CCSAPAE1
Develop information systems to meet the needs of users

Overview

This standard is for archaeologists who are not information technology experts, but who do have responsibility for computerised and manual information systems, and who have a need to store information on their activities. Organisations are using ever more sophisticated information systems for a wider range of activities, from archiving to interactive multi-media display systems. On the other hand the use of 'manual' (non-computerised) systems still have a role to play.

This standard deals with the need to keep up to date with developments and seek ways of improving information systems: improvements can be modifications to existing systems, or complete replacement of the hardware or software. This standard covers identifying who is using information systems, consulting with them on their requirements; identifying options for how the information system can be improved; and then seeking resources for implementation and implementing the improvements once they have been agreed, so that the information system is correctly installed and meets all its specifications.

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Performance criteria

You must be able to:

Identify the needs of users of information systems

P1   identify the existing information systems
P2   identify the types of users of the information systems
P3   estimate the numbers of users of the information systems
P4   identify the ways in which the current information systems are used
P5   identify the current and future requirements of users and review them with relevant people
P6   identify and assess the conflicting requirements of users
P7   provide users with opportunities to discuss their requirements, and seek clarification on any issues

Identify and recommend improvements to information systems

P8   regularly monitor the performance and function of the existing information systems
P9   match the requirements of users against the information systems' capabilities, and identify any problems
P10   encourage users to provide suggestions on improvements
P11   consult suitable information system specialists to assist in the identification of improvements
P12   identify and apply relevant technical and ethical standards
P13   identify and evaluate options for improvement
P14   identify accurately the resources required for the desired improvement
P15   consult users on the feasibility and acceptability of implementing options
P16   propose recommendations within the agreed timescale

Implement improvements to information systems

P17   consult specialists to assist in the implementation of improvements
P18   select systems and equipment to meet agreed specifications, and acquire them in accordance with the organisation's procedures
P19   ensure systems and equipment are installed and commissioned according to specification and verifying that they meet all relevant regulations
P20   ensure systems and equipment are configured with existing systems and equipment, and that they achieve their optimum performance
P21   ensure relevant people are briefed in the use of the systems and equipment
P22   ensure data are entered or transferred into the new systems and equipment according to an agreed plan
P23   resolve any problems with the implementation

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Knowledge and understanding

You need to know and understand:

K1   design valid questionnaires

K2   conduct user surveys

K3   the different types of users of information systems, and their broad objectives

K4   how to estimate the numbers of users of information systems

K5   the likely benefits of user surveys, and their limitations

K6   who the people are with whom results should be reviewed

K7   the likely conflicting requirements of users

K8   the methods that can be used to communicate with users, and those that have proved successful in the past

K9   the types of issues likely to be raised by users

K10   how to encourage users to provide constructive suggestions

K11   how to evaluate the options and select one

K12   relevant technical and ethical standards

K13   how to develop a specification for the improvement of the information system

K14   the current performance and capability of the existing information system, and how they are monitored

K15   the requirements of users

K16   the range of options for improving the information system

K17   the timescales and financial requirements for improvements

K18   how to select systems and equipment to meet specifications

K19   how to transfer data between items of equipment

K20   the most effective sources for the supply of systems and equipment

K21   the organisation's procedures for purchasing supplies

K22   the appropriate professional bodies and trade associations for people installing equipment, and what qualifications installers should possess

K23   what the configuration of the equipment should be

K24   who should be provided with information on the installation

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