
Overview

There are environmental laws and regulations that all businesses must comply with, and those for specific industry sectors. Good environmental practices can be cost-effective when re-cycling methods are being used. Operating measures to protect the environment can enhance a business's reputation and can also contribute to the profitability of your business.

You might do this if you need to

1. set up a business or social enterprise
2. move premises
3. change working practices
4. be responsible for environmental practice in the workplace

Environmental practice involves

5. knowing about current laws and regulations that can affect small businesses
6. putting in place measures to comply with environmental legislation
7. developing good environmental practice
8. reviewing the effectiveness of your business's environmental practices

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Assess the environmental impact of your business

Performance criteria

- You must be able to:*
- P1 find out about current key environmental laws and regulations
 - P2 identify regulations and requirements that are specific to your industry sector
 - P3 decide which laws and regulations apply to your business, its products or services
 - P4 decide what tasks need to be done, when and by whom, to comply with the laws and regulations
 - P5 identify the people and organisations where you can get advice and support on environmental practice
 - P6 look at other ways in which in which your business could affect the environment and think about any changes you could make to lessen the effect
 - P7 decide what additional measures you can take to make your business environmentally friendly
 - P8 investigate the cost benefits of introducing these measures
 - P9 decide who should be involved in implementing environmentally friendly practices and what their role should be
 - P10 identify how adopting any of these measures might enhance the reputation of your business
 - P11 carry out regular reviews of environmental practices of your business and identify further steps to improve their effectiveness

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Knowledge and understanding

You need to know and understand:

Laws and regulations

- K1 what laws and regulations you must comply with to reduce the harm your business may cause to the environment (such as those covering emissions to air, noise, waste, raw materials, packaging, energy use, and water use)
- K2 how to meet the requirements of environmental laws and regulations
- K3 who has the power to assess your businesses to enforce environmental laws and regulations
- K4 what can happen if you fail to comply with environmental laws and other regulations

You need to know and understand:

Good environmental practice

- K5 why it is a good idea to improve your business's environmental performance, even if you are not required to do so by law
- K6 how to assess your business's environmental impact and identify what could be improved
- K7 what simple changes you can make to improve environmental performance, such as saving energy, recycling, reducing travel and using less water

You need to know and understand:

Business benefits

- K8 how good environmental practices can help benefit your business's reputation
- K9 how to communicate your environmental commitment to shareholders, investors, customers, employees and the general public
- K10 how involving employees in environmental discussions can improve their motivation
- K11 what financial incentives there may be to make changes (such as capital allowances and carbon trust loans)
- K12 how being able to show that your business has sound environmental policies and procedures helps in getting competitive insurance premiums

You need to know and understand:

Professional advice and information

- K13 what information on environmental law is available and from which organisations
- K14 why it is important to use proper advice to find out about law and regulations
- K15 what role the professional adviser has
- K16 how to use free and paid-for sources of advice

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