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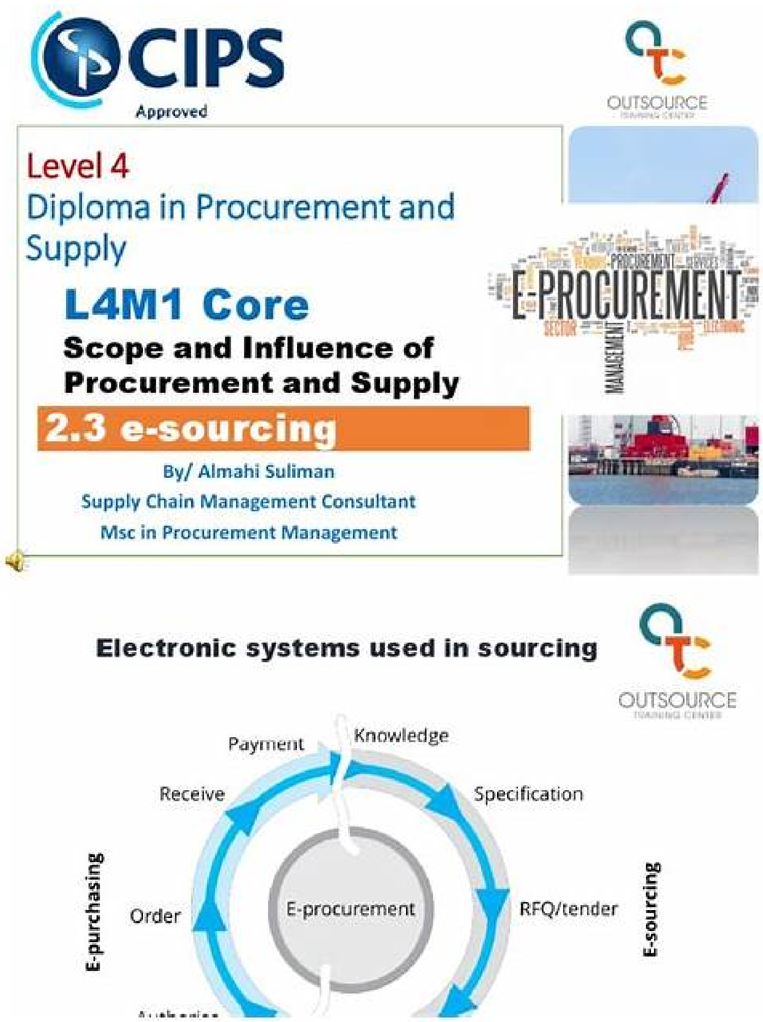

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CIPS L4M1 Exam Syllabus Topics:

Topic	Details
Topic 1	• Procedures, strategies, manuals, and internal function involvement.
Topic 2	• 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 3	• Understand and analyse the key steps when procuring goods or services: This section measures that skills of purchasing managers and procurement officers in identifying and evaluating stages in the sourcing process, planning, supplier selection, and contract management.
Topic 4	• 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.
Topic 5	• 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

CIPS Scope and Influence of Procurement and Supply Sample Questions (Q36-Q41):

NEW QUESTION # 36
In the supplier selection part of the Procurement Cycle, what criteria can a Procurement Manager use to ensure they award to the best supplier? (25 points)

Answer:

Explanation:
See the solution in Explanation part below.
Explanation:
How to approach this question:
- This is quite an open question and there are many different things you could mention. One way to approach it would be to use Carter's 10 Cs- discuss a couple of these. OR just give a couple of criteria in different paragraphs. Some ideas include: Supplier financial status, Reputation / References, Quality, Availability, CSR Policies / Ethics / Environmental considerations, Accreditations, Added Value. This list is not exhaustive.
- If you're going for Carter's 10 Cs you could name a couple of these: competency, consistency, capability, control, cost, cash, clean, communication, culture, commitment
- I don't think either approach is better or worse. Choose the criteria you know the most about and write about those.
- The question doesn't tell you how many criteria to name, so you have to make a judgement call here. I would aim for 5-6. But if you can only remember 4 that's fine. The main thing they're looking for is that you explain for each one 1) what it is 2) how procurement can check 3) why procurement would look at that criteria 4) an example. If you do too many you risk not going into enough detail on each. It's a balance. 5 is always a good number to aim for if the question doesn't state.
Example Essay
In the procurement cycle, the supplier selection phase is a critical juncture that demands consideration.
Procurement Managers shoulder the responsibility of identifying and awarding contracts to suppliers who not only meet immediate needs, but contribute to the long-term success of the organization. This essay explores various criteria a Procurement Manager can employ to ensure the selection of the best supplier: financial stability, reputation, quality, availability, CSR policies, and added value.
Financial stability is a foundational criterion in supplier selection. Assessing a supplier's financial status involves a multifaceted evaluation, with liquidity and gearing ratio taking center stage. The acid test, comparing short-term assets to liabilities, offers insights into a supplier's ability to settle debts promptly, with a ratio exceeding 1 indicating financial health. Meanwhile, the gearing ratio, reflecting the proportion of capital funded by loans,aids in gauging financial risk, with a ratio below 50% considered low-risk.
Relying on published Profit and Loss statements and income statements, along with financial credit checks from platforms like Dun and Bradstreet, empowers Procurement Managers to make informed decisions. This financial scrutiny is imperative to avoid entering contracts with suppliers facing imminent financial struggles, safeguarding against potential disruptions to the supply chain.

Reputation and references are another pivotal criterion. Seeking references from previous contracts allows Procurement Managers to gauge a supplier's track record in successfully delivering on similar commitments.
Independent reviews and informal market inquiries supplement this information, providing a holistic understanding of a supplier's performance. However, caution is advised in overreliance on past performance, as variables like personnel changes or contract scale differences may impact outcomes. Recognizing that past shortcomings may have been addressed internally further emphasizes the need for a balanced approach to reference evaluation.
Thirdly, Quality. Beyond the product itself, considerations extend to the supplier's technological capabilities, manufacturing processes, and relevant accreditations such as ISO 9001. Physical visits to supplier sites may be warranted, especially for products like raw materials where samples can be requested. Adhering to recognized safety standards and assessing factors like fire retardancy ensures that the quality of manufactured goods aligns with established benchmarks.
Next, Availability is another important criteria to consider. Procurement Managers must evaluate a supplier's capacity and capability to meet specific requirements. Inquiries about existing contracts and flexibility in response to demand fluctuations provide insights into a supplier's commitment and responsiveness. Assessing the supplier's workload and the significance of the buyer in their client portfolio helps determine the level of attention and service the buyer can expect. A buyer may wish to avoid working for a supplier who is already stretched very thinly with other contracts.
Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) policies and ethical considerations have gained prominence in supplier selection. Beyond legal compliance, Procurement Managers may scrutinize a supplier's history for convictions or negative press related to corruption, bribery, or fraud. The presence of a Modern Slavery Policy and Environmental Policy, along with relevant accreditations like ISO14001 or Fair Trade certification, attests to a supplier's commitment to ethical and sustainable practices. Procurement would likely seek to appoint a supplier who's CSR vision aligns with their own company's.
Lastly, added value is an important criteria to consider. This is particularly so for Public Sector Organizations governed by the Social Value Act. In addition to meeting contractual requirements, suppliers may offer knowledge sharing, training, improved processes, or contribute to social value by employing local community members or providing apprenticeships. This criterion aligns procurement decisions with broader organizational goals, enhancing the overall impact of supplier relationships and benefitting the local community.
In conclusion, a careful combination of financial scrutiny, reputation assessment, quality evaluation, availability considerations, CSR policies, and added value analysis forms the bedrock of effective supplier selection in the procurement cycle. Procurement Managers, armed with a holistic understanding of these criteria, should seek not only to fulfil immediate needs, but also consider the long-term impact of supplier appointments.
Tutor Notes
- A 'good' scoring answer (50-70%) will explain the criteria well and give examples. If you're looking for a distinction level answer (70% +) you could also mention advantages, disadvantages and risks associated with each of the criteria. For example, when looking at references and reputation it's important to know that a supplier would only ever provide a good reference to you, they would never tell you of a contract that failed.
Another example is that financial data may be skewed- a supplier may have a low score if they are just starting up or have recently remortgaged a property. It's therefore important to get a commentary as well as the figures / scores.
- You could also mention that criteria could be weighted e.g. more importance given to quality than financial status and also consider how easy or difficult it would be to get the information e.g. a supplier may say they have lots of availability to deliver the service you require, but they may just be saying this to win business.
How do you know for sure?
- Social Value Act isn't in this syllabus. If you work in Public Sector procurement it's something you'll be very familiar with. If you don't or you're outside of the UK do not worry about this. I've just included it to show how you can bring in your own knowledge to questions like this. You could think of particular criteria that's important to your industry and write about that. The Social Value Act: What is it, and why is it important? (samtaler.co.uk)
- Study guide p.77

NEW QUESTION # 37
Explain the impact that having a Corporate Governance Framework can have on the policies and processes of the procurement department (25 points)

Answer:

Explanation:
See the solution inExplanation partbelow.
Explanation:
A basic response would include:
- What a Corporate Governance Framework is - the system of rules, practices and processes which directs and controls a company. Corporate Governance refers to the way in which companies are governed and to what purpose.
- Impact this has on policies and processes - means the procurement department follows regulatory mechanisms (e.g. financial regulations, Codes of Practices), has a checks and balances system (such as auditing), uses e-procurement technologies, vets staff

and suppliers, has a clear segregation of duties etc.
This is a very open question and there are so many correct answers. In fact, it's quite hard to give a wrong answer to this question - as long as your response explains a policy or process that a procurement department can have that ensures they're following Corporate Governance - that's right!
A good response may mention:
- Corporate governance is in essence a 'toolkit' that allows an organisation to effectively manage itself, ensuring that it's policies and procedures are compliant with legislation and are ethical. It also ensures that the company meets its objectives.
- The impact Corporate Governance has on the procurement department will be in mandating the ways in which goods and services are procured and in the general ways of working of the procurement department.
- In your response you should mention 5 (ish) different ways Corporate Governance would impact on how procurement do their job. Examples include:
- Ethical Conduct - corporate governance ensures that the company is operating in a legal and ethical way.
This influences the processes Procurement will do and the type of suppliers they will engage with. This may also be in their approach to relationships and negotiations- seeking out collaborative relationships with suppliers rather than looking to exploit them. For example, an organisation that does not have a Corporate Governance structure may look to take advantage of suppliers and achieve the lowest cost possible at the expense of the supply chain and local community. An organisation that has strong Corporate Governance would work with suppliers, developing the relationships and thinking long-term about the impact on the local community. The organisation may therefore prioritisestandards such as Fair Trade over price, and this would be reflected in the way tenders are evaluated by the procurement department.
- Use of Checks and Balance system- Corporate Governance ensures strong financial controls are implemented throughout the organisation. For the procurement department this may result in purchases being made to strict budgets (rather than just spending whatever they want), and business cases being written up and approved before the organisation spends a large amount of money on a single item. Another impact may be in the use of audits. For example, peer reviewing tenders and contract awards to ensue all members of the Procurement Team are following internal processes correctly.
- Anti-fraud prevention mechanisms. An important area of Corporate Governance is ensuring the organisation is free from fraud and corruption. This impacts on Procurement's policies and processes as it will mean scrutinising tenders and who is being awarded contracts. It may result in high levels of Due Diligence being completed on suppliers before entering into contracts and providing a whistle-blowing service for staff to report issues.
- Security measures- this will be to protect the organisation from risk. It may include the procurement department vetting new staff by completing background checks. It may also involve the segregation of procurement duties so that no individual has too much power. E.g. one person raises the requisition and another person approves the purchase. Security may also be in ways of working such as password protecting documentation and limiting access to confidential information.
- Use of a Purchasing Policy Manual - this provides operational guidance on procurement policies and procedures to all staff members. It may detail things like who has permission to order what, who the Delegated Purchasing Authority (DPA) is and the roles and responsibilities of the team.
An excellent response may also include
- Reasons why Corporate Governance Frameworks impact on procurement policies and practices. This could include reasons of accountability, reputation and risk management, procurement's links with other departments.
- You could also look at what processes would look like with Corporate Governance compared to without it (with CG = rule driven, autocratic but organisation is protected from risk. Without CG = laissez-faire, everyone does whatever they like, very risky)
- You could also provide further examples, either real life or hypothetical. Investopedia has some great information and examples you could use: Corporate Governance Definition: How It Works (investopedia.com)

NEW QUESTION # 38
What is a Public Sector organisation and what are the main objectives of organisations in the Public Sector?
(25 points)

Answer:

Explanation:
See the solution inExplanation partbelow.
Explanation:
How to approach this question
- For the first part of the question you should look to give a definition of the public sector, think about it's characteristics and give so examples e.g. local government, hospitals, libraries.
- For the second part try to explain 4-5 objectives. Try to remain as broad as you can - think about objectives that all public sector organisations have in common rather than anything very specific to one organisation, what the question is looking for is the higher level, more broad aims.
Example Essay

A public sector organization, is a branch of government responsible for providing a wide range of services and functions to citizens and communities. It is funded by taxpayers' money and operates under governmental authority at various levels, including federal, state, and local governments. Public sector organizations can encompass government departments, agencies, authorities, and public enterprises. The main objectives of these organizations are multifaceted, aimed at serving the public interest and ensuring the efficient functioning of society. Examples include hospitals, schools and libraries. In this essay, we will explore the primary objectives of public sector organizations: improving services, achieving value for money, supporting communities and social value, and promoting equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI).
Improving Services:
One of the central objectives of public sector organizations is to enhance the quality and accessibility of services provided to the public. These services can range from healthcare and education to transportation and public safety. The focus is on improving the well-being of citizens by ensuring that essential services are accessible, efficient, and responsive to evolving societal needs. For example, public healthcare systems aim to deliver high-quality medical services to all citizens, striving to reduce health disparities and provide equitable care.
Value for Money:
Public sector organizations are entrusted with the responsible and efficient use of public funds. Achieving value for money is a critical objective, ensuring that taxpayer money is spent wisely and that resources are allocated efficiently. Government agencies are tasked with optimizing budgets, reducing waste, and delivering services in a cost-effective manner. For instance, public infrastructure projects must be designed and executed to maximize benefits while minimizing costs and delays.
Supporting Communities and Social Value:
Public sector organizations play a pivotal role in supporting communities and generating social value. This objective involves initiatives and policies aimed at fostering community well-being, economic development, and social cohesion. It includes activities such as urban planning, affordable housing initiatives, and community development programs. By focusing on supporting communities, public sector organizations contribute to the overall betterment of society, creating opportunities and improving the quality of life for residents. In the UK it is a legal requirement for all large public sector contracts to consider Social Value, in line with the Social Value Act 2012.
Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI):
Promoting equality, diversity, and inclusion is another fundamental objective of public sector organizations.
These organizations are tasked with ensuring that all citizens are treated fairly and have equal access to opportunities and services. This objective encompasses anti-discrimination policies, diversity hiring practices, and programs that address societal inequalities. Public sector entities strive to create environments where individuals of diverse backgrounds can thrive and participate fully in public life, regardless of race, gender, age, disability, or other characteristics.
In conclusion, public sector organizations serve as key agents in addressing societal needs and promoting the common good. Their objectives encompass improving services,achieving value for money, supporting communities and social value, and promoting equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI). By pursuing these objectives, public sector organizations contribute to the welfare and development of society, ensuring that public resources are utilized efficiently and equitably. They play a vital role in shaping the overall well-being and progress of their respective communities and nations.
Tutor Notes
- The study guide talks about the main objective of the public sector as being 'to improve services'. This is true, but in reality, the public sector may be the only people providing that service. They may be providing a service that the private sector can't or won't because it's simply not profitable. An example is the Forestry Commission which looks at protecting forests and conducting research on forests. No private sector organisation is going to do that because there's simply no money in it.
- With a lot of public sector organisations there are competing private sector organisations, just look at medical care and the rise of private health insurance. Same with transport. This essay doesn't ask you to talk about this, and it is outside of the scope of the study guide but it's an interesting observation: traditionally the aim of the public sector was to serve the public, nowadays it's actually competing with private sector organisations to do this!
- Social Value Act for anyone who's not familiar: Social Value Act: information and resources - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

NEW QUESTION # 39
(a) Outline the main characteristics of an Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system.
(10 marks)
(b) Explain how an Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system can be used in a procurement and supply chain context.

Answer:

Explanation:
See the solution in Explanation part below
Explanation:
3 (a) Outline the main characteristics of an Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system.
(10 marks)
An Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system is an integrated software system used by organisations to manage and coordinate

key business activities through one central system. Its main characteristics are as follows:
1. Integration of business functions
One of the main characteristics of an ERP system is that it links different departments such as procurement, finance, HR, production, warehousing, and sales.
This means information can be shared across the business rather than each department working in isolation.
2. Centralised database
ERP systems usually operate from a single shared database.
This ensures that all users are working from the same data, which improves accuracy and reduces duplication of records.
3. Real-time information
ERP systems provide up-to-date information in real time.
For example, if stock levels change or a purchase order is raised, the system updates immediately so other departments can see the latest information.
4. Standardised processes
ERP systems support the use of common procedures and workflows across the organisation.
This helps ensure activities are carried out consistently and in line with company policies.
5. Modular structure
Most ERP systems are made up of different modules, such as procurement, inventory, finance, manufacturing, and customer management.
A business can choose the modules it needs while still keeping all functions connected.
6. Automation of routine tasks
ERP systems can automate repetitive activities such as order processing, invoice matching, stock reordering, and reporting.
This reduces manual work and can improve efficiency.
7. Improved visibility and reporting
ERP systems provide managers with access to reports and dashboards that show performance across the organisation.
This supports better decision-making and control.
8. Security and access controls
ERP systems normally include user permissions and approval levels.
This means only authorised employees can access or approve certain transactions, which strengthens control and compliance.
9. Support for planning and forecasting
ERP systems help organisations plan resources more effectively by using data on demand, stock, production, and purchasing.
This helps businesses make better forecasts and allocate resources efficiently.
10. Scalability
An ERP system can often grow with the organisation.
As the business expands, new users, modules, or locations can be added to the system.
Conclusion
Overall, the main characteristics of an ERP system are integration, shared data, real-time information, standardisation, automation, and improved control. These features help organisations manage their operations more effectively.
3 (b) Explain how an Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system can be used in a procurement and supply chain context.
In a procurement and supply chain context, an ERP system can be used to improve the flow of information, increase efficiency, and support better decision-making across the supply chain.
1. Purchase requisition and purchase order processing
An ERP system can be used to create and manage purchase requisitions and purchase orders.
When a department identifies a need, the request can be entered into the system and routed for approval. Once approved, the ERP system can generate a purchase order and send it to the supplier.
This helps procurement by making the process faster, more accurate, and easier to control.
2. Supplier information management
ERP systems can store supplier records in one place, including:
supplier contact details
pricing agreements
contract terms
delivery performance
quality records
This means procurement staff can make informed decisions when selecting and managing suppliers.
3. Inventory and stock control
ERP systems allow organisations to monitor inventory levels in real time.
This helps procurement teams know when materials need to be reordered and prevents both stockouts and overstocking.
For example, if stock falls below a minimum level, the system may trigger a reorder alert or automatic replenishment process.
4. Demand planning and forecasting
ERP systems can analyse historical sales and usage data to help forecast future demand.
This allows procurement and supply chain teams to plan purchases more effectively and ensure materials are available when needed.
This is particularly useful in manufacturing, where raw materials must be available to support production schedules.

5. Production planning and materials management
In a manufacturing environment, ERP systems can link procurement with production planning.
If the production department schedules the manufacture of goods, the ERP system can calculate the raw materials and components required.
This supports materials requirements planning (MRP) and ensures procurement orders the right items in the right quantities.
6. Goods receipt and invoice matching
When goods are delivered, the ERP system can record the receipt and compare it against the original purchase order and supplier invoice.
This is often called three-way matching.
This improves accuracy, reduces fraud, and ensures suppliers are only paid for goods that were actually ordered and received.
7. Supplier performance monitoring
An ERP system can collect data on supplier performance, such as:
on-time delivery
quality of goods
lead times
price changes
Procurement can use this information to review supplier performance, manage contracts, and identify opportunities for improvement.
8. Spend analysis
ERP systems can provide visibility of organisational spend by supplier, category, or department.
This helps procurement identify patterns, negotiate better deals, and reduce unnecessary or off-contract spending.
9. Improved communication across the supply chain
Because the ERP system integrates departments such as procurement, warehousing, production, and finance, all parties can access the same data.
This improves coordination and reduces misunderstandings.
For example, finance can see what has been ordered, warehouse staff can prepare for deliveries, and production can check material availability.
10. Compliance and audit trail
ERP systems help ensure that procurement activities follow company policy through approval workflows and user permissions.
They also create an audit trail, showing who raised, approved, ordered, and received goods.
This improves governance and reduces compliance risks.
Conclusion
In a procurement and supply chain context, an ERP system supports purchasing, stock control, planning, supplier management, and reporting. It creates a more connected and efficient process, helping organisations reduce costs, improve control, and ensure the smooth flow of goods and information.

NEW QUESTION # 40
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 discussingcapital 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 arefive key differencesbetween 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 betweencapital expenditure and operational expenditureis 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 # 41
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