

Pearson BTEC Level 3 Certificate and Diploma for Customer Service Specialists

Specification

BTEC Specialist qualification

First teaching February 2020

Edexcel, BTEC and LCCI qualifications

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1 Introducing BTEC Specialist qualifications

What are BTEC Specialist qualifications?

BTEC Specialist qualifications are work-related qualifications available from Entry to Level 3 in a range of sectors. They give learners the knowledge, understanding and skills they need to prepare for employment in a specific occupational area. The qualifications also provide career development opportunities for those already in work.

BTEC Specialist qualifications put learning into the context of the world of work, giving learners the opportunity to apply their research, skills and knowledge in relevant and realistic work contexts. This applied, practical approach means that learners develop the knowledge, understanding and skills they need for career progression or further study.

Specialist qualifications can be offered as full-time or part-time courses in schools, colleges and training centres, and through employers.

Sizes of BTEC Specialist qualifications

For all regulated qualifications, Pearson specifies a total estimated number of hours that learners will require to complete and show achievement for the qualification – this is the Total Qualification Time (TQT). The TQT value indicates the size of a qualification.

Within the TQT, Pearson identifies the number of guided learning hours (GLH) we estimate a centre delivering a qualification might provide. Guided learning means activities, such as lessons, tutorials, online instruction, supervised study and giving feedback on performance, that directly involve tutors and assessors in teaching, supervising and invigilating learners. It also includes the time required for learners to complete external assessment under examination or supervised conditions.

In addition to guided learning, other required learning directed by tutors or assessors includes private study, preparation for assessment and undertaking assessment when not under supervision, such as preparatory reading, revision and independent research.

As well as TQT and GLH, qualifications can also have a credit value – equal to one tenth of the TQT, rounded to the nearest whole number.

TQT and credit values are assigned after consultation with the employers and training providers delivering the qualifications.

BTEC Specialist qualifications are generally available in the following sizes:

- Award – a qualification with a TQT value of 120 or less
- Certificate – a qualification with a TQT value in the range of 121–369
- Diploma – a qualification with a TQT value of 370 or more.

2 Qualification summary and key information

Qualification title	Pearson BTEC Level 3 Certificate for Customer Service Specialists
Qualification Number (QN)	603/5449/5
Regulation start date	27/01/2020
Operational start date	01/02/2020
Approved age ranges	16–18 18+ 19+ Please note that sector-specific requirements or regulations may prevent learners of a particular age from taking this qualification. Please see <i>Section 6 Access and recruitment</i> .
Total qualification time (TQT)	221 hours
Guided learning hours (GLH)	143
Assessment	Internal assessment
Grading information	The qualification and units are at a Pass grade.
Entry requirements	No prior knowledge, understanding, skills or qualifications are required before learners register for this qualification. However, centres must also follow the information in our document <i>A guide to recruiting learners onto Pearson qualifications</i> (see <i>Section 6 Access and recruitment</i>).
Funding	Qualifications eligible and funded for post-16-year-olds can be found on the funding Hub. The Apprenticeship funding rules can be found at www.gov.uk

Qualification title	Pearson BTEC Level 3 Diploma for Customer Service Specialists
Qualification Number (QN)	603/5450/1
Regulation start date	27/01/2020
Operational start date	01/02/2020
Approved age ranges	16–18 18+ 19+ Please note that sector-specific requirements or regulations may prevent learners of a particular age from taking this qualification. Please see <i>Section 6 Access and recruitment</i> .
Total qualification time (TQT)	402 hours
Guided learning hours (GLH)	243
Assessment	Internal assessment
Grading information	The qualification and units are at a Pass grade.
Entry requirements	No prior knowledge, understanding, skills or qualifications are required before learners register for this qualification. Learners will need to be on an apprenticeship programme or be otherwise working in a customer service role that involves responsibility for dealing with complex customer service cases and/or escalation issues. Centres must also follow the information in our document <i>A guide to recruiting learners onto Pearson qualifications</i> (see <i>Section 6 Access and recruitment</i>).
Funding	Qualifications eligible and funded for post-16-year-olds can be found on the funding Hub. The Apprenticeship funding rules can be found at www.gov.uk

Centres will need to use the Qualification Number (QN) when they seek public funding for their learners. The qualification title, unit titles and QN will appear on each learner's final certificate. Centres should tell learners this when recruiting them and registering them with Pearson. There is more information about certification in our *UK Information Manual*, available on our website: qualifications.pearson.com

3 Qualification purpose

Qualifications objectives

The Pearson BTEC Level 3 Certificate and Diploma for Customer Service Specialists are for learners working in, or intending to work in, a customer service specialist job role. Their key responsibilities will include: acting as a referral point for dealing with more complex or technical customer requests, complaints, and queries; being an escalation point for complicated or ongoing customer problems; influencing change and improvements in service; sharing their knowledge and experience with others to support the development of their colleagues.

The Pearson BTEC Level 3 Certificate for Customer Service Specialists supports the off-the-job training and development of learners on the Customer Service Specialist Apprenticeship programme. The qualification will help learners to develop and apply the technical and behavioural knowledge and understanding required to become competent and successful in a customer service specialist job role.

The qualification is also suitable for non-apprenticeship learners who want to develop technical knowledge to prepare for employment or to progress their career by achieving a recognised qualification based on current, employer-recognised standards.

The qualification gives learners the opportunity to:

- develop the technical knowledge and understanding that underpins competence in a customer service specialist job role
- learn about a range of transferable skills and professional attributes that support successful performance in a customer service specialist job role
- achieve a nationally recognised Level 3 qualification
- develop confidence and readiness for the apprenticeship end-point assessment.

The Pearson BTEC Level 3 Diploma for Customer Service Specialists extends the learning from the Certificate-size qualification to include the development of practical work-based skills and behaviours. The qualification is designed to support both the off-the-job and on-the-job training and development of learners on the Customer Service Specialist Apprenticeship programme. It helps learners to develop and demonstrate technical knowledge and understanding, skills and behaviours to become successful in a customer service specialist role.

The qualification is also suitable for non-apprenticeship learners in work who want to upskill or progress their career by achieving a recognised qualification based on current, employer-recognised standards.

The qualification gives learners the opportunity to:

- develop the technical knowledge and understanding that underpins competence in a customer service specialist job role
- develop and demonstrate a range of transferable skills and professional behaviours and attributes in the work environment
- develop and demonstrate a range of technical skills to carry out their job role successfully in the work environment
- achieve a nationally recognised Level 3 qualification
- develop confidence and readiness for the apprenticeship end-point assessment
- develop personal growth and engagement in learning.

Apprenticeships

The Pearson BTEC Level 3 Certificate and Diploma for Customer Service Specialists are not a mandatory requirement in the Customer Service Specialist Apprenticeship Standard. However, as they are aligned to the knowledge and behaviours outcomes of the Apprenticeship Standard, they provide structure for the off-the-job training element of the apprenticeship and give learners a foundation to develop occupational competence in the job role.

Annexe A shows how the knowledge and behaviours from the Apprenticeship Standard are covered in the qualifications.

Progression opportunities

Learners who achieve the qualification, having met all other gateway requirements of the Apprenticeship Standard, can progress to end-point assessment and achieve the full Apprenticeship certification, which confirms competency in a customer service specialist job role.

With further training and development, learners can also progress to a more senior customer service or management role.

Alternatively, learners who have achieved the Certificate or Diploma qualification but have not completed the full apprenticeship requirements could progress to job roles such as customer relationship manager, service delivery manager or customer service manager, or to other qualifications in customer service and leadership and management.

4 Qualification structures

Pearson BTEC Level 3 Certificate for Customer Service Specialists

The learner will need to meet the requirements outlined in the table below before Pearson can award the qualification.

Minimum number of units that must be achieved	4
Minimum number of guided learning hours that must be achieved	143

Unit number	Mandatory units	Level	Guided learning hours
1	Understanding the Customer Service Environment	3	28
2	Understanding Customer Loyalty, Retention and Satisfaction	3	28
3	Understanding Continuous Improvement in Customer Service	3	42
4	Understanding Personal Effectiveness in a Customer Service Work Environment	3	45

Pearson BTEC Level 3 Diploma for Customer Service Specialists

The learner will need to meet the requirements outlined in the table below before Pearson can award the qualification.

Minimum number of units that must be achieved	8
Minimum number of guided learning hours that must be achieved	243

Unit number	Mandatory units	Level	Guided learning hours
1	Understanding the Customer Service Environment	3	28
2	Understanding Customer Loyalty, Retention and Satisfaction	3	28
3	Understanding Continuous Improvement in Customer Service	3	42
4	Understanding Personal Effectiveness in a Customer Service Work Environment	3	45
5	Delivering Solution-focused Customer Service	3	24
6	Managing Challenging Customers and Situations	3	24
7	Influencing Change and Improvement in Customer Service	3	28
8	Managing Personal Effectiveness in a Customer Service Specialist Job Role	3	24

5 Centre resource requirements

As part of the approval process, centres must make sure that the resource requirements below are in place before offering the qualifications.

General resource requirements

- Centres must have appropriate physical resources (for example IT, learning materials, teaching rooms) to support the delivery and assessment of the qualifications.
- Staff involved in the assessment process (assessors and internal verifiers) must have relevant expertise and occupational experience. This includes having:
 - current occupational experience (within the last three years) appropriate to the level and breadth of subject areas of the qualification units being assessed
 - substantial knowledge and understanding of the subject areas appropriate to the level, breadth and content of the qualifications units. This may be evidenced through having a relevant qualification that is at an equivalent or higher level than the level of the qualifications being assessed
 - a relevant qualification in assessment and/or internal quality assurance or current experience (within the last three years) of assessing and/or internal verification appropriate and relevant to the level and subject area of the qualification units
 - evidence of continuing professional development (CPD) which may include the achievement of qualifications relevant to the areas being assessed.
- There must be systems in place that ensure CPD for staff delivering the qualifications.
- Centres must have in place appropriate health and safety policies that relate to the use of equipment by learners.
- Centres must have in place robust internal verification systems and procedures to ensure the quality and authenticity of learners' work as well as the accuracy and consistency of assessment decisions between assessors operating at the centre. For information on the requirements for implementing assessment processes in centres, please refer to our work-based learning quality assurance handbooks, available on our website.
- Centres must deliver the qualifications in accordance with current equality legislation. For further details on Pearson's commitment to the Equality Act 2010, please see *Section 6 Access and recruitment*. For full details of the Equality Act 2010 visit www.legislation.gov.uk

6 Access and recruitment

Our policy on access to our qualifications is that:

- they should be available to everyone who is capable of reaching the required standards
- they should be free from barriers that restrict access and progression
- there should be equal opportunities for all those wishing to access the qualifications.

Centres must ensure that their learner recruitment process is conducted with integrity. This includes ensuring that applicants have appropriate information and advice about the qualification to ensure that it will meet their needs.

Centres should review applicants' prior qualifications and/or experience, considering whether this profile shows that they have the potential to achieve the qualification.

Centres should refer to our *Equality, diversity and inclusion policy*, available in the support section of our website.

Prior knowledge, skills and understanding

No prior knowledge, understanding, skills or qualifications are required for learners to register for the qualifications. For the Diploma-size qualification, learners will need to be on an apprenticeship programme, or be otherwise working in a customer service role that involves responsibility for dealing with complex customer service cases and/or escalation issues.

Access to qualifications for learners with disabilities or specific needs

Equality and fairness are central to our work. Our *Equality, diversity and inclusion policy* requires all learners to have equal opportunity to access our qualifications and assessments, and that our qualifications are awarded in a way that is fair to every learner.

We are committed to making sure that:

- learners with a protected characteristic (as defined by the Equality Act 2010) are not, when they are undertaking one of our qualifications, disadvantaged in comparison to learners who do not share that characteristic
- all learners achieve the recognition they deserve from undertaking a qualification and that this achievement can be compared fairly to the achievement of their peers.

For learners with disabilities and specific needs, the assessment of their potential to achieve the qualification must identify, where appropriate, the support that will be made available to them during delivery and assessment of the qualifications. Please see *Section 8 Assessment*, for information on reasonable adjustments and special consideration.

7 Programme delivery

Centres are free to offer these qualifications using any mode of delivery that meets learners' and employers' needs. It is recommended that centres make use of a wide range of training delivery methods, including direct instruction in classrooms, simulated demonstrations, research or applied projects, e-learning, directed self-study, field visits and role play. Whichever mode of delivery is used, centres must make sure that learners have access to the identified resources and to the subject specialists delivering the units.

Centres must adhere to the Pearson policies that apply to the different models of delivery. Please refer to our *Collaborative and consortium arrangements for the delivery of vocational qualifications policy*, available on our website.

Those planning the programme should aim to enhance the vocational nature of the qualifications by:

- spending time with employers to better understand their organisational requirements and the methods of training that are most suitable, taking into consideration their available resources and working patterns
- collaborating with employers to ensure that learners have opportunities in the workplace to implement the knowledge and skills developed through the training programme
- developing up-to-date and relevant teaching materials that make use of scenarios relevant to the sector and relevant occupation
- giving learners the opportunity to apply their learning in realistic practical activities
- having regular meetings with employers to discuss learner progress, providing feedback and agreeing how any issues will be resolved
- developing projects or assessments with input from employers
- using 'expert witness' reports from employers to support assessment
- making full use of the variety of experience of work and life that learners bring to the programme.

Where legislation is taught, centres must ensure that it is current and up to date.

8 Assessment

The table below gives a summary of the assessment methods used in the qualifications.

Units	Assessment method
All units	Internal assessment (centre-devised assessments)

In administering internal assessments, centres need to be aware of the specific procedures and policies that apply to, for example, registration, entries and results. There is more information in our *UK Information Manual*, available on our website.

Language of assessment

Assessments for internally-assessed units are in English only.

A learner taking the qualifications may be assessed in British or Irish Sign Language where it is permitted for the purpose of reasonable adjustment.

Further information on the use of language in qualifications is available in our *Use of languages in qualifications policy* document, available on our website.

For further information on access arrangements, please refer to *Reasonable adjustments to assessments* later in this section.

Internal assessment

All knowledge units in these qualifications are internally assessed and subject to external standards verification. This means that centres set and mark the final summative assessment for each unit using the examples and support that Pearson provides. Centres need to be approved, if they are not already, to offer the qualifications before conducting assessments. *Section 10 Centre recognition and approval* gives information on approval for offering these qualifications.

Assessment of knowledge units using assignments

For internally-assessed knowledge units, the format of assessment is an assignment taken after the content of the unit, or part of the unit if several assignments are used, has been delivered. An assignment may take a variety of forms, including practical and written forms. An assignment is a distinct activity, completed independently by learners, that is separate from teaching, practice, exploration and other activities that learners complete with direction from tutors and assessors.

An assignment is issued to learners as an assignment brief with a defined start date, a completion date and clear requirements for the evidence that they need to provide.

Assignments can be divided into tasks and may require several forms of evidence. A valid assignment will enable there to be a clear and formal assessment outcome based on the assessment criteria.

Designing effective assignments for knowledge units

Recommended assignments are given in the *Further information for tutors and assessors* section of each knowledge unit. In designing assignments, centres need to work within the structure of the recommended assignments. They need to consider the following points when developing their assignment briefs.

- Centres may choose to combine all or parts of different units into single assignments, provided that all units and all their associated learning outcomes are fully addressed in the programme overall. If this approach is taken, centres need to make sure that learners are fully prepared so that they can provide all the required evidence for assessment and that centres are able to track achievement in their learner records.
- A learning outcome must always be assessed as a whole and should not be split into two or more assignments.
- The assignment must be targeted to the learning outcomes but the learning outcomes and their associated assessment criteria are not tasks in themselves. Criteria are expressed in terms of the outcome shown in the evidence.
- Clear instructions must be provided to the learner about what they are required to do – normally set out through a series of tasks.
- Centres do not have to follow the order of the learning outcomes of a unit in developing assignments but later learning outcomes often require learners to apply the content of earlier learning outcomes, they may also require learners to draw their learning together.
- As assignments constitute the final assessment, they will draw on the specified range of teaching content for the learning outcomes. The specified content is compulsory for teaching and learning. The evidence for assessment need not cover every aspect of the teaching content, as learners will normally be given particular examples, case studies or contexts in their assignments. For example, if a learner is carrying out research on their employer organisation, then they will address all the relevant range of content that applies in that instance.

- The assignment brief must include the vocational scenario or context for the tasks to be completed. There must, in addition, be a clear audience or purpose for which the evidence is being provided.

To ensure that final assessment decisions meet the required standard, assignments must be fit for purpose as a tool for measuring learning against the defined content and assessment criteria. Centres should make sure that assignments enable learners to produce valid, sufficient, authentic and appropriate evidence that relates directly to the specified criteria in the context of the learning outcomes and unit content.

An assignment that is fit for purpose and suitably controlled is one in which:

- the tasks that the learner is asked to complete provide evidence for a learning outcome that can be assessed using the assessment criteria
- the time allowed for the assignment is clearly defined and is consistent with what is being assessed
- the centre has the required resources for all learners to complete the assignment fully and fairly
- the evidence that the assignment generates is authentic and individual to the learner
- the evidence can be documented to show that the assessment and verification has been carried out correctly.

Forms of evidence

Centres may use a variety of forms of evidence, as long as they are suited to the type of learning outcome that is being assessed. For some units, the practical demonstration of skills is necessary, and for others learners will need to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding. The units give information on suitable forms of evidence.

Centres may choose to use different forms of evidence to those proposed. Overall, learners should be assessed using varied forms of evidence.

Some of the suitable forms of evidence include:

- written tasks or reports
- projects
- time-constrained simulated activities, with observation records and supporting evidence
- observation and recordings of practical tasks or performance in the workplace
- sketchbooks, work logbooks, reflective journals and workbooks
- presentations with assessor questioning
- witness testimony.

The forms of evidence selected must allow:

- the learner to provide all the evidence required for the learning outcomes and the associated assessment criteria
- the learner to produce evidence that is their own, independent work
- a verifier to independently reassess the learner's work to check the assessor's decisions.

For example, when using performance evidence centres need to think about how supporting evidence can be captured through preparation notes, reflective accounts, logbook records, recordings, photographs and task sheets.

Centres need to take particular care that they enable learners to produce independent work. For example, if learners are asked to use real examples, then best practice would be to encourage them to use examples of their own experiences.

For information on the requirements for implementing assessment processes in centres, please refer to our work-based learning quality assurance handbooks, available in the support section of our website.

Assessment of skills units using a portfolio

All skills units in the Diploma qualification are assessed through an internally and externally quality assured portfolio made up of evidence gathered during the course of the learner's work. Each skill unit has specified learning outcomes and assessment criteria. To pass each skills unit the learner must:

- achieve all the specified learning outcomes
- satisfy all the assessment criteria by providing sufficient and valid evidence for each criterion
- prove that the evidence is their own.

The learner must have an assessment record that identifies the assessment criteria that have been met. The assessment record should be cross-referenced to the evidence provided. The assessment record should include details of the type of evidence and the date of assessment. Suitable centre documentation should be used to form an assessment record.

Forms of evidence

To achieve a skills unit, the learner must gather evidence showing that they have met the required standard specified in the assessment criteria and Pearson's quality assurance arrangements (see *Section 10 Quality assurance of centres*).

The evidence for the skills units can take a variety of forms as indicated below.

- Direct observation of the learner's performance by their assessor (O).
- Outcomes from oral or written questioning (Q&A).

- Products of the learner's work (P).
- Personal statements and/or reflective accounts (RA).
- Professional discussion (PD).
- Authentic statements/witness testimony (WT).
- Simulation (S) where a real-work context does not offer the opportunity for assessment, for example dealing with issues, problems and complaints.
- Expert witness testimony (EWT).

Learners can use the abbreviations in their portfolios for cross-referencing purposes. Learners must provide evidence of their achievement of the knowledge-based learning outcomes and the associated assessment criteria in skills units – achievement cannot be inferred from performance.

Centres must ensure that the assessment methods used are appropriate for the specific learning outcomes and assessment criteria. Before the assessment is conducted, learners may need guidance on the requirements of different command verbs. This will ensure that the evidence they provide has sufficient breadth and depth to meet the assessment requirements.

Learners can use one piece of evidence to prove their knowledge, skills and understanding across different assessment criteria and/or across different units. It is not necessary for learners to have each assessment criterion assessed separately. The evidence provided for each unit must reference clearly the unit that is being assessed and learners should be encouraged to signpost evidence. Evidence must be available to the assessor, the internal verifier and the Pearson Standards Verifier.

Any specific evidence requirements for a unit are given in the unit's *Assessment* section. Further guidance on the requirements for centre quality assurance and internal verification processes is available on our website.

Authenticity of learner work

An assessor must assess only work that is authentic, i.e. learners' own independent work. Learners must authenticate the evidence that they provide for assessment through signing a declaration stating that it is their own work.

Assessors must ensure that evidence is authentic to a learner, through setting valid assignments and supervising learners during assessment period. Supervision will usually include tutors overseeing the planning stage, supervising a proportion of the assignment and regular discussion with the learner during the assessment. Assessors must take care not to provide direct input, instructions or specific feedback that may compromise authenticity.

Assessors must complete a declaration that:

- the evidence submitted for this assignment is the learner's own
- the learner has clearly referenced any sources used in the work
- they understand that false declaration is a form of malpractice.

Centres may use Pearson templates or their own templates to document authentication.

During assessment, an assessor may suspect that some or all of the evidence from a learner is not authentic. The assessor must then take appropriate action using the centre's policies for malpractice. More information is given later in this section.

Making assessment decisions using unit-based criteria

Assessment decisions for the qualifications are based on the specific criteria given in each unit.

Assessors make judgements using the assessment criteria and must show how they have reached their decisions in the assessment records. The assessor needs to make a judgement against each criterion that evidence is present and sufficiently comprehensive.

For example, the inclusion of a concluding section may be insufficient to satisfy a criterion requiring 'evaluation'.

Assessors should use the following information and support in reaching assessment decisions:

- the *Essential information for tutors and assessors* section in each unit, which gives further information on the requirements to meet the assessment criteria
- the centre's Lead Internal Verifier and the assessment team's collective experience
- *Annexe B: Glossary of terms used in assessment criteria.*

When a learner has completed the assessment for a unit, then the assessor will give an assessment outcome for the unit. To achieve a Pass, a learner must have satisfied all the assessment criteria for the learning outcomes, showing appropriate coverage of the unit content and therefore attainment at the stated level of the qualification. The award of a Pass is a defined level of performance and cannot be given solely on the basis of a learner completing assignments. Learners who do not satisfy the assessment criteria for the units should be reported as Unclassified.

Dealing with late completion of assignments

Learners must have a clear understanding of the centre's policy on completing assignments by the stated deadlines. Learners may be given authorised extensions for legitimate reasons, such as illness at the time of submission, in line with centre policies.

For assessment to be fair, it is important that learners are all assessed in the same way and that some learners are not advantaged by having additional time or the opportunity to learn from others.

If a late completion is accepted, then the assignment should be assessed normally using the relevant assessment criteria.

Issuing assessment decisions and feedback

Once the assessor has completed the assessment process for an assignment, the outcome is a formal assessment decision. This is recorded formally and reported to learners.

The information given to the learner:

- must show the formal decision and how it has been reached, indicating how or where criteria have been met
- may show why attainment against criteria has not been demonstrated
- must not provide feedback on how to improve evidence
- must be validated by an Internal Verifier before it is given to the learner.

Resubmissions and retakes

Learners who do not successfully pass an assignment are allowed to resubmit evidence for the assignment or to retake another assignment.

Records

Centres are required to retain records of assessment for each learner. Records should include assessments taken, decisions reached and any adjustments or appeals. More information is given in our *UK Information Manual*. We may ask to audit centre records, so they must be retained as specified.

Reasonable adjustments to assessments

Centres are able to make adjustments to assessments to take account of the needs of individual learners, in line with the guidance given in our document *Guidance for reasonable adjustments and special consideration in vocational internally assessed units*. In most instances, adjustments can be achieved by following the guidance, for example allowing the use of assistive technology or adjusting the format of the evidence.

We can advise you if you are uncertain as to whether an adjustment is fair and reasonable. Any reasonable adjustment must reflect the normal learning or working practice of a learner in a centre or a learner working in the occupational area.

There is further information on access arrangements in the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) document *Access arrangements and reasonable adjustments*.

Special consideration

Centres must operate special consideration in line with the guidance given in the Pearson document *Guidance for reasonable adjustments and special consideration in vocational internally assessed units*. Special consideration may not be applicable in instances where:

- assessment requires the demonstration of practical competence
- criteria have to be met fully
- units/qualifications confer licence to practice.

Centres cannot apply their own special consideration – applications for special consideration must be made to Pearson and can be made on a case-by-case basis only.

A separate application must be made for each learner. Certification claims must not be made until the outcome of the application has been received.

Further information on special consideration can be found in the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) document *A guide to the special consideration process*.

Appeals against assessment

Centres must have a policy for dealing with appeals from learners. Appeals may relate to assessment decisions being incorrect or assessment not being conducted fairly. The first step in such a policy is a consideration of the evidence by a Lead Internal Verifier or other member of the programme team. The assessment plan should allow time for potential appeals after learners have been given assessment decisions.

Centres must document all learner appeals and their resolutions. Further information on the appeals process can be found in the document *Enquiries and appeals about Pearson vocational qualifications and end point assessment policy*, available on our website.

Dealing with malpractice in assessment

Malpractice refers to any act which may adversely affect learners, undermine public confidence in qualifications, undermine the integrity and validity of assessment and/or damage the authority of those responsible for delivering the assessment and certification.

Pearson does not tolerate actual or attempted malpractice by learners, centre staff or centres in connection with Pearson qualifications. Pearson may impose penalties and/or sanctions on learners, centre staff or centres where malpractice or attempted malpractice has been proven.

Malpractice may occur or be suspected in relation to any unit or type of assessment within a qualification. For further details on malpractice and advice on preventing malpractice by learners, please see *Centre guidance: Dealing with malpractice and maladministration*, available on our website.

Centres are required to take steps to prevent malpractice and to investigate instances of suspected malpractice. Learners must be given information that explains what malpractice is for internal assessment and how suspected incidents will be dealt with by the centre. Our document *Centre guidance: Dealing with malpractice and maladministration*, gives full information on the actions we expect you to take.

If we believe that a centre is failing to conduct assessments appropriately, we may arrange enhanced quality assurance measures or conduct investigations. The *Centre Guidance* document referenced above gives further information and examples, and details the penalties and sanctions that may be imposed. Our investigations are conducted in accordance with the JCQ Suspected Malpractice Policies and Procedures (<https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/malpractice/jcq-suspected-malpractice-policies-and-procedures-2019-2020>).

In the interests of learners and centre staff, centres need to respond effectively and openly to all requests relating to an investigation into an incident of suspected malpractice.

Learner malpractice

The head of centre is required to report incidents of suspected learner malpractice that occur in the delivery of Pearson assessments. We ask centres to complete JCQ Form M1 (www.jcq.org.uk/malpractice) and email it with any accompanying documents (signed statements from the learner, invigilator, copies of evidence, etc.) to the Investigations team at candidatemaalpractice@pearson.com.

The responsibility for determining appropriate sanctions or penalties to be imposed on learners lies with Pearson.

Learners found guilty of malpractice may be disqualified from the qualification for which they have been entered with Pearson.

Teacher/centre malpractice

The head of centre is required to inform Pearson's Investigations team of any incident of suspected malpractice (including maladministration) by centre staff, before any investigation is undertaken. The head of centre is required to inform the Investigations team by submitting a JCQ M2 form (downloadable from www.jcq.org.uk/malpractice) with supporting documentation to pqsmalpractice@pearson.com. Where Pearson receives allegations of malpractice from other sources (for example Pearson staff, anonymous informants), the Investigations team will conduct the investigation directly or may ask the head of centre to assist.

Full guidance can be found in the JCQ Suspected Malpractice Policies and Procedures (<https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/malpractice/jcq-suspected-malpractice-policies-and-procedures-2019-2020>) and our Investigations team is of course also here to assist with any queries.

Pearson reserves the right in cases of suspected malpractice to withhold the issuing of results/certificates while an investigation is in progress. Depending on the outcome of the investigation, results and/or certificates may not be released or they may be withheld.

9 Recognising prior learning and achievement

Recognition of Prior Learning

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is a method of assessment that considers whether a learner can demonstrate that they can meet the assessment requirements for a unit through knowledge, understanding or skills they already possess and so do not need to develop through a course of learning.

Pearson encourages centres to recognise learners' previous achievements and experiences in and outside the workplace, as well as in the classroom. RPL provides a route for the recognition of the achievements resulting from continuous learning.

RPL enables recognition of achievement from a range of activities using any valid assessment methodology. If the assessment requirements of a given unit or qualification have been met, the use of RPL is acceptable for accrediting a unit, units or a whole qualification. Evidence of learning must be sufficient, reliable and valid.

Further guidance is available in our policy document *Recognition of prior learning policy and process*, available on our website.

10 Centre recognition and approval

Centres that have not previously offered BTEC Specialist qualifications need to apply for, and be granted, centre recognition as part of the process for approval to offer individual qualifications.

Existing centres will be given 'automatic approval' for a new qualification if they are already approved for a qualification that is being replaced by a new qualification and the conditions for automatic approval are met.

Guidance on seeking approval to deliver BTEC qualifications is given on our website.

Approvals agreement

All centres are required to enter into an approval agreement with Pearson, in which the head of centre or principal agrees to meet all the requirements of the qualification specification and to comply with the policies, procedures, codes of practice and regulations of Pearson and relevant regulatory bodies. If centres do not comply with the agreement, this could result in the suspension of certification or withdrawal of centre or qualification approval.

11 Quality assurance of centres

Quality assurance is at the heart of vocational qualifications and apprenticeships.

The centre assesses BTEC Specialist qualifications and will use quality assurance to make sure that their managers, internal verifiers and assessors are standardised and supported. This also ensures learners are given appropriate opportunities that lead to valid and accurate assessment outcomes.

Pearson uses external quality assurance processes to verify that assessment, internal quality assurance and evidence of achievement meet nationally defined standards.

Our processes enable us to recognise good practice, manage risk effectively and support centres to safeguard certification and quality standards.

Our Standards Verifiers provide advice and guidance to enable centres to hold accurate assessment records and assess learners appropriately, consistently and fairly.

For the qualification in this specification, the Pearson quality assurance model will consist of the following processes.

Centres will receive at least one visit from our Standards Verifier, followed by ongoing support and development. This may result in more visits or remote support, as required to complete standards verification. The exact frequency and duration of Standards Verifier visits/remote sampling will reflect the level of risk associated with a programme, taking account of the:

- number of assessment sites
- number and throughput of learners
- number and turnover of assessors
- number and turnover of internal verifiers
- amount of previous experience of delivery.

If a centre is offering a BTEC Specialist qualification alongside other qualifications related to a similar Apprenticeship Standard, wherever possible we will allocate the same Standards Verifier for both qualifications.

For further details, please see the work-based learning quality assurance handbooks, available in the support section of our website.

Following registration, centres will be given further quality assurance and sampling guidance.

12 Units

Each unit in the specification is set out in a similar way. This section explains how the units are structured. It is important that all tutors, assessors, internal verifiers and other staff responsible for the programme review this section.

Units have the following sections.

Unit number

The number is in a sequence in the specification. Where a specification has more than one qualification, numbers may not be sequential for an individual qualification.

Unit title

This is the formal title of the unit that will appear on the learner's certificate.

Level

Units and qualifications have a level assigned to them. The level assigned is informed by the level descriptors defined by Ofqual, the qualifications regulator.

Unit type

This indicates whether the unit is knowledge or skills-based.

Guided Learning Hours (GLH)

This indicates the number of hours of activities that directly or immediately involve tutors and assessors in teaching, supervising, and invigilating learners, for example lectures, tutorials, online instruction and supervised study. Units may vary in size.

Pearson has consulted with users of the qualifications and has assigned a number of hours to this activity.

Unit introduction

This is designed with learners in mind. It indicates why the unit is important, what will be learned and how the learning might be applied in the workplace.

Learning outcomes

The learning outcomes of a unit set out what a learner knows, understands or is able to do as the result of a process of learning.

Assessment criteria

The assessment criteria specify the standard the learner is required to meet to achieve a learning outcome.

Unit content

This section sets out the required teaching content of the unit and specifies the knowledge, skills and understanding required for achievement of the unit. It enables centres to design and deliver a programme of learning that will enable learners to achieve each learning outcome and to meet the standard determined by the assessment criteria.

Where it is designed to support apprenticeships, the unit content is informed by the knowledge and understanding requirements of the relevant Apprenticeship Standard.

Relationship between unit content and assessment criteria

Content is compulsory for internally-assessed units except when shown as 'e.g.'. Although it is not a requirement that all the content is assessed, learners should be given the opportunity to cover it all.

Learners should be asked to complete summative assessment only after the teaching content for the unit or learning outcomes has been covered.

Legislation

Legislation cited in the units is current at time of publication. The most recent legislation should be taught and assessed internally.

Essential information for tutors and assessors

This section gives information to support delivery and the implementation of assessment. It contains the following subsections.

- *Essential resources* – lists any specialist resources needed to deliver the unit. The centre will be asked to make sure that these resources are in place when it seeks approval from Pearson to offer the qualification.
- *Assessment* – for the knowledge units, it provides recommended assignments and suitable sources of evidence for each learning outcome. It also gives information about the standard and quality of evidence expected for learners to achieve the learning outcome and pass each assignment. It is important that the information is used carefully alongside the assessment criteria.

Unit 1: Understanding the Customer Service Environment

Level:	3
Unit type:	Knowledge
Guided learning hours:	28

Unit introduction

Having awareness of the aims and objectives of customer service organisations, as well as how the organisation comes together to deliver high standards of customer service that make the customer journey a memorable experience, is essential.

In this unit you will develop an understanding of the purpose and benefits of an organisation's mission statement as well as exploring the relationship between service culture and service delivery and how these contribute to achieving the overall business strategy. You will develop an understanding of the importance of the organisation's brand for customers and the impact this has on your customer service delivery.

You will learn about the structure of the organisation in comparison to other similar organisations and understand how departments and functions play their part in delivering effective customer service through cross-team collaboration. You will also develop knowledge of different aspects of customer service delivery that may fail, the causes of failure and the potential consequences.

There are various internal and external factors that influence how organisations operate and function, so it is important for you to understand how organisations identify these factors. You will learn how political, economic, social, technological, legal and environmental factors impact on a customer service-related organisation.

You will also learn about customer and consumer-related legislation and regulations including data protection, equality and health and safety, and the influence these have on customer service provision. Furthermore, you will develop an understanding of organisational policies and procedures and how these are essential in ensuring relevant legislation and regulations are met. You will understand and follow internal processes relating to escalation, achieving customer service standards and explore systems and technology that make customer service delivery efficient.

Learning outcomes and assessment criteria

To pass this unit, the learner needs to demonstrate that they can meet all the learning outcomes for the unit. The assessment criteria determine the standard required to achieve the unit.

Learning outcomes		Assessment criteria	
1	Understand an organisation's business strategy in relation to customers	1.1	Describe the purpose and benefits of a mission statement for an organisation
		1.2	Explain the impact of an organisation's mission statement and business strategy on customer service delivery
		1.3	Explain the importance of a brand to customers and to an organisation
2	Understand organisational structure in relation to customer service delivery	2.1	Compare different types of organisational structure
		2.2	Describe the roles different departments/ functions play in delivering customer service
		2.3	Explain the benefits of cross-team collaboration on customer service delivery
		2.4	Describe the potential causes of different service failures
		2.5	Describe the potential consequences of different service failures

Learning outcomes		Assessment criteria	
3	Understand how customer service is shaped by the business environment and culture	3.1	Explain how the impact of internal and external factors can influence organisational customer service delivery
		3.2	Describe what is meant by 'customer service culture'
		3.3	Explain the relationship between customer service culture and service delivery
4	Understand the impact of relevant legislation and regulations on customer service delivery	4.1	Describe the impact of consumer-related legislation on customer service delivery
		4.2	Explain the impact of data protection legislation/regulations on the collection, storage and use of customer information
		4.3	Explain the influence that health and safety legislation has on customer service delivery
		4.4	Explain the influence of equality legislation on customer service delivery
5	Understand the impact of organisational policies, procedures and systems on customer service delivery	5.1	Explain the influence organisational policies, processes and procedures have on the delivery of customer service
		5.2	Explain the importance of escalation procedures in a customer service delivery
		5.3	Describe how the organisation's service standards impact on the customer experience
		5.4	Explain how policies relating to confidentiality affect the organisation's customer service provision
		5.5	Evaluate the systems and technology that can be used in customer service delivery

Unit content

What needs to be learned

Learning outcome 1: Understand an organisation's business strategy in relation to customers

1A Business aims and objectives

- Business goals:
 - purpose, including the benefits of having business goals
 - how the business goals are linked to the sector the company works in, e.g. public, private, voluntary sector.
- Mission statement:
 - purpose
 - benefits of having a mission statement, e.g. guides decisions made by the organisation and communicates intentions to customers and stakeholders
 - how this is linked to the customer journey and meeting business goals and aims.
- Examples of the business goals and aims, including the importance of these in relation to the customer journey.
- Relationship between the business's aims and the sector in which it operates, including showing knowledge of other sectors.
- Business strategy:
 - overall business strategy – the direction the organisation plans to take and the aims and objectives it intends to achieve as a whole
 - customer service-related strategy – customer and customer-service focused aims and objectives
 - how business goals contribute to the achievement of customer service strategies.

1B The organisation's brand

- Definition and purpose of a brand.
- Process of branding a product/service:
 - process used, e.g. research, development and application.
- Importance of branding a product/service, e.g. benefits for the organisation and the customer, impact on market position of the organisation, impact on customer perception of the organisation and its products and services.

What needs to be learned

Learning outcome 1: Understand an organisation's business strategy in relation to customers (*continued*)

- Components of branding:
 - brand awareness, e.g. familiarity
 - brand extension, e.g. extension of services and products
 - brand identity, e.g. staff awareness and behaviours, policies and organisational values
 - brand management, e.g. creation and maintenance of a brand, customer perception of organisation, tangible elements (font, style, packaging)
 - brand recognition, e.g. identifying features of the organisation, logo, tagline, mission statement, advertising
 - brand advocacy, e.g. positively and activity promoting the organisation through communications and behaviours.

What needs to be learned

Learning outcome 2: Understand organisational structure in relation to customer service delivery

2A Organisational structures

- The need for an organisational structure, i.e. defines how tasks are divided, grouped and coordinated in an organisation, helps a business run effectively and efficiently.
- Elements of organisational structures:
 - work specialisation
 - departmentalisation
 - chain of command
 - span of control
 - centralisation and decentralisation
 - formalisation.
- Types of organisational structure:
 - functional, e.g. sales, marketing, human resources, production
 - divisional, e.g. product line, geographical location
 - matrix.
- Layers of authority, including tall or flat hierarchical structures.
- Use of organisational charts:
 - positions within the structure
 - role and reporting relationships
 - levels of authority.

2B Cross-team collaboration

- Business functions, including financial control, reception services, information technology (IT), digital services and information management (IM), facilities management (maintenance, grounds, warehouse and transportation, cleaning, procurement), marketing and promotions management.
- How their duties relate to the work of others in their immediate team/department and other functional areas within the organisation:
 - consequences for other roles if duties are not completed as required, e.g. not achieving team and organisational goals and targets, poor working relationships.

What needs to be learned

Learning outcome 2: Understand organisational structure in relation to customer service delivery (*continued*)

- The benefits of, and need for, cross-team collaboration, e.g. cross-disciplinary skills and insight, innovation, builds trust, communication, stakeholder/team buy-in, greater productivity.
- Features of effective collaboration, e.g. shared goals, respect for all perspectives, empowerment of individuals, open communication, equal access to information, having a collective mind set.

What needs to be learned

Learning outcome 3: Understand how customer service is shaped by the business environment and culture

3A Internal and external factors

- Potential impacts of political, economic, social, technological, legal and environmental (PESTLE) factors that affect the organisation.
- How a SWOT analysis can be used against the business's aims and mission to understand ongoing improvement planning and utilising best practice.
- The purpose and benefits of competitor analysis to be linked to the company's own practice.
- The importance and advantages/disadvantages of using various analysis techniques and the impact this can have on customer service provision, e.g. strengths and weaknesses of each type of analysis, how the outcomes may differ, opportunities learnt.
- How industry trends can affect the provision of customer service and impact on the business as a whole, e.g. change management.

3B Service culture and values

- Definition of the term 'service culture' and what this means in the context of customer service delivery and the actions and behaviours of customer service staff.
- How the business trains and motivates staff in customer service provision and how this compares to industry standards.
- The importance of monitoring and recording customer service outcomes for continuous improvement, including the types of monitoring used.
- How the company uses and analyses the information gained from monitoring, e.g. how this is shared with internal and external stakeholders.
- Definition and examples of organisational core values, their purpose in the organisation and how core values relate to the organisation's service culture.
- Influence of core values:
 - factors, e.g. size and type of organisation
 - impact on individual behaviour, e.g. personality, traits and types and relevance in understanding self and others
 - impact on team behaviour, e.g. commitment to shared beliefs, team loyalty
 - impact on the organisation, e.g. strategic planning, setting objectives.
- How service delivery aligns with service culture and organisational core values.

What needs to be learned

Learning outcome 4: Understand the impact of relevant legislation and regulations on customer service delivery

4A Main consumer protection legislation and regulations

- Main provisions/requirements of consumer-related legislation and regulations, including:
 - Consumer Rights Act
 - Consumer Credit Act
 - Trade Descriptions Act
 - Consumer Protection Act
 - Consumer Contracts Regulations.
- How consumer-related legislation and regulations are applied in practice, e.g. providing clear and accurate information to customers, following relevant organisational policies and procedures.
- Potential impact of non-compliance with consumer-related legislation and regulations on the organisation, the customer service practitioner and the customer.

4B Equality legislation

- Requirement to legally protect people from discrimination in the workplace and in wider society.
- Protected characteristics under equality legislation.
- Importance of equality legislation in a customer service environment.
- How the equality legislation can be applied in practice in customer service delivery, e.g. treating all customers with dignity and respect, following the organisational equality policy, adapting service approach to meet customers' specific needs, communicating in an open, fair and respectful manner, providing equally accessible service to all.
- Potential impact of non-compliance with equality legislation on the organisation, the customer service practitioner and the customer.

4C Health and safety legislation

- Requirement to legally ensure the health, safety and welfare for all employees at work.
- Importance of health and safety in the work environment and in customer service delivery.
- Responsibilities of employers and employees under the Act.

What needs to be learned

Learning outcome 4: Understand the impact of relevant legislation and regulations on customer service delivery (*continued*)

- How the legislation can be applied in practice, e.g. following health and safety training received, taking reasonable care of own and others' health and safety, cooperating with employer on health and safety, reporting occurrences where inadequate precautions are putting anyone's health and safety at risk.
- Potential impact of non-compliance with health and safety legislation on the organisation, the customer service practitioner and the customer.

4D Data protection legislation

- Key principles under the legislation.
- Importance of keeping information confidential.
- Types of information to be kept confidential in the business, including customers' personal data.
- How the legislation can be applied in practice, e.g. secure storage of paper-based records, following policies and procedures for using computer systems, web-based technology and mobile devices (e.g. using passwords, locking screens).
- Employee (customer service practitioner) responsibilities under data protection legislation:
 - follow organisational policy/procedures for collection, storage, processing, retention and disposal of personal data
 - maintain security/confidentiality of data (paper-based, electronic)
 - report data security risks in line with organisational procedures.
- Potential impact of non-compliance with data protection legislation on the organisation, the customer service practitioner and the customer.

4E Industry-specific legislation and regulations

- Requirements of legislation and regulations that affect the delivery of customer service in specific industries as applicable to apprentices.
- How industry-specific legislation and regulations impact on the delivery of customer service and the implications of not complying with them.

What needs to be learned

Learning outcome 5: Understand the impact of organisational policies, procedures and systems on customer service delivery

5A Internal policies of an organisation

- Difference and relationship between a policy and a procedure and the importance of these within an organisation.
- Different types of organisational policies and procedures related to customer service and their purpose (i.e. why they are needed), including complaints and escalation procedures.
- Importance of following policies and procedures in customer service delivery, including provision of consistent service, maintaining service quality, compliance with legislation and regulations.
- Digital media policy including:
 - what is meant by digital media
 - purpose of a digital media policy
 - types of guidelines within a social media policy, e.g. confidentiality, standards of behaviour, privacy settings, use of personal information, copyright compliance.
- Importance of maintaining and updating knowledge on policies, procedures and legislation.

5B Organisation service standards

- Definition and purpose of creating and maintaining organisational standards.
- Customer insight, e.g. specific needs, preferences, market research, emerging trends.
- Business culture, e.g. consistent and transparent service policies, ethical behaviours, staff training.
- Delivery of service, e.g. exceeding customer expectations, delivery on promises, measurements of service standards.

5C Systems and technology used in customer service delivery

- Types of technology that can be found in customer service delivery:
 - hardware, e.g. the equipment/technology that supports the customer service role (computers, tills, telephones etc.)
 - software, e.g. the systems, databases and applications that are used in customer service delivery.

What needs to be learned

Learning outcome 5: Understand the impact of organisational policies, procedures and systems on customer service delivery (*continued*)

- Benefits of using technology within a customer service environment, e.g. the types of technology used, the benefit to the organisation, benefit to the customer, aligning to customer service targets.
- Importance of ongoing training on the operation of the systems, including the consequences if training is not completed.
- Importance of researching industry trends and updating systems and technology, e.g. the advantages and drawbacks of new technology and systems.

Essential information for tutors and assessors

Essential resources

There are no special resources needed for this unit.

Assessment

This section must be read in conjunction with *Section 8 Assessment* and the glossary in *Annexe B*.

This unit is internally assessed. To pass this unit, the evidence that the learner presents for assessment must demonstrate that they have met the required standard specified in the learning outcomes and assessment criteria.

The assessment for this unit should be set in a specific organisational context, it should draw on learning from the unit and be designed in a way that enables learners to meet all the assessment criteria.

A recommended assessment approach is given below. Centres are free to create their own assessment as long as they are confident it enables learners to provide suitable and sufficient evidence to meet the stated standard of the assessment criteria and achieve the learning outcomes.

Learning outcome 1

To satisfy the assessment criteria for this learning outcome, learners will prepare a presentation on their organisation's business strategy in relation to its customers. Learners who are not employed can prepare their presentation on a customer service business they are familiar with. In their presentation (which may be verbal or written and include images), learners will:

1. state the organisation's mission statement (AC1.1)
2. outline the purpose of the organisation's mission statement and give **three** reasons why having a mission statement benefits the organisation (AC1.1)
3. outline a minimum of **two** business goals of the organisation based on its customer service strategy (AC1.2)
4. give detailed examples how the organisation's mission statement and business strategy impact customer service (**one** example for each) (AC1.2)
5. outline the benefits of having a brand, giving reasons to support each benefit. At least **one** benefit must be from the perspective of the organisation and at least **one** benefit must be from the perspective of the customer (AC1.3).

Learning outcome 2

To satisfy the assessment criteria for this learning outcome, learners will prepare a report (based on their own organisational chart) on a customer service business. Learners who are not employed can prepare their report on a customer service business they are familiar with. In their report (which may include images), learners will:

1. compare **two** different organisational structures. **One** organisational structure type must be that of the employer organisation or an organisation the learner is familiar with (AC2.1)
2. describe the role different departments/functions play in customer service delivery. The description must focus on key responsibilities of the departments/functions and how they relate to customer service delivery (AC2.2)
3. outline **two** benefits of cross-team collaboration when delivering customer service and provide reasons to support these. **One** benefit must be from the perspective of the customer and **one** from the perspective of the organisation (AC2.3)
4. describe the causes of **three** different potential service failures within an organisation. Descriptions must include detail that links the cause with the failure (AC2.4)
5. describe the potential consequences of **at least three** different service failures that may occur within the organisation. The description should clearly show the link between the potential consequence and the service failure (AC2.5).

Learning outcome 3

To satisfy the assessment criteria for this learning outcome, learners will prepare company induction materials that communicate information to new staff about the business environment and culture. Learners who are not employed can prepare their staff induction materials for a customer service business they are familiar with. In their staff induction materials (which may include images), learners will:

1. outline **two** internal and two external factors that can influence organisational customer service delivery and give examples to support each (AC3.1)
2. describe what is meant by 'customer service culture' at the organisation (AC3.2)
3. outline at least **two** links between the organisation's customer service culture and customer service delivery. For each link, learners must give examples to show the relationship between the service culture and customer service delivery (AC3.3).

Learning outcome 4

To satisfy the assessment criteria for this learning outcome, learners will develop a presentation on how legislation and regulations relating to health and safety, data protection and equality apply to their organisation and job role, and ways in which they can support the organisation in applying them. Learners who are not employed can base their information on an organisation they are familiar with. In their presentation, learners will:

1. describe the main requirements of **three** consumer-related legislation/regulations that affect the organisation's customer service provision (AC4.1)
2. outline **two** ways in which the organisation collects, stores and uses customer information and, for each, provide clear details to show the actions that the organisation should take as a result of the requirements of current data protection legislation/regulations (AC4.2)
3. outline **three** health and safety-related factors that influence customer service delivery, giving examples to support each. The factors must relate to the organisation's customer service delivery as a whole (AC4.3)
4. outline **three** equality-related factors that influence customer service delivery, giving examples to support each. The factors must relate to the organisation's customer service delivery as a whole (AC4.4).

Learning outcome 5

To satisfy the assessment criteria for this learning outcome, learners will produce a set of guidance notes on how organisational policies and procedures apply to their organisation and job role, and ways in which they can support the organisation in applying them. Learners who are not employed can base their information on an organisation they are familiar with. In their guidance notes, learners will:

1. outline **two** organisational policies and **two** organisational procedures relevant to customer service delivery. For each, give **at least one** way it influences the delivery of customer service with supporting examples. Organisational policies and procedures must specifically relate to the delivery of customer service (AC5.1)
2. outline the need for escalation procedures and give **one** reason why these are important from the perspective of the customer and **one** reason from the perspective of the organisation (AC5.2)
3. describe **two** ways the organisation's service standards impact on the customer experience. The description must show the link between the customer experience and the standard of customer service they receive (AC5.3)

4. outline **three** ways that policies and procedures relating to confidentiality affect customer service provision, giving examples to support each. Learners must show the impact policies and procedures have on the duties of the customer service specialist (AC5.4)
5. examine the strengths and weaknesses of **two** systems and **two** types of technology used in customer service delivery. Learners must use the information gathered to draw a conclusion on the impact of each in supporting customer service delivery (AC5.5).

Unit 2: Understanding Customer Loyalty, Retention and Satisfaction

Level:	3
Unit type:	Knowledge
Guided learning hours:	28

Unit introduction

To be successful, organisations need to know how to provide customer service that meets and exceeds their customers' individual needs and expectations. In order to do this well, organisations need to find out the requirements and expectations of their customer base. Knowing this information is extremely important as it allows organisations to cater for customers at an individual level and thus provide excellent customer service.

In this unit you will gain an understanding of the impact customer loyalty, retention and satisfaction have on an organisation and strategies for improving them. You will identify the different points of the customer journey where customers interact with the organisation and the importance of understanding the customer journey.

You will learn how customer service organisations use customer insight and customer service data to; analyse customer behaviours, anticipate needs and expectations and measure customer satisfaction and organisational performance in order to set objectives for organisational improvements.

You will learn how to develop and maintain relationships with internal and external customers, including how to adapt your service approach to meet customer needs and expectations and retain customers, even in challenging situations.

This unit links with *Unit 5: Delivering Solution-focused Customer Service*, *Unit 6: Managing Challenging Customers and Situations* and *Unit 7: Influencing Change and Improvement in Customer Service*. Consideration should be given to delivering the related content together. There may also be opportunity to use the same evidence across these units.

Learning outcomes and assessment criteria

To pass this unit, the learner needs to demonstrate that they can meet all the learning outcomes for the unit. The assessment criteria determine the standard required to achieve the unit.

Learning outcomes		Assessment criteria	
1	Understand the importance of customer loyalty, retention and satisfaction for an organisation	1.1	Explain the value of customer loyalty, retention and satisfaction to the organisation
		1.2	Outline factors that drive customer loyalty, retention and satisfaction
		1.3	Explain the impact of good and poor customer service on a brand
		1.4	Describe techniques used to attract and retain customers
		1.5	Evaluate strategies that can be used to improve customer loyalty, retention and satisfaction
2	Understand the importance of the customer journey for customer service delivery	2.1	Describe the needs and expectations of different types of customers
		2.2	Describe touchpoints at each stage of a typical customer journey
		2.3	Explain how customer journey mapping contributes to delivery of effective customer service
		2.4	Explain techniques for analysing the 'customer journey'
		2.5	Identify where high points and low points of a customer journey may produce a range of customer emotions
		2.6	Explain how the 'customer journey' can be managed to ensure successful outcomes
3	Understand the use of customer insight to improve service delivery	3.1	Describe sources of information that can provide customer insight
		3.2	Describe different methods of segmenting and characterising customers
		3.3	Explain the importance of analysing information relating to customer insight
		3.4	Describe methods of collecting, analysing and presenting information relating to customer insight
		3.5	Explain how information about customer insight can be used to improve the customer journey

Learning outcomes		Assessment criteria	
4	Understand how to develop customer relationships that contribute to customer loyalty	4.1	Compare the needs and expectations of internal and external customers
		4.2	Explain how different cultures, ages and social profiles can influence customer expectations
		4.3	Explain differences in service approach that may be required when managing internal and external customer relationships
		4.4	Explain the importance of being aware, and reacting appropriately to different customer emotions
		4.5	Explain how developing good customer relationships contributes to customer loyalty
5	Understand how to retain customers during challenging situations	5.1	Explain challenges and issues that can impact on a customer journey
		5.2	Compare different techniques that could be used to critically evaluate customer challenges and issues
		5.3	Explain when referral or escalation of customer issues may be required
		5.4	Describe the limits and levels of authority that exist within the organisation
		5.5	Explain the business processes involved in customer recovery that benefit both the customer and the organisation

Unit content

What needs to be learned

Learning outcome 1: Understand the importance of customer loyalty, retention and satisfaction for an organisation

1A Value of customer loyalty and retention

- Customer loyalty and customer retention:
 - definitions
 - impact of customer loyalty on customer retention.
- How to retain customers, e.g. providing the right products and/or services for customers, awareness of competitors, regular dialogue, providing excellent customer service, meeting and exceeding customer expectations.
- Value of customer loyalty and retention, e.g. reduced costs, repeat business, increased profit, reduced risk, improved reputation.
- Benefits:
 - direct value to an organisation
 - indirect value to an organisation.
- Potential impacts of good and poor customer service on brand loyalty, reputation, brand image and revenue.
- Evaluating customer loyalty, retention and satisfaction
 - how to assess the extent of customer loyalty, e.g. obtaining customer feedback face to face, surveys and questionnaires, (online, social media, telephone, focus groups)
 - analysing repeat custom and purchases, e.g. review the use of loyalty schemes, online purchases, analysis of new customers by customer referral
 - use of Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system to predict customers' future needs and expectations for products and/or services.
- Factors that influence customer retention:
 - internal factors, e.g. products and/or services offered by the organisation, including value for money, customer service standards
 - external factors, e.g. competitor offers, position in the marketplace, customers' perception of organisation's brand.

What needs to be learned

Learning outcome 1: Understand the importance of customer loyalty, retention and satisfaction for an organisation (*continued*)

1B Strategies for improving customer loyalty, retention and satisfaction

- Practices for improving customer loyalty, e.g. effective customer service procedures, established service recovery procedures.
- Measuring organisational effectiveness:
 - monitoring policies and procedures, e.g. reviewing policies for effectiveness analysis against organisational service standards
 - analysing customer feedback, e.g. compliments and complaints, analysis of data for trends
 - benchmarking, e.g. monitoring the service offer against Key Performance Indicators (KPI) both internal and external
 - comparability research, including comparison (against own performance, competitor performance), identifying gaps (in the customer experience, type and range of products and/or services)
 - evaluation of customer service standards against organisational objectives and customer service strategy.
- Features and uses of a range of techniques to measure customer satisfaction, e.g. questionnaires (face to face, telephone), online surveys, customer focus groups.
- Use of techniques for measuring customer satisfaction, e.g.:
 - gauging customer satisfaction (quality of products and/or services, improvements in processes and procedures)
 - informing improvements highlighted by customers, informing changes to policies and procedures to improve customer satisfaction.

What needs to be learned

Learning outcome 2: Understand the importance of the customer journey for customer service delivery

2A Types of customer

- Definition of a customer.
- Types of customer:
 - internal and external
 - customers with specific needs, e.g. protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010
 - customers with specific requirements/priorities, e.g. timescales
 - challenging customers – where communication difficulties and interactions need to be overcome, e.g. impatient, indecisive, argumentative
 - dissatisfied customers, e.g. unhappy about the service received.
- How customer needs and expectations might differ across different people:
 - cultures, e.g. organisational culture, national culture, differing traditions and beliefs
 - ages, e.g. children, adults, elderly
 - social profiles, e.g. social and digital media communication platforms, online presence of customers.

2B Evaluating the 'customer journey'

- Customer journey, i.e. series of interactions customers have with an organisation through all available interaction channels.
- Customer journey mapping:
 - definition (mapping the customer experience across touchpoints)
 - purpose, e.g. gives holistic view of the experience delivered by all customer-facing functions, strategic tool to enhance customer experience, improves customer service design.
- Customer journey mapping process:
 - identifying different types of customer and their needs
 - identifying the steps in the customer journey
 - identifying customer touchpoints, e.g. website, social media, telephone, face to face.

What needs to be learned

Learning outcome 2: Understand the importance of the customer journey for customer service delivery (*continued*)

- High points and low points of the customer journey:
 - emotions of customers at key stages of the journey, e.g. research, choice, purchase, delivery time, post-purchase, experience, post-experience
 - level of time, effort and expense incurred by the customer and the organisation.
- Contribution to the delivery of effective customer service, e.g. opportunity to see things from the customer's perspective, identifies customer needs and expectations, identifies areas of weakness in service.
- Customer journey management, e.g. predicting customer needs and expectations, personalising the customer experience, eliminating missed opportunities to attract, satisfy and retain customers.

What needs to be learned

Learning outcome 3: Understand the use of customer insight to improve service delivery

3A Understanding customer insight

- Purpose of gaining customer insight, e.g. identify customer buying habits, anticipate and respond to customer needs and expectations, develop effective strategies and plans.
- Influences on customer behaviour:
 - the customer buying cycle: problem/need recognition; information search; evaluation of alternatives; selection; purchase; post-purchase review
 - political, environmental (public concern), social (friends and family), technological (access to internet, mobile devices), legal and economic (spending power, financial incentives and discounts) influences
 - cultural influences
 - media reports, social media and online reviews
 - marketing communications, e.g. television, radio, social media, offline communications
 - products/services (pricing, choice, suppliers, availability, distribution (online/in-store)).

3B Researching customer insight

- Purpose of research, e.g. captures customer requirements/Voice of the Customer (VOC), informs business and customer service strategy and plans, helps organisations anticipate and respond to customer needs and expectations, forms part of continuous business improvement cycle – plan, do, reflect, review, adjust.
- Considerations for research into customer insight, e.g. type of information required – facts, figures, information already owned or needs to be commissioned, conducting research – in-house or via third-party research companies, timing of research – before, during, after purchase, information sources, cost of research, management and use of data gathered.

What needs to be learned

Learning outcome 3: Understand the use of customer insight to improve service delivery (*continued*)

- Information that can be gained from research:
 - demographics, e.g. age, lifestyle
 - customer/consumer beliefs, perceptions and depth of knowledge
 - customer/consumer attitudes
 - buyer behaviour motivations
 - past buying behaviour
 - future buying behaviour – predicting/anticipating needs/expectations
 - likelihood of customer referrals/recommendations.
- Sources of information:
 - quantitative, e.g. performance data
 - qualitative, e.g. surveys, reviews, complaints
 - primary, e.g. new research direct from internal and external customers
 - secondary, e.g. existing research from indirect sources such as internet research, internal records of customer service.
- Segmenting and characterising customers:
 - demographics: age, gender, income size, occupation, religion, race, ethnicity, disability and mobility
 - geographic: countries, cities, postal codes, counties, towns, language
 - behavioural: usage, knowledge and attitude, attitude and response to product and/or service
 - customer value base: revenue generated from customer, costs associated with retaining customer
 - socio-economic groupings: social status, social grade, lifestyle (activities, interests, opinions, values and beliefs), personality.

3C Collecting, analysing and presenting customer research

- Information collection methods:
 - performance data – results of questionnaires or surveys, e.g. online, focus groups, face to face, telephone
 - compliments – staff, product and/or service, volume, repetition
 - complaints – staff, product and/or service, action and follow up, resolution, volume, repetition.

What needs to be learned

Learning outcome 3: Understand the use of customer insight to improve service delivery (*continued*)

- Analysis techniques:
 - performance analysis – scorecards, dashboards (created from CRMs)
 - performance variation – comparison (by time, by product and/or by service), internal, with competitors
 - performance measured – matched to benchmark (meeting, exceeding)
 - trends and indicators: statistics, profiles.
- Presenting outcomes of analysis:
 - formats, e.g. table, chart, graph, diagram, report, presentation, case study, scenario, screen-based, paper-based
 - techniques, e.g. software manipulation, ratios, percentages, predictive modelling.
- Importance of customer insight analysis, e.g. making better business decisions relating to customer service delivery and the ‘customer journey’ and the ability to predict customer movements, needs and expectations.
- Using information to improve the customer journey, e.g. targeting specific marketing communications, staying one step ahead of competitors, building stronger relationships with customers that lead to retention and loyalty.

What needs to be learned

Learning outcome 4: Understand how to develop customer relationships that contribute to customer loyalty

4A Customer needs and expectations

- Customer needs:
 - definition, including examples
 - impact on customer satisfaction and return sales.
- Customer expectations:
 - definition of customer expectations and how expectations are formed
 - features of customer expectations, e.g. value for money, personalisation, accuracy and reliability, information and advice, open communication and efficiency.
- Impact of customer expectations on customer experience, e.g. positive or negative customer experience depending on whether expectations were not met, were matched or were exceeded.
- Needs and expectations vary according to type of customer.
- Importance of differentiating:
 - focus on customer retention and customer loyalty instead of just making a one-time sale
 - creates a foundation to attract new customers, e.g. word-of-mouth advertising, customer recommendations
 - reduces customer defections; develops effective customer service delivery techniques and processes; reduces delivery costs
 - opportunity to increase sales through cross-selling and upselling.

4B Customer types

- Internal customers:
 - employees – colleagues for whom one department or individual performs a service for another to help satisfy external customers
 - stakeholders – other individuals or groups within a business who have an interest in the company (owners, shareholders and management).
- Needs and expectations of internal customers, e.g. cooperation, support, friendliness, respect.

What needs to be learned

Learning outcome 4: Understand how to develop customer relationships that contribute to customer loyalty (*continued*)

- External customers:
 - business to consumer (B2C) – a business sells its products/services directly to a customer/consumer
 - business to business (B2B) – a business sells its products/services to another business
 - business to government (B2G) – similar to B2B (may require a business to submit a competitive tender).
- Needs and expectations of external customers, e.g. value for money, good quality products and/or services, friendly and professional service..
- Influences on customer expectations:
 - cultural factors, e.g. cultural awareness of organisation and staff, anti-discriminatory behaviour and communications
 - age-related factors, e.g. respect, language and communications tailored to specific needs such as large print documents, hearing loops, resting points, access and understanding of technology, child and baby-friendly services such as changing stations
 - social profiles, e.g. organisation's social media presence, customer preferences for marketing communications, accessibility to organisational information.

4C Differences in service approach

- Ways of meeting specific needs, e.g. providing a seat for an elderly customer.
- Knowing when to adapt service approach, including signs and signals for when to adapt, e.g. customer with a visible protected characteristic, customer dissatisfaction, customer body language.
- How to adapt service approach according to customer needs and expectations, e.g. changing personal behaviours and communication style to reflect customer's personality (amiable, expressive, analytical and driver), empathising.
- Understanding customer emotions:
 - positive emotions can include happiness, gratitude and surprise
 - negative emotions can include anger, frustration and disappointment
 - rational and irrational buying decisions, e.g. impulse buying.

What needs to be learned

Learning outcome 4: Understand how to develop customer relationships that contribute to customer loyalty (*continued*)

- Defusing emotions to make conversation more productive, e.g. reassuring customers that you want to help them, empathising, acknowledging the issue.
- Use of empathetic listening:
 - understanding the feelings and emotions of the customer
 - providing responses relevant to the situation, e.g. customers with special requirements, difficult customers, dealing with complaints.

Learning outcome 5: Understand how to retain customers during challenging situations

5A Challenges and issues

- A complex situation is one that has many different parts and is therefore often difficult to understand and may be hard to find an answer to.
- Types of challenge and issue:
 - products/services, e.g. quality, delivery problems, damage, price
 - customer error, e.g. lack of understanding of company policies, procedures, pricing
 - lack of customer service training
 - poor communication (colleagues, customers)
 - inadequate customer service systems or procedures to support effective customer service, e.g. complex telephone systems
 - staff problems (poor service delivery, poor attitude, poor behaviour)
 - unclear lines of responsibilities and levels of authority, staff shortages, competence levels and/or lack of product/service knowledge, lack of incentives, use of jargon and/or abbreviations, personal issues affecting service
 - unmanageable and restrictive organisational policies and procedures, e.g. restrictions on ability of staff to make decisions, refunds and exchanges
 - complications and limitations caused by legislation/regulations, e.g. data protection processes
 - ethical issues and their effect on community and the environment, e.g. fair trade, use of child labour, single-use packaging.
- Different types of challenging customer, e.g. impatient, dissatisfied, indecisive, argumentative, customers with language or cultural needs, customers with special needs (visual impairment, hearing or physical impairments), talkative customers, groups of customers.
- Challenging behaviour from customers, e.g. arguing with staff, questioning staff competence, demanding impossible solutions, not accepting limitations and procedures.
- Identifying customer issues and challenging situations: based on types of issue or challenging situation, e.g. indicates breakdown in service delivery, potential to damage the reputation of the organisation.
- Techniques for evaluating customer challenges and issues and their causes, e.g. business process monitoring, sampling customer feedback, monitoring repeat customers, measuring customer satisfaction.

What needs to be learned

Learning outcome 5: Understand how to retain customers during challenging situations (*continued*)

5B Escalation requirements and procedures

- Escalation: levels of authority in the organisation; limits of own authority, limits of knowledge, losing control of the situation, level and speed of progress.
- Reasons for referring or signposting customers, e.g. to be in line with organisational escalation procedures, required action is outside area of responsibility or authority, when there is a lack of knowledge or experience, when specialist support is needed.
- When to escalate – limits of own authority, limits of knowledge, losing control of the situation, level and speed of progress.
- How to escalate – follow organisational policies.
- Who to escalate to, based on, e.g. level of authority, level of expertise/knowledge, availability, type of situation.

5C Customer service recovery

- Factors involved in customer recovery, e.g. value of the customer to the organisation, reputation of organisation impacted on by negative views of customers.
- Loss of business to competitors, e.g. re-engagement with customer, establishing why customer left, customer incentives to return, compensating the customer for bad service.
- Follow up: communication with customer following the provision of customer service.
- How resolving customer issues and complex situations contributes to customer loyalty, e.g. keeping existing customers, selling more to existing customers, reducing customer complaints.

5D Business processes for resolving customer issues and challenging situations

- Taking ownership through showing personal commitment, e.g. not passing the customer on unless necessary, being resourceful to acquire information needed to find a resolution, following issues until they are resolved, escalating in a timely manner, requesting assistance from colleagues and other departments.
- Identifying options for resolving situations of conflict and challenge, which are mutually beneficial for the organisation and the customer.

What needs to be learned

Learning outcome 5: Understand how to retain customers during challenging situations (*continued*)

- Balancing the needs of customer and organisation:
 - operating within organisational limitations
 - meeting organisational objectives, suggesting alternatives, offering concessions
 - signposting to other departments or organisations.
- Resolutions to meet customer needs, e.g. refund payments, exchange product, replace product and/or service, repair product, offer alternative product and/or service, offer goodwill gestures such as discounts, gift vouchers.
- Providing resolutions for challenging situations:
 - within organisational policies and procedures and within the remit of own responsibility
 - working with others to help when options for action are beyond own level of authority
 - offering solutions but not overpromising
 - agreeing solution and next steps with the customer.
- Keeping customers informed of progress, e.g. frequency of updates, communication method used, updating customers even when there is no progress to report.

Essential information for tutors and assessors

Essential resources

There are no special resources needed for this unit.

Assessment

This section must be read in conjunction with *Section 8 Assessment* and the glossary in *Annexe B*.

This unit is internally assessed. To pass this unit, the evidence that the learner presents for assessment must demonstrate that they have met the required standard specified in the learning outcomes and assessment criteria.

The assessment for this unit should be set in a specific organisational context, it should draw on learning from the unit and be designed in a way that enables learners to meet all the assessment criteria.

A recommended assessment approach is given below. Centres are free to create their own assessment as long as they are confident it enables learners to provide suitable and sufficient evidence to meet the stated standard of the assessment criteria and achieve the learning outcomes.

Learning outcome 1

To satisfy the assessment criteria for this learning outcome, learners will provide a training guide for colleagues on the topic of customer loyalty, retention and satisfaction, including how to attract and retain customers. As part of their training guide, learners will:

1. outline **three** ways that customer retention, loyalty and satisfaction can be valuable to the organisation, giving a detailed reason to support each (AC1.1)
2. outline **three** factors that drive customer loyalty, retention and satisfaction. One factor must be given for retention, one factor for loyalty and one factor for satisfaction (AC1.2)
3. outline ways that good and poor customer service can impact on the organisation, with supporting examples. At least **two** ways must relate to the positive impact and at least **two** ways must relate to the negative impact on the organisation (AC1.3)
4. describe **two** techniques that could be used to attract customers and **two** techniques that could be used to retain customers. Learners must show the differences between attracting and retaining customers and give clear information to show how each technique is appropriate for attracting or retaining customers (AC1.4)

5. examine the features, advantages and disadvantages of two different strategies the organisation could use for improving customer loyalty, retention and satisfaction. Learners must use the information they have presented to draw a conclusion on which of the strategies would be most effective. (AC1.5).

Learning outcome 2

To satisfy the assessment criteria for this learning outcome, learners will provide an annotated illustration of a typical customer journey in their organisation, including the main touchpoints, and the touchpoints where the learner interacts with the customer. Their customer journey will be shared with other apprentices in the training environment to use as a basis for group discussion. If learners are not employed, they can base their customer journey on a customer service business they are familiar with. As part of their customer journeys annotated illustration, learners will:

1. describe **three** different types of customer they are likely to deal with in the organisation, and for each detail their needs and expectations. Needs and expectations must be specific to each type of customer and not just needs and expectations of customers in general (AC2.1)
2. describe the organisation's typical customer journey, where the customer touchpoints are within this journey, and for each touchpoint detail the interaction the organisation has with customers (AC2.2)
3. outline how customer journey mapping contributes to the organisation's delivery of effective customer service and give **at least two** detailed examples to support this (AC2.3)
4. outline **three** techniques used by the organisation to analyse the customer journey and give detailed reasons to show how each technique is appropriate for analysing the customer journey (AC2.4)
5. Give examples of **at least two** high points and at least two low points of the customer journey that may affect customer emotions (AC2.5)
6. outline **two ways** that the customer journey is managed and for each detail management actions that could be applied to manage specific stages of the customer journey (AC2.6).

Learning outcome 3

To satisfy the assessment criteria for this learning outcome, learners will present outcomes (written or verbal) of an analysis into the organisation's customers and their specific characteristics. The presentation will also include the methodology used when analysing customer insight. As part of their presentation into customer insight, learners will:

1. describe **three** sources of information that could be used to obtain insight about the organisation's customers. Learners must provide details to show the specific type of information they would acquire from each source (AC3.1)
2. describe **three** different ways of segmenting customers and for each detail the characteristics of those customers. Characteristics must relate specifically to each segment and not to customers in general (AC3.2)
3. outline reasons for analysing information relating to customer insight. **At least one reason** must be from the perspective of the organisation and **at least one reason** must be from the perspective of the customer (AC3.3)
4. describe **at least three** methods that can be used to collect, analyse and present information related to customer insight. For each method, learners need to show how it would be suited to collecting, analysing and presenting this information (AC3.4)
5. outline **three** ways that information related to customer insight can be used to improve the customer journey, using examples. Learners must show the link between the information gained and the potential improvement to customer service (AC3.5).

Learning outcome 4

To satisfy the assessment criteria for this learning outcome, learners will produce a staff guide for new employees on developing customer relationships and how this contributes to customer loyalty. As part of their staff guide, learners will:

1. compare the needs and expectations of different types of customers (AC4.1)
2. outline **three** ways that different cultures, ages and social profiles can influence customer expectations. For each way, learners need to give detailed examples to show how customer expectations can be influenced. Responses must cover culture, age and social profiles (AC4.2)
3. outline **four** actions and behaviours that could be used when managing internal and external customer relationships. For each, learners need to show how each action and behaviour is appropriate for managing relationships with each type of customer (AC4.3)

4. Give detailed reasons why it is important to be aware and react appropriately to different customer emotions when developing customer relationships and loyalty. **At least one reason** must be from the perspective of the customer and **at least one reason** must be from the perspective of the customer service specialist (AC4.4)
5. outline **two** ways that building good relationships with customers contributes to loyalty and give detailed reasons to support this (AC4.5).

Learning outcome 5

To satisfy the assessment criteria for this learning outcome, learners will produce a guidance document on organisational procedures for handling customer issues and challenging situations. Learners may present this guidance in writing or verbally.

As part of their guidance, learners will:

1. outline **two** possible customer challenges and **two** possible customer issues. They will give details to show the impact each may have on the customer journey (AC5.1)
2. compare **two** different techniques that could be used to critically evaluate customer challenges and issues (AC5.2)
3. outline **one** occasion when referral and **one** occasion when escalation of customer issues may be required and give reasons to support these (AC5.3)
4. describe the limits and levels of authority within the organisation for handling customer challenges and issues. In their description, learners must include detail to show limits and levels of authority for their own role and **at least one other role** within the organisation (AC5.4)
5. outline **at least three** business processes involved in service recovery and for each business process, give detailed examples to show how these benefit the customer and the organisation (AC5.5).

Unit 3: Understanding Continuous Improvement in Customer Service

Level:	3
Unit type:	Knowledge
Guided learning hours:	42

Unit introduction

Over a period of time, customer expectations change and organisations need to improve and adapt their products and services to meet those expectations; this can be achieved through a process of continuous improvement. Ideas for improvements may come from customers in the form of formal or informal feedback the organisation collects, for example through their complaint procedures. This information must be interpreted and analysed so that the organisation can make the improvements required.

Once customer requirements are understood, the organisation must plan for the implementation of any improvements. Careful planning will help to ensure the success of any improvements and customer acceptance of the new product, service or system. The final stage is to monitor a new product, service or system to make sure it is functioning correctly.

On completion of this unit, you will understand the importance of continuous improvement within a customer service environment and the role of stakeholder feedback in the continuous improvement cycle. You will know how to monitor the quality of customer service delivery and customer interactions and the appropriate methods for capturing customer research and data. You will explore how to analyse and interpret customer feedback using formal and informal methods such as questionnaires, customer panels and social media. You will understand how to plan improvements to customer service delivery, how constraints can limit plans and how to identify when a plan has been successful. Finally, you will look at the monitoring and evaluating of customer service improvements and how to communicate improvements through sharing information with work colleagues.

This unit links with *Unit 7: Influencing Change and Improvement in Customer Service*. Consideration should be given to delivering the related content together. There may also be opportunity to use the same evidence across these units.

Learning outcomes and assessment criteria

To pass this unit, the learner needs to demonstrate that they can meet all the learning outcomes for the unit. The assessment criteria determine the standard required to achieve the unit.

Learning outcomes		Assessment criteria	
1	Understand the principles of continuous improvement in customer service	1.1	State the purpose of continuous improvement in customer service
		1.2	Describe the benefits of continuous improvement for a customer service organisation
		1.3	Explain the internal and external factors that influence future customer service-related improvements
		1.4	Explain the benefits of considering the future when making customer service-related decisions and/or taking action
		1.5	Explain the importance of using feedback from customers and other stakeholders in continuous improvement
2	Understand how to monitor the quality of customer service in order to improve delivery	2.1	Describe the value of using organisational customer service standards and targets when monitoring the quality of customer service delivery
		2.2	Explain how different sources of information may help identify ways of improving customer service
		2.3	Describe sampling techniques used to collect customer research
		2.4	Explain the advantages and limitations of different methods for collecting data for customer research

Learning outcomes		Assessment criteria	
3	Understand how to analyse and interpret information to improve customer service	3.1	Explain the suitability of a range of techniques for analysing customer feedback
		3.2	Explain techniques used to monitor the quality of customer research collected
		3.3	Explain the impact of validity and reliability issues when analysing customer research
		3.4	Explain the suitability of a range of techniques for interpreting customer research data
		3.5	Explain different formats and techniques that can support the presentation of analysis data and recommendations
4	Understand how to manage a customer service improvement project	4.1	Describe the key factors required for the successful implementation of customer service improvements
		4.2	Explain how to plan for the implementation of an improvement to customer service
		4.3	Explain possible constraints that can impact on implementing customer service improvements
		4.4	Explain the importance of sharing information and ideas with colleagues and/or service partners to support the improvement of service delivery
		4.5	Explain how to evaluate the impact of improvements to the quality of customer service

Unit content

What needs to be learned

Learning outcome 1: Understand the principles of continuous improvement in customer service

1A Continuous improvement in customer service

- Definition and purpose of continuous improvement, including links to quality assurance and quality control.
- Types of continuous improvement in customer service, including improving existing processes, using innovation to improve products and services, changes to procedures, staff training, solving problems for customers.
- Specific areas for continuous improvement, e.g. timeliness, consistency, accessibility, accuracy, responsiveness, cost.
- Process of carrying out continuous improvement: plan-do-check-act.
- Benefits of continuous improvement in customer service, e.g. benefits for the organisation and for the customer, impact on market position of the organisation.
- Consequences of not carrying out continuous improvements, e.g. potential non-compliance with regulatory requirements, negative customer reviews and feedback.

1B Future-focused customer service

- Ways of being future-focused, e.g. developing a customer service strategy, analysing internal and external influences (SWOT, PESTLE analysis), using information to make justified predictions.
- Benefits of future-focused customer service, e.g. aligning with customer service strategy, anticipating and predicting customer needs and expectations of customer service delivery based on industry trends and developments.
- Components of a service strategy:
 - service reliability, e.g. systems and procedures, staff behaviour and product expertise
 - service surprise, e.g. exceeding customer expectations
 - service recovery, e.g. service recovery plan, problem resolution procedures
 - service fairness, e.g. consistent and transparent policies, ethical behaviour.
- Relationship between future-focused thinking and customer service strategy, including component plan of the strategic management plan, supports the implementation of business strategy, supports achievement of performance objectives through marketing orientation, customer acquisition, customer retention, customer extension, value creation.

What needs to be learned

Learning outcome 1: Understand the principles of continuous improvement in customer service (*continued*)

1C Stakeholder engagement and feedback

- Stakeholders:
 - internal, e.g. supervisor, team leader or manager, team members, senior managers
 - external, e.g. potential service users/customers, consumers, competitors, regulatory bodies, suppliers.
- Operations from the customers' viewpoint, e.g. adopting a customer-centred approach, customer relationship management (CRM), mapping customer touchpoints, identifying moments of truth, continuous improvements to service delivery policies and procedures, focus on meeting customer needs.
- Importance of feedback:
 - to customers, e.g. improves the customer experience, provision of products and services that meet needs
 - to the organisation, e.g. identifies improvements to customer service, builds customer loyalty, supports information exchange, increases cross-selling and up selling opportunities, customer retention.

What needs to be learned

Learning outcome 2: Understand how to monitor the quality of customer service in order to improve delivery

2A Measuring the quality of customer service

- Quality service standards, e.g. agreed lead times, accuracy of information and delivery, meeting customer expectations, following organisational protocols, systems and procedures.
- Customer service delivery targets, e.g. meeting requirements of job role:
 - Key Performance Indicators (KPI), e.g. number of issues or complaints
 - customer satisfaction scores
 - First Contact Resolution (FCR)
 - Net Promotor Score (NPS)
 - average resolution times
 - call wait times.
- Value of measuring service quality:
 - identifying current and emerging customer needs and expectations
 - identifying innovation and improvements in products/services
 - measuring customer perception, e.g. what customers are thinking
 - measuring customer satisfaction, e.g. are customers happy?
 - identifying service failures, e.g. where the organisation is going wrong
 - assessing the competition, e.g. comparing brands, brand loyalty
 - supporting decision making
 - provides information for analysis and interpretation
 - identifies areas for staff training and development
 - benchmarking against organisational service standards
 - indicates changes to procedures and processes to improve efficiency.

2B Quality monitoring techniques and information sources

- Information collection systems, e.g. customer feedback cards, online customer feedback collection, social network metrics system, loyalty cards.
- Information reports, including written or oral, specific or general reports, e.g. customer feedback, customer reviews, social media reports such as, number of 'hits' per hour/day/week.

What needs to be learned

Learning outcome 2: Understand how to monitor the quality of customer service in order to improve delivery (*continued*)

- Sources of information, e.g. questionnaires, customer panels, face-to-face interviews, focus groups, mystery shoppers, online surveys, social media, competitors.
- Content of feedback, e.g. quality of product/service, speed of service, clarity and accuracy of information, staff helpfulness and approach, potential improvements, complaints.

2C Customer research sampling techniques

- Random sampling techniques, e.g. sampling for population characteristics, sampling frame, e.g. an organised list of all members of a certain population, random number generation, stratified sampling.
- Non-random sampling techniques, e.g. accidental, haphazard or convenience sampling, quota sampling, snowball sampling.

2D Data collection methods

- Advantages and limitations of different methods for collecting customer research data:
 - advantages, e.g. ease of data collection, cost efficiency, ease of data analysis, reaching the correct customers, live feedback
 - limitations, e.g. cost, reaching a significant number of respondents, non-response of customers, sample bias.

What needs to be learned

Learning outcome 3: Understand how to analyse and interpret information to improve customer service

3A Data analysis techniques

- Data analysis techniques:
 - data organisation
 - summarisation and categorisation of data
 - identification of patterns and themes in the data.
- Qualitative data analysis methods, e.g. functional analysis to identify optimal target market by demographic, geographical analysis.
- Quantitative data analysis methods:
 - measures of central tendency (mode, median and mean)
 - standard deviation.
- Suitability:
 - feedback objectives
 - format of customer feedback.

3B Validating the quality of customer research and data

- Validation issues:
 - internal validity of customer feedback, e.g. removal of bias
 - barriers to contacting survey respondents
 - correlation of results
 - comparison to the population being surveyed
 - sample size, e.g. larger sample makes it easier to generalise results.
- Issues relating to data validity and reliability:
 - accuracy and relevance of data
 - level of detail
 - trusted sources
 - ownership of data
 - currency of data
 - cost of data collection.
- Issues relating to data analysis:
 - purpose, scope and size of sample
 - validity and reliability of data

What needs to be learned

Learning outcome 3: Understand how to analyse and interpret information to improve customer service (*continued*)

- collection of data, limited or unrepresentative samples
- validation of data
- presentation of information
- bias
- errors in methodology used, e.g. insufficient statistical power, ignoring measurement error, performing multiple comparisons
- interpretation problems, e.g. confusion over significance, precision and accuracy, causality, graphical representation.

3C Interpreting customer feedback

- Use of descriptive statistics such as mean, mode, median and range, percentages.
- Use of charts and other visual elements to present information.
- Identifying patterns and trends in feedback to draw conclusions.
- Use of computer software in processing and interpreting feedback, e.g. spreadsheets.
- Presenting the findings in an agreed format, e.g. report, presentations.

3D Recommending opportunities for improvement

- Using patterns and trends to identify opportunities for improvement.
- Considering constraints on implementing improvements, including costs, staff resources, time, differing customer and staff perceptions, legislation and regulations.
- Making a decision on opportunity for improvement, considering constraints.
- Presenting recommendations for making improvements on a specific area, e.g. response times, availability and quality of customer information, product knowledge, technical skills of staff.
- Formats and techniques for presenting data:
 - formats, e.g. table, chart, graph, diagram, report, presentation, case study, scenario, screen-based, paper-based
 - techniques, e.g. software manipulation, ratios, percentages, predictive modelling.
- Follow organisational processes and procedures in making and presenting recommendations.

What needs to be learned

Learning outcome 4: Understand how to manage a customer service improvement project

4A Factors for successful implementation

- Key factors:
 - critical success factors
 - use of an improvement management team
 - improvement management plan
 - communications planning
 - staff involvement and contribution
 - close monitoring of process of improvement
 - review of improvement against aims and objectives.
- Potential constraints:
 - internal, e.g. people, equipment, finance, organisational policy, capacity
 - external, e.g. customer resistance, expectations, affordability, availability of alternative products and/or services.
- Components of implementation plan, including aims and objectives for improvement, systems and processes, physical and human resources, budget, time frame, monitoring and evaluation techniques.

4B Sharing information to support service improvement

- Types of information, e.g. buying trends, critical feedback from customers and staff, identification of customer needs, opportunities for cost savings.
- Importance of sharing information to support the improvement of service delivery.
- Improvements to customer service, e.g. opportunities for upselling, improved customer service, developing new products and services, streamlining services, eliminating wasteful practices.

4C Evaluating the impact of customer service improvements

- Techniques:
 - control charts
 - customer sampling
 - customer feedback cards
 - customer focus groups
 - number of customer complaints.
- Monitoring impact, including comparisons with previous customer feedback, aims and objectives of the change and project budget.

Essential information for tutors and assessors

Essential resources

There are no special resources needed for this unit.

Assessment

This section must be read in conjunction with *Section 8 Assessment* and the glossary in *Annexe B*.

This unit is internally assessed. To pass this unit, the evidence that the learner presents for assessment must demonstrate that they have met the required standard specified in the learning outcomes and assessment criteria.

The assessment for this unit should be set in a specific organisational context. It should draw on learning from the unit and be designed in a way that enables learners to meet all the assessment criteria.

A recommended assessment approach is given below. Centres are free to create their own assessment as long as they are confident it enables learners to provide suitable and sufficient evidence to meet the stated standard of the assessment criteria and achieve the learning outcomes.

Learning outcome 1

To satisfy the assessment criteria for this learning outcome, learners will prepare a presentation (to be shared with their team members) on the principles and importance of continuous improvement within their customer service environment. Learners who are not employed can prepare their presentation on a customer service business they are familiar with. In their presentation (which may include images), learners will:

1. state the purpose of continuous improvement in customer service (AC1.1)
2. describe **two** benefits of continuous improvement for a customer service organisation; the description must draw on the relationship between continuous improvement activities and benefits for the organisation and the customer (AC1.2)
3. outline **two** internal and **two** external factors that may influence future customer service improvements. For each, give examples to show how it contributes to future-focused customer service (AC1.3)
4. outline **four** benefits of considering the future when making service-related decisions and provide reasons to support each. **Two** benefits must be from the perspective of the organisation and **two** benefits from the perspective of the customer (AC1.4)
5. outline **two** ways in which feedback from customers and stakeholders can be used in continuous improvement and give **at least one** example for each to show why it is important for the organisation to use this feedback (AC1.5).

Learning outcome 2

To satisfy the assessment criteria for this learning outcome, learners will prepare a quality monitoring plan that includes the different sources of information, techniques and methods that could be used for monitoring the quality of customer service delivery in their organisation. In their plan, learners will:

1. outline **two** customer service standards and **two** customer service-related targets and describe the value of using these to measure the quality of customer service delivery. In their description, the values must specifically relate to each example outlined (AC2.1)
2. outline **three** different sources of information that could be accessed to identify ways of improving customer service. For each, give an example to show how the information sourced may help improve customer service delivery (AC2.2)
3. describe **four** sampling techniques that could be used to collect customer information. **Two** techniques must relate to random sampling and **two** techniques must relate to non-random sampling. Techniques must be specific and show how they would be effective in selecting a non-bias, representative sample of customer data (AC2.3)
4. outline **four** different methods of collecting data for customer research and give **at least one** advantage and **at least one** limitation for each method and provide reasons how each method is suitable for the collection of data for customer research (AC2.4).

Learning outcome 3

To satisfy the assessment criteria for this learning outcome, learners will produce a guide on the different tools, techniques and approaches that can be used to analyse and interpret quality data from customer research to identify and recommend improvements to customer service delivery. Learners who are not employed can produce the presentation on a customer service business they are familiar with. In their guide learners will:

1. outline **three** different techniques that can be used to analyse customer feedback and give **at least one** detailed reason for each to show why it would be suitable for analysing different types of customer feedback. Reasons must include the advantages and limitations of each technique (AC3.1)
2. outline **two** different techniques for monitoring the quality of customer research data and **give at least one** detailed reason for each to show why it would be appropriate to validate the quality of data collected (AC3.2)
3. Outline the meaning of validity and reliability. Give detailed reasons for why each is important in analysis of customer research (AC3.3)
4. outline **three** different techniques that can be used to interpret customer research data and give **at least one** detailed reason for each technique to show its suitability for interpreting different types of customer research data (AC3.4)

5. outline **four** methods of presenting analysis data and recommendations. For each method, give a reason to show how the format and techniques applied may support the presentation of the information (AC3.5).

Learning outcome 4

To satisfy the assessment criteria for this learning outcome, learners will produce a project plan that contains evidence of the learner's understanding of how they would manage the implementation of customer service improvements. Learners who are not employed can base the project plan on a customer service business they are familiar with. In their project plan, learners will:

1. describe **three** key factors that need to be considered when implementing customer service improvements. The description must include how each key factor can contribute to successful implantation of a customer service improvement (AC4.1)
2. outline **three** key components of an implementation plan and give reasons why each component would be effective in planning the implementation of an improvement to customer service (AC4.2)
3. outline **two** possible internal and **two** possible external constraints that may affect successful implementation of the customer service improvement and give examples to support each (AC4.3)
4. give **two** reasons why it is important to share information to support the improvement of service delivery. **One** reason must be from the perspective of work colleagues and **the other** from the perspective of service partners or external stakeholders, and the reasons must be specific to their work context (AC4.4)
5. outline **two** techniques that could be used to evaluate the impact of improvements on the quality of customer service and give **at least one** detailed reason for each to show why these would be effective in the evaluation process (AC4.5).

Unit 4: Understanding Personal Effectiveness in a Customer Service Work Environment

Level:	3
Assessment type:	Knowledge
Guided learning hours:	45

Unit introduction

Employers are no longer just looking for people with technical specialist skills; they are also looking to find staff who can represent their brand effectively and have the right mix of transferable skills and personal attributes to deal with the challenges of the modern workplace. Having the right mix of these skills and attributes enables individuals to become more personally effective in carrying out their job role.

People who are personally effective are able to make the best use of their abilities. They are better able to manage their time and emotions, get along with their colleagues, deal with changing situations and challenges, solve problems, lead others when required, manage their personal performance and ultimately become strong ambassadors for their organisation. Personal effectiveness enables individuals to become more productive in their job role and to contribute to the success of their organisation.

In this unit, you will learn about professionalism and its importance in the workplace. You will explore different leadership styles and which work best in different work situations. You will develop knowledge and understanding of the transferable skills and personal attributes that underpin personal effectiveness in a customer service specialist job role, the strategies for developing these skills and personal attributes and the benefits they provide.

This unit links with *Unit 8: Managing Personal Effectiveness in a Customer Service Specialist Job Role*. Consideration should be given to delivering the related content together. There may also be opportunity to use the same evidence across these units.

Learning outcomes and assessment criteria

To pass this unit, the learner needs to demonstrate that they can meet all the learning outcomes for the unit. The assessment criteria determine the standard required to achieve the unit.

Learning outcomes		Assessment criteria	
1	Understand professionalism and its importance in a customer service work environment	1.1	Analyse the requirements and expectations for professionalism in a specific customer service work environment
		1.2	Describe where to find information on employer expectations and standards for professionalism in a specific customer service work environment
		1.3	State why professionalism is important in a customer service work environment
2	Understand how to develop and demonstrate a range of transferable skills and personal attributes that contribute to personal effectiveness at work	2.1	Describe what it means to have good work ethics and how to demonstrate good work ethics in a customer service specialist job role
		2.2	Describe how to problem-solve in the workplace
		2.3	Analyse the different techniques for decision making and the factors to be considered in making decisions in the workplace
		2.4	Explain how to develop personal adaptability and the benefits of adaptability in the workplace
		2.5	Explain how to build personal resilience and the benefits of doing so in the workplace
		2.6	Explain how to work in own job role to respond appropriately to the commercial features of a specific customer service organisation
		2.7	Explain how to self-manage in the workplace and the benefits of effective self-management for self and others

Learning outcomes		Assessment criteria	
		2.8	Explain how to work effectively in a team and the impact of poor team working on an organisation
		2.9	Explain the negotiating principles and practices to be applied in a specific situation in the workplace
		2.10	Evaluate the suitability of different influencing strategies in a specific work situation
3	Understand different leadership styles and their use in a customer service environment	3.1	Evaluate different styles of leadership used in customer service organisations
		3.2	Assess the suitability of different leadership styles to different work situations
		3.3	Explain the need to adjust leadership style to different work situations
4	Understand how to manage personal performance in the workplace	4.1	Describe how to manage personal performance in the workplace
		4.2	State why it is important to manage personal performance in the workplace
5	Understand how to manage personal and professional development in the workplace	5.1	Describe how to identify own learning and development needs
		5.2	Compare different learning and development activities that can be used to manage own development
		5.3	Describe how to produce and maintain a personal development plan
		5.4	Describe different sources of information on industry best practice which can support personal and professional development
		5.5	Explain how information on industry best practice can be used to improve own personal and professional development

Unit content

What needs to be learned

Learning outcome 1: Understand professionalism and its importance in a customer service work environment

1A Requirements for professionalism

- Meaning of professionalism, i.e. meeting the expectations, standards and values defined by the employer; following the rules, guidelines, duties, and responsibilities related to a job role. This includes written or unwritten rules, guidelines and expectations.
- Different requirements for professionalism in different work environments and organisations; influenced by nature of the industry and job role, customer expectations, regulatory requirements, organisational culture.
- Promoting the organisation's brand, e.g. through organisation's website, logo, advertising style and social media.
- Representing the organisation's brand image through personal behaviours and effectiveness, e.g. professionalism, trust, competence and reliability.

1B Characteristics of professionalism

- Personal behaviours and conduct, including:
 - following organisational code of conduct, e.g. general conduct, conflict of interest, social media use, privacy and confidentiality, relationships, accepting gifts
 - demonstrating a positive work attitude and commitment
 - being punctual
 - showing respect and consideration for others
 - being courteous and cooperative.
- Competence in the job role:
 - having the necessary technical skills and knowledge to do the job, e.g. communication skills, building customer relationships, identifying and meeting customer needs and expectations, resolving customer queries, problems or complaints
 - having the relevant generic workplace competencies, e.g. team working, basic computer skills, commercial awareness, carrying out the responsibilities of the job role to the required standard, including handling referrals and escalations, resolving higher level issues and complaints
 - meeting deadlines and performance standards
 - meeting necessary regulatory or industry practice requirements, including consumer protection and consumer rights legislation.

What needs to be learned

Learning outcome 1: Understand professionalism and its importance in an customer service work environment (*continued*)

- Personal dress and appearance, including good personal hygiene; cleanliness; following organisational dress code; maintaining organisational dress code.
- Communication:
 - good listening and speaking skills
 - effective use of communication techniques
 - appropriate non-verbal communications
 - positive and professional language
 - good grammar and punctuation in written communications
 - following organisational greeting guidelines.
- Difference between a desired professional image and a perceived professional image: aligning how customer service specialists want customers to see them with how customers actually see them.

1C Sources of information on professional standards

- Sources of information for professional standards in the workplace, e.g. job descriptions, person specifications, induction process, employee handbook, line manager, HR team, organisational intranet.

1D Importance of professionalism in the workplace

- Importance of professionalism to the employer, including consistent experience for customers, employee motivation, improved employee performance, compliance with specific industry requirements, enhancing organisational brand and reputation, more productive working relationships among staff.
- Importance of professionalism to the employee, including mutual respect between colleagues, good team working, maintaining professional image through communications, increased job satisfaction and personal growth.

What needs to be learned

Learning outcome 2: Understand how to develop and demonstrate a range of transferable skills and personal attributes that contribute to personal effectiveness at work

2A Good work ethics

- Meaning of work ethics.
- Elements of good work ethics with relevant behavioural examples:
 - being responsible (completing assigned tasks on time and to required standards)
 - punctuality
 - commitment
 - honesty and integrity
 - professional behaviours and communications
 - demonstrating a positive approach
 - taking initiative/being proactive
 - self-development and self-motivation.
- How work ethics interrelate with other personal attributes/personal behaviours.
- Ways of demonstrating good work ethics such as taking ownership for understanding own role, goals and responsibilities; being persistent and following through on tasks; avoiding procrastination; effective prioritisation and time management; asking for feedback on performance; continuously updating knowledge of organisational procedures, standards and relevant regulations and legislations; developing positive working relationships with colleagues; building trust and reliability.

2B Problem solving in the workplace

- Nature of problems at work:
 - people, e.g. personality differences, cultural issues, customer dissatisfaction
 - processes, e.g. inefficient, not clear
 - products and services, e.g. availability, quality, suitability, cost
 - systems and equipment, e.g. outdated, breakdown/failure, new
 - resources, e.g. inadequate
 - communications.

What needs to be learned

Learning outcome 2: Understand how to develop and demonstrate a range of transferable skills and personal attributes that contribute to personal effectiveness at work (*continued*)

- Scope and impact of problem:
 - who is affected and how many people
 - what is affected
 - who can resolve
 - duration of impact (short-term, medium term, long-term)
 - financial loss
 - customer dissatisfaction.
- Sources of help for solving problems including, colleagues, managers/ supervisors, policies and procedures.
- Problem-solving process:
 - identifying the problem
 - developing understanding of the problem (e.g. fact-finding, analysis, understanding the interest of others)
 - identifying possible options/solutions
 - evaluating options/solutions
 - deciding on an option/solution that considers level of risk to the organisation and documenting outcomes
 - implementing solution
 - seeking feedback, monitoring and evaluating success
 - recognising when to escalate issues outside level of authority/level of skills or knowledge.
- Approaches that support problem solving, including, PDCA, problem-solving cycle, FOCUS model.
- Relationship between problem solving and decision making.

2C Decision-making in the workplace

- Definition of decision making.
- Features, advantages and disadvantages of different decision-making techniques, including decision tree, decision matrix, cost-benefit analysis, PESTLE analysis, SWOT analysis.
- Factors for consideration, including organisational values and culture, ethics, type of decision (strategic versus tactical), value for money (VFM), internal organisational factors.

What needs to be learned

Learning outcome 2: Understand how to develop and demonstrate a range of transferable skills and personal attributes that contribute to personal effectiveness at work (*continued*)

- Skills needed for decision making, including, research, analysis, collaboration, emotional intelligence.

2D Personal adaptability in the workplace

- Meaning of adaptability in a workplace context, i.e. willingness and ability to respond readily to changing circumstances and expectations.
- The need for adaptability:
 - fast pace of change in industry and technology
 - responding to impact of external factors
 - responding to stakeholder emerging needs
 - mental and physical wellbeing building resilience.
- Behaviours that demonstrate adaptability at work:
 - looking for ways to make changes work rather than identifying why changes will not work
 - responding positively to changing priorities and timescales, e.g. changing planned work to respond to an emerging problem
 - willingness to learn new methods and procedures
 - willingness to look beyond job description to achieve organisational goals, e.g. offering to cover the responsibilities of an absent colleague
 - open to different views and listens to others
 - making changes to ways of working on the basis of constructive feedback
 - developing multiple solutions to a problem and/or contingencies.
- Developing adaptability:
 - observing and learning from others
 - looking for the positives in challenging situations
 - developing resilience and emotional intelligence
 - listening to others and asking questions
 - making use of opportunities to engage in diverse and challenging activities/projects.
- Benefits of adaptability in the workplace:
 - for individuals, e.g. increased opportunities for career progression, success at work, being better able to deal with life challenges, being a more valuable employee, leadership capabilities
 - benefits for employer, e.g. innovation, effective change and crisis management, remaining competitive, improved problem solving, employee wellbeing.

What needs to be learned

Learning outcome 2: Understand how to develop and demonstrate a range of transferable skills and personal attributes that contribute to personal effectiveness at work (*continued*)

2E Building personal resilience in the workplace

- Meaning of resilience, i.e. an individual's capacity to respond to pressure and the demands of daily life.
- Factors affecting resilience, including, adaptability, self-confidence, social support, purposefulness, physical and mental wellbeing, environment.
- The need for resilience:
 - managing stress and workplace pressures
 - dealing with changing economy and modern work practices
 - mental and physical wellbeing
 - personal growth.
- Strategies to build resilience:
 - developing high quality and supportive relationships
 - developing awareness of own strengths and weaknesses
 - using challenges as learning opportunities
 - focusing on positive outcomes and celebrate success
 - committing to realistic goals
 - seeking help and support when needed
 - practising regular self-reflection
 - maintaining a balanced diet and regular exercise.
- Benefits of resilience in the workplace:
 - for individuals, e.g. increased confidence, being more able to manage stress, increased opportunities for career progression
 - for employers, e.g. more stable workforce, increased productivity, improved performance.

What needs to be learned

Learning outcome 2: Understand how to develop and demonstrate a range of transferable skills and personal attributes that contribute to personal effectiveness at work (*continued*)

2F Commercial awareness in the workplace

- Meaning of commercial awareness, i.e. ability to understand what makes a business successful; understanding an employer's operating environment and how to work in response to this.
- Commercial awareness in practice:
 - being able to view work situations from a commercial perspective – impact on costs and revenues
 - considering factors that influence the success of a business (internal and external)
 - understanding the business processes, relationships, risks and costs.
- Developing commercial awareness of an employer's organisation:
 - fully understanding the organisation's mission, aims/goals, brand and commercial priorities
 - developing knowledge of the organisation's industry and the economic and political issues that affect the business
 - developing knowledge of the organisation's customers, major competitors and their place in the market
 - developing an appreciation of own role in the organisation, how it relates to others and how it adds value to the business.
- Sources of information to develop commercial awareness, e.g. organisational website and intranet; team meetings and 'away days'; annual reports, line managers/supervisors, newspapers, industry reports.

What needs to be learned

Learning outcome 2: Understand how to develop and demonstrate a range of transferable skills and personal attributes that contribute to personal effectiveness at work (*continued*)

2G Self-management in the workplace

- Meaning of self-management skills, i.e. ability to control feelings, emotions and activities to feel and be more productive.
- Areas of self-management:
 - self-awareness
 - stress management
 - time management.
- Self-awareness:
 - emotional awareness
 - self-assessment (personal strengths, weaknesses, resources and limitations)
 - self-confidence.
- Developing self-awareness:
 - asking for feedback to get different perspectives and identify blind spots
 - paying attention to other people's body language, emotions and words
 - recording thoughts, feelings, successes and failures to clarify and clear the mind
 - identifying strengths and weakness, e.g. using psychometric tests
 - exploring feelings and emotions
 - practising regular self-reflection and self-motivation.
- Potential causes of stress in the workplace, e.g. fear of job loss, excessive overtime, working relationships, operational challenges.
- Warning signs of stress, e.g. fatigue, anxiety, inability to concentrate, muscle tensions, headaches, mood swings.
- Managing stress:
 - be clear on job/task requirements
 - prioritise and organise
 - creating a balanced schedule
 - asking for help and support from others
 - avoid perfectionism
 - balanced nutrition and regular exercise
 - taking regular breaks
 - not over-committing.

What needs to be learned

Learning outcome 2: Understand how to develop and demonstrate a range of transferable skills and personal attributes that contribute to personal effectiveness at work (*continued*)

- Time management techniques:
 - 'to do' lists (monthly, weekly, daily)
 - prioritising tasks (importance versus. urgency, Covey Time Management Matrix)
 - scheduling tasks
 - allowing flexibility in scheduling
 - setting realistic goals and deadlines
 - regular review of workload
 - keep multi-tasking to a minimum
 - take actions to minimise distractions
 - manage emails effectively (4Ds – Do, Delegate, Defer, Delete).
- Benefits of effective self-management:
 - greater self-confidence and creativity
 - stronger working relationships
 - sound decision making; job satisfaction
 - higher productivity and lower rate of absence from work
 - safer workplaces
 - positive work-life balance.

2H Effective teamwork

- Meaning of teamwork.
- Characteristics of an effective team:
 - clear expectations and goals
 - clear roles and good balance of skills and abilities
 - good communication
 - strong leadership
 - mutual cooperation
 - openness and trust
 - good personal relationships.
- Team roles:
 - assigned or adopted roles
 - Belbin's team roles (plan, resource investigator, coordinator, shaper, monitor-evaluator, team worker, implementer, completer-finisher).
- Team dynamics and factors affecting team dynamics.

What needs to be learned

Learning outcome 2: Understand how to develop and demonstrate a range of transferable skills and personal attributes that contribute to personal effectiveness at work (*continued*)

- Effective teamwork:
 - effective personal communications
 - inclusive and respectful behaviours
 - completing work on time and to required standards
 - listening to others and sharing ideas
 - supporting team members
 - building trust and rapport
 - resolving conflicts.
- Impact of poor team working:
 - staff turnover
 - objectives and targets not met
 - low morale
 - lack of motivation
 - conflicts.

21 Negotiating and Influencing others

- Difference and relationship between negotiating and influencing.
- Characteristics of a negotiating situation:
 - minimum of two parties
 - predetermined goals
 - expected satisfactory outcomes
 - compromise.
- Types of negotiation and their features: positional negotiations versus integrative negotiations.
- Stages of negotiation:
 - preparation
 - discussion
 - clarifying goals
 - working towards a win-win outcome
 - agreement
 - implementing a course of action.

What needs to be learned

Learning outcome 2: Understand how to develop and demonstrate a range of transferable skills and personal attributes that contribute to personal effectiveness at work (*continued*)

- Elements of successful negotiating:
 - good interpersonal skills, e.g. effective communications, body language building rapport
 - positive attitudes and behaviours (confidence, interest in the other party)
 - knowledge of the issues in question
 - understanding the negotiation process, e.g. preparation, other party's approach.
- Negotiation strategies:
 - avoidance
 - competitive
 - collaborative
 - accommodative.
- Influencing styles and approaches:
 - push versus pull
 - logical versus emotional.
- Influencing strategies and their suitability in different situations:
 - Tim Baker's influencing strategies (motivation, collaboration, investigation, calculation)
 - Robert Cialdini's Influence Weapons (reciprocity, commitment and consistency, social proof, liking, authority, scarcity).
- Factors contributing to effective influencing:
 - self-awareness
 - confidence
 - positive communications
 - building and maintaining trust
 - effective networking
 - personal presentation
 - assertiveness
 - motivation of self and others.

What needs to be learned

Learning outcome 3: Understand different leadership styles and their use in a customer service environment

3A Leadership styles and their characteristics

- The difference and relationship between leadership and management (influencing and inspiring people and giving them a sense of direction and purpose versus planning, organising, directing and controlling resources to complete tasks and activities).
- Definition, characteristics and negative and positive impact of different leadership styles:
 - autocratic
 - paternalistic
 - democratic
 - laissez-faire
 - charismatic leadership.

3B Appropriate leadership styles in different work situations

- Factors affecting the suitability and use of different leadership styles, including:
 - competence, proficiency and experience of the team or leader (multi-skilled, new or untrained staff)
 - stage of team development – team dynamics
 - nature of the work, task or project
 - time and resource constraints
 - organisational culture
 - organisational environment/context, e.g. ongoing changes in structure, downsizing, large teams, corporate crisis or actual emergency.
- Main benefit of adapting leadership styles with reference to effective leadership and meeting the needs of individuals and the team and achieving team goals and objectives.
- Consequences of ineffective/poor leadership in terms of productivity and team performance, staff morale and turnover, staff development and organisational culture.

What needs to be learned

Learning aim 4: Understand how to manage personal performance in the workplace

4A Managing personal performance in the workplace

- Identifying own responsibilities:
 - job description
 - contract; staff handbook
 - code of conduct
 - organisational structure.
- Goal-setting:
 - agreeing SMART objectives with line manager (KPIs)
 - alignment of objectives with organisational goals
 - relationship of personal objectives to those of team members and other colleagues.
- Measurement standards:
 - agreeing criteria for measuring progress and achievement with line manager
 - varying criteria depending on organisation and role, e.g. quality of work, volume of work, timeliness of completion, customer satisfaction.
- Completing tasks/work:
 - meeting quality standards and agreed timescales
 - reporting problems beyond own level of competence.
- Monitoring and assessing performance:
 - asking for performance feedback from relevant colleagues
 - attending and engaging in regular one-to-one meetings
 - actively participating in annual performance appraisal, e.g. regularly updating performance review systems, preparing evidence for discussion at meetings
 - being receptive to feedback on performance
 - using feedback from performance appraisals to inform personal development planning.
- Dealing with own underperformance:
 - managing own emotions, i.e. not taking the feedback personally
 - listening to identify specific performance issues
 - reflecting on reasons for underperformance
 - discussing suggestions for improvement
 - agreeing a performance improvement plan (PIP) with line manager.

What needs to be learned

Learning aim 4: Understand how to manage personal performance in the workplace

4B Importance of managing personal performance in the workplace

- Benefits to individuals:
 - clear understanding of job expectations
 - enhanced employment opportunities; job satisfaction; career progression
 - financial rewards or recognition for good performance.
- Benefits to employer/organisation:
 - delivery of strategic and operational goals
 - increased efficiency and productivity
 - reduced staff turnover
 - support staff planning and training.

What needs to be learned

Learning outcome 5: Understand how to manage personal and professional development in the workplace

5A Identifying learning and development needs

- Professional development:
 - development of role-related technical skills and knowledge
 - IT skills
 - Communication skills.
- Personal development:
 - development of transferable skills, e.g. self-awareness, adaptability, self-management.
- Identifying learning and development needs:
 - skills audit
 - analysis of job description and personal and team objectives
 - using information on industry best practice to improve own personal and professional development
 - analysing changes in the industry and the external environment
 - feedback from others
 - personal reflections.

5B Comparing different development activities

- Formal versus. informal development activities.
- Features and advantages of different activities, such as qualifications, training courses, on-the-job training, coaching, shadowing, job enlargement, job enrichment, mentoring.
- Suitability of activities, such as the nature of learning needs, learning styles, outcomes required, cost.

5C Producing and managing a personal development plan (PDP)

- Purpose of a personal development plan (PDP).
- Contents of a PDP:
 - SMART objectives
 - selected learning and development activities
 - resources
 - timescales
 - review mechanisms.

What needs to be learned

Learning outcome 5: Understand how to manage personal and professional development in the workplace (*continued*)

- Process of creating and managing a PDP:
 - identify learning needs (knowledge, skills and behaviours to be developed)
 - select relevant learning and development activities to meet needs
 - undertake planned activities
 - progress review
 - adapting plan according to outcomes of review
 - review target completion.

5D Sources of information on industry best practice

- Information relating to best practice, such as managing customer expectations, enhancing the customer experience, use of customer research data, customer touchpoints and opportunities to engage with the organisation.
- Sources of industry best practice, including sources internal and external to the organisation.
- Using industry best practice to improve performance and personal development through internal and external development activities, proactively seeking opportunities to improve, sharing personal learning with others.

Essential information for tutors and assessors

Essential resources

There are no special resources needed for this unit.

Assessment

This unit is internally assessed. To pass this unit the evidence that the learner presents for assessment must demonstrate that they have met the required standard specified in the learning outcomes and assessment criteria.

The assessment for this unit should draw on learning from the unit and be designed in a way to enable the learners to meet all the assessment criteria.

Centres are free to choose their own forms of evidence for this unit as long as they enable learners to produce suitable and sufficient evidence to meet the stated standard of the assessment criteria and achieve the learning outcomes.

Forms of evidence such as learning logs, recorded question and answers and workbooks would be suitable sources of evidence for this unit. Regardless of the source of evidence used, learners will need to meet the standards stated below for each learning outcome.

Learning outcome 1

To satisfy the assessment criteria for this learning outcome, learners could develop a verbal or written presentation on the topic of the professionalism required in their customer service specialist role in the organisation and deliver the presentation to workplace colleagues. The presentation should:

1. analyse **three** requirements and/or expectations for professionalism in their customer service work environment showing clearly how these are influenced by factors related to the industry, their organisation and/or regulatory requirements (AC1.1)
2. describe **two** sources of information in their workplace about the expected behaviours and professional standards for their job role. Learners must provide details to show the specific type of information they would get from each source (AC1.2)
3. give **two** reasons why professionalism is important in their customer service work environment. **One** reason must be from the perspective of their employer and **the other** from their perspective as an employee and the reasons must be specific to their work context (AC1.3).

Learning outcome 2

To satisfy the assessment criteria for this learning outcome, learners could develop a training guide on how to develop and demonstrate a range of transferrable skills and personal attributes that contribute to personal effectiveness in the workplace. Learners could use real or created case study examples to support their evidence. The training guide should:

1. describe **three** elements of good work ethics. Learners must provide details to show what the behaviours looks like in practice (AC2.1)
2. describe **three** actions they could undertake, and/or behaviours that they could adopt, to demonstrate good work ethics in carrying out their customer service specialist job role (AC2.1)
3. identify **one** type of problem that may occur in a customer service environment and the potential impact of this problem (AC2.2)
4. describe how they would approach solving this problem, including the activities they would carry out and the people they would engage with. Learner descriptions must include the problem-solving process (AC2.2)
5. analyse the possible ways forward to solve the identified problem, examining the following as part of the analysis:
 - a. the features, advantages and disadvantages of **two** decision-making techniques
 - b. **two** factors they would need to consider (AC2.3)
6. outline **two** ways they can develop their own ability to adapt to changes and give **at least one** detailed reason for each to show clearly why it would support their development (AC2.4)
7. outline **two** ways in which adaptability in the workplace benefits the employer and **two** ways in which it benefits the customer. Give **at least one detailed reason** for each to show why they are of benefit (AC2.4)
8. outline **two** ways they can develop their own personal resilience and give **at least one** reason for each to show clearly why these ways would support their development (AC2.5)
9. outline **two** ways in which personal resilience in the workplace benefits the employer and **two** ways in which it benefits the employee and give **at least one** reason for each to show why they are a benefit (AC2.5)
10. describe **three** commercial features of their employer organisation. For each commercial feature, give **two** ways in which they would operate within their job role to respond to it (AC2.6)
11. outline **three** self-management practices they could use to be more productive at work, and give **at least one detailed reason** for each to show why these would improve their productivity (AC2.7)

12. explain, with supporting information, **two** ways in which effective self-management can benefit their own performance and that of others in the workplace (AC2.7)
13. outline **three** ways they could contribute to effective team working in their team, and give **at least one detailed reason** for each to show clearly why each of these ways would be helpful (AC2.8)
14. explain with supporting information, **two** ways in which poor team working practices impact on their employer organisation (AC2.8)
15. outline a specific negotiating situation in their work environment that they would engage in (2.9)
16. outline **three** principles and practices of negotiating that they would apply in the identified situation and give **at least one detailed reason** for each to show why they are needed to achieve a successful outcome in the specific situation. The principles and practices must include **at least one** negotiation strategy and **at least one** element of successful negotiation (2.9)
17. examine the features, benefits and limitations of **two** different influencing strategies that could be used to strengthen their negotiation position. Learners must use the information they have presented to draw a conclusion on which of the strategies would be more suitable in the specific negotiating situation (2.10).

Learning outcome 3

To satisfy the assessment criteria for this learning outcome, learners will produce a set of notes to be included in their learning log to support their development in leading people.

In their notes, learners will:

1. examine **three** different leadership styles that are used to lead teams and individuals in a customer service organisation, considering their characteristics, strengths and weaknesses (AC3.1)
2. outline **two** specific work situations a manager would likely deal with in their employer organisation or an organisation that they are familiar with and, for each situation, draw a conclusion on which of the three leadership styles referenced in (1) above would be most suitable to apply. To support their conclusion on the leadership style for each situation, learners will outline what specific factors about the situation and the leadership style make them suited (AC3.2)
3. outline why it is necessary to adjust leadership style to different situations and give **at least two** detailed potential consequences of not adjusting leadership styles to meet the specific situation and individuals (AC3.3).

Learning outcomes 4 and 5

To satisfy the assessment criteria for these learning outcomes, learners could write a training guide for other apprentices about managing personal performance and personal and professional development in the workplace. Learners could use real or created case study examples to support their evidence. The guide should:

1. describe **three** activities they could engage in to manage their own performance in the workplace. Learners must provide details of the purpose of each activity and what it involves (AC4.1)
2. give **three** reasons why it is important for individuals to manage their own personal performance in the workplace (AC4.2).
3. describe **two** ways of identifying own learning and development needs (AC5.1)
4. compare **two** different learning and development activities that could be used to address a specific personal development need in terms of their features, advantages and disadvantages (AC5.2)
5. identify the areas covered in a personal development plan (AC5.3)
6. describe how they would go about producing and maintaining their own personal development plan. This must include the stages of development planning (AC5.3)
7. describe **two** internal and **two** external sources of information on industry best practice. Descriptions must include the relevance of the information that can be sourced (AC5.4)
8. outline **three** ways that information on industry best practice can be used to support personal and professional development and give **at least one detailed reason** for each to show how this information can be used to improve personal and professional development (AC5.5).

Unit 5: Delivering Solution-focused Customer Service

Level:	3
Unit type:	Skills
Guided learning hours:	24

Unit introduction

Effective customer service is essential for any organisation, even when an organisation provides excellent customer service, its customers may experience problems. Often this is because customer expectations are higher than the organisation can satisfy.

Listening to customer problems, negotiating and then delivering the right solutions requires a well-planned and organised approach. Customers may judge how excellent customer service is by the way organisations resolves their issues, problems and complaints.

In this unit, you will learn how to identify and deal with customer issues, problems and complaints in a way that provides a positive outcome for the customer and the organisation. You will develop skills in using different communication techniques when negotiating options for resolution, including the use of questioning techniques and listening skills.

You will be able to assess the suitability of a range of potential solutions for customer problems and explain these to customers, providing opportunities for customers to make choices about the best solutions. You will also be able to negotiate solutions that meet customer and organisational requirements, whilst building a rapport and adhering to organisational policies, procedures and requirements.

This unit has links to *Unit 2: Understanding Customer Loyalty, Retention and Satisfaction* and *Unit 6: Managing Challenging Customers and Situations*. Consideration should be given to delivering the related content together. There may also be opportunity to use the same evidence across these units.

Learning outcomes and assessment criteria

To pass this unit, the learner needs to demonstrate that they can meet all the learning outcomes for the unit. The assessment criteria determine the standard required to achieve the unit.

Learning outcomes		Assessment criteria	
1	Be able to acknowledge and understand customers' needs and expectations	1.1	Identify when customer issues, problems and complaints impact the customer and the organisation
		1.2	Confirm understanding of the customer's needs and expectations and explain why these might not be met
		1.3	Express empathy and understanding of the customer's point of view
2	Be able to negotiate and agree mutually beneficial solutions for customers	2.1	Use appropriate verbal and/or written communication techniques, styles and formats to provide clear information that supports a positive customer outcome
		2.2	Show proactivity and creativity when identifying solutions to meet both customer and organisational needs
		2.3	Provide clear information on options and solutions so customers can make informed choices about how issues, problems and complaints can be resolved
		2.4	Use advanced questioning, listening and summarising techniques when negotiating and agreeing solution options with customers
		2.5	Agree realistic and achievable steps with customers that demonstrate personal commitment to successful resolution
		2.6	Adapt communication skills and techniques to communicate effectively with customers even when unable to deliver the customer's expected outcome

Learning outcomes		Assessment criteria	
3	Be able to take ownership and responsibility to resolve customer issues, problems and/or complaints	3.1	Build a rapport with the customer when dealing with customer issues, problems and complaints
		3.2	Balance the need for excellent service delivery with a cost-conscious mind-set and organisational needs
		3.3	Manage customer expectations by explaining next steps and keeping the customer up to date with regard to their issue, problem and/or complaint
		3.4	Work with others in delivering promises made to customers to achieve customer satisfaction
		3.5	Deliver solution-focused customer service in line with organisational policies and procedures and within own levels of authority

Unit content

What needs to be learned

Learning outcome 1: Be able to acknowledge and understand customers' needs and expectations

1A Customer issues, problems and complaints

- Techniques to identify customer service issues, problems and complaints and their causes, e.g. feedback from customer, staff and systems, auditing, customer surveys, complaints.
- Interpreting verbal and non-verbal signs and signals that tell you the customer is dissatisfied, e.g. body language, tone of voice, hand gestures.

1B Customer needs and expectations

- Establishing and confirming customer needs and expectations through active listening, use of open and closed questions to gather information about customer needs and expectations, showing empathy towards customer's point of view, building rapport.
- Delivering a solution-focused experience through establishing customer needs, targeting product and/or services to meet those needs, using listening and questioning skills to enable selection of the most suitable product/service, being positive and helpful, adapting service approach and communication to meet specific needs.
- Managing customer expectations, e.g. communicate any aspects that cannot be delivered, explaining why.
- Building trust with a customer, e.g. listening, being respectful, meeting promises, or timelines, exceeding expectations, being up front and honest, admitting mistakes.

1C Expressing understanding of the customer's point of view

- Responding positively, with empathy, to customer concerns.
- Where customers express their point of view, e.g. customer expectations, quality of products and/or services, standard and speed of service, policies, procedures and regulations, responsiveness to problems and complaints, inaccurate or insufficient information, expected solutions.
- Customer awareness:
 - situational awareness – you get 'it'
 - personal awareness – you get them
 - solution awareness – understand how to progress their position.

What needs to be learned

Learning outcome 1: Be able to acknowledge and understand customers' needs and expectations (*continued*)

- Understanding the customers' point of view:
 - listening carefully
 - empathising with how the customer is feeling
 - apologising sincerely for problems
 - offering solutions but not overpromising
 - using questioning techniques.

What needs to be learned

Learning outcome 2: Be able to negotiate and agree mutually beneficial solutions for customers

2A Communicating effectively

- Using different methods of communication for different purposes:
 - verbal, e.g. face to face, telephone, video conferencing, telephone conferencing
 - written, e.g. letters, emails, reports
 - digital, e.g. web posts, social networking, instant messaging, podcasts, webinars, emails.
- Simplifying complex information, e.g. compiling only relevant information, breaking message down into small parts, organise information by starting with the basic information first and build from there.
- Using appropriate verbal and non-verbal communication techniques and behaviours, including:
 - empathising, summarising and paraphrasing; use of positive non-technical language; reflecting to check understanding; use of appropriate formality etc.
 - non-verbal techniques such as good eye contact; using positive facial expressions; adopting an open posture; mirroring positive body language.
- Clear and accurate written communication, including:
 - using professional language, correct spelling, tone and grammar
 - using appropriate tone and vocabulary to suit purpose (informal, formal)
 - appropriate use of jargon, abbreviations and acronyms
 - clear presentation of information
 - use of appropriate format, house style
 - meeting business communication conventions, as appropriate to the intended audience and subject matter.
- Following organisational procedures, protocols and corporate communication guidelines.

What needs to be learned

Learning outcome 2: Be able to negotiate and agree mutually beneficial solutions for customers (*continued*)

- Adapt style and method, considering:
 - the primary and secondary audience
 - the communication objectives and the context of the communication situation.
 - when unable to meet customer needs or deliver expected outcome, e.g. show confidence and assertiveness in tone of voice and language used
 - confirming understanding of the message.

2B Negotiating and influencing customers

- Negotiations could be with external customers and internal customers such as colleagues in other teams, team members or managers.
- Pre-negotiation – preparing to negotiate:
 - identifying goals and outcomes to be achieved
 - carrying out research on the other party and identifying their interests and benefits
 - setting negotiation parameters and fall-back positions, including cost-conscious solutions that balance the needs of the organisation and customer satisfaction.
- Negotiating successfully:
 - using positive language and emotional intelligence to guide negotiations: communicating effectively to understand the other party's position (listening and questioning skills, verbal and non-verbal communications)
 - building rapport and developing relationships (identifying shared goals/outcomes, mirroring, empathising)
 - using appropriate influencing strategies and techniques
 - overcoming objections and showing the other party how their needs will be met
 - managing personal impact and presence (for example demonstrating a balance of confidence, conviction and vulnerability, being authentic and consistent)
 - agreeing next steps and actions to be taken to resolve customer issues, problems and complaints.
- Recording agreement: using organisational documentation and sign-off processes, detailing agreed actions and terms.

What needs to be learned

Learning outcome 2: Be able to negotiate and agree mutually beneficial solutions for customers (*continued*)

2C Using questioning techniques and listening skills to clarify customer needs

- Advanced questioning techniques that help customers solve problems by thinking and responding in a deeper way:
 - applying, such as 'How would you use this product?'
 - analysing, e.g. 'How does this product compare with the one you had?'
 - evaluating, e.g. 'How well does this product meet your needs?'
 - creating, e.g. 'Can you propose an alternative make or model?'
- Standard questioning techniques:
 - open response questioning, e.g. 'How can I help you today?'
 - closed response questioning, e.g. 'Would you like me to raise a complaint for you?'
 - probing questioning, e.g. 'How long has this been a problem for you?'
 - leading questioning, e.g. 'You do know this option will be the best solution for you?'
- Effective listening skills, e.g. being attentive, allowing customers to speak without interruption, taking notes, repeating back to confirm understanding.
- Using summarising techniques appropriately, e.g. to confirm own understanding of customer needs, note important points or actions to be taken, bring the conversation to a close.

2D Options for resolving customer issues, problems and complaints

- Taking ownership through showing personal commitment, e.g. not passing the customer on unless necessary, being resourceful to acquire information needed to find a resolution, following through until they are resolved, escalating in a timely manner when appropriate to do so, requesting assistance from colleagues and other departments.
- Identifying options for resolution that are mutually beneficial for the organisation and the customer.
- Resolutions to meet customer needs, e.g. refund payments, exchange product, replace product and/or service, repair product, offer alternative product and/or service, offer goodwill gestures such as discounts, gift vouchers.

What needs to be learned

Learning outcome 3: Be able to take ownership and responsibility to resolve customer issues, problems and/or complaints

3A Building a rapport with customers

- Using interpersonal communication skills to build rapport, e.g. positive and reinforcing body language, appropriate active listening skills and questioning skills, showing empathy, mirroring and matching body language, being open and genuine, appropriate use of verbal communication techniques, treating disagreements constructively.

3B Resolving customer issues, problems and complaints

- Balancing the needs of customer and organisation:
 - operating within organisational limitations
 - meeting organisational objectives
 - suggesting alternatives, offering concessions
 - signposting to other departments or organisations.
- Providing resolutions to customer and organisation:
 - within organisational policies and procedures and within the remit of own responsibility
 - working with others to help when options for action are beyond own level of authority
 - offering solutions but not overpromising, agreeing solution and next steps with the customer.
- Keeping customers informed of progress, e.g. frequency of updates, communication method used, updating customers even when there is no progress to report, keeping customers reassured that service recovery is still ongoing, advising of next steps in the process.

3C Managing customer expectations

- Reasons why customer situations cannot be resolved, e.g. product/service not offered by the organisation, customer expectations do not balance the needs of the organisation, unacceptable customer behaviours.
- Being polite and showing empathy in explaining why the situation cannot be resolved.
- Applying escalation procedures when necessary.

What needs to be learned

Learning outcome 3: Be able to take ownership and responsibility to resolve customer issues problems and/or complaints (*continued*)

3D Working effectively with others

- Working with others:
 - others, e.g. immediate team members, supervisors, managers, colleagues in other departments, colleagues in other branches, others external to the organisation.
- Ways of working with others effectively:
 - demonstrating professional behaviours
 - achieving shared work objectives and quality standards, e.g. meeting deadlines
 - working collaboratively, e.g. sharing workloads, sharing information and ideas
 - providing timely and reliable to support others in meeting customer needs.
- Support activities:
 - how and when to seek assistance and/or guidance, e.g. resolving different customer situations such as complex queries, when a request is outside own limit of authority
 - using escalation procedures
 - offering support, responding to requests for support.

Essential information for tutors and assessors

Essential resources

There are no special resources needed for this unit.

Assessment

This unit is internally assessed. To pass the unit, the evidence that the learner presents for assessment must demonstrate that they have met the required standard specified in the learning outcomes and assessment criteria.

It is expected that this unit will be assessed in a real or simulated working environment, where evidence is naturally occurring and collected over a period of time.

Centres are responsible for deciding on the assessment activities that will enable learners to produce valid, sufficient, authentic and appropriate evidence to meet the assessment criteria. When planning assessment and evidence collection for the unit, centres should consider the nature and sources of the evidence required for the portfolio that support the professional discussion in the end-point assessment. This ensures that learners have evidence to support them in the discussion.

Learners must be given a clear assessment brief before the assessment takes place, detailing:

- the assessment activity and context
- the learning outcomes to be assessed
- the criteria they are expected to meet, and
- the time and duration of the assessment.

Wherever possible, centres should adopt a holistic and integrated approach to assessing the skills units in the qualification. This gives the assessment process greater rigour, minimises repetition and saves time. The focus should be on assessment activities generated through naturally occurring evidence in the workplace rather than on specific tasks. Taken as a whole, the evidence must show that the learner meets all learning outcomes and assessment criteria over a period of time. It should be clear in the assessment records where each learning outcome and assessment criterion has been covered and achieved.

Unit 6: Managing Challenging Customers and Situations

Level:	3
Unit type:	Skills
Guided learning hours:	24

Unit introduction

Delivering customer service to a range of customers and challenging situations is part of many customer service roles. It is essential that this is achieved effectively to provide customer satisfaction while demonstrating professionalism and meeting the needs of the organisation and expectations of the customer.

In this unit, you will develop practical communication skills to help you identify and respond to challenging customers and complicated situations. This will include, ensuring that verbal, non-verbal and written communication skills are appropriate for the situation and relationships being managed.

You will learn how to deliver active customer service to a diverse range of challenging customers by understanding the different types of customer and their situations in the customer service environment.

You will learn how to process complex information and hold difficult conversations with customers, particularly where needs and expectations cannot be fully met.

You will develop techniques for dealing with challenging customer behaviours while showcasing your ability to influence and negotiate with customers, agreeing to delivery actions within your limits of authority.

You will also develop skills in receiving and managing customer escalations and referrals from colleagues, ensuring that supportive professional outcomes are reached for both the customer and the organisation.

This unit has links to *Unit 2: Understanding Customer Loyalty, Retention and Satisfaction* and *Unit 5: Delivering Solution-focused Customer Service*. Consideration should be given to delivering the related content together. There may also be opportunity to use the same evidence across these units.

Learning outcomes and assessment criteria

To pass this unit, the learner needs to demonstrate that they can meet all the learning outcomes for the unit. The assessment criteria determine the standard required to achieve the unit.

Learning outcomes		Assessment criteria	
1	Be able to engage positively with customers in challenging situations	1.1	Identify the signs that indicate a customer and/or situation is challenging
		1.2	Actively listen to customers to establish the nature and cause of the challenging situation
		1.3	Communicate in a way that recognises the customer's situation and point of view without admitting liability where appropriate
		1.4	Explain to customers the reasons for the organisation's position, policy and limits of service that they can offer
		1.5	Demonstrate a range of techniques to manage challenging and complicated situations and, escalate within lines of authority where necessary

Learning outcomes		Assessment criteria	
2	Be able to manage referrals and escalations to achieve a positive outcome	2.1	Review relevant and available historical information relating to the case being referred or escalated
		2.2	Take action to deal with potential issues and challenges in resolving the referrals or escalations within own level of authority
		2.3	Determine appropriate actions to be taken when managing referrals or escalations
		2.4	Select and apply a range of approaches to resolve different complex customer situations
		2.5	Communicate effectively with customers to identify the best solution to meet their requirements
		2.6	Use advanced questioning and active listening techniques when negotiating a solution within own level of authority
		2.7	Agree a way forward that balances customer satisfaction and organisational needs
		2.8	Manage referrals and escalations in line with organisational policies and procedures and within own levels of authority

Unit content

What needs to be learned

Learning outcome 1: Be able to engage positively with customers in challenging situations

1A Challenging customer situations

- Challenging situations, e.g. situations where customers will likely react with distress, anger, disappointment or frustration.
- Types of customer issues, problems and complaints e.g. identified by the customer, identified by the organisation.
- Causes of customer dissatisfaction that may lead to conflict, e.g. breakdown in relationship between the customer and organisation, inadequate customer service systems, procedures and support, poor communication, attitude, behaviour and service from staff, unmanageable and restrictive organisational policies and procedures, complications and limitations caused by legislation/regulations.

1B Challenging customers and their behaviours

- Different types of challenging customer, e.g. impatient, dissatisfied, indecisive, argumentative, overly assertive/intimidating, customers with language or cultural needs, customers with special needs (visual impairment, hearing or physical impairments), talkative customers, groups of customers.
- Challenging behaviour from customers, e.g. arguing with staff, questioning staff competence, demanding impossible solutions, not accepting limitations and procedures, making inappropriate personal comments, angry behaviours.
- Techniques to deal with customer conflict and challenge:
 - staying calm and polite, defusing emotions to make conversations more productive, e.g. reassuring customers you want to help them, empathising, acknowledging the issue, problem and/or complaint
 - giving customers the opportunity to speak and listening carefully, asking open-ended and probing questions as appropriate and necessary
 - showing respect for customer views and apologising sincerely for any problems
 - focusing on helping the customer in a positive way
 - focusing on the outcome wanted.

What needs to be learned

Learning outcome 1: Be able to engage positively with customers in challenging situations (*continued*)

1C Customer service policies and procedures for resolving conflict and challenge

- Purpose of customer complaints policy and procedures.
- Features of complaints procedure, e.g. formalised process, escalation points, roles and responsibilities, limits of authority, approved documentation to record actions/outcomes.
- Benefits of following policies and procedures in customer service delivery, including provision of consistent service, maintaining service quality, compliance with legislation and regulations.
- Limits of own authority based on limits of job role (job description), organisational procedures, organisation's lines of authority and responsibility.

1D Reasons to use a customer complaints process

- Customers feel reassured and confident when dealing with organisation, obtaining products, using services, recommending to friends and family.
- Organisational benefits, e.g. identifies areas of weakness, drives change to improve service, limits further damage to organisation's reputation.
- Keeping colleagues informed:
 - enables a full picture to be given and any actions agreed and taken so far with the customer
 - helps to maintain organisation's reputation with customers
 - supports organisational procedures for dealing with customers
 - helps to retain customer base and keep customers loyal
 - enables managers to be kept fully informed and enables effective decision making in relation to escalation.

1E Escalations requirements and procedures

- When to escalate – limits of own authority, limits of knowledge, losing control of the situation, poor level and speed of progress.
- How to escalate – follow organisational policies.
- Who to escalate to, based on, e.g. level of authority, level of expertise/knowledge, availability, type of situation.

What needs to be learned

Learning outcome 2: Be able to manage referrals and escalations to achieve a positive outcome

2A Receiving and managing referrals and escalations

- Reasons for referrals, e.g. customer initially in the wrong location/department, referring to colleagues in the next stage of the customer journey, necessary knowledge, expertise or authority to deal with problems, issues and complaints, referral from a competitor or other external source.
- Reasons for escalation, e.g. issue, problem or complaint is beyond the limit of customer service practitioner authority or ability or knowledge, situation has got out of control, where progress is slow.
- Sources of information that may be available and could provide relevant historical interactions with customers to assist with referrals or escalations:
 - understand the situation, the cause and the potential consequences for the customer and the organisation
 - gain an insight from the person referring or escalating the customer situation to understand actions taken to date
 - access files, correspondence (letters and emails), statements, incident notes and any meeting or telephone call notes.
- Challenges in resolving referred or escalated cases, e.g. outside limits of authority, unable to find a solution that meets customer needs, external referral required.

2B Communicating effectively when managing referrals and/or escalations

- Using different methods of communication for different purposes: verbal (face to face, telephone, video conferencing, telephone conferencing); written (letters, emails, reports); digital (web posts, social networking, instant messaging, podcasts, webinars, emails).
- Using appropriate verbal and non-verbal communication techniques and behaviours, including:
 - empathising, summarising and paraphrasing; use of positive non-technical language; reflecting to check understanding; use of appropriate formality etc.
 - non-verbal techniques such as good eye contact; using positive facial expressions; adopting an open posture; mirroring positive body language.

What needs to be learned

Learning outcome 2: Be able to manage referrals and escalations to achieve a positive outcome (*continued*)

- Clear and accurate written communication, including:
 - using professional language, correct spelling, tone and grammar
 - using appropriate tone and vocabulary to suit purpose (informal, formal)
 - appropriate use of jargon, abbreviations and acronyms
 - clear presentation of information
 - use of appropriate format, house style
 - meeting business communication conventions, as appropriate to the intended audience and subject matter.
- Following organisational procedures, protocols and corporate communication guidelines.
- Adapt style and method, considering:
 - the primary and secondary audience
 - the communication objectives the context of the communication situation.
- Confirming understanding of the message.

2C Applying questioning techniques and listening skills when managing referrals and/or escalations

- Advanced questioning techniques that help customers solve problems by thinking and responding in a deeper way:
 - applying, such as 'How would you use this product?'
 - analysing, e.g. 'How does this product compare with the one you had?'
 - evaluating, e.g. 'How well does this product meet your needs?'
 - creating, e.g. 'Can you propose an alternative make or model?'
- Understanding the feelings and emotions of the customer (empathetic listening).
- Using verbal and non-verbal reinforcement techniques, e.g. uses positive words of encouragement, paraphrasing, non-verbal gestures such as nodding.

What needs to be learned

Learning outcome 2: Be able to manage referrals and escalations to achieve a positive outcome (*continued*)

2D Negotiating with customers when managing referrals and/or escalations

- Negotiating techniques:
 - listening and questioning techniques to gather information
 - use of empathy
 - identifying the root cause of the problem, issue and/or complaint
 - use of persuasion techniques, e.g. positive spoken and body language, mirroring, understanding and using allowable concessions and alternative options appropriately
 - discuss alternative solutions with the customer within limits of authority.

2E Taking action to respond to challenging customers and complicated situations

- Different types of challenging customer: e.g. customers with language or cultural needs, impatient customers, dissatisfied customers, indecisive customers, overly assertive/intimidating customers, customers with special needs (visual impairment, hearing impaired customers), talkative customers.
- Approaches and techniques to deal with challenging customer behaviours:
 - appreciate the customers stance and adjust your frame of mind to be able to help the customer in a positive sense
 - build a rapport and empathise
 - change the environment, e.g. moving chairs, moving to a quieter/more peaceful location to calm the situation
 - defuse the emotion
 - ask open questions
 - focus on the outcome wanted
 - develop and agree a solution
 - highlight and agree the next steps with the customer.
- Managing customer relationships:
 - using appropriate service approach
 - considerations for service approach including formality of approach, tone of voice, method of communication, frequency of communication
 - organisational guidelines.

What needs to be learned

Learning outcome 2: Be able to manage referrals and escalations to achieve a positive outcome (*continued*)

- Different types of complicated situation, e.g. misaligned customer expectations, miscommunication, breach of trust, poor quality or faulty products and/or services.
- Following organisational policies and procedures when managing referrals and/or escalations (formal complaints procedures and informal complaints procedures).
- Purpose of a complaints procedure: e.g. resolve customer complaints quickly, minimise damage to the organisation's reputation, information gained can be used to inform and improve customer service, maintain relationships.
- How to handle customer issues, problems and complaints following recognised processes:
 - listen – concentrate on what the person is telling you about the issue, problem and/or complaint, use open body language to show the customer you are listening, ask relevant questions, establish the facts, show understanding of viewpoints
 - apologise – remain calm, polite and professional, use appropriate language, tone and body language, don't make excuses or allocate blame, keep situation under control.

Essential information for tutors and assessors

Essential resources

There are no special resources needed for this unit.

Assessment

This unit is internally assessed. To pass the unit, the evidence that the learner presents for assessment must demonstrate that they have met the required standard specified in the learning outcomes and assessment criteria.

It is expected that this unit will be assessed in a real or simulated working environment, where evidence is naturally occurring and collected over a period of time.

Centres are responsible for deciding on the assessment activities that will enable learners to produce valid, sufficient, authentic and appropriate evidence to meet the assessment criteria. When planning assessment and evidence collection for the unit, centres should consider the nature and sources of the evidence required for the portfolio that support the professional discussion in the end-point assessment. This ensures that learners have evidence that supports them in the discussion.

Learners must be given a clear assessment brief before the assessment takes place, detailing:

- the assessment activity and context
- the learning outcomes to be assessed
- the criteria they are expected to meet, and
- the time and duration of the assessment.

Wherever possible, centres should adopt a holistic and integrated approach to assessing the skills units in the qualification. This gives the assessment process greater rigour, minimises repetition and saves time. The focus should be on assessment activities generated through naturally occurring evidence in the workplace rather than on specific tasks. Taken as a whole, the evidence must show that the learner meets all learning outcomes and assessment criteria over a period of time. It should be clear in the assessment records where each learning outcome and assessment criterion has been covered and achieved.

Unit 7: Influencing Change and Improvement in Customer Service

Level:	3
Unit type:	Skills
Guided learning hours:	28

Unit introduction

Successful organisations know their customers and can anticipate their needs and requirements. Forward-thinking organisations collect and use customer information systematically so that they can shape their services to meet the challenges that the customer service environment may face.

Organisations can use information about customers and their needs to develop and improve future customer service.

Effectively capturing customer behaviours, actions and habits can prove a valuable source of information for organisations to identify and implement future customer expectations and service improvements.

In this unit, you will develop your skills to follow continuous improvement processes and use appropriate data collection techniques for customer and service analysis.

You will decide the appropriate methods and sources for collecting information about customers and their experiences, and you will use different techniques to analyse and interpret the findings to not only identify service failures but also to look ahead and anticipate what customers may need and expect from the organisation in the future.

You will use the information collected to identify and recommend solutions that support the continuous improvement of customer service while working with others to communicate and implement customer service improvement.

This unit links with *Unit 3: Understanding Continuous Improvement in Customer Service*. Consideration should be given to delivering the related content together. There may also be opportunity to use the same evidence across these units.

Learning outcomes and assessment criteria

To pass this unit, the learner needs to demonstrate that they can meet all the learning outcomes for the unit. The assessment criteria determine the standard required to achieve the unit.

Learning outcomes		Assessment criteria	
1	Be able to collect information about customers to inform continuous improvement in customer service	1.1	Use appropriate methods to collect agreed information relating to different types of customer and their experience
		1.2	Collect information from a range of sources to evaluate customer service delivery
2	Be able to analyse and interpret information to identify options for improving customer service delivery	2.1	Apply analytical techniques that are appropriate to the purpose of the research and the type of data collected
		2.2	Analyse and interpret customer service information and feedback
		2.3	Evaluate how well the organisation's customer service delivery meets the needs of different customer types
		2.4	Propose customer service delivery improvement options based on outcomes of analysis and evaluation
3	Be able to identify and present recommendations for customer service delivery improvement	3.1	Make justified recommendations for improving customer service delivery based on identified and/or anticipated customer needs and external influences
		3.2	Present recommendations, including supporting analysis evidence in the agreed format, to appropriate people
		3.3	Negotiate and agree customer service delivery improvement solutions with others to support continuous improvement development

Learning outcomes		Assessment criteria	
4	Be able to implement customer service delivery improvements	4.1	Develop a customer service delivery improvement plan that includes specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bound (SMART) objectives and resources
		4.2	Communicate customer service delivery improvements and the reasons for these to internal and external customers
		4.3	Implement the customer service delivery improvement plan within the agreed timescale, using available resources within the limits of their own authority
		4.4	Evaluate the impact of the customer service delivery improvements following implementation

Unit content

What needs to be learned
<p>Learning outcome 1: Be able to collect information about customers to inform continuous improvement in customer service</p>
<p>1A Continuous improvement in customer service</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Definition of continuous improvement, including links to quality assurance and quality control.• Types of continuous improvement in customer service, including improving existing processes, using innovation to improve products and services, changes to procedures, staff training, solving problems for customers.• Specific areas for continuous improvement, e.g. timeliness, consistency, accessibility, accuracy, responsiveness, cost.• Process of carrying out continuous improvement:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ plan – current status, aims and objectives, success factors, legal requirements○ do – implementing the plan, including activities to deliver the plan, tools and equipment, human resources, training○ check – checking performance and assessing risks○ act – reviewing performance, acting on lessons learned.
<p>1B Methods for collecting customer service information and feedback</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Types of research that support continuous improvement activities:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ qualitative research – data based on individual customer responses, using open-ended questions to find out how they feel, what they think, and why they make certain choices○ quantitative research – gathering data in a numerical form that can be put into categories, or in rank order, or measured in units of measurement through customer service performance statistics, audits, surveys and polls• primary research: new research carried out directly with potential customers.• Methods for collecting primary research, e.g. questionnaire/survey/interview (online, phone, paper), focus groups, observation/visit, trials, mystery shopping.• Secondary (desk) research, i.e. using existing research from third parties.• Methods for collecting secondary research, e.g. online research, business materials, directories, market reports, sector reports, commercial research, government reports.

What needs to be learned

Learning outcome 1: Be able to collect information about customers to inform continuous improvement in customer service (*continued*)

- Types of information to be collected:
 - feedback from staff and customers on effectiveness of customer service delivery
 - quality of customer service interactions and experience
 - effectiveness of processes used in customer service delivery
 - external factors that influence change.
- Advantages and disadvantages of different methods of collecting customer feedback, including aspects of cost, efficiency and customer accessibility.
- Data protection regulation – collecting, maintaining and storing customer personal information.

1C Considerations when collecting customer service delivery information

- Advantages and disadvantages of different methods of collecting customer feedback, including aspects of cost, efficiency and customer accessibility.
- Data protection regulation – collecting, maintaining and storing customer personal information.
- Organisation size – small and large organisations.
- Risks to information security.
- Availability of resources – equipment, people, time.
- Credibility of sources of feedback.

1D Using information to make improvements in customer service delivery

- Organisational uses of information relating to customer service delivery:
 - identifying current and emerging customer needs and expectations
 - identifying innovation and improvements in products/service
 - measuring customer perception, e.g. what customers are thinking
 - measuring customer satisfaction, e.g. are customers happy?
 - identifying service failures, e.g. where the organisation is going wrong
 - assessing the competition, e.g. comparing brands, brand loyalty
 - supporting decision making.

What needs to be learned

Learning outcome 1: Be able to collect information about customers to inform continuous improvement in customer service (*continued*)

- Situational analysis techniques used to identify internal and external influences:
 - political, economic, social, technological, legal, ethical (PESTLE); used by customer service specialists to analyse and monitor the external customer service environment factors that have an impact on the organisation
 - strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats (SWOT): used to analyse the internal and external factors, usually the first stage of planning, helps customer service specialists to focus on key issues.

What needs to be learned

Learning outcome 2: Be able to analyse and interpret information to identify options for improving customer service delivery

2A Customer service research analysis techniques

- Suitability of analysis techniques, e.g. survey objectives, format of customer feedback, use of survey outcomes.
- Analysis techniques:
 - types, e.g. functional analysis to identify optimal target market by demographic
 - geographical analysis
 - statistical techniques to describe data to include: mean, mode and median, range, standard deviation.
- Techniques used to monitor the quality of data collected, e.g. data triangulation, investigator triangulation, theory triangulation, methodological triangulation, standardisation of results.

2B Interpreting customer service delivery research

- Use of charts and other visual elements to present information.
- Identifying patterns and trends in feedback to draw conclusions, e.g. customer buying habits, recurring issues, problems and complaints, anticipating customer needs and expectations for products and services.
- Use of computer software in processing and interpreting feedback, e.g. spreadsheets.
- Presenting the findings in an agreed format, e.g. report, presentations.
- Identify potential changes to customer service delivery policies and procedures based on external influences.

What needs to be learned

Learning outcome 3: Be able to identify and present recommendations to enable customer service delivery improvement

3A Recommending opportunities for customer service delivery improvements

- Considering constraints on implementing improvements, including costs, staff resources, time, differing customer and staff perceptions, legislation and regulations.
- Making a decision on opportunity for improvement, considering constraints.
- Presenting recommendations for making improvements on a specific area, e.g. response times, availability and quality of customer information, product knowledge, staff technical skills.
- Follow organisational procedures in making recommendations, e.g. channels of communication, format of presentation, appropriate persons to present recommendations to.

3B Considering future changes based on internal and external factors

- Internal factors affecting marketing: business objectives, business culture, operational issues, finance (costs, budgetary constraints), timescales.
- External factors affecting marketing: economic environment, competitor actions, ethical considerations, social and political issues, cultural issues, technology and technological change, market dynamics.

What needs to be learned

Learning outcome 4: Be able to implement customer service delivery improvements

4A Planning the implementation of customer service delivery improvements

- Areas for improvement, e.g. improving efficiency, effectiveness, development of customer service delivery processes.
- Types of improvement, e.g. revising existing customer service delivery processes and procedures, developing new processes and procedures, use of IT solutions to increase efficiency.
- Contribute to developing a plan for the implementation of changes to customer service delivery, including:
 - objectives – steps required to ensure successful implementation, desired outcomes, deadlines
 - measurement criteria, e.g. cost, timescales, expected outcomes, justification
 - resource requirements, e.g. equipment, materials, people
 - roles and responsibilities in implementing changes
 - risk assessment to predict issues with implementation
 - contingency planning to mitigate against unforeseen operational issues.
- Factors to be taken into consideration during implementation of changes/improvements, e.g. communication of new or revised processes and procedures, allowing time for new or revised processes and procedures to embed, staff training requirements, how changes affect others in the organisation.

4B Organising and managing resources

- Allocating resources in accordance with the improvement plan (finance, human resources, e.g. staff numbers, specific expertise, physical resources, for example equipment and materials).
- Ensuring appropriate sufficiency and type of resources are available including, monitoring resource usage against improvement plan.

4C Implementing customer service delivery plans

- Using project management plan (Gantt chart, PERT chart, Plan on a page) to track activities and progress against planned deliverables, milestones and deadlines.

What needs to be learned

Learning outcome 4: Be able to implement customer service delivery improvements (*continued*)

- Monitoring progress against the project plan, including:
 - setting project review dates
 - recording achievements against activities and milestones
 - recording feedback from progress updates
 - project reviews and focus group meetings with team and stakeholders
 - reviewing progress using project plan
 - reviewing and revising objectives.

4D Evaluating customer service delivery improvements

- Gather information from stakeholders to inform evaluation, e.g. qualitative and quantitative data.
- Acknowledge what was successful and unsuccessful, identifying reasons why.
- Reflect objectively on mistakes and failures to identify lessons learned that can inform future customer service delivery improvement projects.
- Report to key people on the outcome of the improvements made, including using appropriate format and structure to convey information.

Essential information for tutors and assessors

Essential resources

There are no special resources needed for this unit.

Assessment

This unit is internally assessed. To pass the unit, the evidence that the learner presents for assessment must demonstrate that they have met the required standard specified in the learning outcomes and assessment criteria.

It is expected that this unit will be assessed in a real or simulated working environment, where evidence is naturally occurring and collected over a period of time.

Centres are responsible for deciding on the assessment activities that will enable learners to produce valid, sufficient, authentic and appropriate evidence to meet the assessment criteria. When planning assessment and evidence collection for the unit, centres should consider the nature and sources of the evidence required for the portfolio that support the professional discussion in the end-point assessment, ensuring that learners have suitable evidence to support them in the discussion.

Learners must be given a clear assessment brief before the assessment takes place, detailing:

- the assessment activity and context
- the learning outcomes to be assessed
- the criteria they are expected to meet, and
- the time and duration of the assessment.

Wherever possible, centres should adopt a holistic and integrated approach to assessing the skills units in the qualification. This gives the assessment process greater rigour, minimises repetition and saves time. The focus should be on assessment activities generated through naturally occurring evidence in the workplace rather than on specific tasks. Taken as a whole, the evidence must show that the learner meets all learning outcomes and assessment criteria over a period of time. It should be clear in the assessment records where each learning outcome and assessment criterion has been covered and achieved.

Unit 8: Managing Personal Effectiveness in a Customer Service Specialist Job Role

Level:	3
Unit type:	Skills
Guided Learning Hours:	24

Unit introduction

In this unit, you will apply your transferable skills and personal attributes to demonstrate your effectiveness in your role as a customer service specialist.

You will also gain an understanding of your organisation's structure and the role of your team within it. You will look at your role in the team and how it contributes to team objectives and benefits the organisation. You will explore the necessary knowledge, skills and behaviours that make a customer service specialist effective, and the impact that actions and behaviours have on others in the organisation.

You will apply your positive work ethic, demonstrating that you have the right personal attributes to do your job effectively and with professionalism.

You will demonstrate personal behaviours and attributes that enable effective team cohesion and team working, including supporting colleagues in meeting customer needs, supporting good customer service practice and supporting colleagues' development, recognising colleagues as internal customers and how this may impact your service approach.

You will identify and take up opportunities to improve your own service, industry and best practice knowledge and skills by agreeing development objectives, carrying out self-assessment activities, producing a professional development plan and monitoring and reviewing your plan to achieve development objectives.

This unit has links to *Unit 4: Understanding Personal Effectiveness in a Customer Service Work Environment*. Consideration should be given to delivering the related content together. There may also be opportunity to use the same evidence across these units.

Learning outcomes and assessment criteria

To pass this unit, the learner needs to demonstrate that they can meet all the learning outcomes for the unit. The assessment criteria determine the standard required to achieve the unit.

Learning outcomes		Assessment criteria	
1	Understand own role and value within the organisation	1.1	Describe own role within the employer organisation
		1.2	State the standard of service expected of the job role within the employer organisation
		1.3	Explain how own work and actions impact on others within the organisation
		1.4	Explain how own work benefits the organisation
2	Be able to maintain organisational brand standards	2.1	Present a professional image that reflects positively on the organisation's brand
		2.2	Reinforce brand values and beliefs when delivering customer service
		2.3	Promote and represent the organisation's brand to build trust, credibility and satisfaction with customers
3	Be able to tailor service delivery to meet the needs of a diverse range of customers	3.1	Promote equality in customer service with a positive and open-minded attitude that respects customers as individuals
		3.2	Adapt customer service to recognise the different needs and expectations of a diverse group of customers
		3.3	Display behaviour that supports equality, diversity and inclusion during customer service delivery

Learning outcomes		Assessment criteria	
4	Be able to work effectively and collaboratively in a customer service team	4.1	Role model personal behaviours and attitudes that contribute to team cohesion and team productivity
		4.2	Support colleagues to deliver high quality customer service
		4.3	Demonstrate collaborative working with colleagues at all levels to achieve results
		4.4	Adapt service approach when managing internal and external customer relationships within own organisation
		4.5	Deliver high quality customer service consistently to internal and external customers
		4.6	Use formal and informal ways of sharing information with colleagues to support their development
5	Be able to manage own personal and professional development in a customer service specialist job role	5.1	Assess strengths and weaknesses in own customer service performance to inform personal and professional development
		5.2	Agree specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time bound (SMART) personal and professional development objectives to meet identified needs
		5.3	Produce a personal development plan to meet agreed SMART objectives
		5.4	Undertake planned learning and development activities to fulfil the personal development plan
		5.5	Review progress against agreed objectives and amend the personal development plan accordingly

Unit content

What needs to be learned

Learning outcome 1: Understand own role and value within the organisation

1A Understanding own role in an employer organisation

- Occupational profile of a customer service specialist:
 - Apprenticeship Standard
 - person specification for own job role.
- The role of a customer service specialist in an organisation.
- Own roles and responsibilities:
 - job description
 - own position in the organisation and its function
 - job title and duties as per job description, e.g. acting as a referral point for more complex customer requests, queries, complaints or problems, sharing knowledge and expertise with wider team and colleagues, influencing change and improvements to service, following organisational and legal requirements
 - team purpose and objectives; role in the team
 - organisational chart.
- Impact on others and organisation:
 - how their duties relate to the work of others in their immediate team/department and other functional areas within the organisation
 - consequences for other roles if duties are not completed as required, e.g. not achieving team and organisational goals and targets, poor working relationships.

1B Customer service standards

- Continual updating of organisational policies and procedures to meet customer needs – conforming with equality and diversity legislation, handling customer problems and complaints, dealing with angry or dissatisfied customers.
- Implementation of strategies to obtain and use customer feedback, provide new and additional services, have continual dialogue with customers, retain dissatisfied customers.

What needs to be learned

Learning outcome 2: Be able to maintain organisational brand standards

2A Demonstrating professionalism that reflects positively on the organisation's brand

- Demonstrating professionalism:
 - personal appearance (dress code, grooming) and behaviours in line with organisational code of conduct and any industry professional requirements
 - positive language and attitude
 - being approachable, polite, calm and focused
 - positive body language appropriate to the situation, e.g. maintaining eye contact, smiling
 - welcoming tone of voice in line with organisational brand and service culture.
- Working in line with brand standards and values.

2B Reinforce brand values and beliefs

- Use communication that reflects positive organisational brand values and culture:
 - responsiveness to customer requests, queries, problems and complaints
 - fulfilling brand promises made to customers within organisational literature and marketing materials
 - providing opportunities for customers to create positive brand associations.

2C Promoting and representing the organisation's brand

- Being a brand ambassador by representing the organisation in a positive light and raising brand awareness inside and outside the organisation.
- Inform, remind, persuade and influence customers' buying decisions to purchase products and/or services from the organisation and maintain customer loyalty.
- Consistently follow, and encourage others to follow organisational standards, protocols and procedures relating to customer service delivery and expectations for behaviour and professionalism.

What needs to be learned

Learning outcome 3: Be able to tailor service delivery to meet the needs of a diverse range of customers

3A Promoting equality, diversity and inclusion

- Meaning of diversity and inclusion.
- Showing respect for equality, diversity and inclusion:
 - being tolerant and open-minded, respecting the values, beliefs and customs of colleagues
 - use of non-discriminatory language
 - following organisational policies and procedures in supporting equality, diversity and inclusion.
- Promoting diversity and inclusion, e.g. ensuring colleagues are aware of their responsibilities under equality legislation and organisational policy, identifying potential issues, recommending ways to improve equality and inclusion.

3B Adapting customer service to meet the differing needs and expectations of customers

- Different needs and priorities of customers: needs vary according to type of customer, e.g. internal or external, new customers, customers with young families, customers with protected characteristics under the Equality Act; customers with specific requirements, e.g. timescales.
- Knowing when to adapt service approach: signs and signals when to adapt, e.g. customer with a visible protected characteristic, customer dissatisfaction, customer body language.
- How to adapt service approach: adapting according to customer needs and expectations, e.g. changing personal behaviours and communication style to reflect customer social styles (i.e. amiable, expressive, analytical and driver), empathising, changing response/delivery times to fit with customer needs, seeking support from line manager.
- Ways of meeting these specific needs of individual customers, e.g. providing a seat for an elderly customer, helping to pick items from shelves for a customer using a wheelchair, offering hearing loop technology, large print materials.

What needs to be learned

Learning outcome 3: Be able to tailor service delivery to meet the needs of a diverse range of customers (*continued*)

3C Behaviours that support equality, diversity and inclusion

- Characteristics of personal behaviour; appropriate communications, e.g:
 - using styles appropriate to different people and situations
 - using non-discriminatory language
 - allowing others to express their views
 - being tolerant and open-minded
 - showing respect for the background, values, beliefs and customs of customers and colleagues
 - integrity, fairness and consistency in decision making.
- Ways of showing respect for customer diversity, e.g:
 - not stereotyping or making assumptions about customers
 - listening for how customers want to be treated and then treat them accordingly
 - using simple, appropriate and non-offensive language
 - being aware of cultural or demographic differences and norms within the organisational customer profile
 - following organisational policies and best practices for diversity
 - being polite, patient and considerate.

What needs to be learned

Learning outcome 4: Be able to work effectively and collaboratively in a customer service team

4A Contributing to team cohesion and team productivity

- Role modelling personal behaviours and attitudes, e.g. respectfully challenging inappropriate culture, proactively offering help and support, reinforcing shared team objectives, celebrating success, giving positive feedback and reinforcing positive behaviours, fostering social connections and relationships between team members, engaging with team members on a personal level.

4B Supporting colleagues to deliver high quality customer service

- Types of support that could be offered, including using appropriate communication skills, effective questioning, active listening; giving clear explanations and instructions; use of demonstrations, sharing best practice examples, giving constructive feedback, using coaching skills.
- Considerations: own limits of authority, relevant legal, organisational requirements, own level of expertise and knowledge.
- Sharing information with colleagues to support their development, e.g. developing knowledge of new procedures, briefings on organisational changes.

4C Collaborative working

- Collaboration: definition, i.e. cooperative arrangement in which two or more parties work jointly towards a common goal; techniques, e.g. brainstorming, affinity sorting/affinity diagrams, ranking.
- The importance of, and need for, collaboration, e.g. cross-disciplinary skills and insight, innovation, builds trust, communication, stakeholder/team buy-in, greater productivity.
- Impact of effective collaboration, including shared goals, respect for all perspectives, empowerment of individuals, open communication, equal access to information, a collective mind set.
- Potential implications of ineffective collaboration: e.g. conflict between individuals and departments, wasted resources, organisation's competitive ability is weakened, delays, inefficiencies, poor lines of communication.
- Colleagues at all levels relevant to job role, level of authority and activities being undertaken.

What needs to be learned

Learning outcome 4: Be able to work effectively and collaboratively in a customer service team (*continued*)

4D Internal customer and external customer service approaches

- Internal customer definition, i.e. from within the organisation, e.g. colleagues, line managers, staff working in other departments.
- External customer definition, i.e. from outside the organisation, e.g. paying customer (individual, families, other firm or business), industry regulator.
- Managing internal and external customer relationships:
 - using appropriate service approach
 - considerations for service approach including formality of approach, tone of voice, method of communication, frequency of communication, organisational guidelines.

What needs to be learned

Learning outcome 5: Be able to manage own personal and professional development in a customer service specialist job role

5A Identifying learning and development needs

- Potential sources of feedback: team members, line manager, senior management, other teams and departments, customers, suppliers, other stakeholders.
- How sharing knowledge and experience with colleagues can impact own development and/or their development.
- Areas for feedback, e.g. personal and professional behaviours, performance targets, quality standards, achievement of learning and development goals and objectives, customer complaints, customer recognition.
- Sources of information to support personal and professional development: feedback from others, analysis of industry best practice and trends and the external environment, analysis of job description and team objectives, performance reviews and appraisals, own career aspirations, personal brand.
- Using self-assessment tools, e.g. reflection activities, SWOT analysis, skills audit, analysis of feedback.
- Reflecting on outcomes of self-assessment activities: own skills, knowledge and behaviours, productivity, quality standards, working practices, identifying strengths and weaknesses, identifying areas for development, recognising achievements and successes.

5B Agreeing SMART objectives and selecting appropriate development activities

- Working with line manager or relevant others to agree the scope of development plan: agreeing a reasonable number of development areas for focus in the development plan – consideration of factors such as time, capacity and resources.
- Agreeing SMART learning and development objectives to address the agreed development areas as well as to build and leverage strengths.
- Agreeing what success looks like (evidence of success).
- Identifying learning and development activities:
 - considerations: development needs and objectives, development impact, budget, learning styles, capacity, etc.
 - selecting a variety of learning and development activities, e.g. applying the 70:20:10 model (Lombardo and Eichinger).

What needs to be learned

Learning outcome 5: Be able to manage own personal and professional development in a customer service specialist job role (*continued*)

5C Producing and managing a personal development plan (PDP)

- Contents of a PDP: agreed SMART objectives, selected learning and development activities, success criteria, resources, timescales, review mechanisms.
- Monitoring a personal development plan: setting review dates, recording achievements, recording feedback from appraisals and personal reviews, reviewing and revising objectives, tracking against targets (milestones, completion), identifying reasons for deviations from plan, identifying exploitative or corrective actions.

Essential information for tutors and assessors

Essential resources

There are no special resources needed for this unit.

Assessment

This unit is internally assessed. To pass the unit, the evidence that the learner presents for assessment must demonstrate that they have met the required standard specified in the learning outcomes and assessment criteria.

This unit is expected to be assessed in a real working environment, where the evidence is naturally occurring and is collected over a period of time.

Centres are responsible for deciding on the assessment activities that will enable learners to produce valid, sufficient, authentic and appropriate evidence to meet the assessment criteria. When planning assessment and evidence collection for the unit, centres should consider the nature and sources of the evidence required for the portfolio that support the professional discussion in the end-point assessment, ensuring that learners have suitable evidence to support them in the discussion.

There are opportunities for learners to demonstrate achievement of some of the learning outcomes of this unit through evidence generated across other units. For example; *Unit 5: Delivering Solution-focused Customer Service* and *Unit 6: Managing Challenging Customers and Situations* give good opportunities for learners to generate evidence around their:

- professionalism (professional image, brand values and beliefs)
- brand advocacy
- behaviours that promote and support equality and diversity
- effective and collaborative team working skills and interactions.

Learners must be given a clear assessment brief before the assessment takes place, detailing:

- the assessment activity and context
- the learning outcomes to be assessed
- the criteria they are expected to meet, and
- the time and duration of the assessment.

Wherever possible, centres should adopt a holistic and integrated approach to assessing the skills units in the qualification. This gives the assessment process greater rigour, minimises repetition and saves time. The focus should be on assessment activities generated through naturally occurring evidence in the workplace rather than on specific tasks. Taken as a whole, the evidence must show that the learner meets all learning outcomes and assessment criteria over a period of time. It should be clear in the assessment records where each learning outcome and assessment criterion has been covered and achieved. For more information, please refer to the guidance available on our website on selecting suitable assessment activities for the skills units.

13 Suggested teaching resources

This section lists resource materials that can be used to support the delivery of the units across the qualifications.

Textbooks

Barnes, R – *Customer Experience for Dummies* (Wiley Publishing, 2014)
ISBN 9781118725603

Clayton M – *Time Management Pocketbook* (Management Pocketbooks, 2017)
ISBN 9781910186015

Cottrell S – *Skills for Success, Personal Development and Employability*, 3rd Edition
(Palgrave Macmillan, 2015) ISBN 9781137426529

Dent F – *Self-Managed Development Pocketbook* (Management Pocketbooks, 2016)
ISBN 9781906610944

Heppell M – *Five Star Service: How to deliver exceptional customer service*, 3rd Edition
(Pearson Business, 2015) ISBN 9781292100203

Kay F – *Smart Skills: Working with Others* (Legend Business, 2019) ISBN 9781789550054

Lucas R W – *Customer Service Skills for Success*, 7th Edition (McGraw-Hill Higher
Education, 2018) ISBN 9781260092509

Pennington, A – *The Customer Experience Book: How to design, measure and improve
customer experience in your business* (Pearson, 2016) ISBN 9781292148465

Ramm, G – *Celebrity Service* (SRA books, 2018) ISBN 9781912300181

Swinscoe, A – *How to Wow: 68 Effortless Ways to Make Every Customer Experience
Amazing* (Pearson, 2016) ISBN 9781292116891

Trough F – *Brilliant Employability Skills*, 2nd Edition (Pearson FT Prentice Hall, 2017)
ISBN 9781292158907

Websites

www.businessballs.com	Information on different business-related topics suited to this unit, such as complaint letters, body language, customer service, and games to improve skills and understanding of relevant topics.
www.businesstrainingworks.com	Includes information on customer service language.
www.gov.uk	Official government website that explains legislation.
www.hse.gov.uk	Health and Safety Executive, information on all aspects of health and safety.
www.ico.org.uk	Information Commissioner's Office, information regarding data protection legislation.
www.instituteofcustomerservice.com	Independent, professional membership body for the customer service sector. Includes a resources section where a glossary of terms, downloadable resources and guidance notes are available.
www.managementhelp.org	Information on customer service branding needs, basic customer service.
www.marketing.about.com	Information on good customer service.
www.mindtools.com	Provides a wide range of learning resources, with some resources on personal and professional development.
www.ofcom.org.uk	Information on legislation and regulation from Ofcom, the independent regulator and competition authority for the UK communications industry.
www.skillsyouneed.com	Information on customer service skills and skills needed for life, personal and work development.

14 Further information and useful publications

- Edexcel, BTEC and Pearson Work Based Learning contact details: qualifications.pearson.com/en/support/contact-us.html.
- Books, software and online resources for UK schools and colleges: www.pearsonschoolsandcolleges.co.uk
- Key publications
 - *Access arrangements and reasonable adjustments* (Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ))
 - *A guide to recruiting learners onto Pearson qualifications* (Pearson)
 - *A guide to the special consideration process* (JCQ)
 - *Pearson Centre Guide to Quality Assurance NVQs/SVQs and Competence-based qualifications*
 - *BTEC Centre Guide to Managing Quality* (Pearson)
 - *BTEC Quality Assurance Centre Handbook* (Pearson)
 - *Collaborative and consortium arrangements for the delivery of vocational qualifications policy* (Pearson)
 - *Enquiries and appeals about Pearson vocational qualifications and end point assessment policy* (Pearson)
 - *Equality, diversity and inclusion policy* (Pearson)
 - *Recognition of prior learning policy and process* (Pearson)
 - *Guidance for reasonable adjustments and special consideration in vocational internally assessed units* (Pearson)
 - *Suspected malpractice in examinations and assessments* (JCQ)
 - *UK Information Manual* (updated annually) (Pearson)
 - *Use of languages in qualifications policy* (Pearson)

Publications on the quality assurance of Pearson qualifications are available on our website.

Our publications catalogue lists all the material available to support our qualifications. To access the catalogue and order publications, please visit our website.

Additional resources

If you need further learning and teaching materials to support planning and delivery for your learners, there is a wide range of BTEC resources available.

Any publisher can seek endorsement for their resources and, if they are successful, we will list their BTEC resources on our website.

15 Professional development and training

Pearson supports UK and international customers with training related to BTEC qualifications. This support is available through a choice of training options offered on our website.

The support we offer focuses on a range of issues, such as:

- planning for the delivery of a new programme
- planning for assessment and grading
- developing effective assignments
- building your team and teamwork skills
- developing learner-centred learning and teaching approaches
- building in effective and efficient quality assurance systems.

The national programme of training we offer is on our website. You can request centre-based training through the website or you can contact one of our advisers in the Training from Pearson UK team, via Customer Services, to discuss your training needs.

BTEC training and support for the lifetime of the qualifications

Training and networks: our training programme ranges from free introductory events through sector-specific opportunities to detailed training on all aspects of delivery, assignments and assessment. We also host regional network events to allow you to share your experiences, ideas and best practice with other BTEC colleagues in your region.

Regional support: our team of Curriculum Development Managers, based around the country, are responsible for providing advice and support in centres. They can help you with planning and curriculum developments.

To get in touch with our dedicated support teams, please visit our website.

Your Pearson support team

Whether you want to talk to a sector specialist, browse online or submit your query for an individual response, there is someone in our Pearson support team to help you whenever – and however – you need:

- **Subject Advisors:** find out more about our subject advisor team – immediate, reliable support from a fellow subject expert
- **Ask the Expert:** submit your question online to our Ask the Expert online service and we will make sure your query is handled by a subject specialist.

Please visit our website at: qualifications.pearson.com/en/support/contact-us.html

Annexe A

Mapping of the Customer Service Specialist Apprenticeship Standard to the qualifications' content

The grid below maps the knowledge, skills and behaviours (KSBs) of the Customer Service Specialist Apprenticeship Standard to the content covered in the Pearson BTEC Level 3 Certificate and Diploma for Customer Service Specialists.

Please note: only Units 1–4 are part of the Certificate structure.

KEY

indicates coverage of the knowledge, skills or behaviours in the qualification.

A blank space indicates no coverage of the knowledge, skills or behaviours in the qualification.

BTEC Specialist units		Pearson BTEC Level 3 Certificate and Diploma for Customer Service Specialists							
		Unit 1	Unit 2	Unit 3	Unit 4	Unit 5	Unit 6	Unit 7	Unit 8
KSBs from the Apprenticeship Standard		Unit 1	Unit 2	Unit 3	Unit 4	Unit 5	Unit 6	Unit 7	Unit 8
Knowledge	1. Business knowledge and understanding <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand what continuous improvement means in a service environment and how your recommendations for change impact your organisation Understand the impact your service provision has on the wider organisation and the value it adds Understand your organisation's current business strategy in relation to customers and make recommendations for its future Understand the principles and benefits of being able to think about the future when taking action or making service related decisions Understand a range of leadership styles and apply them successfully in a customer service environment 	#		#	#				#

BTEC Specialist units		Pearson BTEC Level 3 Certificate and Diploma for Customer Service Specialists							
		Unit 1	Unit 2	Unit 3	Unit 4	Unit 5	Unit 6	Unit 7	Unit 8
Knowledge (continued)	2. Customer journey knowledge <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand and critically evaluate the possible journeys of your customers, including challenges and the end-to-end experience Understand the reasons why customer issues and complex situations sometimes need referral or escalation for specialist attention Understand the underpinning business processes that support you in bringing about the best outcome for customers and your organisation Understand commercial factors and authority limits for delivering the required customer experience 		#						
	3. Knowing your customers and their needs/customer insight <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Know your internal and external customers and how their behaviour may require different approaches from you Understand how to analyse, use and present a range of information to provide customer insight Understand what drives loyalty, retention and satisfaction and how they impact on your organisation Understand different customer types and the role of emotions in bringing about a successful outcome Understand how customer expectations can differ between cultures, ages and social profiles 		#						
	4. Customer service culture and environment awareness <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand your business environment and culture and the position of customer service within it Understand your organisation structure and what role each department needs to play in delivering customer service and what the consequences are should things go wrong Understand how to find and use industry best practice to enhance own knowledge 	#			#				

BTEC Specialist units

KSBs from the Apprenticeship Standard

Pearson BTEC Level 3 Certificate and Diploma for Customer Service Specialists

Unit 1	Unit 2	Unit 3	Unit 4	Unit 5	Unit 6	Unit 7	Unit 8
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<p>Skills</p>	<p>5. Business focused service delivery</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate a continuous improvement and future focussed approach to customer service delivery including decision making and providing recommendations or advice • Resolve complex issues by being able to choose from and successfully apply a wide range of approaches • Find solutions that meet your organisations needs as well as the customer requirements 					#	#	
	<p>6. Providing a positive customer experience</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through advanced questioning, listening and summarising negotiate mutually beneficial outcomes • Manage challenging and complicated situations within your level of authority and make recommendations to enable and deliver change to service or strategy • Use clear explanations, provide options and solutions to influence and help customers make choices and agree next steps • Explore and interpret the customer experience to inform and influence achieving a positive result for customer satisfaction • Demonstrate a cost conscious mind-set when meeting customer and the business needs • Identifying where highs and lows of the customer journey produce a range of emotions in the customer • Use written and verbal communication to simplify and provide complex information in a way that supports positive customer outcome in the relevant format 			#	#	#		

BTEC Specialist units

KSBs from the Apprenticeship Standard

Pearson BTEC Level 3 Certificate and Diploma for Customer Service Specialists

Unit 1	Unit 2	Unit 3	Unit 4	Unit 5	Unit 6	Unit 7	Unit 8
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Skills (continued)	<p>7. Working with your customers/customer insights</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proactively gather customer feedback, through a variety of methods. Critically analyse, and evaluate the meaning, implication and facts and act upon it Analyse your customer types, to identify or anticipate their potential needs and expectations when providing your service 						#	
	<p>8. Customer service performance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain a positive relationship even when you are unable to deliver the customer’s expected outcome When managing referrals or escalations take into account historical interactions and challenges to determine next steps 				#	#		
	<p>9. Service improvement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyse the end to end service experience, seeking input from others where required, supporting development of solutions Make recommendations based on your findings to enable improvement Make recommendations and implement where possible, changes in line with new and relevant legislation, regulations and industry best practice 						#	

BTEC Specialist units		Pearson BTEC Level 3 Certificate and Diploma for Customer Service Specialists							
		Unit 1	Unit 2	Unit 3	Unit 4	Unit 5	Unit 6	Unit 7	Unit 8
KSBs from the Apprenticeship Standard									
Behaviours /attitude	10. Develop self <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proactively keep your service, industry and best practice knowledge and skills up to date Consider personal goals related to service and take action towards achieving them 								#
	11. Ownership/ responsibility <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Personally commit to and take ownership for actions to resolve customer issues to the satisfaction of the customer and your organisation Exercises proactivity and creativity when identifying solutions to customer and organisational issues Make realistic promises and deliver on them 					#			
	12. Team working <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work effectively and collaboratively with colleagues at all levels to achieve results Recognise colleagues as internal customers Share knowledge and experience with others to support colleague development 								#

BTEC Specialist units		Pearson BTEC Level 3 Certificate and Diploma for Customer Service Specialists							
		Unit 1	Unit 2	Unit 3	Unit 4	Unit 5	Unit 6	Unit 7	Unit 8
KSBs from the Apprenticeship Standard									
	<p>13. Equality</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopt a positive and enthusiastic attitude being open minded and able to tailor your service to each customer • Be adaptable and flexible to your customer needs whilst continuing to work within the agreed customer service environment 								#
	<p>14. Presentation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate brand advocacy, values and belief when dealing with customer requests to build trust, credibility and satisfaction • Ensure your personal presentation, in all forms of communication, reflects positively on your organisation's brand 								#

Glossary of terms used in assessment criteria

Analyse	Examine methodically and in detail, typically in order to interpret.
Compare	Identify the main factors relating to two or more items/situations, explaining the similarities and differences, and in some cases say which is best and why.
Describe	Give a clear account in their own words, including all the relevant information (e.g. qualities, characteristics or events, etc.). Description shows recall and in some cases application.
Detailed	Having additional facts or information beyond a simple response.
Evaluate	Bring together all information and review it to form a conclusion, drawing on evidence, including strengths, weaknesses, alternative actions, relevant data or information
Explain	Provide details and give reasons and/or evidence to support an argument or point. OR Provide details and give relevant examples to clarify and extend a point. This would usually be in the context of learners showing their understanding of a technical concept or principle.
Identify	Shows the main features or purpose of something. Can recognise it and/or name characteristics or facts that relate to it.
Outline	A description setting out the main characteristics or points; write a clear description but without going into too much detail
State	Express information in clear and precise terms.

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