

BSBSUS501

Develop workplace policy and procedures for sustainability

Release 1

Learner guide

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Aspire Version 1.1

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BSBSUS501 Develop workplace policy and procedures for sustainability Release 1

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Before you begin

This learner guide is based on the unit of competency *BSBSUS501 Develop workplaces policy and procedures for sustainability*, Release 1. Your trainer or training organisation must give you information about this unit of competency as part of your training program. You can access the unit of competency and assessment requirements at: www.training.gov.au.

How to work through this learner guide

This learner guide contains a number of features that will assist you in your learning. Your trainer will advise which parts of the learner guide you need to read, and which practice tasks and learning checkpoints you need to complete. The features of this learner guide are detailed in the following table.

Feature of the learner guide	How you can use each feature
Learning content	Read each topic in this learner guide. If you come across content that is confusing, make a note and discuss it with your trainer. Your trainer is in the best position to offer assistance. It is very important that you take on some of the responsibility for the learning you will undertake.
Examples and case studies	Examples of completed documents that may be used in a workplace are included in this learner guide. You can use these examples as models to help you complete practice tasks and learning checkpoints. Case studies highlight learning points and provide realistic examples of workplace situations.
Practice tasks	Practice tasks give you the opportunity to put your skills and knowledge into action. Your trainer will tell you which practice tasks to complete.
Video clips	Where QR codes appear, learners can use smartphones and other devices to access video clips relating to the content. For information about how to download a QR reader app or accessing video on your device, please visit our website: www.aspirelr.com.au/help
Summary	Key learning points are provided at the end of each topic.
Learning checkpoints	There is a learning checkpoint at the end of each topic. Your trainer will tell you which learning checkpoints to complete. These checkpoints give you an opportunity to check your progress and apply the skills and knowledge you have learnt.



Foundation skills

As you complete learning using this guide, you will be developing the foundation skills relevant for this unit. Foundation skills are the language, literacy and numeracy (LLN) skills and the employability skills required for participation in modern workplaces and contemporary life.

The following table outlines specific foundation skills noted for your learning in this learner guide.

Foundation skill area	Foundation skill description
Reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifies, analyses and evaluates complex textual information to determine legislative and regulatory requirements, trends and outcomes
Writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Researches, plans and prepares documentation using format and language appropriate to context, organisational requirements and audience
Oral communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presents information and seeks advice using language appropriate to audience Participates in discussions using listening and questioning to elicit the views of others and to clarify or confirm understanding
Numeracy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interprets and uses mathematical equations to calculate numerical information relating to time durations and costs
Navigate the world of work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develops, monitors and modifies organisational policies and procedures in accordance with legislative requirements and organisation goals
Interact with others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Selects and uses appropriate conventions and protocols when communicating with internal and external stakeholders to seek or share information Plays a lead role in consulting and negotiating positive outcomes with a range of stakeholders
Get the work done	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plans, organises and implements work activities of self and others that ensure compliance with organisational policies and procedures, and legislative requirements Sequences and schedules complex activities, monitors implementation, and manages relevant communication Uses systematic, analytical processes in relatively complex, situations, setting goals, gathering relevant information, and identifying and evaluating options against agreed criteria Evaluates outcomes of decisions to identify opportunities for improvement

What do you already know?

Use the following table to identify what you may already know. This may assist you to work out what to focus on in your learning.

Topic	Key outcome	Rate your confidence in each section
Topic 1 Develop workplace sustainability policy	1A Define scope of sustainability policy	<input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Not confident
	1B Gather information from a range of sources to plan and develop policy	<input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Not confident
	1C Identify and consult stakeholders in the policy development process	<input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Not confident
	1D Include appropriate strategies in sustainability policy	<input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Not confident
	1E Make recommendations for policy options	<input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Not confident
	1F Develop policy that reflects the organisation's commitment to sustainability	<input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Not confident
	1G Seek agreement on implementation methods, outcomes and performance indicators	<input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Not confident
Topic 2 Communicate workplace sustainability policy	2A Promote workplace sustainability policy to key stakeholders	<input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Not confident
	2B Inform those involved in implementing the policy	<input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Not confident

Topic	Key outcome	Rate your confidence in each section
Topic 3 Implement workplace sustainability policy	3A Develop and communicate procedures to help implement workplace sustainability policy	<input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Not confident
	3B Implement strategies for continuous improvement in resource efficiency	<input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Not confident
	3C Establish and assign responsibility for recording systems to track continuous improvements in sustainability approaches	<input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Not confident
Topic 4 Review workplace sustainability policy implementation	4A Document outcomes and provide feedback to key personnel and stakeholders	<input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Not confident
	4B Investigate successes and failures of policy	<input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Not confident
	4C Monitor records to identify trends	<input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Not confident
	4D Modify policy and procedures to ensure improvements are made	<input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Not confident

Topic 1

Develop workplace sustainability policy

Before developing a workplace sustainability policy, you must first define the scope of the intended policy. This involves understanding the organisation's current environmental impact, identifying how the organisation can minimise this impact, and familiarising yourself with the legislation and regulations that need to be complied with.

When preparing to develop the policy, you need to gather relevant information, identify and consult with stakeholders to encourage their input, and consider financial implications and time lines for implementation.

The final sustainability policy should reflect the organisation's commitment to sustainability as part of the overall business planning process.

In this topic you will learn how to:

- 1A Define scope of sustainability policy
- 1B Gather information from a range of sources to plan and develop policy
- 1C Identify and consult stakeholders in the policy development process
- 1D Include appropriate strategies in sustainability policy
- 1E Make recommendations for policy options
- 1F Develop policy that reflects the organisation's commitment to sustainability
- 1G Seek agreement on implementation methods, outcomes and performance indicators

1A

Define scope of the sustainability policy

Sustainability focuses on the concept of interdependence, meaning that life on earth exists due to a delicate balance of ecosystems. If part of the system is disrupted, all life on earth experiences repercussions.

In recent decades it has become clear that human beings are living beyond this natural balance, using up the planet's resources at a rate that cannot be maintained. Sustainability in an organisational context is therefore about reducing water and energy use, reducing waste and pollution, and switching to renewable sources of energy, raw materials and products.

A holistic approach requires that actions be considered on individual, organisational, national and global levels. The fundamental premise of sustainable thinking is that the future is not somewhere we are going, but something we are creating through our choices today.



Components of sustainability

Sustainability is often associated uniquely with environmental issues. However, there are three interlocking components associated with sustainability that are equally important. Actions today have ecological, economic and social consequences for the future, as shown here.

Ecological sustainability

Ecological sustainability is based on our planet having a limited amount of non-renewable resources and ensuring we do not use these up.

Financial (or economic) sustainability

Financial sustainability involves the fair distribution of wealth. Wealth is often needed to access essential services such as medical care and education, and ensure a good standard of living. The global economic crisis in late 2008 demonstrated how fragile our global economies can be. Economic growth is dependent on natural resources and energy supply – without these, there is nothing to trade.

Social sustainability

Social sustainability refers to the needs of people and communities. This may include access to adequate housing, sanitation, food and medical care or just general equality principles.

Change of attitudes

Rather than being viewed as a concrete concept, sustainability should be considered an aspirational goal, one that involves a fundamental shift in human attitudes and behaviours. It therefore requires education and new ways of thinking to bring about behavioural change.

The sustainability movement is working to change people's attitude towards environmental issues. This movement is spreading through the world: at a grassroots community level through individuals exhibiting behaviours such as recycling, taking shorter showers, reducing waste in the home and using greener modes of travel; and with international recognition by governments of the need for sustainable development, and the incorporation of sustainability into business practices and economic strategy.

In the workplace, sustainability requires a shift from conventional economic values that rate profit and efficiency above all else, to triple bottom line reporting that includes accounting for environmental and social activities as well as financial reporting.



Need for a sustainability policy

Sustainability policies are becoming more common as society expects businesses of all types to address the impact of their operations on the environment, as well as becoming more financially sustainable. Large companies in mining, road infrastructure, banks and manufacturing all have clear policies on sustainability and these can be accessed via the internet. Small- to medium-sized enterprises are now developing and publicising policies and approaches to sustainability as well. Similarly, businesses operating in office environments are now recognising that they have an impact on the environment and that their 'environmental footprint' – the impact their activities have on the environment – can be significant.

Organisations develop their plans for sustainable development with a focus on growth and profitability, and addressing the impact that directly arises from its operations, activities, products and services, and those of its suppliers. The plans also focus on indirect impacts arising from the daily use of resources such as electricity for lighting and fossil fuels for driving to work.

Structure of a sustainability policy

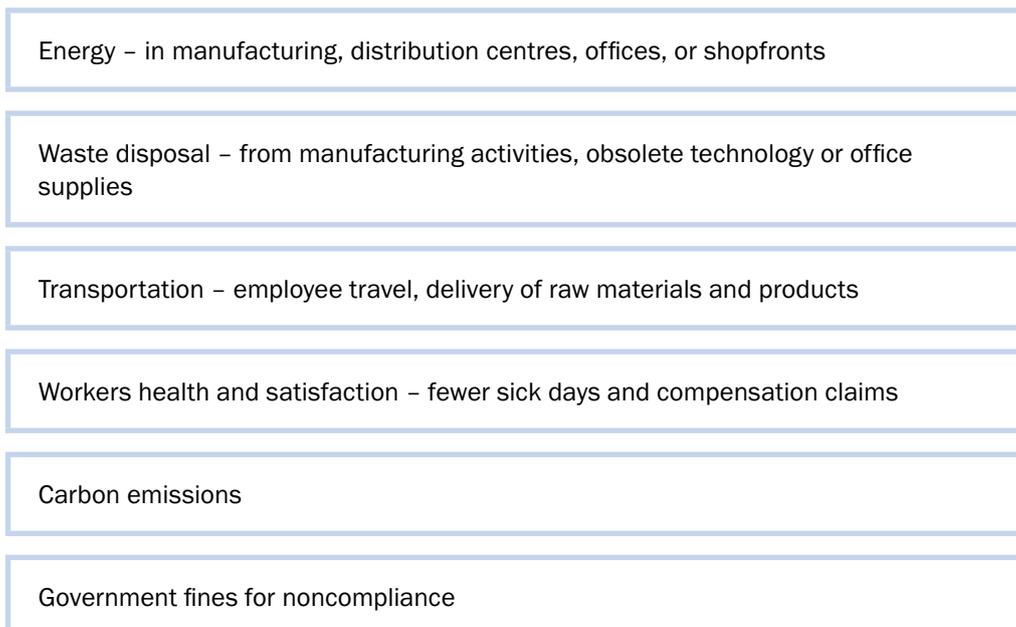
Because all organisations are different, there is no 'one size fits all' sustainability policy. A policy needs to be tailored to fit all aspects of an organisation's activities and encompass any operational approaches undertaken by employees performing their duties.

Here is a typical structure of a sustainability policy.



Benefits of sustainability practices

As well as meeting consumer expectations and being seen as an environmentally conscious organisation, sustainability can lead to cost savings, as shown below.



Framework for environmental policies

Environmental policies demonstrate the commitment of management to improving environmental performance to employees and the wider community. Such commitment can provide a source of encouragement and motivation for staff.

Environmental policies provide the framework for developing environmental strategies, programs and actions. Such development usually happens at the planning and implementation stage.

For environmental policies to be successful, the broad aims and objectives must be able to be converted into practical strategies and actions that you will be able to implement in your workplace. Some organisations will have extensive strategies, while others may only just be starting their commitment, with basic procedures such as recycling office paper.



Skills and knowledge required

Those who are involved in developing, communicating, implementing and monitoring sustainability policies and procedures must understand the organisation, the business it transacts, and the industry in which it operates. They need to understand current sustainability practices so they can translate these into workable policies and procedures. They will also need to be familiar with environmental and sustainability legislation, regulations, codes of practice, standards and guidelines.

In order to create a successful sustainability policy, managers will need good communication skills to be able to convey information, listen to people's points of view, resolve difficulties, work collaboratively to achieve outcomes, and prepare accurate and well-researched reports. Encouraging and motivating staff is a major responsibility.

Establishing networks with colleagues and policy makers will provide opportunities to discuss ways of introducing sustainability to the workplace and learn what is happening in other industries. It is also useful to read or subscribe to journals and magazines on the topic to keep up to date with current ideas, systems, techniques and procedures.

The role of managers in environmental policies

Managers specifically have a role to play in ensuring that an organisation's environmental policy is up to date, understood and followed by all employees.

Tips for managing sustainability procedures:

- Incorporate sustainable practices and culture into all levels of the organisation.
- Build sustainability into team, department or faculty agendas.
- Embed sustainability in job descriptions.
- Allocate specific responsibility for driving change.
- Allocate sufficient resources to sustainability activities.
- Consider the 'whole of life' costs of products and services.
- Encourage individual actions to reduce carbon footprint.
- Build capacity to ensure buy-in from all levels of the organisation.

The role of organisations in sustainability

Most organisations wish to be viewed as good corporate citizens by reducing their ecological footprint. They can do this by establishing a sustainability policy that helps them to:

- comply with national and international environmental legislation
- minimise waste
- reduce water, energy and paper use
- purchase green products
- secure commitment from the whole organisation.

The contents of sustainability policies and procedures will differ depending on the size and type of the organisation and the industry. The policy will state the goals the organisation wishes to achieve and be a guide to employees' behaviour.

Generally, sustainability policies cover energy use, water use, waste disposal, discrimination and social inclusion. Procedures will include the practical steps to take; for example, switching off lights and appliances when not in use; how to deal with potential environmental risks and hazards; and how to store dangerous goods or report a spill.

Compliance for environmental policies

When designing sustainability policies and procedures, bear in mind that compliance may be necessary with federal, state/territory and local government laws, by-laws, regulations and codes of practice.

Importantly, sustainability needs to be embedded in corporate culture and not be viewed as an add-on. A sustainability policy should be the beginning of an environmental management system (EMS) that will manage the impact of an organisation's activities on the environment by minimising environmental liabilities, allowing for more efficiency in resource use, reducing waste, demonstrating corporate responsibility and building awareness among employees.

Example: overview of an environmental management system

Here is an overview of the components of an EMS; the policy is the primary component that guides all subsequent components. The definition of each component is provided.

EMS components

1**Environmental policy**

A statement of the organisation's sustainability objectives.

2**Environmental impact identification**

The organisation's current environmental impact is assessed with an environmental audit that identifies and documents the actual and potential effects of its operations.

3

Objectives and targets

A list of goals, based on the findings from the audit. General objectives (such as 'reduce energy use') are aligned with specific targets (such as 'reduce electricity consumption by 15% by December 2016').

4

Environmental management plan

An environmental management plan details the methods and procedures that the organisation will use to meet its objectives and targets.

5

Responsibilities and reporting structures

There must be clear allocation of the responsibilities of staff and management to ensure the EMS is implemented effectively.

6

Training

Staff should undergo training so they understand their responsibilities for implementing the EMS, the overall environmental policy, and the objectives and rationale behind it. Skills training may be needed in order to carry out the actions in the policy.

7

Review audits and monitoring compliance

Audits should be undertaken regularly to ensure the EMS is achieving its objectives. Monitoring should be thorough and continuous.

8

Continuous improvement process

Procedures should be examined frequently to find out how they can be improved.

Sustainability initiatives

When defining the scope of your policy, you should look at how you will approach sustainability with reference to standards and guidelines.

Organisations that are just beginning to develop a policy usually start with small initiatives and gradually build towards bigger and more long-term programs. You may be responsible for developing an initial policy, or adjusting a policy for an organisation that wants to increase its sustainability credentials.

The first step in developing a sustainability policy is to define its scope.

Defining the scope of a sustainability policy:

- Which part of the organisation will the policy apply to? Is it for the whole organisation, one site or one work area?
- Will it be an integrated approach including environmental, economic and social aspects, or a specific approach?
- What sustainability initiatives will the policy address?
- What laws and regulations need to be complied with?

Identify your ecological footprint

Everyone and everything has an environmental impact, whether it is positive, such as revegetating eroded areas, or negative, such as polluting or habitat destruction. Identify how your organisation's day-to-day operations affect the environment by working out your environmental footprint. Factors contributing to the overall environmental footprint may include paper use, air-conditioning, energy use by computers, emissions from transportation, packaging and waste disposal, water use, and the purchase of non-recyclable or non-renewable materials and equipment. This is an essential starting point so you can plan your future goals. You should conduct an environmental audit, review documentation and observe current behaviour.

It is also useful to prepare an environmental risk register that lists the various risks associated with resource use, waste, purchasing, equipment, energy, transport and the built environment; for example, the threat of toxic chemical spills or fire.

Reduce the environmental footprint

To reduce the size of your organisation's environmental footprint and minimise environmental impact, you may initiate a green office program and adopt work practices such as the following.

Green purchasing

Green purchasing means choosing to buy products that are less damaging to the environment. Green products offer recycled content, energy efficiency, water-saving features, low contamination or toxicity, ease of recycling, minimum waste/packaging, biodegradable materials, renewable sources and minimal habitat and land degradation. An organisation committed to reducing their environmental footprint will buy recycled paper; use recyclable toner cartridges; refuse excess packaging; and purchase equipment with a high 'Energy Star' rating.

Green office program

A green office program focuses on making the workplace environmentally friendly and efficient, and changing people's behaviour; for example, encouraging minimum use of paper; re-using paper; switching computers to stand-by when not in use; switching off lights when not in the room; reducing energy consumption by not turning the heating or airconditioning up higher than is needed; and reducing water consumption by installing dual-flush toilets.

Supply chain

Supply chain management is about ensuring the supply chain is efficient and economical in order to gain a competitive advantage in the marketplace. However, you can also use supply chain management to ensure that all suppliers at all stages of production from the basic raw materials to the consumable product have sustainability policies in place. You can also include sustainability requirements in your supplier contracts.

Product stewardship

Product stewardship is the practice of taking steps to minimise environmental impact from the production, use and disposal of a product. You can choose to purchase from suppliers or importers who manage the 'life cycle' of their products responsibly. Your organisation can also become a product steward.

Ethical purchasing

Ethical purchasing means choosing products and raw materials that are produced under fair conditions and sold at a fair price. This means that there was no child labour or forced labour involved in the production process, and that workers are paid a living wage and have safe working conditions. Because unfair labour conditions and environmental degradation tend to go hand-in-hand in countries that do not have a good governance framework, ethical purchasing is often considered part of green purchasing.

Identify initiatives implemented by others

Initiatives for environmental sustainability are implemented by industry and private groups, environmental lobby groups and the federal, state and territory governments. These initiatives are usually published in industry and government papers, websites or in company statements; for example, a company's newsletter may describe a tree planting program, and government initiatives, such as the federal Your Energy Savings program, are regularly advertised on television, online and in newspapers.

When researching initiatives, it is important to look past the press releases and initial reports to find out what the outcomes were and whether the initiative was a success. This can be difficult to ascertain, as results from failed initiatives may not be published. You will therefore need to broaden your research to reports and reviews published by universities, government bodies (Australian and international) and research organisations. Be alert to signs of bias or poor reporting, and avoid relying on a single source to make a decision.

A systematic approach to researching sustainability initiatives

- Identify the sources appropriate to your business and industry.
- Select and, if necessary, subscribe to updates from the chosen sources.
- Analyse the published outcomes.
- Review the success or failure of each initiative.

Identify reporting requirements

There are a number of reporting requirements you may need to consider when developing your policy. Some of these are outlined in the following information.

Global Reporting Initiative (GRI)

The GRI is a network-based organisation that has developed the world's most widely used sustainability reporting framework and is committed to its continuous improvement and application worldwide. The framework sets out the principles and indicators that organisations can use to measure and report on their economic, environmental and social performance.

National Greenhouse and Energy Reporting Act 2007 (Cth)

This Act introduced a single national framework for the reporting and dissemination of information about greenhouse gas emissions, greenhouse gas projects, and energy production and consumption.

Triple bottom line reporting

Triple bottom line reporting is an approach to accounting that, in addition to reporting financial measures, reports on the total performance of a company including environmental and social activities.

Your policy must stipulate the need to report on the strategies your organisation has in place to reduce its impact on the environment and its performance against targets through the mechanism of triple bottom line reporting.

Life cycle analyses

A life cycle analysis is a tool for identifying and measuring the environmental impact of resource and energy used in the entire life cycle of a product, including production, distribution, consumption and disposal. This allows a company to examine the full range of environmental and social impacts resulting from its products and services, and assists in choosing the least damaging route.

An environmentally conscious organisation will incorporate life cycle analysis into decision-making processes, and manage materials and products across their life cycles. The procedures of life cycle assessments are a part of the ISO 14000 Environmental management standards. Software packages are available to aid in these complex calculations.



Sustainability covenants

A sustainability covenant (or compact) is a voluntary agreement between an environmental group and a business or organisation. The covenant forms part of each party's policy on sustainability.

The aim is for the two parties to explore new ways of reducing environmental impact and achieving sustainability goals. The covenant also provides a medium for publicly announcing a company or organisation's commitment to broad-based sustainability initiatives and goals.

Covenants set out realistic, achievable objectives with a specific time frame.

The Environment Protection Authority of Victoria has active covenants listed on its website. Visit www.epa.vic.gov.au and search for 'Sustainability covenants'.

Determine operations

A critical step in defining the scope of a sustainability policy is to audit your organisation's current operations and develop an overview of the potential needs of the organisation in regard to a sustainability policy.

You will also need to discover what licences, permits and authorisations are required to conduct business, and the regulators/authorities that issue the permissions or have legislated the standards your organisation must meet. You may need to contact federal, state and local government authorities, industry bodies and international entities to ensure you are compliant with their requirements.

An organisation-wide audit can be used to ascertain:

- the activities conducted
- the size of the organisation including the physical premises, resource requirements and staff numbers
- the location of all premises in Australia and overseas
- energy demands for the organisation
- emissions produced
- the waste produced, options for reducing it and disposal methods for reducing the environmental impact
- the general impact on the environment in relation to land, water, air and energy
- the attitude of the organisation towards sustainability and the commitment of management.

Identify laws and regulations

Organisations are governed by laws, regulations, standards, guidelines and best practice. Sustainability policy must comply with environmental performance and sustainability requirements issued at the international, national, state/territory, industry and organisational level.

Some of these requirements are mandatory, meaning organisations must comply with them or they will face legal sanctions such as fines, loss of operating licences or court action. Other requirements are voluntary, but are conditions for membership of or certification by industry bodies. Companies may also decide to make voluntary commitments based on a covenant, community expectations, or their mission statement.

These are described in the following information.

Legislation or legal requirements

Compliance is required with international law, federal legislation (Acts and legislation passed by the federal government), state/territory legislation and local council/shire regulations. These requirements are enforced through mandatory reporting, audits and site inspections.

Industry standards and guidelines

Compliance is voluntary as it is not legislated for. Standards arise from international standards such as ISO 14001:2004 (updated from ISO 14001:1996), Australian and New Zealand standards (AS/NZS), national standards, industry-specific standards and guidance notes. Generally these are termed best practice approaches and thus many organisations have a policy to comply with them. Requirements are met through reporting, submissions and assessments.

Voluntary commitments

Compliance with stakeholder, shareholder and community expectations is voluntary. Organisations may opt to sign up to an existing scheme or framework that matches their objectives, such as Ride2Work or Healthy Spaces & Places. They could also create a covenant in partnership with a local environmental group or government body, or develop commitments based on addressing local environmental and social issues.

International standards

ISO 14001:2004 is an international standard on environmental management systems that enables organisations to develop policies that take into account legislative requirements and information about significant environmental impacts.

More information about the standard can be found on the International Organization for Standardization website at: www.iso.org.

Legislation – Commonwealth

The Department of the Environment is the federal body that develops and implements national policy, programs and legislation to protect and conserve Australia's environment and heritage, and to promote Australian arts and culture. There are six agencies that report to the department and they administer the various Acts and sustainability initiatives, including those listed here.

The *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (Cth) is the Australian Government’s major environmental legislation. It provides a legal framework to protect and manage nationally and internationally important flora, fauna, ecological communities and heritage places – defined in the Act as matters of national environmental significance. The Act enables the Australian Government to provide a national scheme of environment and heritage protection and biodiversity conservation.

The *Corporations Act 2001* (Cth) requires companies to report breaches of environmental laws and licences in their annual reports.

Other Acts that affect organisations include:

- *Environment Protection (Sea Dumping) Act 1981* (Cth)
- *Hazardous Waste (Regulation of Exports and Imports) Act 1989* (Cth)
- *Ozone Protection and Synthetic Gas Management Act 1989* (Cth).

Legislation – state and territory

Each state and territory has departments that deal with environmental legislation and administer environment protection policies relating to noise control, pollution and construction planning. They issue relevant licences, act as regulatory authorities and can prosecute noncompliant offenders through the courts with fines and jail terms.

State and territory government departments are outlined in the following information. Note that names often change with governments, so always check to ensure you have the current information.

Northern Territory	Department of Lands, Planning and the Environment www.dlp.nt.gov.au
New South Wales	Office of Environment and Heritage www.environment.nsw.gov.au
Queensland	Department of Environment and Heritage Protection www.ehp.qld.gov.au
Western Australia	Department of Environment Regulation www.der.wa.gov.au
Victoria	Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning www.delwp.vic.gov.au
ACT	Environment and Planning Directorate www.environment.act.gov.au
Tasmania	Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment www.dpiw.tas.gov.au

Local government

Local government is required to comply with federal, state and territory government laws and regulations. Councils and shires also administer their own laws and regulations relating to organisations and individuals. Organisations commonly need to comply with local government requirements relating to building and planning permits, greywater and rainwater use, zoning, noise and waste disposal.

Standards – codes of practice and industry

Many professions industries have a code of practice that organisations should adhere to. The code provides standards and approaches to assist them in complying with legislation, regulations and ethical requirements. Though a breach of a code of practice is not punishable by law, an organisation or an individual may be deregistered for noncompliance.

Industry bodies provide standards and guidelines for organisations that assist them in complying with various legislative requirements. Organisations operating in certain industries commit themselves to abiding by the industry standards, which are often more rigorous than the regulatory requirements imposed by the government.

Standards and voluntary compliance

After identifying the legal compliance obligations, an organisation needs to consider the various standards that it will include in a sustainability policy. Codes of practice and industry guidelines are voluntary under the law but many organisations place significant importance on complying with them.

A number of codes of practice and industry standards make reference to and expect compliance with various international standards, Australian standards or other initiatives. Organisations will also choose to comply with these standards as part of their policy commitment. Some of the options include green purchasing and supply chain management.

Example: how a company determined the scope for their new sustainability policy

Prestige Printing and Office Supplies is located in a regional town that has a university campus, a TAFE institute and several public and private schools.

Frank and Stephanie each own 30 per cent of the business and jointly run it. There are two other part owners, Chris and Anh, who each have a 20 per cent investment but do not work in the business. All four (Frank, Stephanie, Chris and Anh) are directors and they hold quarterly meetings. The business directly employs 25 people with some part-time and casual staff. The business services a number of smaller outlets across the region.

There is an increasing awareness in the educational institutions in the area and the local community of environmental and sustainability issues. At the last directors meeting it was agreed that the company should have a well-defined stance on sustainability with appropriate policies and procedures. They decided that Prestige Printing and Office Supplies needs to reduce its ecological footprint and demonstrate compliance with 'green' business practices.

Frank and Steph research the options and decide that the company should focus on:

- green purchasing
- a green office program
- waste management and recycling
- triple bottom line reporting.

The purpose of the triple bottom line reporting is to highlight successes and targets achieved in reducing the company's ecological footprint, which can then be publicised.

Practice task 1

Read the scenario and answer the following questions. Keep a record of your work on this scenario, as it will be referred to in practice tasks throughout this unit.

Scenario

You work for Kare 4 Kidz, a preschool kindergarten. Your centre is part of a larger network of centres working with children from age three until they go to school. The staff consists of two educators, two assistants, the centre director and an administrative support person (which is your role).

The centre director has decided to develop a range of sustainability initiatives for the centre to reduce its environmental impact and set a good example for children and their families.

1. Consider the type of activities Kare 4 Kidz would need to include in an environmental sustainability policy, keeping in mind the nature of the business and the energy demands on this type of business. List four objectives and specific practices that would support them.

2. With reference the four objectives you chose, define the scope of the policy and why you think it is appropriate.

1B

Gather information from a range of sources to plan and develop policy

The next stage in developing a sustainability policy involves significant research and consultation to gather the information you need before you can prepare the policy. You should source a range of information from internal and external sources regarding law and regulations, and organisational needs.

Regulatory sources

You must check with all regulatory international, federal, state, territory and local government authorities as well as industry bodies, and collect a range of relevant legislation, standards, guidelines and codes of practice you need to comply with in a sustainability policy. Obtaining copies of the relevant legislation and guidelines of the reporting required by the regulators will assist in policy and procedure development. It is a good idea to prepare a file and catalogue the material so it is easily accessible.

Information relating to legislation and guidelines should include:

- national and state laws and regulations regarding handling dangerous materials, disposing of hazardous wastes, water use, environmental protection and biodiversity conservation
- local government provisions.



Organisational specifications

Check your internal records on current policies and procedures relating to sustainability. Such records and environmental documents may exist as a requirement of legislation with which you already comply.

Seek out documentation relating to:

- relevant legislation and compliance requirements currently in place
- audits on current systems for compliance, including any breaches; for example, an incident report on a chemical spill
- current policies and procedures relating to purchasing, recycling, energy use reduction and storage of hazardous substances
- resource use; for example, monthly electricity bill
- the type of paper used and consumption rate; for example, supplier invoices
- meeting notes recording sustainability activities and the commitment of staff to sustainability
- materials safety data sheets (MSDSs), which include specific requirements for handling and storage for the organisation's resources.

Relevant personnel

You should also consult with a range of people to obtain relevant and current information that can guide you in developing the sustainability policy. Suitable avenues for consultation are described below.

Suitable avenues for consultation

1

Staff

All staff can provide input for the development of a workplace sustainability policy as they can comment on the efficiency and effectiveness of current practices. It is vital that input from employees is encouraged and acknowledged, and combined with the input from all other sources.

2

Consultants and environmental agencies

There is a range of organisations that provide reporting systems and advice; for example, the Global Reporting Initiative. The GRI produces e-newsletters. There are members of the GRI whose advice and systems will meet the GRI standard. Information on emissions trading can be gained from the Australian Government's Department of the Environment. Find out whether there are any agencies in your area that focus on sustainability programs.

3

Environmental regulators and industry associations

Local, national and international environmental regulators provide advice on policy development and procedures; for example, the Environmental Protection Authority in Victoria provides advice and conducts environmental audits.

Many recommend standards such as AS/NZS or ISO provide best practice guidelines on achieving those standards. Industry associations also provide guidelines and information on compliance with regulations, rules and standards.

4

Companies and businesses

Many companies and businesses provide their sustainability policy, plans, targets and approaches as part of their annual reports, or as separate publications or announcements on their website. Such electronic documents can include policy statements and procedures that can be analysed and considered in terms of your own organisation. Triple bottom line reporting provides one type of standard reporting.

5

Suppliers

Suppliers can provide information on the materials, equipment and general resources used in the production of your products and services so you can see how energy efficient, environmentally compliant and sustainable they are. Many organisations in the energy sector are keen to provide options for green efficient energy solutions; for example, Green Power is a government agency that guarantees that the renewable electricity you buy from energy suppliers meets stringent environmental standards.

6

Customers

Customers are increasingly aware of environmental sustainability, so their purchasing decisions are influenced by the environmental credentials of goods and services. It's important to obtain customer feedback about what they require from the goods and services they purchase from your organisation. Consult feedback records, survey results and reports from focus groups.

Other information sources

Other information about environmental issues can be sought from websites, publications and other media as shown in the following information.

Examples of other sources of information

Energy Rating is a government initiative that provides a guide to choosing energy-efficient appliances. Access Energy rating at www.energyrating.gov.au

The Green Office Guide is published by the Australian government to help businesses to buy and use environmentally friendly office equipment

The Green Directory is an online resource for locating green businesses, products and services, attributes and sustainable business practices. Access the Green Directory at www.greend.com.au

Green Lifestyle is an Australian consumer sustainability magazine. Access *Green Lifestyle* at <http://greenlifestylemag.com.au>

Australian consumer organisation CHOICE and environmental organisations publish reports and comparisons to help consumers choose products

Example: research and gather information to inform environmental policy

Frank and Steph consider various issues and undertake research as to what they may include in the workplace sustainability policy for Prestige Printing and Office Supplies. Given the scope that has been identified, they research:

- local council regulations, waste management and recycling
- requirements for triple bottom line reporting
- the definition and expectations for green purchasing
- requirements for a green office program
- Acts and regulations such as the *Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (Cth)
- information from websites on similar businesses and general websites such as Energy Rating
- sustainability policies from surrounding educational institutions.



Practice task 2

Make a list of the sources you will consult when developing the sustainability policy for Kare 4 Kidz.

1C

Identify and consult stakeholders in the policy development process

In 1963, the Stanford Research Institute defined stakeholders as ‘those groups without whose support the organization would cease to exist’. The concept from this internal memo was expanded on and popularised in the 1980s by business professor R. Edward Freeman.

Today, a stakeholder is considered to be any individual or group with an interest in the conduct, actions and production of the organisation’s products and services. Stakeholders can be internal (staff, shareholders) or external (local residents, customers, suppliers).

The development and implementation of a workplace sustainability policy will clearly affect everyone involved, so each group should be consulted when developing the policy or making changes to an existing one.

It is to be expected that each stakeholder will have a different view on the implementation and continued development of sustainability policies and procedures.

Examples of stakeholder interest

- The community that lives near a factory has a connection with the local environment and the impact on it.
- The shareholder has money invested and changes can affect the price of the shares and their investment.
- The employee will be concerned about the potential changes to their job.

Determine what information will be used in developing your policy and procedures

Every stakeholder has a view that should be considered. Determine how you will obtain their input and the types of consultation you will employ. Before embarking on a significant consultation effort, first determine what information is being sought and how it will be used in developing your policy and procedures.

Questions to consider prior to consultation

- What is the organisation attempting to gain from consulting stakeholders?
- What measures can be applied to know whether consultation is effective?
- Which categories of stakeholder need to be consulted on the different aspects?
- How will the input from stakeholders be gathered, stored and used?
- Who should have access to the responses from the consultation?
- What feedback will be provided to the stakeholders following consultation?

Potential stakeholders

The following information lists potential stakeholders, the reason for their inclusion as a stakeholder and consultation options to obtain their input.

Employees at all levels

Reason for consultation

Any change in policy and procedures will affect staff, usually by changing or adding to their duties or KPIs. Sustainability will require changes in procedures for adherence and compliance. Obtaining staff commitment is a crucial aspect.

Consultation options

Staff meetings, intranet, surveys, toolbox meetings, memos, emails, informal discussions, formal group meetings, suggestion boxes, working parties.

Key internal personnel

Reason for consultation

Decision-makers and those responsible for guiding, implementing and managing sustainability may include directors, board members, finance managers, department managers, and work health and safety personnel.

Consultation options

Meetings, committees, seminars, planning sessions.

Customers and clients

Reason for consultation

Customers and clients purchase the products and services and are increasingly interested in the environment and sustainability.

Consultation options

Surveys, advertisements and requests for contributions, public presentations, social media, online feedback.

Investors and shareholders

Reason for consultation

Investors and shareholders have money invested and expect a return, and will want to maintain the status quo or increase investment return.

Consultation options

Shareholders meetings (including the AGM) or communications (electronic or in print), surveys.

Local community**Reason for consultation**

Production has an impact on the immediate environment. The local community will be keen to see a reduced impact on the environment.

Consultation options

Community forums, focus groups, online feedback, social media, surveys.

Suppliers**Reason for consultation**

Suppliers have a genuine interest in being able to provide input, and will be keen to ensure that they know the standards to be met.

Consultation options

Exhibitions, seminars, industry events, questionnaires and surveys, formal meetings.

Employee unions**Reason for consultation**

Unions aim to protect the rights of employees but may also be interested in promoting sustainability and be willing to lend their support to achieving environmental goals.

Consultation options

Formal meetings, emails, memos or formal written requests.

Government agencies and regulators**Reason for consultation**

Government agencies and regulators provide permits and licences to operate and regulate compliance with legislation. These entities can provide substantial information and support for improved practices and reduced impact on the environment. Local government has an interest in sustainable practices and may be able to provide advice and support.

Consultation options

Attend government-sponsored information events, and have meetings with agency experts to discuss sustainability options.

Industry associations**Reason for consultation**

Industry associations wish the industry to grow and thrive, and may have research and development specialists. They are keen to have the industry reduce its ecological footprint while maintaining competitiveness.

Consultation options

Industry exhibitions; seminars; meetings with experts in the field; reports and research; and consultation with authors, investigators, and research and development personnel.

Need for consultation

Different organisations in different industries will face particular issues in terms of the range of stakeholders and the options for consultation; for example, a geographic spread across the country or the world will present issues for some. Consultation may need to take place via teleconferencing, videoconferencing or written questionnaires.

It is important that there is a planned approach to the consultation process for each of the stakeholder groups. Allowing appropriate lead time for responses is necessary if you wish to be taken seriously in terms of seeking input.



After the consultation has taken place, the various stakeholders will also be interested in receiving a report on the outcome of the consultation process and the policies and procedures that are to be implemented. Some stakeholders will also be required to take on certain responsibilities in terms of a compliance role to ensure the policy and procedures are being followed and the targets achieved.

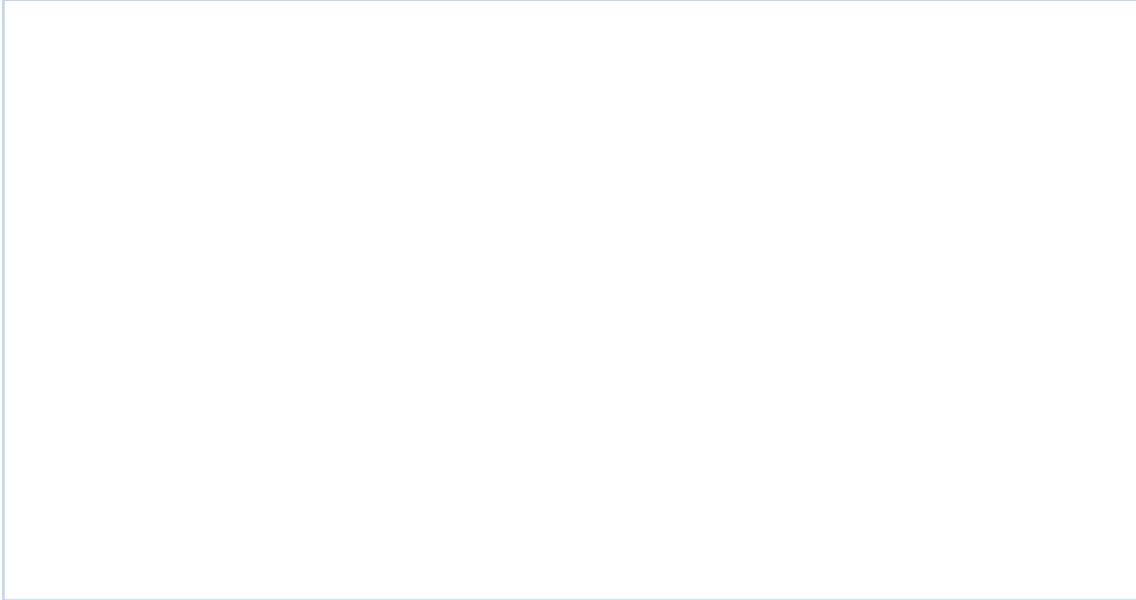
Example: how stakeholders were identified

At Prestige Printing and Office Supplies, Frank and Steph identify stakeholders and undertake consultation as follows:

- Clients (large and small) – a series of meetings and discussions
- Suppliers – a short survey and discussions on the phone and face to face
- Staff – a general staff meeting and focus meeting with specific groups, and an intranet survey
- Community – informal discussions, an advertisement in the local press and a request for feedback via the company's social media network
- Local council – meeting with the environmental unit and waste management specialist
- Investors (Chris and Anh) – meeting

Practice task 3

Identify possible stakeholders in the Kare 4 Kidz preschool kindergarten and explain why you think they are stakeholders.



1D Include appropriate strategies in sustainability policy

With any new policy or significantly changed policy there is the need to consider how it will be implemented and how it will affect people and budgets. Here are some examples of how a sustainability policy could guide an organisation's sustainability requirements.

Influence of sustainability policy on organisation requirements

Minimise resource use, use energy more efficiently, reduce waste, reduce toxic material and hazardous chemical use and introduce life cycle management.

Comply with the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI).

Implement triple bottom line reporting.

Comply with a green purchasing approach for all inputs.

Purchase carbon credits.

Comply with the ISO 14001:2004 – international standard on environmental management systems.

Sign up for government initiatives.

Effective policies

To be effective, the policy needs the commitment of all stakeholders. This means they have to understand it, know how it affects their work, be aware of their responsibilities and have the skills and knowledge to implement the various activities.

You need to write into the policy how you will ensure that:

- all stakeholders are aware of the sustainability policy
- issues and implications are clarified with all stakeholders
- all employees and contractors are aware of the required changes to their current workplace procedures.



Raise awareness

The sustainability policy must include how the organisation is going to raise awareness of its sustainability aims. There must be a communication strategy that provides for information sessions to ensure that all employees and relevant parties, such as contractors and suppliers, are aware of the policy and the commitment of the organisation to achieving the targets it has set.

The following information provides an outline of some communication strategies.

Communication strategies

1**Induction sessions**

Ensure that information about the policy is included in induction sessions for new staff.

2**Information sessions and presentations**

Arrange whole staff information sessions and presentations to discuss people's responsibilities and provide the opportunity for feedback, making sure part-time employees are included.

3**Explanatory steps**

Explain the steps to be taken to minimise resource use, reduce toxic material and hazardous chemical use, and employ life cycle management. Present these steps using notices, posters, intranet articles, blogs, memos and flyers. Use pictures, photographs and graphics to ensure everyone understands the procedure.

4**Intranet**

Place articles on the intranet.

5**Newsletters**

Place articles in the company's newsletter that is distributed to full-time and casual staff, customers, contractors and suppliers, business associates and shareholders.

6**Teleconferencing**

Hold teleconferences to include those in remote locations.

7

Team meetings

Run team meetings at which managers provide the opportunity for team members to raise issues and concerns.

8

Experts

Arrange for an environmental expert to talk to staff about the areas the policy will cover.

Training

Effective training in sustainability principles and processes is essential to provide support and encouragement, and ensure staff have the skills and knowledge needed to achieve sustainability targets. The policy must include how employees will be trained.

Training sessions should:

- be delivered by appropriately qualified and experienced people who understand what the organisation is trying to achieve
- be conducted on site with experts called in for specific areas such as handling hazardous materials
- provide documentation in a form and style accessible to employees
- take into account language or learning difficulties of employees.

Promotional activities

The sustainability policy must include strategies the organisation will use to promote their sustainability activities.

Some strategies to promote sustainability activities include:

- a sustainability vision and mission statement
- a series of posters displayed in office, warehouse and factory sites
- sustainability slogans or a logo appropriately displayed
- environmental planning days to discuss the policy, answer queries, resolve issues and ensure employees understand their responsibilities
- experts engaged to provide relevant training
- a 'green team' tasked with encouraging their colleagues and promoting initiatives.

Example: inclusions in sustainability policy

Frank and Steph consider what they will need to put in their sustainability policy and come up with this list:

- An environmental statement of commitment
- A staff information session must be conducted prior to the implementation of the policy, with input from experts
- General training for all staff will be provided at inductions and team sessions
- Information about sustainability strategies will be featured in newsletter articles and on the intranet
- Information about specific environmental strategies the organisation plans to introduce, such as recycling, reducing the use of hazardous substances and maintaining assets appropriately
- A promotional campaign must be arranged prior to the implementation of the policy



Practice task 4

List the strategies you would include in a sustainability policy for the Kare 4 Kidz preschool kindergarten to raise awareness, provide training and promote the policy.

1E

Make recommendations for policy options

With the amount of information you have obtained during your research and consultation phase, you will probably have a range of ideas that you would like to include in the sustainability policy. You need to make sure the options you propose are easy to implement, cost effective and realistic in terms of the organisation's current position.

Note that initiating a large number of objectives at once can be overwhelming and confusing to employees and stakeholders; conversely, implementing a small number of objectives – especially if they are minor ones – may cause people to question the organisation's commitment to sustainability.



Consider the options

When making recommendations about what to include, you need to consider what options will bring the most benefits, the likely effectiveness of the strategies, the time frame needed to put them into practice and the cost of implementation.

Benefits and effectiveness

You may conduct a SWOT analysis or issue a questionnaire to identify the benefits and how effective the policy will be for the organisation.

A SWOT analysis can be used by an organisation to look at the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats associated with a proposal or initiative. Strengths and weaknesses are internal to the organisation and define what the organisation is good at and where help is required. Opportunities and threats are external to the organisation and although the organisation cannot control them, they may influence the situation.

The analysis can be organised as a staff session to ensure everyone is consulted. From the analysis you should be able to identify the activities that will be most beneficial and effective for your organisation.

The following information outlines the four stages of a SWOT analysis.

Internal	External
<p>Strengths: What the organisation is good at – the knowledge, skills, resources, personnel and attitudes already found in house that will support the sustainability policy</p> <p>Weaknesses: What the organisation is not good at – the knowledge, skills, resources, personnel and attitudes the company needs to obtain in order to make the policy a success</p>	<p>Opportunities: The external opportunities that the organisation can take advantage of to ensure the policy achieves success</p> <p>Threats: The external issues that threaten the success of the sustainability policy</p>

Qualitative questionnaire

Use a questionnaire to survey key people to rate their view using a Likert scale from 'strongly agree' to 'strongly disagree'.

A template can be used to gather the responses, and then an analysis should provide an initial determination as to whether the option should be investigated further or, on comparison with other options, that it be ranked above or below alternatives.

Here is an example of a qualitative questionnaire template.

Initial response questionnaire on policy option/initiative	
Policy option/initiative:	Description of option/initiative:
Person completing:	Name:
	Date:
Respond to each statement by circling the appropriate number: 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = undecided, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree	
Provide any additional comments in the space at the bottom or overleaf.	
This option will yield benefits that outweigh the costs.	1 2 3 4 5
The implementation will have little effect on production.	1 2 3 4 5
The option will improve our compliance performance.	1 2 3 4 5
The option will reduce resource consumption and the ecological footprint of the organisation.	1 2 3 4 5
The organisation has the capability to provide the support required to implement this option (e.g., human resources, training).	1 2 3 4 5
The option is in line with the organisation's strategic plan.	1 2 3 4 5
The option will benefit our triple bottom line reporting and is GRI (Global Reporting Initiative) compliant.	1 2 3 4 5
Comments:	

Consider the cost

Conduct a cost-benefit analysis to assess whether the sustainability strategies outlined in the policy are economically worthwhile. By translating the benefits and costs into current monetary values a judgment can be made in relation to the proposal.

For example, estimate the cost of purchasing an energy efficient printer with the ability to print on both sides, versus the estimated reduction in energy and paper costs. Look for ways that some of the strategies could be 'cost neutral' (expenditure is balanced by the money saved, or no expenditure is required).



Consider the time lines

Identify those initiatives that can be implemented quickly and those that are long term. For example, procedures to allow the organisation to switch to recycled paper and introduce non-disposable cups and cutlery can be put in place relatively easily, whereas sourcing green suppliers will take more time. Make sure time lines are realistic and not so long term that they are ineffective.

Document findings and provide a report

Once all the information has been gathered, prepare a report recommending your preferred options for the sustainability policy and its implementation.

The detailed report should include the following elements:

- Background (reason for the policy)
- Table of contents
- Executive summary
- Overview of analysis and recommendation (potential economic gains, environmental gains)
- Impact of recommendation (in terms of environment and compliance, corporate standing and reputation)
- Risks of not implementing the policy
- Implementation requirements, including the proposed procedures, training requirements and a communication, promotion and awareness campaign
- Standards and benchmarks to be achieved with recommended targets
- Time lines for implementation, monitoring and review
- Summary and conclusion

Example: options identified and recommended

Frank and Steph undertake a cost-benefit analysis on the initiatives and options they are considering. The key difficulty they find is quantifying the benefits associated with the options. Assistance is sought from an expert at the local university in quantifying intangible benefits.

A SWOT analysis provides information that enables them to understand the potential effects internally (strengths and weaknesses) and externally (opportunities and threats). Documenting the SWOT analysis identifies areas where they will need to take action to minimise risks associated with the weaknesses and threats.

A report is generated with appropriate costs and time lines for consideration by their fellow directors, Chris and Anh.



Practice task 5

The Kare 4 Kidz centre director has approved two initiatives to include in the sustainability policy:

- Creating a vegetable garden so the children can be involved in planting, watering, weeding, spraying, picking, eating and composting (food scraps and weeds) and learn about how plants grow.
- Asking families to bring in items to re-use for arts and craft.

Using this SWOT analysis table, evaluate each initiative and determine whether you would recommend that the initiatives are included.

	Creating a vegetable garden	Asking families to bring in items to re-use for arts and crafts
Strengths (internal)		
Weaknesses (internal)		
Opportunities (external)		
Threats (external)		

1F

Develop policy that reflects the organisation's commitment to sustainability

When developing the policy, keep in mind that it must reflect the organisation's commitment to sustainability as an integral part of business planning and as a business opportunity. The way in which organisational goals can be reflected in sustainability practices are outlined in the following information.

To be positioned as a leader in sustainability

- Follow environmental guidelines.
- Encourage ethical business practices.
- Ensure your actions preserve natural resources and biodiversity.
- Avoid buying products from companies or industries that exploit workers.
- Ensure financial transparency and openness in environmental practices.

To use sustainability initiatives as business opportunities

- Use business partners that can further your sustainability credentials.

To be part of the local community

- Support and empower local communities.
- Educate others on sustainability.

To reduce operating costs and ensure growth and profitability

- Reduce, re-use, recycle.

To purchase green equipment and consumables

- Incorporate life cycle analysis into decision-making processes.

To comply with relevant legislation

- Comply with environmental legislation, agreements and standards at local, national and international levels.

Components of a sustainability policy

You are now ready to develop the sustainability policy using the information you have gathered.

A sustainability policy needs:

- an overarching vision statement
- targets and time lines
- plans and procedures to achieve the targets
- details of responsibilities and accountabilities for implementing procedures, meeting targets and keeping records
- a clear commitment from management and all employees.

Example: sustainable purchasing policy

The sustainable purchasing strategy promotes sustainable use of resources and reduces an organisation's environmental impact through responsible buying. All products coming into the workplace must be purchased under set guidelines. The strategy will allow for staff to choose environmentally preferred products whenever possible; for example, recycled paper, paper sourced from responsible producers, non-toxic inks and dyes for printers, and energy-efficient globes.

As well as raising awareness about environmental initiatives, it is important to promote a culture of environmental responsibility. The key difference is in making the transition from something that is a good thing to do, to something that is required and part of everyday responsibilities. Achieving this sense of responsibility may require some formal documentation.

While it may be your role to provide some or all of the relevant documentation to support an environmentally responsible culture, it is not enough to just produce documents. Creating a consistent culture in any organisation requires support at all levels. Senior management support for environmental policies is critical; this could take the form of providing sufficient funding and resources to carry out necessary tasks, and leading by example when it comes to following procedures.

Consider the following options:

- Publish an environmental policy statement on the intranet or company website.
- Develop and publish an environmental improvement plan.
- Ensure objectives and targets are widely communicated and included in the performance management process where appropriate.
- Provide regular feedback on environmental targets and objectives.
- Document environmental procedures so they are part of the formal workplace policy and procedures manual.
- Include environmental policies and procedures in the induction program.
- Formally document reporting requirements for compliance with legislation, regulations or accreditation programs.
- Ensure external reporting requirements are assigned to appropriate staff and followed up.
- Regularly communicate at all levels to maintain awareness.

Example: draft sustainability policy statement

An organisation's workplace sustainability policy statement may look similar to the following.

Our policy is to be an environmentally aware company that is committed to reducing its ecological footprint and is respected in the community for its efforts in sustainability. We value the natural environment highly and are committed to sound environmental practices in our daily operations.

We will do this by:

- ensuring sustainability is an integral part of our business plans
- complying with all relevant legislation and regulations
- applying sustainable solutions to all work practices in order to minimise waste, use energy and water more efficiently and reduce greenhouse gas emissions
- improving our products throughout their life cycle
- purchasing recycled and green products
- enacting the principles of reduce, re-use and recycle to minimise waste generation
- entering strategic partnerships
- ensuring all staff are aware of, and trained in, sustainability practices
- continually reviewing and improving sustainability initiatives
- encouraging an environmentally responsible culture.



Every employee, contractor, supplier and visitor must comply with this policy.

Implement the policy

A sustainability policy needs to be supported by clear plans for implementing options that help the organisation achieve the overall goals in the policy statement. You should provide details of each strategy.

An advantage of documenting the implementation of each initiative individually is that they can be evaluated separately and, more importantly, compared to each other in terms of their demands and expectations. There may well be areas of synergy that will allow you to save time, money or human resources. Areas of conflict could include time lines, or demands on personnel or business areas.

The information below outlines the strategy elements that will be needed to implement sustainability initiatives.

1

Description of initiative

Provide a clear description, including what the initiative should accomplish and how it integrates with the organisation's strategic planning.

2

Targets and time lines

Detail how these will be set and measured, including review time lines.

3**Implementation approach and impact**

Identify which areas will be affected and how this will be addressed. For example, down time for equipment changeover could offer an opportunity for staff training.

Provide details on training that will be required and which employees will need to attend.

Identify the resource requirements for implementation.

4**Promotion and communication**

Provide an overview of how the initiative will be promoted to stakeholder groups.

5**Responsibility, monitoring and reporting**

Detail who will be responsible for reporting on the implementation of the different aspects of the initiative. Outline the monitoring process and the reports that will be generated.

6**Review**

Provide a review time line and process.

Example: further policy initiatives

When the directors of Prestige Printing and Office Supplies (Frank, Steph, Chris and Anh) agreed to develop a workplace sustainability policy they also agreed to develop a statement outlining their commitment to sustainability and supporting the environment. This formal statement is issued to the local press (newspapers, radio and television). It explains the initiatives that they will be considering to promote sustainability in regards to their products and services.

Frank and Steph draft a sustainability statement and policy that incorporates the following initiatives:

- A 'green discount account' for account clients who purchase environmentally friendly products and services
- A competition for local high school students to write an essay on a sustainability, with the winners to receive green products and discounts from Prestige Printing and Office Supplies
- A billboard displaying the company's monthly energy use designed by local Grade 6 students

Practice task 6

Consider the following two sustainability initiatives from the Kare 4 Kidz program:

- Creating a vegetable garden so the children can be involved in planting, watering, weeding, spraying, picking, eating and composting (food scraps and weeds) and learn about how plants grow.
- Asking families to bring in items to re-use for arts and craft.

Using this table, provide details against each of the implementation stages for each of the two initiatives.

	Creating a vegetable garden	Asking families to bring in items to re-use for arts and crafts
Targets and time lines		
Implementation approach and impact		
Promotion and communication		
Responsibility, monitoring and reporting		
Review		

1G

Seek agreement on implementation methods, outcomes and performance indicators

The final step in developing a sustainability policy is to seek approval and agreement on the way the policy will be implemented and monitored. Gaining agreement from stakeholders in all relevant areas and at all relevant levels of the organisation will increase your chances of successful implementation.

Identify implementation methods

List the initiatives you are going to implement and identify a time line, who will be involved, resources needed and any training required. You may decide to phase in activities over a certain period, or trial the policy and procedures in a team or department. Whatever procedure you adopt, make sure all details are clearly set out.

Targets

Set clear, understandable goals that are measurable and realistic so everyone is able to be committed and achieve the targets.

Targets may include:

- dates for implementation and milestones
- deliverables, including progress reports
- standards and performance, including key performance indicators
- review dates.

Time lines

Time lines determine periods for a wide range of activities; agreeing on dates with stakeholders provides them with realistic time lines for implementation.

Time lines include dates for:

- project start
- implementation of communication strategy
- target dates for achievements
- training schedules.

Resources

Determine resource requirements (physical, human and financial) and the type, style, quantity and time required. Securing agreement on resource requirements will lead to ownership and commitment for acquisition of the necessary resources.

Document the:

- quantity and specification of resources required
- staff/contractors needed: where and when
- funding options
- date resources are needed
- potential suppliers.

Training needs

Determine the knowledge and skills shortfalls and plan a training program to remedy these gaps. Agreeing on the training needs with an internal training specialist or external provider enables the commitment and lead time to develop materials and training schedules.

You will need to determine:

- the number of people to be trained, on what tasks, and by when
- the method for delivering training
- who will carry out the training
- the materials/resources required
- a schedule of training dates.

Communication and promotion

Determine the options for communicating with internal stakeholders and ongoing awareness campaigns. You will need to get agreement early to allow planning and lead time to produce the required communications, follow up arrangements and secure commitment from departments; for example, human resources.

Determine the options for communicating with external stakeholders and promoting the organisation. Agreement will enable public relations staff to plan communications, capitalise on opportunities and secure commitment to the policies.

The communication options that need to be determined are shown in the following information.

Communication options that need to be determined:

- What needs to be communicated when and to whom
- Methods of communication
- Timetable for communications and follow up
- Procedure for handling inquiries
- How the organisation will measure effectiveness of communication, awareness and targets achieved

Responsibilities and report formats

Determining who is responsible for the various reporting duties is critical to the successful implementation of any project or policy. Delegate appropriately. Securing agreement with the designated persons or areas on who is responsible and what is required will lead to ownership and commitment of reporting activities.

Secure written agreement on:

- who is responsible for what task over what time frame
- methods of reporting and time lines for reporting
- processes for dealing with issues.

Gain agreement

You need to follow on from the range of consultation and communication previously undertaken to gain agreement from each of the parties concerned. The key is to create a sense of ownership in the stakeholders by getting them to recognise the value of the sustainability policy to the future of the organisation. There will be occasions when conflict arises with key stakeholders and you will need to use your interpersonal skills to resolve issues and negotiate an agreed position.

Agreements should be documented and signed as proof of acceptance and support of the policy and commitment to the implementation. Once all key stakeholders have agreed to the method of implementation, and their roles, responsibilities and the goals, the implementation process can begin.

It is a good idea to set key performance indicators while negotiating agreement on implementation.



Example: achieve agreement on implementation methods

In considering the implementation of the sustainability policy, Frank and Steph speak to people in each area of the business and detail what is required to achieve the goals for the company. The feedback that is obtained is incorporated into the documentation. The time frames, targets, reporting lines, communication protocols and agreed support requirements, such as training and equipment upgrades, are included in an agreement that all employees sign.

Now everyone knows about the policy, how it affects them and when it will be implemented.

Practice task 7

Using the Kare 4 Kidz initiative of creating a vegetable garden, address the following:

1. Identify the internal stakeholders from whom you would need to seek agreement.

continued ...

... continued

2. Detail your approach for involving them in the planning phase.

3. Outline how you would reach an agreement with the stakeholders you have identified.

Summary

1. The first step in developing a workplace sustainability policy is to determine the scope of the policy and mandatory compliance with any legislation or regulations.
2. Information sources that can assist in the planning and development of the policy should be identified and researched. They may include regulatory bodies, internal personnel, and organisational policies, procedures and other specifications.
3. All stakeholders, internal and external, need to be identified and consulted using appropriate methods such as meetings, emails, informal discussions, surveys, social media, focus groups, seminars and shareholder meetings.
4. The policy must include strategies for consultation, communication and implementation, such as campaigns to create awareness, avenues consultation with stakeholders, and education strategies to ensure all staff understand the changes to their workplace procedures.
5. Detailed evaluation of policy options and initiatives should be undertaken using appropriate tools; this will lead to recommendations being made for incorporation into the draft policy.
6. The draft policy should be discussed with the key stakeholders who will need to implement it. Agreement must be obtained so that the stakeholders will commit to and support the implementation.

Learning checkpoint 1

Develop workplace sustainability policy

This learning checkpoint allows you to review your skills and knowledge in developing workplace sustainability policy.

Part A

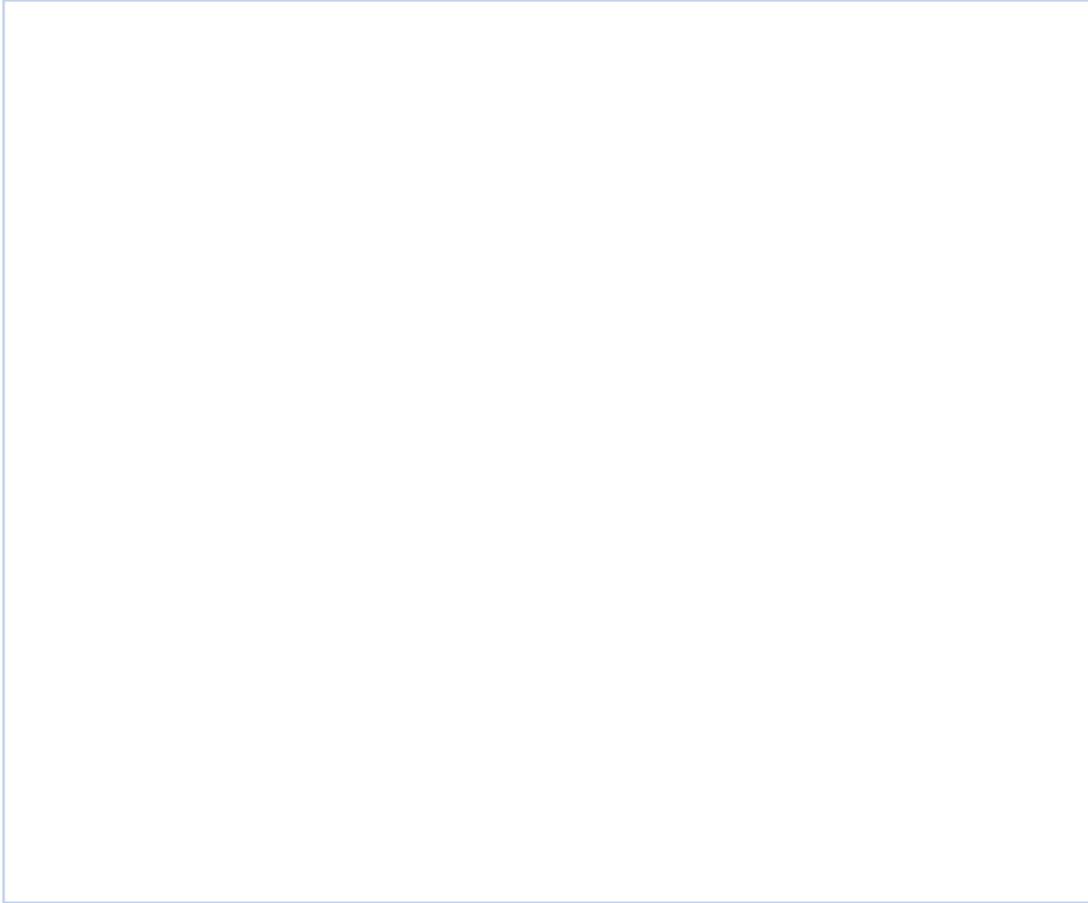
1. List and describe three pieces of legislation, codes of practice or industry standards that impact on your industry in relation to sustainability.



2. Identify a relevant industry association for your organisation. Access its website and provide an overview of two environmental initiatives that have been developed for your industry.



3. Identify a source that you would need to contact to obtain information if you were developing a sustainability policy for your organisation; for example, a government department or an environmental expert. List contact details and the type of information they could provide to help you develop your policy.



4. Why is the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (Cth) so important?



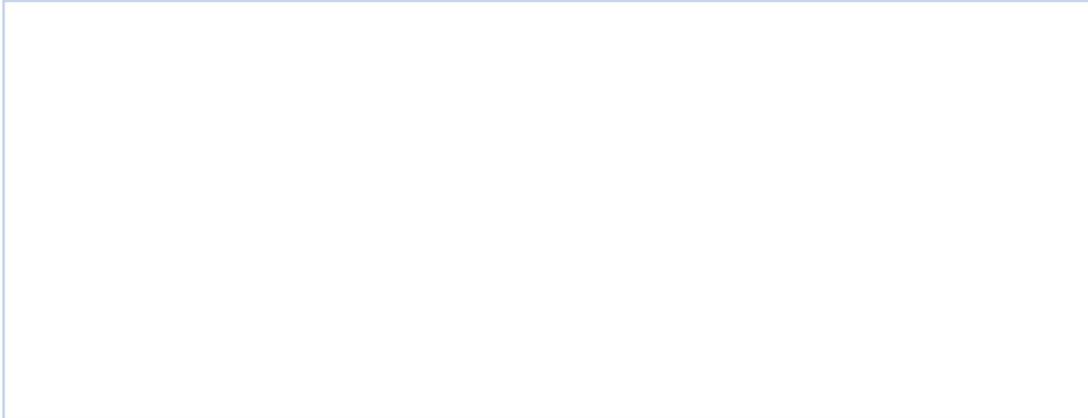
5. Complete the following table, noting each stakeholder's potential role in the development of your organisation's sustainability policy and how you would consult with them.

Stakeholder	Role in the development of your organisation's sustainability policy	Consultation methods you would use
Suppliers		
Shareholders		
Unions or industry associations		
Community		
Employees		

6. Describe how you would promote initiatives associated with a workplace sustainability policy to:
- employees
 - local community.



7. How can a SWOT analysis help you to develop an effective sustainability policy for the organisation?



8. Describe your role in helping the organisation show commitment to the environment and sustainability.



9. Your organisation is about to introduce a new policy to reduce power use. What are some promotional activities you could do to raise awareness?

Part B

Read the case study, then answer the questions that follow.

Case study

A mining company with its head office in Perth creates an office compliance policy for sustainable practices. The policy results in the consolidation of 2,000 employees from seven offices around the state into one office in the Perth CBD. The consolidation is seen as the key to reducing energy use and minimising waste in the office environment.

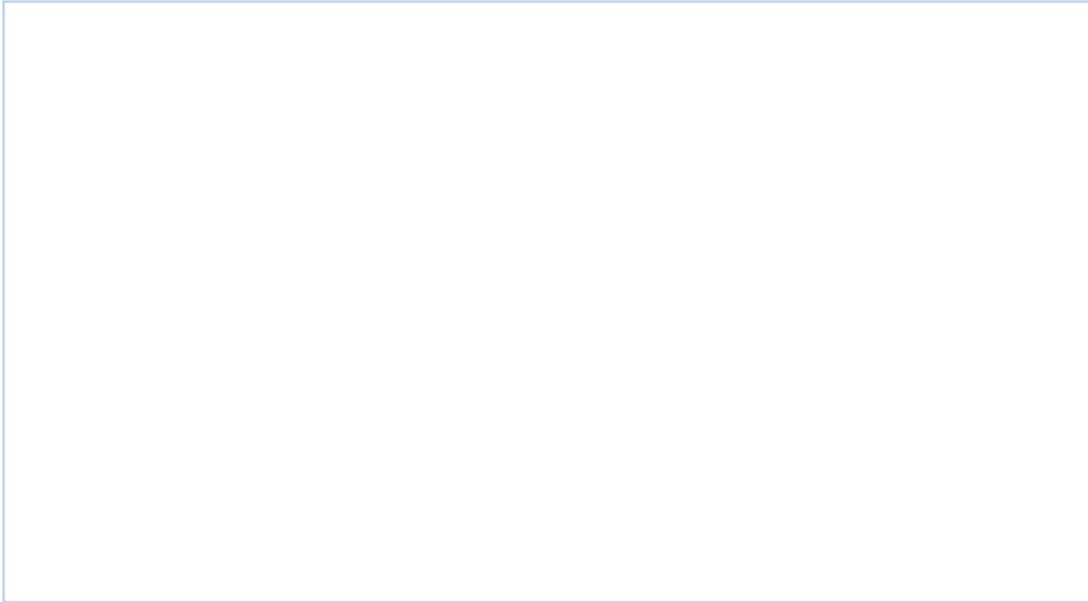
The policy and associated standards that were created to reduce the environmental impact of the new office stipulate that recyclable or renewable materials are to be used whenever possible, and that the purchasing department is to use only green suppliers. A waste reduction program will reduce the amount of waste going to landfill and increase recycling rates.

Environmental initiatives at the new office complex include:

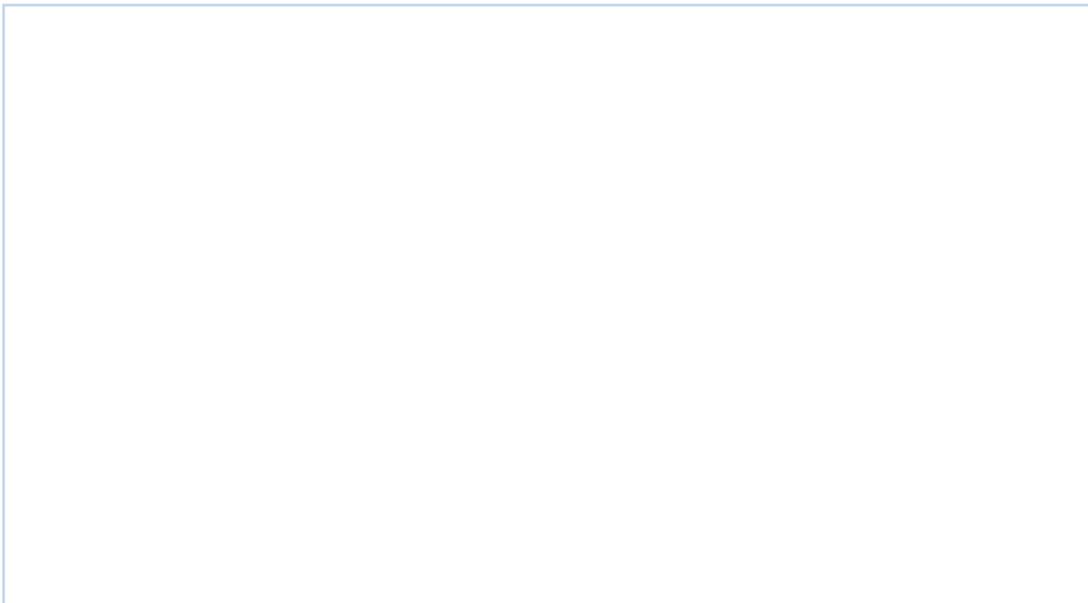
- a 150-kilolitre water tank that captures rain water, which is used to flush the toilets
- smart lighting systems with electronically controlled light levels and energy-efficient lights; there are no light switches in the office areas
- low-power LCD and LED monitor systems and wired keyboards/mice to reduce battery waste
- removal of desk bins to reduce the plastic waste created by bin liners
- rebates for workers in the office using public transport or carpooling to get to work.

It is noted that the policy has a beneficial side effect: staff and managers are motivated to seek out new ways to reduce their personal contributions to waste and energy use at work, over and above the standards outlined in the policy. Anecdotal reports suggest that people are also aiming to reduce their energy use and carbon footprint at home.

1. What issues would have been considered in defining the scope of the policy?



2. What sources of information would have been accessed during the planning stage of this policy?



3. What legislation, codes of practice and standards would have been considered?

4. List the stakeholders who would have been consulted in developing the policy.

5. Does the policy reflect the organisation's commitment to sustainability and the environment? If so, why? If not, why not?

Topic 2

Communicate workplace sustainability policy

Communicating and promoting the workplace sustainability policy to all stakeholders, as well as to the general community, is the only way to ensure that everyone is aware of the steps the organisation is taking and the expected outcomes.

All those involved need to understand the activities that will be undertaken, their responsibilities, and the goals and KPIs that have been set for them.

In this topic you will learn how to:

- 2A Promote workplace sustainability policy to key stakeholders
- 2B Inform those involved in implementing the policy about activities, outcomes and responsibilities

2A Promote workplace sustainability policy to key stakeholders

Once a sustainability policy has been approved, it is essential that key stakeholders are informed. Although stakeholders will have been involved at the draft stage, a prepared and considered promotional campaign will ensure that all those involved understand what the policy is trying to achieve and the specific actions the organisation is going to take. Implementing a policy without first making sure it has full support will create problems such as lack of commitment and confusion about what to do and why it has to be done.

The campaign should be prepared well before the policy is implemented and should include strategies for monitoring its success. It must target internal and external key stakeholders.

The organisation's size and structure will dictate the type of communication strategies you use. For example, your organisation may have one site or it may have local, regional, interstate or international branches; you may be part of a senior management implementation group or you may only be responsible for informing your own team.

Ensure policy documents are accessible to everyone. You may need to adapt material for those with language or learning difficulties; this can be done using diagrams or illustrations, a plain English version, a multi-lingual version or employing an interpreter.



Promote awareness to internal stakeholders

Key stakeholders include senior managers, board members, in-house specialists and those involved in promoting the policy. Employees are also considered key stakeholders as they will be the ones implementing the strategies.

A detailed promotional campaign should explain the:

- rationale behind the policy
- areas that the policy covers
- range of activities designed to implement the policy; for example, buying recycled paper, setting up a carpooling scheme
- expected outcomes of each strategy in measurable terms; for example, to reduce electricity usage by 15 per cent in the first six months
- benefits from a successfully implemented sustainability policy
- support the organisation will provide to implement the policy.

Promotional campaign

The aim of a promotional campaign is to raise awareness of the policy and to ensure it is supported at all levels. You need to make sure all stakeholders know it is an organisational initiative that needs everyone's support. Consider how you could use charts, photographs, statistics and evidence from the experiences of employees at other organisations that have introduced a similar policy.

Consulting with staff is essential. Make sure a copy of the sustainability policy is available and accessible to everyone. There are a variety of communication methods to promote awareness of a sustainability policy for internal stakeholders as shown below.

Presentations



A company meeting or presentation can be used to announce the new sustainability initiative. Some organisations will decide on a formal launch. The CEO or senior management are the key presenters and this provides impetus to the policy and demonstrates support from the highest level.

Each strategy that will be implemented should be clearly explained with targets and expected outcomes; for example, if a major initiative is to reduce energy consumption, the target for the next six months should be highlighted with an explanation of how the company expects to do this. Bar charts and graphs can be used to indicate the current situation and the expected goal. This helps put the policy in clear, measurable terms.

Have hard-copy documentation available, such as handouts and brochures that reiterate the organisation's policy and goals.

Intranet



An intranet (staff-only internal website) can be used to launch a major policy and maintain regular communication with employees. Specific pages can be allocated to each sustainable strategy where regular progress and achievements towards reducing the environmental footprint are published.

Another key feature of an intranet is the opportunity for people to provide feedback and add to the communication.

Internal newsletter



The organisation's regular newsletter for internal stakeholders is a useful medium to promote the new sustainability policy. Some organisations may decide to prepare a special issue of the newsletter that focuses on sustainability. It should contain a message from the CEO to emphasise the commitment of senior management, and explain the major initiatives that will be implemented in the first stage of the policy, along with the expected outcomes.

Posters and notices



Posters displayed around the office, workshop, factory and tearoom are useful as a promotional strategy, as they provide a constant reminder of what the organisation aims to do. This can help build momentum and encourage commitment to the goals of sustainability. Charts and graphs can be used to show the current situation, the activities planned and the goals the organisation expects to achieve.

Meetings



A meeting specifically held to introduce the policy will focus attention on the sustainability targets and give people the opportunity to ask questions. Meetings are a good medium for explaining the expected outcomes so people can see where they are heading.

Logo or mascot



Develop a name for your 'green office' program. Perhaps create a logo or mascot that will identify the program. This is a fun and visible way to increase its profile, although it will take time and money to create and promote.

A green team



Form green teams to provide a forum for people to meet regularly to devise and implement initiatives. The advantages include involving staff, increasing motivation and enthusiasm, and gaining access to ideas. If your organisation has several sites or has staff who operate off site, make sure to include people not in the main office in each team to give a representative perspective.

Competitions and rewards



A useful way of publicising the policy, gaining commitment and building momentum is to instigate competitions or rewards for stakeholders for achieving the specified outcomes.

Communication and promotion to external stakeholders

Key external stakeholders such as suppliers, customers, government bodies, shareholders, investors, regulators and the local community, are increasingly concerned about sustainability and will therefore be interested in your organisation’s policy and approaches to achieving sustainability.

The sustainability policy and targets should be readily available and accessible to all external stakeholders.

Promotional activities

The following information shows a range of activities that could be used in a promotional campaign to raise awareness of the organisation and its sustainability policy.

Media and public relations campaigns

Media and public relations campaigns can be organised to maximise coverage of the organisation’s commitment to the environment and sustainability. Options for such a campaign include television and radio, magazines, newspapers and public presentations. Print materials highlighting the organisation’s position, the initiatives it aims to implement and targets will be needed.

continued ...

... continued

Correspondence

Suppliers, contractors and business associates can be informed of the policy through written correspondence such as letters, memos and emails. Such documents should clearly detail the policy, the methods and approaches for implementation, targets and expected outcomes.

Presentations

Presentations can be used to inform external stakeholders and the general community of policy development and implementation. The size and scope of the presentation will vary according to the promotional budget from a roadshow travelling across the nation, to an open day or a display at a local shopping centre. Presentations are a chance to showcase the organisation's strengths, and to inform those interested in attending what they are doing in relation to sustainability.

Websites and newsletters

The internet is a valuable tool to keep external stakeholders and the broader community informed. Many organisations have a webpage dedicated to sustainability and the environmental strategies they are introducing to reduce their impact. This is used to display policies and highlight achievements. Sustainability reports and the organisation's newsletter can be made available online.

Many websites also provide the opportunity for external parties to seek answers to questions in relation to policy matters, where the organisation welcomes comments and feedback.

Organisations may include a logo on documents or a footer on their email to emphasise commitment to the environment; for example, 'Please consider the environment before printing this email'.

Annual general meeting

An organisation's annual general meeting is an opportunity to communicate environmental performance to a wide range of stakeholders, in keeping with an organisation's commitment to triple bottom line reporting.

Information service

Some organisations provide information services via dedicated phone lines and, when a new policy development is released, provide additional trained staff to handle calls.

Example: promotion activities for release of a sustainability policy

Frank and Steph use several approaches to promote their workplace sustainability policy.

For internal stakeholders they use the following:

- A meeting of all staff is arranged and a copy of the policy is provided to each person. People with key responsibilities are identified.
- A formal memo is sent to all staff.
- Incoming staff are provided with a copy of the policy and undergo an induction program that has a specific time component dedicated to the sustainability policy and related initiatives.
- Posters are placed at key locations to remind employees of the importance of sustainability and their role in contributing to the outcomes.

For external stakeholders they use the following:

- A formal launch is arranged with major account holders present, along with the press. A brochure explaining the policy is provided to all attendees.
- The website has a 'Sustainability policy release' link on the home page, which takes users to a page dedicated to the policy and initiatives that are to be implemented and the anticipated outcomes. It also has a statement from the directors.
- A letter announcing the sustainability policy is sent to all account holders along with a brochure explaining the policy and programs.



Practice task 8

Using bullet points, outline how you will promote the Kare 4 Kidz sustainability policy and its outcomes to all stakeholders.

2B

Inform those involved in implementing the policy

The way sustainability initiatives are introduced will differ between organisations, depending on the initiative and the size and nature of the organisation. Each department may be responsible for overseeing the implementation, or a project team drawn from critical areas of the organisation may be formed to manage the implementation.

In all situations, the organisation needs to clearly outline the activities each person will undertake, determine who is responsible for what, and define the reporting lines. You may need to adjust your communication to ensure the information is accessible to those with language or learning difficulties.

Simply knowing that the organisation has a sustainability policy is not sufficient. Everyone involved in implementing the policy needs to understand the following points.

Information to understand about implementing policy

The specific outcomes expected – goals for the organisation, deliverables for a work area and KPIs for those implementing the strategies

The range of activities to be undertaken to achieve the goals

The responsibilities assigned

Any interrelationships with other parts of the organisation in terms of the impact of the initiatives

Identify the expected outcomes

The sustainability policy should clearly explain the expected outcomes for each initiative. You need to make sure that people who are involved in the implementation understand the organisation's goals, as well as the key performance indicators (KPIs) that will measure their effectiveness.

Organisational goals

Using strategies such as team meetings, posters, notices and intranet articles communicate the goals that your organisation is hoping to achieve. These goals should follow the SMART formula – they should be specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and able to be accomplished within the time allocated. For example, if you have decided to reduce resource use and are targeting paper, your goal would be to reduce paper use by printing less, printing double sided and re-using paper to print drafts.

Typical sustainability goals

- Implement a set of environmentally preferred selection criteria so purchasing strategies reflect sustainability practices by the end of the financial year.
- Reduce overall energy use by 5 per cent within one year.
- Reduce monthly printing costs by 15 per cent.
- Achieve 100 per cent compliance with hazardous materials storage regulations within one month.
- Reduce vehicle emissions by 10 per cent.
- Reduce packaging waste by 30 per cent within six months.
- Fit all workstations with a purpose-built stand for LCD monitors within 12 months.
- Recycle or refill 100 per cent of toner cartridges consumed by October 2016.
- Introduce special bins to take recyclable material and reduce the amount of recyclables going to landfill to nil within six months.

Key performance indicators

Key performance indicators must reflect the goals of the organisation and be quantifiable, achievable and agreed on in advance of policy implementation. Ensure that employees understand what they are expected to achieve, are capable of reaching the KPIs that have been set and are in agreement with the expectation of their job description. Skill or knowledge deficiencies will need to be addressed with training.

Example KPIs

- One hundred per cent compliance with sustainability policy
- Compliance with ISO 14001:2004 environmental management systems life cycle analyses
- Zero breaches of regulatory requirements
- A five per cent reduction per month for the next six months in solid waste generated
- A 25 per cent reduction in greenhouse gas emissions
- A monthly report on waste management
- One hundred per cent compliance with green purchasing guidelines
- Compliance with triple bottom line reporting
- 100 per cent safety record
- All staff have completed training in compliance requirements

Identify the activities to be undertaken

The type of activities an organisation will undertake depend on the scale of its sustainability policy. In many cases, organisations that are just starting out are likely to concentrate on small but effective steps such as reducing energy and paper use and introducing a recycling program. Others may embark on a physical restructure, such as purchasing energy-efficient equipment and machinery or changing production techniques and materials to reduce environmental impact.



Some activities will need to be undertaken by senior management while others will need to be carried out by all staff. Whatever activities are chosen, all those involved must understand the nature of the activity, what it is designed to achieve and their role in the activity.

Strategies for introducing environmental sustainability

There is a range of strategies that can be used when introducing environmentally sustainable work practices, as shown in the information below.

Minimising energy use
Reducing kitchen waste
Reducing the amount of packaging
Reducing paper use
Using recycled paper
Choosing energy-efficient equipment
Ensuring commitment by forming green teams
Creating a focus area each month to bring staff attention to an initiative

Procedures

You will need to further define the specific actions that need to occur in order for the aims and goals to be achieved.

For example, if you have decided to reduce paper consumption, activities could include:

- arranging for a contractor to collect used office paper for recycling
- placing recycling boxes under every desk
- making double-sided photocopying and printing standard procedure
- encouraging the use of emails instead of paper communications
- re-using paper to print draft copies.

Identify responsibilities

All initiatives and options considered for implementation towards the overall policy must be clearly allocated to the relevant areas, with appropriate staff made responsible for achieving the targets for that area and reporting accordingly. The process of allocating responsibilities will depend on the organisation's size, structure and capabilities. External specialists and consultants will report to someone in the organisation who has responsibility for managing the specialist, consultant or contracted organisation. Make sure you detail the implications of a failure to follow procedures; for example, possible dismissal in case of gross violation of a safety requirement.

Allocate the responsibilities to the relevant areas and key personnel in your organisation by determining who is responsible for each area. The information below outlines typical responsibilities for managers and staff.

Senior management	General staff
<p>The responsibilities of senior management include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • raising awareness of the policy initiatives and encouraging environmental practices • providing information about roles and responsibilities of employees, daily operational requirements, reporting mechanisms and consequences of noncompliance • preparing step-by-step procedures for carrying out specific tasks • reporting progress regularly to staff and external stakeholders • dealing with media enquiries and business partners • implementing purchasing agreements • ensuring compliance with legislative requirements • organising sustainability audits and reviews • managing and rectifying breaches • approving budget expenditure to achieve targets; for example, approving a quote for installation of skylights • arranging training for staff as needed. 	<p>The responsibilities of general staff include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • following all sustainability policies and procedures such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – using recycling bins correctly – using once-used paper for printing draft copies – switching off lights when leaving – handling and storing hazardous material correctly • participating in all environmental initiatives such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – green team activities – promotional initiatives – planning days/brainstorming sessions for new ideas.

Example: set KPIs

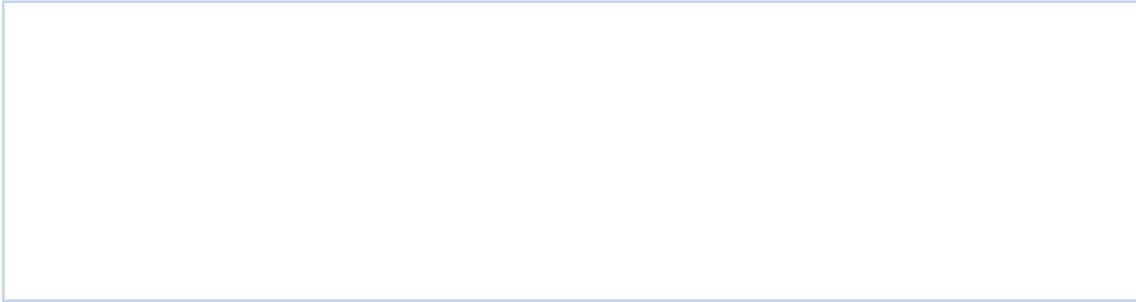
Frank and Steph met with each of the managers and supervisors in the organisation to discuss targets and KPIs:

- Ahmed, who is their main purchaser, has a target of 80 per cent green purchasing within a year, with quarterly targets at 20, 40, 60 and 80 per cent. The purchasing team will provide a monthly progress report to Frank and Steph, and a quarterly report to the directors.
- Gillian, who is in charge of the printing area, has a target of a 5 per cent reduction per month on solid waste generated for the first four months, and a 10 per cent increase in recycling of materials in the same period. She will provide a monthly report to the directors.
- All staff are to comply with new procedures on energy use and a 15 per cent reduction in nonproduction energy is to be achieved in six months. Spot observation checks will be instigated. Frank and Steph have had a solar hot water system installed that will assist substantially in achieving this target, and the target may well be increased at some future date after a review.



Practice task 9

Using the Kare 4 Kidz initiative of creating a vegetable garden, write three appropriate sustainability KPIs the preschool kindergarten might seek to achieve.



Summary

1. Once the sustainability policy has been developed, the policy and the expected outcomes must be communicated to key stakeholders.
2. Various communication strategies should be used to promote the policy across the organisation and externally as appropriate. Strategies may include presentations, meetings, newsletters, articles on the intranet, posters and specially formed 'green teams'.
3. Key employees and groups involved in the implementation need to be aware of the organisational goals, their own KPIs and the activities to be undertaken.
4. Responsibility for all aspects of the implementation should be assigned and known by all concerned.

Learning checkpoint 2 Communicate workplace sustainability policy

This learning checkpoint allows you to review your skills and knowledge in communicating workplace sustainability policy.

Part A

1. Why is it important to let stakeholders know about your sustainability policy? Describe the consequences if this is not done.



2. List the skills a manager needs to communicate effectively. Give examples, then list at least five tips for developing these skills.

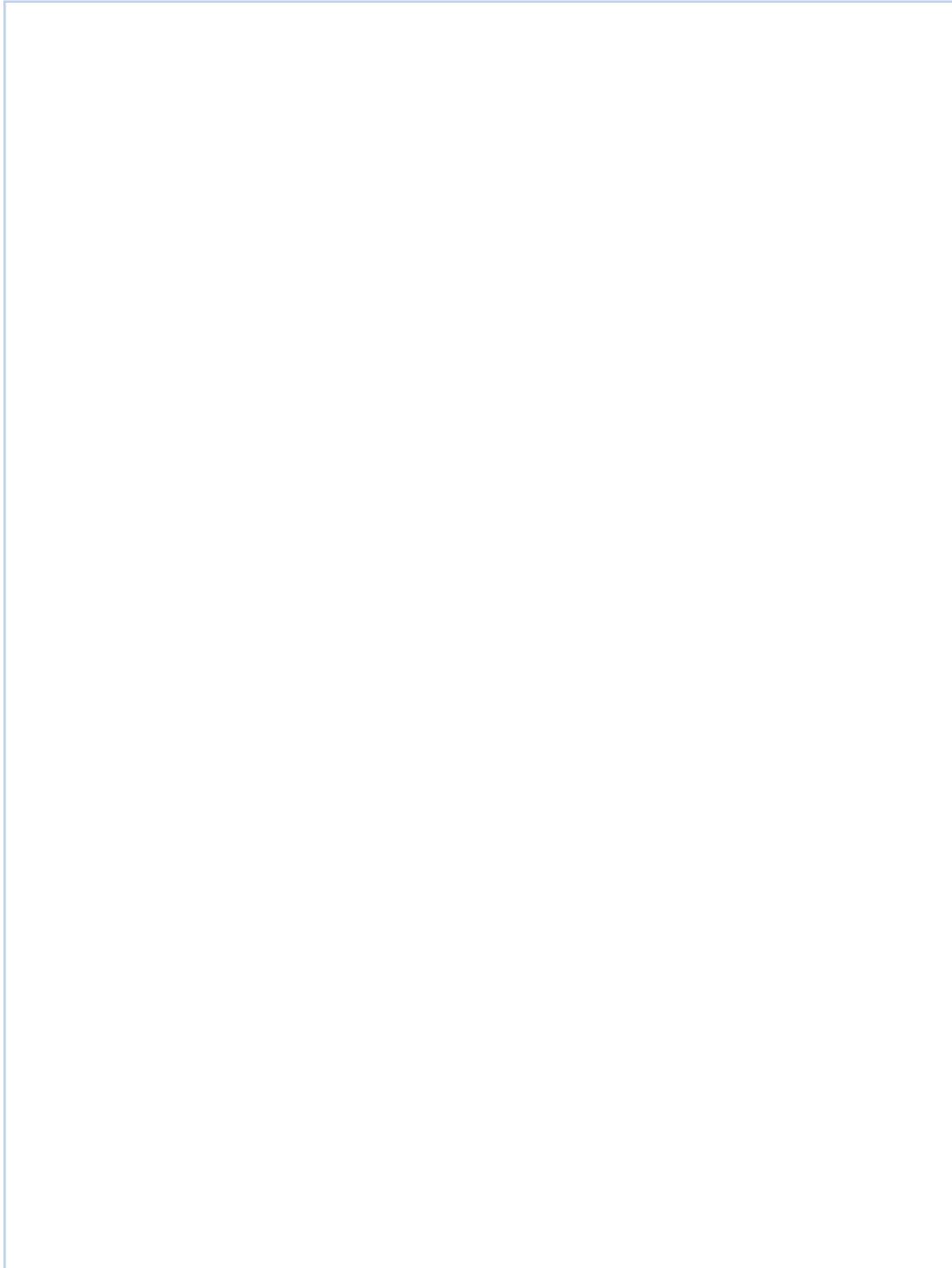


3. Consider your organisation and the introduction of a sustainability policy. Outline:

- the key internal stakeholders
- the key external stakeholders.

Then list what you would include in a presentation to the staff in your area in relation to the policy. Make sure to include:

- the procedures and activities to be carried out
- the impact on staff duties
- the responsibilities staff will have to take on board in terms of quality assurance
- any WHS issues.



4. Outline the presentation to your supervisor or some stakeholders and obtain comments from them. Attach the comments to your outline and indicate whether you would adjust the outline in response to the comments.

Part B

Read the case study, then answer the questions that follow.

Case study

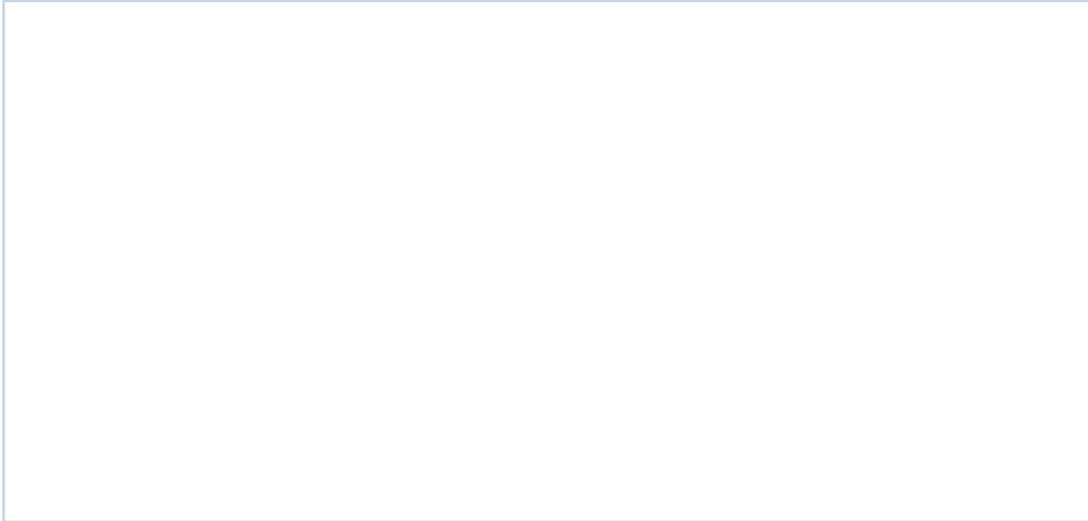
The Perth-based mining company receives high praise from the state government, customers and local supplier groups. In addition to the physical infrastructure initiatives (water tanks, efficient lighting system and low-power monitors), management introduced policies and procedures that all staff have to follow. These include:

- a Wise Waste program in which staff have to separate food scraps, tins, plastics, bottles, paper and cardboard packaging into appropriate bins
- a Positive Paper program in which staff have to use both sides of a sheet of paper, make notebooks out of used paper, and place used paper in recycling bins
- a Timely Travel program that encourages people to use teleconferencing or videoconferencing instead of travelling to clients, reduce the number of trips taken for external meetings, and use carpooling or public transport
- an Active Awareness program to stimulate enthusiasm, including an annual tree planting program, incentives for ideas to improve the organisation's environmental footprint, and green planning days.

1. Describe the strategies you would use to promote and communicate the new policy and procedures to the 2,000 employees who are now located in the Perth office.



2. What strategies would you recommend for ongoing awareness of the initiatives that have been put in place?



3. Suggest four key performance indicators (KPIs) in relation to the initiatives that could be put in place for employees.



4. Select one of the initiatives from the bulleted list and complete a table similar to the following.

Green initiative:	
Outcomes expected	
Activities to be undertaken	
Responsibilities	

Topic 3

Implement workplace sustainability policy

When a policy and supporting initiatives are implemented, procedures will be needed so that outcomes can be achieved. Procedures should be clearly communicated to everyone involved in a process, so they are understood and carried through.

Ongoing review and a corresponding adjustment of procedures in order to improve efficiency and effectiveness should be accepted practice. To track and report on continuous improvement in sustainability initiatives, it is necessary to record changes and developments.

In this topic you will learn how to:

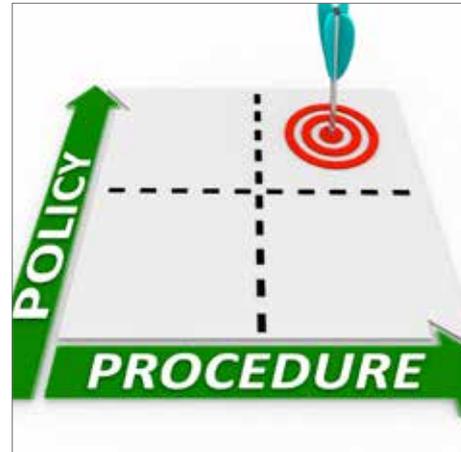
- 3A Develop and communicate procedures to help implement workplace sustainability policy
- 3B Implement strategies for continuous improvement in resource efficiency
- 3C Establish and assign responsibility for recording systems to track continuous improvements in sustainability approaches

3A

Develop and communicate procedures to help implement workplace sustainability policy

To ensure sustainability initiatives are successful, an organisation needs effective procedures that staff and others can follow to make sure everyone involved knows what they have to do.

While most people will generally agree with the idea of sustainability and the need to monitor the organisation's environmental performance, they may be concerned about their own responsibilities and the impact of the policy on their day-to-day tasks. Provide people with checklists or procedures to show what is required in order to meet policy requirements, and make sure they understand what they need to do in addition to their current responsibilities.



Identify key people to develop procedures

For each strategy or initiative, you need to determine who is involved, and therefore who can contribute to developing a procedure.

To identify the key people for each strategy or policy initiative, consider drawing up a table like the example following.

Strategy/policy	Target	Compliance	Persons responsible/affected
Reduce nonproduction energy use	Decrease nonproduction energy use by 15% by December 2016	<i>National Greenhouse and Energy Reporting Act 2007</i> (Cth)	Employees who work in the office, use the tearoom or use the change room facilities and showers
Decrease greenhouse gas emissions	Reduce company emissions by 25% by 2018	<i>National Greenhouse and Energy Reporting Act 2007</i> (Cth)	Senior executives, production department and operational area, and quality control personnel
Switch to 'green' purchasing	65% of all suppliers to be 'green' by 2016	Nil	Purchasing department and all employees authorised to purchase or procure goods and services
Convert reports to GRI compliant	GRI compliant by 2017	Global Reporting Initiative	Senior executives, managers, supervisors and all employees writing reports on finance, social or environmental issues
Introduce waste reduction initiatives	90% of kitchen waste is recycled or composted by December 2016	Organisational policy	All staff

Develop procedures

The best people to write the new procedures are those directly involved in the processes. Once it has been determined what procedures need to be developed, the task of doing this should be allocated to specific people or groups with relevant process knowledge.

It is likely that you will be required to develop and document standard operating procedures for areas of your own responsibility. Collect the information you need; this may include compliance guidelines, WHS standards, how to address equity and diversity issues, and resources needed. You may also need to seek information from experts on specific step-by-step procedures.



Once the draft procedure has been written, it should be given to relevant personnel for feedback and to ensure that it correctly describes the actual process that is undertaken. Feedback gained should be included in a further draft of the procedure before final approval is given.

A procedure should include the steps to follow, the resources needed and time lines involved, if appropriate. Use pictures and diagrams to ensure all staff understand the instructions.

Example: sample steps included in a procedure

The following are some steps that may be included when developing a procedure to reduce paper use:

- Always use double-sided photocopying and printing.
- Use once-used paper to print drafts.
- Use email and noticeboards for staff updates and memos.
- Re-use manila folders, document wallets and envelopes.
- Decrease document margins for draft copies.
- Use the reduce function on photocopiers for archives and filing; for example, reduce two A4 pages into one.
- Place a paper recycling box under every desk and empty it weekly.



Implementation procedures

Implementation procedures may also include checklists. For example, if the organisation has introduced a policy that focuses on green purchasing then a checklist could be developed for the purchaser. By completing a checklist for every purchase, staff are reminded to check on all the relevant issues that can affect the environment.

The purchasing checklist could include reminders about:

- the energy rating of the products
- the greenhouse gas emission rating of the products
- the recyclability of the products
- the supplier's commitment to sustainability.

Example: checklist used as a reminder of procedures to adhere to

Below is a sample checklist that could be used as a reminder of the procedures that should be followed.

Resource checklist		
Employee name:	Date:	
Position:	Time:	
Dept:		
Have you turned off all equipment in your area (computer, printer, etc.)?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Has all your recycling material been placed in the main bin?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Was all ordering done according to the green purchasing policy?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Are you the last to leave? If yes:	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Have the main lights been turned off	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Have the taps in the kitchen been checked?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Has all non-essential equipment been powered down?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>

Communicate the procedures

Before circulating procedures, you should ensure that all employees expected to follow the procedure have the knowledge and skills required to do so. In the event that they do not, training will be needed – this usually needs to occur in advance of implementing the procedures.

The following information outlines procedures that should be communicated to all relevant stakeholders using the same mechanisms that were used to explain the policy.

Training

Can be used as a way of introducing the new procedures, either in a formal training environment or on the job with appropriate support materials being provided for participants

Meetings

Held in appropriate groups and used to inform staff of the procedures and how to implement them

Memos and emails

Provide written communication on the procedures and the events surrounding the implementation, such as the training schedule and implementation time lines

Intranet

Used as a means of highlighting the new procedures and expected outcomes, with the option of downloading or printing key documentation relating to the procedures

Internal newsletters

Can be used to maintain momentum on sustainability and communicate to employees when the new procedures commence

Posters

Can be placed on noticeboards to highlight the forthcoming changes in procedures and to maintain awareness of the implementation of the sustainability policy and procedures

Storage of procedures and related documents

It is critical that the procedures and related documentation, such as manuals, forms and checklists, are readily available and accessible for all those involved in the process. Use your organisation's information management system; for example, procedures can be stored as a hard copy in a procedures master file in each department, or as electronic documents on the intranet or in a database. Key policies and procedures are often provided to employees at induction in a file, with updates provided when a change occurs.

Procedures should be version controlled so any updates or adjustments are clearly noted. Employees following outdated versions could inadvertently breach policy and compliance requirements and expose an organisation to the risk of litigation.

Example: how new procedures are communicated to staff

Frank and Steph have been approaching the introduction of a workplace sustainability policy and procedures systematically. The procedures for each of the three areas targeted by the policy (purchasing, printing and non-production energy use) and associated KPIs have been broken down into more-detailed instructions.



- For staff working for Ahmed (who is their main purchaser with a target of 80 per cent green purchasing within a year, with specific quarterly targets): a formal procedure is developed with a series of checklists. All current suppliers and potential future suppliers must be able to demonstrate compliance with a set of criteria that have been defined. All staff working for Ahmed are to undergo training in the new procedures, and progress for each staff member on vetting a supplier will be monitored.
- For staff working for Gillian (who is in charge of the printing area and has a target of a 5 per cent reduction per month on solid waste and a 10 per cent increase in recycling of materials): new procedures are to be circulated to the staff and a half-day training session on the use of the equipment and associated new procedures will be undertaken. Staff are required to document waste generated and to provide explanations on any excessive waste.
- All staff are to comply with new procedures regarding non-production energy use. A 15 per cent reduction in nonproduction energy is to be achieved in six months. All staff will be provided with procedures relating to the energy efficient use of non-production equipment; the procedures describe how to use current equipment more efficiently, and how to use newly purchased equipment, such as the solar hot water system. Checklists relating to the equipment and facilities in the workplace environment will be given to all staff.

Practice task 10

Using the Kare 4 Kidz initiative of creating a vegetable garden, identify three procedures that would need to be developed for the employees at the centre to help implement workplace sustainability.

3B

Implement strategies for continuous improvement in resource efficiency

Continuous improvement is required in all aspects of an organisation's operations. The organisation needs to continually increase efficiency and effectiveness across all areas in order to maintain a competitive position in the market.

In an environmental context, continuous improvement is defined in ISO 14001: 2004 as 'the process of enhancing the environmental management system to achieve improvements in overall environmental performance in line with the organisation's environmental policy'.

Long-term, continuous improvement should be a key factor in all environmental policies.

For a sustainability policy to be effective, it needs to be monitored regularly, with opportunities for stakeholders to generate ideas and suggestions for improvement and a procedure to discuss and implement options for improvement.

Continuous improvement

Continuous improvement is not about fixing problems as they arise, but creating an environment in which improvement is always encouraged; adopting this mindset can benefit all areas of the workplace.

The five steps of continuous improvement

1

Commitment and policy

Commitment must come from senior management. This is a prerequisite for the organisation as a whole to commit to achieving sustainability goals. The development of the sustainability policy needs to incorporate general research on sustainability, an organisation audit, advice from experts and input from stakeholders. There should be a process in place to regularly revise the policy in light of the organisation's environmental achievements.

2

Planning

Evaluate how well your planning processes worked, and areas that could be improved in future planning activities.

- Was there sufficient consultation?
- Were more physical resources needed?
- Was more time needed?
- Did you have access to all relevant legislation, codes of practice and industry standards?
- Did you do sufficient research on the current impact of the organisation on the environment?
- Did you collect information and data from internal and external sources, and analyse it to determine the strategies to be considered?
- Did you obtain agreement from stakeholders and set realistic targets?
- Was the implementation time frame realistic?

3**Implementation**

Monitor and review the implementation strategies. A key component of implementation is the communication strategies used with all stakeholders.

- Did you use a range of communication strategies?
- Which ones were most successful?
- Did you gain commitment from everyone?
- Was everyone aware of the expectations on them, and the need to comply with the initiatives and meet the targets set for the organisation and individuals?
- Did people receive training when needed?
- Were new procedures developed and disseminated?
- What difficulties did you encounter?
- Were they resolved or are they still present?

4**Measurement and evaluation**

The results of the new policy, strategies and associated procedures must be monitored on an ongoing basis. Progress can only be assessed through measurement.

Measuring improvements in sustainable performance creates accountability in the workplace and provides motivation and a sense of achievement among workers when goals are realised.

Because sustainability is a continuous process, progress must be measured in order to determine whether or not targets are being achieved and to ascertain where the organisation is in relation to its goals. It is also important to measure change in order to evaluate and re-evaluate your sustainability strategies.

Seeking feedback from stakeholders is critical as it can provide valuable information on implementation difficulties. Measurements obtained along with feedback should be analysed and evaluated against the targets and outcomes that were set, and the changes achieved made evident for all to appreciate.

5**Review and improvement**

Formal reviews should be undertaken according to the review timetable included in the initial policy development and announcement.

A review is effectively an audit of the policy outcomes against the policy targets. A review may be initiated outside the scheduled review timetable if there are noncompliance reports and an evident failure to meet targets.

The outcome of a review or audit should identify where improvement can be made through the adjustment of existing policies or development of new policies. Strategies and procedures can also be identified as areas requiring improvement.

Example: implement a continuous improvement plan and identifying potential efficiency gains

Although reports for each of the areas targeted by the sustainability policy will be provided over time, Frank and Steph arrange with each of their managers and the people assigned responsibility to achieve targets for an agenda item added to the monthly staff meetings. The agenda item is in two parts:

1. An analysis of any hard data that had been gathered during the period with a comparison against the previous month
2. An opportunity for staff to identify procedural issues or actions that could be modified in order to better achieve the targets

Both parts of the agenda item are to be discussed openly, with suggestions for improvement to be considered. Follow-up action or further investigation is the responsibility of the manager of the area, and will involve people who have raised suggestions. Proposed changes to procedures, purchasing of more efficient equipment or other improvement options will be raised with Frank and Steph for approval, and then actioned and communicated via the manager to staff.

Frank and Steph support suggestions and input by offering a quarterly reward – dinner for two at a local restaurant – for the best suggestion from a staff member relating to resource efficiency and sustainability.



Practice task 11

Using the Kare 4 Kidz initiative of creating a vegetable garden, identify three strategies to encourage continuous improvement.

3C

Establish and assign responsibility for recording systems to track continuous improvements in sustainability approaches

When assigning responsibilities, it is important to indicate who is responsible for tracking sustainability improvements and recording achievements and other outcomes.

Capturing data is an essential aspect of the monitoring and review process for continuous improvement.

Records will show:

- compliance with legislation and adherence to voluntary codes of practice, industry standards, other standards (AS/NZS or ISO) and other voluntary initiatives such as the Global Reporting Initiative and triple bottom line reporting
- achievement of organisational goals and targets, including the overall reduction in the ecological footprint and how this was achieved (e.g. reduction in greenhouse gas emissions)
- achievement of targets or KPIs by departments, work groups and individuals.

Environmental records

Be aware of the type of environmental records that your organisation needs to keep. Examples of environmental records that need to be kept by some organisations are shown in the following information.

Measures of environmental performance; e.g. kilowatt hours of energy consumed, expenditure on waste disposal, reams of paper purchased

Details of environmental hazards; e.g. material safety data sheets on the storage of chemicals, incident reports, disposal of toxic waste

Details of environmental policies and strategies

Assessment of environmental policies and strategies

Potential and existing environmental risk assessment and identification

Comments and responses, including complaints, from internal and external sources

Use appropriate record systems

The people responsible for tracking outcomes could be team leaders, purchasing officers, work health and safety officers, human resource managers and other senior managers. Individual staff members may also be responsible for recording their own achievements.

Systems for collecting, analysing and recording information will depend on the organisation's information management system, quality assurance systems and the software programs used.

Procedures will also be driven by the need to produce reports and data for external regulatory authorities and other entities when a commitment has been made. Therefore, recording systems need to meet external and internal requirements.

There are tracking systems and tools you can use to collect and analyse data. Make sure the information is collected using the organisation's prescribed templates and stored so it is easily accessible by those who need to use the information. If a set format has not been designated, it may be a good idea to develop appropriate templates and pro formas to establish consistency and quality control.



Workplace inspection checklists

A workplace inspection checklist can be used on a day-to-day basis to document the success of a policy and associated procedures. The person responsible may be a team member or a specialist such as the work health and safety officer.

This person observes how individuals or a work group perform duties on a regular but random basis, records their actions via a checklist and adds comments as needed. If the procedure is not being followed, this indicates a need for action. Similarly if procedures are being followed but the outcome is not achieving the targets of the policy, then this will be the trigger for a review of the policy and procedures.

Workplace audits and compliance reviews

Audits are more formal than a workplace inspection and should be conducted on a regular basis by a manager or environmental specialist. An audit is used to determine an organisation's compliance with legislative requirements; progress towards implementing its policies and procedures; and whether staff have the required knowledge of the policies and procedures to perform their duties appropriately. It provides feedback to allow the organisation to make adjustments and address potential areas of risk that could lead to noncompliance.

A work health and safety officer or an environmental consultant may be responsible for a green audit, using a checklist to define the organisation's performance in a range of areas. They will then compare the result against the target, the trend over time and the outcomes.

Example: internal compliance review report

The table below is a sample compliance review report on office waste procedures.

Compliance review on office waste procedures conducted on 20/9/2015 by S Gardener					
Policy target	Priority (H/M/L)	Progress	Analysis	Actions required	Person/s responsible
Removal of rubbish bins from cubicle area	Medium	Completed	Has led to an immediate reduction in plastic rubbish bag usage – estimated at 120 tonnes p/a	Monitor office area to ensure no rubbish bins are used	Office manager (W Peters)
Recycle dumpster ordered and installed	High	Completed	Recycle company issued 'Green workplace' certificate to the organisation; dumpster adequate for employees' use	No action required	Admin. assistant (J Chang)
Paper recycling bins installed in cubicle area	High	Completed	100% of office paper being recycled; employees are placing correct paper type in bins	No action required	Office manager (W Peters)
Glass and plastics recycling bin installed in tearoom	High	Completed	Incorrect items (e.g. food scraps, plastic bags) are being placed in recyclables bin; recyclable items are being placed in landfill bin	Agenda item for October sustainability committee meeting – how can we get people to sort their kitchen waste?	Office manager (W Peters)

Questionnaires and checklists for staff

To assess staff knowledge, understanding and compliance with environmental policies a manager may conduct a survey or provide employees with a questionnaire.

- Questions may include:
- Are you aware of the energy conservation policy?
- Can you briefly describe why we have the policy and what it covers?
- Can you list the key procedures in the policy? Do you follow these procedures?
- Are there aspects of the procedures that in your view could be improved? If so, please provide details.



Questionnaires and checklists for policies

A similar set of questions can be developed for each of the relevant policies for each area of the organisation.

These could include:

- green purchasing policy
- recycling policy
- waste management and disposal policy
- energy conservation policy
- compliance with environmental permits or licences
- policy on issuing internal authorities.

Spreadsheets and other software programs

You and your team should plot resource use and analyse consumption patterns by reviewing documentation such as invoices for fuel consumption, electricity bills, purchase orders, bills for waste disposal and water accounts. Enter the results into a spreadsheet to show gains or losses; for example, an analysis could be undertaken on purchasing documentation to determine the percentage of purchasing expenditure that has been spent on green inputs in each month. Using a graph, this can be compared against the target and previous months, with improvements highlighted.

Managers and supervisors are also responsible for entering data needed to evaluate the sustainability policy into the electronic records system; for example, purchase orders should indicate the amount of 'green' items supplied, and waste collected for disposal by a contractor should be recorded.

Any suggestions or improvements that are to be implemented are also the responsibility of the relevant manager or supervisor, and the success or otherwise of these has to be recorded and reported.

Breach or noncompliance reports

When a breach of compliance occurs the manager, in conjunction with the person responsible, should document it as a breach report; for example, a chemical spill would constitute a breach of compliance even if it was a small one with minor potential hazards that was contained on-site. Managers should delegate responsibility to a team member to regularly collate and analyse breach records in terms of frequency, the area the breach occurred in and the seriousness of the breach. They should then prepare a report for senior management.

Serious breaches, such as a chemical spill or gas release that had an impact on the environment, must be reported to the relevant authorities.



Example: implementing recording systems to support policies and procedures

The management team at Prestige Printing and Office Supplies identify the strategies they will use for tracking and recording environmental progress. These are:

- comparing targets/benchmarks with actual performance
- using ratios and growth rates
- calculating cost savings from improved efficiencies
- tracking improvements using graphs and visual aids
- using performance reporting
- distributing a staff satisfaction survey once a month.

Frank, Steph and all other managers and supervisors develop recording systems to support the policy and procedures that are being implemented. All managers and supervisors are assigned responsibility for ensuring compliance with the recording requirements and checklists for the policy initiatives and targets, such as reduced energy use.

Ahmed and Gillian are assigned responsibility for ensuring that the records relating to purchasing and supplier information, waste management and recycling are entered in a spreadsheet format and stored according to the new procedures.



Practice task 12

Consider the KPI of all children at Kare 4 Kidz, regardless of their scheduled attendance, having the opportunity to participate in the garden project on a weekly basis.

1. Describe what type of recording tool could be used to measure and evaluate progress.

2. Explain who will be responsible for the recording.

Summary

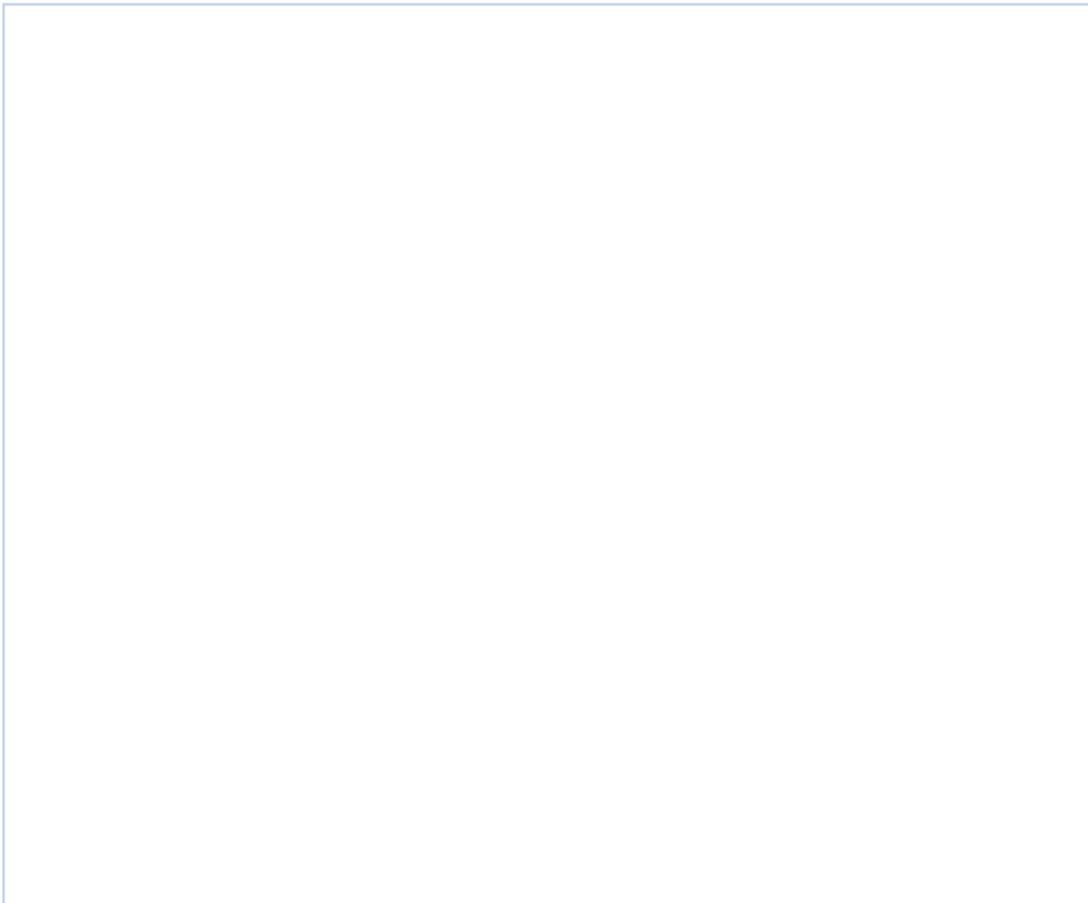
1. To ensure sustainability initiatives are successful, an organisation needs to develop effective procedures that staff and others can follow and make sure that everyone involved knows what they have to do.
2. A procedure should include the steps to follow, the resources needed and time lines involved, if appropriate.
3. Procedures should be written in a style that is appropriate to the reader and communicated using appropriate methods.
4. Development of procedures requires consultation and input from those who will be affected by the policy.
5. Procedures should be a 'living document' in that they should be updated to reflect continuous improvements for increases in efficiency and effectiveness of the policy.
6. Continuous improvement is a five-step approach:
 - Commitment and policy
 - Planning
 - Implementation
 - Measurement and evaluation
 - Review and improvement
7. Capturing data is an essential aspect of the monitoring and review process for continuous improvement.
8. Recording systems and tools are needed to record information on the effectiveness of the policy and to track continuous improvements in sustainability; responsibilities should be assigned for those recording systems.
9. Reports on adherence to the policy and achievements of targets and outcomes should be produced from the recording systems in place.

Learning checkpoint 3 Implement workplace sustainability policy

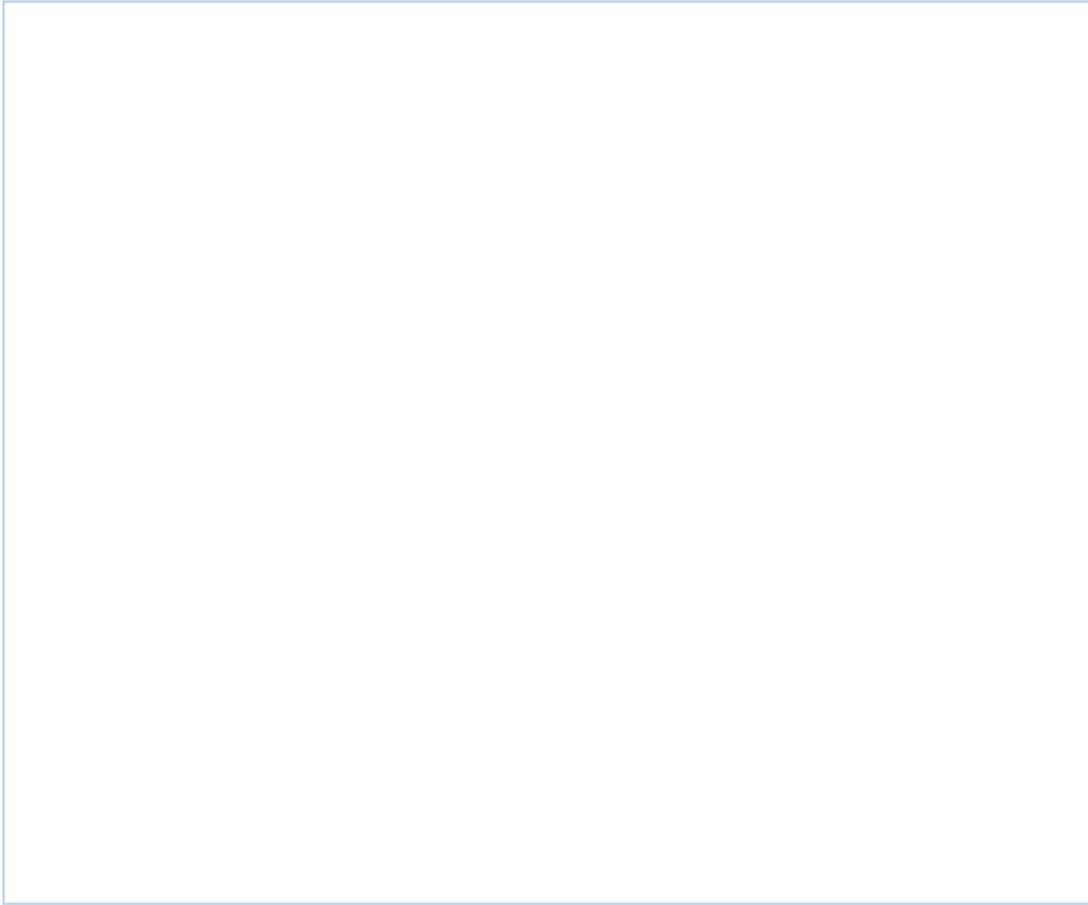
This learning checkpoint allows you to review your skills and knowledge in implementing workplace sustainability policy.

Part A

1. Explain how you would manage the development of a procedure to implement a workplace sustainability initiative; for example, a procedure to implement a green purchasing policy.



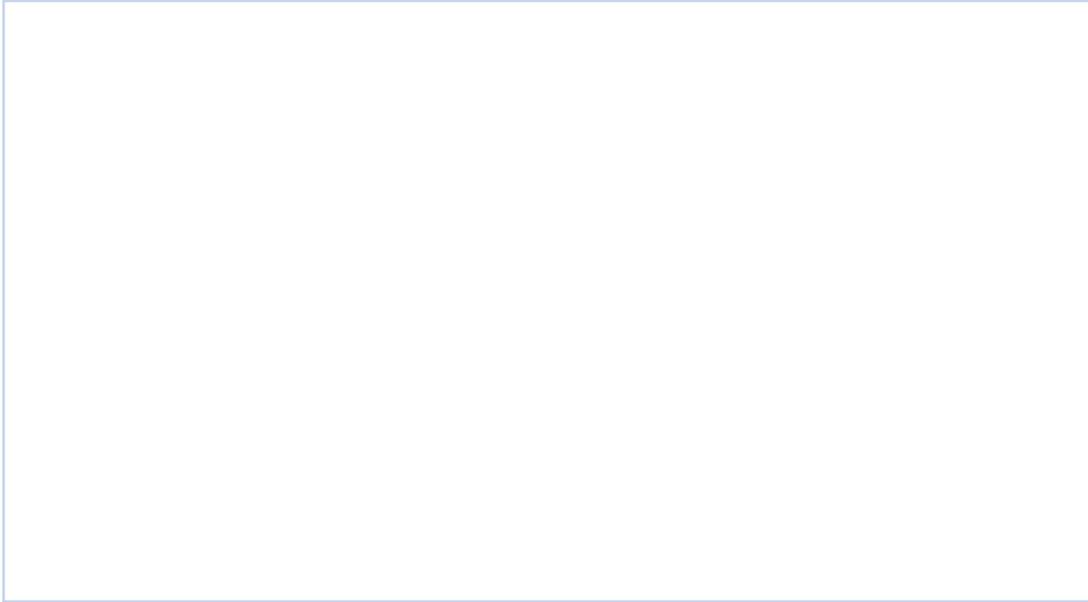
2. Prepare a brief procedure for an environmental initiative.



3. List and describe three mechanisms for communicating the procedure. Explain how you will ensure that the procedure can be understood by everyone.



4. Describe the strategies you would use to implement a continuous improvement cycle for environmental sustainability.



5. Explain how the continuous improvement cycle can improve resource efficiency.



6. List and describe three examples of internal recording systems or tools and explain how they can be used to measure environmental progress.

7. Explain the link between reporting and recording systems and quality assurance.

Part B

Read the case study, then answer the questions that follow.

Case study

An organisation that cares for 10,000 sick and elderly people around Australia has included several initiatives in its recently drafted sustainability policy. The development group identify 70 areas where a more environmentally friendly approach could be implemented. Three of these are:

Water use

- Facility managers will investigate and report on water use reduction options applicable to their facility (given the differing state/territory and local regulations), such as rainwater tanks, greywater diversion or treatment, dual-flush toilets and water-efficient fittings. Reports are to be submitted by 1 May 2015 and all facilities will implement a water use reduction program by 1 July 2015.
- Dishwashers and washing machines purchased after 1 January 2015 will be chosen for efficient water use.

Waste reduction

- The amount of waste going to landfill will be reduced by establishing systems to better dispose of recyclable and biodegradable (compostable) waste.
- Staff attitudes about waste reduction will be improved by educating them about the benefits of reducing the amount of waste going to landfill.
- The amount of waste currently being disposed of will be demonstrated by collecting the material disposed of over one day and categorising the types of waste the organisation or department produces. This process will be repeated at two-monthly intervals to check progress.

Green purchasing

- Suppliers used must be compliant with environmental guidelines.
- Recycled paper must be purchased and used for the majority of tasks.
- Recyclable toner cartridges must be purchased.
- The organisation's fleet of cars will be converted to LPG vehicles.
- Products purchased should be from an environmentally sustainable source when possible.
- Packaging should be kept to a minimum.
- Equipment purchased from now on must have the highest energy efficiency rating.

1. Develop implementation procedures and a communication strategy to let the appropriate people know about the procedures they have to follow.



2. Describe some strategies you would use to monitor the policies and procedures for tracking and recording performance in these areas and ensure the organisation regularly improves resource efficiency.



3. Explain how you would assign responsibility for tracking improvements in sustainability approaches. Give examples of tracking tools and software systems you might use.



Topic 4

Review workplace sustainability policy implementation

The implementation of the workplace sustainability policy and procedures should be appropriately documented, reviewed and analysed, so all stakeholders can see the progress being achieved and the adjustments that need to be made.

Monitoring records enables trends to be identified that will help in the continuous improvement cycle.

In this topic you will learn how to:

- 4A Document outcomes and provide feedback to key personnel and stakeholders
- 4B Investigate successes and failures of policy
- 4C Monitor records to identify trends
- 4D Modify policy and procedures to ensure improvements are made

4A

Document outcomes and provide feedback to key personnel and stakeholders

Documenting the outcomes of sustainability initiatives is a crucial part of the continuous improvement cycle. The analysis of data collected will enable the organisation to assess policy performance based on qualitative and quantitative evidence.

Outcomes can be documented in specific sustainability reports, in financial reports, an annual report that includes triple bottom line reporting, a shareholders report, or a report for an external body such as a regulatory authority. Common report types are outlined in the following information.

Formal compliance reports

Formal compliance reports are required by regulatory authorities and can be developed from internal compliance reviews and audits, or other internal recording systems that are set up to generate the information required. The data collected and the format of the report are prescribed by the external authority.

General compliance reports

Reports may be generated internally and targeted for specific areas of the organisation. These are generated from a range of internal records such as workplace inspections and audits, reviews and breach reports.

Regular target achievement reports

Reports may be generated from regular reviews and analyses conducted to assess progress towards targets and compliance. These reports are used to consider the overall progress and efficiency of the organisation as a whole, and for each of the relevant departments or operational areas.

Board reports

Reports may be provided by senior management to the board of directors. Such reports are created from a range of records and documentation generated throughout the organisation. These reports will show legislative compliance, as well as financial savings or expenditure arising from the sustainability policy.

Annual reports

Annual reports are provided to shareholders and other key stakeholders. They provide an overview of a range of achievements, particularly financial performance. Organisations with a sustainability policy will also disclose their environmental performance in line with triple bottom line reporting requirements and expectations.

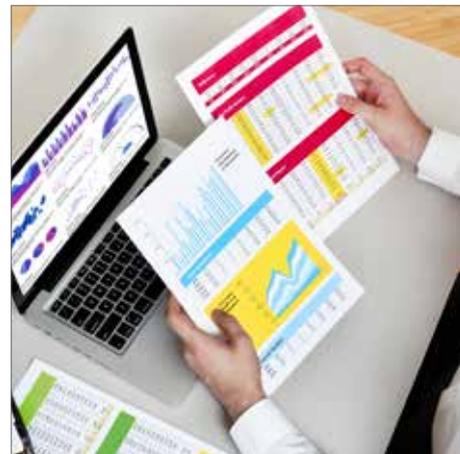
Report system compliance reports

Organisations may adopt a particular sustainability reporting practice such as the Global Reporting Initiative, or use international (ISO) or national (AS/NZS) reporting standards. Production of such reports and compliance with these standards is seen by stakeholders as a positive step, as it shows the organisation is meeting a widely recognised standard for reporting.

Report formats

The format of reports varies, but graphical representations of information are often easier to comprehend for readers; for example, a graph showing energy consumption over six months, or a bar chart showing cost comparisons for green purchasing. Visual representations can effectively demonstrate progress made, but it is important that they are used to convey information rather than add visual clutter. Make sure graphs and charts are laid out logically and clearly, with legends and colour used to support the meaning.

You may need to provide annual reports in an accessible format to stakeholders with a vision or reading impairment. It is therefore good practice to prepare materials in line with accessibility guidelines; for example, following plain English principles and ensuring the online format is suitable for screen readers. The Lighthouse International website, at www.lighthouse.org/accessibility, has online tutorials explaining how to make graphics more readable. The Vision Australia website, at www.visionaustralia.org, has information on accessibility and accessible format publishing services.



Provide feedback

Senior managers and shareholders will receive regular formal reports, but other also stakeholders need to know how the organisation is progressing towards achieving its environmental targets. Regular updates and successful achievement of targets can be used to provide encouragement and support to maintain the momentum and commitment of all involved. Feedback can also identify targets that have not been met, areas of weakness and risks; thus showing where improvements need to be made.

There are a number of ways you can provide feedback, as shown in the following information.

Newsletters

Newsletters can be targeted at internal personnel only, or produced to provide information to external groups through publication of a company newsletter or a sustainability newsletter.

Memos, emails and letters

Tailor correspondence to particular key personnel or groups, highlighting progress and providing specific feedback.

Website – intranet

Use an internal website (intranet) to provide key feedback and information, and act as a repository for reports, reviews, audits and analyses of outcomes and issues relating to the implementation of the workplace sustainability policy and procedures. The intranet can be used to announce achievements or highlight staff who have demonstrated a commitment.

Meetings

Hold specific focus meetings to provide feedback and address performance against targets. These meetings can also be used to obtain input from people to address issues. Such meetings may be documented and can result in an action list.

Presentations

Relevant senior management can also hold presentation sessions for key personnel and provide feedback. Such sessions can be used to highlight progress, and boost the confidence of people involved or charged with responsibilities under the implementation of the policy.

Visual methods

Use visual methods to share achievements, such as a huge thermometer on the factory wall for communicating long-term targets and showing current progress or posters thanking people for their contributions.

Example: how to provide feedback

Frank and Steph receive triple bottom line reports in relation to the operation of the business from each department each month. These formal reports are forwarded to the other directors for discussion at their quarterly meetings. Comments and issues raised by the directors at the directors meeting are passed on to the relevant managers by Frank and Steph; the managers in turn inform or consult their staff of these matters if needed.

Comments are provided back to each manager by staff and the report and comments are placed on the agenda for the monthly staff meetings.

Frank and Steph provide monthly briefings to the other two directors on how the company is progressing towards achieving the sustainability policy outcomes.



Practice task 13

1. Explain how you will document outcomes of the Kare 4 Kidz initiative to create a vegetable garden.

2. Where would you present this information?

4B

Investigate successes and failures of policy

The implementation of any initiative by an organisation should be closely monitored and evaluated against targets to determine whether it has been successful or not.

Whatever the outcome, an organisation should learn from the continuous improvement process in terms of what has worked, what has not worked, and what options can be considered to improve the outcomes.

Measure performance and progress

Environmental records provide excellent data for monitoring environmental policies and initiatives. As discussed previously, the records can provide a benchmark against which progress can be measured.

An organisation's environmental performance can be determined by measuring:

- its use of resources such as paper, water and energy
- how much it contributes to pollution
- how it handles waste
- the basis of its purchasing decisions
- stakeholder commitment to sustainable practices.

Determine performance

Performance is determined by comparing the results of the policy over a designated time period against the targets and benchmarks that have been set.

For each measurable aspect, the organisation may be:

- ahead of the target, having clearly achieved the benchmark
- on target and close to the benchmark
- not achieving the target and well below the benchmark.

Recognise achievements

Documentation, observation and feedback all contribute to recognising when targets have been reached. Make sure achievements are well publicised.

It is important to learn from your successes. To do this, you need to analyse the results to identify the reason for the success. Even if you find your organisation is on target, you may still need to adjust procedures or the policy itself to ensure continued achievement.

Here are some factors that could explain success.

The target was realistic.

The target was easily measurable.

The time line was realistic and achievable.

Everyone was committed to achieving the target.

Everyone knew their responsibilities and KPIs.

A reward and recognition system encouraged participation.

Investigate discrepancies

Achievement of targets and benchmarks is admirable and should be communicated to all involved, but failure to reach a target or benchmark needs to be investigated. With good monitoring in place, you may be able to identify a negative discrepancy ahead of the deadline and revise procedures so that the target can still be reached.

You may also need to consider if current performance is sufficient to cope with likely government policy changes, price rises or limited resource availability.

In some cases, you may need more time to tell whether an initiative is a success; for example, changing staff attitudes will take more time than changing to energy-efficient globes. A positive discrepancy can also be a trigger for investigation. If a target is reached more quickly and easily than forecast, you may need to set your sights higher.

You will need to gather feedback from those involved and analyse the original targets to see if they were realistic. The outcome of the investigation should be a series of recommendations to address shortcomings and refocus the policy and procedures on achieving the targets.

The investigation needs to determine:

- why the targets have not been achieved
- what has contributed to the lack of achievement
- what areas can be adjusted to improve performance.

Take action

An action plan should be developed to ensure the organisation is on target to achieve its goals. This may mean making adjustments to the policy, targets, and human or other resources assigned to an activity. It may also mean you need to work on increasing staff awareness and commitment or provide extra training.

Example: investigate successes in reducing energy use

Frank and Steph have set targets for the various initiatives they are implementing, including a 15 per cent reduction in monthly energy use.

The 15 per cent reduction in non-production energy use is achieved by the end of the third month, and by the end of the sixth month use is down 20.3 per cent compared to the previous year.

An investigation into the achievement uncovers that the solar hot water system has performed better than expected, and that staff are doing a good job of turning off lights and equipment not in use. In the loading bay and toilets, sensor lights have been fitted. The lights activate when a door opens or a vehicle pulls up, and switch off if there is no movement for five minutes. This has saved resources without compromising safety.

Practice task 14

The centre director of Kare 4 Kidz is considering ways of analysing and presenting the outcomes of the sustainability initiatives introduced by the preschool kindergarten. Brambles's *Sustainability review 2014* is one example of a format that Kare 4 Kidz could follow.

Access the documents *Sustainability review 2014* and *Sustainability review 2014 – supplementary information* produced by support services company Brambles at www.brambles.com/sustainability/sustainability-review.

Consider the Brambles report and answer the following:

1. Does the report clearly document the implementation and outcomes of the policy?

2. How relevant is such a report for key personnel or internal stakeholders?

3. What would you recommend as a form of report or communication for lowerlevel employees?

4C

Monitor records to identify trends

Environmental records will provide a picture of your organisation's environmental performance over time. Records provide data for assessing that performance, identifying trends and deciding on future directions to maintain continuous improvement.

Monitor records

The recording and reporting systems that were discussed previously and can assist in identifying trends are described here. Each type of record and report should be considered on its own, and in conjunction with other reports and records. Remember that policies and procedures can have unintended consequences – outcomes that were not desired or predicted – and looking at the big picture will help you to identify these.

The following information outlines the types of monitoring records used and the range of performance issues that they can identify.

Workplace inspections and audits of procedures

Audits generate checklists and can be used to identify areas where procedures are not being followed, as well as the frequency of noncompliance. Regular noncompliance needs to be identified and addressed.

Reviews and compliance assessments

Reviews generate checklists and records of compliance (or achievement of targets) over a period of time. Analysis over time can identify trends relating to compliance, achievement of targets and variations over time.

Noncompliance, breach and incident reports

Incident reports can identify areas where procedures are not being correctly followed or are in need of adjustment. These reports can also identify areas where employees are failing to meet expected work performance standards.

Employee records and performance appraisals

Employee records can help you to identify when training or coaching is needed. Employees may fail to meet key performance indicators because of:

- poorly documented procedures
- a lack of training
- poor communication
- ill-defined or unachievable targets
- a poor attitude
- a misunderstanding about expected performance targets.

Identify areas for remedial action

In addition to identifying targets that are being reached, you need to closely monitor records to see whether any trends are emerging that require remedial action. These trends may be due to 'unforeseen consequences'. For example, you may find that although kitchen waste has been reduced because of the introduction of non-disposable cups, water use has increased because people need to wash the cups by hand or in the dishwasher. You may need to introduce a new policy that the dishwasher be switched on only when it is full.

Records can show where initial targets have been reached but improvements still need to be made; for example, records may indicate that overall water use has decreased during the target period but may identify a specific area of the company where use is still higher than acceptable.

In some cases you may find that there is insufficient data to enable a conclusion to be formed; for example, if staff are not always completing a form that shows when their department orders paper, it will be difficult to track paper use.

Need for improvement

A key area where records may identify the need for improvement is the commitment and motivation of your staff. After their initial enthusiasm when the policy was released, staff may now be resentful of any tasks they see as being additional to their regular activities.

When targets are not being met or benchmarks achieved, remedial or corrective action needs to be determined and appropriate action plans designed and implemented as soon as possible. This may require modifications to the workplace policy and procedures, a renewed communication and promotional strategy, or innovative ways to get staff involved.

Example: the importance of monitoring and investigating discrepancies

The initial reports Frank and Steph receive from Gillian, manager of the printing area, are very encouraging in regard to the increase in recycling of materials. In fact, there was an increase of 14.5 per cent in the amount of recyclable materials collected and a commensurate reduction in the amount of solid waste generated.

However, as the months pass, a graphical analysis shows that the amount of recycled materials is reducing and solid waste is increasing.

An investigation into the situation discovers that a new employee in the printing area is stockpiling waste and recyclable materials for disposal at the start of his next shift. On Friday evenings, the cleaners are removing all the material awaiting disposal and placing it in the solid waste bins. The employee had not realised that the cleaners were throwing away recyclable materials.

The issue is highlighted at a staff meeting. An adjustment is made to procedures directing employees to remove all waste and place it into the appropriate bins at the end of their shift. Additionally, the cleaners are advised not to remove any items from the printing area.



Practice task 15

The sustainability initiative of asking families to bring in items to re-use for arts and crafts has created problems for the Kare 4 Kidz staff. Families have been bringing in glass jars, plastic milk bottles and plastic margarine containers, among other items, but the original vision for this initiative was to use biodegradable materials.

The staff at the centre have raised the issue of receiving unsuitable material. They are having to spend valuable time sifting through the donations to find the items they want to keep and disposing of the rest into the recycling or rubbish streams. There also too many items to store.

Prepare a list of the points that need to be addressed in the policy to resolve these problems.

4D

Modify policy and procedures to ensure improvements are made

Once problems, discrepancies and areas that need improvement have been identified, you will need to look closely at the policies and procedures in place to see where adjustments can be made.

The need to modify the sustainability policy can arise when the current policy is failing to achieve the required outcomes.

Policy amendments

The first step is to analyse all related policies for the workplace to determine if there are conflicts between the policies; for example, a policy to achieve 80 per cent green purchasing may be in conflict with a policy to use a contracted supplier that is not green-compliant.

You may find that the policy was too ambitious and consequently unrealistic; in this case, you will need to develop an amended policy that more closely reflects the organisation's capabilities and financial circumstances. You may find that the policy targets have been easily met before deadlines; in this case you may wish to develop the organisation's environmental credentials by having a more ambitious policy with targets for further improvements.

You may only need to make small changes to the policy to include additional information and procedures, such as 'Install light sensors in rooms used less frequently' or 'All monitors must be switched to power save when not in use'.

You will need to:

- scope the new policy options and obtain relevant information
- consult with stakeholders and consider options
- analyse and evaluate options for the new policy and determine targets
- make recommendations on the new policy
- plan the implementation and develop appropriate procedures
- communicate the new policy and procedures to relevant entities
- implement the policy
- monitor, evaluate and review the performance of the organisation based on the new policy.

Procedure modification

When a procedure needs to be modified it is important that the relevant stakeholders are consulted in the development phase. Then, once the new procedures have been implemented, the continuous improvement cycle begins again to monitor and review the improvement.

Procedure modification may be needed for a variety of reasons, as shown in the following information.

1**Changes in legislation or regulations**

There may be changes in legislation that require changes in compliance; for example, a class of chemicals is to be phased out over a one-year period, with

2**Changes in targets**

A new or amended policy has changed targets; for example, cardboard packaging must be reduced by 60 per cent within 12 months.

3**Monitoring and evaluations**

Monitoring and evaluations have shown that:

- targets can't be achieved with the current procedures so they must be adjusted; for example, introduce new procedures that ensure only recycled paper is used
- the reporting system is inadequate; for example, introduce a system in which staff must record when paper is ordered by their department and the type of paper requested
- there needs to be a new awareness campaign to motivate staff; for example, form a green team to specifically work towards supporting green initiatives
- the system for tracking changes needs to be improved; for example, introduce procedures for staff to report on achievements at a monthly staff meeting.

4**New initiatives**

Internal proposals for improved efficiency and reduction of the ecological footprint have prompted new initiatives; for example, an incentive program for team successes.

Example: modification of sustainability policy to meet new requirements

Ahmed, the purchasing manager, is pleased to report to Frank, Steph and the other directors that he and his staff have achieved their target of 80 per cent green purchasing in a threemonth period. However, he advises them that at the beginning of each quarter there is a standing order from a large supplier that is not a green supplier – this is preventing his department from achieving an even better result. The standing order was entered into before the green purchasing policy took effect.

At a review, the managers note that the price being charged for the goods is 22.5 per cent less than any competitor. They discuss the cost difference and their need to meet environmental obligations. It is agreed to source a green-compliant supplier and cancel the standing order as soon as possible. The purchasing policy is adjusted to reflect this. Each manager is asked to look at their expenditure and identify where savings can be made to offset the increased cost of using a green supplier.



Practice task 16

In the previous practice task you defined the issues that arose when the policy of asking families to bring in items to re-use for arts and crafts was implemented at Kare 4 Kidz.

1. What are two amendments could you make to the policy to provide a solution to the issues raised?

2. How will you communicate these solutions?

Summary

1. Documenting the outcomes of sustainability initiatives is a crucial part of the continuous improvement cycle. Analysing the data collected will enable the organisation to assess its performance based on qualitative and quantitative evidence.
2. Documented outcomes should be communicated via reports to key personnel and stakeholders in accordance with an agreed reporting schedule. The method of communication should be appropriate to the stakeholder.
3. The success or failure of the policy should be investigated and reported.
4. In identifying shortcomings, recommendations for adjustment to the policy and procedures should be considered as part of continuous improvement.
5. Policy and procedural adjustment can arise for reasons internal or external to the organisation; for example, legislative or compliance changes; changes to targets; the need to improve tracking and reporting systems.
6. Procedural adjustments can be undertaken with input from relevant stakeholders and subsequent communication and implementation of the adjusted procedures.
7. Any adjustments in policy and procedures must be monitored and evaluated.

Learning checkpoint 4

Review workplace sustainability policy implementation

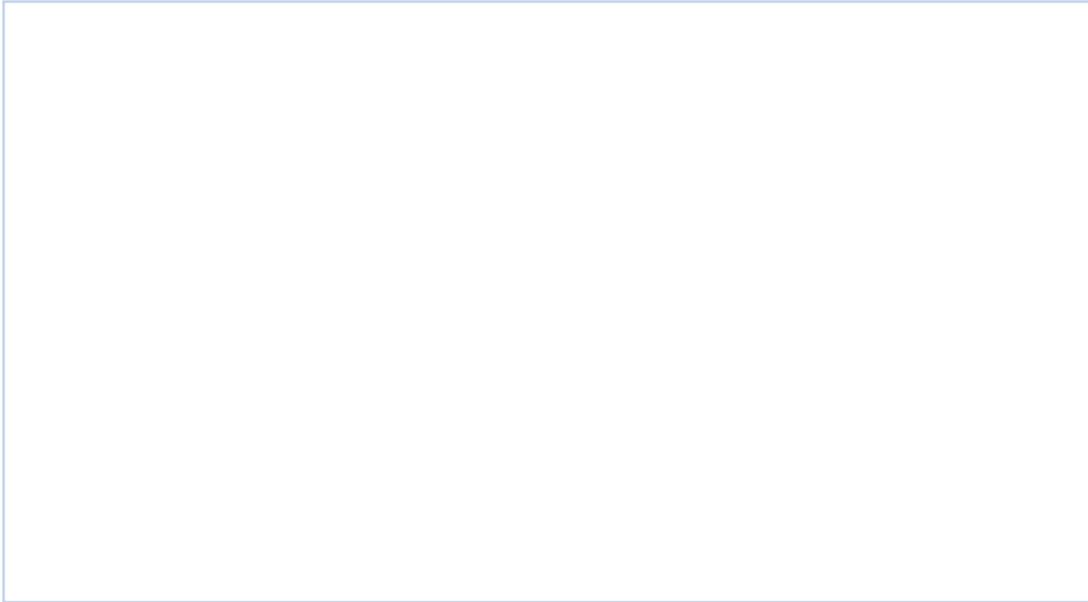
This learning checkpoint allows you to review your skills and knowledge in reviewing workplace sustainability policy implementation.

Part A

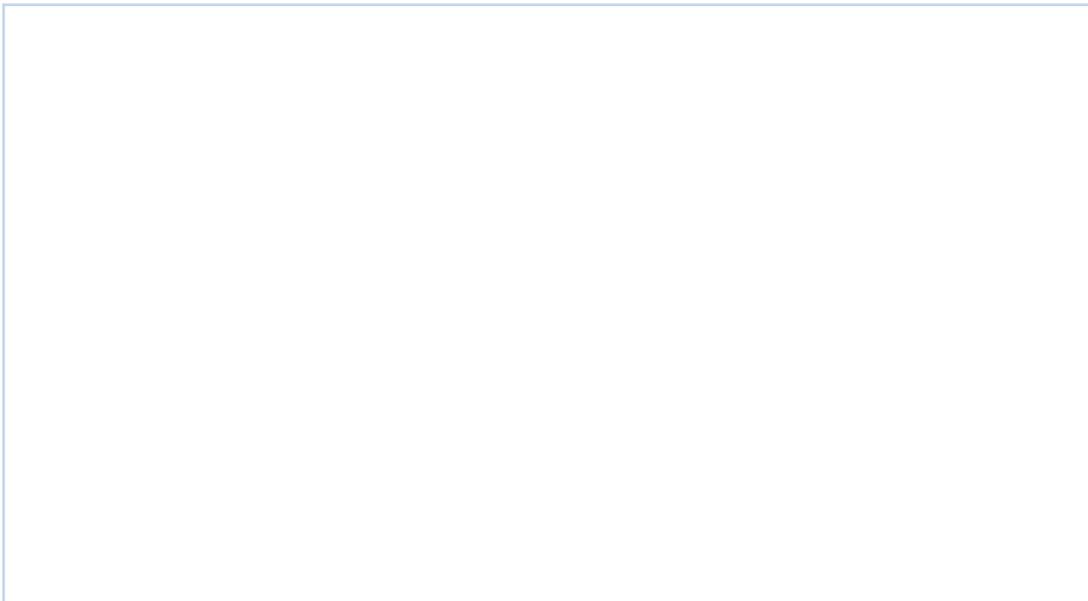
1. Why is it important to inform stakeholders of the results or outcomes following the implementation of environmental policies and procedures? What are the possible consequences if people are not informed of the results or outcomes?

2. Why is it crucial to investigate the success or failure of the sustainability policy?

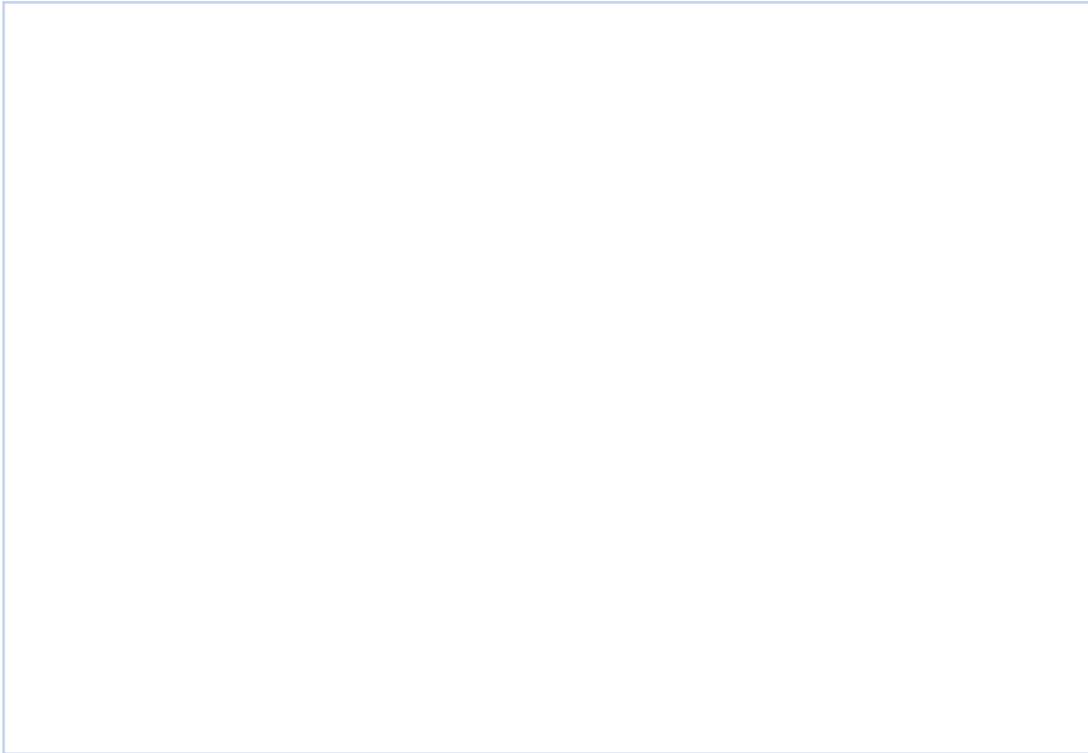
3. Describe the steps you would take to evaluate a policy implementation.



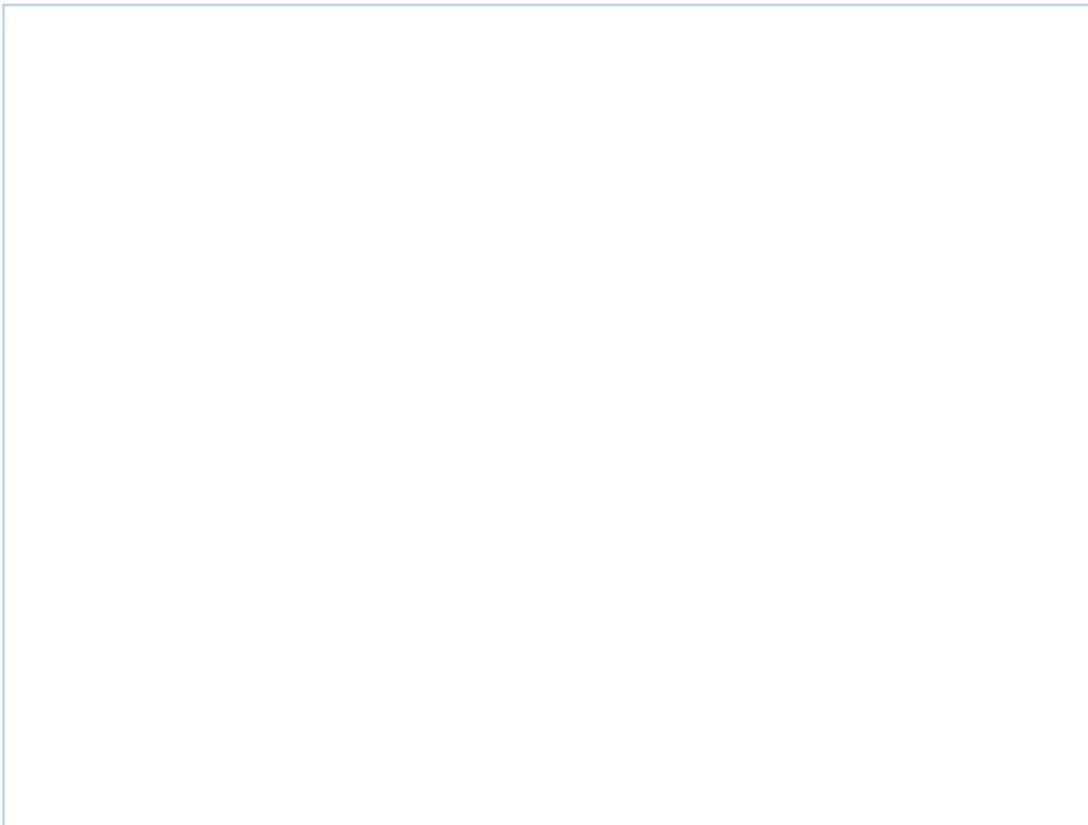
4. Imagine you are preparing a report for senior management to document the outcomes of a workplace sustainability policy initiative that has been in place for six months. Provide a brief description of the structure and nature of the report and explain how you would make sure the report was suitable for the audience.



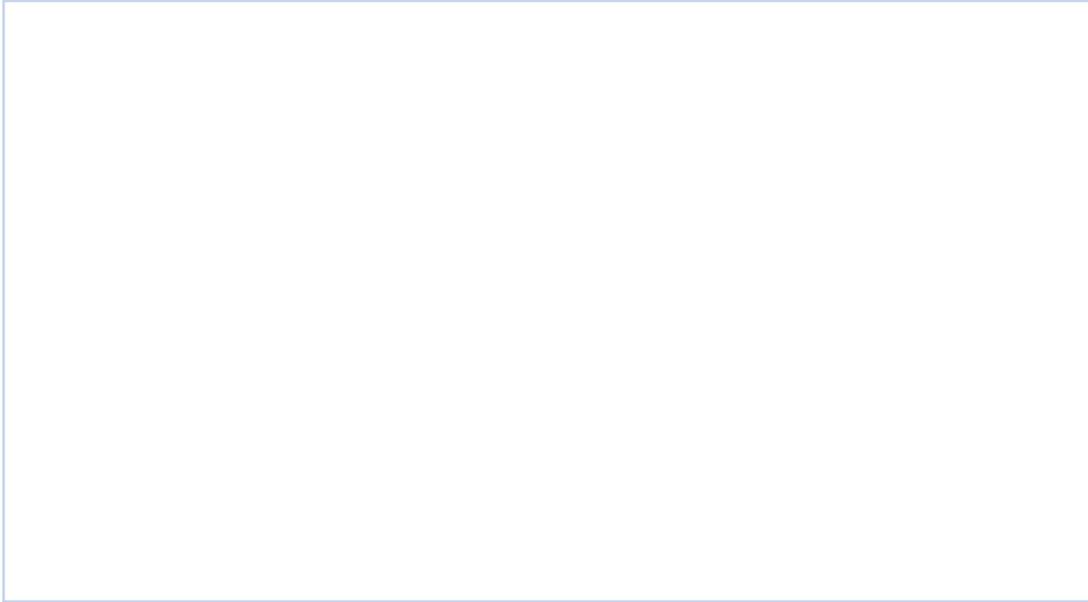
5. Imagine you are preparing a presentation for general staff to explain the outcomes of the same workplace sustainability initiative. Provide a brief description of the format, content and tools appropriate to this audience. Explain how your presentation will boost people's confidence.



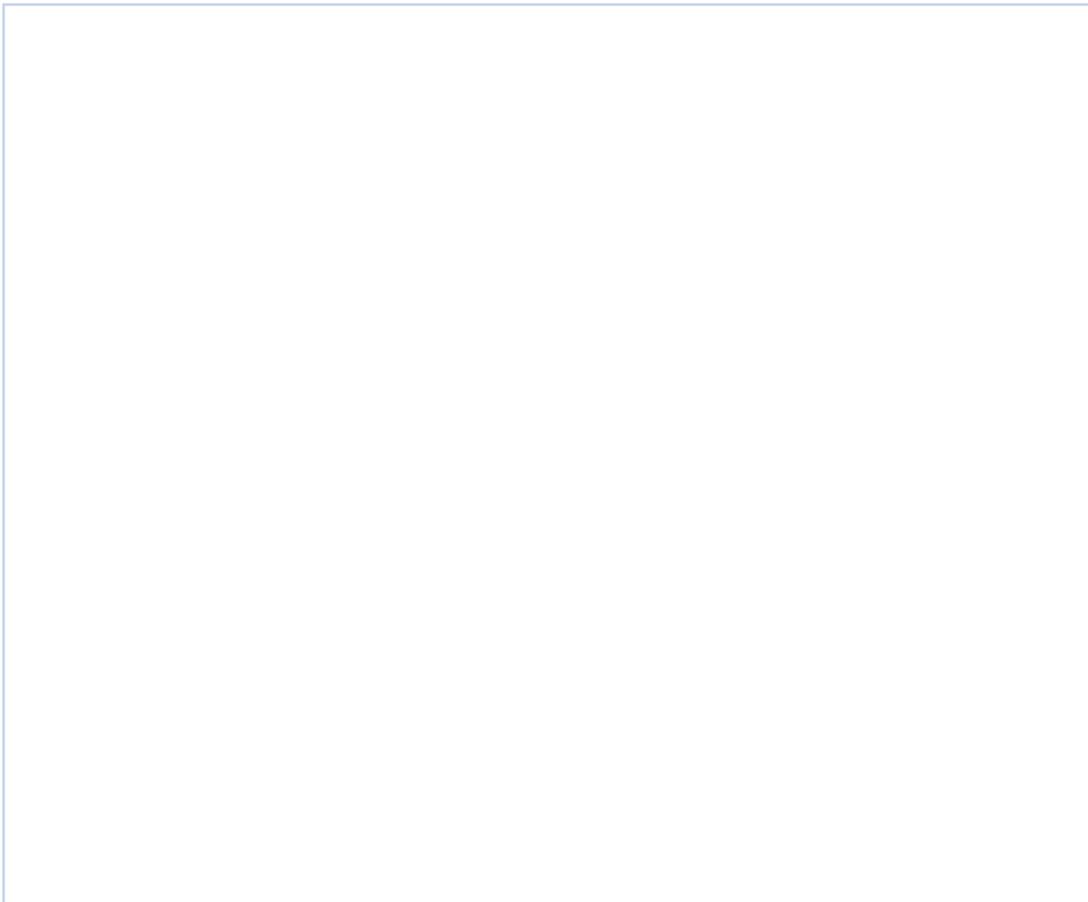
6. Why is ongoing monitoring of the implementation of a policy and associated procedures important? What is the relevance of such monitoring to risk minimisation?



7. What role do key performance indicators (KPIs) play in monitoring performance and how can they assist in supporting continuous improvement?



8. Outline how you would proceed if your outcomes report showed that the policy needed major modification.



9. The management team has tasked you with making changes to procedures in order to improve the overall performance of a workplace sustainability policy. Explain your approach.

10. You have been asked to analyse records and reports showing the outcomes of a sustainability policy. You notice that progress towards the waste reduction target has slowed to such an extent that the target for the end of the two-year period will not be reached. The targeted reduction initially was as follows:

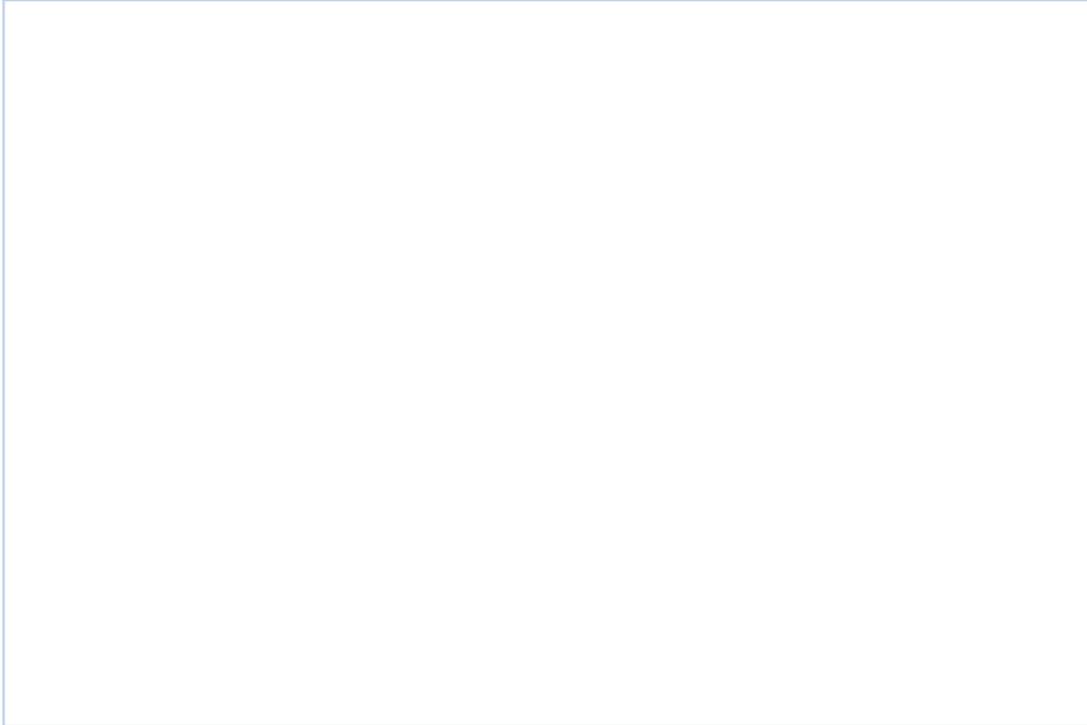
Target date	Reduction amount
June 2015	8%
December 2015	16%
June 2016	24%
December 2016	32%

For 2015, the figures are as follows:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
4%	7%	9%	10%	13%	15%	16%	16%	17%	18%	18%	19%

Graphing these figures and extrapolating the trend to December 2016 suggests that at best the reduction in waste will be 24 to 25 per cent – well short of the target of 32 per cent.

Describe the steps you would take to address this situation.



Part B

Read the case study, then answer the questions that follow.

Case study

Karen is in charge of introducing a new paper use policy for the debt recovery team. Before introducing the policy, she inquires as to whether the company keeps records on paper use. Karen finds that the organisation has records on how much paper was purchased in previous years, the cost and the brand. Although paper use is not broken down by team, Karen is able to get an estimate of paper use per person by dividing annual paper purchased by the total number of staff.

- Annual paper consumption (reams): 5,000
- Number of staff: 625
- Paper use per person per annum (reams): 8

Karen uses 8 reams per person as her benchmark. In order to assess the success of the new policy, Karen decides she needs to keep records on the amount of paper used for her team of 14 people. Based on the benchmark of 8 reams per person, her team would be expected to use 112 reams of paper in a year.

Karen is good at motivating and her team are enthusiastic. They use double-sided copying and printing whenever possible, and re-use paper to print draft copies. The team also increases its use of email and decreases its use of paper memos and internal reports.

At the end of six months, Karen is pleased to announce that the team has only used 28 reams of paper, which is half the projected usage.

The CEO decides that the company should keep more-detailed records on paper purchasing and use. Using Karen's model, the purchasing department adopts a team-based approach. In future, the purchasing officer will report on paper use each quarter. These detailed reports will be used to design strategies for particular areas.

1. Describe the process Karen followed to document paper usage.

2. How could Karen provide feedback to her staff about the outcomes of the new paper use policy?

3. Develop a new procedure that will improve record-keeping on paper purchasing and use.