

Competency Standard

UNIT TITLE: MAINTAIN PRODUCT INFORMATION INVENTORY		NOMINAL HOURS: 30
UNIT NUMBER: D2.TTA.CL2.12		
UNIT DESCRIPTOR: This unit deals with skills and knowledge required to maintain and use a product information inventory to support the effective operation of a travel and tourism business. It does not relate to the provision of product information to clients.		
ELEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE CRITERIA	UNIT VARIABLE AND ASSESSMENT GUIDE	
<p>Element 1: Identify the function of product information inventory in the travel and tourism business</p> <p>1.1 Describe the <i>role of product information inventories</i></p> <p>1.2 List the <i>businesses</i> involved with <i>product information inventories</i></p> <p>1.3 Identify the <i>formats of product information inventories</i></p> <p>Element 2: Source and interpret products and information for inventory</p> <p>2.1 Identify information that may be entered onto a product information inventory</p> <p>2.2 <i>Request businesses</i> to supply required product information</p> <p>2.3 <i>Interpret product information</i> received from <i>businesses</i></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 the maintenance and use of a product information inventory to support the effective operation of a travel and tourism business 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>Role of product information inventories</i> may be related to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing a readily accessible and current database of information that staff can use in their selling endeavours • Optimising the potential for staff to make accurate bookings and sales that best comply with identified client requests • Enabling staff to respond professionally to client requests for information. 	

<p>2.4 <i>Review and evaluate product information</i></p> <p>2.5 Obtain <i>additional product information</i>, where necessary</p> <p>Element 3: Enter product information onto inventory systems</p> <p>3.1 Load data onto the product information inventory system in accordance with <i>host enterprise policies and procedures</i></p> <p>3.2 Verify completeness, accuracy and currency of information entered onto the product information inventory</p> <p>Element 4: Update product information inventory</p> <p>4.1 <i>Monitor product information inventory</i></p> <p>4.2 Request <i>additional allocations</i></p> <p>4.3 <i>Remove information</i> from product information inventory</p> <p>4.4 <i>Input up-dates and other product information</i> changes as they arrive</p> <p>Element 5: Supply inventory information</p> <p>5.1 Identify <i>internal personnel</i> to whom product inventory information advice may be provided</p> <p>5.2 Identify <i>frequency</i> with which product inventory information advice may be provided</p> <p>5.3 Prepare and distribute <i>reports</i> and product information to internal personnel</p>	<p><i>Businesses</i> may include:</p> <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, interpreters • Tour operators and wholesalers • Travel agencies and associations • Peak travel bodies • Government tourism industry bodies and authorities, including domestic and international bodies • The host enterprise, including identification of department and individuals within the host enterprise who are involved in this. <p><i>Product information</i> may include:</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, ranging from five-star to back-packer venues and including blocked dates, seasons and times, minimum purchase, use, booking and stay requirements, where applicable • Services, including medical, personal, entertainment, sporting, shopping • Travel requirements, including requirements relating to entry, passport, visas, warnings and advisory bulletins, customs information
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5.4 Provide *assistance to internal personnel*

- Finance and travel insurance
- Allotments of any type of tourism product, including accommodation, seats, entry passes
- Rates, costs and tariffs, including details relating to specials, packages, discounts, peak and low season rates, premiums, commissions and group rates
- General product information, including venue and local area and facilities information
- Terms and conditions of sale, including details that apply to the business and to clients/purchasers
- Sales data, including internal tracking of sales together with up-dated sales data from suppliers to assist with identifying allotments that remain for sale.

Formats of product information inventories may include:

- Manual systems
- Computerised systems
- Combination of the above.

Request businesses may relate to:

- Telephoning targeted businesses
- Making face-to-face requests of sales staff that visit the office
- Making e-mail requests
- Registering to receive information, newsletters and up-dates.

Interpret product information may include:

- Understanding resources, including interpreting codes, abbreviations, acronyms and individual supplier terminology
- Converting currencies
- Interpreting terms and conditions

- Understanding limitations and elements of products and services, especially packages and deals
- Identifying fees and charges
- Using international time in accordance with a 24-hour clock.

Review and evaluate product information may include:

- Assessing currency of the information provided
- Determining degree of usefulness of the information
- Identifying new information that is needed to supplement existing product information
- Considering the applicability of information to client queries and needs
- Judging accuracy and honesty of the information provided by suppliers.

Additional product information may include:

- Making telephone calls and/or sending e-mails to individual suppliers
- Internet research
- Interrogation of the internal database
- Asking network of contacts.

Host enterprise policies and procedures may include:

- Timing of data entry and up-dates, including up-date schedules
- Authorities to enter data, including designation of individuals and positions within the business
- Identification of specific data that must and must not be entered onto the system
- Complying with operational requirements of the data system, including log on procedures, system integrity, fields to be used, file creation procedures, file naming protocols and system security requirements
- Version controls to note dates material was last edited/up-dated.

Monitor product information inventory may include:

- Assessing completeness, accuracy and currency of the product information
- Verifying source of information
- Monitoring bookings, allotments/allocations and requests
- Ensuring regular up-dates in accordance with supplier schedules and seasonal demands
- Ensuring all products and services offered are supported by suitable and sufficient product information inventory.

Additional allocations may include contacting suppliers and support services to organise extra allocations to meet:

- One-off peak load demand
- General trends indicating increased demand.

Remove information may relate to:

- Deleting information regarding products and services that have been removed from the service menu
- Over-writing dated information with revised information
- Removing out-of-date information
- Complying with designated host enterprise guidelines, including guidelines and requirements imposed by suppliers
- Removing hard copy material that supports and reflects product information inventory data.

Input up-dates and other product information may include:

- Adding new information as soon as possible to ensure currency of product information inventory
- Ensuring related hard copy material is removed and/or amended, including promotional material and hard copy information used by staff for selling activities
- Ensuring accuracy of data entry.

Internal personnel may include:

- Head office
- Managers, supervisors and owners
- Sales staff, including counter-staff, ticketing officers and other client-contact staff
- Marketing department
- Accounting department, including individual responsible for price setting.

Frequency may relate to:

- Prepared schedules for disseminating internal information, including staff briefings, schedules staff meetings and management meetings
- Complying with immediate demand where no prior notice exists.

Reports may include:

- Sales reports
- Reservation reports
- Cost comparisons for various product suppliers
- Features and benefits comparisons for various product suppliers and/or packages
- Usage rates for various product suppliers and individual products and/or services
- General management tools to track and evaluate business performance in conjunction with financial reports.

Assistance to internal personnel may include:

- Providing information as required
- Clarifying information and information that is potentially conflicting
- Making recommendations
- Verifying information sourced by staff.

Assessment Guide

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

- Enterprise policies and procedures in regard to sourcing and maintaining product information both internally and externally
- Knowledge of the role of product information inventories in industry
- Knowledge of major categories of tourism products and services
- Knowledge of industry products, product information and rate options and variations
- Industry terminology, jargon and abbreviations
- Ability to convert to and from international time
- Ability to produce and interpret product information inventory reports
- Ability to calculate rates.

Linkages To Other Units

- Access and interpret product information
- 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
- 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 current and potential sources of information that can be used within the product information inventory of the host enterprise in-line with the products and services offered by that business
- Demonstrated ability to obtain and interpret product information to support a nominated suite of products and services offered by the host enterprise
- Demonstrated ability to create, up-date, review, evaluate, amend and maintain product information inventory files for a nominated suite of products and services offered by the host enterprise
- Demonstrated ability to calculate costs relating to nominated items of product information for products and services offered by the host enterprise
- Demonstrated ability to secure additional allocations from suppliers for a nominated suite of products and services offered by the host enterprise
- Demonstrated ability to produce a set of nominated reports to support, track and/or explain designated aspects of sales for given products and services offered by the host enterprise
- Demonstrated ability to provide assistance to personnel in relation to nominated aspects of data contained within the product information inventory of the host enterprise.

Context of Assessment

Assessment must ensure:

- Simulated or actual workplace for the application of techniques to maintain product inventory information.

Resource Implications

Training and assessment must include the use of real equipment, databases, facilities and product information; and access to workplace standards, procedures, policies, guidelines, tools and equipment.

Assessment Methods

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

- Observation of practical candidate performance
- Case studies
- Simulated exercises
- Role plays
- Portfolio of reports, database up-dates, inventory documentation and resources to support the maintenance and operation of a product information inventory
- 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	3	Obtain, evaluate and synthesise product information
Communicating ideas and information	3	Communicate with suppliers to obtain and clarify product information; explain product information to colleagues
Planning and organising activities	2	Schedule reviews and product information up-dates

	Working with others and in teams	2	Supply responses to queries from colleagues; liaise with internal and external personnel to maintain currency and accuracy of the product information inventory
	Using mathematical ideas and techniques	3	Calculate costs
	Solving problems	1	Resolve issues relating to currency, accuracy, honesty, completeness and applicability of product information
	Using technology	2	Use database technologies to record and modify product information inventories