These routine procedures must also be covered by the SMS. They are the Seven Implementation and Operation steps of the ISO 14001 environmental management standard.
Part 1: Develop Workplace Sustainability Policy

In our plan, we will be covering:

- Structure and responsibility
- Training, awareness and competence
- Communication
- Sustainability management system documentation
- Document control
- Operational control
- Emergency preparedness and response.

“The bottom of the oil barrel is now visible.”

Christopher Flavi
Part 1: Develop Workplace Sustainability Policy

Structure and Responsibilities

To ensure that your organisation meets the operating requirements of SMS you need adequate structure and responsibilities. This includes the assignment of an Environmental Manager responsible for the creation and implementation of the SMS itself and the assignment of clear responsibilities and accountability for all activities that affect the environment. Management has the responsibility for providing necessary resources.

The next section outlines the knowledge and skills that your employees need to perform their tasks in a way that is environmentally acceptable to the organisation. Those within the organisation who hold responsibilities that encompass aspects that may affect the environment need to understand how their role could impact the environment and how they can reduce the likelihood of them occurring. In this case, you may need to consider training and ensuring you have records to show what training has been undertaken.

A very important aspect of any system is the way that communication is managed within the system. Communication means ensuring that your staff have the information they need to make an effective decision – and an effective SMS allows its staff to be involved in any such decision. Therefore, you can see the importance of ensuring information flows around the system as easily as possible.

Communication concerns the flow of relevant information among people inside the organisation and with communications from outside the organisation. Remember that an SMS focuses on strong employee involvement and participation.

You should then examine the documentation requirements of your organisational system. There are key documents that must be kept in order for your system to be effective and the plan that you develop should outline these in detail.

Then you should move on to operation controls. This is the area where you will provide work procedures and monitoring procedures to allow you to ensure the system as a whole is working efficiently.

What is Structure and Responsibility within Your SMS?

An SMS must have a series of lines of responsibility that outlines exactly who is responsible for the system and its operation. You will note that there are many regulatory and legislative requirements which must be met under an SMS, so to this end, you may find that there is a significant amount of responsibility that falls on your legal staff. However, there is also a greater need to ensure that your operational staff are also covered. They are the ones with their fingers on the pulse, those who actually know the impacts that are occurring. Ensure that in this section you carefully outline:

1. Exactly what you define the environment and environmental performance to be, as well as responsibilities for documenting and communicating these issues.
Part 1: Develop Workplace Sustainability Policy

2. Outline how resources will be provided, from where and to what extent.

3. Exactly who has overall responsibility for the operational aspects of the SMS. Who is the person on whom the overall responsibility falls. Who will receive reports and who makes final decisions.

Define Tasks and Responsibilities

You need to decide which are the important environmental tasks in your organisation and who will be responsible for them. Environmental tasks include:

- Ensuring environmental legal compliance
- Co-ordinating measures to improve environmental performance
- Environmental training
- Developing and monitoring SMS documentation
- Internal and external environmental communication
- Auditing.

If not already done, you must allocate overall responsibility for the SMS and ensuring that it works, to a representative of management. It is essential that the management representative has the appropriate level of authority. In smaller companies, the company director or owner often assumes overall responsibility for the SMS. Other tasks will probably be divided. For example, ensuring legal compliance may be the responsibility of more than one person.

The way in which you decide to organise responsibility for environmental management will depend on your organisation’s size, existing structure and financial and human resources. There are various possibilities, for example:

- Appoint a full-time environmental manager to oversee the environmental aspects of all areas of activities.
- Allocate responsibility for environmental management to an existing manager, e.g. Production manager, who oversees the environmental aspects of all areas of activities.
- Allocate responsibility for environmental aspects of specific departments/functions to the person in charge of each department/function.
- Allocate responsibility for environmental aspects to all employees.

In smaller organisations it is more common for an existing manager to take on the role of environmental manager as opposed to creating a full-time environmental manager position. An increasing number of companies allocate environmental management responsibility to quality assurance managers. Whatever you decide, make sure that those with key environmental responsibilities have the appropriate level of authority to do their job.

Think about the work of each employee, the environmental effects of the work they do, and how they can contribute to minimising environmental impacts. If each person has a role to play in improving the environmental performance of your organisation they are more likely to be
actively supportive of the SMS and environmental initiatives. Your SMS will be more effective if each employee is in part an environmental manager than if one person is responsible for all environmental matters.

The names or positions and environmental responsibilities of the persons with the main responsibilities must be documented. Organisational and responsibility charts or responsibility matrices are normally used to meet this requirement.

The management program with its assigned responsibilities is a further reinforcement of these documents.

**Provide Resources**

Top management will also have to supply the resources to implement and maintain the SMS.

Resources include manpower, money and technology. Identify the necessary workforce to implement and maintain your SMS, and do not forget that this workforce needs an appropriate level of skills. Identifying necessary resources for day-to-day operations may logically rest with the persons responsible for the task.

Remember that every staff member within your organisation has the potential to impact the environment either on a positive or negative basis, therefore you need to look at ways of changing their overall behaviour in such a way to reduce those impacts.

Therefore, training, awareness and competence are vital for the success of an SMS. It is about providing the knowledge to enable staff to recognise their role and to understand why their action matters, to increase employee commitment and involvement and to help them get the skills they need to achieve good performance.

Training allows your staff to make informed decisions and know the impacts that their work is having on the organisation as a whole.

Developing a sound understanding of staff roles is a key component of effective SMS implementation. Sustained change in individual behaviour will only be achieved through effective training and communication.

**Communication with Internal and External Stakeholders**

Communicating poorly is a sure fire way of making your staff feel like they do not matter. If you make changes to the way your work is done without effective communication to make them aware of the changes, you are doomed to failure.

Communication is not just about telling people things. Many of the changes the SMS brings are new and challenging. Your staff will respond to what you are communicating, whether you have communicated it knowingly or not.
Part 1: Develop Workplace Sustainability Policy

You must also maintain effective communication with your stakeholders – those individuals within the organisation who have a stake in the way that you perform. These external parties want to stay informed with what is going on.

Three specific points shall be addressed under the Communication section of the regulation:

- Procedures to facilitate internal communication with respect to the SMS.
- A system for receiving and responding to communication from external parties.
- A structure for determining whether or not the organisation will communicate to external parties on its significant environmental aspects.

Environmental Documentation

Of course, the SMS is something which is going to produce paperwork. You are probably thinking that is the last thing you need – more paper! However documentation is critical to any system working. It provides for information flow and allows you to understand both what is happening now and what has happened in the past, so that you can make changes in the future.

The documentation from an SMS is useful in providing you with a roadmap – this is where we were, this is where we are, this is where we want to go. It also allows you to find the best way of actually getting there.

However there is a problem with documentation – sometimes you keep things without really needing to. A good way to think about this issue is to look at a document you intend to keep and then asking yourself:

"Why do I need this document?"

If you have trouble answering that question, think carefully about the need to actually keep it. The documents that you hold in your organisation are also a very useful way of actually orienting new staff. They can provide staff members with a way of learning new processes and becoming familiar to the work they are required to do.

Three specific tasks must be addressed under the SMS Documentation Section of the regulation:

1. Description of the core elements of the environmental management system.
2. The description must demonstrate the interaction of these core elements.
3. The description must reference the related documents.
Extent of SMS Documentation

- Sustainability policy statement.
- Objectives and targets.
- Structure and responsibility.
- SMS core elements and their interaction.
- Documented procedures, where their absence could lead to deviations from the environmental policy and objectives and targets.
- Documented procedures to monitor and measure key characteristics of operations and activities that can have a significant impact on the environment.
- Changes in documented procedures resulting from corrective and preventive action.
- Management review.
- Environmental statements.

However, there is some more documentation implied by SMS sections. For example, when you identify the environmental aspects of your activities, you should document them. Or identifying the legal requirements that are applicable to your activities would make no sense without documenting them.

Every procedure and policy that you create as a major part of your SMS needs to be documented. It needs to be written down and communicated among your staff so that everyone is aware of what you have done and what is required of them. Documents include:

- Policies
- Authorisations
- Licences
- Records
- Monitoring records.

Document Control

The process of document control is all about trying to ensure that you know which documents are current and which are outdated. You will find that you supersede some documents with new improved ones on a fairly regular basis. Document control should also work to ensure that there are controls in place outlining who is responsible for each document change and how new and old documents are added or removed from the system documents.

Four specific tasks must be addressed under the Document Control section of the plan:

1. Define the scope of the document control system (which documents must be controlled?).
2. Develop a document authorisation or approval system.

3. Ensure that only current versions of documents are used at the workstation where they are employed.

4. Out of date documents that need to be archived must be suitably identified.

Operational Control

Operational control takes your ideas and turns them into a reality. This involves your organisation looking for ways of implementing changes within it.

In order to gain control over the way that the system actually operates, you need to understand the link between what you do and the impacts that those actions have. Think of what you actually do and then try to find new ways of doing it.
This may be something that you find quite difficult. Commonly, the methods currently used are logical, they make sense and they have been in place for many years. So finding new and improved methods can be quite difficult.

But, never be afraid of making changes by involving your staff in this type of decision making. Ask them what they would change, why they would change it and how this would impact the operations of the organisation as a whole.

Operational control also allows you to ensure that you continue to achieve compliance with legislative and regulatory requirements. You can have procedures and processes in place dealing with the major issues and ensuring that you don’t have to say “this is how we do things” - you can actually show evidence of your overall procedures.

Emergency Preparedness and Response

You may find that many environmental issues arise from what could be considered to be an emergency situation, rather than something which comes about from the normal day-to-day operations of your organisation.

While these may be outside your control to a certain extent, careful planning for any such event can significantly reduce the impact. Ensure that you manage the risk of such events from occurring by developing contingency plans.

Four specific points will be addressed under the Emergency Preparedness and Response section of the regulation:

1. Identify the possibilities for accidents and emergency situations.
2. Prepare emergency response procedures, including preventing and mitigating environmental impacts.
3. Periodically test these procedures.
4. Evaluate and revise, as appropriate, your situation’s identification and response procedures.
5. The Emergency preparedness and response section of an SMS applies to the entire organisation; it is not limited to the significant environmental aspects.

Developing a Sustainability Policy

As previously mentioned, the Sustainability Policy should outline exactly what the organisation wishes to achieve in terms of sustainability and environmental protection. It should include the following sections:
Scope Statement

The scope statement should outline exactly what sections of the organisation and its processes are covered by the Sustainability Policy. It should also define what definition of sustainability is being adopted and what this means to your organisation.

The scope statement that you provide should:

- Identify the scope to which the policy applies. If it applies to only portions of the organisation – this should be identified.
- Outline the definition of sustainability that is being adhered to – there are a range of different definitions, one should be chosen.
- Outline what activities are being covered. For the most part this should include all operational factors within the organisation.
- Define the overall managerial aspiration towards which you are working.
- Define how you will ensure that you are making relevant changes.
- Outline your commitment – what are you actually committed to doing?

Making change.
Identifying change.
Being accountable for our actions.
Improving performance.
Being transparent in everything we do.

Principles and Practical Strategies

The sustainability policy should briefly outline the policies that your organisation should put in place to:

- Minimise resource use,
- Reduce toxic material and hazardous chemical use, and
- Employ life cycle management approaches.

By including practical strategies for reducing resource use by the organisation, you are in a position to meet the overall principles that your organisation finds important in establishing itself as a sustainable organisation.

Organisations that are fully committed to environmental performance often place these on their website, so you may find it useful to read one or two to get an idea of what you should place in such a statement. Overall, your principles sections should outline:

- The governing principles on which your organisation’s overall system is based.
- How sustainability is to be integrated into all business practices.
An obligation to adhere to all relevant legislation and regulation (a list of these specific items may be useful).

How the organisation communicates the importance of sustainability, and actively communicates its progress, to all staff.

The importance of minimising the environmental impact of everything that the organisation does.

A guideline to show the importance of the policy and how it will be communicated to staff, customers and suppliers.

The regular review of the policy and a commitment to continual improvement.
Once any key guidelines have been made, you can move on to the methods that will be used to put this into practice. There are a huge range of suggestions, but some you might like to consider include:

- Avoiding meetings where possible – instead opt to use technology to communicate.
- Encourage the use of public transport among staff (perhaps by providing subsidies).
- Arrange car pools for staff.
- Contributing to carbon emission schemes when making travel arrangements.
- Setting photocopiers and faxes to print double sided by default.
- Using recycled paper when buying office supplies.
- Identifying ways in which office waste can be reduced.
- Join schemes for recycling office toner and computer equipment rather than just throwing it away.
- When purchasing new equipment, ensuring that it is energy efficient.
- Purchasing your electricity from suppliers with good environmental performance levels.
- Ensure that when you buy supplies you can be sure the supplier is adhering to a sustainability policy.

Making Recommendations

It is likely that the sustainability policy will not be written by a single individual within the organisation, rather it will be developed from ideas from a number of individuals. Ideas will be sought and then each idea will be evaluated to establish whether it should be included within the policy. The policy ideas should be evaluated using the following factors:

- **Likely Effectiveness**: How likely is it that the idea will actually work? Not all ideas will be effective. On first impressions, some may seem like they will be very effective at reducing resource use; but even these ideas should be carefully examined to ensure that they will be effective at applying the principles contained in your policy statement.

- **Timeframes**: When examining ideas, look first at those ideas which can be implemented quickly. Those ideas are likely to be the ideas that will have an immediate impact at improving the organisation’s sustainability.

- **Budget**: When examining ideas and strategies, ensure that you consider the budget. The amount of money that it will cost to implement the strategy should reflect the effectiveness of the strategy. If a given strategy will cost a lot of money, but will provide very little improvement, carefully consider whether it should be implemented.
Activity One

Of the various components mentioned in this section for the development of an SMS, which does your organisation already have in place, and which would need to be developed further?
### Section 1 - ‘True’ or ‘False’ Quiz

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<tr>
<th>Please tick</th>
<th>True</th>
<th>False</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>A Sustainability Management System is a strategic document.</strong></td>
<td>✔</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Environmental management seeks to control a company’s environmental impact.</td>
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<tr>
<td>A company using an SMS goes beyond legal requirements.</td>
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<tr>
<td>SMS is a stop and start process that is undertaken once every year.</td>
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<td>Communication only concerns the flow of relevant information among people inside the organisation.</td>
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<td>The first section in ISO 14001 is on Implementation and Operation.</td>
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<td>Tasks should be delegated without authority.</td>
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<td>Documentation should be kept at an efficient maximum.</td>
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<td>In smaller organisations it is more common for an existing manager to take on the role of environmental manager.</td>
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<td>Top management must supply the resources to implement and maintain the SMS.</td>
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