



TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL
EDUCATION AND TRAINING
(TVET) COUNCIL

Occupational Standards

SETTING THE STANDARD FOR JOB PERFORMANCE



What are Occupational Standards?

An occupational standard is a precise description of what an employee is expected to know and be able to do in his/her work role.

Occupational standards are:

- Defined as the “ideal” benchmarks against which actual performance is measured (i.e. assessed)
- Designed to anticipate occupational requirements, rather than only reflect current activity
- Used to develop education and training programmes
- Used to assess competent performance in a work role
- Used to certify job competence.

Occupational Standards are set by Industry Lead Bodies – i.e. groups led by employers and practitioners with the relevant occupational expertise who know exactly what skills are needed to do each job well. The standards are benchmarked against regional and/or international standards which are then locally validated to ensure that they are fit for purpose, and packaged into National/Caribbean Vocational Qualifications (N/CVQs).

The Anatomy of an Occupational Standard

An occupational standard comprises an element title, performance criteria and a range indicator. Consider the following example:

OCCUPATIONAL STANDARD

DEFINITION

EXAMPLE

An Element Title

A statement of an outcome which an individual is expected to achieve.

Greet Customers and/or Visitors Face-to-Face and Meet Initial Needs.

Performance Criteria

A number of statements which describe critical outcomes that have to be achieved and the standard of performance which is required.

(a) Customer and/or visitor is greeted in accordance with organisational requirements.

(b) Purpose of visit is ascertained using communication skills to elicit information in accordance with organisational requirements.

A Range Indicator

A description of the range of applications and contexts over which the standard is intended to apply.

Greeting:

May include but is not limited to – a smile, polite language, appropriate welcoming phrase, appropriate non-verbal communication.

Requirements:

May include but are not limited to – timeliness, accuracy of directions, courtesy.

Underpinning Knowledge

Specifies the knowledge and understanding an individual needs for competent performance.

The policies and procedures relating to customer service.

What are the benefits to the Economy?

Occupational standards can offer:

- A better guarantee of available skill sets in the labour force
- Greater labour force planning options
- Increased ability to compete with other economies
- Increased attractiveness of the labour force to foreign investors
- Potential for economic growth
- Consistency in national training provision
- Clear benchmarks to assure and evaluate quality of training available nationally
- Basis for competence-based qualifications such as N/CVQs

Benefits to the Employer

- More relevant education and training provision and qualifications
- Improved flexibility and competitive advantage
- A better “guarantee” of capability
- A benchmark for use in customised training
- Incentives to employees
- Contribution to Human Resources Management and Development processes (e.g. Job Descriptions, Job Evaluation, Performance Appraisal and Career Progression).

Benefits to the individual

- Recognition, progression and increased mobility (work related, education and training related)
- Improved access to training and qualifications by previously marginalised and disadvantaged groups
- Fair and just assessment and development opportunities (due to independent assessment criteria and open access to assessment and qualifications).

Overall Aim of the Standards Programme

The main objective of the standards programme is to base training, qualifications and recognition of achievement on independent evidence of what people are able to do – rather than:

- What they know/ought to know (regardless of relevance)
- Length of service or training programme
- Where or how they were trained
- Arbitrary and unreliable assumptions and judgements.

For further information please contact:

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