

Visual Merchandiser SYLLABUS/ CURRICULUM

This Programme is aimed at training candidates for the job of “Visual Merchandiser”, in the “Retail” Sector/Industry and by the end of the program aims at building the following key competencies amongst the learner:

1	Enhance store visibility by implementing attractive visual displays to support store profitability	2	Comply to store policies, merchandising norms and statutory regulations while executing themes and plots
3	Collect and analyze data to track the visual impact of promotions and events	4	Maintain visual merchandising elements in the store as per brand and store guidelines
5	Update self on industry trends and best practices through continuous learning and innovation	6	Liaise effectively with internal and external stakeholders to effectively implement visual merchandising plans

This course encompasses 6/6 NOS of “Visual Merchandiser” - RAS/Q0402, Qualification Pack issued by RASCI.

S.No	Module/Topic	Durati on (hrs)	Key Learning Outcomes	NOS Code
1.	Enhance store visibility by implementing attractive visual displays to support store profitability		Performance Criteria The learners will be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify industry and company trends with respect to products and marketing thereof • Identify target customer base, category-wise sales pattern, market trends • Identify elements such as available space, lighting, props and visual merchandising accessories in order to design relevant and effective plots and themes • Identify possible problems in putting layouts together and work out ways of sorting them out • Create displays that achieve the visual effect as required and are consistent with the company’s visual design policy • Follow company procedures for using ladders, tools and equipment safely • Use the design brief to identify the focal points of the display • Identify seasonality and past sales patterns with respect to the merchandise category 	RAS/N0401

S.No	Module/Topic	Duration (hrs)	Key Learning Outcomes	NOS Code
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify related categories across which merchandising themes and events can be planned • Match customer needs to category advantages and benefits • Identify opportunities for cross selling across related categories in order to design effective schemes • Design and validate relevant offers and merchandising themes • Implement relevant offers and merchandising themes • Position merchandise, graphics and signs according to guidelines and in ways that attract the attention and interest of customers and give customers the information they need • Implement and adhere to themes and plots in accordance with the above variables so as to maximize returns for the desired category in the store • Choose shapes, colors and groupings that are suited to the purpose and style of the display • Check that the finished display meets health and safety guidelines and legal requirements • List tasks and activities involved in the merchandising plan • Create visual displays based on the requirements set by the marketing department • Finalize designs and create detailed floor plans • Assemble and dismantle displays, if and when required • Assess resources involved in executing the merchandising plan • Ensure the availability of resources required to execute the merchandising plan • Implement merchandising plan/theme at the store • Assess the merchandising plan and record observations related to the same • Measure performance of merchandising plans/themes • Group merchandise appropriately for the purpose and style of display, the selling features of the merchandise and the visual effect needed under the design brief 	

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep abreast of information on faltering categories, slow moving categories and ageing products in store • Create innovative merchandising themes and plots to improve performance of such categories for the specific store • Validate merchandising themes and plots with all concerned stakeholders • Implement the approved merchandising themes and plots • Evaluate performance of merchandising themes and plots post implementation • Accurately identify health, safety and security arrangements from plans, elevations and drawings <p>Knowledge and Understanding Organizational Context: The learners will be able to apply knowledge of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevant legislation, standards, policies, and procedures followed in the company • Relevant legislation, standards, policies, and procedures followed by brands • Various props used in merchandising themes and plots • Vendors and supplier details for procurement and their terms and conditions • How to identify the health, safety and security arrangements needed for layouts • What layout design is and its part in effective visual design practice • The techniques of layout design, including drawing conventions and standards • Who can make decisions when you have problems with layouts • How to work out what activities and resources you need to put layouts together • How to create and use focal points within a display • How to put together merchandising displays for use inside the store • How to choose and combine dimension, shape, color, texture and lighting to create the visual effect you need from a display • How to display different types of merchandise and props • How to choose a suitable type of grouping merchandise 	

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to use different types, directions and levels of light to create atmosphere • How displays can achieve add-on sales and why this is important • Why is it expected to install creative displays and to be aware of trends • Different approaches to displaying merchandise and how to choose the best approach • How props, prototypes, dressing and fixtures create visual effects • How to identify the selling features of merchandise to be used in displays • The legal requirements which apply to pricing and ticketing • Why different kinds of merchandise need different approaches to display, and what these approaches are • The dressing techniques to use for different types of merchandise <p>Technical Knowledge: The learner will be able to apply technical knowledge of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business profitability parameters – return of shelf space • Category merchandising norms • Consumer behavior • Schematic presentations of merchandising themes and plots • Effects of seasonality on different categories of products being sold • Factors affecting customers buying behavior for a particular category • Store sales data for various categories 	
2.	Comply to store policies, merchandising norms and statutory regulations while executing themes and plots		<p>Performance Criteria The learners will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and adhere to store policies and budgets with respect to visual merchandising • Identify and adhere to statutory guidelines with respect to visual merchandising • Describe vendor guidelines with respect to visual merchandising • Describe category and brand norms with respect to visual merchandising • Check the suitability and availability of merchandise with the relevant decision-makers 	RAS/N0402

S.No	Module/Topic	Duration (hrs)	Key Learning Outcomes	NOS Code
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reach agreement with decision-makers concerning realistic arrangements and timescales for supply • Promptly make other arrangements to get hold of merchandise if it is not available within your timescales and cost limits <p>Knowledge and Understanding Organizational Context: The learners will be able to apply knowledge of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevant legislation, standards, policies, and procedures followed by company and brand • Service request procedures, tools, and techniques • How to compare selected merchandise with the display requirements • How to check whether merchandise is available • How to arrange for merchandise to be delivered • The different purposes of displays and their use in visual merchandising • Different approaches to use for displaying different kinds of merchandise • The decision-makers who you need to agree your choices of merchandise with • The people who can supply the merchandise you need for display <p>Technical Knowledge: The learner will be able to apply technical knowledge of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Category merchandising norms • Brand policies, statutory regulations 	
3.	Collect and analyze data to track the visual impact of promotions and events		<p>Performance Criteria The learners will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Track visual impact of all promotions and events organized by the head office/brands/store • Identify parameters to be observed and recorded to assess impact of promotions and events • Compare current data trends with past data trends • Agree suitable standards for assessing the effect of displays and layouts 	RAS/N0403

S.No	Module/Topic	Duration (hrs)	Key Learning Outcomes	NOS Code
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draw inferences that are reasonable in terms of the purpose of the display and customers' responses to it • Identify improvements in the way visual merchandising is carried out at the store • Report findings and recommendations clearly to decision-makers • Assess information fairly when reviewing the effect of displays and layouts • Check that all the parts of the display are suitable for the purpose of the display and meet requirements • Check that the display meets requirements for easy access, safety and security • Identify safety and security risks to the display and choose suitable ways of reducing risks • Promptly make any adjustments within scope of authority that are needed to achieve the visual effect and to make the display safe and secure • Regularly check the display's visual effect from the customers view • Promptly report to the right person any problems and risks that are beyond the scope of responsibility • Gather enough information to allow you to make judgments about customers' responses to displays and layouts • Accurately interpret information about customers' responses <p>Knowledge and Understanding Organizational Context: The learners will be able to apply knowledge of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stock movement of different product categories in the store • Ageing stocks in various categories • The company's visual design and merchandising policy • The meaning of 'validity' and 'reliability' in relation to interpreting information about customers' responses to displays and layouts • How to judge fairly the evidence of customers' responses against the agreed standards for displays and layouts • How to draw reasonable conclusions about the effect of displays and layouts, bearing in 	

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			<p>mind the purpose of the display or layout and customers' responses to it</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to recognize improvements to be made to the way visual merchandising is carried out at the store • How to present findings and recommendations clearly to decision-makers • How to evaluate the visual effect of displays • How light, color, texture, shape and dimension combine to achieve the visual effects needed for a display • Different approaches to using displays for different types of merchandise • The dressing techniques for different types of merchandise • How much authority one has to change displays • Company procedures and requirements for collecting information about customers' responses to displays <p>Technical Knowledge: The learner will be able to apply technical knowledge of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marketing basics • Consumer behavior • Market trends • Information on relevant themes and plans executed in the past • Information on relevant themes and plans by competition/industry • Different ways of analyzing promotion data • Promotional strategies 	
4.	Maintain visual merchandising elements in the store as per brand and store guidelines		<p>Performance Criteria The learners will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement checks and balances to ensure up-keep of tools, displays, fixtures and props of existing themes • Organize for new props in case of damaged/ distressed props, displays, fixtures and tools • Establish uniformity of displays across stores • Collect and record accurate information on price changes • Give accurate, up-to-date price information to the staff who need it • Regularly check price marking and promptly sort out any pricing problems you spot 	RAS/N0404

S.No	Module/Topic	Duration (hrs)	Key Learning Outcomes	NOS Code
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make sure that stock replenishment plans are up-to-date and realistic • Deal with out-of-date or deteriorating stock in line with company policy and any relevant laws • Involve staff in spotting potential improvements to the way stock is organised and presented • Get permission from the right person, where necessary, to improve the way stock is organised and presented • Make sure that you maintain customer goodwill and staff morale while stock is being reorganized • Ensure compliance to all safety measures <p>Knowledge and Understanding Organizational Context: The learners will be able to apply knowledge of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elements of visual merchandising like props, fixtures etc. • Brand norms with respect to visual merchandising elements • Organizational norms with respect to visual merchandising elements • Statutory norms with respect to visual merchandising elements • Process of changing/modifying/updating visual merchandising elements • How to collect and record information about prices • How to check stock rotation and the quality of goods on display • What can happen to stock that is not stored correctly or renewed as needed • How to replenish and rotate stock and deal with sub-standard goods • How to check pricing and price marking, correct mistakes and change prices • Why it is important to record price changes accurately <p>Technical Knowledge: The learner will be able to apply technical knowledge of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brand policies, statutory regulations • How to maintain visual merchandising elements 	

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most commonly used processes to maintain tools, displays, fixtures and props of existing themes 	
5.	Update self on industry trends and best practices through continuous learning and innovation		<p>Performance Criteria The learners will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collect information about business operations from relevant sources to evaluate the potential for improvement within one's area of responsibility Monitor and analyse information sufficiently to reveal any actual or potential problems Encourage staff and colleagues to identify potential improvements and to comment constructively on others' ideas Assess potential improvements for their relevance, practicality, consistency with organisation policy and style and ease of implementation Select ideas for suggestion and implementation which offer the greatest potential for maximising the benefits to the business and the client Make recommendations for improvements to management in a form which is suitable for their use and supported by relevant information Explain the benefits which improvements could bring and the resources needed to implement improvements Communicate appropriately to the decision makers Give decision makers adequate opportunities to ask questions and to seek clarification Monitor and evaluate information about improvements and their purpose to find out whether they are effective Confirm and clarify the content and time-scales of implementation with decision makers Explain plans to relevant individuals in a manner which encourages understanding and effective implementation Give appropriate support, encouragement, advice and orientation to individuals for as long as is necessary to achieve effective implementation 	RAS/N0405

S.No	Module/Topic	Duration (hrs)	Key Learning Outcomes	NOS Code
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek advice and support as soon as possible when specific implementation problems come to light • Demonstrate, in your behaviour, commitment to achieving the benefits of the improvement throughout implementation • Identify market trends and running offers from comparative brands • Share data and relevant reports with concerned stakeholders • Co-create promotions and offers as per business demand • Study success stories and examples • Identify running offers and their returns from wholesale and brand stores • Share data with store managers and marketing supervisors <p>Knowledge and Understanding Organizational Context: The learners will be able to apply knowledge of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to identify where and the reasons why standards are not being met • How to determine the action needed to correct problems and deviations from standards • How to identify how performance can be improved or enhanced against standards • How to select and use different approaches to generating improvement ideas from staff • The organization's quality standards and norms • Organization systems, procedures and policies that are relevant to one's area of responsibility • How to determine and assess the benefits which improvements could bring against the resources which would need to be expended • How to develop proposals for improvements which relate to the organization's policy and standards • How to disseminate, present and communicate improvements and benefits/expenditure • The effect of his/her communication and behavior, whilst explaining improvements, that can have on staff's response to implementation plans 	

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Industry best practices • International benchmarks • Comparative brands • Running offers and their effectiveness within and outside the company <p>Technical Knowledge: The learner will be able to apply technical knowledge of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to design effective promotions and offers • Usage of relevant tools to present promotions in the most efficient manner • Consumer behavior • Market trends • Marketing basics 	
6.	Liaise effectively with internal and external stakeholders to effectively implement visual merchandising plans		<p>Performance Criteria The learners will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify external stakeholders and the nature of their interest in the activities and performance of the organisation • Establish working relationships with relevant internal and external stakeholders • Recognise and respect the roles, responsibilities, interests and concerns of stakeholders and particularly in situations of matrix management, their managers' requirements • Create a climate of trust and mutual respect, particularly where one has no authority, or shared authority, over those he/she is working with • Understand difficult situations and issues from stakeholders' perspectives and provide support, where necessary, to move things forward • Provide stakeholders with appropriate information to enable them to perform effectively • Consult stakeholders in relation to key decisions and activities and take account of their views, including their priorities, expectations and attitudes to potential risks • Fulfil agreements made with stakeholders and let them know • Advise stakeholders promptly of any difficulties or where it will be impossible to fulfil agreements • Identify and resolve conflicts of interest and 	RAS/N0406

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			<p>disagreements with stakeholders in ways that minimise damage to work and activities and to the stakeholders involved</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor and review the effectiveness of working relationships with stakeholders in order to identify areas for improvement • Seek and provide feedback in order to improve one's own and stakeholders' performance • Monitor wider developments in order to identify issues of potential interest or concern to stakeholders in the future and to identify new stakeholders • Enhance store team awareness about visual merchandising and its importance • Collaborate with team to create design themes and plans and to ensure smooth and efficient implementation of events • Collaborate with business, sales managers and retail managers to discuss sales strategies • Identify resources needed for implementation of visual merchandising guidelines/events/themes • Identify vendor support required for store specific events • Liaison with vendor to ensure availability of required resources in a timely manner • Adhere to checklist for vendor payments • Ensure vendor meets the terms and conditions of business <p>Knowledge and Understanding Organizational Context:</p> <p>The learners will be able to apply knowledge of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The benefits of developing productive working relationships with stakeholders • How to identify organization's stakeholders, including background information and the nature of their interest in the organization • Principles of effective communication and how to apply them in order to communicate effectively with stakeholders • Why it is important to recognize and respect the roles, responsibilities, interests and concerns of stakeholders • The importance of creating a climate of trust and mutual respect where one has no authority, or shared authority, over those he/she is working with 	

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The importance of understanding difficult situations and issues from other perspectives and providing support, where necessary, to move things forward How to identify and meet the information needs of stakeholders How to consult with stakeholders in relation to key decisions and activities How to identify conflicts of interest with stakeholders and the techniques that can be used to manage or remove them. How to manage the expectations of stakeholders How to monitor and review the effectiveness of working relationships with stakeholders How to get and make effective use of feedback from stakeholders Current and emerging trends and developments in your industry or sector Sector-specific legislation, regulations, guidelines and codes of practice Mechanisms for consulting with stakeholders on key decisions and activities The organization's planning and decision-making processes Standards of behavior and performance that are expected in the organization Mechanisms in place for monitoring and reviewing the effectiveness of working relationships with stakeholders <p>Technical Knowledge: The learner will be able to apply technical knowledge of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vendor management 	
Core Skills / Generic Skills				
8.	Writing Skills		<p>On the job the individual needs to be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete data sheets on events being organized Generate accurate reports as required by concerned stakeholders Document reports Document checks and balances Write memos and e-mail to customers, co-workers, and vendors to provide them with work updates and to request appropriate information without English language errors regarding grammar or sentence construct 	All 6 NOSs

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9.	Reading Skills		<p>On the job the individual needs to be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read and understand relevant documents received from the head office/industry /brand owners/store • Read and understand documents critical for store's performance • Read and interpret critical job-related reports • Read and interpret notices and circulars related to guidelines and norms • Read collected promotion data • Read about new processes/tools • Interpret instructional documents such as safety rules, operating and maintenance instructions, and procedure manuals • Read about new products and services with reference to the organization and also from external forums such as websites and blogs • Keep abreast with the latest knowledge by reading brochures, pamphlets, and product information sheets • Read comments, suggestions, and responses to Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) posted on the helpdesk portal • Read information accurately 	All 6 NOSs
10.	Oral Communication (Listening and Speaking skills)		<p>On the job the individual needs to be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain merchandising themes and plans to store members and customers • Understand customer's queries regarding the implemented scheme • Answer queries using appropriate communication skills • Accept and communicate feedback on the plans/schemes • Communicate with vendors as per requirements • Explain guidelines and directives to team members and customers • Complete tasks allocated by relevant stakeholders • Accept and communicate feedback on the plans/scheme • Explain the importance of collecting promotion/event data to the store team • Communicate the efficacy of the promotion/event to relevant stake holders • Convey feedback of promotion to organizers of the promotion/event 	All 6 NOSs

S.No	Module/Topic	Duration (hrs)	Key Learning Outcomes	NOS Code
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discuss task lists, schedules, and work-loads with co-workers Give clear instructions to store members Question customers appropriately in order to understand the nature of the problem and make a diagnosis Use questioning and active listening to determine and respond to stakeholder queries 	
Professional Skills				
11.	Decision Making		On the job the individual needs to be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make decisions pertaining to the concerned area of work 	All 6 NOSs
12.	Analytical Thinking		On the job the individual needs to be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify customer buying behavior and plan merchandising schemes accordingly Analyze data collected in reports to be able to plan future merchandising events Use the existing data to arrive at specific data points Use the existing data points to generate required reports for business Accurately analyze and interpret the findings for key stakeholders to provide actionable solutions Interpret and infer data Break down complex problems into single and manageable components within his/her area of work 	All 6 NOSs
13.	Critical Thinking		On the job the individual needs to be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Apply, analyze, and evaluate the information gathered from observation, experience, reasoning, or communication, as a guide to thought and action 	All 6 NOSs
14.	Problem Solving		On the job the individual needs to be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Anticipate problems and act to avoid them where possible Resolve problems related to sourcing and allocating of resources during implementation of merchandising plans Identify immediate or temporary solutions to resolve delays Think through the problem, evaluate the possible solution(s) and suggest an optimum /best possible solution(s) Capture, identify and act quickly on changing in-store conditions compared to others brands Co-create long term solutions for identified 	All 6 NOSs

S.No	Module/Topic	Duration (hrs)	Key Learning Outcomes	NOS Code
			problems	
15.	Customer Centricity		On the job the individual needs to be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure thorough implementation so as to enhance customer experience • Remove all process glitches possible in the plan/scheme • Incorporate customer feedback in the data analysis • Manage relationships with customers who may be stressed, confused, or angry • Build customer relationships and use customer centric approach • Collaborate with internal stakeholders to address customer needs 	All 6 NOSs
16.	Plan and Organize		On the job the individual needs to be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan and organize all necessary tasks to ensure smooth implementation of merchandising themes and plots • Plan and organize during implementation of merchandising plans • Plan and organize promotion/feedback data collected • Plan and organize feedback files/documents • Organize and complete multiple projects simultaneously • Plan, organize and deliver as per commitments made to respective stakeholders 	All 6 NOSs

(This syllabus/ curriculum has been approved by RASCI)