



# **Pearson LCCI Level 3 Certificate in Customer Service (VRQ) (ASE3014)**

## **Specification**

First teaching from November 2006

Issue 2

## **Edexcel, BTEC and LCCI qualifications**

Edexcel, BTEC and LCCI qualifications are awarded by Pearson, the UK's largest awarding body offering academic and vocational qualifications that are globally recognised and benchmarked. For further information, please visit our qualifications website at [qualifications.pearson.com](http://qualifications.pearson.com). Alternatively, you can get in touch with us using the details on our contact us page at [qualifications.pearson.com/contactus](http://qualifications.pearson.com/contactus)

## **About Pearson**

Pearson is the world's leading learning company, with 35,000 employees in more than 70 countries working to help people of all ages to make measurable progress in their lives through learning. We put the learner at the centre of everything we do, because wherever learning flourishes, so do people. Find out more about how we can help you and your learners at [qualifications.pearson.com](http://qualifications.pearson.com)

This specification is Issue 2. We will inform centres of any changes to this issue. The latest issue can be found on the Pearson website: [qualifications.pearson.com](http://qualifications.pearson.com)

## Acknowledgements

*References to third party material made in this specification are made in good faith. Pearson does not endorse, approve or accept responsibility for the content of materials, which may be subject to change, or any opinions expressed therein. (Material may include textbooks, journals, magazines and other publications and websites.)*

*All information in this specification is correct at time of publication.*

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# Introduction

## LCCI qualifications

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LCCI qualifications are widely regarded by employers to prepare students for the key functions of modern international business. The qualifications are recognised worldwide by employers, universities and professional bodies.

This qualification is not regulated by any regulatory authority in the UK. It exists on Pearson's self-regulated framework (SRF).

Pearson LCCI offers a wide range of qualifications, which are available at Levels 1 to 4 across the following subject areas:

- English Language
- Marketing and Customer Service
- Business, Administration and IT
- Financial and Quantitative.

This specification is part of the Marketing and Customer Service suite of LCCI qualifications.

Please refer to the Pearson qualification website for details of other qualifications in the suite.

## **Purpose of the specification**

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This specification sets out:

- the objectives of the qualification
- any other qualification(s) that a student must have completed before taking the qualification
- any prior knowledge and skills that a student is required to have before taking the qualification
- any other requirements that a student must have satisfied before they will be assessed or before the qualification will be awarded
- the knowledge, understanding and skills that will be assessed as part of the qualification
- the method of assessment and any associated requirements relating to it
- the criteria against which a student's level of attainment will be measured (such as assessment criteria).

## Qualification aims

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The aims of the Pearson LCCI Level 3 Certificate in Customer Service (VRQ) are to enable students to develop:

- knowledge and understanding of the advanced concepts in developing and delivering good customer service
- an appreciation of systems and procedures that enhance delivery of reliable and effective service
- an understanding of personal behaviours and processes that enhance and influence service delivery
- the ability to apply these behaviours and processes within the job role, in realistic situations

This qualification is intended for those who are working, or intend to work, in a customer service role where they have to take some degree of responsibility for supervising or leading staff at lower levels. It is suitable for those who wish to gain knowledge and understanding of the concept of customer service at a more advanced level. Possible vocational opportunities include:

- librarians
- administrators
- receptionists
- cashiers
- car-hire staff
- sales assistants
- hospital staff
- airline cabin crew
- tourism staff
- couriers
- hotel/catering
- customer relations staff.

The specification for the Pearson LCCI Level 3 Certificate in Customer Service (VRQ) covers many of the knowledge and understanding requirements of the (2006) National Occupational Standards (NOS) developed by the Institute of Customer Services (ICS) in the UK.



# Contents

<b>Specification at a glance</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Knowledge, skills and understanding</b>	<b>3</b>
Content	3
<b>Assessment</b>	<b>9</b>
Assessment summary	9
Aims of assessment	11
Entry and assessment information	12
Student entry	12
Combinations of entry	12
Age	12
Resitting the qualification	12
Access arrangements, reasonable adjustments and special consideration	13
Equality Act 2010 and Pearson equality policy	14
Malpractice	15
Language of assessment	16
<b>Other information</b>	<b>17</b>
Guided Learning Hours (GLH)	17
Student recruitment	17
Prior learning and other requirements	17
Progression	17
Codes	18
<b>Support, training and resources</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Appendix 1: Action verbs</b>	<b>23</b>



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## Specification at a glance

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The Pearson LCCI Level 3 Certificate in Customer Service (VRQ) consists of one externally-examined paper.

### Title: Pearson LCCI Level 3 Certificate in Customer Service (VRQ)

- Externally assessed

**100% of the  
total  
qualification**

#### Overview of content

- The Developing Role of Customer Service
- Delivering Reliable Service
- Communicating with Internal and External Customers
- Handling and Solving Customer Problems and Complaints
- Influencing Improvement and Effective Change

#### Overview of assessment

- One written, externally-set and marked paper, contributing 100% of the overall grade of the qualification.
- The examination will be 3 hours.
- The examination will consist of 100 marks.
- Candidates will be graded Pass/Merit/Distinction. A result of Fail will be recorded where candidates do not achieve the required marks for a Pass
- The compulsory question will require candidates to draw upon knowledge from all syllabus topics. In addition, each optional question will not be based on more than two syllabus topics.
- Question 1 is a compulsory question worth 25 marks. This should be attempted by all candidates. The compulsory question will be based on a structured case study that will require candidates to apply their knowledge and understanding of customer service. Candidates will be asked to respond to a series of issues as indicated and are expected to provide responses in sufficient detail as required by the issues.
- Candidates should then attempt 3 other questions from a choice of 5. Each of these questions is worth 25 marks. Candidates should use a concise essay style or bullet points, as required by the questions.
- Candidates may be required to compose a letter using appropriate letter layout, an email communication using email etiquette or a report using standard report format. Marks will be awarded for appropriate formats.
- When answering questions, candidates should include in their answers appropriate examples drawn from their knowledge and experience of customer service. Examples could be drawn from:
  - candidates' experiences at work
  - candidates' own experiences of customer service

## Title: Pearson LCCI Level 3 Certificate in Customer Service (VRQ)

- examples provided by teachers
- examples obtained from other sources, including published texts and media coverage.

### Candidate Performance Measurement

Pass 50%, Merit 60%, Distinction 75%

### Mark Allocation

A positive marking approach is used. Marks are not deducted for spelling, grammatical errors or punctuation.

In each examination, candidates will be allocated marks as follows:

- marks are allocated in line with the instructions given with each question
- setting out answers in a clear manner
- marks are not deducted for syntax errors, except where these cause a failure to communicate.

### Recommended Reading List and Support Material

#### Reading List

T Johnson — *How to Pass Customer Service Third Level\** (LCCIEB, 1999)  
ISBN-10: 1862470901, ISBN-13: 9781862470903

Customer 1st International Ltd — *Best Practice Guide for Customer Service Professionals (2nd Edition)* (Customer 1st International Ltd. 2006)  
ISBN-10: 0954874412, ISBN-13: 9780954874414

\*As the syllabus has been revised, this How To Pass Book no longer maps specifically or entirely to the learning outcomes of the syllabus. However, the How To Pass Book still covers many concepts and principles required by the syllabus, and as such is very valuable resource in the delivery of the qualification.

#### Support Material

A sample exam paper with model answers is available on the qualification page of the Pearson website ([qualifications.pearson.com/lcci](http://qualifications.pearson.com/lcci)). As time progresses, past papers will be made available on the website.

Additionally, to support the delivery of the new syllabus Teaching and Learning Handouts have also been made available on the qualification page of the website. These Handouts cover key new concepts in the revised syllabus. Centres can download these to use as student handouts or as teacher resource. Where necessary, teachers will need to expand on the information presented to meet the specific learning objectives of the syllabus.

A Glossary of customer service terms, prepared by the Institute of Customer Service (ICS) in the UK, is also available on the website. This glossary provides an interpretation of related customer service terms and words as they are used in the learning objectives in the syllabus.

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# Knowledge, skills and understanding

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## Content

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The following content must be covered to prepare students for the final assessment of this qualification.

### 1. The Developing Role of Customer Service

Subject content	What students need to learn:
<b>1. The Developing Role of Customer Service</b>	a) Give an acceptable definition of customer service and distinguish between an internal and external customer
	b) Describe the different types of organisational structures and their effect on customer service delivery: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• hierarchical</li><li>• power</li><li>• achievement</li><li>• support</li></ul>
	c) Describe how services may be classified: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• end-user</li><li>• service tangibility</li><li>• people based/equipment based</li><li>• expertise</li><li>• profit orientation</li></ul>
	d) Discuss the following customer service concepts and issues: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• why an organisation must limit its level of customer service to balance its goals with customer satisfaction</li><li>• how customer service can provide a 'competitive advantage' for an organisation</li><li>• how the 'service offer' is affected by financial and other resource limitations and its effects on the service chain</li><li>• added value service as a competitive tool – the cost implications and its contribution to an organisation's customer service targets</li></ul>
	e) Explain how a competitor's service offer affects an organisation's level of service

Subject content	What students need to learn:
	f) Explain how organisations that are in a non-competitive environment benchmark for effective service, and how good customer service can provide added value to such organisations
	g) Describe the similarities and differences in planning the customer offer for commercial, public sector and private sector not-for-profit organisations
	h) Explain how the features and benefits of an organisation's services and products influence customer service delivery and customer satisfaction
	i) Explain how the ethics and values of an organisation influence its approach to customer service

## 2. Delivering Reliable Service

Subject content	What students need to learn:
<b>2. Delivering Reliable Service</b>	a) Identify the difference between routine service standards and going the extra mile
	b) Describe a range of methods of record keeping and their importance in maintaining good customer service
	c) Explain the benefits to an organisation and its customers of having fast and reliable information
	d) Identify ways in which effective teams and service partnerships can improve the reliability and quality of customer service
	e) Explain why personal confidence in own abilities and setting a good example to others is an essential aspect of customer service delivery
	f) Discuss the resource implications of staff sickness and holidays on service delivery and how these may be dealt with to maintain good customer service
	g) Explain the importance of relevant regulations and legislation relating to the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• consumer protection</li> <li>• data protection</li> <li>• disability discrimination, equal opportunities, diversity and inclusion</li> <li>• health and safety</li> </ul>

Subject content	What students need to learn:
	h) Explain why consideration of diversity and inclusion issues is important in customer service and how the different needs of diverse groups may be identified
	i) Describe how the promotion of additional products and services may be organised and monitored and explain why this is important for an organisation and its customers
	j) Describe and explain how organisations try to maximise the demand for, and the supply of the service offering: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• strategies to increase supply</li> <li>• strategies to increase demand</li> </ul>
	k) Describe methods or systems for measuring an organisation's effectiveness in delivering customer service

### 3. Communicating with Internal and External Customers

Subject content	What students need to learn:
<b>3. Communicating with Internal and External Customers</b>	a) Describe a range of communication methods that can be used to effectively communicate with customers and identify the most appropriate for differing situations including: face-to-face, electronic, telephone and written
	b) Outline and apply the principles and procedures relating to written communication and the use of ICT to communicate
	c) Explain the importance of ensuring that the style and tone of written or ICT communication matches the organisation's service offer
	d) Explain the importance of adapting language to meet the needs of different customers who may find the communication hard to understand
	e) Identify ways in which staff can contribute to communicating the service vision or promise to customers
	f) Identify potential barriers to effective communication between client and organisation and ways of dealing with them
	g) Describe the causes and effects of stress to both customers and service providers and demonstrate ways of managing this

Subject content	What students need to learn:
	h) Demonstrate how to balance the communication needs of customers and the organisation
	i) Explain the importance of establishing a good rapport with customers and identify the ways in which customer service can be made more personal

#### 4. Handling and Solving Customer Problems and Complaints

Subject content	What students need to learn:
<b>4. Handling and solving customer problems and complaints</b>	a) Describe and appropriately apply recognised procedures for handling and solving a customer's problem
	b) Explain why it is important to monitor and prioritise the resolution of customer problems and identify ways in which this may be done
	c) Give an acceptable definition of a 'complaint' and outline recognised procedures for dealing with complaints effectively
	d) Identify the main techniques for handling conflict and negotiating with customers
	e) Discuss the importance of dealing with a customer complaint promptly
	f) Recognise limits of own authority and identify when to escalate a complaint by involving more senior members of the organisation or an independent third party
	g) Explain how the successful handling of a complaint can be used to impress a customer and contribute to customer satisfaction
	h) Describe actions that can be taken to avoid the repetition of customer problems and complaints
	i) Explain the need to provide feedback about complaints to relevant others
	j) Identify different ways of dealing with different customers' behaviours and personalities when managing problems and complaints
	k) Explain why it is necessary to monitor the level of complaints and describe how this may be done

## 5. Influencing Improvement and Effective Change

Subject content	What students need to learn:
<b>5. Influencing Improvement and Effective Change</b>	a) Explain the importance of Continuous Improvement and Change in developing customer service
	b) Explain how customer feedback can be used to propose changes in the way service is delivered
	c) Describe how to collect, analyse and interpret customer feedback to inform customer service improvements
	d) Identify recognised procedures/steps that should be taken into account when proposing and implementing changes in customer service
	e) Explain the importance, when changing customer service practices, of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• obtaining authorisation</li> <li>• own and others' limits of authority</li> <li>• involving others – colleagues or service partners</li> </ul>
	f) Outline the actions and activities that may be used to develop and support your team to implement customer service improvements and developments
	g) Outline the factors that prevent change in organisations and identify ways of overcoming them
	h) Describe how to put together a Personal Development Plan and explain how such a plan can help in improving the customer service skills of yourself or your team members
	i) Identify the key guidelines to follow when coaching team members
	j) Explain how improvements and developments in customer service can be monitored and evaluated



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# Assessment

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## Assessment summary

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### Pearson LCCI Level 3 Certificate in Customer Service (VRQ)

Number of series: On demand

#### Overview of content

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## Aims of assessment

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The examination will assess the candidate's ability to demonstrate:

- an up-to-date knowledge and understanding of advanced customer service concepts and their role in developing and delivering good customer service
- the application of recognised customer service principles in realistic situations
- an understanding of personal behaviours that enhance service delivery
- an understanding of the contribution made to the customer service function by technical and administrative systems and human resources
- an understanding of the importance of effective teamwork and supervision
- how communication can be used effectively to enhance customer service
- the importance of effective problem solving and handling of customer complaints
- knowledge and application of activities and approaches used to influence and implement change and improvement to customer service within an organisational setting

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## **Entry and assessment information**

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Please see the *Pearson Information Manual* and the *Pearson LCCI examination regulations*, available from our website: [qualifications.pearson.com/lcci](http://qualifications.pearson.com/lcci)

### **Student entry**

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Details on how to enter students for the examination for this qualification can be found on our website: [qualifications.pearson.com/lcci](http://qualifications.pearson.com/lcci)

### **Combinations of entry**

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There are no forbidden combinations of entry for this qualification.

### **Age**

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The qualification is intended for learners aged 16 and above.

### **Resitting the qualification**

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Candidates can resit the examination for the Pearson LCCI Level 3 Certificate in Customer Service (VRQ).

It is strongly advised that candidates do not register to undertake a resit until they have received the results from their previous examination.

## Access arrangements, reasonable adjustments and special consideration

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### Access arrangements

Access arrangements are agreed before an assessment. They allow students with special educational needs, disabilities or temporary injuries to:

- access the assessment
- show what they know and can do without changing the demands of the assessment.

The intention behind an access arrangement is to meet the particular needs of an individual student with a disability, without affecting the integrity of the assessment. Access arrangements are the principal way in which awarding bodies comply with the duty under the Equality Act 2010 to make 'reasonable adjustments'.

Access arrangements should always be processed at the start of the course. Students will then know what is available and have the access arrangement(s) in place for assessment.

### Reasonable adjustments

The Equality Act 2010 requires an awarding organisation to make reasonable adjustments where a person with a disability would be at a substantial disadvantage in undertaking an assessment. The awarding organisation is required to take reasonable steps to overcome that disadvantage.

A reasonable adjustment for a particular person may be unique to that individual and therefore might not be in the list of available access arrangements.

Whether an adjustment will be considered reasonable will depend on a number of factors, including:

- the needs of the student with the disability
- the effectiveness of the adjustment
- the cost of the adjustment; and
- the likely impact of the adjustment on the student with the disability and other students.

An adjustment will not be approved if it involves unreasonable costs to the awarding organisation timeframes, or affects the security or integrity of the assessment. This is because the adjustment is not 'reasonable'.

### **Special consideration**

Special consideration is a post-examination adjustment to a student's mark or grade to reflect temporary injury, illness or other indisposition at the time of the examination/assessment, which has had, or is reasonably likely to have had, a material effect on a candidate's ability to take an assessment or demonstrate their level of attainment in an assessment.

### **Further information**

Please see our website or email [internationalenquiries@pearson.com](mailto:internationalenquiries@pearson.com) for further information on how to apply for access arrangements and special consideration.

For further information about access arrangements, reasonable adjustments and special consideration please refer to the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) website: [www.jcq.org.uk/examination-system/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration](http://www.jcq.org.uk/examination-system/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration)

## **Equality Act 2010 and Pearson equality policy**

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Equality and fairness are central to our work. Our equality policy requires all students to have equal opportunity to access our qualifications and assessments, and our qualifications to be awarded in a way that is fair to every student.

We are committed to making sure that:

- students 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 students who do not share that characteristic
- all students achieve the recognition they deserve for undertaking a qualification and that this achievement can be compared fairly to the achievement of their peers.

You can find details on how to make adjustments for students with protected characteristics in the policy document *Access Arrangements, Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations*, which is on our website, [qualifications.pearson.com/en/support/support-topics/exams/special-requirements.html](http://qualifications.pearson.com/en/support/support-topics/exams/special-requirements.html)

## Malpractice

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Cases of alleged, suspected or confirmed malpractice must be dealt with in accordance with the latest Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) *General and Vocational Qualifications Suspected Malpractice in Examinations and Assessments Policies and Procedures*, available on the JCQ website: [www.jcq.org.uk](http://www.jcq.org.uk)

Pearson cares greatly about the integrity of its qualifications and is aware that incidents of malpractice threaten that integrity, adversely affect learners and undermine public confidence in the delivery and awarding of qualifications. For this reason, Pearson takes malpractice incidents extremely seriously and investigates all allegations it receives as fully as possible. Where malpractice is proven Pearson will impose appropriate penalties and/or sanctions on those found to be responsible, which can include debarment from delivery of Pearson qualifications (for staff) and disqualification (for learners).

### **Candidate malpractice**

Candidate malpractice refers to any act by a candidate that compromises or seeks to compromise the process of assessment or which undermines the integrity of the qualifications or the validity of results/certificates.

Candidate malpractice in examinations must be reported to Pearson using a *JCQ M1 Form* (available at [www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/malpractice](http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/malpractice)). The form can be emailed to [pqsmalpractice@pearson.com](mailto:pqsmalpractice@pearson.com) or posted to Investigations Team, Pearson, 190 High Holborn, London, WC1V 7BH. Please provide as much information and supporting documentation as possible. The final decision regarding appropriate sanctions lies with Pearson.

Failure to report malpractice constitutes staff or centre malpractice.

### **Staff/centre malpractice**

Staff and centre malpractice includes both deliberate malpractice and maladministration of Pearson qualifications. As with candidate malpractice, staff and centre malpractice is any act that compromises or seeks to compromise the process of assessment or which undermines the integrity of the qualifications or the validity of results/certificates.

All cases of alleged or suspected staff malpractice and maladministration must be reported immediately, before any investigation is undertaken by the centre, to Pearson on a *JCQ M2(a) Form* (available at: [www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/malpractice](http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/malpractice)). The form, supporting documentation and as much information as possible can be emailed to [pqsmalpractice@pearson.com](mailto:pqsmalpractice@pearson.com) or posted to Investigations Team, Pearson, 190 High Holborn, London, WC1V 7BH. The final decision regarding appropriate sanctions lies with Pearson.

Failure to report malpractice itself constitutes malpractice. More detailed guidance on malpractice can be found on our website at <http://qualifications.pearson.com/en/support/support-topics/exams/examination-guidance/malpractice-and-plagiarism.html> and in the latest version of the JCQ *General and Vocational Qualifications Suspected Malpractice in Examinations and Assessments Policies and Procedures*, available at: [www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/malpractice](http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/malpractice)

## **Language of assessment**

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Assessment of this specification will be in English only.  
Assessment materials will be published in English only and all work submitted for examination must be in English only.

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## Other information

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### Guided Learning Hours (GLH)

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Guided Learning Hours: the number of teacher-led contact hours required to support student achievement for a qualification.

For the Pearson LCCI Level 3 Certificate in Customer Service (VRQ) we recommend 140–160 GLH.

Centres should ensure students have additional time for self-study and preparation for the final examination, which is in addition to the GLH stated above.

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### Student recruitment

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Pearson follows the JCQ policy concerning recruitment to our qualifications in that:

- they must be available to anyone who is capable of reaching the required standard
- they must be free from barriers that restrict access and progression
- equal opportunities exist for all students.

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### Prior learning and other requirements

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There are no formal entry requirements for this qualification. However, candidates should have achieved a level of practical skill, knowledge and understanding appropriate to preparation for a Level 3 qualification in Customer Service, either through previous learning or experience.

Students may be studying in a local language but the assessment will be in English. Pearson recommends that students have a standard of business English equivalent to LCCI International Level 2 English for Business. This will support access to the assessment materials and enable students to communicate responses effectively.

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### Progression

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Students may progress to relevant qualifications in the level above; alternatively the qualification can support progression to employment.

Using appropriate internal processes, centres must ensure they choose the most appropriate qualification level for their students' needs.

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## Codes

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The subject code for the Pearson LCCI Level 3 Certificate in Customer Service (VRQ) is: ASE3014. The subject code is used by centres to enter students for a qualification.

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# Support, training and resources

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## **Training**

Pearson offers support and training to teachers on standard of delivery and preparing students to meet the assessment requirements.

## **Specifications, sample assessment materials and teacher support materials**

The Pearson LCCI Level 3 Certificate in Customer Service (VRQ) sample assessment materials can be downloaded from our website.

To find a list of all the support documents available please visit our website:  
[qualifications.pearson.com](http://qualifications.pearson.com)



# Appendices

Appendix 1: Action verbs

23



## Appendix 1: Action verbs

Below is a list of **action verbs** that are likely to be used in examination questions.

Action verbs provide guidance and information on what the examiner is asking of candidates and also on what approach candidates need to take in answering the questions. It would be beneficial to candidates if tutors spend time discussing these action verbs and the approach to take for each when answering questions. The aim of this is not to ensure that candidates know the meaning of the verbs but more how to answer questions where the verbs are used.

<b>Analyse</b>	Break into parts and discuss each part separately
<b>Apply</b>	To put to practical use
<b>Assess</b>	To judge the worth, importance, value, etc.; evaluate
<b>Classify</b>	To arrange or put into groups or classes
<b>Compare</b>	Explain similarities and differences
<b>Contrast</b>	Distinguish between items being compared by focusing on differences
<b>Define</b>	Give the specific meaning of words, terms, etc.
<b>Demonstrate</b>	To show or prove especially by reasoning, evidence etc.
<b>Describe</b>	Visualise and give information that paints a complete picture
<b>Discuss</b>	Examine in a complete and detailed way, usually by connecting ideas to examples
<b>Enumerate/List/Identify</b>	Recall and specify items in the form of a list
<b>Evaluate</b>	Give your opinion about the value or worth of something, usually by weighing positive and negative effects, and justify your conclusion
<b>Examine</b>	Inspect carefully or look at in detail; investigate
<b>Explain</b>	Make the meaning of something clear, often by making comparison or giving examples
<b>Give</b>	To present or outline briefly
<b>Illustrate</b>	To clarify or explain by use of examples
<b>Interpret</b>	Explain your view of facts and ideas and how they relate to one another
<b>Outline</b>	To give the main features or general idea of
<b>Review</b>	Give an overview of ideas and establish their merits and features
<b>Show</b>	To explain or make clear; prove
<b>Suggest</b>	To put forward (a plan, idea etc.) for consideration

<b>State</b>	Explain clearly, simply and concisely, being sure that each word gives the image you want
<b>Summarise</b>	Give the important ideas in brief

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