

Unit 16: Working in Business and Administration

Unit reference number: F/502/4009

QCF level: 1

Credit value: 3

Guided learning hours: 30

Unit aim

This unit gives learners an overview of what working in business administration can be like. In particular, understanding roles of those they are working with, how to carry out routine tasks and the appropriate way to present themselves.

Unit introduction

Learners will be introduced to the different activities carried out by people working in administration and they will be required to follow instructions in order to carry out routine administrative tasks, using key office equipment. Learners will also gain an understanding of the role that a person working in an administrative role has, in helping the team to achieve its goals.

People working in administrative roles must be able to present themselves in a positive way, particularly when undertaking work for, or dealing with, colleagues and customers. Learners will be required to present themselves positively, both in relation to their appearance and their manner and behaviour.

Anyone working in an administrative role must be able to organise their time and prioritise tasks. Learners will have the opportunity to develop their knowledge and understanding of how to do this, for example through the use of tools such as task lists.

Finally, the unit looks at confidentiality of information and learners will consider the types of information that need to be confidential and the importance of keeping it confidential.

Essential resources

Centres need access to typical office equipment, such as a telephone and computer, so that learners can practise and develop their skills when interacting with others.

Learning outcomes, assessment criteria and unit amplification

In order to pass this unit, the evidence that the learner presents for assessment needs to demonstrate that they can meet all the learning outcomes for the unit. The assessment criteria determine the standard required to achieve the unit.

On completion of this unit a learner should:

Learning outcomes		Assessment criteria	Unit amplification
1	Understand the role of an administrator within an office	1.1 Describe different activities carried out by administrators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ <i>Activities:</i> checking, collating and providing information; answering the telephone and making calls; producing documents using IT, e.g. letters, agendas, invoices; filing and retrieving documents; collecting, sorting and distributing mail; preparing outgoing mail; receiving visitors; coordinating arrangements for meetings, e.g. sending information to delegates, booking meeting room; maintaining diary or calendar for individual or team; making travel arrangements
		1.2 State how the work of an administrator helps a team achieve its goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ <i>Achieving team goals:</i> ensuring communication within the team; helping other team members; monitoring and prioritising work for the team; ensuring all of the team works to same priorities
2	Be able to carry out routine administrative tasks	2.1 Follow instructions to complete routine administrative tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ <i>Following instructions:</i> listening; questioning if unsure; confirming understanding; checking instructions carried out properly □ <i>Routine tasks:</i> types of task, e.g. answering the telephone, producing documents, filing and retrieving documents, collating documents
		2.2 Use key equipment according to organisational procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ <i>Key equipment:</i> confirming the equipment needed for the task; types of office equipment, e.g. telephone, computer, fax, photocopier, printer, scanner, filing equipment □ <i>Procedures:</i> types of procedure, e.g. concerning proper use of equipment (following manufacturer's instructions, keeping equipment clean, reporting problems, leaving equipment ready for next user) health and safety (seating, posture) disposal of materials, preventing waste

Learning outcomes		Assessment criteria	Unit amplification
3	Be able to present themselves positively	3.1 Dress appropriately	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ <i>Appearance</i>: following dress code; smart; clean □ <i>Manner</i>: friendly; polite; using communication skills, e.g. listening, questioning, speaking clearly, being tactful
		3.2 Adopt a positive manner in dealings with colleagues and/or customers	
4	Be able to organise their work effectively	4.1 Use simple tools to organise their time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ <i>Organising time</i>: types of tools to organise time, e.g. task list, work schedule
		4.2 Prioritise tasks in discussion with their supervisor or manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ <i>Prioritising</i>: monitoring work; checking against deadlines; checking with supervisor; examining other commitments
5	Know the importance of confidentiality of information	5.1 State the reasons why it is important to keep some information confidential	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ <i>Reasons for confidentiality</i>: to prevent theft, e.g. identify theft, fraud; to avoid company sensitive information falling into a competitor's hands; the need to comply with the Data Protection Act
		5.2 Give examples of information that should be kept confidential	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ <i>Confidential information</i>: types of confidential information, e.g. customer records, employee records, commercially sensitive information, overheard conversations

Information for tutors

Delivery

The purpose of this unit is to introduce learners to the administrative environment and for them to experience different types of administrative tasks. The unit will encourage learners to think realistically about what it would be like to be employed in an administrative role. Learners would benefit from access to a practice office or the office in the learning environment, in order to carry out tasks and use office equipment. Guest speakers could provide useful input on the importance of following instructions and organisational procedures accurately, as well as on the importance of presenting oneself appropriately with regard to dress and manner. Examples of tools used to organise time, such as task lists, would be helpful when discussing organising time and prioritising tasks.

Learners should have the opportunity to carry out practical tasks, whether through using a model office at the centre or through external links. Learners must have access to office equipment so that they can practise their tasks.

Discussions should take place regarding types of confidential information and the importance of keeping some information confidential. Learners could discuss information relating to themselves that they regard as confidential and how they would feel if others knew about it. The centre's own rules relating to confidentiality could be used as an example.

Outline learning plan

The outline learning plan has been included in this unit as guidance.

Topic and suggested assignments/activities

Introduction to unit and structure of the programme of learning.

Small-group discussion on types of administrative tasks that may exist in an office.

Learners visit a large office to observe the main administrative roles in different departments such as customer service, reception, finance.

In pairs, learners discuss the different administrative roles that may exist in a small and a large business.

Tutor-led discussion – What makes a good team? How can an administrator contribute to a team?

Assessment – learners produce a job description for an administrative role provided by the tutor. Learners must describe at least four different activities that someone in that administrative role would need to carry out.

Assessment – one-to-one discussion with the tutor on how an administrator can help a team to achieve its goals (learning outcome 1).

Tutor-led discussion on the importance of communication and active listening. Why is communication so important in administration? Why is it important to listen to instructions, and to confirm that you have understood them?

Role-play activities – learners to take it in turns to role play both the administrator and the colleague/client. They will be given a range of role-play scenarios to complete.

Topic and suggested assignments/activities (continued)

Tutor-led discussion on organisational procedures in relation to the use of office equipment, for example in relation to health and safety, minimising waste.

Tutor-led demonstrations on how to use a range of office equipment. Learners to take it in turns to use the equipment.

Group discussion on the importance of presenting oneself positively. Tutor to provide examples of company dress codes to aid discussion.

Learners to watch a DVD on adopting a positive manner when dealing with colleagues and/or customers.

Role-play activities – in pairs, learners take it in turns to play the administrator and client in a range of situations provided by the tutor. Learners to practise adopting a positive manner.

Tutor-led discussion on the importance of organising time and prioritising work.

Exercise – tutor to provide a list of tasks that need to be completed. In small groups, learners practise completing work schedules or task lists, and placing the work in the correct order of priority.

Assessment – the tutor must give learners instructions to complete a series of administrative tasks. Learners must complete the tasks demonstrating the following:

- carrying out the task correctly, according to instructions
- use of key equipment where appropriate (at least two tasks)
- a positive manner
- appropriate dress
- use of tools to organise time
- correct prioritisation of work (learning outcome 2, learning outcome 3, learning outcome 4).

Tutor-led discussion – what types of information need to be kept confidential? Why is it important to keep some information confidential?

Exercise – tutor to give learners different types of information. Learners to decide whether the information should be confidential.

Exercise – learners to think of something about themselves that they would rather other people in the class did not know. How would they feel if that information was made public?

Assessment – in a one-to-one discussion with the tutor, learners must give examples of types of information that must be kept confidential, and say why this is important.

Assessment feedback, review and evaluation of unit.

Assessment

To achieve assessment criterion 1.1, learners must describe at least two different activities administrators carry out and, to achieve 1.2, learners must state at least two ways that administrators can help to achieve team goals. This can be evidenced through discussions or question and answer sessions with the tutor, or through completing a pro forma. For example, learners could produce a job description for an administrative role. Any question and answer sessions or discussions would need to be taped and a witness statement included.

To achieve 2.1, learners must be observed completing at least two administrative tasks such as answering a telephone call, collating documents or creating a document. To achieve 2.2, they must be observed using two types of key equipment, according to organisational procedures, such as a telephone, computer, photocopier. These could be used to carry out the same tasks for 2.1. These tasks could also relate to 4.1 and 4.2.

To achieve 3.1, learners need to have dressed appropriately for an administrative role, perhaps following a dress code set by the tutor. To achieve 3.2, they should be observed adopting a positive manner with peers and tutors and (if appropriate) any other people they may come into contact with during the course, for example customers or visiting speakers.

Assessment criteria 2.1, 2.2, 3.1 and 3.2 must be evidenced by a video recording and a witness or observation statement.

To achieve 4.1, learners should be observed using tools to organise their time and prioritise tasks in discussion with the tutor (these could be the tasks carried out for 2.1 and 2.2). This could be evidenced by producing a flow chart as a timeline produced after discussion with the tutor.

To achieve 5.1, learners should state reasons why it is important to keep some information confidential and, for 5.2, should give examples of at least two types of confidential information. This can be evidenced through discussion or question and answer sessions with the tutor or through completion of a pro forma. Learners could produce a chart of confidential information matched against reasons for confidentiality.

All witness statements and observation records should be retained for verification purposes.

Suggested resources

Books

Barker A – *Improve your Communication Skills* (Kogan Page, 2010)
ISBN 9780749456276

Lapsley A – *Business and Administration Student Handbook Level 1* (Council for Administration, 2011) ISBN 9780956773814

Tetley C – *Entry 3/Level 1 Business Administration Student Book* (Pearson, 2010)
ISBN 9781846909214

Websites

www.skillsca.org

Council for Administration

www.hse.gov.uk

Health and Safety Executive – information on health and safety in the workplace