

Competency Standard

UNIT TITLE: ACCESS AND INTERPRET PRODUCT INFORMATION		NOMINAL HOURS: 80
UNIT NUMBER: D2.TTA.CL2.01		
UNIT DESCRIPTOR: This unit deals with skills and knowledge required to access and explain domestic and/or internal tourism-specific information to support sales activities.		
ELEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE CRITERIA	UNIT VARIABLE AND ASSESSMENT GUIDE	
<p>Element 1: Identify and evaluate sources of product information</p> <p>1.1 List potential <i>sources of product information</i></p> <p>1.2 <i>Determine usefulness</i> of product information sources</p> <p>1.3 Identify <i>items that may contain product information</i></p> <p>Element 2: Access product information</p> <p>2.1 Select appropriate sources of product information</p> <p>2.2 <i>Register</i> to receive and/or access product information</p> <p>2.3 Visit suppliers and other sources to talk with sales staff and obtain items that may contain product information</p>	<p>Unit Variables</p> <p>The Unit Variables provide advice to interpret the scope and context of this unit of competence, allowing for differences between enterprises and workplaces. It relates to the unit as a whole and facilitates holistic assessment.</p> <p>This unit applies to work in the travel industry within the labour divisions of the hotel and travel industries and may include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Travel Agencies 2. Tour Operation <p><i>Sources of product information</i> may relate to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal business sources, including databases and reservation systems either manual or computerised • Direct contact with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Travel suppliers, including airlines, cruise operators, railway operators, bus lines, car rental businesses, limousine hire and taxis ▪ Suppliers and providers of support and ancillary services, including travel insurance providers, finance providers, currency exchange, conference and similar venues and interpreters 	

<p>2.4 <i>Access selected internal databases and internal business systems</i></p> <p>2.5 <i>Access external sources of product information</i></p> <p>Element 3: Interpret product information</p> <p>3.1 <i>Identify specific sales needs that form the basis for the search for product information</i></p> <p>3.2 <i>Read items that may contain product information</i></p> <p>3.3 <i>Integrate sourced product information with identified client needs and/or preferences</i></p> <p>Element 4: Provide product information</p> <p>4.1 <i>Interpret industry terminology</i></p> <p>4.2 <i>Pass on general information relating to products and services</i></p> <p>4.3 <i>Explain specific details about product and services</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Tour operators and wholesalers ▪ Travel agencies and associations ▪ Peak travel bodies ▪ Government tourism industry bodies and authorities, including domestic and international bodies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Literature, including reference books, magazines and newspapers • Websites, including individual companies, directories, news sites, surveys and research sites • Personal network of contacts, including those within the host enterprise and those external to the business <p><i>Product information may relate to:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Travel, including air, cruise, train, bus, car • Destinations, including statistical information and details relating to climate, currency, maps, travel guides, events, languages, history, safety, government information, time zones, culture and communications • Tourist activities and attractions, including natural and man-made • Tours, trips, sight-seeing and excursions • Accommodation facilities, including 5-star to back-packer venues • Services, including medical, personal, entertainment, sporting, shopping • Travel requirements, including requirements relating to entry, passport, visas, warnings and advisory bulletins, customs information • Finance • Travel insurance.
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Determine usefulness may include:

- Defining enterprise needs
- Assessing validity, reliability, accuracy, currency and sufficiency of information provided
- Evaluating method and speed of access to information provided
- Identifying ease of access to information provided
- Appraising cost of obtaining information
- Complying with enterprise policies and commercial agreements, including agency, sub-agency and franchise requirements
- Reviewing the utility of sources on a regular basis.

Items that may contain product information will include:

- Brochures
- Timetables
- Tariff sheets, including confidential tariff schedules
- Sales and promotion kits
- Supplier information kits
- Product manuals
- Advertising fliers
- Manufacturer's specifications
- Websites, including downloads from same.

Register may include:

- Registering on-line
- Paying a fee

- Establishing required password and username, if required
- Lodging host enterprise details with product information source
- Establishing the *bona fides* of the host enterprise
- Joining an association or body in order to enable access.

Access selected internal databases may include:

- Obtaining internal authority to access required fields of information
- Setting-up password access authority
- Determining folders, documents and locations to use.

Access external sources may include:

- Telephoning organisations, bodies and authorities
- Going on-line
- Requesting a visit from sales staff from other organisations.

Specific sales needs may relate to:

- Non-negotiable client needs, including budget, timing, duration of travel, required destination and activities, health
- Requests from and preferences of client, including general enquiries and special interest requests, travel preferences, timing and designated destination activities
- Need to provide quotations
- Processing a reservation, including booking and coordinating supplier services and products
- Issuing non-air documentation
- Processing financial transactions, including payment of deposits and full-payment for bookings

- Need to amend an existing booking due to unforeseen circumstances
- Cancellations and/or alterations made to bookings.

Integrate sourced product information may include:

- Matching availability and data to identified client needs and preferences to the best extent possible
- Searching for possible alternatives and options
- Converting supplier codes and abbreviations into usable data to adequately interpret the information provided.

Industry terminology may include:

- Industry jargon
- Industry specifications
- Common abbreviations
- Industry and supplier/provider codes
- Use of 24-hour international time clock
- Technical capacity of equipment.

Products and services may include:

- Transportation and transfers
- Accommodation, meals, functions and entertainment
- Tours, cruises and entry to attractions
- Tour guide services and activities
- Special events, including special event consumable items
- Venue and convention facilities, including equipment to support same
- Speaker, audio-visual, catering, health and financial services.

Specific details may include:

- Costs, tariffs and rates
- Conditions and rules
- Scheduling information
- Product codes
- Booking procedures
- Points of departure and arrival
- Touring inclusions and exclusions
- Technical specifications for audio-visual and other meetings and events equipment.

Assessment Guide

The following skills and knowledge must be assessed as part of this unit:

- Understanding and following the enterprise's policies and procedures in regard to accessing product information both internally and externally
- Knowledge of major categories of tourism products and services
- Using industry terminology, jargon and abbreviations
- Ability to convert to and from international time
- General knowledge of destinations and travel options
- Understanding of the advantages and disadvantages of travel choices, destinations, activities and other travel-related purchasing options.

Linkages To Other Units

- Access and retrieve computer-based data
- Develop and update local knowledge
- Maintain quality customer/guest service

- Use common business tools and technology
- Develop and update tourism industry knowledge
- Promote products and services to customers
- Operate a computerised reservation system
- Maintain product information inventory
- Source and provide destination information and advice
- Construct and apply tourism product research
- Promote tourism products and services.

Critical Aspects of Assessment

Evidence of the following is essential:

- Understanding of arrangements that exist to determine sources of information that are to be used
- Demonstrated ability to evaluate and rate nominated sources of information against given criteria
- Demonstrated ability to access a nominated range of information sources both electronically and paper-based to identify a designated set of information
- Demonstrated ability to communicate product information to clients to meet identified needs and preferences

Context of Assessment

Assessment must ensure:

- Actual or simulated workplace application of techniques to access and interpret product information.

Resource Implications

Training and assessment must include the use of real equipment, with access to the Internet, databases, facilities and products.

Assessment Methods

The following methods may be used to assess competency for this unit:

- Observation of practical candidate performance
- Case studies
- Role plays
- Oral and written questions
- Third party reports completed by a supervisor
- Project and assignment work.

Key Competencies in this Unit

Level 1 = competence to undertake tasks effectively

Level 2 = competence to manage tasks

Level 3 = competence to use concepts for evaluating

Key Competencies	Level	Examples
Collecting, organising and analysing information	2	Determine and evaluate suitable sources of product information
Communicating ideas and information	1	Explain product information to clients
Planning and organising activities	1	Schedule review of product information sources

	Working with others and in teams	1	Liaise with industry partners and other staff to access and identify relevant information as required by the client
	Using mathematical ideas and techniques	1	Calculate costs to ensure compliance with client budget
	Solving problems	1	Develop alternatives for clients to enable their requirements to be met as best as possible
	Using technology	1	Research and access information via the Internet