

Typical Job Roles include:

- Assistant Buyer / Assistant Merchandiser / Junior Buyer / Junior Merchandiser
- Buyer / Merchandiser

Occupational Profile:

This occupation is typically found in the retail sector, across a range of different types of companies and employers such as those selling direct to the public / consumer and those selling to trade. It is also found across different types of retail operation, including those who trade from traditional stores, those who are exclusively on-line, and those who operate through a variety of channels.

The purpose of the occupation is to understand the brand and customer in order to source, select, maintain and deliver the right products to meet demand and business objectives. Using effective business forecasting, risk / opportunity analysis, creativity and business insight, they anticipate and shape customer demand and market trends.

The overarching purpose of buyers is to identify and source the right products and services, in line with the organisations strategic objectives, for the organisation to sell to customers.

The overarching purpose of the merchandiser is to maximise sales and profit by ensuring that the right products are available to customers in the right place at the right time and in the right quantities.

They achieve their objectives by developing and implementing buying / merchandising strategies to ensure current and future customer demand is researched anticipated and satisfied. They anticipate and prepare for new markets through customer insight and research activities, and they contribute to company profit through efficient, effective and sustainable buying / merchandising.

In this occupation, individuals would normally interact with a wide range of internal and external colleagues, including but not limited to, their wider buying and merchandising team, designers, manufacturers, suppliers, distribution centres, stores, marketing, finance and IT departments. This is normally an office-based role, but may involve remote working, travel to stores, trade fairs, supplier meetings etc. There may also be a need for travel to other countries for supplier / factory meetings.

In this occupation, they will typically be responsible for the management of a team. They will be responsible for an assigned 'assortment' or product range. They will have budget responsibility, which varies significantly across different employers and departments, but could reach £100m+.

No	Duty	Measurement	Knowledge	Skills
C1	Manage a portfolio of products/services to ensure that the critical path(s) for the assortment is (are) followed, taking appropriate corrective actions to resolve issues as needed.	Critical path understood and applied to all in scope products/services. Correct data sources accessed and analysed.	<p>Understands the overall product portfolio and brand image that the company is promoting to the customer, and can purchase / merchandise the products accordingly.</p> <p>Understands how to identify current and future buying and loyalty behaviours of existing and potential customer groups.</p> <p>Understands the impact of the buying critical path on the effective operation of the buying function Understands the concept and impact of new product development.</p>	<p>Identify which customer groups are within the target range for the business</p> <p>Develop and implement a customer 'engagement' plan, covering both existing and potential customer groups</p> <p>Selects and merchandises products that enhance the company brand image and product portfolio.</p> <p>Anticipates the need for products and ensures that the buying process enables their effective delivery to the customer</p>

			Understands when a product / product range has reached the end of its lifecycle, and acts appropriately to ensure its removal from the product range	Can articulate a supported recommendation regarding the introduction or withdrawal of a product / product range..
C2	Apply detailed knowledge of UK and/or global markets to select and develop an appropriate product/service range.	Appropriate products/services sourced. Sales are at or above forecasted levels.	Understands the key factors that influence UK and global markets, including economic and political activity Understands how different business models, buying cycles, trading models and customer groups can affect the buying and merchandising process. Understands the impact of a variety of emerging technological changes	Analyse and react to main influences on Buying and Merchandising plans Construct the key buying and merchandising objectives and plans for the specific product range.

C3	Develop/contribute to departmental buying / merchandising strategy to ensure overarching organisation objectives are met, and that products / services meet the needs of the customer.	<p>Appropriate strategy developed and communicated.</p> <p>Products and services sourced that meet customer needs</p> <p>Sales and volume targets are met.</p>	<p>Understands what contributes to the strategic development of the buying and merchandising function</p> <p>Understands the key factors that influence the quality of a product</p> <p>Is proactive in their level of understanding of technological developments</p> <p>Understands the importance of ensuring that in all stages of the process, the product is fit for purpose and the company standards</p>	<p>Demonstrates effective concern to ensure product quality</p> <p>Ensures through effective monitoring procedures throughout the buying / merchandising process, that product compliance is maintained, taking into account the legal requirements</p>
C4	Take account of emerging technological changes in design and delivery as well as new markets to maximise market share and profitability.	New technologies and markets identified and advocated.	How new AI / digital and IT developments impact on the future of buying and merchandising eg.the	Critically evaluate the most effective methods of digital delivery, and how they will impact on the product range.

			<p>impact of new / diverse revenue streams.</p> <p>The impact of new purchasing methods. 'Bricks and Clicks' in the context of On-line only and / or store only operations</p>	<p>Evaluate the impact digital channels play and identify the likely impact of changes in digital / AI behaviour by customers.</p>
C5	<p>Make informed decisions that manage risk, drive sales and profitability, taking into account the requirements of different customer delivery channels.</p>	<p>Informed and justified decisions are made in a timely manner.</p> <p>Risks identified and mitigations and action plans put in place.</p>	<p>Understands the main influencers on sales growth</p> <p>Understands the key financial levers and ratios that affect profitability</p> <p>Understands the appropriate product ranges that match the company product portfolio</p>	<p>Analyse appropriate cost / income influences on Buying and Merchandising plans</p> <p>Construct the key buying and merchandising objectives and plans for the specific product range</p> <p>Looks to use digital opportunities to drive sales and profitability where appropriate</p>

C6	<p>Drive sales and profitability through effective negotiations with suppliers on key deliverables such as: capacity, cost price and flexibility, re-buys, cancellations, delivery dates, lead times, promotion support etc.</p>	<p>Relationships are established and maintained through effective communication</p> <p>Sales and profitability targets met</p> <p>Launch dates / targets managed</p>	<p>Understands the key deliverables associated with the buying and merchandising function, such as cost return rates, re-buys, cancellations, debit agreements, delivery dates, lead times etc.</p> <p>Understands the importance of effective negotiation and managing an ongoing relationship, with for example, with designers, manufacturers and suppliers</p>	<p>Demonstrates how to negotiate in a manner that obtains the optimum outcome for the business.</p> <p>Uses of variety of different negotiating techniques dependent upon the outcome being achieved</p>
C7	<p>Collaborate with key internal stakeholder functions to agree appropriate promotional strategies and other activities to maximise the success / profitability of the allocated assortment.</p>	<p>Key stakeholders fully briefed relevant strategies and agreement reached.</p>	<p>Understands the importance of effective partnership with other functions and departments, such as</p>	<p>Demonstrates a strategic approach to the relationship with other departments.</p>

			<p>Merchandising, Sales and Finance</p> <p>Knows when to make appropriate referrals to senior executives for appropriate authorisation</p>	<p>Anticipates potential problems or opportunities through the effective liaison at the appropriate level with other teams / functions</p>
C8	<p>Deliver robust range building and planning for the assigned assortment, linking it in to the wider operation of the buying and merchandising function.</p>	<p>Ranges are developed collaboratively to be commercially viable for the business and meet customer needs.</p>	<p>Understands the role of effectively planning and forecasting such aspects as customer demand, and changes in buying patterns etc</p>	<p>Advocates and ensures the delivery of robust planning and forecasting in the operation of the buying and merchandising function.</p> <p>Critically reviews and revises plans and forecasts for the function, taking into account the latest trend analyses.</p>

C9	Lead, coach, manage, motivate and develop self and team members to achieve personal and business success.	The individual and their team members are effectively delivering their business and personal objectives.	Understands the importance of leading, coaching, motivating and developing members of the team Understands the importance of self-development, on the success of the business	Has in place an effective 'People Plan' for the team Utilises leadership, coaching and mentoring techniques to ensure that the team is operating at its optimum potential. Has an effective approach to continuous personal Development
C10	Ensure all channels to market are considered and the most appropriate channel(s) is/are selected to maximise the sales and profit potential.	Current channels considered and assessed Consideration given to new or emerging channels within the sector or organisation	How to identify the customer's current and future needs and purchasing trends, including ethical and sustainable retailing Through the use of analytics, the purchasing, buying and loyalty behaviours of existing and potential customer groups, including the communities and	By using data, analyse and predict the customer's current and future needs and purchasing trends, including how the customer journey is impacted Using critical research, construct a customer engagement plan identifying the effective channels to market.

			customer profiles that are served, and pricing strategies	
	Buying option			
B1	Developing own brand products to meet current trends / customer requirements, linked to strategy and financial targets.	Own brand products developed in line with customer and business demand. Products meet strategic and financial objectives.	<p>Understands how different channels of delivery, buying cycles, trading models and customer groups can affect the buying and merchandising process.</p> <p>Understand how to identify current and future buying and loyalty behaviours of existing and potential customer groups.</p> <p>Understands key Buying analysis criteria such as, competitor benchmarking, price comparison, and competitor analysis.</p>	<p>Appraises and implements the relevant approach required from a buying and merchandising strategy, to take account of differing types of delivery channel, product and customer.</p> <p>Identify which customer groups are within the target range for the business.</p> <p>Work effectively with the customer engagement team to achieve better outcomes for both</p>

				<p>existing and new customer groups.</p> <p>Effectively analyses the key buying criteria to help shape the planned product range</p>
B2	<p>Ensure department is set up to maximise sales / profitability by using techniques such as pricing strategies, product trends, product design and appropriate routes to market.</p>	<p>Customer satisfaction levels in respect of product and product availability are in-line with or ahead of targets.</p> <p>Sales and profit targets are met.</p>	<p>Understands the roles that techniques such as business planning, pricing strategies, product design and product manufacture, often in a global context, have on the overall success of the business</p> <p>Understands the need to develop and implement innovative and responsive processes and systems to customer's digital demands.</p>	<p>Critically evaluates the current and future methods of digital delivery, and anticipates customer changes in respect of the use of digital and Artificial Intelligence</p> <p>Demonstrates responsiveness to customer demand from whatever the source</p>

			Understands the requirements of delivering to the most appropriate route to market.	
B3	Ensure they and their team deliver in an ethical, sustainable and legal way in the sourcing of product ranges, aligned to the overall strategy of the business.	Operates in line with business and ethical standards. Complies with company policies regarding the sustainable sourcing of product.	Understand the importance of ethical and legal compliance Understands the potential problems that can arise and how they can be mitigated. Understands 'anti-bribery, anti-corruption' (ABAC) regulations	Ensures that the organisation's ethical and legal policies and procedures are adhered to. Ensures that all team members operate within ABAC guidance.
B4	Analyse and evaluate overall performance of the Buying function, against the original strategy and business plan, identifying lessons to learn for future business cycles.	Can demonstrate that they are responsible for an effective and efficient buying function.	Understands the impact of the buying critical path on the effective operation of the buying function	Anticipates the need for products and ensures that the buying process enables their effective delivery to the customer

			<p>Understands the concept and impact of new product development.</p> <p>Understands when a product / product range has reached the end of its lifecycle, and acts appropriately to ensure its removal from the product range</p>	<p>Can articulate a supported recommendation regarding the introduction or withdrawal of a product / product range..</p>
B5	<p>Ensure ranges are sourced to comply with relevant safety and quality standards.</p> <p>Oversee the process to identify and rectify any failures in safety &/or quality.</p>	<p>Relevant standards identified and applied</p> <p>Failures to meet standards identified and appropriate steps taken in line with legal / company requirements and policies.</p>	<p>Understands the importance of onboarding new suppliers to ensure full compliance with internal and external standards</p> <p>Understands the difference between legal requirements, and additional corporate requirements</p>	<p>Operates to, and ensures relevance of company operating standards</p> <p>Can identify when problems are likely to occur, and manage action required</p>

			Understand the process that is required to ensure the rectification of any failures	
B6	Source and select 3 rd party products to meet current trends / customer requirements, linked to strategy and financial targets.	3 rd Party products developed and made available to customers. Products meet strategic and financial objectives	<p>Within the context of 3rd party products, understand how to identify current and future buying and loyalty behaviours of existing and potential customer groups.</p> <p>Understands key Buying analysis criteria such as, competitor benchmarking, price comparison, and competitor analysis.</p>	Effectively analyses the key buying criteria to help shape the planned product range for 3 rd party products

	Merchandising option			
M1	Uses analysis to develop range framework identifying commercial opportunities. Collaborate with the buying team to input into or create a plan to deliver a commercial assortment that maximises sales and margin	Key commercial opportunities identified and maximised within planning process and financial parameters.	<p>Understands how to effectively utilise data in order to identify commercial opportunities</p> <p>Understands the importance of working together with other teams (especially Buying)</p>	<p>Has the ability to ensure that the right product is available at the right time, in the right place.</p> <p>Produces accurate forecasts which demonstrate creative and ambitious suggestions for future strategy</p> <p>Demonstrates customer insight in preparing forecasts</p> <p>Demonstrates the activities needed to ensure that the forecast is underpinned by financial considerations and business strategy.</p>
M2	Ensure they and their team work in an ethical and legal way in the supply of product ranges, aligned	Operates in line with business and ethical standards.	Understand the importance of ethical and legal compliance	Ensures that the organisation's ethical and legal policies and

	to the overall strategy of the business.		<p>Understands the potential problems that can arise in merchandising and how they can be mitigated.</p> <p>Understands concepts such as 'Modern Slavery' and how they might impact on the business</p>	<p>procedures are adhered to.</p> <p>Ensures that all team members operate within current legal guidance.</p> <p>Operates to, and ensures relevance of company operating standards</p>
M3	Trades effectively delivering to sales and profit targets whilst identifying and taking relevant actions, to account for market and performance factors.	<p>Market and performance factors identified.</p> <p>Performance and sales opportunities maximised</p> <p>Costs to the business minimised</p>	<p>Understands allocation strategies and ensure effective data inputting</p> <p>Understands how to interrogate data in order to make effective trading decisions</p> <p>Understand merchandising concepts such as 'fixturation', and the effective use of space</p>	<p>Makes commercial decisions based on product, category and departmental performance</p> <p>Maximises every trading opportunity to deliver sound commercial outcomes</p> <p>Uses IT and digital methods of merchandising to</p>

				improve sales / profitability
M4	Analyse and evaluate overall performance of the merchandising function, against the original strategy and business plan, identifying lessons to learn for future business cycles in order to maximise sales	Can demonstrate through achievement of KPIs, that they are responsible for an effective and efficient merchandising function.	<p>Understands the impact of effective forecasting on the operation of the merchandising function</p> <p>Understands the concept and impact of new product development.</p> <p>Understands when a product / product range has reached the end of its lifecycle, and acts appropriately to ensure its removal from the product range</p> <p>Understands how to review and revise a system that is not functioning correctly.</p>	<p>Anticipates the need for products and ensures that the buying process enables their effective delivery to the customer</p> <p>Using own reports, can articulate a supported recommendation regarding the introduction or withdrawal of a product / product range.</p> <p>Effectively liaises with other key stakeholders to ensure a joined-up approach across the business.</p>

M5	Ensure the availability of appropriate product range to meet customer demand and expectations across all delivery channels. This to be achieved, through detailed forecasting, and management of the WSSI, supplier interaction and critical path management	Product available to customers demand across all channels. Key business dates and objectives met.	<p>Understands in depth, the concept of the critical path</p> <p>Understands supplier data, such as delivery intakes , packaging requirements etc.</p> <p>Understand differing requirements across all methods of delivery (eg instore and on line)</p> <p>Understands the principles of having the right stock in the right place at the right time, in order to satisfy customer demand.</p>	<p>Delivers to critical path plan in order to ensure that delivery deadline are met, and that intakes met stock levels</p> <p>Delivers timely and accurate forecasts to effectively ensure that customer needs are met.</p> <p>Communicates directly with suppliers to ensure effective receipt of stock</p>
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Behaviours

B1	Acts as an ambassador for the buying and merchandising function and the business
B2	Is resilient, responsible, commercially aware and takes the initiative
B3	Seeks opportunities to develop themselves and the team

