

**NEW ZEALAND INSTITUTES OF TECHNOLOGY AND POLYTECHNIC
QUALIFICATIONS IN INFORMATION & COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY**

PRESCRIPTION: IG600 INFORMATION GATHERING

AIM OF MODULE:	Students will be able to determine the appropriate use of various information-gathering techniques and to use these techniques effectively. They will appreciate the difference between quantitative and qualitative information and the importance of cross-checking. They will be able to document and present the findings in an appropriate format.
CREDITS:	7
STUDENT LEARNING HOURS:	70
CONTENT REVISED:	2000
PRESCRIPTION EXPIRY DATE:	Nov 2011

Level and Assessment Schedule

TOPICS	Highest Skill Level				Suggested Assessment Percentage
	R	C	A	P	
1. Research			*		10
2. Interviewing			*		30
3. Questionnaires			*		25
4. Sampling of Documentation & Data			*		15
5. Observation			*		15
6. Cross checking			*		5
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LEARNING OUTCOMES

The student will:

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|---|---|---|
| A | 1 | Describe the need to use research as an information-gathering process, describe some of the methods and sources of research, and apply this knowledge by conducting a research project. |
| A | 2 | Describe the techniques and methods used in interviewing, and conduct and report back on an interview using these techniques and methods. |
| A | 3 | Describe the principles and methods of selecting and designing questionnaires, design a questionnaire, carry out a survey, and analyse a set of questionnaire returns and compare with expected results. |
| A | 4 | Describe how to select relevant documentation and data, and given a set of documents for an application, select and record data in a format which enables ease of use of such facts. |
| A | 5 | Describe the need for, and when and where to use observation as an information gathering process, and carry out an observation of a person's practical activities, making appropriate notes for cross-checking. |
| A | 6 | Describe the importance of using more than one method of information gathering, and compare the results from at least two methods of information gathering in order to highlight the differences and similarities revealed. |

CONTENT

1 RESEARCH

- The need to use research as an information-gathering process should also include such aspects as:
 - various methods of research as relevant to the information gathering process.
 - sources of research material, which may include a literature search via library catalogues, CD-ROM databases, an Internet-based search and site visits.
- Carry out a research project.

2 INTERVIEWING

- The techniques and methods used in interviewing should include:
 - the structure and purpose of the interview.
 - the atmosphere, questioning and interaction with the interviewee.
 - the steps required for planning, conducting and following up an interview.
 - types of questions – open-ended and closed.
- Conduct and report back on an interview using the above techniques and planning methods. (Note to tutors: assessment should include feedback from interviewee on technique, as well as consideration of the completeness of the information gathered).

3 QUESTIONNAIRES

- Methods of selecting and designing questionnaires should include:
 - further discussion on the advantages and disadvantages of open and closed questionnaires.
 - the different types of and uses for questionnaires.
 - determining appropriate sample size to achieve statistical relevance of the results.
 - the processes involved in distributing and collecting a questionnaire.
- Design a questionnaire (e.g. for consumer appreciation of services provided).
- Analyse a set of questionnaire returns and compare with expected results. (Use of a spreadsheet may be appropriate here).

4 SAMPLING OF DOCUMENTATION AND DATA

- Select relevant documentation and data should include sampling existing corporate literature and documentation.
- Given a set of documents for an application, select and record data in a format to enable ease of use of such facts.

5 OBSERVATION

- The use observation as an information gathering process should consider:
 - the role of observation in the information gathering process.
 - techniques of observation and their relevance.
 - determining when and where such observations should take place.
- Carry out an observation of a person's practical activities for a minimum of one hour, making appropriate notes for cross-checking.

6 CROSS-CHECKING

- The importance of using more than one method of information gathering should be explained, including:
 - comparing information from one source or method against that gained from another source or method.
 - methods of substantiating information gathered.
 - the importance of the quality of the results which is not necessarily related to the quantity.
- 6.1 Compare the results from at least two methods of information gathering in order to highlight the differences and similarities revealed. (Note to tutors: it is recommended that observation be one of these methods.)