BUSINESS SERVICES

Mandatory Focus Area: Innovation

Welcome.

This module will assist you to review and revise the content of the **Mandatory focus area: Innovation**. Each focus area prescribes the scope of learning for the HSC and is drawn from associated units of competency.

You will have studied this competency, which addresses the scope of learning:

[BSBINN201 Contribute to workplace innovation](https://training.gov.au/Training/Details/BSBINN201)

This module is broken up into:

* Important notes
* Key terms and concepts
* Activities
* Putting the theory into practice
* HSC Focus Areas

How to use the resource

Work through the notes and the suggested activities. Great revision techniques include working through how a problem is solved, explaining the concept, testing yourself and retrieving information from your memory. Spread your revision over a number of sessions rather than sitting at one subject for lengthy periods.

Discuss your responses with your teacher, fellow students or an interested family member.

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# Important notes

The unit of competency [BSBINN201 Contribute to workplace innovation](https://training.gov.au/Training/Details/BSBINN201) describes the skills and knowledge required to make a pro-active and positive contribution to workplace innovation.

The HSC Content for this industry curriculum framework is organised into focus areas. The outcomes of the mandatory focus area ‘Innovation’ require that the student:

* demonstrates knowledge of the role, benefits and challenges of innovation and change in a business services workplace
* proposes ideas for routine improvements in a business services workplace
* considers issues and processes associated with implementing innovative ideas and routine change.

You should use the following information as a prompt and guide when revising your study notes or text-book information or other resources provided by your teacher.

Make sure you check your understanding of all the content in the scope of learning (see HSC Focus Areas).

This module should be reviewed alongside the topic 'Working in the business services industry and workplace’.

# Key terms and concepts

**You can use the following information to revise the key terms and concepts from this unit of competency**. Perhaps you could:

* Copy the table into your own file, remove all the key terms, then fill in the blanks (without peeking at the original file) with your own answers.
* Copy the table into your own file and remove the definitions. Write a definition in your own words – it doesn’t have to word perfect but should show you understand the concept.
* Add additional words and definitions as you work through the unit. Add a line to a table by pressing ‘tab’ in the last box of the table.
* You could add an example of this term or concept which is relevant to the retail environment. If the key term were ‘routine’ your business example might be ‘business procedures usually state the specific intervals between routine tasks, for example, how often the server is backed up would be a regular routine task.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Key term or concept | and Definition |
| Authority | Person or people with official responsibility for a particular area of activity |
| Brainstorm | Suggesting (usually as a group) a lot of ideas for a future activity very quickly before considering some of them more carefully: |
| Business performance | Work relating to the production, buying, and selling of goods or services |
| Business routines | The usual or regular methods or procedures undertaken by a business |
| Communication | Exchanging or imparting of information, ideas, or feelings |
| Constraints | Something that limits or controls what you can do |
| Contribution | Doing something to help make a project or outcome successful |
| Creative thinking | Ability to invent and develop original ideas |
| Discuss | Talk about a matter, often in order to reach a decision |
| Effective | Having a definite or desired effect. |
| Efficient | Being productive, with minimum waste or effort. |
| Employee | A person who works for a wage or salary. |
| Evaluate | Judge or assess the worth of something or someone; appraise |
| Facilitation | Make an action or process easier or more likely to happen. |
| Feedback | When someone tells you how well or how badly you are doing and how you could improve your work, your ideas or your progress. Feedback can be positive or negative. |
| Innovation | An organisation introduces new processes, services, or products to affect positive change in their business |
| Interpret | To decide the intended meaning |
| Lateral thinking | Method of solving problems by using your imagination to help you think of solutions that are not obvious at first |
| Logistics | Detailed planning and organisation of any large complex operation |
| Maximise | To increase to the greatest possible amount or make the greatest or fullest use of something |
| Negotiation | Discussions between people who have different aims or intentions, during which they try to reach an agreement |
| New technology | new technology designs offer options and improvements to manage tasks more effectively. |
| Opportunity for improvement | The chance to change something that will lead to a better result. |
| Organisational culture | Attitudes and agreed ways of working shared by the employees of a company or organisation |
| Participation | Be involved or take part in something |
| Prioritise | To put in order of priority or urgency. |
| Proactive | Taking action to achieve positive change before it becomes necessary or in reaction to a situation |
| Problem-solving | Finding solutions to problems |
| Productivity | The ability to produce useful work or goods, in a particular period |
| Teamwork | Working together in a group with other people, especially towards a shared goal |
| Underperformance | To operate in a less successful way than others doing the same activity  |

# Activities

1. Research [the benefits of workplace innovation](https://www.business.vic.gov.au/marketing-and-sales/growth-innovation-and-measurement/improving-business-innovation-and-examples) at Business Victoria. Provide a business services workplace example for each benefit.
2. Consider how each of the following techniques encourages innovation in the workplace. Write an example of how and why for each. The table will grow as you enter text.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Techniques to encourage innovation | Why and/or how examples |
| Good leadership |  |
| Innovation strategy |  |
| Willingness to experiment |  |
| Open communication |  |
| Staff well-being |  |
| Workplace design |  |
| Tools |  |
| Cutting down on workload  |  |
| Employing new staff |  |

1. Provide a list of at least five strategies that could be implemented to improve team efficiency. Explain how each strategy would lead to improvements.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Strategy | How it would improve team efficiency |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |

1. Fill in the blanks, using the words provided.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Use these words |  |  |  |
| retention | efficiency | new | lower |
| better | innovation | business | commitment |
| proactive | focus | problem | competitiveness |

[**The benefits of innovation**](https://www.business.vic.gov.au/marketing-and-sales/growth-innovation-and-measurement/improving-business-innovation-and-examples)

If you develop a ( ) on innovation in your business, you'll ensure everyone in the ( ) is working towards ( ) business practices and improving business ( ) and performance.

Some of the other benefits include:

* increased competitiveness – higher efficiency with ( ) costs and higher quality products
* more efficient use of all resources
* improved staff ( ) – staff like to work in innovative and challenging jobs that promote team work and ( ) solving
* ( ) approach to business – your business model is continually matching changing conditions
* greater attraction of ( ) customers by improving existing, or offering new, products or services or entering new markets.

Your approach to ( ) will be driven by your business strategy, capability, market understanding and ( ) to the process. Often, these processes will add capacity to your business with little or no additional costs. Your business
( ) and survival is directly linked to your ability to innovate.

[Improving employee innovation](https://www.business.vic.gov.au/marketing-and-sales/growth-innovation-and-measurement/improving-business-innovation-and-examples) © [Business Victoria](https://www.business.vic.gov.au/copyright)

1. You have been working in an office situation for two years and have had a number of ideas about how to improve aspects of your work. Until now you’ve lacked the confidence to mention any of them. Your annual performance review is coming up next week.
	1. Why might this be a good time to raise these ideas?
	2. What preparation would you need to do before you present your ideas?
	3. What could you suggest to your line manager as ways to encourage other people to make suggestions about potential improvements?
	4. One of your ideas is trialled for a period of three months. Explain what needs to happen during this period and at the end of the three months.
2. Describe how you might identify areas for improvement in the workplace, especially in your own role and team. Consider the words ‘observant’, curiosity’ and ‘creative’ to help with your response.
3. Provide an example of each type of the following types of innovation in a business services environment.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Innovation | Example |
| Processes or procedure |  |
| File storage procedures |  |
| Team communication |  |
| New technology |  |
| Change to the physical environment |  |
| Job role changes |  |

1. Explain how each of the following styles of communication might be used when working towards innovation.

Methods of communication in the Business Services industry

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Verbal communication | Non-verbal communication | Written communication |
| How used in a climate of innovation |  |  |  |

1. Answer True or False for the following statements

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | True | False |
| All employees have the right to offer ideas for improvement |  |  |
| Routine changes, for example picking up the office supplies at the same time as picking up the mail, may not require formal approval |  |  |
| You can change your lunchbreak time to whatever suits you each day. |  |  |
| The CEO of the organisation is the only person authorised to facilitate changes within the business. |  |  |
| Costs should be carefully considered before implementing change |  |  |

1. Correctly match the two halves of each sentence. Draw a line between each or rewrite (or copy and paste) the corrected sentences, in full, below the table.

Check your answers [here](https://training.gov.au/Training/Details/BSBINN201).

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Match the sentence halves  |  |
| Proactively identify opportunities for  | ideas for improvements |
| Gather and review information which may be relevant to ideas | about how improvements could be made |
| Identify people who could provide input into  | improvement in your own area of work |
| Review and select ideas for follow up, based on  | develop options and possible variations |
| Present ideas and practical suggestions to the appropriate people  | and which might assist in gaining support for ideas |
| Seek feedback on improvement of ideas, and discuss and  | in workplace innovation |
| Be aware of own role  | feedback and further review |

1. Match the words to the correct definition below.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Use these words |  |  |
| mentor | deadline | work schedule |
| quality assurance | equity | principles |
| duty of care | goals and objectives | negligence |
| negotiation | prioritise | timeframe |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Fill in the term or concept |  |
|  | The notion of fairness. |
|  | A system to maintain standards in a business. |
|  | Acting carelessly, failing to consider the consequences of actions. |
|  | Moral or legal obligation to ensure safety. |
|  | Where a business plans to be in the future and what it needs to do to get there. |
|  | A person experienced in a particular job who can give trusted advice. |
|  | To rank in order of importance. |
|  | The time by which a particular task must be finished. |
|  | Conferring with others to reach an agreement or a compromise in times of dispute. |
|  | A list of tasks that need to be completed and the timeframe for each |
|  | Specified periods of time within which tasks should be completed |

1. Write a 100-word summary of one workplace innovation in a business services environment which might be of use in an HSC response.

# Putting the theory into practice

The following questions are [**from past years’ NSW HSC examination papers for this subject.**](https://educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/portal/nesa/11-12/resources/hsc-exam-papers) HSC exams are intended to be rigorous and to challenge students of all abilities. To better understand a question, you should look for key words and identify the aspect of the course to which these relate. You are then in a position to formulate your answer from relevant knowledge, understanding and skills.

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### Multiple Choice

1. Change and innovation can have various effects on a business’s performance and growth. Which of the following are both positive effects of change and innovation?
	1. Increased competitiveness and reduced business costs
	2. Increased business costs and increased competitiveness
	3. Enhanced business reputation and decreased productivity
	4. Increased productivity and decreased business reputation
2. An employee has identified the need to update workplace policies in line with the introduction of new technology. Which area would be reviewed initially?
	1. Job roles
	2. Team communication
	3. Processes and procedures
	4. The physical environment
3. In which of the following are both issues environmental concerns relevant to the business services industry?
	1. Human resources and energy use
	2. Ergonomics and clean-up practices
	3. Sustainability and waste management
	4. Water resources and software updates
4. Which of the following is generally considered best practice for reviewing the work performance of employees?
	1. Studying work diaries
	2. Analysing customer reviews
	3. Performing efficiency studies
	4. Conducting supervisor appraisals
5. Implementing effective grievance procedures to settle workplace disputes enables a business to
	1. act fairly and consistently.
	2. resolve all conflicts quickly.
	3. increase employee motivation.
	4. avoid negativity in the workplace.
6. Which of the following correctly shows the process that takes an innovation from the idea stage through to implementation as a new work practice?

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| a) | Prepare an implementation plan | Make necessary changes | Communicate the changes | Gain authority to proceed |
| b) | Gain authority to proceed | Communicate the changes | Make necessary changes | Prepare an implementation plan |
| c) | Prepare an implementation plan | Gain authority to proceed | Make necessary changes | Communicate the changes |
| d) | Gain authority to proceed | Prepare an implementation plan | Communicate the changes | Make necessary changes |

1. What is the objective of conflict resolution?
	1. To avoid staff turnover
	2. To determine the party responsible
	3. To promote the concept of ‘win-win’
	4. To establish the cause of a disagreement
2. Which of the following is an example of an employee being innovative in the business services industry?
	1. Working cooperatively with colleagues
	2. Designing solutions to improve efficiency
	3. Implementing workplace policies collaboratively
	4. Effectively responding to all customer enquiries in a timely manner
3. In preparing for a performance review, an office assistant identifies where there is a gap in his knowledge and skills in the job that he is presently doing.
What is this an example of?
	1. Credit transfer
	2. Self-reflection
	3. Personal study
	4. Recognition of prior learning
4. Which of the following shows the expected results of a business’s decision to expand its customer base?
	1. Reduced business costs and increased productivity
	2. Increased productivity and increased competitiveness
	3. Enhanced business reputation and reduced business costs
	4. Increased competitiveness and enhanced business reputation

### Questions from Section II

Questions in Section II should be answered in the suggested number of lines (handwritten) as they give a guide to the length of your response.

Plan out your answer and key points before you commence writing.

You may need to bring together knowledge from several areas of study/competencies to do justice to the answer.

Example Question

1. A manager asks her team to use lateral thinking to find a solution to a complex issue.

How could a team member demonstrate lateral thinking in working towards a solution? (2 marks)

Question continues over

1. A business is considering changing its staff working environment to improve workplace collaboration and communication. It is proposing that employees no longer have their own desks and instead share workspaces with their colleagues.

Explain issues that should be considered prior to implementation of this innovation. (6 marks)

### Questions from Section III

You will note that questions often require you to bring together knowledge from several areas of study/competencies to do justice to the answer. You should allow about 25 minutes for the question in Section III. Map out your answer using post-it notes or a sheet of paper before you start.

There will be one question in Section III, usually made up of several parts totalling 15 marks.

Example Question

(a) Describe issues that need to be considered prior to implementing any change to workplace practices. (6 marks)

(b) Explain the processes required to introduce an innovative idea into a new workplace practice. Support your answer using workplace examples. (9 marks)

### Questions from Section IV

In the Business Services HSC exam –

* there will be one structured extended response question in Section IV worth 15 marks.
* the question will have an expected length of response of around four pages of an examination writing booklet (approximately 600 words) in total.

This will provide you with the opportunity to:

* demonstrate knowledge and understanding relevant to the question
* communicate ideas and information using relevant workplace examples and industry terminology
* present a logical and cohesive response

You will note that these questions usually require you to bring together knowledge from several areas of study/competencies to do justice to the answer. You should allow about 25-30 minutes for a question in Section III and the same for Section IV of the exam.

In each of the following, map out your answer using post-it notes or a sheet of paper. Pay particular attention to incorporating a variety of aspects of your Business Services curriculum into the plan. Consider why we have included this question within this **Innovation** module and what other areas of study you would need to draw upon.

Example Question 1

Explain how policies and procedures can be used to minimise discrimination in a business services workplace.

Example Question 2

Explain how an individual worker can facilitate innovation in a business services workplace.

# HSC Focus Areas

The HSC Content for this industry curriculum framework is organised into focus areas. Each focus area prescribes the scope of learning for the HSC and is drawn from the associated units of competency.

Students undertaking the 240 indicative hour course from the Business Services Curriculum Framework must address **all of the mandatory focus areas**:

* Customer service
* Financial records
* **Innovation**
* Safety
* Sustainability
* Working in the business services industry and workplace
* Workplace information

How to use the scope of learning for ‘Innovation’ (which follows over).

* draw up your own mind map showing the connection between the various concepts listed; examples appear on the last page of this module
* use the key terms and concepts to add to your mind map
* add examples or case study prompts to show how the concept is applied in the information technology working environment.

The following information is taken directly from page 33 ff of [Business Services
Curriculum Framework Stage 6 Syllabus based on the BSB Business Services Training Package (version 5) for implementation from 2020.](https://educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/wcm/connect/e5ea12b9-2d53-415c-bdc4-4b0da5ee6a7c/vet-business-services-11-12-syllabus-based-on-BSBv5.pdf?MOD=AJPERES&CVID=)

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|  |
| --- |
| workplace innovation |
| * meaning of ‘innovation’ in the context of the business services industry and workplace
 |
| * difference between being innovative and ‘just doing your job’
 |
| * reasons why change and innovation are undertaken in a business services workplace including:
	+ introduction of new products and/or services
	+ improvement of existing products and/or services
	+ change to and/or improvement of business operational processes
 |
| * positive effects of change and innovation on:
	+ day-to-day business routines and operations
	+ overall business performance and growth:
* enhanced business reputation
* increased competitiveness
* increased productivity
* reduced business costs
 |
| * general understanding of the challenges of change and innovation in a business services workplace
 |
| * key characteristics that facilitate innovation in a business services workplace, including collaboration, open-mindedness and risk-taking
 |
| * skills to facilitate workplace innovation, including the ability of a worker to:
	+ brainstorm
	+ discuss
	+ find and interpret information
	+ think laterally and/or creatively
	+ negotiate
	+ present
	+ problem-solve
	+ question and actively listen
 |
| * role of teamwork in successful workplace innovation
 |
| participation and contribution |
| * benefits when an individual worker effectively participates in, and contributes to, workplace innovation
 |
| * importance of individual workers proactively participating in, and contributing to, workplace innovation and in accordance with organisational vision, priorities and policies
 |
| * role of the worker, supervisor/team leader and manager in workplace innovation, and the interrelationship between these roles
 |

|  |
| --- |
| participation and contribution cont/d |
| * techniques for approaching people to share ideas and/or suggestions and maximise the likelihood of support
 |
| * areas where improvement can take place, including:
	+ processes and procedures
	+ work practices or services
	+ changes to physical environment
	+ storage or maintenance procedures
	+ team communication
	+ new equipment and technology
	+ new customer base
	+ staff changes
	+ job role changes
 |
| * examples of change and/or improvements that may occur in a business services workplace:
	+ within scope of responsibility of an entry-level worker
	+ outside the scope of responsibility of an entry-level worker
 |
| * individual participation in, and contribution to, innovation in a business services workplace:
	+ identify opportunities related to own role in consultation with supervisor/team leader
	+ gather input and/or undertake research using:
* relevant people:
* colleagues, mentor, supervisor/team leader and manager
* customers
* experienced industry personnel
* other sources of information:
* business networks
* industry bodies
* internet
* journals
* media
* training courses
* workplace documents
	+ generate ideas and/or suggestions
	+ present ideas and/or suggestions to relevant personnel:
* at appropriate times (considering work priorities and pressures)
* types of presentations:
* written
* verbal
* formal and informal
* persuasive communication techniques
	+ gather feedback:
* review suitability of ideas and/or suggestions
* develop option(s) for implementation
	+ review and select appropriate option(s)
 |
| implementing routine change |
| * issues to consider prior to implementation of a proposed change, including:
	+ relationship to workplace policy and priorities
	+ cost of implementation and/or other resource implications
	+ logistics
	+ organisational culture
	+ potential problems
 |
| * typical reasons why a proposed change may not be implemented (include operational and management constraints)
 |
| * processes to implement an innovative idea into a new work practice, including:
	+ gain authority to proceed
	+ prepare an implementation plan
	+ communicate the changes
	+ make necessary changes
	+ evaluate the changes
 |

Example of mind map being developed

