Financial Services Sector Social Responsibility Facilitator

Course Description

EQF Level 4
8 ECVET

With the support of the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union

Course Rationale

The aim of the Financial Services Sector, Social Responsibility Facilitator course is to provide learners with the required knowledge, skills and competences necessary to assist in the implementation of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) measures taken up by their respective organisations. As time passes, CSR is gaining importance amongst various companies and not just those involved in Finanical Services. More and more companies, are taking up CSR initiatives and soon, CSR might become a mark of quality which every company will seek to possess.

The course is divided into 4 Units, which take the learners through a formative process, familiarising them with the different forms of CSR, their aims, and how these can be executed effectively. At the end of this course, the learners will be able to assist middle to higher managemen in the implementation of CSR thus effectively making them Social Responsibility Facilitators.

The course is made up of the following Units:

1. Unit 1: Introduction to Social Responsibility in the Financial Services Sector (2 ECVET)
2. Unit 2: The role of Internal and External Stakeholders (2 ECVET)
3. Unit 3: Strategies and tools for Social Responsibility Implementation (2 ECVET)
4. Unit 4: Professional Knowledge, Skills and Competences for the Social Responsibility Facilitator (2 ECVET)

The units can be achieved individually and customised to the needs of the organisation. A description of each Unit can be found below. All units have been designed whilst considering the needs of the finanical services sector.

Unit Descriptions

Unit 1: Introduction to Social Responsibility in the Financial Services Sector

Financial Institutions can be considered as important components of the worldwide economic system. Such entities provide consumers and commercial clients with a wide range of financial services. The number of people affected by activities of financial organisations tends to be very large and normally entails long term relationships. After the 2008 financial crisis, many were concerned about the decline in confidence in financial services institutions.

This unit therefore introduces learners to the general notions and definitions of Social Responsibility as applied to the financial services sector. Importance will be given to the need for trust, accountability, transparency and particularly the issue of governance; which is critical in different areas including the legal, ethical and economic elements.

Unit 2: The Role of Internal and External Stakeholders

Banks and other financial services institutions affect a large number and variety of people. One can consider both internal and external stakeholders. This includes the owners, officers, employees, borrowers, depositors, government and communities. Hence it is important that the 'social responsibility facilitator' understands the role/function of such stakeholders.

This unit will therefore introduce learners to the different internal and external stakeholders, elements that should be included in stakeholders' dialogues and how to deal with issues related to social responsibility.

Unit 3: Strategies and tools for Corporate Social Reponsibility Implementation

The implementation of Social Responsibility measures requires effective strategies and tools in order to be effective. The Social Responsibility Facilitator has an important role, in using his/her experience in the Financial Services Sector, so as to support the management of a financial services organisation in this context.

It is also fundamental that financial services organisations also understand the economic consequences of ethical failures. This unit will therefore consider these key aspects together with how the impact of corporate social responsibility can be measured.

Unit 4: Professional Knowledge, Skills and Competenes for the Social Responsibility Facilitator

In order for the social responsibility facilitator to be effective in his/her role, certain knowledge, skills and competences are required. These can be considered to be a package that enables the social responsibility facilitator (SRF) to work concretely in the field of CSR. Effective communication, problem solving skills, conflict resolution, team-work and work ethics are few of the most important soft skills that enable the social responsibility facilitator to fulfil his duties.

Moreover, the social responsibility facilitator needs to be sensitive to issues affecting society and the environment around his/her organisation. S/he needs to be able to think critically and creatively and suggest activities which the company can pursue in order to improve these challenges. This unit will therefore introduce learners to such topics.