

WA7: Business Travel, Diary Systems, Meeting organization and event management

3.11 Plan, organise and support meetings and recommend improvements to the procedures



LO70: Analyse the organisation, documents and materials provided for a meeting and make recommendations for any improvements.

LO71: Demonstrate ability to plan, organise and support meetings.

LO72: Demonstrate ability to complete actions required after a meeting and to carry out action points arising from the meeting.



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Module Details



Work Area Code:	7
Work area title:	Business Travel, Diary Systems, Meeting organization and event management
Unit Code:	3.11
Unit Title:	Plan, organise and support meetings and recommend improvements to the procedures
Learning Outcomes Ids:	LO70, LO71, LO72
Learning Outcomes titles:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Analyse the organisation, documents and materials provided for a meeting and make recommendations for any improvements. (LO70)- Demonstrate ability to plan, organise and support meetings. (LO71)- Demonstrate ability to complete actions required after a meeting and to carry out action points arising from the meeting. (LO72)
Recommended Duration:	4 hours
Trainer:	



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Meetings defined

Meeting is a gathering of two or more people for discussions, information sharing and to reach on an agreement.



Meetings can take place in various ways like face-to-face, conference calls, video conference etc.



Effective meetings



A meeting should not be a waste of time and be effective.

Effective meetings happen with proper **planning** and should have a **purpose** and **outcome**.



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Purpose of the meeting



GROUP DISCUSSION

- Why do companies organize meetings?
- What issues are usually being discussed?



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Purpose of the meeting



In general, the role of the meeting is to carry out certain **important discussions** and take **decisions** by bringing in **all the involved members together in one place.**

This will avoid the many number of phone calls, emails and the confusions involved, helping to take clear cut decisions and assign actions to the relevant person or people or department.



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Purpose of the meeting



1. To **coordinate** action, for a joint agreed decision
2. To **reach decisions** more quickly than with phone calls and emails.
3. To **save time**, for example, something that took you more than 15 minutes to write on an email which could still be unclear to the recipient, can be talked through in two minutes if you meet face-to-face



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Purpose of the meeting



4. To **share information**, to gain or seek ideas and information and clarify things
5. To **resolve issues** or any problems and plan working strategies
6. To **discuss** organisational or departmental matters in a detailed manner, when this can be difficult through email communications
7. To **avoid** confusion, conflicts and discrepancies



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Purpose of the meeting



8. To **clarify and sort out** conflicts and settle disputes
9. To **take decisions** on matters discussed and to help track actions against any decisions made in the past
10. To **discuss projects** or anything to do with work and ways to do it
11. To **help make decisions faster**, as everyone is available in one place to discuss and decide



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Purpose of the meeting



12. To **negotiate** on contracts and agreements depending on the organisation or matters involved
13. To **give everyone a chance to speak** and voice their thoughts and ideas
14. To **take emergency decisions and actions** in times of need - crisis management
15. To help with **team building and motivation**
16. To help **set targets and objectives**



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Types of meetings



Meetings differ with respect to:

- The **purpose** of the meeting
- The **number** of people attending the meeting
- The **size** of the organisation
- The **person chairing** the meeting
- The **duration** of the meeting



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Informal meetings:

- **Regular meetings** – held by small groups of staff normally chaired by the team leader or manager
- **Briefing meetings** – where, for instance, the manager or an organisation representative such as the health and safety officer talks to staff about a particular issue
- **Progress meetings** – where a group of staff working on the same project get together to check where they are
- **Working parties** – set up for a particular purpose, such as the introduction of a new computer system, and ended when the job is complete



Formal meetings:

- Meetings of the board of directors or senior executives
- Committee and sub-committee meetings reporting to the board or senior executives
- Annual general meetings
- Meetings of shareholders



1. *Standing meeting:* Takes place on a regular basis either weekly or fortnightly with the manager with regards to any project that is in progress.
2. *Topical meeting:* A meeting arranged to discuss a particular topic related to work or a project.
3. *Presentation:* A meeting held generally to inform the team about changes made in processes and procedures. In this meeting, there is a presenter or two, and at the end the attendees have the opportunity to ask questions.



4. *Conference:* A meeting organised with considerable planning and structure and moderated by a chair person. The number of participants depends on the purpose of the conference.
5. *Emergency meeting:* A meeting held all of a sudden without much prior notice to address any crisis internal or external to the organisation. All members of the team are required to attend the meeting.
6. *Seminar:* A meeting are held mainly for educational purposes, and headed by experts in a particular field.



What types of documents related to meetings are used in your organization?

Group discussion



Documents Commonly Used in Meetings:

- **Agenda**
- **Attendance sheet**
- **Minutes**
- **Matters Arising**
- **Reports**
- **Action Sheets**
- **Other documents based on the purpose and content of the meeting**



Do not forget!



All documents that are prepared for the meetings of a company have to respect organization policy regarding corporate identity, and design manual and have to comply with copyright and confidentiality regulations.



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Types of materials common to meetings



- **Notepad**
- **Projector**
- **Name tents/tags**
- **PC/Laptop**
- **Screen**
- **Flipchart**
- **Pens/markers**
- **Handouts**



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- Document that is **created by** either a **secretary** or an **administrator** or anyone in a similar position or job role.
- It is then **approved by the chair person** and **circulated** to the other members who will be attending the meeting. It can be distributed either electronically or as hard copies. It is always best to have a few spare copies.



Agenda contains



- **Name** of the meeting, meeting **date**, time of meeting and the **venue** of meeting at the top.
- Followed by the **attendees**, apologies and visitors/speakers.
- The agenda **items**, where urgent and important matters are listed on top of the list.
- Mandatory items on the agenda list are, **previous minutes** or Confirmation of previous minutes, **matters arising** and any **other business**. The rest are the items gathered from relevant members involved with the meeting.



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Agenda examples



Your logo here

[Sample Meeting Agenda Template]

Pyramid Model Team Meeting

Date:
Place:

Meeting Roles

Host:
Facilitator:
Time-Keeper:
Refreshments:
Note-taker:
Buddy for absent members:

Meeting Objectives:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Next Meetings dates and places:

Agenda:

Time	Item	Type of Action
9:00	Welcome/Introductions	info sharing
9:15	Action plan updates	discussion
10:15	Selection of Coaches	discussion
11:15	Continued planning of train the trainer event	discussion
Noon	complete meeting evaluation & adjourn	

MEETING AGENDA

[Board Meeting]

Date: [time][Date] | time | Meeting called by [Name]

Board members

[Name, Title] | [Name, Title] | [Name, Title] | [Name, Title] | [Name, Title] | [Name, Title] | [Name, Title]

Time	Item
[Time]	Welcome
[Time]	Old business and approval of last meeting's minutes
[Time]	Vote on new Secretary
[Time]	Discuss parent openings on advisory committees - any response from newsletter?
[Time]	Vote on proposed Budget
[Time]	Principal's Report
[Time]	Break
[Time]	New Business
	A. Recap of Back to School Night - Erik Anderson
	B. Parent Education Programs - Rachel Valdez, school counselor
	C. Teacher grants application process - Laura Giussani, Oakdale Schools Foundation
[Time]	Committee Reports
	A. Membership, Angela
	B. Volunteers, Erik
	C. Newsletter, Dean
	D. Computer Support, Terry
[Time]	Announcements
[Time]	Adjournment

MEETING AGENDA – [MEETING TITLE]

MEETING INFORMATION

Objective:	[Enter the objective of the meeting here]		
Date:	01/01/2000	Location:	[Enter Room Number]
Time:	6:00 AM	Meeting Type:	[Identify type of meeting]
Call-In Number:	[List call in number]	Call-In Code:	[Enter call in code]
Called By:	[List Name]	Facilitator:	[List Name]
Timekeeper:	[List Name]	Note Taker:	[List Name]
Attendees:	[List Names]		

PREPARATION FOR MEETING

Please Read:

Please Bring:

ACTION ITEMS FROM PREVIOUS MEETING	RESPONSIBLE	DUE DATE
1 [List Action Item 1]	[Name]	[Date]
2		
3		

AGENDA ITEMS	PRESENTER	TIME ALLOTTED
1 [List Agenda Item 1]	[Name]	[x minutes]
2		
3		
4		

NEW ACTION ITEMS	RESPONSIBLE	DUE DATE
1 [List New Action Item 1]	[Name]	[Date]
2		
3		

OTHER NOTES OR INFORMATION



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Methodological tool

- Meeting agenda
- EUPA_LO_070_M_001



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Attendance sheet



- List of all the attendees in the meeting.
- To have accurate details, a few columns are included like, Name, Position, Contact number, Email address. This will help the minute taker with writing down names in minutes and also will help with contacting them easily when necessary, especially when there are external members attending the meeting.
- This is not usually used for internal meetings, but used for meetings where external customers or partnership organisations are involved.



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Attendance sheet example



Attendance Sheet

Meeting..... Date..... Venue.....

Name	Organisation	Position (Eg Community Health Nurse, Council Staff Etc)	Address	Telephone & Email



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Code of ethics/codes of conduct



- Not used in all meetings, but can be used in board meetings, and meetings where public are involved etc.
- Set of principles and expectations that are set out to the members, by which they have to adhere to, when participating in the meeting. It is set out for the smooth and success functionality of the meeting. In some meetings it is used to preserve freedom of speech.



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Previous minutes



- Brought in to the meeting to be read out and confirmed. Also the action points from the previous meeting are checked to see if they have been actioned, or at what status the actions are, if not actioned, the reasons for that are gathered and noted down in the minutes along with necessary actions or decisions.

Team Meeting		Date	
		Time	
		Location	
Meeting called by:	Enter meeting organizer here	Type of meeting:	Enter meeting type here
Facilitator:	Enter meeting facilitator here	Note taker:	Enter note taker here
Timekeeper:	Enter meeting timekeeper here		
Attendees:	Enter attendees here		
Please read:	Enter reading list here		
Please bring:	Enter items to bring here		

Minutes			
Agenda item:	Enter agenda item here	Presenter:	Enter presenter here
Discussion:			
To get started right away, just tap any placeholder text (such as this) and start typing to replace it with your own.			
Conclusions:			
Enter conclusions here.			
Action items	Person responsible	Deadline	
✓ Enter action items here	Enter person responsible here	Enter deadline here	
✓ Enter action items here	Enter person responsible here	Enter deadline here	
✓ Enter action items here	Enter person responsible here	Enter deadline here	

Agenda item:	Enter agenda item here	Presenter:	Enter presenter here
Discussion:			
To get started right away, just tap any placeholder text (such as this) and start typing to replace it with your own.			
Conclusions:			
Enter conclusions here.			
Action items	Person responsible	Deadline	
✓ Enter action items here	Enter person responsible here	Enter deadline here	
✓ Enter action items here	Enter person responsible here	Enter deadline here	
✓ Enter action items here	Enter person responsible here	Enter deadline here	

Agenda item:	Enter agenda item here	Presenter:	Enter presenter here
Discussion:			
To get started right away, just tap any placeholder text (such as this) and start typing to replace it with your own.			



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Attachments to minutes



Sometimes in meetings, a policy or procedure or a report may have to be read out and agreed. In this case, this document will be brought into the meeting read out to the members and this will have to be attached to the minutes.



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Presentation papers



- Some meetings will have presentation papers. Although presentations are done on a large screen with overhead projectors, it is always good to give all the attendees a copy, so that they have a record of what was presented, and also it will help them note down important points that will be useful or helpful for them for future reference as the presentation goes on.



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- Not mandatory, but for clarity and for being properly organised, what you can do is, collect all the action points from the previous meeting and mention the status across each of them, so that it is easier to go through them during the meeting. Also any action points for the current meeting can be noted down on that sheet, while some actions may have links with previous actions.
- It will also be easier at the end of the meeting to summarise all the action points from this sheet.



Action sheets



Meeting Action Sheet

Format No.:

Reference: Meeting No: _____ & Date: _____ Time: _____ to _____

Date of Action Review: _____ Lead by: _____

Meeting – Members

Meeting Agenda / Discussed Points	Target Date	Action Taken	Actual Date	Status	Next Due	Responsibility Assigned

Resource Requirements:

Manager – General



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Minimum content requirements

- Place
- Date and time
- Participants and their roles in the meeting
- Who was absent
- How the meeting took place
- What happened at the meeting
- What was discussed at the meeting
- What was decided and the official action points of the discussions and decisions



- Minutes may serve as **legal binding documents** in many situations and in many organisations and can be produced as evidence of certain discussions and decisions when there are legal challenges in the future.
- The minutes should have the date of next meeting at the end if possible.
- The minutes need to document the presence of a quorum, as most valid decisions need a minimum number of people in order to make a decision.



MEETING



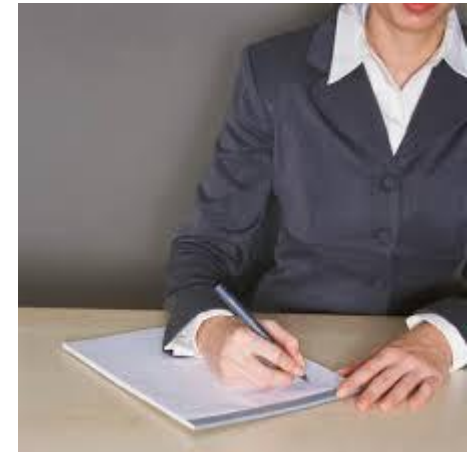


The purpose and benefits of minutes as an accurate record of discussions and decisions are:

- Minutes will need to be shared with the public when it comes to public governing bodies. So the records of the meeting will be available for the public to see as people will want to know the results of meetings and discussions and how they were taken.
- Minutes can be used to monitor the decisions and actions mentioned in case there is a conflict in the future.



- There will be action points in minutes that need to be actioned and these will help with changes and improvements for the organisation and hence minutes will be a reminder of those actions, the person who needs to action them and within what timeframe it needs to be actioned.
- Sharing minutes with the concerned people who were not able to attend, will keep them informed of any changes, discussions and decisions.



What is your role?



For a meeting to run effectively, good **PLANNING** and **PREPARATION** are required.

These two steps may take a lot of time.



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Consider the following when planning the meeting:

- Find out the **basic details of the meeting**: the type of meeting, the budgeted amount that can be spent, the number of attendees, the venue where it will be held, and other details.
- Find out the **aim of the meeting**
- Find out **the role of each person** attending from the team.
- **Organise a checklist** and **put all dates on the calendar**, to make sure different meetings or events do not conflict with each other.
- If meetings will have to be **scheduled periodically** to monitor the actions taken, a meeting that repeats every month or every fortnight can be put on the electronic calendar



What is your role?



Consider the following when organising the meeting:

- Fully understand the **purpose** of the meeting
- Find out the **time schedules** of the people involved, to determine the best time to hold the meeting.
- **Choose a venue** easily accessible by all the attendees.
- Make a note of any **documents** and **equipment** that need to be prepared.
- Plan the **length of the meeting**, considering the visitors and the number of issues that need to be discussed.
- Plan what **refreshments** will be provided, and who will be in charge.
- Gather **agenda** items and prepare them in the proper format and order.
- If **responsibilities** need to be distributed among different people, make a list of who will be doing what!



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Basic venue Requirements:

- Based on the purpose of the meeting and the number of attendees.
- Is the venue is in good reach?
- Check with the venue to see if they have all the facilities needed for the meeting.
- Inform the chair and the attendees if necessary and get ideas if needed about their expectations for the venue in order to avoid any problems or failures.



Meeting venue selection criteria



Suitability:

Check to see if the venue is big enough to accommodate all the attendees of the meeting.

Location: Make sure that the venue is in a location accessible to all the attendees of the meeting.

Availability: Check to see if the venue is free on the date requested to avoid disappointment at the last minute. It can create further problems not knowing the venue is not available after all arrangements have been made and all attendees have arrived.



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Meeting venue selection criteria



Size:

Check to see if the venue can accommodate all the attendees and the resources that they will need, and if help is available to use resources needed.

Facilities:

Check the venue to see if you can hold the meeting there without any trouble in using the resources.

Cost:

Also check to see if the venue fits into the budget and if it is cost-effective.



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Meeting resources and equipment



- *Writing material:* to take down notes in the meeting.
- *Overhead Projector:* to demonstrate or display documents or slides.
- *White Board, Flipchart:* This helps the person who demonstrates to write down things or ideas clearly for the attendees, so that there are no doubts.
- *PC/laptop:* these are used in conjunction with the overhead projector for displaying slideshows or documents.



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Meeting resources and equipment



- *Info print outs for other participants:*
These include agendas and other paperwork the attendees might require to follow the meeting without any problems.
- *Refreshments:* Drinks, coffe, snacks,
...



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Budgetary requirements



- What to include in the budget?
 - Venue renting
 - Refreshments
 - Transport and lodging
 - Preparation and printing of materials
- Separate must haves from good to haves



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- List clearly the possible attendees for the meeting
- Ask what they will be talking on and how long they will need. That way you can calculate the length of the meeting.
- Send Invites long before the meeting
- Send reminder
- Register participants for the company security/entrance



Invitations



- Invitation contains:

- Date
- RSVP
- Costs
- Program
- Instructions
- Contacts



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- **A meeting organiser will have to make sure that the needs of all the attendees are met.**
- Always **come prepared**, if you have been assigned something specific. If you are scheduling a conference call, make sure you do it in advance. You might be asked to bring food or drinks.
- If you responsible for organising food and drink for attendees, check to see if any of the attendees have **special dietary requirements**.
- If the chair or speaker needs to make use of a laptop and projector, **make sure they are set up** and ready.





- If an attendee **is physically disabled** and requires special access arrangements ,make sure there are facilities for that person in the venue.
- If attendees need the address and directions, make sure they are emailed the details well in advance.



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Meeting Checklist



- Have the specific and realistic goals been set up?
- Is the venue accessible to everyone?
- Are the dates and times convenient for all attendees?
- Is the agenda covering all topics and goals?
- Is the agenda printed and ready, resources are ready and all invites have been sent out.
- Are the chairperson, the minute taker, and the presenters ready, and the refreshments are all set up?



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Methodological tool

- Prepare a detailed checklist
- EUPA_LO_071M_001



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How to work in partnership with the chair when taking minutes

- Minute taking can sometimes be difficult, especially when too many people are talking together all at once or when disagreements and arguments continue or when discussions deviate and become complicated.
- In these kinds of situations, liaising with the chair will be beneficial, make the task of minute taking simpler and help writing minutes with confidence.



How to work in partnership with the chair when taking minutes

- As the chairperson controls the meeting and the discussions, it is important for the minute taker to sit close to the chair, so that it makes communication with the chair easier.
- A good chair will also, always take the minute taker's situation into account and will control discussions in such a way that more than one person does not speak at any given time or there are not too many interruptions.



How to work in partnership with the chair when taking minutes

- Also sometimes when the discussions deviate from the main issue towards another issue similar to the main one, the chair can forget to take a decision on that item as a result of deviations towards other issues. In such cases, working closely with the chair can help the minute taker remind the chair that a decision needs to be made on that issue before proceeding to the next item.
- When you are in doubt about whether or not to record something, always confirm with the chair.



How to work in partnership with the chair when taking minutes

- Even before the meeting starts, the minute taker can have a discussion with the chair about how the meeting will take place, the items that will be discussed, how the discussion will take place and what necessarily need to be minuted. After the meeting, while writing down the minutes, if the minute taker has any difficulties with anything relevant to the discussions, they should have a quick word with the chair to clarify things, as hesitation to do this will end up with inaccurate information in the minutes.





Best practice

- When taking notes, one does not record the words that were used in discussion, but one records the discussions that took place in the meeting.
- Any documents relevant to the meeting that were distributed or circulated prior to the meeting should be looked through, so that you are familiar with what is being discussed.
- In situations where the discussions or conversations are lengthy and complicated, always focus in the important aspects of the discussion like, what is the focus of the discussion, what is the decision, if available, why this decision was taken, who has to action the decision and when / within which timeframe the decision has to be actioned.



Best practice

- Write down important views and opinions of all the people present.
- Use headings, as this will help you follow the notes later, and you can have different sections of the meeting under different headings. Leave some space under each section, so that it is easier to add notes underneath if anyone comes up with new points or ideas as the meeting proceeds.
- If you know short-hand, it is best to write up notes using short-hand and also use abbreviations wherever possible.





Best practice

- Do not forget to have one or two spare pens and pencils.
- Take pictures when required, it is also recommended to take pictures of whiteboard writing and flipchart papers
- Make sure everyone has signed the participant list
- If note taking becomes too difficult as a result of too many discussions and cross references etc, you can always take permission to see if the meeting can be **recorded on an audio recording device**. Make sure that the participants are aware of this. This helps a lot for clarifying things while producing the minutes.



Problems that may occur during a meeting



Problems with technology:

- A laptop or projector used for the meeting might not function properly due to a conflict with the software.
- Wifi or intranet connection problems
- Not enough power sockets or extensions

Solutions:

- Prepare and test everything in advance
- Download documents for offline use
- Seek help from IT technician, or have him booked for the meeting



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Time management

- Meetings do not start and finish on time
- Agenda items don't get adequate coverage or don't even get covered at all

Solutions:

- Send a meeting agenda with a rough estimate on how long each topic will take.
- Make sure the agenda is clear for everyone and be sure to mark off the items as you proceed. This will help the group see the progress.
- Make sure there is a timekeeper to watch the clock for every agenda item.



Follow up activities and post meeting documentation



- Produce and distribute meeting minutes
- Collect and evaluate feedback
- Write „thank you“ emails
- Finalize and distribute action plans with assigned personal responsibility
- Monitor tasks for completion within given time frame
- Distribute individual package of documents after the meeting



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- It is best to write up the minutes as soon as you can after the meeting as you will remember things better.
- Write down the main/important points.
- Remember numbering the minutes.
- Each agenda item or each discussion should have an explanation or a brief note of what was discussed with main points of the discussion, any disagreements, decisions and actions.
- Have a standard template for minutes if a meeting recurs periodically, any items on agenda, which are standard, can be added on to the minutes template.



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- Minutes are professional documents which can be viewed by anyone outside of the organisation.
- It is important to write them down in a professional manner using the correct professional / formal tone and language.
- Minutes should be written in the past tense as they are about a meeting or discussion that took place in the past.
- Always use a mix of active and passive voice sentences while writing down the minutes.
- It is best to write the minutes as a third person. Use phrases like, "the chair stated that", "it was noted", "the committee decided that", "it was decided", etc. In cases where points were put across by a specific person or where agreement was made by an individual, it is important to specify that person and what they said, as it will help for future references.



- Once you have drafted the minutes, it can be sent to the chair for any clarifications and then approval.
- After approval from chair they can be distributed to the relevant people, that is people who attended and people who need to action the decisions.
- It can be useful if the action list along with deadline dates is attached along with the minutes, so that it is easier for the respective people to action them.
- If after distribution, people ask for corrections to be made, they can be noted down and taken to the following meeting so that the chair can verify and clarify them along with other members present in the meeting. Only after all the changes are made, the minutes are agreed and signed off as accurate.





- **Let people know you'll be asking for feedback**
(incorporate it in the agenda)
- **Keep it short** (ideally online)
- **Ask for examples of ways to improve, not about problems.**

Use "what can we improve?" instead "what went wrong?"
By asking how to improve, you focus the group on improvement and solutions rather than criticism.



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Methodological tool

- Feedback
- EUPA_LO_072M_001



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- **Review Question 1**
 - Outline the Main Points That Should Be Covered by an Agenda and Meeting Minutes
- **Review Question 2**
 - Describe and explain how and why an assistant should cooperate with the chairperson before, during and after the meeting.
- **Review Question 3**
 - Describe the types of problems that may occur during a meeting and how to solve them



- **Preparation:**
 - Put a smile in your voice
 - Practice active listening
 - Speak naturally
 - Always let the caller answer
- **Documentation**
 - Prepare a call plan
 - Use effective questioning
 - Create commitment





Well Done!

You have completed this unit



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