

Unit 3: Providing Customer Service in Hospitality

Unit code:	R/601/0433
QCF Level 3:	BTEC National
Credit value:	8
Guided learning hours:	40

● Aim and purpose

The aim of this unit is to enable learners to gain understanding of the role of communication, presentation and teamwork in customer service and develop customer service skills in hospitality.

● Unit introduction

The success of a hospitality business is judged by its ability to attract and retain customers based on its reputation for quality products and services. Issues such as customer satisfaction, brand loyalty, exceeding customer expectations and ensuring repeat custom are critical for the growth, development and success of the hospitality industry. This unit introduces learners to the principles of customer service and the part employees play in retaining existing customers and attracting new ones.

Understanding and applying good customer service skills is a key requirement of this unit. Learners will come to appreciate how customer service and appropriate interpersonal skills contribute to the success of a hospitality business. They will be given the opportunity to practise and show customer service support, using appropriate communication and presentation techniques to meet customers' needs. Using a variety of hospitality-based situations, learners will be taught how to satisfy different types of customers and their specific needs.

The ability to measure the effectiveness of customer care is a key requirement for any successful hospitality business. Learners will explore the key factors used to measure, monitor and evaluate customer service within the hospitality industry. They will be encouraged to suggest improvements and make recommendations as to how customer service provision can be improved.

● Learning outcomes

On completion of this unit a learner should:

- 1 Understand the role of communication, presentation and teamwork in customer service in hospitality
- 2 Be able to provide customer service to meet the needs of customers in different hospitality situations.

Unit content

1 Understand the role of communication, presentation and teamwork in customer service in hospitality

Communication: one-way eg using public address; two-way; verbal eg face-to-face, telephone; non-verbal eg written; electronic eg email, internet; listening skills; barriers to communication

Customer requirements: when making a booking eg accurate information, timely response; when making a complaint eg knowing that problem is understood, outcome will be communicated; when customer has specific needs

Presentation: of self eg first impressions, hygiene, appearance, attitude; of working environment eg tidy, well stocked, secure, health and safety; of front office; of other areas eg car parks; of official publicity and communications

Teamwork: motivation; team formation; team roles (front of house, back of house), differing characteristics of team members; delegation; lines of authority; mentoring

2 Be able to provide customer service to meet the needs of customers in different hospitality situations

Different types of customer: internal eg front of house, back of house, support staff; external eg individuals, groups, business travellers, VIPs, corporate, people with young children, suppliers; with specific needs eg mobility impaired, sensory problems, dietary requirements, different cultures, non-English speakers

Customer needs: quality of hospitality products and services; value for money; timing (urgent, non-urgent); special requirements; healthy, safe and secure environment

Situations: providing information or advice; sales; dealing with problems or complaints; dealing with praise (verbal, written); health and safety

Records: procedures eg taking payments, issuing receipts, taking bookings, keeping health and safety records

Assessment and grading criteria

In order to pass this unit, the evidence that the learner presents for assessment needs to demonstrate that they can meet all the learning outcomes for the unit. The assessment criteria for a pass grade describe the level of achievement required to pass this unit.

Assessment and grading criteria		
To achieve a pass grade the evidence must show that the learner is able to:	To achieve a merit grade the evidence must show that, in addition to the pass criteria, the learner is able to:	To achieve a distinction grade the evidence must show that, in addition to the pass and merit criteria, the learner is able to:
P1 explain the role of communication, presentation and teamwork in the provision of customer service in hospitality businesses [IE 1, 2, 3, 4]	M1 analyse how different communication types are used to exceed customer requirements	D1 propose realistic improvements for communication, presentation and teamwork to the provision of customer service in a selected hospitality business
P2 provide customer service to different types of customers in different hospitality situations, completing relevant documentation. [SM 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, EP 5, 6]	M2 demonstrate excellent customer service skills in hospitality businesses.	D2 evaluate their ability to provide effective customer service, making recommendations for their own development and improvement.

PLTS: This summary references where applicable, in the square brackets, the elements of the personal, learning and thinking skills applicable in the pass criteria. It identifies opportunities for learners to demonstrate effective application of the referenced elements of the skills.

Key	IE – independent enquirers	RL – reflective learners	SM – self-managers
	CT – creative thinkers	TW – team workers	EP – effective participators

Essential guidance for tutors

Delivery

This unit develops learners' appreciation of the importance of customer service to all areas of the hospitality industry and prepares them for supervision of customer service provision. It is important to emphasise the idea of 'excellent' customer service so learners realise the need to exceed customers' expectations at all times. Guest speakers could be used to demonstrate the breadth of customer service provision.

Learners can use their own experiences of customer service, and group discussions are a useful way of exploring the subject. Learners will find it beneficial to visit or contact businesses within the hospitality industry to assess their customer service delivery. They could take on the role of mystery customers once they have identified specific requests.

Practical situations should be used as much as possible as a vehicle for the provision of customer service. It is important for learners to have a suitable range of skills and a sound understanding of customer service provision. If real workplace situations are not available, role plays can be used. These can be particularly useful for handling complaints, solving problems and dealing with customers who have specific needs.

Case studies could be used to demonstrate the varying needs of different types of customers. There are a variety of videos and television programmes highlighting customer service issues in the industry which give learners an insight into the extent of customer service provision and how it is supervised.

As learners are expected to investigate in order to meet outcomes, the delivery of the unit may require development of learners' research skills. This would need to focus on sources of information, collating, selecting and analysing information.

Outline learning plan

The outline learning plan has been included in this unit as guidance and can be used in conjunction with the programme of suggested assignments.

The outline learning plan demonstrates one way in planning the delivery and assessment of this unit.

Topic and suggested assignments/activities and/assessment
Introduction to the unit and the programme of learning.
Group discussion to determine types of customers for different types of hospitality businesses and their requirements.
Visit to a hospitality business and observation of different types of communication used in the provision of customer service – follow-up poster showing different types of communication.
Learners interview a member of staff from their own institution on teamwork in customer service.
Visit to customer service provider to find out about the business's perspective on the role of presentation in customer service.
Assignment 1 – The Role of Communication, Presentation and Teamwork in Customer Service in Hospitality (P1, M1, D1)
Learners do a presentation explaining the role of communication, presentation and teamwork in customer service in hospitality.
Videos or role plays of good and poor interpersonal skills – learners identify what makes the difference.
Role-play exercises – developing customer service skills.
Learners work alongside customer service staff in own institution dealing with routine customers with guidance – receive feedback.
Video on telephone skills for dealing with customers – discussion on difference between social and business use of telephone.
Customer service telephone role plays with feedback from peers – and repeat practice.
Assignment 2 – Providing Customer Service (P2, M2, D2)
Based on serving customers in simulated or real situation.
Tutorial support and feedback.
Self-initiated learning time.

Assessment

Any evidence submitted for criteria requiring the practical demonstration of skills, eg role plays or the ability to work independently, must be supported by observation sheet(s) signed by the assessor and identify how specific criteria have been met.

The sub-headings in this section mirror the funnelling opportunities in the grading grid. They suggest how assessment can be grouped to allow learners to progress to the higher grades; however, they are not prescriptive.

P1 – M1 – D1

Evidence for P1 could come from a period of work experience where learners have been involved in different communication processes, and where good presentation and teamwork have been integral to their work. Alternatively, evidence could come from research or from experience of customer service from the point of view of being a customer in a hospitality business.

To achieve M1, learners could make a presentation or submit a written report analysing how different communication types are used to exceed customer requirements. Learners should recognise the significance of training in communication, presentation and teamwork techniques. This should be in general terms, supported by examples from hospitality businesses where appropriate.

To achieve D1, learners must propose realistic improvements for communication, presentation and teamwork to the provision of customer service in a selected hospitality business.

P2 – M2 – D2

To achieve P2, learners could produce appropriate witness statements from a work experience placement. Alternatively, the evidence could be provided via role-play exercises or from work undertaken in a realistic work environment. Learners should provide customer service in a minimum of four situations (providing information or advice, sales, dealing with a problem or complaint, dealing with praise) to three different types of customer (internal, external and with specific needs) all of which should be in a hospitality context.

Evidence for M2 should be in the form of an observation sheet provided by the assessor stating how the learner provided exemplary customer service. At pass level the service must be competent, but at merit level it should be much better. This could be shown by 'going the extra mile' or anticipating customers' needs. For this criterion, learners should demonstrate high levels of communication skills, be articulate and ensure their own personal presentation and their environment is of a high standard.

Evidence for D2 is based on learners' ability to reflect on their effectiveness in providing customer service in the four different situations covered in P2. A key component of this grading criterion is learners' ability to make recommendations for their future development and improvement in providing customer service.

Programme of suggested assignments

The table below shows a programme of suggested assignments that cover the pass, merit and distinction criteria in the assessment and grading grid. This is for guidance and it is recommended that centres either write their own assignments or adapt any Edexcel assignments to meet local needs and resources.

Criteria covered	Assignment title	Scenario	Assessment method
PI, M1, D1	The Role of Communication, Presentation and Teamwork in Customer Service in Hospitality	Learners take on the role of customer service supervisor and present to new staff.	Learners create a presentation for use with new staff
P2, M2, D2	Providing Customer Service	Learners take on the role of customer service staff and deal with a range of customer service situations.	Role play or work placement

Links to National Occupational Standards, other BTEC units, other BTEC qualifications and other relevant units and qualifications

This unit forms part of the *BTEC Hospitality* suite. This unit has particular links with the following unit titles in the Hospitality suite:

Level 2	Level 3
Principles of Customer Service in Hospitality, Leisure, Travel and Tourism	Principles of Supervising Customer Service Performance in Hospitality, Leisure, Travel and Tourism
Providing Customer Service in Hospitality	Supervisory Skills in the Hospitality Industry
	Food and Drinks Service
	Food Service Organisation
	Front Office Operations in Hospitality

Essential resources

Access to real examples of customer care policies and how they are monitored at local and national level are essential to make this unit relevant.

A realistic work environment or access to a real work situation is essential for the delivery of this unit.

Employer engagement and vocational contexts

Where possible employers should be involved with this unit by supplying opportunities for learners to visit their businesses, speakers with appropriate expertise to talk to learners and possible work placements.

The practical part of this unit, where learners are required to provide customer service to customers in simulated or real situation, should take place in a hospitality vocational context. If there is no suitable situation within the centre, then a link with a local employer or collaboration with a local college with hospitality realistic work environments could facilitate this.

Indicative reading for learners

Textbooks

Goodman G – *Monitoring, Measuring and Managing Customer Service* (Jossey-Bass, 2000)
ISBN 9780787951399

Kandampully J, Mok C and Sparks B – *Service Quality Management in Hospitality, Tourism, and Leisure*
(Haworth Press, 2001) ISBN 9780789007261

Martin W – *Providing Quality Service: What Every Hospitality Service Provider Needs to Know*
(Prentice Hall, 2002) ISBN 9780130967459

Williams A – *Understanding the Hospitality Consumer* (Butterworth-Heinemann, 2002) ISBN 9780750652490

Journal

Caterer and Hotelkeeper – Reed Business Information

Websites

www.bbc.co.uk/learningzone

BBC Learning Zone – programme times

www.bha.org.uk

British Hospitality Association

www.caterersearch.com

Caterersearch – Hospitality news

www.catersource.com

Catersource – Education, products and news for caterers

www.compass.com

Compass – gateway to sites for business, travel, shopping

www.merlincareers.com/search-and-apply

Merlin Entertainments Group – Job search

www.nmm.ac.uk/search-results/?search_word=customer+service

National Maritime Museum – Customer service

www.people1st.co.uk

People 1st – Sector Skills Council for Hospitality, Leisure, Travel and Tourism

www.sodexo.com

Sodexo – On-site service solutions and motivation solutions

Delivery of personal, learning and thinking skills

The table below identifies the opportunities for personal, learning and thinking skills (PLTS) that have been included within the pass assessment criteria of this unit.

Skill	When learners are ...
Independent enquirers	P1 explaining the role of communication, presentation and teamwork in the provision of customer service in hospitality businesses [IE 1, 2, 3, 4]
Self-managers	P2 providing customer service to different types of customers in different hospitality situations, completing relevant documentation [SM 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7]
Effective participators	P2 providing customer service to different types of customers in different hospitality situations, completing relevant documentation [EP 5, 6].

Although PLTS are identified within this unit as an inherent part of the assessment criteria, there are further opportunities to develop a range of PLTS through various approaches to teaching and learning.

Skill	When learners are ...
Reflective learners	evaluating their ability to provide effective customer service, making recommendations for their own development and improvement [RL 1]
Effective participators	proposing realistic improvements for communication, presentation and teamwork to the provision of customer service in a selected hospitality business [EP 3] evaluating their ability to provide effective customer service, making recommendations for their own development and improvement [EP 4].

● Functional Skills – Level 2

Skill	When learners are ...
ICT – Use ICT systems	
Select, interact with and use ICT systems independently for a complex task to meet a variety of needs	
Use ICT to effectively plan work and evaluate the effectiveness of the ICT system they have used	
Manage information storage to enable efficient retrieval	
Follow and understand the need for safety and security practices	
Troubleshoot	
ICT – Find and select information	
Select and use a variety of sources of information independently for a complex task	researching using websites
Access, search for, select and use ICT-based information and evaluate its fitness for purpose	researching and selecting information on approaches to customer service
ICT – Develop, present and communicate information	
Enter, develop and format information independently to suit its meaning and purpose including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • text and tables • images • numbers • records 	
Bring together information to suit content and purpose	
Present information in ways that are fit for purpose and audience	
Evaluate the selection and use of ICT tools and facilities used to present information	
Select and use ICT to communicate and exchange information safely, responsibly and effectively including storage of messages and contact lists	

Skill	When learners are ...
Mathematics	
Understand routine and non-routine problems in a wide range of familiar and unfamiliar contexts and situations	
Identify the situation or problem and the mathematical methods needed to tackle it	
Select and apply a range of skills to find solutions	
Use appropriate checking procedures and evaluate their effectiveness at each stage	
Interpret and communicate solutions to practical problems in familiar and unfamiliar routine contexts and situations	
Draw conclusions and provide mathematical justifications	
English	
Speaking and listening – make a range of contributions to discussions and make effective presentations in a wide range of contexts	discussing different types of customers and the specific needs of each explaining the key factors involved in good customer service
Reading – compare, select, read and understand texts and use them to gather information, ideas, arguments and opinions	researching from textbooks, articles and websites to gather information on hospitality customer service
Writing – write documents, including extended writing pieces, communicating information, ideas and opinions, effectively and persuasively	preparing presentations, class notes, reports and written pieces of work on hospitality customer service.