

Occupational profile: Buying / Merchandising Assistant (Level 4) V2

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.

Buying assistants will support new product selection and development and ensure that these new products are accurately added to the employer's product portfolio in line with the supplier agreement. They will normally be responsible for the testing and delivery of product samples.

Merchandising assistants collate, distribute and analyse sales and performance reports, identifying trends, trading patterns and highlighting anomalies. They communicate and escalate findings appropriately, supported by a range of business solutions. They may also place supplier orders and maintain product availability across the business and for monitoring products to ensure on time delivery and availability to agreed locations.

Buying and merchandising assistants work collaboratively to contribute to the delivery of department / company sales and profit targets. They will normally report to a more senior member of the buying or merchandising team, this may vary with the size of the employer.

In this occupation, individuals would typically interact with a wide range of internal and external colleagues, including but not limited to, their wider buying and merchandising teams, 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.

Revised Duties - Buying / Merchandising Assistant (Level 4) V2

	Core Duty	Suggested Measure	Knowledge	Skills	Behaviours
C1	Monitor the critical path to ensure products are delivered on time.	Recommendations made for new and existing products to agreed timescales.	K1 K2 K3 K5 K9	S3 S4 S6 S7 S8 S9 S10 S21	BV3 BV5 BV6 BV8
C2	Engage with internal and external functions (marketing, PR, distribution, suppliers, supply chain, stores, on-line, sales teams, design teams, product technologists, customers) to deliver product ranges that meet business KPIs and customer needs.	Issues that affect other internal and external functions identified promptly and resolved No KPIs missed through poor communication or failure to collaborate.	K2 K5 K6 K7 K10 K11 K14 K16 K17 K18 K20 K21 K22 K23 K25	S3 S4 S5 S6 S7 S8 S9 S10 S12 S20 S21	BV1 BV2 BV3 BV4 BV5 BV6 BV7 BV8 BV9
C3	Contribute to the continuous improvement of the buying and merchandising processes, responding to sector trends and new ways of working to drive sales and profit.	Recommendations for improvements made to senior team members.	K1 K4 K10 K14 K16 K17 K23 K25	S1 S2 S7 S10 S11 S12 S14 S15 S16 S17 S19 S21	BV1 BV2 BV4 BV6 BV7 BV8
C4	Coach and mentor new colleagues to drive development	Individual and team development recorded.	K10 K11 K16 K18 K19 K20 K22	S19	BV2 BV3 BV8 BV9
C5	Develop and maintain a stakeholder network, to facilitate negotiations to	Professional relationships developed, issues identified and	K2 K3 K4 K5 K6 K7 K8 K9 K10	S5 S8 S10 S15 S18	BV2 BV3 BV4 BV8 BV9

	maximise opportunities	resolved promptly. KPIs met	K11 K16 K20 K21 K22 K23 K25	S20	
C6	Receive and resolve queries and questions from stakeholders (suppliers, designers, packagers, customers) regarding products, process, services, critical path deliverables etc.	Internal and external functions briefed on critical path.	K2 K6 K10 K11 K17 K21 K22	S3 S5 S6 S10	BV1 BV2 BV3 BV4 BV5 BV8 BV9
	Buyer Duty				
B1	Manage the ordering, delivery, testing and showcasing of samples, to support the final selection of products	Appropriate samples were available for testing and show casing activities.	K1 K2 K3 K5 K6 K7 K10 K11 K14 K15 K16 K17 K20 K21 K22 K23 K25	S1 S2 S3 S5 S7 S8 S10 S14 S15 S17 S18	BV1 BV4 BV6 BV7 BV8 BV9
B2	Action all the required processes throughout the product lifecycle, ensuring trading and pricing policies are adhered to, meeting the requirements of the current business strategy	Product portfolio updated and maintained with correct information.	K1 K2 K3 K5 K7 K8 K9 K10 K13 K20 K21 K22 K23	S4 S6 S7 S8 S9 S10 S13 S14 S20 S21	BV3 BV5 BV8
B3	Input products into the database and carry out on-going maintenance. Coordinate the product content and	All products represented accurately on product portfolio.	K1 K2 K5 K8 K14 K16 K20 K25	S3 S9 S10 S11 S12 S21	BV1 BV2 BV5 BV6 BV8

	imagery to support and maximise the sales of the product				
B4	Monitor competitor activities and update prices accordingly in line with legislation and organisation policies	Product portfolio updated and maintained with correct information.	K2 K8 K13 K14 K21 K22	S1 S3 S11 S13 S14 S15 S17 S21	BV3 BV5 BV8
B5	Use competitor and market analysis to identify opportunities to improve/increase sales performance.	Data sourced and actions implemented to agreed timescales.	K2 K8 K13 K14 K21 K22 K25	S1 S3 S11 S13 S14 S15 S17 S21	BV3 BV4 BV6
B6	Assist in the creation of future range building inputting into trend and competitor analysis	Accurate data inputted to inform strategic decisions.	K1 K2 K3 K5 K9 K10 K12 K13 K14 K15 K16 K22	S1 S2 S11 S12 S13 S14 S15 S16 S17 S18 S20	BV1 BV6 BV7 BV8
	Merchandiser Duty				
M1	Manage suppliers and key stakeholders (distribution/warehousing and depots, branches/ stores, online) to ensure stock levels are kept within agreed targets/timelines	Stakeholder's issues dealt with promptly and within targets/timescales.	K10 K14 K17 K18 K20 K21 K22 K23 K24 K25	S4 S6 S9 S10 S21 S22	BV2 BV3 BV5 BV6 BV8 BV9
M2	Provide orders and line level product	Stock system updated and	K14 K17 K21 K22	S9 S11 S12	BV2 BV3 BV5

	forecasts to suppliers. Manage/maintain stock replenishment system to maximise availability and drive sales.	maintained to agreed timescales.	K24 K25 K26	S20 S21 S22	BV8
M3	Place and manage orders for assigned products, in line with the agreed volume and specification.	Deliveries made on agreed dates in agreed volumes Cancellations processed correctly.	K7 K8 K10 K17 K20 K22 K24	S4 S9 S10 S12 S21 S22	BV2 BV3 BV5 BV6 BV8
M4	Assist in producing short to mid-term product range forecasts for intake and delivery.	Correct data sources accessed and analysed.	K8 K12 K14 K16 K22 K24	S12 S13 S22	BV5 BV6
M5	Use current and past data to identify opportunities to improve sales and profit performance, providing reforecasts of stock, delivery dates and cancellations to minimise/maximise financial impact. Provide weekly trading analysis.	Data analysed and findings reported to senior team members to agreed timescales.	K8 K12 K13 K20 K21 K22 K24	S4 S6 S11 S12 S13 S14 S17	BV2 BV3 BV4 BV5 BV6 BV7
M6	Assist in the creation of future range building by inputting financial targets and plans and data analysis.	Accurate data inputted to inform strategic decisions.	K1 K3 K5 K8 K9 K12 K13 K15 K16 K17 K20	S2 S7 S10 S11 S12 S13 S14 S17 S18 S20 S21	BV1 BV3 BV5 BV6 BV7 BV9

K1 How to develop an operational or strategic approach to buying and / or merchandising

K2 Industry standards, regulations and legislation relating to the sourcing, purchasing and sale of goods

K3 Product lifecycle from development to customer and the critical path approach

K4 Principles of buying and merchandising and the specific role of each

K5 The brand position within the market, UK and global markets, retailer types and trading models

K6 Effective methods of negotiation, and how they relate to the organisation's strategy, goals and ethical stance

K7 Key aspects of the sector (including stakeholder locations) and its relevance to UK and Global economies

K8 Key aspects of global and domestic trading patterns

K9 Principles of and how to develop the critical path including a strategic ethical and sustainable approach to buying and / or merchandising

K10 Principles of working within strategic operational buying and merchandising frameworks

K11 Effective methods of communication to achieve operational success

K12 The principles of trend analysis and forecasting

K13 The principles of undertaking competitor analyses

K14 The different purchasing habits of customers, seasonality and the different customer journey across all purchasing channels

K15 The importance and use of customer profiles

S1 Using market / industry knowledge contribute to new product development and innovation

S2 Contribute to the building of customer focused ranges to meet the brand identity of your business

S3 Ensure product quality and legal compliance

Work within industry standards, regulations and legislation to source, purchase and sell goods

S4 Ensure effective implementation of the critical path

S5 Negotiate in a manner that balances the need for a sound financial return, with the need to operate ethically, honestly and fairly

S6 Monitor agreed performance targets with suppliers and manage ongoing supplier relationships

S7 Apply strategic approaches to buying and / or merchandising

S8 Apply ethical and sustainable approach to the buying and merchandising process in line with policies and procedures

S9 Ensure the agreed route to market is delivered and maintained successfully

S10 Work with external and internal departments (for example, marketing, distribution, suppliers) to build relationships to drive sales activity and support the delivery of the business objectives across all channels (stores/branches and online)

S11 Effectively use data to influence both the strategic and operational direction of the buying and / or merchandising approach.

S12 Demonstrate effective application of systems in analysing data (for

<p>K16 The importance of keeping up with current trends within the industry</p> <p>K17 The importance of meeting regional needs, exceeding customer expectations and building customer focused ranges</p> <p>K18 The principles of team dynamics and relationships in order to achieve individual and organisational goals</p> <p>K19 The importance of coaching and mentoring</p> <p>K20 The key performance indicators of the department / organisation</p> <p>K21 The importance of operating within the financial framework of the organisation</p> <p>K22 The importance of meeting organisational targets, goals and financial rate of return</p> <p>K23 The range and impact of external factors such as currency fluctuation and global suppliers have on profit margin and costs</p> <p>K24 The impact of stock planning and densities on profitability and how it aligns to organisational/brand strategy</p> <p>K25 Factors affecting and impacting seasonal planning</p> <p>K26 The role of allocation in the merchandising function</p>	<p>example, customer trends, buying patterns, stock rotation and levels)</p> <p>S13 Analyse and present business data with reference to business strategies, brand and KPIs</p> <p>S14 Evaluate commercial performance proposing action for good and poor performers</p> <p>S15 Demonstrate anticipation of customer buying and product patterns</p> <p>S16 Contribute ideas and opinions towards trends and competitor activity</p> <p>S17 Apply customer profile / trend data to inform development of range, products and services</p> <p>S18 Assist in formulating customer propositions</p> <p>S19 Develop self and individuals to improve personal and team performance and capability</p> <p>S20 Demonstrate commercial buying and merchandising within a financial framework</p> <p>S21 Operate in a manner that produces the required financial rate of return for the business</p> <p>S22 Ensure effective stock management to support the delivery of the sales and profit forecasts</p>
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- B1 Creative thinking, and enthusiastic with a positive and professional attitude
- B2 Confident communicator, uses own initiative to undertake activities
- B3 Accountable, takes initiative to resolve issues within their control
- B4 Shows tenacity and is prepared to take risks
- B5 Pro-actively completes tasks without the need for direction
- B6 Resilient, organised with an eye for attention to detail
- B7 Flexible, agile and adaptable to changing markets
- B8 Operates within professional code of ethics
- B9 Is an ambassador for the business