Hard Ware and Network Servicing

Level – 5

Based on Dec, 2024, Curriculum Version - II

Module Title: Hardware Technology Options for Organizations

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Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Logo	Company Name:	Form No.:
	የሥራና ክህሎት ሚኒስቴር	OF/MoLS/TVT/029
	MINISTRY OF LABOR AND SKILLS	

| Form Title: | | Issue No: | Page No: |
| | **Training module format** | **1** | Page 2 of 41 |

Table of Contents

Contents

Acknowledgement

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Acronyms

SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats
RFI	Request for Information
RFP	Request for Proposal
ISO	International Organization for Standardization
LMS	Learning Management System
KPIs	Key Performance Indicators
ROI	Return on Investment

Introduction to the Module

Installing and managing complex ICT networks involves setting up and maintaining interconnected systems that enable seamless communication, data sharing, and service delivery within an organization. This process includes designing network architecture, configuring hardware such as routers, switches, and servers, and implementing software solutions to optimize performance and security. Effective management also requires continuous monitoring, troubleshooting, and upgrading of the network to ensure reliability and scalability. Professionals in this field must possess expertise in networking protocols, cybersecurity measures, and modern technologies like cloud computing and virtualization to meet the demands of dynamic business environments. This module is designed to meet the industry requirement under the **Hardware and Networking service** occupational standard, particularly for the unit of competency: **Research and Review Hardware Technology Options for Organizations**

This module covers the units:

- Researching vendors, suppliers and IT industry specialists
- Evaluating and reporting on options

Learning Objective of the Module

- Research vendors, suppliers and IT industry specialists
- Evaluate and report on options

Module Instruction

For effective use these modules trainees are expected to follow the following module instruction:

1. Read the information written in each unit

2. Accomplish the Self-checks at the end of each unit

3. Perform Operation Sheets which were provided at the end of units

4. Do the "LAP test" giver at the end of each unit and

5. Read the identified reference book for Examples and exercise

Unit One: Researching Hardware Technologies

This unit is developed to provide you the necessary information regarding the following content coverage and topics

- Establishing Organizational needs and selection criteria
- Determining suitable suppliers and Source information

This unit will also assist you to attain the learning outcomes stated in the cover page. Specifically, upon completion of this Training Module, you will be able to:

- Establish Organizational needs and selection criteria
- Determine suitable suppliers and Source information

| Logo | Company Name: | Form No.: |
| | | OF/MoLS/TVT/029 |

የሥራና ክህሎት ሚኒስቴር
MINISTRY OF LABOR AND SKILLS

| Form Title: | Issue No: | Page No: |
| **Training module format** | **1** | Page 8 of 41 |

1.1. Establishing Organizational needs and selection criteria

Establishing organizational needs is the process of identifying the specific resources, skills, systems, or strategies that an organization requires to achieve its goals and overcome challenges. This process ensures the organization operates efficiently, stays competitive, and fulfills its mission.

Steps to Establish Organizational Needs

a) Understand the Organization's Purpose

- **Mission and Vision**: Start with the organization's mission (why it exists) and vision (where it wants to go).
- **Core Goals**: Identify the key objectives that drive the organization forward (e.g., improving education quality, expanding services, or adopting digital tools).

b) Identify *Current Gaps*

To know what you need, first understand what is missing or inadequate in the organization.

- **Evaluate Current Resources**:
  - ✓ Assess the organization's human resources (staff, skills, and expertise).
  - ✓ Review infrastructure (buildings, technology, tools, or equipment).
- **Analyze Processes**:
  - ✓ Look for inefficiencies in workflows, policies, or systems.
  - ✓ Identify outdated methods or tools causing delays or errors.
- **Measure Performance**:
  - ✓ Compare current results with desired outcomes (e.g., student enrollment targets or operational efficiency).

c) Engage Stakeholders

Involve all those who contribute to or benefit from the organization.

- **Internal Stakeholders**: Leadership, staff, and other team members who understand the challenges and opportunities.

- **External Stakeholders**: Customers, clients, students, or community members who can provide insight into unmet expectations.

d) 4. Conduct Research and Analysis

Use specific tools and methods to analyze the organization's situation:

- ✓ **SWOT Analysis**: Identify Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats.
- ✓ **Gap Analysis**: Pinpoint where the organization currently is versus where it wants to be.
- ✓ **Benchmarking**: Compare your organization with similar institutions or competitors.

e) Define Categories of Needs

After analyzing the organization, categorize the needs into specific areas:

- **Human Resources**:
  - ✓ Do you need more staff or specialized skills (e.g., IT, management, or teaching)?
- **Technology**:
  - ✓ Are current systems outdated? Do you need new software, hardware, or IT infrastructure?
- **Financial Resources**:
  - ✓ Is there enough funding to achieve goals? What budget is needed for upcoming initiatives?
- **Processes and Policies**:
  - ✓ Are operational workflows efficient? Are policies clear and up to date?
- **Facilities and Infrastructure**:
  - ✓ Are buildings, tools, and physical spaces adequate for current and future needs?

f) 6. Prioritize Needs

Not all needs can be addressed at once. Prioritize based on:

Logo	Company Name:	Form No.:
	የሥራና ክህሎት ሚኒስቴር **MINISTRY OF LABOR AND SKILLS**	OF/MoLS/TVT/029

Form Title:		Issue No:	Page No:
Training module format		**1**	Page 10 of 41

- **Urgency**: Which needs are most critical right now?

- **Impact**: Which needs will have the greatest effect on achieving goals?

- **Feasibility**: Can the need be realistically addressed given current resources and constraints?

g) 7. Develop a Plan

- Create a clear plan that outlines:
    - ✓ **What** needs to be addressed?
    - ✓ **Who** will take responsibility?
    - ✓ **When** the need will be fulfilled (timeline).
    - ✓ **How** the need will be met (methods and resources).
- Align the plan with the organization's overall strategy.

Why Is This Important?

Establishing organizational needs ensures:

- **Clarity**: Everyone understands what the organization needs to succeed.
- **Focus**: Efforts are directed toward the most critical areas.
- **Efficiency**: Resources are used where they make the greatest impact.
- **Preparedness**: The organization is better positioned to adapt to future challenges and opportunities.

Example in Action

For **Sebeta Polytechnic College**, the process might look like this:

- **Mission**: To deliver high-quality technical and vocational education.
- **Goal**: Modernize student registration and tracking.
- **Current Gap**: The existing manual system is slow, error-prone, and not scalable.
- **Identified Needs**:

    ✓ Technology: A digital registration system.

    ✓ Training: Staff who can manage and operate the new system.

    ✓ Policy: Data security and privacy measures.

- **Priority**: Implement a scalable system within six months.
- **Plan**:

    ✓ Procure a reliable system within two months.

    ✓ Train staff in month three.

    ✓ Launch a pilot test in month four.

Establishing organizational needs requires a clear selection criteria to ensure that the process is systematic, focused, and aligned with the organization's goals. Here are common selection criteria you can use:

a. Strategic Alignment

- Does the identified need align with the organization's mission, vision, and strategic objectives?
- Will addressing this need contribute to long-term organizational growth?

b. Impact

- What is the potential impact of addressing this need on stakeholders (e.g., employees, customers, partners)?
- Will it enhance organizational performance, efficiency, or effectiveness?

c. Feasibility

- Can the organization realistically address this need given its current resources (financial, human, and technological)?
- Are there external constraints (e.g., regulations or market conditions) that affect feasibility?

d. Urgency

- How critical is this need to the organization's immediate operations or survival?
- Is the issue time-sensitive, requiring immediate attention?

e. Risk

- What are the risks of not addressing the need? (e.g., financial loss, reputational damage, compliance issues)
- Are there risks involved in attempting to address the need?

f. Stakeholder Input

- Are all relevant stakeholders involved in identifying and validating the need?
- How will addressing the need benefit key stakeholders?

g. Cost-Benefit Analysis

- What is the estimated cost of addressing this need compared to the expected benefits?
- Is the investment worthwhile based on potential returns?

h. Data-Driven Evidence

- Is the need supported by measurable data (e.g., key performance indicators, audit findings, surveys)?
- Are there trends or patterns indicating the significance of the need?

i. Scalability

- Can addressing this need support future growth or changes in the organization?
- Will the solution remain relevant as the organization evolves?

j. Innovation and Adaptability

- Does addressing this need encourage innovation or improve adaptability in a changing environment?
- Will it position the organization better for future challenges?

Practical Steps

1. Conduct a Needs Assessment: Use surveys, focus groups, performance data, and audits to identify gaps.
2. Prioritize Needs: Rank them based on urgency, impact, and alignment with organizational goals.
3. Engage Stakeholders: Gather input from leaders, employees, and customers.
4. Evaluate Alternatives: Assess multiple ways to address the need and select the most effective and efficient option.

Logo	Company Name:	Form No.:
	የሥራና ክህሎት ሚኒስቴር **MINISTRY OF LABOR AND SKILLS**	OF/MoLS/TVT/029

Form Title: **Training module format**	Issue No: **1**	Page No: Page 14 of 41

Analyzing emerging technology based on organizational needs

Analyzing emerging technology involves assessing new and evolving technologies to determine their potential applications, benefits, and risks for a specific purpose or organization. Here's a detailed approach:

1. Understand the Technology
Key Questions:

- What is the emerging technology?
- How does it work?
- What are its features and capabilities?

Steps:

- **Research:** Gather information from industry reports, academic studies, and technology providers.
- **Classification:** Determine whether the technology is incremental (improving an existing technology) or disruptive (introducing new paradigms).
- **Technology Life Cycle:** Identify whether it is in the research, adoption, or maturity phase.

2. Align with Organizational Needs
Key Questions:

- Does the technology address current pain points or gaps in the organization?
- How does it align with the organization's strategic objectives?

Steps:

- **Needs Assessment:** Identify specific problems or areas where improvement is needed.
- **Use Cases:** Match the technology's capabilities to organizational use cases.

3. Evaluate Feasibility
Key Questions:

- Is the organization ready to adopt the technology?
- Are there resources (budget, skills, and infrastructure) to implement it?

Steps:

- **Technical Feasibility:** Assess compatibility with existing systems and infrastructure.
- **Organizational Readiness:** Evaluate employee skill levels and readiness to embrace change.
- **Cost Analysis:** Review implementation, training, and maintenance costs.

4. Analyze Benefits
Key Questions:

- What value does the technology bring?
- How does it improve efficiency, productivity, or outcomes?

Steps:

- **Efficiency Gains:** Measure time or cost savings.
- **Innovation Opportunities:** Explore how it enables new processes or services.
- **Competitive Advantage:** Determine if it positions the organization ahead in the market.

5. Assess Risks
Key Questions:

- What are the potential risks of adopting the technology?
- Are there any security, privacy, or compliance concerns?

Steps:

- **Cybersecurity:** Evaluate potential vulnerabilities and protection measures.
- **Operational Risks:** Consider the risks of failure or downtime.
- **Ethical Concerns:** Address privacy, bias, or social implications.

6. Market and Industry Trends
Key Questions:

Logo	Company Name:	Form No.:
	የሥራና ክህሎት ሚኒስቴር	OF/MoLS/TVT/029
	MINISTRY OF LABOR AND SKILLS	

| Form Title: | | Issue No: | Page No: |
| **Training module format** | | **1** | Page 16 of 41 |

- What industries are already adopting the technology?

- Are competitors or peers leveraging it?

Steps:

- **Benchmarking:** Compare with how other organizations use the technology.

- **Adoption Trends:** Understand the rate and scale of adoption globally or within the industry.

- **Ecosystem:** Identify partners, vendors, or startups associated with the technology.

7. Perform Pilot Testing
Key Questions:

- How does the technology perform in real-world conditions?

- Does it deliver on its promises?

Steps:

- **Prototype Implementation:** Deploy the technology on a small scale.

- **Performance Metrics:** Track predefined key performance indicators (KPIs) such as cost, speed, or user satisfaction.

- **Feedback:** Gather feedback from end-users and stakeholders.

8. Conduct a Cost-Benefit Analysis
Key Questions:

- Is the investment worth the expected return?

- What is the payback period?

Steps:

- **Direct Costs:** Assess purchase, licensing, and training costs.

- **Indirect Costs:** Consider costs for downtime or adaptation.

- **Benefits:** Estimate tangible and intangible benefits (e.g., cost savings, improved morale).

9. Scalability and Sustainability

Key Questions:

- Can the technology grow with the organization?
- Will it remain relevant over time?

Steps:

- **Scalability:** Assess whether the technology can handle increased demand.
- **Sustainability:** Evaluate its adaptability to evolving needs or technological advancements.

10. Make Informed Decisions
Key Questions:

- Is the technology viable for the organization at this time?
- What is the implementation roadmap?

Steps:

- **Decision Framework:** Use findings to guide decision-making (adopt, delay, or reject).
- **Roadmap:** Develop a phased implementation plan.
- **Continuous Monitoring:** Plan for ongoing evaluation and updates.

Example Analysis: Artificial Intelligence (AI) in Education

- **Understanding:** AI can automate grading, personalize learning paths, and enhance administrative efficiency.
- **Alignment:** Matches needs like improving student engagement and reducing administrative workloads.
- **Feasibility:** Requires budget allocation for tools and training for teachers.
- **Benefits:** Reduces costs, increases teaching efficiency, and improves student outcomes.
- **Risks:** Data privacy concerns and resistance to adoption.
- **Trends:** AI adoption is growing in education globally.
- **Pilot Testing:** Test AI-enabled learning management systems.

- **Cost-Benefit:** ROI realized through enhanced student performance and reduced workload.

- **Scalability:** AI can adapt to handle larger student cohorts.

- **Decision:** Proceed with phased implementation starting with high-priority modules.

Logo	Company Name:	Form No.:
	የሥራና ክህሎት ሚኒስቴር **MINISTRY OF LABOR AND SKILLS**	OF/MoLS/TVT/029

Form Title:		Issue No:	Page No:
Training module format		**1**	Page 19 of 41

1.2. Determining suitable suppliers and Source information

Determining suitable suppliers and sourcing information for organizational needs involves a structured process to ensure that the chosen suppliers align with the organization's objectives, deliver quality services/products, and provide value for money. Below is a step-by-step guide:

1. Define Organizational Needs

- **Identify Requirements:** Clearly define the products, services, or solutions your organization needs.
- **Set Specifications:** Include quantity, quality, delivery timelines, and performance standards.
- **Budget Consideration:** Establish a budget or cost range for procurement.

2. Identify Potential Suppliers

- **Conduct Market Research:** Search for suppliers online, attend trade shows, or consult directories and professional networks.
- **Use Referrals:** Ask colleagues or industry contacts for recommended suppliers.
- **Leverage Technology:** Utilize procurement platforms like Alibaba, ThomasNet, or supplier databases.
- **Local vs. Global:** Decide whether local suppliers (for proximity) or global suppliers (for cost-effectiveness or specialization) are more suitable.

3. Evaluate Supplier Suitability
Criteria for Evaluation:

- **Reputation:** Research the supplier's history, reviews, and ratings.
- **Experience:** Check their track record in providing similar goods or services.
- **Certifications:** Look for relevant certifications (e.g., ISO, compliance with industry standards).
- **Financial Stability:** Ensure the supplier has the financial capability to fulfill long-term contracts.
- **Capacity:** Assess whether the supplier can meet your volume and scaling requirements.

Approval	Name:	Signature:	Date:

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Logo	Company Name:	Form No.:
	የሥራና ክህሎት ሚኒስቴር	OF/MoLS/TVT/029
	MINISTRY OF LABOR AND SKILLS	

| Form Title: | | Issue No: | Page No: |
| **Training module format** | | **1** | Page 20 of 41 |

Methods:

- **Request for Information (RFI):** Send RFIs to gather details about potential suppliers' capabilities.
- **Site Visits:** If possible, visit the supplier's facility to verify their infrastructure and quality control.

4. Gather Sourcing Information

- **Supplier Documents:**
  - ✓ Product catalogs
  - ✓ Pricing lists
  - ✓ Technical specifications
- **References:** Obtain references from other clients who have worked with the supplier.
- **Industry Reports:** Review market and industry analysis reports for supplier benchmarking.
- **Technology Platforms:** Use platforms like LinkedIn or procurement databases to access supplier details.

5. Conduct a Supplier Comparison

- **Develop a Scoring System:** Rate suppliers based on predefined criteria such as cost, quality, delivery time, and customer service.
- **Use Tools:**
  - ✓ SWOT Analysis: Analyze the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of each supplier.
  - ✓ Weighted Matrix: Assign weights to each criterion based on importance and calculate scores for each supplier.

6. Negotiate and Assess Value

- **Request for Proposal (RFP):** Send RFPs to shortlisted suppliers to get detailed quotes and proposals.

| Approval | Name: | Signature: | Date: |
| **PLEASE MAKE SURE THAT THIS IS THE CORRECT ISSUE BEFORE USE** | | | |

- **Negotiate Terms:** Discuss pricing, delivery terms, payment schedules, and penalties for non-compliance.
- **Trial Period:** If possible, start with a small trial order to test the supplier's reliability and product quality.

7. Ensure Compliance

- **Legal and Regulatory Checks:** Verify that the supplier complies with local and international regulations.
- **Contract Review:** Ensure the supplier's contract includes clauses for quality, timelines, and dispute resolution.

8. Monitor and Review Performance

- **Regular Evaluations:** Use KPIs like on-time delivery, defect rates, and customer satisfaction to monitor performance.
- **Feedback Loop:** Establish open communication with suppliers to address issues and improve service.
- **Backup Suppliers:** Always maintain relationships with alternative suppliers to mitigate risks.

Example: Finding a Supplier for Digital Tools

a) **Define Needs:** Sebeta Polytechnic College needs an LMS (Learning Management System) with features like student tracking and resource sharing.
b) **Identify Suppliers:** Research suppliers like Moodle, Blackboard, or local educational technology companies.
c) **Evaluate:** Compare based on pricing, customization options, support services, and reputation.
d) **Gather Information:** Request product demos, user reviews, and pricing structures.
e) **Negotiate:** Choose the supplier offering the best balance of price and features after negotiations.
f) **Trial:** Implement a trial for a small group before rolling out to the entire institution.

Logo	Company Name:	Form No.:
	የሥራና ክህሎት ሚኒስቴር **MINISTRY OF LABOR AND SKILLS**	OF/MoLS/TVT/029

Form Title:		Issue No:	Page No:
Training module format		**1**	Page 22 of 41

g) **Monitor:** Regularly evaluate the system's functionality and user feedback.

Logo	Company Name:	Form No.:
	የሥራና ክህሎት ሚኒስቴር	OF/MoLS/TVT/029
	MINISTRY OF LABOR AND SKILLS	

| Form Title: | | Issue No: | Page No: |
| | **Training module format** | **1** | Page 23 of 41 |

Self-check 1
True/False Questions

1. Establishing organizational needs involves identifying the specific resources, skills, systems, or strategies required to achieve the organization's goals.

2. SWOT analysis is used to measure employee performance and satisfaction exclusively.

3. Prioritizing organizational needs should consider urgency, impact, and feasibility.

4. Emerging technology analysis includes evaluating both benefits and risks.

5. Suppliers with no certifications should always be preferred if they offer the lowest cost.

Multiple Choice Questions

1. Which step is essential in establishing organizational needs?
   a) Randomly selecting new systems
   b) Engaging stakeholders
   c) Ignoring current resource gaps
   d) Using outdated methods

2. What tool helps identify organizational Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats?
   a) Gap Analysis
   b) Benchmarking
   c) SWOT Analysis
   d) Data Mining

3. When determining suppliers, which factor is NOT critical?
   a) Supplier's reputation
   b) Experience
   c) Personal friendship with the supplier
   d) Financial stability

4. What is the primary purpose of a trial period when assessing suppliers?
   a) To test the supplier's reliability and product quality
   b) To secure long-term discounts

Approval	Name:	Signature:	Date:

PLEASE MAKE SURE THAT THIS IS THE CORRECT ISSUE BEFORE USE

Logo	Company Name:	Form No.:
	የሥራና ክህሎት ሚኒስቴር **MINISTRY OF LABOR AND SKILLS**	OF/MoLS/TVT/029

Form Title:		Issue No:	Page No:
Training module format		**1**	Page 24 of 41

c) To delay the purchasing process

d) To increase paperwork

5. What is the first step in analyzing emerging technology for organizational needs?

   a) Pilot testing

   b) Conducting a cost-benefit analysis

   c) Understanding the technology

   d) Market benchmarking

Essay Questions

1. Explain the importance of establishing organizational needs and how it helps improve efficiency and focus.

2. Discuss the role of stakeholder engagement in determining organizational needs and prioritizing them effectively.

3. Describe the steps involved in evaluating the feasibility of adopting emerging technology for organizational growth.

4. How can an organization effectively monitor and review supplier performance to ensure alignment with its goals?

5. Provide an example of how Sebeta Polytechnic College could use technology to address an organizational need and improve its operations.

Logo	Company Name:	Form No.:
	የሥራና ክህሎት ሚኒስቴር **MINISTRY OF LABOR AND SKILLS**	OF/MoLS/TVT/029

Form Title:		Issue No:	Page No:
Training module format		**1**	Page 25 of 41

Operation Sheet 1.1

Operation Sheet Title: Selection Criteria for Hardware, Software, or System

Purpose

To identify and evaluate the necessary hardware, software, or system that meets organizational needs, ensuring optimal performance, compatibility, and cost-effectiveness.

Conditions or situations for the operations:

Consider the specific conditions under which the equipment or software will operate (e.g., office, field, harsh environments).

Equipment Tools and Materials:

- Laptops, servers, network devices, printers, etc.
- Diagnostic tools for hardware testing (e.g., benchmarking software, temperature sensors).

Quality Criteria: Integration with existing systems, operating environments, and network infrastructure.

Precautions:

- Only work with established vendors with good support services and a solid reputation in the market.
- Ensure that compatibility, performance, and stress testing are performed to validate the hardware or software.

Procedures

1. Define Functional Requirements
2. Define Performance Standards
3. Evaluate Compatibility and Integration
4. Define Security and Compliance Requirements
5. Assess Usability and User Experience
6. Cost-Effectiveness and Total Cost of Ownership
7. Vendor Reputation and Support

Approval	Name:	Signature:	Date:

Logo	Company Name:	Form No.:
	የሥራና ክህሎት ሚኒስቴር **MINISTRY OF LABOR AND SKILLS**	OF/MoLS/TVT/029

Form Title:		Issue No:	Page No:
Training module format		**1**	Page 26 of 41

Logo	Company Name:	Form No.:
		OF/MoLS/TVT/029
	የሥራና ክህሎት ሚኒስቴር	
	MINISTRY OF LABOR AND SKILLS	

| Form Title: | Issue No: | Page No: |
| **Training module format** | **1** | Page 27 of 41 |

LAP Test

Practical Demonstration

Name: _____   **Date:** _____

Time started: _____   **Time finished:** _____

Instruction: Perform the following tasks

Task 1 Select Hardware, Software, or System using the given Criteria

Unit Two: Evaluating researched result

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This unit is developed to provide you the necessary information regarding the following content coverage and topics
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- Reviewing and testing Hardware
- Reporting and Documenting finding

This unit will also assist you to attain the learning outcomes stated in the cover page. Specifically, upon completion of this Training Module, you will be able to:

- Review and testing Hardware
- Report and Documenting finding

2.1. Review and Test Hardware for Organizational Needs

When reviewing and testing hardware for organizational purposes, it's essential to ensure the selected equipment meets performance, compatibility, and reliability standards. This ensures that the hardware aligns with organizational goals and provides value for money.

Steps to Review and Test Hardware

- Identify Hardware Requirements
  - ✓ **Define Organizational Needs:** Specify the purpose of the hardware (e.g., servers for data storage, laptops for employees, or network devices for connectivity).
  - ✓ **Set Specifications:** Outline technical requirements like processing speed, memory, storage capacity, or compatibility with existing systems.
  - ✓ **Budget Allocation:** Determine the budget for procurement.

- Research and Shortlist Options

  - ✓ **Market Research:** Gather information on available hardware options from trusted manufacturers.
  - ✓ **Reviews:** Check user reviews, industry reports, and expert evaluations.
  - ✓ **Brand Reputation:** Prioritize reputable brands with reliable customer service and warranties.
  - ✓ **Supplier Quotes:** Request quotes and compare pricing for shortlisted options.

- Compatibility Assessment

  - ✓ **System Integration:** Ensure the hardware integrates seamlessly with existing software, network infrastructure, and systems.
  - ✓ **Future Proofing:** Assess the potential for scalability and adaptability to future upgrades.
  - ✓ **Environment Suitability:** Ensure the hardware suits the operational environment (e.g., rugged devices for harsh conditions).

- Perform Hardware Testing

  ✓ **Trial Period or Demo:** Arrange for a demo unit or trial period before finalizing the purchase.
  ✓ **Test Scenarios:** Simulate real-world conditions during the testing phase:

    - **Performance Testing:** Evaluate speed, reliability, and multitasking capabilities.
    - **Stress Testing:** Push hardware to its limits to check stability.
    - **Compatibility Testing:** Ensure the hardware works with existing systems and software.
    - **User Testing:** Allow end-users to test the hardware for usability and satisfaction.

- Evaluate Cost-Benefit

  ✓ **Direct Costs:** Include purchase price, installation, and setup costs.
  ✓ **Indirect Costs:** Assess maintenance, training, and operational expenses.
  ✓ **Return on Investment (ROI):** Compare the expected benefits (e.g., increased productivity) to the total cost.

- Check Reliability and Durability

  ✓ **Warranty and Support:** Confirm warranty terms and after-sales support services.
  ✓ **Durability:** Test for reliability under typical and extreme working conditions.
  ✓ **Failure Rate:** Research failure rates or reviews for long-term reliability.

- Finalize Procurement and Implementation

  ✓ **Supplier Agreement:** Finalize terms with the supplier, ensuring clear clauses on delivery, warranties, and support.
  ✓ **Documentation:** Keep all receipts, warranty cards, and manuals for future reference.
  ✓ **Deployment:** Install and configure the hardware in the designated environment.

Practical Example: Testing a New Server for Sebeta Polytechnic College

Requirement:

- High-performance server to support the digital registration system.

Testing Process:

a) **Performance:**

  ✓ Run simulated registration tasks to evaluate the server's processing capacity.

b) **Stress Testing:**

  ✓ Test with high traffic volumes (e.g., thousands of concurrent users).

c) **Compatibility:**

  ✓ Integrate with the current network and verify software compatibility.

d) **Reliability:**

  ✓ Monitor server uptime and temperature under continuous operation.

e) **User Feedback:**

  ✓ IT team tests the server for usability and efficiency.

2.2. Reporting and Documenting Findings

Reporting and documenting findings is a critical process to ensure that insights, recommendations, and results from a review or analysis are clearly communicated to stakeholders. An effective report provides a comprehensive and structured way to document outcomes, support decision-making, and maintain accountability.

Steps for Reporting and Documenting Findings
- Define the Purpose of the Report

  ✓ **Objective:** Identify why the report is being prepared (e.g., sharing results, making recommendations, or documenting progress).
  ✓ **Audience:** Determine who will read the report (e.g., managers, team members, or external stakeholders). Tailor the content and tone to the audience's needs.

- Structure the Report

An organized structure ensures clarity and readability. Here's a common format:

- **Title Page:** Include the report title, date, author(s), and recipient(s).
- **Executive Summary:** Summarize the key findings, conclusions, and recommendations in a concise manner (1-2 paragraphs).
- **Introduction:**
  ✓ State the purpose of the report.
  ✓ Provide background information and context.
  ✓ Describe the scope and methodology used.
- **Findings:**
  ✓ Present data, evidence, or results gathered during the review or analysis.
  ✓ Use tables, charts, or diagrams for clarity.
  ✓ Organize findings by category or theme.
- **Analysis:**

      ✓ Interpret the findings, identifying trends, patterns, or gaps.

      ✓ Highlight implications or impacts.

- **Conclusions:**

      ✓ Summarize the key takeaways from the findings and analysis.

- **Recommendations:**

      ✓ Provide actionable suggestions based on the findings.

      ✓ Prioritize recommendations by urgency or impact.

- **Supporting Documents:** Attach relevant data, survey results, or appendices.

- Ensure Clarity and Accuracy

      ✓ **Data Accuracy:** Double-check all numbers, statistics, and information for correctness.

      ✓ **Language Clarity:** Use clear, concise, and jargon-free language that your audience can understand.

      ✓ **Visual Aids:** Incorporate graphs, charts, or infographics to enhance understanding.

- Use Tools and Formats

      ✓ **Documentation Tools:** Use software like Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint, or specialized reporting tools (e.g., Tableau for data visualization).

      ✓ **File Format:** Share the report in widely accepted formats like PDF or DOCX to ensure accessibility.

- Communicate Findings Effectively

      ✓ **Oral Presentation:** Complement the written report with a verbal presentation if needed.

      ✓ **Highlight Key Points:** Focus on the most critical findings and recommendations.

      ✓ **Answer Questions:** Be prepared to clarify or elaborate on the documented information.

Logo	Company Name:	Form No.:
	የሥራና ክህሎት ሚኒስቴር **MINISTRY OF LABOR AND SKILLS**	OF/MoLS/TVT/029

Form Title:		Issue No:	Page No:
	Training module format	**1**	Page 34 of 41

- Archive and Maintain Records

  ✓ **Documentation Storage:** Store the report in a centralized location (e.g., a shared drive or document management system).

  ✓ **Version Control:** Clearly label and manage versions of the document for future reference.

  ✓ **Follow-Up:** Track the implementation of recommendations and update the report if necessary.

Example: Reporting Findings for Sebeta Polytechnic College

Scenario: Reporting findings from a hardware testing project for the college's digital registration system.

Report Outline:

1. **Title Page:**
   ✓ "Hardware Testing Report for Digital Registration System"
   ✓ Prepared by: [Your Name]
   ✓ Date: [Insert Date]

2. **Executive Summary:**
   ✓ Summary of hardware performance, compatibility, and recommended next steps.

3. **Introduction:**
   ✓ Purpose: To document findings from testing the server for the digital registration system.
   ✓ Background: Overview of the college's current infrastructure and the need for new hardware.

4. **Findings:**
   ✓ **Performance:** The server met the required benchmarks, handling 5,000 concurrent users.
   ✓ **Compatibility:** Fully compatible with the college's existing network.
   ✓ **Reliability:** Maintained 99.9% uptime during testing.

Logo	Company Name:	Form No.:
	የሥራና ክህሎት ሚኒስቴር	OF/MoLS/TVT/029
	MINISTRY OF LABOR AND SKILLS	

| Form Title: | | Issue No: | Page No: |
| **Training module format** | | **1** | Page 35 of 41 |

5. **Analysis:**

  ✓ The server's performance exceeds expectations and supports scalability for future growth.

6. **Conclusions:**

  ✓ The tested hardware is suitable for deployment.

7. **Recommendations:**

  ✓ Purchase and deploy the server by [specific timeline].

  ✓ Train IT staff on maintenance and troubleshooting.

8. **Supporting Documents:**

  ✓ Test results, performance graphs, and supplier comparison charts.

Logo	Company Name:		Form No.:
	የሥራና ክህሎት ሚኒስቴር **MINISTRY OF LABOR AND SKILLS**		OF/MoLS/TVT/029

Form Title:		Issue No:	Page No:
Training module format		**1**	Page 36 of 41

Self-Check 2
True/False Questions

1. It is important to evaluate the hardware's compatibility with existing systems during the testing process.

2. Stress testing is optional when reviewing hardware for organizational purposes.

3. Including graphs and charts in a report makes the findings easier to understand.

4. The main goal of reporting findings is to make recommendations and document progress.

5. Documentation of findings can be informal and does not need to be stored for future reference.

Multiple-Choice Questions

1. What is the primary reason for conducting stress testing during hardware evaluation?
   A. To determine cost-effectiveness
   B. To ensure scalability
   C. To check stability under high traffic or workload
   D. To integrate with existing software

2. Which of the following is NOT part of the steps for reviewing and testing hardware?
   A. Budget allocation
   B. Training IT staff on new hardware
   C. Compatibility testing
   D. Stress testing

3. What should be included in the findings section of a hardware testing report?
   A. Data and results gathered during the analysis
   B. Budget plans for future projects
   C. Personal opinions of the IT team
   D. None of the above

4. Which of these tools is most suitable for visualizing data in a hardware testing report?
   A. Microsoft Word
   B. Tableau

Logo	Company Name:		Form No.:
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Form Title:		Issue No:	Page No:
Training module format		**1**	Page 37 of 41

C. Notepad

D. Gmail

5. Why is archiving and maintaining documentation critical after reporting?

   A. To ensure reports are available for future reference

   B. To allow managers to destroy irrelevant data

   C. To save costs on server maintenance

   D. To finalize agreements with suppliers

Essay Questions

1. Explain the importance of testing hardware under real-world scenarios before finalizing a purchase.

2. Discuss how a cost-benefit evaluation impacts the decision-making process in hardware procurement.

3. Why is it necessary to tailor reports to the intended audience, and how does it affect decision-making?

4. Provide a detailed outline of the steps you would take to test a new server for Sebeta Polytechnic College.

5. Analyze the role of documentation tools in enhancing the clarity and accuracy of reports.

Logo	Company Name:	Form No.:
	የሥራና ክህሎት ሚኒስቴር **MINISTRY OF LABOR AND SKILLS**	OF/MoLS/TVT/029

Form Title: **Training module format**	Issue No: **1**	Page No: Page 38 of 41

Operation Sheet 2.2

Operation Sheet Title: Reviewing and Testing Hardware

Purpose

- ✓ To ensure the selected hardware meets organizational requirements for performance, compatibility, and reliability.

Conditions or situations for the operations:

- ✓ Hardware must integrate seamlessly with current systems.
- ✓ Hardware should support expected operational load and future growth.

Equipment Tools and Materials:

- ✓ Testing devices (e.g., diagnostic tools, load testing software).
- ✓ Performance monitoring tools (e.g., stress testing software).

Quality Criteria: Meets speed, reliability, and multitasking requirements

Precautions:

- ✓ Perform performance, stress, and compatibility tests.
- ✓ Choose reputable vendors with strong customer support.
- ✓ Ensure backup systems are in place before testing new hardware.

Procedures

Step1: Identify Hardware Requirements

Step2: Research and Shortlist Options

Step3: Compatibility Assessment

Step4: Perform Hardware Testing

Step5: Evaluate Cost-Benefit

Step6: Check Reliability and Durability

Step7: Finalize Procurement and Implementation

Approval	Name:	Signature:	Date:
PLEASE MAKE SURE THAT THIS IS THE CORRECT ISSUE BEFORE USE			

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	የሥራና ክህሎት ሚኒስቴር **MINISTRY OF LABOR AND SKILLS**	OF/MoLS/TVT/029

	Form Title:	Issue No:	Page No:
	Training module format	**1**	Page 39 of 41

LAP Test

Practical Demonstration

Name: _____   **Date:** _____

Time started: _____   **Time finished:** _____

Instruction: Perform the following tasks

Task 1 Review and Test Hardware

Logo	Company Name:	Form No.:
	የሥራና ክህሎት ሚኒስቴር	OF/MoLS/TVT/029
	MINISTRY OF LABOR AND SKILLS	

| Form Title: | | Issue No: | Page No: |
| **Training module format** | | **1** | Page 40 of 41 |

References

Reference Books and Websites

1. **Books**

   1. "Computer Hardware: The Illustrated Guide to Understanding Computer Hardware" by Karen Judd Smith.
   2. "IT Hardware and Networking Essentials" by Mike Meyers.
   3. "Managing IT Systems: A Practical Guide" by Michael W. Graves.
   4. "Enterprise IT Infrastructure: Planning, Design, and Deployment" by Sjaak Laan.

2. **Websites**

   1. TechRadar (www.techradar.com)
   2. CNET (www.cnet.com)
   3. PCMag (www.pcmag.com)
   4. Tom's Hardware (www.tomshardware.com)
   5. Gartner IT Research (www.gartner.com)

| Approval | Name: | Signature: | Date: |
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