Department for Education

Business management and operations

Level 3 V Level subject content

DRAFT FOR CONSULTATION

November 2026

Contents

1. Introduction 3
2. Aims 4
2.1 Progression 5
3. Subject Content 6
3.1 Guidance for awarding organisations 6
3.2 Optionality 6
3.3 Work-related purposes 7
Annex 23
Glossary of Terms 23
Transferable Skills 25
Workplace behaviours 27
Links to Occupational Standards 29
Links to Foundation Certificates 29

1. Introduction

V Level subject content sets out the knowledge, understanding and skills common to all V Level qualification specifications in this subject. The content provides the framework within which awarding organisations create detailed specifications. This subject content is grounded in key principles which underpin effective business management and operations, including organisational planning, management of people and resources, operational processes, procurement and supply, informed decision-making, stakeholder relationships and continuous improvement.

Students will apply their learning across a range of organisational contexts, considering how organisational purpose, size, structure and operational requirements influence business management, procurement and supply, resource allocation and decision-making. Contexts should reflect public, private and third-sector organisations, organisations of different sizes, and those providing goods or services.

The Department does not set mandatory prior learning requirements for V Levels. As V Level content is set at level 3, providers will set their own entry requirements at level 2, including any GCSEs required.

2. Aims

This content enables students to develop and apply knowledge, understanding and skills in business management and operations. It supports students to analyse information, solve problems, make informed decisions, plan and coordinate activities and resources, and evaluate opportunities for improvement in organisational contexts.

Teaching and learning materials developed by awarding organisations should reflect a range of business and organisational contexts, demonstrating how organisational purpose, structure and operational requirements influence management decisions, procurement and supply activities, and operational performance.

The purpose of this qualification is to enable students to:

Apply their knowledge, skills and understanding to achieve the following work-related purposes (WRPs):

- WRP1: Plan and coordinate operational activities, people and resources to achieve organisational objectives
- WRP2: Plan and manage procurement and supply activities to meet organisational requirements and maintain continuity of supply
- WRP3: Analyse business and operational information to support decision-making and improve organisational performance
- WRP4: Manage stakeholder and supplier relationships to achieve effective operational and commercial outcomes
- WRP5: Evaluate business operations and processes to identify and develop justified improvements

Through this, develop transferable skills, including:

- analysing - interpreting business and operational information to identify patterns, trends, performance issues and opportunities for improvement
- communicating - presenting information, plans, findings and recommendations clearly to colleagues, stakeholders and suppliers
- critical thinking - questioning information, considering alternative approaches and using evidence to form reasoned conclusions
- decision making - evaluating options, considering organisational requirements and justifying decisions about resources, procurement and operational activities
- evaluating - assessing business performance, supplier proposals, operational processes and improvement options against defined criteria
- investigating - gathering and examining information to identify the causes of operational problems, inefficiencies and performance issues
- leading - coordinating people and resources, communicating expectations and supporting others to achieve shared operational objectives

- observing - monitoring activities, resource use and performance to identify changes, issues and deviations from agreed plans
- planning - prioritising and sequencing activities, allocating resources and establishing responsibilities, timescales and objectives
- recording - maintaining accurate operational, procurement, supplier and performance information to support organisational activities and decision-making

Develop in-depth knowledge and understanding of the key theories and principles which support effective practice in the subject, including:

- business organisations, management and operational principles
- leadership, people management and organisational performance
- enterprise, entrepreneurship and business development
- procurement, logistics and supply chain principles and processes
- financial and commercial principles and resource management
- legal, regulatory, ethical and sustainable practice
- data, information and digital technologies used in business management and operations
- risk management, quality, change management and continuous improvement
- communication, stakeholder and supplier relationship principles

The aspects listed above are indicative of the scope and intent of the qualification and are not intended to be exhaustive.

2.1 Progression

V Levels aim to encourage motivation and interest in pursuing careers and further study related to business management and operations, by providing a broad and applied understanding of the subject, without requiring early occupational specialisation.

The content provides both a strong conceptual foundation for the subject and the basis for developing in-depth understanding of business management and operations, through applying knowledge and skills to achieve practical work-related purposes. This includes understanding how organisations operate, how people and resources are managed, and how operational, procurement and supply activities contribute to organisational performance.

This combination of theory and practice, and the transferable skills students develop, should effectively prepare them to access a wide range of related higher-level study and training across multiple sectors. This may include higher education courses in business and management, business operations, operations management, logistics, procurement and supply chain management and related subjects, and higher-level apprenticeships in business, management, operations, procurement, supply chain, commercial and related occupational areas.

3. Subject Content

3.1 Guidance for awarding organisations

All the content outlined in this document must be included in qualification specifications.

Lists of content which start with a colon ':'

This denotes that all the content in the list is compulsory and must be included in awarding organisations' qualification specifications.

Lists of content which start with 'including'

This denotes that all the content in the list is compulsory and must be included in awarding organisations' qualification specifications. The list is a minimum; awarding organisations can choose to add to the list. To ensure comparability between awarding organisations' qualification specifications in a subject, DfE will use this approach in limited instances where additional relevant content could reasonably be added without affecting the comparability of qualification specifications and assessments.

Use of 'e.g.'

This is used to exemplify what is meant by the content statement. It is used to ensure awarding organisations have a clear and consistent understanding of the term; to signal that the example in use now may be superseded by more up-to-date examples; or where different examples could reasonably be included without affecting the comparability of qualification specifications and assessments. Awarding organisations can use the cited example, where it remains relevant and appropriate.

Organisational scenarios

The DfE Subject Content indicates where learning should be contextualised through organisational scenarios. The content will not specify the specific scenarios. Scenarios provided by awarding organisations within qualification specifications should be varied and inclusive, drawing on examples from a range of sectors, local labour markets and organisational contexts to avoid reliance on prior workplace experience or sector specific knowledge.

3.2 Optionality

There are no optional or elective elements through which students can meet the mandatory minimum content required for this V Level subject.

3.3 Work-related purposes

Students are expected to apply knowledge, understanding and skills to achieve authentic work-related purposes. The content specified in this section is expected to be demonstrated through applied activity.

When developing qualification specifications, awarding organisations must allocate between 210 and 240 guided learning hours (GLH) to the development of applied knowledge, understanding and skills directly needed to achieve the defined work-related purposes.

The scope of content for each work-related purpose may vary; they are not expected to each be delivered in the order specified here or be the same ‘size’ in terms of GLH. However, together they will align with the overall GLH for this section of the content.

WRP1: Plan and coordinate operational activities, people and resources to achieve organisational objectives

To achieve this work-related purpose, students interpret organisational objectives and operational requirements, develop plans for activities and resource use, allocate responsibilities, and respond to operational constraints. Students use information about capacity, costs, timescales and performance to justify planning and coordination decisions.

To do this, students are expected to apply the following knowledge and understanding:

- how organisational aims, objectives, strategy and priorities influence operational planning and resource decisions
- the purpose and characteristics of operational plans: objectives, activities, timescales, milestones, responsibilities and resource requirements
- approaches to managing individual and team performance: setting performance expectations and objectives, monitoring progress against agreed requirements, identifying performance gaps, providing constructive feedback and determining support or corrective actions based on the causes of performance gaps, individual capabilities and operational requirements
- methods of scheduling, sequencing and prioritising operational activities: task lists, Gantt charts, milestone plans and dependency mapping, taking account of resource availability and competing priorities
- the principles of budgeting and cost control for operational activities and resource use: preparing budgets from estimated costs, distinguishing fixed and variable costs, monitoring actual expenditure against budgeted amounts, calculating monetary and percentage variances, and identifying actions to address overspending or resource constraints
- the use of demand information and forecasts when determining operational capacity, resource requirements and priorities
- the use of milestones, targets and key performance indicators to monitor progress against operational plans, measure resource use, identify variations from planned activities and support decisions about corrective action
- reasons operational plans may need to be adjusted in response to changes, issues and performance information
- principles of allocating organisational resources, roles and responsibilities: matching tasks to individual capabilities, balancing workloads, considering resource availability, capacity, costs and operational priorities, and establishing accountability for assigned activities
- the role of communication, coordination and feedback in maintaining operational performance and responding to changing requirements

PROPOSED SUBJECT CONTENT FOR CONSULTATION

In working to achieve the work-related purpose, students must be able to:

- interpret organisational objectives, requirements and constraints to determine operational priorities
- allocate roles, responsibilities and resources based on operational priorities, individual capabilities, workload, resource availability, capacity, cost, efficiency and sustainability, justifying allocation decisions against organisational requirements
- develop operational plans setting out activities, responsibilities, resource requirements, priorities, dependencies, milestones and timescales
- calculate and interpret budget variances, assess their implications for operational activities and resource use, and recommend justified actions to address identified cost pressures
- communicate operational plans, expectations, priorities responsibilities and changes relevant to stakeholders
- monitor operational activities and resource use against plans, targets and key performance indicators, analyse variances and emerging issues, and justify adjustments to operational plans and resource allocation in response to changing requirements
- evaluate the effectiveness of operational planning, people coordination and resource use against organisational objectives

WRP2: Plan and manage procurement and supply activities to meet organisational requirements and maintain continuity of supply

To achieve this work-related purpose, students interpret procurement requirements, identify and compare potential suppliers, evaluate costs, quality, delivery and supply risks, and justify procurement decisions. Students monitor supplier performance and recommend actions to address supply issues and maintain continuity of supply.

To do this, students are expected to apply the following knowledge and understanding:

- the stages of the procurement cycle: identifying requirements, developing specifications, sourcing suppliers, evaluating proposals, ordering, receiving goods or services, monitoring performance and review
- the purpose and characteristics of specifications for goods and services: quantity, quality, technical or service requirements, delivery timescales and acceptance criteria
- procurement and sourcing methods: competitive quotation, tendering, direct sourcing and use of approved suppliers; and factors influencing their selection: organisational purchasing policies, value and quantity of purchases, quality requirements, urgency, supplier availability and approval requirements
- methods of identifying potential suppliers: supplier directories, approved supplier lists, market research and requests for information; and methods of evaluating suppliers: weighted scoring matrices, comparative analysis of quotations and assessment against specified price, quality, capacity, capability, reliability, lead-time and service requirements
- the purpose and use of requests for quotations, tenders, purchase orders and contracts within procurement activities
- the relationship between stock levels, demand, supplier lead times, storage capacity and reorder requirements in maintaining stock availability and continuity of supply
- causes of supply disruption: supplier failure, capacity constraints, quality issues, transport delays and changes in demand; and approaches to maintaining continuity of supply: alternative suppliers, contingency stock, adjustments to order quantities and timings, and alternative transport or delivery arrangements
- legal, regulatory, organisational and ethical requirements affecting procurement and supply activities: contractual obligations relating to specifications, delivery and payment; organisational purchasing policies, approval limits and authorisation procedures; prevention of bribery, conflicts of interest and unfair supplier treatment; and requirements for accurate procurement records and confidential handling of supplier information
- principles of sustainable and responsible procurement: environmental, social and ethical considerations in sourcing and supplier decisions

- the functions and uses of digital systems in procurement and supply activities: electronic purchasing systems for recording purchase requests, orders and approvals; inventory management systems for monitoring stock levels and replenishment requirements; and supplier information systems for maintaining supplier records and monitoring delivery performance

In working to achieve the work-related purpose, students must be able to:

- interpret organisational requirements to determine procurement and supply needs
- develop specifications for required goods or services
- select and justify procurement and sourcing methods based on organisational purchasing requirements, cost, quantity, quality, timescales, supplier availability and procurement procedures
- identify potential suppliers using specified sourcing methods and organisational requirements, and assess their suitability against defined selection criteria
- analyse and compare supplier proposals using defined evaluation criteria, identify trade-offs between cost, quality, capability, reliability, lead times and service requirements, and justify the relative suitability of suppliers
- make justified supplier and procurement recommendations based on relevant evidence and organisational requirements
- produce and maintain procurement documentation for the relevant stages of the procurement cycle, recording purchasing requirements, supplier information, orders, approvals and delivery details in accordance with organisational procedures
- coordinate ordering, stock replenishment and delivery activities using order information, stock levels, supplier lead times and delivery requirements, and maintain accurate records to support operational requirements and continuity of supply
- assess the impact of procurement and supply issues arising from delays, shortages, quality failures and discrepancies, evaluate possible responses and justify actions to maintain operational requirements and continuity of supply
- identify procurement and supply risks, assess their potential impact on cost, quality, delivery and continuity of supply, and justify actions to reduce or manage the identified risks
- apply relevant legal, regulatory, organisational, ethical and sustainability requirements to procurement and supply decisions
  analyse procurement and supply performance information against agreed requirements and performance measures, identify variances and their potential implications, and justify actions to address performance issues

WRP3: Analyse business and operational information in order to support decision-making and improve organisational performance

To achieve this work-related purpose, students select and apply appropriate methods to analyse business and operational information, identify trends and performance variations, and interpret findings against organisational objectives. Students use the results to evaluate performance and develop evidence-based recommendations that support management decision-making.

To do this, students are expected to apply the following knowledge and understanding:

- types and sources of business, operational and supply chain data and information: customer demand, orders, revenue, forecasts, resource use, people and performance information, inventory, supplier and delivery information
- methods of collecting, organising and validating business and operational data: extracting information from business records, spreadsheets and information systems; gathering information through surveys and feedback records; categorising, sorting and filtering data; and checking accuracy, completeness, consistency and duplication
- measures used to evaluate business and operational performance: budget variance and unit cost; output per employee or hour worked; percentage of activities completed on time; defect or error rates; on-time delivery rates; stock turnover; and supplier performance against agreed quality, cost and delivery requirements
- information used to understand people and team performance: workload, capacity, productivity, attendance, progress against objectives and feedback
- methods of analysing business and operational data: calculating percentages, percentage changes, averages and variances; comparing performance across time periods, targets and benchmarks; and identifying patterns, trends, relationships and anomalies
- factors that influence business, operational and supply chain performance: demand, capacity, resource availability, cost, supplier performance, inventory levels, logistics and transport disruption
- the functions and uses of spreadsheet software, business information systems and data visualisation tools for analysing and presenting business and operational data: using formulas to calculate totals, averages, percentages and variances; comparing data across time periods, targets and benchmarks; and presenting findings through tables, charts and dashboards

PROPOSED SUBJECT CONTENT FOR CONSULTATION

In working to achieve the work-related purpose, students must be able to:

- identify and select sources of business, operational and supply chain information based on organisational objectives, the purpose of the analysis, data availability and information quality requirements
- collect and organise data and information for analysis and check data for accuracy, completeness, relevance and reliability
- calculate and interpret performance measures and key performance indicators relating to cost, productivity, efficiency, quality and service performance, using specified organisational data, targets and benchmarks
- analyse business, operational, resource and people performance data using calculations and comparisons against targets, standards and benchmarks to identify patterns, trends, anomalies and variances, and explain their implications for organisational objectives and performance
- use spreadsheet software and data visualisation tools to analyse business and operational data, calculate performance measures, compare results against targets and benchmarks, and present findings using tables, charts and dashboards
- evaluate the significance of findings in relation to organisational objectives and performance targets, and assess how data accuracy, completeness, reliability, relevance and potential bias affect the validity of conclusions
- draw conclusions about business, operational and supply chain performance by synthesising analysed information, identifying the main factors contributing to performance variations, and explaining the implications for organisational objectives
- evaluate possible courses of action using analysed business and operational information, and make justified recommendations that consider organisational objectives, resource requirements, risks and potential impacts on performance
- evaluate the feasibility of a proposed business or enterprise opportunity by analysing evidence of customer demand, estimated start-up costs, potential revenue, resource and funding requirements, and commercial and operational risks, and make a justified recommendation on its viability
- communicate findings, conclusions and recommendations to managers, operational teams and other identified stakeholders through written reports, verbal briefings and data visualisations, explaining the supporting evidence, performance implications and proposed actions

WRP4: Manage stakeholder and supplier relationships to achieve effective commercial and operational outcomes

To achieve this work-related purpose, students identify and analyse stakeholder requirements and interests, plan and adapt communication and engagement approaches, and respond to competing priorities and relationship issues. Students justify their approaches to maintaining effective relationships and achieving operational and commercial outcomes.

To do this, students are expected to apply the following knowledge and understanding:

- the roles and interests of internal stakeholders: employees, team leaders, managers, senior leaders and business owners; and external stakeholders: customers, suppliers, contractors, investors, regulators and local communities, in relation to business management, procurement and supply chain activities
- how stakeholder responsibilities, expectations, priorities and levels of influence affect business decisions, operational activities, communication requirements and relationship management
- methods of stakeholder analysis: stakeholder mapping, interest–influence matrices and assessment of stakeholder needs, expectations, priorities and potential impact on organisational activities
- communication methods and channels for stakeholder and supplier engagement: written, verbal, digital and face-to-face communication; and how audience, purpose, complexity, urgency, confidentiality and accessibility influence their selection and effectiveness
- principles of professional communication and relationship building: active listening, questioning and clarification, adapting language and tone, demonstrating respect for different perspectives, providing constructive feedback, maintaining confidentiality and following through on agreed commitments
- principles of negotiation: preparation, objectives, priorities, communication, compromise and reaching agreement, and their application to commercial and operational situations
- causes of stakeholder and supplier disagreements and relationship difficulties: conflicting objectives and priorities, unmet expectations, communication breakdowns, performance failures and contractual disputes; and methods of managing disagreements: clarifying concerns, identifying areas of agreement, negotiating resolutions, agreeing corrective actions and escalating unresolved issues in accordance with organisational procedures
- legal, ethical, cultural and organisational considerations when managing stakeholder and supplier relationships

PROPOSED SUBJECT CONTENT FOR CONSULTATION

In working to achieve the work-related purpose, students must be able to:

- identify internal and external stakeholders and analyse their roles, responsibilities, interests, expectations, priorities and levels of influence in relation to organisational objectives and activities
- evaluate stakeholder needs, interests and influence to select and justify engagement approaches that reflect organisational objectives, communication requirements and stakeholder priorities
- select and use written, verbal, digital and face-to-face communication methods to convey information to stakeholders and suppliers, adapting language, tone and level of detail to the audience, purpose, confidentiality requirements and accessibility needs
- demonstrate the management of internal and external stakeholder relationships by agreeing responsibilities and expectations, sharing information, coordinating activities, responding to stakeholder concerns and reviewing progress towards agreed objectives
- evaluate how supplier performance issues affect working relationships, agreed commitments and organisational requirements, and justify actions to address concerns and maintain effective supplier relationships
- prepare for and participate in negotiations by establishing objectives, priorities and acceptable outcomes, evaluating alternative positions and proposing justified agreements that balance organisational and stakeholder requirements
- analyse stakeholder and supplier issues, assess their impact on organisational requirements and relationships, and justify the selection of negotiation, resolution or escalation actions in accordance with organisational procedures
- assess competing stakeholder requirements and priorities, identify conflicts relating to organisational objectives, resources and timescales, and negotiate or justify actions to balance stakeholder needs with operational and commercial requirements
- review and adapt stakeholder communication and engagement approaches in response to changes in stakeholder expectations, organisational priorities, operational requirements and relationship difficulties, justifying adjustments to communication methods, frequency and level of engagement
- create and maintain records of stakeholder and supplier communications, agreed responsibilities, decisions, commitments, actions, deadlines and follow-up requirements, ensuring records are accurate, complete, securely stored and updated in accordance with organisational procedures
- evaluate stakeholder and supplier relationships against agreed objectives, communication effectiveness, fulfilment of commitments, responsiveness to concerns and supplier performance requirements, and justify recommendations for improving relationship management and operational outcomes

WRP5: Evaluate business operations and processes to identify and develop justified improvements

To achieve this work-related purpose, students investigate business and operational performance, identify causes of inefficiency or underperformance, and evaluate potential improvements. Students develop justified improvement proposals, plan how changes would be implemented and communicated, and establish measures for evaluating their effectiveness

To do this, students are expected to apply the following knowledge and understanding:

- the purpose and characteristics of operational and supply chain processes, across sourcing, warehousing, logistics and the movement of goods and information
- the relationship between processes, organisational objectives and customer or stakeholder requirements
- methods of representing and analysing processes: process mapping and process flow diagrams
- sources of information used to evaluate process performance and identify improvement requirements: performance data, customer and stakeholder feedback, supplier information, quality records and operational records
- methods of analysing operational processes to identify problems, inefficiencies, constraints, waste, bottlenecks and variation; and methods of investigating underlying causes of process performance issues: the five whys and cause-and-effect diagrams
- methods of generating and comparing operational improvement options: process redesign, removal of unnecessary activities, simplification of workflows, reduction of delays and waste, changes to resource allocation and use of digital tools; and the use of process analysis and performance information to identify potential benefits and limitations of each option
- factors used to evaluate improvement options: expected costs and benefits; resource and time requirements; operational and financial risks; sustainability; and stakeholder impact, and how these factors inform judgements about the overall feasibility of proposed improvements
- the stages of managing operational change: identifying the need for change, establishing objectives and expected outcomes, planning implementation activities, allocating responsibilities and resources, communicating with affected stakeholders, monitoring progress and reviewing outcomes
- factors that can support or hinder operational change: organisational culture, stakeholder engagement and resistance, leadership support, communication, staff capability, resource availability and competing organisational priorities
- principles of quality management and quality assurance in operational and supply chain processes: establishing quality standards and requirements, monitoring compliance, identifying defects and non-conformities, conducting quality checks,

taking corrective action and using feedback and performance information to support continuous improvement
- methods of monitoring and evaluating improvements against defined objectives, measures and expected outcomes
- the use of digital and emerging technologies to improve operational and supply chain processes: workflow automation, digital process monitoring, inventory and resource tracking, data analytics and artificial intelligence; and their potential benefits, limitations and risks in relation to efficiency, accuracy, cost, decision-making and operational performance

In working to achieve the work-related purpose, students must be able to:

- select, interpret and evaluate operational information from performance reports, process records, quality monitoring, resource utilisation, cost data and stakeholder feedback to identify trends, variations and areas requiring further investigation
- construct and analyse process maps using flowcharts to show the sequence of activities, decision points, responsibilities, dependencies and handovers; identify delays, duplication, bottlenecks and opportunities to improve process efficiency
- analyse operational performance against defined performance measures, organisational objectives and operational requirements to identify problems, inefficiencies, constraints, waste, bottlenecks and opportunities for improvement
- investigate the underlying causes of operational performance issues using root cause analysis techniques: the five whys and cause-and-effect diagrams; distinguish between symptoms and underlying causes, and use evidence to justify conclusions
- develop and compare evidence-based options for improving operational processes, evaluating their expected costs, benefits, feasibility, resource requirements, risks, sustainability and stakeholder impact, and justify recommendations against organisational objectives and operational requirements
- develop justified implementation plans for operational improvements, specifying objectives, actions, responsibilities, resource requirements, timescales, stakeholder communication, potential barriers and measures of success
- communicate proposed operational improvements to affected stakeholders, explaining the reasons for change, expected benefits, implications for roles and working practices, implementation timescales and required actions, and respond to questions and concerns
- analyse information about issues and barriers affecting the implementation of operational improvements, evaluate their impact on objectives, resources and timescales, and justify adjustments to implementation plans
- analyse information about the implementation of operational improvements against planned activities, milestones, resource use, costs and performance measures; identify variations from implementation plans and report progress, emerging issues and potential impacts on expected outcomes

- evaluate evidence of the effectiveness of operational improvements against agreed objectives, performance measures and expected outcomes, identify remaining issues or unintended consequences, and make justified recommendations for further action

3.4 Core Knowledge and Understanding

When developing qualification specifications, awarding organisations must allocate between 120 and 150 guided learning hours (GLH) to Core Knowledge and Understanding to ensure sufficient depth of coverage of key education concepts, theories and principles at level 3.

The Core Knowledge and Understanding has two purposes:

- provides the conceptual foundation that underpins achievement of the work-related purposes
- ensures that students develop a coherent understanding of the subject more broadly

Where concepts appear across both core knowledge and understanding and work-related purposes, the core knowledge and understanding section defines what students must understand conceptually, while the work-related purposes specify how that understanding is applied, evidenced and demonstrated in context.

Students must know and understand:

Business organisations and management

- types, purposes and characteristics of public, private and third-sector organisations
- types and characteristics of organisational structures: hierarchical, flat, functional and matrix structures; and how organisational structure influences reporting relationships, roles, responsibilities, accountability, communication and decision-making
- the relationships between organisational aims, objectives, strategy and operational priorities
- internal and external factors influencing organisational activities, decisions and performance: internal factors relating to organisational structure, culture, financial resources, workforce capability and operational capacity; and external factors relating to economic conditions, competition, technological developments, legal and regulatory requirements, and changing customer needs
- principles and functions of management: planning, organising, coordinating, monitoring and controlling
- principles of leadership and management, and the characteristics and potential effects of autocratic, democratic and laissez-faire leadership approaches on employee motivation, decision-making, team performance and organisational outcomes
- the characteristics of organisational culture: shared values, expectations, norms and working practices; and how organisational culture influences employee behaviour, communication, working relationships, motivation and performance

- principles of managing people: allocating roles and responsibilities, communicating expectations, supporting motivation and development, monitoring performance and providing feedback
- factors influencing individual and team performance: capability, motivation, communication, workload, resource availability and working relationships
- the characteristics of enterprise and entrepreneurship and the processes involved in establishing and developing a business: identifying opportunities and customer needs, developing business ideas, assessing market demand and commercial viability, selecting business models and ownership structures, considering costs, revenue and sustainability, and identifying start-up resources, funding requirements and commercial risks

Operations and resource management

- principles of operations management and operational planning, and their contribution to organisational objectives: determining priorities, managing dependencies and constraints, and planning for contingencies
- types of organisational resources: human, physical, financial, technological and information resources, and principles of their effective management
- relationships between demand, operational capacity, workload and resource allocation, and their influence on productivity, efficiency and resource utilisation
- principles of performance management and quality management, and their contribution to organisational objectives, operational efficiency, consistent quality and continuous improvement

Procurement, logistics and supply chains

- the purpose, scope and strategic importance of procurement within organisations
- types and characteristics of supply chains: supply chains for goods and services, and domestic and international supply chains; the roles and relationships of suppliers, producers, distributors, retailers and customers; and the flow of goods, services, information and finance between organisations within supply chains
- the roles of warehousing, logistics and transport in the storage, movement and availability of goods
- factors affecting supply chain resilience and continuity and their impact on organisational performance

Finance and commercial principles

- sources of organisational income and expenditure and their relevance to business and management decisions: income from sales of goods and services, fees, grants and other funding; expenditure on staffing, premises, materials, equipment, technology and external services; and the relationship between income, expenditure, costs and organisational financial performance

- principles and purposes of budgeting, forecasting and financial control: using budgets to plan income and expenditure and allocate financial resources; using forecasts to estimate future income, costs and resource requirements; and using financial controls to monitor expenditure, identify variances and support decisions about corrective action
- types of costs: direct, indirect, fixed and variable costs
- principles of value for money and whole-life cost, and their relationship to commercial decision-making: balancing purchase price, ongoing operating and maintenance costs, quality, reliability and expected benefits; and considering affordability, supplier terms, financial risks and organisational priorities when making business, operational and procurement decisions

Information, data and decision-making

- types and sources of quantitative and qualitative information used in business management and operations: quantitative information from sales, financial, operational, workforce and performance records; qualitative information from customer feedback, employee feedback, stakeholder communications and observations; and the differences between numerical and descriptive information and their uses in organisational decision-making
- principles of data quality: accuracy, validity, reliability, relevance, completeness and timeliness; and the potential effects of incomplete, inaccurate or biased information on organisational decisions
- principles of performance measurement, data analysis and interpretation in business and management decision-making: the use of objectives, targets and performance measures to evaluate organisational performance; the identification of patterns, trends, relationships and variations in information; and the use of analysed information to draw conclusions, identify performance issues and support informed management decisions

Risk, improvement and change

- principles of identifying, assessing, mitigating, monitoring and reviewing business, operational, commercial, procurement and supply chain risks, and their potential effects on organisational activities and performance
- principles of organisational change management: drivers for change, planned and reactive change, stakeholder resistance, leadership support, resource requirements and evaluation of change outcomes

Stakeholders and organisational relationships

- types of internal and external stakeholders and their interests, needs and influence
- principles of stakeholder engagement and supplier relationship management, and the role of professional communication, collaboration and relationship building in maintaining effective organisational relationships

Legal, ethical and sustainable practice

- the purpose and implications of legal and regulatory requirements affecting business management and operations: employment rights and responsibilities, workplace health and safety, equality and non-discrimination, data protection and confidentiality, consumer protection, and contractual obligations relating to the purchase and supply of goods and services
- principles of organisational governance, accountability and compliance: organisational policies and procedures, roles and responsibilities for decision-making, delegated authority and approval limits, maintaining accurate records, reporting concerns and breaches, and monitoring adherence to legal, regulatory and organisational requirements
- ethical principles influencing business, operational, procurement and supply chain decisions: integrity, honesty, transparency, fairness, accountability, prevention of conflicts of interest, responsible treatment of employees, customers and suppliers, and consideration of the social and environmental consequences of business decisions
- principles of equality, diversity and inclusion in business operations and stakeholder relationships: fair and equitable treatment, recognising and respecting individual differences, accessibility and reasonable adjustments, inclusive communication, and identifying and addressing discriminatory practices and barriers to participation

Digital technology and emerging practice

- the types and purposes of digital systems used in business management and operations: communication and collaboration platforms, spreadsheets and business information systems, inventory and resource management systems, and reporting tools and dashboards
- opportunities and risks associated with automation and artificial intelligence in business management and operations: opportunities to improve efficiency, accuracy, information processing and decision-making; risks relating to inaccurate outputs, bias, data protection, confidentiality, security and over-reliance on automated systems; and principles of responsible use: human oversight, verification of outputs, transparency and accountability
- principles of data security, confidentiality and information management in business management and operations: controlling access to organisational information, secure storage and sharing of data, maintaining accurate records, protecting personal and commercially sensitive information, identifying information security risks, and following organisational procedures for reporting data breaches and security incidents

Annex

Glossary of Terms

Artificial Intelligence (AI): Technologies that enable computer systems to perform tasks commonly associated with human intelligence, such as analysing information, recognising patterns, generating content and supporting decision-making.

Change management: A structured approach to planning, implementing and supporting organisational change to achieve intended outcomes.

Continuous improvement: An ongoing approach to identifying and implementing changes to processes, products or services to improve performance, efficiency, quality or outcomes.

Key Performance Indicator (KPI): A measurable value used to monitor and evaluate performance against a defined objective or target.

Logistics: The planning and coordination of the movement and storage of goods, services and related information through a supply chain.

Operational Activity: An activity undertaken as part of the day-to-day operation of an organisation to support the delivery of its objectives.

Operational Plan: A plan that sets out activities, resources, responsibilities, timescales and other requirements for achieving defined operational objectives.

Performance management: The process of setting expectations and objectives, monitoring performance, providing feedback and identifying actions to support improvement.

Procurement: The process through which an organisation identifies requirements and sources, acquires and manages goods, services or works from external suppliers.

Process Mapping: The visual representation of the activities, stages, decisions and relationships within a process to support understanding and analysis.

Root cause analysis: A structured approach used to identify the underlying cause or causes of a problem or performance issue.

Stakeholder: An individual, group or organisation that can affect, is affected by, or has an interest in an organisation's activities or decisions.

Supplier: An individual or organisation that provides goods or services to another organisation.

Supply Chain: The network of organisations, people, activities, information and resources involved in supplying goods or services from source through to the end user or customer.

Supply Chain Resilience: The ability of a supply chain to anticipate, respond to and recover from disruption while maintaining or restoring required supply.

Transport: The movement of goods between locations as part of logistics and supply chain activities.

Value for money: The effective use of resources to achieve an appropriate balance of cost, quality and outcomes over the relevant period.

Warehousing: The activities involved in receiving, storing, managing and preparing goods for movement within a supply chain.

Whole-life cost: The total cost associated with a good, service or asset across its life cycle, rather than its initial purchase price alone.

Transferable Skills

The following transferable skills have been integrated into the content for work-related purposes:

WRP	Transferable skills
WRP1	**Planning** when identifying, prioritising, sequencing and coordinating operational activities, resources, responsibilities and timescales. **Decision making** when determining priorities and allocating resources to meet organisational objectives and changing requirements. **Observing** when monitoring activities, resource use and performance against plans and targets. **Communicating** – when communicating plans, priorities, responsibilities and changes. **Leading** when coordinating people and resources, communicating expectations and responsibilities, and supporting progress towards operational objectives.
WRP2	**Planning** when coordinating procurement, ordering, stock and supply activities to meet organisational requirements. **Analysing** when comparing supplier proposals and interpreting procurement and supply information. **Decision making** when selecting procurement approaches and making justified supplier and procurement recommendations. **Recording** when maintaining accurate procurement, supplier, stock and supply information.
WRP3	**Analysing** when identifying patterns, relationships, trends, anomalies and variances in business and operational information. **Critical thinking** when considering the relevance, reliability and limitations of information and drawing reasoned conclusions. **Evaluating** when appraising performance information and developing justified recommendations. **Communicating** when presenting findings and recommendations appropriately for relevant stakeholders.

WRP	Transferable skills
WRP4	**Communicating** when adapting communication to suppliers and stakeholders according to audience, purpose and context and when supporting effective working relationships. **Decision making** when determining appropriate responses to supplier and stakeholder requirements, issues and competing priorities. **Evaluating** when appraising supplier performance and the effectiveness of supplier and stakeholder relationships. **Leading** when establishing effective working relationships, clarifying expectations and priorities, and supporting stakeholders to achieve shared objectives.
WRP5	**Investigating** when identifying and interrogating sources of information to determine the causes of business and operational performance issues. **Analysing** when examining processes to identify inefficiencies, constraints, risks and opportunities for improvement. **Critical thinking** when considering alternative improvement options using evidence and reasoned argument. **Evaluating** when appraising the costs, benefits, risks and impacts of improvement options and making recommendations. **Communicating** when explaining proposed improvements and their rationale to relevant stakeholders. **Planning** when developing actions, responsibilities, resources, timescales and measures for implementing improvements.

Workplace behaviours

Teaching and learning opportunities to develop the following workplace behaviours may be developed through student engagement with work-related purposes:

WRP	Workplace behaviours
WRP1	**Responsible** when coordinating activities and resources and taking account of organisational objectives, priorities and constraints. **Adaptable** when adjusting operational plans and resource allocation in response to changing circumstances. **Focussed** when monitoring priorities, timescales and performance against operational objectives. **Attention to detail** when developing and monitoring operational plans, activities and resource requirements.
WRP2	**Attention to detail** when interpreting procurement requirements, comparing supplier information and maintaining procurement and supply records. **Responsible** when taking account of organisational, legal, ethical and sustainability requirements in procurement and supply activities. **Responsive** when addressing delays, shortages, quality issues and other changes affecting continuity of supply. **Integrity** when making evidence-based procurement and supplier recommendations and considering ethical requirements.
WRP3	**Attention to detail** when checking, analysing and interpreting business and operational information. **Perceptive** when identifying significant patterns, trends, anomalies and relationships within performance information. **Independent** when drawing evidence-based conclusions from information. **Responsible** when handling and communicating organisational information appropriately.
WRP4	**Professional** when communicating and maintaining relationships with suppliers and internal and external stakeholders. **Respectful** when working with stakeholders with different requirements, perspectives and priorities. **Assertive** when communicating requirements and contributing to negotiations while maintaining professional relationships. **Responsive** when addressing supplier and stakeholder issues and changing requirements. **Inclusive** when engaging appropriately with stakeholders from different backgrounds and organisational contexts.

WRP	Workplace behaviours
WRP5	**Perceptive** when identifying underlying issues, inefficiencies and opportunities within business operations and processes. **Enterprising** when developing potential solutions and opportunities for improvement. **Reflective** when considering process performance and the effectiveness of improvements. **Adaptable** when responding to evidence and changing requirements during improvement activities. **Persistent** when investigating problems and developing workable improvements where issues are complex.

Links to Occupational Standards

The subject content for this V Level draws upon the following Occupational Standards. These are provided for reference and awarding organisations are not expected to include any further content from these standards or signal content alignment in any more detail in their qualification specifications.

Occupational Standard	Reference	SOC* Codes
Team Leader	ST0384	4142
Supply chain practitioner (fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG))	ST0201	4134
Procurement and supply assistant	ST0810	3551
Improvement technician	ST0193	3116

* Standard Occupational Classification

Links to Foundation Certificates

The following aspects of content directly relate to content specified in the Level 2 Foundation Certificate in Business.

V Level reference	Foundation Certificate reference	Knowledge and Understanding	Skills
Core - Business organisations and management	LO1 (Learning Outcome)	Organisational purposes, aims, structures, functions, stakeholders and internal and external influences	Interpret organisational information; analyse stakeholder interests and factors affecting organisations
Core - Business organisations and management	LO5	Entrepreneurship, people management, motivation, teamwork and business functions	Interpret information about people and resources; explain how business functions contribute to organisational aims

V Level reference	Foundation Certificate reference	Knowledge and Understanding	Skills
WRP1 - Operational planning and resource coordination	LO2, LO5	Planning and prioritising activities; task dependencies; resource requirements; operations and quality	Plan and prioritise activities; identify staffing, equipment, materials and technology requirements
Core - Procurement, logistics and supply chains / WRP2	LO5	Procurement, suppliers, supply chains, costs, quality, quantities, stock and delivery requirements	Interpret supplier information, stock levels and delivery schedules to support business requirements
Core - Finance and commercial principles	LO4, LO5	Costs, revenue, profit and loss, budgeting, financial information and financial performance	Calculate costs, revenue and budget variances; interpret financial information; support business decisions
Core - Information, data and decision-making / WRP3	LO4	Quantitative and qualitative information; data quality; information sources; performance comparisons and digital applications	Collect, organise, check, calculate, interpret and present business and financial information
Core - Stakeholders and organisational relationships / WRP4	LO1, LO3	Stakeholder interests, communication methods, professional conduct, customer and stakeholder needs	Analyse stakeholder interests; select and adapt communication; respond to enquiries and concerns

V Level reference	Foundation Certificate reference	Knowledge and Understanding	Skills
Core - Risk, improvement and change / WRP5	LO2, LO6	Reviewing business activities; identifying errors and inefficiencies; evaluating responses and organisational constraints	Review work; identify improvement opportunities; compare possible actions and justify recommendations
Core - Legal, ethical and sustainable practice	LO5, LO6	Ethical and sustainability considerations; contractual, employment and consumer rights and responsibilities	Identify legal and regulatory requirements; interpret information and justify responses to business situations
Core - Digital technology and emerging practice	LO2, LO4, LO5	Digital business applications, AI and automation, digital information management, confidentiality and information security	Use digital applications; organise and protect information; check AI-generated outputs

Department for Education

© Crown copyright 2026

This publication is licensed under the terms of the Open Government Licence v3.0, except where otherwise stated. To view this licence, visit nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3.

Where we have identified any third-party copyright information, you will need to obtain permission from the copyright holders concerned.

About this publication:

enquiries www.gov.uk/contact-dfe
download www.gov.uk/government/publications
Follow us on X: @educationgovuk
Connect with us on Facebook: facebook.com/educationgovuk