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CIPS L4M1 - Question & Answer Past exam questions

O1. Outline FIVE differences between purchasing goods and purchasing services. - correct answer 1. Goods are tangible, services are intangible:

2. Services cannot be separated from their supplier:
3. Heterogeneity: goods are usually uniform in nature while services are unique at each delivery
4. Services 'perish' immediately on delivery whereas goods can be stored until required
5. Products are easier to specify, being tangible

O2. Explain THREE circumstances in which a competitive tendering exercise might not be the best approach to making a purchase. - correct answer 1. Urgency

2. Commercial confidentiality or national security (e.g. military organisations):
3. Value of the purchase:
4. Production costs cannot be measured accurately:
5. Price is not the only criterion for supplier selection and contract award
6. Intellectual Property Rights and monopoly

O2. Describe TWO e-sourcing tools and their use in procurement and supply. - correct answer 1. E-Catalogues

2. E-Tendering
3. E. Auction
4. Reverse Auctions
5. Online supplier evaluation data

O3. Explain the role of a shared services unit (SSU). - correct answer SSUs reflect a desire to centralise and share services

The shared service provider becomes a dedicated provider of services such as; finance, HR, IT and procurement which continue to be provided internally

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CIPS L4M1 Exam Syllabus Topics:

Topic	Details
Topic 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Understand and analyse the need for compliance: This section measures skills of compliance officers and sector-specific procurement managers in understanding different economic and industrial sectors such as
Topic 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Public, private, charity, not-for-profit, manufacturing, retail, construction, financial, agriculture, and service sectors. It also covers analyzing the impact of the public sector on procurement and supply chain activities public sector objectives, regulations, competition, accountability, and value for money. It finally covers the impact of the private sector on procurement or supply chain activities.

Topic 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand and analyse aspects of organisational infrastructure that shape the scope of procurement and supply chain functions: This section measures that skill of supply chain strategists and organizational analysts in understanding corporate governance, documented policies, accountability, and ethics. It also covers the impact of organisational policies and procedures on procurement and supply
Topic 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand and analyse the added value through procurement and supply chain management: This section of the exam measures skills of supply chain managers related to identifying added value outcomes in procurement and supply and evaluating cost savings, service improvements, and innovationsu contributions. It also measures procurement and supply processes that contribute to added value.

>> L4M1 Valid Practice Questions <<

Free PDF CIPS - L4M1 - The Best Scope and Influence of Procurement and Supply Valid Practice Questions

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CIPS Scope and Influence of Procurement and Supply Sample Questions (Q10-Q15):

NEW QUESTION # 10

Explain FIVE differences between organisations that operate in the public sector and those that operate in the private sector.

Answer:

Explanation:

See the solution in Explanation part below

Explanation:

Public sector organisations and private sector organisations differ in a number of important ways. These differences affect how they are managed, how they buy goods and services, and what their overall objectives are.

1. Main Objective

One key difference is the main purpose of the organisation.

Public sector organisations exist mainly to provide services for the public and meet social needs, such as healthcare, education, policing, and transport. Their aim is usually to deliver value for money and public benefit rather than make profit.

In contrast, private sector organisations mainly exist to make a profit for their owners or shareholders. Although they also want to satisfy customers, financial return is usually a major objective.

For example, a government hospital focuses on patient care, whereas a private electronics retailer focuses on sales revenue and profit.

2. Source of Funding

Another difference is where the organisations get their money from.

Public sector organisations are usually funded by taxation, government budgets, grants, and public money. This means they must be very careful in how they spend funds because they are accountable to taxpayers.

Private sector organisations normally generate income through the sale of goods and services, investment, or private finance. Their survival depends on their ability to compete and earn sufficient revenue.

This difference affects procurement because public bodies may face stricter rules over spending decisions.

3. Accountability and Transparency

Public sector organisations are generally more accountable to the public, government ministers, and regulatory bodies. They often have to show openness in their decisions and may be subject to audits, public scrutiny, and freedom of information requirements.

By contrast, private sector organisations are usually accountable mainly to their owners, shareholders, or investors. While they must still follow the law, they often have more privacy in commercial decision-making.

This means public sector procurement is usually more transparent and formal than private sector procurement.

4. Procurement Rules and Procedures

A major difference can be seen in how they buy goods and services.

Public sector organisations usually have to follow strict procurement regulations, policies, and procedures to ensure fairness, competition, and value for money. They may need to advertise contracts openly and use formal tendering processes.

Private sector organisations usually have more flexibility. They can often choose suppliers more quickly, negotiate directly, and make decisions based on commercial priorities.

For example, a local authority may need to go through a full tender process, while a private company may select a supplier based on speed, cost, or existing relationships.

5. Performance Measurement

The way success is measured is also different.

In the public sector, performance is often measured by service quality, meeting public needs, staying within budget, and achieving policy outcomes. Success may not always be easy to measure financially.

In the private sector, performance is often measured through profit, sales growth, market share, and return on investment.

For example, a public library may be judged by community access and service delivery, whereas a private bookshop may be judged by profit and customer sales.

Conclusion

In summary, public and private sector organisations differ in their objectives, funding, accountability, procurement processes, and measures of success. Public sector organisations focus more on public service and value for money, while private sector organisations focus more on profit and commercial performance.

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NEW QUESTION # 11

Describe what is meant by the 5 Rights of Procurement (25 points)

Answer:

Explanation:

See the solution in Explanation part below

Explanation:

How to approach the question

- This question is worth 25 marks so you can imagine what the mark scheme will look like. There are 5 Rights so there will be 5 points for each Right. Naming the Right will be one point, then you have 4 points for a description and example. You should therefore aim to have 4-5 sentences per Right.

- I would recommend using headings for this type of essay- clearly putting your essay into 5 sections for each right. This makes it easy for the examiner to mark.

Proposed Essay structure

- Introduction - what is meant by the 5 Rights

- Price

- Quality

- Quantity

- Time

- Place

- Conclusion - why it's important, all rights are equally as important

Example Essay

Procurement revolves around achieving the delicate balance of acquiring goods and/ or services at the right price, quality, quantity, time, and place. This essay explains why these "Five Rights of Procurement" are important and explains how using this metric can help procurement to make smart choices when they purchase goods or services.

Price:

Firstly, it is important that procurement do not simply seek to find the cheapest option. The First Right is about finding the product/ service at an affordable price that doesn't compromise on quality. Let's say a company is buying office furniture. They might go for a supplier that offers a good balance between cost and quality, ensuring they get good value for their money. Considerations here may include Total Cost of Ownership, the Price Iceberg, and Whole Life Costing. The company therefore may seek to get the best price, but in relation to how long the furniture will last. A cheap chair that will break after one year may not be the best price compared to another chair which will last 10 years.

Quality:

The second right, quality, looks at legal compliance and fitness for purpose. Quality adherence aligns with specifications as well as legislation such as the UK Sale of Goods Act 1979. This helps ensure that items meet their commonly intended purpose and maintains satisfactory condition. Buyers deploy both reactive measures like Quality Control and proactive approaches like Quality Assurance to uphold the stipulated quality. This commitment not only ensures legal compliance but also underpins customer satisfaction, brand reputation, and ethical sourcing policies. An example of quality is an organisation buying a washing machine that conforms to ISO standard 97.060 and has a 2-year warranty.

Quantity:

The third right, quantity, is a strategic consideration about how much of an item to order. It is connected to efficient inventory management. One tool that procurement can use to ensure they order the right quantity of a product is Economic Order Quantity (EOQ) - this serves as a tool for finding the equilibrium between stock-holding costs and avoiding stockouts. Market conditions, supply chain dynamics (e.g. JIT / Lean manufacturing), and organizational policies collectively play a pivotal role in determining the right quantity. For example a confectionary manufacturer will need to order the right number of eggs to make cakes- they will need to consider how many eggs they will need in order to make the cakes, but also take into consideration that they may not need them all at once and that eggs can expire. The use of an MRP system is helpful when determining quantities of products to order.

Time:

Time is about getting things when we need them. In the above example, an egg delivery timing for a confectionary manufacturer will be pivotal to making the cakes on time. Other considerations about time include changing market forces and customer demand. The use of forecasting is therefore extremely useful; particularly if there are peaks in demand for a product, such as toys at Christmas. Moreover, organizations need to avoid bottlenecks and production stoppages, so time (including lead time and delivery time) is an important consideration when making orders.

Place:

Lastly, place is about getting things to the right location. Minimizing environmental impact, reducing risks during transit, and optimizing warehousing practices contribute to achieving the right place. This is particularly important for perishable items such as food, and for items which require specific storage conditions such as chemicals. This involves good planning in terms of logistics, minimizing any impact on the environment during transport and a consideration for safety.

In conclusion, the Five Rights of Procurement provide a structured framework for organizations to optimize their sourcing practices. All rights are equally as important and it is the relationship between the Rights which is key. While price, quality, quantity, time, and place form the foundation, evolving models acknowledge additional elements like the Right Relationship with the Supplier. Embracing these principles not only ensures operational efficiency but also promotes sustainability and ethical conduct throughout the procurement process, contributing to long-term success in a globalized and dynamic marketplace.

Tutor Notes

- The 5 Rights is a big topic in CIPS so do learn them off by heart. It's p. 20 in the study guide.
- The conclusion mentions that additional 'rights' are starting to be introduced into the matrix, this is true and isn't mentioned in this study guide. I believe this starts to come up in Level 5. Just something to be aware of- some people are now talking about other Rights such as finding the right supplier and the right relationship. It's good to know, but not essential for this essay. Neither is knowing the ISO standard for washing machines - that's certainly not in the book. You can sprinkle in your own knowledge to essays like this, as it demonstrates you're able to apply the theory to real life. Why I remember the ISO for washing machines is a different story....
- You could also have mentioned the following topics;
 - o price - using the right currency and incoterm, aggregation of spend, negotiating prices o quality - conformance and performance specs o quantity - fulfilling retail orders, large order quantities leading to discount o time - additional costs of a stockout, impact on relationships and reputation o place - additional costs if delivery fails
- This is the type of question you can easily over-write. It's a huge topic and you could easily spend too long on it and not have enough time to answer other questions. So be careful with your timings. You don't need to mention everything above.
- Another way this type of question can come up is as a scenario. E.g. XYZ is a manufacturer of cakes and needs to order eggs. Discuss how XYZ can ensure the 5 Rights of Procurement when ordering Eggs.

NEW QUESTION # 12

Explain FIVE differences between capital expenditure and operational expenditure categories of spend for an organisation. (25 marks)

Answer:

Explanation:

See the solution in Explanation part below.

Explanation:

When discussing capital expenditure (CapEx) and operational expenditure (OpEx) in the context of procurement and supply, it is essential to understand how they impact an organization's financial planning, decision-making, and procurement strategy. Below are five key differences between CapEx and OpEx:

1. Definition and Nature of Spend

* Capital Expenditure (CapEx): Refers to investments made by a company to acquire, upgrade, or maintain physical assets such as property, machinery, or equipment. These are typically large, one-time purchases that provide long-term benefits.

* Operational Expenditure (OpEx): Involves day-to-day expenses required to run the business, such as salaries, rent, utilities, and consumables. These costs are necessary for ongoing operations.

2. Accounting Treatment

* CapEx: Considered a long-term investment, it is capitalized and recorded as an asset on the balance sheet. Depreciation or amortization is applied over the useful life of the asset.

* OpEx: Fully expensed in the profit and loss statement in the accounting period in which it is incurred.

It directly impacts the organization's profitability in the short term.

3. Budgeting and Approval Process

* CapEx: Requires substantial financial planning, detailed justification, and approval from senior management due to its high-cost implications. It often involves long-term financial commitment.

* OpEx: Generally included in the organization's operating budget and does not require extensive approval processes, as it consists of routine expenses necessary for daily business functions.

4. Impact on Cash Flow and Financial Planning

* CapEx: Affects cash flow significantly as it requires large upfront payments. Organizations often finance CapEx through loans, leasing, or long-term financial strategies.

* OpEx: Represents smaller, recurring costs that are easier to manage and predict within the financial year, allowing for more flexibility in cash flow management.

5. Examples of Procurement and Supply Considerations

* CapEx Examples: Purchasing manufacturing equipment, acquiring new office buildings, upgrading IT infrastructure (e.g., servers, data centers).

* OpEx Examples: Office supplies, utility bills, employee salaries, maintenance and repair costs, software subscriptions.

Conclusion

Understanding the distinction between capital expenditure and operational expenditure is essential for procurement and supply professionals to make informed financial decisions, align with corporate strategy, and ensure efficient resource allocation.

Procurement teams must consider factors such as cost-benefit analysis, funding sources, and long-term value when determining the best approach for an organization's spending strategy.

NEW QUESTION # 13

What is 'supply chain management'? Outline the drivers, advantages and disadvantages of using this approach within the Procurement Department of an organisation (25 points)

Answer:

Explanation:

See the solution in Explanation part below.

Explanation:

How to approach the question

- There are 4 main components to this question that you will have to answer, so my advice is to first write down subheadings for your essay so you don't miss any out: definition of supply chain management, drivers, advantages and disadvantages

- The question also brings up 2 concepts - supply chain management and tiered supply chains, it would be good to include a definition of both of these.

- Because of the number of things you'll have to write, you don't need to go into lots of detail - one paragraph per section will be enough.

Proposed Essay Structure

Intro - what is supply chain management and what is a tiered supply chain P1 - drivers P2 - advantages P3 - disadvantages

Conclusion - supply chains are complex due to globalisation Essay Ideas:

- Definition of supply chain management = Making something available in response to a buyer's requirements. The transformation of goods from raw material into an end product (input > conversion

> output)

- Drivers = Cost, Time/ Speed, Reliability, Responsiveness, Transparency, Globalisation

- Advantages = reduced costs by elimination of waste, improved responsiveness to customer requirements, joint-ventures with supply partners leading to innovations, tech sharing, improved communication leads to faster lead times for product development

- Disadvantages = needs considerable investment and internal support, closer relationships may be risky (IP, loss of control), issues in fairly distributing gains and risks (you don't need to talk about all of these- pick 1 or 2 you feel you know the best and focus on that)

Example Essay Supply Chain Management (SCM) is the arrangement of processes involved in the production and distribution of goods / services - from the origin to the end consumer. In simple terms, it's taking a raw product and transforming it into an end product that a consumer would purchase. For example taking a potato from a farmer, giving it to a manufacturer to make into chips and sending these to retailers to be sold. SCM relies on close relationships between the parties in the supply chain and adds value to the product at every stage. A Tiered Supply Chain is a specific configuration within SCM that involves multiple levels of suppliers and sub-suppliers. A buyer will work with a small amount of Tier 1 suppliers who will in turn work with their own suppliers. In a tiered system there can be many, many layers of suppliers who all ultimately work towards creating the same product. This essay aims to delve into the drivers, advantages, and disadvantages associated with implementing a complex supply chain, such as the Tiered Supply Chain model.

The main drivers of using a tiered supply chain are often rooted in the pursuit of efficiency, cost-effectiveness, and flexibility. By consolidating suppliers into distinct tiers, organizations can streamline their management processes, reduce complexity, and enhance overall supply chain performance.

Additionally, tiered supply chains are often employed in response to the global nature of modern business, accommodating the need to source materials and components from various regions while maintaining a manageable and responsive supply network.

One of the advantages of a Tiered Supply Chain is the streamlined management of suppliers. In this model, there are fewer direct suppliers to oversee, simplifying the coordination and communication processes. This can lead to increased efficiency and responsiveness as organizations deal with a smaller, more manageable pool of suppliers. The consolidation of suppliers in a tiered system may also result in potential cost savings and improved collaboration with a select group of trusted partners.

However, the complexity of a Tiered Supply Chain brings disadvantages. One significant drawback is reduced visibility. As the supply chain extends across multiple tiers, organizations may struggle to have a comprehensive view of the entire process. This lack of visibility can lead to challenges in tracking and responding to potential disruptions. Moreover, ethical risks emerge when companies have limited oversight over lower-tier suppliers, potentially exposing organizations to issues such as labour exploitation, environmental concerns, or violations of ethical standards.

In conclusion, supply chain management has evolved into a complex discipline due to the forces of globalization and consumer demands for speed and quality. The Tiered Supply Chain model, driven by these factors, presents both advantages and disadvantages. While managing fewer suppliers can enhance efficiency, the trade-off includes diminished visibility and increased ethical risks.

Organizations must carefully evaluate the specific needs of their operations and weigh the benefits against the challenges when deciding whether to adopt a Tiered Supply Chain. In this intricate landscape, the ability to balance complexity and efficiency becomes paramount for sustained success in the global marketplace.

Tutor Notes

- Definition of supply chain management is from p.5

- Drivers, advantages and disadvantages p.9

- This topic used to be much more in depth in the old syllabus and has been drastically simplified in the new study guide. The guide is actually quite light on this topic stating simply that "globalisation and localisation are both drivers of using supply chain tiering". If you don't work in manufacturing, or an industry that uses supply chain tiering, this concept may be a bit alien to you and I'd recommend doing a little extra research. The best example of supply chain tiering is in car manufacturing- and that would be a good example to use in an essay. Some additional links for research:

- Supplier Tiers: What's The Difference Between Tier 1, Tier 2, and Tier 3 | PLANERGY Software

- Sustainable Sourcing - Definition, Examples, Benefits & Best Practices (brightest.io)

- <https://youtu.be/fs1rDgBQy1M>

NEW QUESTION # 14

Sarah is thinking of setting up a charity in the UK which will look after animals that have been abandoned.

What regulations and governing bodies should Sarah be aware of when setting up her charity? (25 Points)

Answer:

Explanation:

See the solution in Explanation part below.

Explanation:

How to approach this question

- Your essay should mention at least one regulation and one governing body particular to the charity section and I would recommend these be the Charities Act 2011 and the Charities Commission.

- If you don't know a lot about the sector you can bring up more generalised regulations and governing bodies, such as financial conduct and the Equalities Act, but make sure it's relevant to Sarah. Her charity is a small, local one, so things like Modern Slavery Act will not be appropriate to talk about.

Example Essay

When setting up a charity in the UK, particularly one focused on animal welfare, there are several regulations and governing bodies that Sarah should be aware of. These ensure that the charity operates legally, ethically, and effectively.

A charity's purpose involves raising awareness and helping someone or something, in Sarah's case this will be local animals and potentially their owners. A charity has to satisfy two aspects: The benefit aspect and The public aspect. In the UK, both aspects are regulated by the Charities Act 2011.

To satisfy a benefit aspect, a charity must have a purpose that must be beneficial to the community it works in

- this must be in a way that is identifiable and capable of being proved by evidence. For Sarah this would be showing that her charity helps animals, potentially by taking them in off the street or removing them from dangerous homes and caring for them.

To satisfy a public aspect, a charity must benefit the public in general, or a sufficient section of the public. In Sarah's case the public benefit may be in removing stray dogs and cats from the streets where they can transport diseases and potentially attack people.

Most charities strive to satisfy both aspects but in some cases this is not possible.

All charities are regulated. Because charities are funded by donations from the public, businesses and sometimes from government, their conduct is regulated closely. Key regulatory bodies that Sarah will have to engage with include:

1. Charity Commission for England and Wales:

As the primary regulator for charities in England and Wales, the Charity Commission oversees the registration and regulation of charities. Sarah's organization must meet the legal definition of a charity and apply for registration if its income is over £5,000 per year.

The Commission ensures compliance with the Charities Act, offering guidance on charity governance, financial management, and reporting.

2. HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC):

Charities can apply to HMRC for recognition as a charity for tax purposes. This status allows for tax reliefs and exemptions, including Gift Aid on donations.

HMRC ensures compliance with tax obligations and scrutinizes the use of charity funds.

3. Data Protection:

Under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018, any charity handling personal data must ensure its protection and comply with data privacy laws.

4. Health and Safety Executive (HSE):

The HSE provides guidelines for workplace safety, which are important if the charity has employees or volunteers.

In conclusion there are many regulations and bodies that Sarah should be aware of when setting up her charity.

Sarah should consider seeking legal advice or consulting with charity advisory services to ensure full compliance with all relevant laws and regulations. Additionally, staying informed about changes in charity law and animal welfare legislation would be beneficial to the smooth operation of her charity.

Tutor Notes

- With case study questions you're not expected to know anything about the specific topic, in this case Animal Charities. If it happens to be something you know about, you can bring in some of your own knowledge, but this isn't a requirement to get a good score. You're not expected to know, for example about the Animal Welfare Act 2006, but if you happen to do so, it could be a nice little thing to add in. Just don't focus your essay on it. However you can make some sensible guesses on what Sarah will be doing, for example I talked about removing stray animals from the street.

- Charities comes up in LO 4.4 p.232

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NEW QUESTION # 15

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