

Exam L4M1 Materials & Exam L4M1 Demo

CIPS L4M1 - Question & Answer Past exam questions latest 2023/2023

Q1. Outline FIVE differences between purchasing goods and purchasing services.
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

Q2. Explain THREE circumstances in which a competitive tendering exercise might not be the best approach to making a purchase. 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

Q2. Describe TWO e-sourcing tools and their use in procurement and supply.
Answer - 1. E-Catalogues
2. E-Tendering
3. E- Auction
4. Reverse Auctions
5. Online supplier evaluation data

Q3. Explain the role of a shared services unit (SSU). 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
An SSU manages costs and quality SLAs to demonstrate value for money.
An SSU's benefits may be summarised as:

- cost effective internal service;
- liaison with its customers;
- anticipating future demand;
- employing resources and providing higher levels of service more cost effectively than if they were provided by a department or an external provider.

Q3. A manufacturer of electrically powered tools for the engineering industry consists of four separate business units, each of which undertakes its own purchasing activities.

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CIPS L4M1 Exam Syllabus Topics:

Topic	Details
Topic 1	<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 innovations contributions. It also measures procurement and supply processes that contribute to added value.

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"> Procedures, strategies, manuals, and internal function involvement.
Topic 4	<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 5	<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

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CIPS Scope and Influence of Procurement and Supply Sample Questions (Q30-Q35):

NEW QUESTION # 30

Explain, with examples, the three different ways one can categorise procurement spend: direct vs indirect, capital expenditure vs operational expenditure and stock vs non-stock items. (25 points)

Answer:

Explanation:

See the solution in Explanation part below.

Explanation:

The knowledge to remember:

A table with text on it Description automatically generated

Direct	Indirect
Incorporated into goods; raw materials, components and WIP	ancillary item; MRO supplies
effects customer satisfaction and reputation	no effect on customer satisfaction
relationship with supplier is collaborative and long-term	relationship is one off, transactional
objective = continuity of supply	objective = take advantage of promotions
carried out by procurement - high risk	may be carried out by end user- low risk
In Accounting included as 'cost of goods sold'	considered an overhead
Part of Porter's Value Chain	Support Activities of the business

Operational Expenditure	Capital Expenditure
day-to-day costs - consider 5 Rights	one off cost- consider TCO and buy vs lease
Spec more conformance	Spec more performance
regular purchasing	one off purchase
supplier relationships more important- bulk buying, collaborative	supplier relationships not important as one off - transactional
item could fall anywhere on Kraljic matrix	item is strategic- high value and high risk (Kraljic)
Supply chain risks are great	less supply chain risk
may have preferred supplier list	use full tender to procure
doesn't require justification to purchase as core requirement for business to function	may require justification for purchasing; feasibility study, business case, work out payback period etc

Stock	Non-Stock
Buy to put in inventory	Buy to use straight away
Retail	Lean Manufacturing / JIT
Stock to forecasting - order sunglasses in Feb to sell in Summer	Stock to order - ordered when required e.g. in Construction - items incorporated straight away
Has stock holding costs	Use economic Order Quantities to minimise stock holding costs
Risks if item becomes obsolete (perishable)	Risks if order quantity isn't correct or issues with supply chain

Essay Plan :

Remember to include examples for each of the six categories of spend. This is specifically asked for in the question so it's important to include as many examples as you can. To do this you could take an example organisation such as a cake manufacturer and explain which of their purchases would fall into each category and why.

Introduction - explain why procurement categorises spend

- Direct - these are items that are incorporated into the final goods (the cakes) so would include raw materials such as flour, eggs, sugar etc

- Indirect - these are items that the company needs, but don't go into the end product. For example, cleaning products and MRO supplies for the machines

- Capital Expenditure- these are large one-off purchases, such as buying a new piece of equipment such as a giant oven to cook the cakes.

- Operational Expenditure - these are purchases that are required to ensure the business can function day-to-day. They may include PPE for the workers in the factory and cleaning equipment

- Stock items - these are items procured in advance and held in inventory until they are needed. In a cake manufacturing factory this could be PPE for staff such as hairnets and gloves. The organisation will buy these in bulk and keep them in a stock cupboard, using these as and when they are required

- Non- stock items - items that are not stored and used right away. An example would be eggs- these will need to be put directly into the cakes as they would go off if bought in advance.

Conclusion - the categories are not mutually exclusive - an item can be direct and operational, or indirect and stock. Different companies may use different systems to classify items of spend.

Example Introduction and Conclusion

Introduction

Procurement categorizes spend to efficiently manage resources and make strategic decisions. Three primary ways of categorizing procurement spend include distinguishing between direct and indirect spend, classifying expenditures as capital or operational, and categorizing items as stock or non-stock. These distinctions aid organizations in optimizing their procurement strategies for better resource allocation.

Conclusion:

In conclusion, categorizing procurement spend into direct vs. indirect, capital vs. operational, and stock vs.

non-stock items is essential for strategic resource management. While these categories provide a structured framework, they are not mutually exclusive, as an item can fall into multiple categories. For example, an item may be both direct and operational or indirect and stock. The flexibility of these categories allows organizations to tailor their procurement strategies based on their specific needs, ensuring efficient resource allocation and effective supply chain management. Different companies may adopt varying categorization approaches depending on their industry, size, and operational requirements.

Tutor notes:

- Because you've got 6 categories of spend to talk about you're only going to need 3-4 sentences for each.

Providing you've said the category, explained what it is and given one example, you'll absolutely fly through this type of question

- You could also mention that it is useful to use categories of spend as this helps with budgeting. Different categories may also have different processes to follow for procuring the item (this could form part of your introduction or conclusion).

- This subject is LO 1.3.2 it's quite spread out in the text book but the main info is on p.49

- Note- different companies/ industries classify items of spend differently. Particularly packaging and salaries.

Some say they're direct costs and some say they're indirect costs. Honestly, it's a hotly debated subject and I don't think there is a

right or wrong. I'd just avoid those two examples if you can and stick to ones that aren't as contentious like eggs and PPE.

NEW QUESTION # 31

Explain, with examples, the three different ways one can categorise procurement spend: direct vs indirect, capital expenditure vs operational expenditure and stock vs non-stock items. (25 points)

Answer:

Explanation:

See the solution in Explanation part below.

Explanation:

The knowledge to remember:

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Direct	Indirect
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NEW QUESTION # 32

Industry Sectors can be classified as Primary, Secondary and Tertiary. What is meant by an 'industry sector'?

Describe the main characteristics of and types of business you will find in these. (25 marks)

Answer:

Explanation:

See the solution in Explanation part below.

Explanation:

How to approach this question

- The first question can be a simple introduction with a bit of extra detail. The main 'meat' to your essay is going to be explaining the three sectors, their characteristics and example businesses.

- Aim for three well explained characteristics as a minimum

Example essay

An industry sector refers to a broad category or grouping of businesses and economic activities that share similar characteristics and functions in the production and distribution of goods and services. These sectors are often classified into three main categories:

Primary, Secondary, and Tertiary. Here are the main characteristics and types of businesses you will find in each of these industry sectors:

1. Primary Sector:

*Characteristics: The primary sector involves activities related to the extraction and production of raw materials and natural resources directly from the environment. This sector relies on nature and weather patterns: businesses in the primary sector are highly dependent on natural factors such as climate, weather, soil quality, and geographic location. These factors can significantly impact the productivity and profitability of primary sector activities. Extreme weather such as floods can severely impact this sector. Moreover there is a seasonality to this sector and many activities in the primary sector require a significant amount of manual labour, particularly in agriculture, fishing, and forestry. However, modern technology has also been integrated into some primary sector activities to increase efficiency.

*Types of Businesses: a. Agriculture: This includes farming, crop cultivation, livestock raising, and forestry. b. Mining and Extraction. c. Fishing and Aquaculture: Forestry and Logging: Includes the harvesting of timber and related activities.

2.Secondary Sector:

*Characteristic: The secondary sector focuses on the transformation of raw materials and intermediate goods into finished products. The main characteristic of the sector is that it requires high levels of machinery and industrial techniques. There is a reliance on technology. Secondly, the secondary sector adds significant value to the products compared to their raw material form. This value addition is achieved through processing, assembly, and quality control processes. The third main characteristic is standardisation: Manufacturing processes often involve standardization of components and processes to ensure consistency and quality in the final products. Standardization helps in economies of scale.

*Types of Businesses: a. Manufacturing: This sector includes factories and plants that produce tangible goods such as automobiles, electronics, textiles, and machinery. b. Construction: Involves the building and construction of structures like buildings, bridges, and infrastructure. c. Utilities: Companies providing essential services like electricity, gas, and water supply fall into this category.

3.Tertiary Sector:

*Characteristic: The tertiary sector is also known as the service sector and involves businesses that offer various services to consumers and other businesses. The main defining characteristic of this sector is Intangibility: Services are intangible and cannot be touched or held. They are often experienced directly by consumers through interactions with service providers or through the use of technology. Secondly, High Human Involvement: The tertiary sector relies heavily on a skilled and often highly educated workforce to deliver services effectively. This can include professionals such as doctors, lawyers, teachers, and customer service representatives. Lastly, Customization: Many services are customized to meet the specific needs and preferences of individual clients or customers. This personalization is a key characteristic of the tertiary sector.

For example Legal Advice will always be different depending on the specific needs of the client.

*Types of Businesses: a. Retail and Wholesale: Businesses engaged in the sale of goods to consumers or to other businesses. b.

Healthcare and Education: This includes hospitals, clinics, schools, colleges, and universities. c. Financial Services: Banks, insurance companies, and investment firms are part of this sector. d.

Hospitality and Tourism: Hotels, restaurants, travel agencies, and entertainment venues fall into this category.

e. Professional Services: Legal, accounting, consulting, and IT services are part of the tertiary sector.

These industry sectors represent the different stages of economic activity, with the primary sector providing raw materials, the secondary sector processing and manufacturing goods, and the tertiary sector offering services and distribution. Together, these sectors form the backbone of an economy, contributing to its growth and development Tutor Notes

- I've gone overboard on naming the types of organisation in the different sectors. You don't have to remember all of these. 3 examples is sufficient to get good marks. I've just named them all so you can see what could be considered a right answer.

- Some people are talking about Quaternary and Quinary Sectors. CIPS is not one of those people, so don't worry if you come across those terms in any further reading. But FYI

1.

*Quaternary Sector: This sector involves knowledge-based activities, including research and development, information technology, and data analysis.

*Quinary Sector: The quinary sector comprises high-level decision-making and leadership roles in areas such as government, academia, healthcare, and top-level corporate management.

- LO 4.1 p.196

NEW QUESTION # 33

Explain the following terms: outsourced procurement, shared service unit (SSU) and consortium procurement.

What are the advantages and disadvantages of each approach to procurement? (25 points)

Answer:

Explanation:

See the solution in Explanation part below.

Explanation:

How to approach this question:

- There are 3 terms and an advantage and disadvantage for each you need to talk about. So that's 9 things. Out of 25 points you can see you'll probably only get 1-2 points for each aspect of the question. That shows you the level of detail you need to include - not

that much!

- In terms of structure feel free to use headings and bullet points for this one Example Essay Outsourced procurement, shared service units (SSUs), and consortium procurement are distinct approaches to managing procurement activities within organizations. Each method carries its own set of advantages and disadvantages, catering to different organizational needs and circumstances.

Outsourced Procurement: Outsourced procurement involves engaging a procurement consultant or an external organization to provide advice or handle the entire procurement process on behalf of the company. The advantages of outsourced procurement are that it frees up internal resources, allowing them to focus on other tasks. The expertise and skills brought by external consultants can also fill gaps in the organization's capabilities. Moreover, this approach is flexible, adapting well to irregular procurement needs. However, drawbacks include a potential loss of control, higher costs, the need for an additional management layer, and the risk of losing intellectual property (IP).

Shared Service Unit (SSU): A Shared Service Unit is an internal procurement support function within an organization that various divisions can access for assistance, resembling the outsourcing concept but within the organizational structure. The advantages of SSUs lie in potential cost savings, the ability to aggregate demand, and the establishment of common standards and processes across the company. The expertise utilized is internal, providing a sense of familiarity. The disadvantage is that measuring the success of an SSU can be challenging, and there is a risk of stifling innovation. The unit may also be perceived as remote from end users, and procurement processes might be slower due to serving multiple departments.

Consortium Procurement: Consortium procurement involves a collective effort where separate organizations join forces to purchase goods, thereby increasing their bargaining power. The advantages of this approach are in the aggregated demand, resulting in more economical purchases. Pooling knowledge and expertise within the consortium enhances the collective capabilities of its members, providing a sense of safety in numbers.

However, disadvantages include a potential loss of individual organizational power, prolonged decision-making processes within the consortium, challenges in responding quickly to demands, and the potential hindrance to small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) competing if demand is aggregated.

In conclusion, organizations must carefully consider their specific needs, priorities, and the nature of their procurement requirements when choosing between outsourced procurement, SSUs, or consortium procurement. Each approach offers unique benefits and challenges, and the decision-making process should align with the organization's overall goals and strategies.

Tutor Notes:

- I've named lots of advantages and disadvantages for each of the models. 1-2 advantages and disadvantages of each is all you need to secure you the marks. Remember you only have 35 minutes to write this. A danger with this type of question is spending too long on one aspect of the question and running out of time to answer the rest of it.

- A good idea is to pace yourself and give yourself 10 minutes per term (outsourced, SSU and consortium) then 5 minutes at the end to review and edit your response.

- Some further details you may wish to include:

- Outsourced procurement - this is often used when the organisation doesn't have the expertise to procure the item they need. This often happens for complex / technical procurements or highly regulated industries. An example may be a housing provider who runs a block of flats where the lift has just broken down and cannot be fixed. They need to procure a new lift but have no idea how to write a specification for this as they don't have the technical knowledge of how lifts work. Hiring a consultant who is experienced in tendering for lifts, although expensive, may actually save money by reducing the risk of procuring the wrong thing.

- SSU - a Shared Service Unit acts as a support function for the organisation. This is described in Porter's Value Chain- all other departments can call on the SSU when they require assistance. The SSU is responsible for managing its own costs, employs its own resources and may have contractual agreements with other divisions. The main aim of the SSU is to add value. SSUs are common in large organisations where the core activities don't revolve around procurement (such as finance and service industries).

- Consortium - Consortium buying is encouraged in the public sector in order to maximise value for money.

Consortiums can create their own Frameworks. There is a risk that large consortia can abuse their dominant market position.

- LO 3.3 p. 161

NEW QUESTION # 34

Explain each of the following FIVE electronic systems and how they can contribute to an effective procurement process. (25 marks)

- (i) e-requisitioning
- (ii) e-catalogues
- (iii) e.ordering
- (iv) e-sourcing
- (v) e-payment

Answer:

Explanation:

See the solution in Explanation part below.

Explanation:

Electronic procurement systems leverage technology to improve efficiency, transparency, and control in procurement processes.

Each system has distinct functionalities that contribute to effective procurement.

Below is an explanation of each system and its contribution:

(i) E-Requisitioning

* Explanation:E-requisitioning is the electronic process of submitting purchase requests within an organization, replacing traditional paper-based requisition forms. Users can raise requisitions online, detailing the goods or services needed.

* Contribution to Procurement Effectiveness:E-requisitioning accelerates the request process, reduces errors, and ensures standardization of data. It enables automatic routing for approvals, enforcing procurement policies and budget controls. This reduces processing time and improves transparency, allowing better tracking and auditability of requests.

* Example:An employee submits an electronic requisition which is automatically routed to managers for approval, ensuring compliance and faster processing.

(ii) E-Catalogues

* Explanation:E-catalogues are digital product listings maintained by suppliers or procurement departments. They provide a searchable and standardized database of goods and services available for purchase, often with pricing and technical details.

* Contribution to Procurement Effectiveness:E-catalogues simplify ordering by giving users easy access to approved products, reducing the need for manual sourcing. They help control spending by limiting choices to pre-approved items and negotiated prices, supporting compliance and reducing maverick spending. The electronic format improves accuracy in ordering and reduces processing time.

* Example:Procurement users select products directly from a supplier's e-catalogue integrated into the procurement system, ensuring correct specifications and pricing.

(iii) E-Ordering

* Explanation:E-ordering refers to the electronic placement of purchase orders via procurement software or online platforms. It replaces manual order creation and transmission methods.

* Contribution to Procurement Effectiveness:E-ordering increases speed and accuracy of orders, reduces administrative costs, and provides real-time order status tracking. It minimizes errors caused by manual entry, improves communication with suppliers, and supports automatic matching of orders with invoices for smoother payment processes.

* Example:Once a requisition is approved, the system generates an electronic purchase order sent directly to the supplier, reducing lead times.

(iv) E-Sourcing

* Explanation:E-sourcing is the electronic process of identifying, evaluating, and selecting suppliers using online tools such as auctions, tendering portals, and supplier databases.

* Contribution to Procurement Effectiveness:E-sourcing enhances transparency, widens supplier competition, and accelerates the tendering process. It reduces paperwork and streamlines supplier evaluation through standardized online submissions. Electronic auctions can drive competitive pricing and better contract terms. It also enables better documentation and audit trails.

* Example:An organization uses an e-sourcing platform to conduct a reverse auction, encouraging suppliers to offer their best prices in real time.

(v) E-Payment

* Explanation:E-payment systems facilitate electronic transfer of funds to suppliers, including methods such as electronic funds transfer (EFT), automated clearing house (ACH) payments, or procurement card payments.

* Contribution to Procurement Effectiveness:E-payment increases the efficiency and security of supplier payments, reduces errors, and speeds up transaction processing. It strengthens supplier relationships through timely payments and reduces administrative overhead and costs associated with manual cheque processing. Automated payments also support better cash flow management and financial control.

* Example:Invoices matched and approved in the procurement system are paid automatically through an integrated e-payment platform, ensuring prompt settlement.

Conclusion:

The integration of these five electronic procurement systems - e-requisitioning, e-catalogues, e-ordering, e-sourcing, and e-payment - delivers significant improvements in procurement efficiency, control, and transparency. Together, they streamline processes, reduce costs, enhance compliance, and improve supplier collaboration, making the procurement function more strategic and value-driven.

NEW QUESTION # 35

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