Pearson
BTEC Level 3 Diploma in Customer Service

Specification

Combined (Competence and Knowledge) qualification

First registration September 2014

Issue 4

Edexcel, BTEC and LCCI qualifications

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This specification is Issue 4. Key changes are listed in the summary table on the next page. We will inform centres of any changes to this issue. The latest issue can be found on the Pearson website: qualifications.pearson.com

This qualification was previously known as:

Pearson BTEC Level 3 Diploma in Customer Service (QCF)

The QN remains the same.

Summary of Pearson BTEC Level 3 Diploma in Customer Service specification issue 4 changes

Summary of changes made between previous issue and this current issue	Section number
All references to QCF have been removed throughout the specification	
Definition of TQT added	Section 1
Definition of sizes of qualifications aligned to TQT	Section 1
Credit value range removed and replaced with lowest credit value for the shortest route through the qualification	Section 2
TQT value added	Section 2
GLH range removed and replaced with lowest GLH value for the shortest route through the qualification	Section 2
Reference to credit transfer within the QCF removed	Section 8
QCF references removed from unit titles and unit levels in all units	Section 11
Guided learning definition updated	Section 11

Earlier issue(s) show(s) previous changes.

If you need further information on these changes or what they mean, contact us via our website at: qualifications.pearson.com/en/support/contact-us.html.

Contents

Purpose of this specification

This specification sets out:

- the objectives of the qualification

- any other qualification that a learner must have completed before taking the qualification

- any prior knowledge, skills or understanding which the learner is required to have before taking the qualification

- the combination of units that a learner must have completed before the qualification will be awarded and any pathways

- any other requirements that a learner must have satisfied before they will be assessed or before the qualification will be awarded

- the knowledge, skills and understanding that will be assessed as part of the qualification

- the method of any assessment and any associated requirements relating to it

- the criteria against which a learner's level of attainment will be measured (such as assessment criteria)

- assessment requirements and/or evidence requirements required as specified by the relevant Sector Skills Council/Standards Setting Body

- assessment requirements/strategy as published by the relevant Sector Skills Council/Standards Setting Body

- the Apprenticeship Framework in which the qualification is included, where appropriate.

1 Introducing Pearson BTEC Combined (Competence and Knowledge) qualifications

What are Combined (Competence and Knowledge) qualifications?

A Combined (Competence and Knowledge) qualification is a work-based qualification that combines competence and technical knowledge to give learners the practical competencies, technical skills and sector-related knowledge they need to be able to carry out a job effectively.

Combined (Competence and Knowledge) qualifications are based on the National Occupational Standards (NOS) for the appropriate sector. NOS define what employees, or potential employees, must be able to do and know, and how well they should undertake work tasks and work roles. At Level 2 and above, these qualifications are recognised as the competence component of Apprenticeship Frameworks. Qualifications at Level 1 can be used in Traineeships, which are stepping-stones to Apprenticeship qualifications. Combined (Competence and Knowledge) qualifications can also be delivered as stand-alone for those who wish to take a work-based qualification.

Combined (Competence and Knowledge) qualifications are outcome based with no fixed learning programme – allowing flexible delivery that meets the individual learner's needs. They are suitable for those in employment and for those studying at college who have a part-time job or access to a substantial work placement so that they are able to demonstrate the competencies that are required for work.

Most learners will work towards their qualification in the workplace or in settings that replicate the working environment as specified in the assessment strategy for the sector. Colleges, training centres and employers can offer these qualifications provided they have access to appropriate physical and human resources.

Sizes of Combined (Competence and Knowledge) qualifications

For all regulated qualifications, we specify a total number of hours that learners are expected to undertake in order 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, we identify the number of Guided Learning Hours (GLH) that a centre delivering the qualification needs to provide. Guided learning means activities that directly or immediately involve tutors and assessors in teaching, supervising, and invigilating learners, for example lectures, tutorials, online instruction and supervised study.

As well as guided learning, there may be other required learning that is directed by tutors or assessors. This includes, for example, 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 TQT, rounded to the nearest whole number.

TQT and credit values are assigned after consultation with users of the qualifications.

BTEC Combined (Competence and Knowledge) qualifications are available in the following sizes:

- Award – a qualification with a TQT value of 120 or less (equivalent to a range of 1–12 credits)

- Certificate – a qualification with a TQT value in the range of 121–369 (equivalent to a range of 13–36 credits)

- Diploma – a qualification with a TQT value of 370 or more (equivalent to 37 credits and above).

2   Qualification summary and key information

Qualification title	Pearson BTEC Level 3 Diploma in Customer Service
Qualification Number (QN)	601/3478/1
Regulation start date	06/06/2014
Operational start date	01/09/2014
Approved age ranges	16-18 19+ Please note that sector-specific requirements or regulations may prevent learners of a particular age from embarking on this qualification. Please refer to the qualification Assessment Strategy in *Annexe A.*
Credit value	55
Assessment available	Portfolio of Evidence (internal assessment) **and** Pearson-devised assessment (onscreen testing).
Total Qualification Time (TQT)	550
Guided learning hours	289
Grading information	The qualification and units are graded pass/fail.
Entry requirements	No prior knowledge, understanding, skills or qualifications are required before learners register for this qualification, however it is likely that they will be seeking work within the customer service sector, or they may already be employed in a cross-sector role or function. Centres must follow the Pearson *Access and Recruitment* policy (see *Section 7, Access and Recruitment*).
Funding	Details on funding approval will be available in the future on the Learning Aims Reference Service (LARS) database, which replaces the Learning Aim Reference Application (LARA). In the interim, the LARS Lite database is available to check funding approval. Alternatively, the Skills Funding Agency's simplified funding catalogues can be used to check funding approval. Further information and guidance is available on the website: www.gov.uk

Centres will need to use the Qualification Number (QN) when they seek public funding for their learners. As well as a QN, each unit within a qualification has a unit reference number (URN).

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 at: qualifications.pearson.com

3   Qualification rationale

Qualification objectives

The Pearson BTEC Level 3 Diploma in Customer Service is for learners who work in, or who want to work in customer service roles such as.

Customer Service Supervisor   Customer Relationship Manager

Customer Service Team leader   Client Services Officer

Events Coordinator

The qualification gives learners the opportunity to:

- develop and demonstrate technical and wider sector-related knowledge to underpin competence in the job roles stated above. This includes the principles, and techniques for organising and delivering customer service, building and maintaining relationships with customers and an understanding of the legislation and regulations that governs the industry

- develop and demonstrate a range of technical skills and behaviours that supports competence in the job roles stated above. This includes resolving customer problems and complaints, communicating with customers, delivering non-routine customer service and supporting improvements in customer service

- develop their own personal growth and engagement in learning through the development of personal, learning and thinking skills (PLTS)

- have existing skills recognised

- achieve a nationally-recognised Level 3 qualification.

Relationship with previous qualifications

This qualification replaces the Pearson Edexcel Level 3 NVQ Diploma in Customer Service that has expired and the Pearson BTEC Level 3 Certificate in Customer Service which expires 31st December 2014.

Apprenticeships

Skills CFA include the Pearson BTEC Level 3 Diploma in Customer Service as the competencies component for the Advanced Apprenticeship in Customer Service.

Progression opportunities

Learners who achieve the Pearson BTEC Level 3 Diploma in Customer Service can progress to the Pearson Edexcel Level 4 NVQ Diploma in Customer Service Alternatively, learners could choose to progress to management qualifications at Level 3, including:

- Pearson BTEC Level 3 Diploma in Management
- Pearson BTEC Level 3 Certificate in Management Principles

Achieving this qualification also gives learners the opportunity to progress to job roles that require a more complex set of skills and responsibility including leading and managing, for example, Service Delivery Manager, Client Services Manager or Customer Operations Manager.

Industry support and recognition

This qualification is supported by Skills CFA, the Skills Council for pan-sector business skills, which includes the customer service sector.

Relationship with National Occupational Standards

This qualification is based on the National Occupational Standards (NOS) in Customer Service which were set and designed by Skills CFA.

4 Qualification structure

Pearson BTEC Level 3 Diploma in Customer Service

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

Number of credits that must be achieved	55
Minimum number of credits that must be achieved at level 3 or above	40
Number of mandatory credits that must be achieved: Group A	31
Minimum number of optional credits that must be achieved: Group B/C A **minimum** of 15 credits must be achieved from Group B. The remaining 9 credits can come from Group B or C (a maximum of 9 credits can come from Group C).	24

Mandatory Group A: Learners must achieve 31 credits from this group.

Unit	Unit reference number	Mandatory units	Level	Credit	Guided learning hours
1	L/506/2150	Organise and Deliver Customer Service	3	5	27
2	Y/506/2152	Understand the Customer Service Environment	3	5	40
3	K/506/2169	Resolve Customers' Problems	3	4	19
4	D/506/1942	Principles of Business	3	10	74
5	J/506/2910	Understand Customers and Customer Retention	3	4	35
6	T/506/2952	Manage Personal and Professional Development	3	3	12

Optional Group B: Learners must achieve a minimum of 15 credits from this group.

Unit	Unit reference number	Optional units	Level	Credit	Guided learning hours
7	Y/506/2166	Develop Resources to Support Consistency of Customer Service Delivery	3	5	21
8	D/506/2167	Use Service Partnerships to Deliver Customer Service	3	3	20
9	R/506/2151	Resolve Customers' Complaints	3	4	22

Unit	Unit reference number	Optional units	Level	Credit	Guided learning hours
10	D/506/2170	Gather, Analyse and Interpret Customer Feedback	3	5	24
11	K/506/2172	Monitor the Quality of Customer Service Interactions	3	5	27
12	D/506/2119	Communicate Verbally with Customers	2	3	14
13	T/506/2126	Communicate with Customers in Writing	2	3	20
14	L/506/2133	Promote Additional Products and/or Services to Customers	2	2	14
15	Y/506/2135	Exceed Customer Expectations	2	3	15
16	T/506/2143	Deliver Customer Service Whilst Working on Customers' Premises	2	4	20
17	F/506/2159	Deliver Customer Service to Challenging Customers	2	3	16
18	Y/506/2149	Develop Customer Relationships	2	3	18
19	T/506/2160	Support Customer Service Improvements	2	3	12
20	A/506/2161	Support Customers Through Real-time Online Customer Service	2	3	15
21	J/506/2163	Use Social Media to Deliver Customer Service	2	3	18
22	D/506/2153	Champion Customer Service	4	4	17
23	R/506/2179	Build and Maintain Effective Customer Relations	4	6	25
24	L/506/2181	Manage a Customer Service Award Programme	4	4	15
25	Y/506/2183	Manage the Use of Technology to Improve Customer Service	4	4	14
26	H/506/2977	Support Customers Using Self-service Equipment	2	3	18
27	K/506/2978	Provide Post-transaction Customer Service	2	5	22
28	D/506/2962	Develop a Social Media Strategy for Customer Service	4	5	16

Optional Group C: A maximum of 9 credits may come from this group.

Unit	Unit reference number	Mandatory units	Level	Credit	Guided learning hours
29	H/506/1912	Negotiate in a Business Environment	3	4	18
30	T/506/1820	Promote Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in the Workplace	3	3	15
31	A/506/1821	Manage Team Performance	3	4	21
32	J/506/1921	Manage Individuals' Performance	3	4	20
33	M/506/1931	Collaborate with Other Departments	3	3	14
34	F/502/8612	Negotiating, Handling Objections and Closing Sales	3	4	22
35	R/502/8615	Obtaining and Analysing Sales-related Information	3	4	24
36	K/502/8622	Buyer Behaviour in Sales Situations	3	3	27
37	K/503/0418	Manage Incidents Referred to a Contact Centre	3	6	30
38	D/503/0397	Lead Direct Sales Activities in a Contact Centre Team	3	4	8
39	L/506/1807	Manage Diary Systems	2	2	12
40	L/506/1869	Contribute to the Organisation of an Event	2	3	23
41	H/506/1814	Provide Reception Services	2	3	15
42	M/506/1895	Buddy a Colleague to Develop their Skills	2	3	19
43	L/506/1905	Employee Rights and Responsibilities	2	2	16
44	M/502/8587	Processing Sales Orders	2	2	17
45	J/502/4397	Bespoke Software	3	4	30

5   Programme delivery

Centres are free to offer these qualifications using any mode of delivery, for example full time, part time, evening only, distance learning, that meets learners' needs. Learners must be in employment or working with a training provider on a programme so that they can develop and demonstrate the occupational competence required.

Whichever mode of delivery is used, centres must make sure that learners have access to specified resources and to the sector specialists delivering and assessing the units. Centres must adhere to the Pearson policies that apply to the different modes of delivery, in particular the policy *Collaborative Arrangements for the Delivery of Vocational Qualifications* on our website at http://qualifications.pearson.com/en/support/support-topics/understanding-our-qualifications/policies-for-centres-learners-and-employees.html

There are various approaches to delivering a successful competence-based qualification. The section below outlines elements of good practice that centres can adopt in relation to learner recruitment, preparation and support, training and assessment delivery, and employer engagement.

Elements of good practice

Learner recruitment, preparation and support

Good practice in relation to learner recruitment, preparation and support includes:

- providing initial advice and guidance, including work tasters, to potential learners to give them an insight into the relevant industry and the learning programme

- using a range of appropriate and rigorous selection methods to ensure that learners are matched to the programme best suited to their needs

- carrying out a thorough induction for learners to ensure that they completely understand the programme and what is expected of them. The induction can include, for example, the requirements of the programme, an initial assessment of current competency levels, assessment of individual learning styles, identification of training needs, an individual learning plan, details of training delivery, the assessment process. It is good practice to involve employers in the induction process, this helps them to understand what will be taking place during the programme and enables them to start building a relationship with the centre to support the effective delivery of the programme

- keeping in regular contact with the learner to keep them engaged and motivated, and ensuring that there are open lines of communication with the learner, the assessor, the employer and teaching staff.

Training and assessment delivery

Good practice in relation to training and assessment delivery includes:

- offering flexible delivery and assessment to meet the needs of the employer and learner, through the use of a range of approaches, for example virtual learning environments (VLEs), online lectures, video, printable online resources, virtual visits, webcams for distance training, e-portfolios

- balancing on-the-job and off-the-job training to meet the knowledge and competence requirements of the programme:

  - off-the-job: the nature of Combined (Competence and Knowledge) qualifications means that the development of technical- and sector-related knowledge is integral to learners achieving them. As a result, learners need to have sufficient time away from the work environment to focus on developing their technical and industry knowledge, and transferable and practical skills related to their job role. Tutors need to use a range of teaching and learning methods to deliver this training effectively, for example demonstration, observation and imitation, practising ('trial and error'), feedback on performance from experts and peers, reflective practice, real-world problem solving, enquiry-based learning, simulation and role play, peer learning, virtual environments, questioning, discussions

  - on-the-job: planning opportunities with the employer for the development and practising of skills on the job. The on-the-job element of the programme offers opportunities for assessment and plays an important role in developing the learner's routine expertise, resourcefulness, craftspersonship and business-like attitude. It is important that there is intentional structuring of practice and guidance to supplement the learning and development provided through engagement in everyday work activities. Teaching and learning methods, such as coaching, mentoring, shadowing, reflective practice, collaboration and consultation, could be used in this structured on-the-job learning

- integrating the delivery and assessment of Personal, Learning and Thinking Skills (PLTS) and Employment Rights and Responsibilities (ERR) if the programme is being delivered as a part of an Apprenticeship. It is important that learners understand the relevance of these skills in the workplace and are aware of when and how they will be developing them (see *Annexe E* for mapping of PLTS to the units in this specification)

- developing a holistic approach to assessment by matching evidence to different assessment criteria, learning outcomes and units as appropriate, thereby reducing the assessment burden on learners and assessors. It is good practice to draw up an assessment plan that aligns the units with the learning process and the acquisition of knowledge and skills, and which indicates how and when the units will be assessed. In producing the plan, the assessor should work closely with the learner to identify any activities that relate to more than one unit or learning outcome and to agree the best way to collect a single piece of evidence that meets the assessment requirements sufficiently. The assessment guidance given in the units identifies opportunities to assess units holistically, helping centres to develop assessment plans

- discussing and agreeing with the learner and employer suitable times, dates and work areas where assessment will take place. Learners and employers should be given regular and relevant feedback on performance and progress.

Employer engagement

Good practice in relation to employer engagement includes:

● communicating with employers at the start of the programme to understand their business context and requirements so that the programme can be tailored to meet their needs

● working with the employer to ensure that learners are allocated a mentor in the workplace to assist them in the day-to-day working environment and to act as a contact for the assessor/tutor

● helping the employer to better understand their role in the delivery of the programme. It is important that employers understand that sufficient and relevant work must be given to learners in order to provide a culture of learning and to ensure that they are given every opportunity to participate in aspects of continuous professional development (CPD).

Delivery guidance for Pearson BTEC Level 3 Diploma in Customer Service

The following delivery guidance is not intended to be prescriptive. Those delivering the programme of learning can adapt the guidance to meet the needs of learners, employers and the specific context.

The Level 3 Diploma in Customer Service is an apprenticeship qualification that gives learners the opportunity to develop and demonstrate their technical and wider sector-related knowledge and develop and demonstrate a range of technical skills and behaviours that supports the competencies required in a range of customer service job roles.

The mandatory knowledge-based units, i.e. Unit 2 *Understand the Customer Service Environment*, Unit 4 *Principles of Business* and Unit 5 *Understand Customers and Customer Retention* are best delivered through off the job training, where the underlying principles of customer service can be explored, examined and discussed. This will provide the learners with a sound knowledge base for the development of practical skills that can be evidenced in the workplace. It is suggested that the delivery of the these units can be enriched and extended by the use of teaching and learning methods and activities that draw on current practice in, and experience of, the customer service sector. This may include the use of:

● vocationally specific workplace case-study materials

● expert visiting speakers

● group and individual problem solving activities

● video clips taken from real work situations

● presentations

● questioning and discussions

● virtual learning environments and online learning resources

For example, in delivering Unit 2, *Understand the Customer Service Environment,* it may be possible to draw on different customer service contexts such as a retail business, business to businesses, business to customer and government organisations that offer services to a variety of different customers. If possible, visiting speakers from different business models e.g. small independent business, medium size business and on-line business, might be able to describe how their approach to customer service is influenced by the size of their business, the products they sell, a brand name and their influence over their market share.

The learners might be able to engage in a dialogue that would lead into a discussion about how a good understanding of customers' needs and expectations can lead to greater customer retention.

Similarly, in delivering Unit 4, *Principles of Business*, the use of business speakers from different types of business e.g. small, medium and large, will provide learners with examples of different market environments and how different types of businesses interact with the different markets. The learners might investigate businesses that have a track record of being innovative, such a Dyson. An understanding of financial and budget management might be developed from examining some simple financial records preferably from a real organisation and discussing the implications for the organisation of poor financial management. Some understanding of financial terminology would allow the learners to speak about finance and budgeting confidently so words such as profit, loss, working capital, assets and variance analysis might be discussed and applied to real life situations. Finally, marketing and sales and their relationship to helping the business to be competitive and profitable might be explored in the context of how a business uses marketing information gathered from customers to develop its sales offer using different sales channels. Group or individual investigation into a particular brand and how the owner of the brand markets the product might provide a valuable and interesting learning experience. The development of an understanding of the business environment will enable the learners to transfer their knowledge into the workplace where they can explore the relationship that exists with the customer service environment.

Optional units such as Unit 12 *Communicate Verbally with Customers*, Unit 13 *Communicate with Customers in Writing* and Unit 29 *Negotiate in a Business Environment* can also be delivered away from the work environment to allow the learner to develop these skills in a safe environment that can then be transferred to the workplace. Activities such as demonstrations, observation and role-plays would be best suited in delivering these units. The use of feedback on performance and reflective practice would support and extend learning from these activities.

Competence-based mandatory units, i.e. Unit 1 *Organise and Deliver Customer Service*, Unit 3 *Resolve Customers' Problems* and Unit 6 *Manage Personal and Professional Development* should be delivered through on the job training. In the workplace learners could be teamed with an experienced customer service professional to act as a mentor providing help and support as the learner develops the necessary workplace skills. Coaching of learners in the workplace is an effective method of providing training and support at the point of delivery. For example, if a learner has dealt with a customer problem a short meeting with a mentor or coach would allow the learner to review and reflect on how they handled the problem and what learning points they could take away to inform their future practice. This will help the learner to develop the skills needed to achieve the mandatory unit, Unit 3 *Resolve Customers' Problems*.

There are strong links between Unit 1 *Organise and Deliver Customer Service* and Unit 5 *Understanding Customers and Customer Retention*. Both units look at how customers can be segmented in different groups, so it may be possible to deliver learning outcome 1 of both units together though off the job training. The use of shadowing, coaching and consultation could then be used on the job to follow-up and reinforce the off the job learning and support the learner in developing the competencies to plan and deliver customer service. There may be opportunities to create structured learning where the learner can be introduced to a situation and guided through a series of actions to arrive at a final conclusion. Care should be taken to ensure the learner is responding to a real situation and it is not a simulation.

Where possible, job rotation should be undertaken so that the learner is exposed to a variety of different learning environments within the employing organisation. This will allow the learner to gain experience of providing customer service across different situations and different types of customers. These might be internal or external customers who may have different requirements and expectations of customer service. This will also link to Unit 6 *Manage Personal and Professional Development*. There are many on-line tools that are available for learners to access to evaluate their current skill levels and these might be useful for promoting discussions, whether through on the job or off the job training, that can help learners to formulate their own ideas of where they want their careers to go in the future. Other on-the-job delivery methods that the trainer might consider includes: collaboration, special project groups and cross-functional teams.

Opportunities to integrate the delivery and assessment of Personal Learning and Thinking Skills (PLTS) will arise naturally through the delivery of the knowledge and through the competence outcomes. Unit 6 *Manage Personal and Professional Development* may be seen as an example where PLTS could be delivered through off the job training but evidenced through the learner's work products, for example if the learner is subject to Performance Management at work then it may be possible to find evidence for PLTS outcome *Self-Managers*. Centres should plan and make full use of the opportunities to integrate PLTS that are available. See *Annexe E* for mapping of PLTS to the units in this specification).

Opportunities to integrate the delivery and assessment of Employee Rights and Responsibilities (ERR) are likely to occur early on in the training process.

Where ever possible links to customer service in the workplace should be used to demonstrate that ERR does not work in isolation.

Unit 6 *Manage Personal and Professional Development* may offer opportunities to link with ERR learning outcome 1. Unit 16 *Deliver Customer Service Whilst Working on Customers' Premises* may offer an opportunity to provide evidence towards ERR learning outcome 2 and the Health and Safety implications of working away from the employer's base location. It may be possible to link the ERR outcomes to other units and centres should plan and make full use of the opportunities to integrate ERR that are available.

6 Centre resource requirements

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

General resource requirements

- Centres must have the appropriate physical resources to support delivery and assessment of the qualification. For example, a workplace in line with industry standards, or a Realistic Working Environment (RWE), where permitted, as specified in the assessment strategy for the sector, equipment, IT, learning materials, teaching rooms.

- Where RWE is permitted, it must offer the same conditions as the normal day-to-day working environment, with a similar range of demands, pressures and requirements for cost-effective working.

- Centres must meet any specific human and physical resource requirements outlined in the Assessment Strategy in *Annexe A*. Staff assessing learners must meet the occupational competence requirements within the overarching assessment strategy for the sector.

- There must be systems in place to ensure continuing professional development for staff delivering the qualification.

- Centres must have appropriate health and safety policies, procedures and practices in place for the delivery and assessment of the qualification.

- Centres must deliver the qualification in accordance with current equality legislation. For further details on Pearson's commitment to the Equality Act 2010, please see *Section 7, Access and recruitment*. For full details on the Equality Act 2010, please go to www.legislation.gov.uk

Specific resource requirements

As well as the general requirements above, there are specific resource requirements that centres must meet. They are listed by unit below.

Unit	Resources required
Unit 37: Manage Incidents Referred to a Contact Centre Unit 38: Lead Direct Sales Activities in a Contact Centre Team	Centres should ensure that learners undertaking these units have access to the relevant equipment and software expected within a contact centre environment.

7 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 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.

Prior knowledge, skills and understanding

No prior knowledge, understanding, skills or qualifications are required before learners register for this qualification, however it is likely that they will be seeking work within the customer service sector, or they may already be employed in a cross-sector role or function.

Access to qualifications for learners with disabilities or specific needs

Equality and fairness are central to our work. Pearson's Equality 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 qualification. Please see the information regarding reasonable adjustments and special consideration in *Section 8, Assessment*.

8 Assessment

This qualification contains both knowledge and competence units, assessed through a combination of internal and external assessment.

All competence units are internally assessed. Knowledge units can be assessed through internal or external assessment. The type of unit, whether knowledge or competence, is stated in the unit information section at the start of each unit. Information on the methods and requirements for both internal and external assessment is given later in this section.

To achieve a pass for the full qualification, the learner must achieve all the units in the stated qualification structure.

Language of assessment

External assessments for units in this qualification will be available in English.

Assessments for units that are to be internally assessed may be in English, Welsh or Irish. If assessment is to be carried out in either Welsh or Irish then centres must inform Pearson at the point of learner registration.

A learner taking the qualification 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 policy document *Use of languages in qualifications policy*.

Further information on access arrangements can be found in the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) document *Access Arrangements, Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration for General and Vocational Qualifications*.

Both of the documents above are on our website at http://qualifications.pearson.com/en/support/support-topics/understanding-our-qualifications/policies-for-centres-learners-and-employees.html

Competence units – internal assessment

All competence units in this 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 competence unit has specified learning outcomes and assessment criteria. To pass each 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.

It is important that the evidence provided to meet the assessment criteria for each unit is:

Valid	relevant to the standards for which competence is claimed
Authentic	produced by the learner
Current	sufficiently recent to create confidence that the same skill, understanding or knowledge persist at the time of the claim
Reliable	indicates that the learner can consistently perform at this level
Sufficient	fully meets the requirements of the standards

Learners can provide evidence of occupational competence from:

- **current practice** – where evidence is generated from a current job role

- a **programme of development** – where evidence comes from assessment opportunities built into a learning programme. The evidence provided must meet the requirements of the Sector Skills Council's Assessment Strategy.

- the **Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)** – where a learner can demonstrate that they can meet a unit's assessment criteria through knowledge, understanding or skills they already possess, without undertaking a course of development. They must submit sufficient, reliable, authentic and valid evidence for assessment. Evidence submitted based on RPL should give the centre confidence that the same level of skill, understanding and knowledge exists at the time of claim as existed at the time the evidence was produced. RPL is acceptable for accrediting a unit, several units, or a whole qualification.

    Further guidance is available in our policy document *Recognition of Prior Learning Policy and Process*, available on our website at: http://qualifications.pearson.com/en/support/support-topics/understanding-our-qualifications/policies-for-centres-learners-and-employees.html

- a combination of the above.

Assessment Strategy

The Assessment Strategy for the customer service specific competence units in this qualification is given in *Annexe A*. It sets out the overarching assessment principles and the framework for assessing these units to ensure that the qualification remains valid and reliable. The Assessment Strategy has been developed by Skills CFA in partnership with employers, training providers, awarding organisations and the regulatory authorities.

Imported units in this qualification are governed by the Assessment Strategies in *Annexe B, C* and *D*. The *unit assessment requirements* section in each unit states where these strategies apply.

Types of evidence

To achieve a competence unit, the learner must gather evidence showing that they have met the required standard specified in the assessment criteria, Pearson's quality assurance arrangements (see *Section 10, Quality assurance of centres*) and the requirements of the Assessment Strategies in *Annexe A, B, C* and *D*.

In line with the Assessment Strategies, evidence for the competence 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)

- outcomes from simulation (S) - Unit 34, Unit 35, Unit 36 and Unit 44 only

- professional discussion (PD)

- authentic statements/witness testimony (WT)

- expert witness testimony (EWT)

- evidence of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL).

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 competence units – achievement of these cannot be inferred from performance. Centres must ensure that the assessment methods used are appropriate for the specific learning outcomes and assessment criteria and are in line with the Assessment Strategies in Annexe *A, B, C* and *D*. Guidance may need to be given to learners before the assessment is conducted to clarify the requirements of different command verbs. This will ensure that evidence provided has sufficient breadth and depth to meet the assessment requirements. The *Unit assessment guidance* given in each unit is useful in supporting centres with the assessment process.

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. They should be encouraged to reference evidence to the relevant assessment criteria. However, the evidence provided for each unit must reference clearly the unit that is being assessed. 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 at: qualifications.pearson.com

Knowledge units – external and internal assessment

The following knowledge units in this qualification can be externally assessed through an onscreen test or internally assessed through a Portfolio of Evidence. Centres have the option to choose the method of assessment that is most suitable for their learners and context.

Unit 2: Understand the Customer Service Environment

Unit 4: Principles of Business

Unit 5: Understand Customers and Customer Retention

Learners can achieve units through a combination of Portfolio of Evidence and onscreen tests but a single unit must use one or the other form of assessment.

The following knowledge unit is assessed internally through a Portfolio of Evidence only.

Unit 43: Employee Rights and Responsibilities

External assessment

Pearson sets and marks the externally assessed onscreen tests. These tests must be taken by the learner under examination conditions.

The table below gives information about the onscreen tests available for this qualification.

Unit 2: Understand the Customer Service Environment	
Length of assessment	The external assessment will be 45 minutes
Number of marks	30
Assessment availability	On demand
First assessment availability	October 2014
Unit 4: Principles of Business	
Length of assessment	The external assessment will be 45 minutes
Number of marks	30
Assessment availability	On demand
First assessment availability	October 2014
Unit 5: Understand Customers and Customer Retention	
Length of assessment	The external assessment will be 35 minutes
Number of marks	25
Assessment availability	On demand
First assessment availability	October 2014

The onscreen tests assess all the learning outcomes in the identified units to meet the standard specified by the related assessment criteria. All the amplification in each unit is mandatory for the tests. The test writer will use the *Unit amplification* section in the unit as a guide when writing questions. Centres need to make sure that learners are:

- fully prepared to sit the onscreen tests

- entered for the tests at appropriate times, with due regard for resit opportunities as necessary.

All centres offering onscreen assessment must comply with the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) document *Instructions for the Conduct of Examinations (ICE)*. The current version of this document is available on our website at: qualifications.pearson.com

Internal assessment

Internal assessment of the knowledge units is through an internally and externally quality assured Portfolio of Evidence. All assessments created by centres for the development of portfolio evidence must be fit for purpose and based on the unit assessment criteria. To pass each internally assessed knowledge unit the learner must:

- achieve **all** the specified learning outcomes

- meet the standard determined by the assessment criteria by providing sufficient and valid evidence

- prove that the evidence is their own.

Assessment tasks and activities must enable learners to produce valid, sufficient, authentic and appropriate evidence that relates directly to the learning outcomes and assessment criteria in the context of the *Unit amplification*. When devising the assessments, centres need to look closely at the verb used for each assessment criterion to ensure that learners can provide evidence with sufficient breadth and depth to meet the requirements.

Centres need to produce assessment briefs for learners to show what evidence is required. Assessment briefs should indicate clearly which assessment criteria are being targeted. Centres are encouraged to create strong links between the assessment of the knowledge units and the competence units to reinforce the relationship between knowledge and understanding and the job-related competencies.

Unless otherwise indicated in the *Unit assessment guidance* for each unit, the centre can decide the form of assessment evidence (for example presentations, projects, tests, extended writing) as long as the methods chosen allow learners to produce valid, sufficient and reliable evidence of meeting the assessment criteria.

For guidance on internal assessment methods, please refer to the *Guide to Assessing Work Based Learning Qualifications*, available on our website at: qualifications.pearson.com

Appeals

Centres must have a policy for dealing with appeals from learners. Appeals may relate to incorrect assessment decisions or unfairly conducted assessment. 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 learners' appeals and their resolutions. There is more information on the appeals process in our policy document *Enquiries and Appeals about Pearson Vocational Qualifications,* available on our website at:
http://qualifications.pearson.com/en/support/support-topics/understanding-our-qualifications/policies-for-centres-learners-and-employees.html
http://qualifications.pearson.com/en/support/support-topics/understanding-our-qualifications/policies-for-centres-learners-and-employees.html
ww.edexcel.com/policies

Dealing with malpractice

Centres must have a policy for dealing with malpractice by learners. This policy must follow the *Centre guidance for dealing with malpractice and the JCQ document Suspected Malpractice in Examinations and Assessments – JCQ Policies and Procedures*, available on our website at:
http://qualifications.pearson.com/en/support/support-topics/understanding-our-qualifications/policies-for-centres-learners-and-employees.html

Centres must report malpractice to Pearson, particularly if any units have been subject to quality assurance or certification.

Reasonable adjustments to assessment

Centres are able to make adjustments to assessments to take account of the needs of individual learners in line with the guidance given in the document *Pearson supplementary guidance for reasonable adjustment and special consideration in vocational internally assessed units*, available on our website. In most instances, adjustments can be achieved by following the guidance, for example allowing the use of assistive technology, 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 working within the occupational area.

Further information on access arrangements can be found in the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) document *Access Arrangements, Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration for General and Vocational Qualifications*, available on our website.

Special consideration

Centres must operate special consideration in line with the guidance given in our document *Supplementary guidance for reasonable adjustment 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 and 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 *Access Arrangements, Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration for General and Vocational Qualifications*.

Both of the documents mentioned above are on our website at: www.edexcel.com/policies

9 Centre recognition and approval

Centre recognition

Centres that have not previously offered BTEC vocational qualifications need to apply for and be granted centre recognition and approval 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 vocational qualifications is available at http://qualifications.pearson.com/en/about-us/qualification-brands/lcci/support/becoming-a-centre.html.

Approvals agreement

All centres are required to enter into an approval agreement, which is a formal commitment by the head or principal of a centre, to meet all the requirements of the specification and any associated codes, conditions or regulations. Pearson will act to protect the integrity of the awarding of qualifications. If centres do not comply with the agreement, this could result in the suspension of certification or withdrawal of approval.

10 Quality assurance of centres

Quality assurance is at the heart of vocational qualifications. Centres are required to declare their commitment to ensuring quality and to giving learners appropriate opportunities that lead to valid and accurate assessment outcomes.

Centres must follow quality assurance requirements for standardisation of assessors and internal verifiers and the monitoring and recording of assessment processes. Pearson uses external quality assurance procedures to check that all centres are working to national standards. It gives us the opportunity to identify and provide support to safeguard certification and quality standards. It also allows us to recognise and support good practice.

Centres offering Combined (Competence and Knowledge) qualifications will usually receive two standards verification visits per year (a total of two days per year). The exact frequency and duration of standards verifier visits will reflect the centre's performance, taking account of the:

● number of assessment sites

● number and throughput of learners

● number and turnover of assessors

● number and turnover of internal verifiers.

For centres offering a full Pearson BTEC Apprenticeship (i.e. all elements of the Apprenticeship are delivered with Pearson through registration of learners on a BTEC Apprenticeship framework) a single standards verifier will normally be allocated to verify all elements of the BTEC Apprenticeship programme. Centres should make use of our one-click learner registration to access this facility. If a centre is also offering stand-alone NVQs/Competence-based qualifications in the same sector as a full BTEC Apprenticeship, the same standards verifier should be allocated. If a centre is also offering stand-alone BTEC qualifications in the same sector as a full BTEC Apprenticeship, a different quality assurance model applies.

In order for certification to be released, confirmation is required that the National Occupational Standards (NOS) for assessment and verification, and for the specific occupational sector are being met consistently.

For further details, please go to the *NVQ Quality Assurance Centre Handbook,* the *BTEC Apprenticeships Quality Assurance Handbook* and the *Pearson Edexcel NVQs, SVQs and competence-based qualifications – Delivery Requirements and Quality Assurance Guidance* on our website.

11 Unit format

Each unit has the following sections.

Unit title

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

Unit reference number

Each unit is assigned a unit reference number that appears with the unit title on the Register of Regulated Qualifications.

Level

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

Credit value

All units have a credit value. When a learner achieves a unit, they gain the specified number of credits. The minimum credit value is 1 and credits can be awarded in whole numbers only.

Guided learning hours

Guided Learning Hours (GLH) is the number of hours that a centre delivering the qualification needs to provide. Guided learning means activities that directly or immediately involve tutors and assessors in teaching, supervising, and invigilating learners, for example lectures, tutorials, online instruction and supervised study.

Unit summary

This summarises the purpose of the unit and the learning the unit offers.

Learning outcomes

The learning outcomes set out what a learner will know, understand or be able to do as the result of a process of learning.

Assessment criteria

The assessment criteria describe the requirements a learner is expected to meet to demonstrate that a learning outcome has been achieved.

Unit amplification

Unit amplification sets out the range of subject material required for the programme of learning and specifies the knowledge 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 relevant and/or appropriate, unit amplification is informed by the underpinning knowledge and understanding requirements of related National Occupational Standards (NOS).

Relationship between amplification and assessment criteria

Although it is not a requirement that all of the amplification is assessed, learners should be given the opportunity to cover it all. However, the indicative amplification (see below) will need to be covered in a programme of learning to enable learners to meet the standard determined in the assessment criteria.

Amplification structure

- Amplification is given only for those assessment criteria associated with knowledge-based learning outcomes. Assessment criteria for competence learning outcomes are not amplified as the related activities are organisation specific.

- Where a knowledge-based assessment criterion is context specific, it is indicated by the following, or similar, statement: '*The knowledge to meet this AC depends on particular organisational requirements and context. Learners need to apply knowledge specific to their organisation to meet this AC*'. Where appropriate, general information is given to support the delivery of the content needed to satisfy the assessment criteria.

- Content in brackets is content that must be covered and delivered.

- Where content is specified as 'e.g.' (indicative content) it means that it could be covered in delivery or replaced with other, similar content.

Legislation

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

Information for tutors

This section gives tutors information on delivery and assessment. It contains the following subsections.

- *Suggested resources* – lists resource materials that can be used to support the teaching of the unit, for example books, journals, websites.

- *Assessment* – gives information about the assessment requirements that learners need to satisfy in order to achieve the unit. This section also gives guidance on the assessment activities that can be used to gather the evidence required to achieve the unit. This section should be read in conjunction with the assessment criteria, learning outcomes and unit amplification.

Unit 1: Organise and Deliver Customer Service

Unit reference number: L/506/2150

Level: 3

Credit value: 5

Guided learning hours: 27

Unit type: Competence

Unit summary

This unit focuses on the requirements for organising and delivering customer service. Your role may or may not involve supervisory or management responsibilities but you will be expected to take some responsibility for the resources and systems you use that support the service you give.

You will learn about implications for customer service when promoting products and/or services. You will learn who should be involved in the organisation of customer service delivery and about the importance of differentiating between customers' wants, needs and expectations. You will understand how customers are segmented for the purpose of providing customer service delivery and how the analysis of the 'customer journey' is undertaken. Through your job role you will demonstrate your ability to plan for the delivery of customer service and your competence in delivering it.

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 outline the requirements the learner is expected to meet to achieve the unit.

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria
1 Understand how to organise customer service delivery	1.1 Explain how different methods of promoting products and/or services impact on customer service delivery
	1.2 Explain who should be involved in the organisation of customer service delivery
	1.3 Explain the importance of differentiating between customers' wants, needs and expectations
	1.4 Explain different ways of segmenting customer groups
	1.5 Explain how customer segmentation is used in organising customer service delivery
	1.6 Explain how to analyse the 'customer journey'
2 Be able to plan the delivery of customer service	2.1 Identify customers' needs and expectations
	2.2 Map the 'customer journey'
	2.3 Confirm that systems and structures are in place to enable the delivery of agreed standards of customer service
	2.4 Prepare the resources needed to deliver products and/or services to different types of customers
	2.5 Plan how to deal with unexpected additional workloads
	2.6 Allocate priorities to address points of service failure

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria
3 Be able to deliver customer service	3.1 Take steps to ensure that the needs of customers are balanced with organisational objectives
	3.2 Agree realistic and achievable actions with customers
	3.3 Identify areas for improvement in their own customer service delivery
	3.4 Adapt their own customer service delivery to meet customers' changing expectations

Unit amplification

AC1.1: **Explain how different methods of promoting products and/or services impact on customer service delivery**

- Methods of promoting goods and services*: advertising (media, print, online), outdoor, e.g. use of roadside advertising, aerial display; sales promotions, e.g. coupons, samples, competitions, new media, merchandising; public relations, e.g. sponsorships, special events, press releases, newsletters*

- Brand-Expectations-Experience cycle*, i.e. causal relationship across brand awareness, customer expectations, service delivery and customer experience; new models of customer service delivery in line with changes to marketing technologies*

- Impact on customer service delivery*: e.g. staff training and awareness of changes to product offer and promotional activities; updates to customer service knowledge base; changes to systems and procedures to align to promotional activities; alignment of staff attitudes and personal behaviours with corporate brand and image; changes in size of the customer service workforce and shift patterns; knowledge of advertising and promotional regulations*

AC1.2: **Explain who should be involved in the organisation of customer service delivery**

- Supervisor/line manager*: role e.g. training, auditing, day-to-day responsibility, supervision, source of help, dealing with queries/problems*

- Customer service roles*: customer facing, e.g. receptionist, contact centre worker, shop assistant, delivery driver*

- Staff not offering direct customer service*: e.g. cleaners, gardeners, engineers, entrance supervisors, account managers*

AC1.3: **Explain the importance of differentiating between customers' wants, needs and expectations**

- Customer wants*: definition (shaped by society and marketing); likely leads to product and/or service sale*

- Customer needs*: definition; results in positive impact on customer satisfaction and return sales*

- Customer expectations*: definition (shaped by service offer, marketing materials and organisational reputation); results in customer retention and long-term customer relationships*

- 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*

AC1.4:   Explain different ways of segmenting customer groups

- Demographics*: e.g. age, gender, income size, occupation, religion, race, ethnicity*

- Geographic*: e.g. countries, cities, postal codes, counties, towns*

- Behavioural*: e.g. usage of product and/or service, knowledge and attitude to product, response to product, buying habits*

- Customer value-based*: e.g. revenue generated from customer, costs associated with retaining customer*

- Psychographic*: socio-economic groupings, e.g. social status, social grade; lifestyle, e.g. activities, interests, opinions, values and beliefs, personality*

AC1.5:   Explain how customer segmentation is used in organising customer service delivery

- Uses of segmentation*: identifies the specific needs of different customer groups, e.g. older customers, customers with disabilities; tailors service features to meet the needs of different customer segments; tailors communication techniques and language to demographic need; identifies additional services and/or products to meet needs; maximises opportunities to provide effective customer services; customer testing and service pilots*

AC1.6:   Explain how to analyse 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 customer experience across touch points); 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*:*
  o *identifying different types of customers and their needs*

  o *identifying the steps in the customer journey*

  o *identifying customer touch points, e.g. website, social media, telephone, face to face; owners of touch points; impact of touch points on customer experience; gaps in desired and current performance of touch points*

  o *assessing most important touch point and interactions; weighted importance of customer type and steps; identifying opportunities for moments of truth*

Information for tutors

Suggested resources

Books

Arden TG and Edwards SE – *Best Practice Guide for Customer Service Managers: An Activity-based Workbook for Leaders of Teams That Strive for Service Excellence (Customer Service Best Practice Guides)* (Customer 1st International, 2009) ISBN 9780954874421

Fogli L – *Customer Service Delivery: Research and Best Practices – J-B SIOP Professional Practice Series* (John Wiley & Sons, 2006) ISBN 9780787976200

Leland K and Bailey K – *Customer Service for Dummies* (John Wiley & Sons, 2006) ISBN 9780471768692

Sylvester M and Ahmi M – *Living Service* (Financial Times/Prentice Hall, 2008) ISBN 9780273715351

Websites

www.instituteofcustomerservice.com – The ICS website provides information and guidance on many aspects of customer service

Other

Customer Focus magazine – produced by the Institute of Customer Service. Provides information on customer service practice, including topical issues relating to the customer service industry

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 and the requirements of the Assessment Strategy.

To ensure that the assessment tasks and activities enable learners to produce valid, sufficient, authentic and appropriate evidence that meets the assessment criteria, centres should apply the *Unit assessment guidance* and the requirements of the Assessment Strategy below.

Wherever possible, centres should adopt a holistic approach to assessing the units in the qualification. This gives the assessment process greater rigour and minimises repetition, time and the burden of assessment on all parties involved in the process.

Unit assessment requirements

This unit must be assessed in the workplace in accordance with the Skills CFA Business Administration, Customer Service and Management and Leadership Assessment Strategy in *Annexe A*. Simulation is not allowed for this unit. All evidence of occupational competence should be generated through performance under workplace conditions; this includes evidence of achievement for knowledge-based learning outcomes and associated assessment criteria.

Unit assessment guidance

This guidance supports assessors in making decisions about how best to assess each unit and the evidence needed to meet the assessment requirements of the unit. Centres can adapt the guidance for learners and the particular assessment context, as appropriate.

To achieve this unit, the learner needs to provide evidence that they can consistently plan and deliver customer service in line with their organisational standards and requirements, to different types of customers and in different circumstances, e.g. during very busy periods and in situations where systems, people or resources are unavailable or ineffective. The learner could be planning and delivering customer service to external or internal customers.

The evidence to demonstrate achievement of learning outcomes 2 and 3 will likely come from a combination of direct observation of the learner carrying out their work activities, examination of the learner's work products, professional discussion and witness testimony. For learning outcome 2, the learner's work products such as personal planning notes/records, customer journey mapping documents (e.g. diagrams, customer needs analysis) and records of communications with colleagues (e.g. emails, meeting notes) should be reviewed by the assessor and used to support the professional discussion to evidence the underpinning knowledge and understanding. If the work products are as a result of a wider team activity (e.g. the customer journey mapping), then the learner needs to identify their role and personal contribution to the activity and the work products. In the professional discussion, the learner could explain how their planning and preparation differed according to the type of customer, the basis for their plans to deal with unexpected workloads and service failures, and how these plans align with their responsibilities to maintain consistent service as well follow their organisational procedures (AC2.4, AC2.5 and AC2.6).

For learning outcome 3, evidence from direct observations of the learner dealing with customers should be supported with a professional discussion around the learner's performance and work products to evidence the learner's underlying knowledge and understanding. The learner's work products could include records of actions agreed with customers, notes/records relating to areas for improvements and relevant communications with colleagues and/or customers. The professional discussion could focus on the basis for the actions agreed with different customers, how they balanced the needs of customers with the organisation's objectives and how they have adapted their own customer service delivery in light of the improvements identified (AC3.1, AC3.2, AC3.3 and AC3.4).

For learning outcomes 2 and 3, witness testimony from colleagues and their line manager should be used to confirm that the learner has consistently met the requirements over a period of time.

Evidence to confirm achievement of learning outcome 1 could be integrated into the professional discussion for learning outcomes 2 and 3, giving the learner the opportunity to link and apply their knowledge to their work activities. For example, the learner could comment on the customer journey mapping, explaining how it was done, the need for each stage in the process and how the outcomes were used in planning the delivery of customer service. This would link AC1.6 to AC2.2. Similarly, the learner could explain the use of customer segmentation in relation to their preparation and delivery of customer service to different types of customers; this links AC1.4 and AC1.5 to AC2.4 and AC3.1. The learner's responses must be at

a sufficient depth and breadth to meet the level of demand expected from an explanation.

Throughout the assessment of this unit, the use of a reflective account is a suitable alternative to professional discussion. If this is used, the learner should reflect on their planning and delivery of customer service to address similar knowledge and understanding requirements as outlined above for the professional discussion.

Evidence of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) can also be used within the unit to confirm competence. Wherever possible, the learning outcomes in this unit should be assessed holistically across the qualification.

Unit 2: Understand the Customer Service Environment

Unit reference number: Y/506/2152

Level: 3

Credit value: 5

Guided learning hours: 40

Unit type: Knowledge

Unit summary

When working in a customer service role it is important that you understand some key customer service concepts and practices as they will form the basis for decisions you make and how you interact with customers and/or colleagues.

In this unit you will learn how different customer service models and standards support the structure of customer service and the costs and benefits of this service to an organisation. You will learn about the link between customer service and the process of continuous improvement and how customers' expectations are formed. You will gain an understanding of how organisations measure the effectiveness of the customer service they provide, how customer service can sometimes fail and how problems can be rectified. You will gain an understanding of the importance of 'brand', how an organisation's brand can affect customers' perceptions and how good or bad service can have an impact on that brand. You will also learn about consumer legislation and data protection and how they affect customer service.

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 outline the requirements the learner is expected to meet to achieve the unit.

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria
1 Understand the concepts and practices underpinning customer service delivery	1.1 Explain the value of customer service as a competitive tool
	1.2 Explain the process of mapping the customer journey and its importance in delivering effective customer service
	1.3 Describe techniques used to identify service failures
	1.4 Explain the concept and importance of the service profit chain
	1.5 Describe methods of measuring organisational effectiveness in the delivery of customer service
2 Understand the relationship between customer service and a brand	2.1 Explain the importance of a brand to customers and to an organisation
	2.2 Explain how branding can influence customers' perception of an organisation and its products and/or services
	2.3 Explain the potential impact of good and poor customer service on a brand
3 Understand the structure of customer service	3.1 Explain the features of different customer service models and customer service standards
	3.2 Explain the relationship between customer service and operational areas of an organisation
	3.3 Explain the relationship between customer service and continuous improvement processes
	3.4 Explain the costs and benefits of customer service to an organisation
	3.5 Explain the impact of organisational values on how customers create their expectations
	3.6 Explain how organisational values impact on meeting customer expectations

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria
4 Understand the implications of legislation on customer service delivery	4.1 Explain the implications of consumer-related legislation on customer service delivery
	4.2 Explain the implications of confidentiality and data protection legislation for the collection, storage and use of customer information

Unit amplification

This content has been written in an expanded format to facilitate both onscreen testing and portfolio assessment. Learners presenting work for portfolio assessment are not expected to evidence all of the amplification. Learners who are to be assessed by the onscreen test could be tested on any aspect of the amplification.

AC 1.1:   Explain the value of customer service as a competitive tool

- Value of customer service: *ability to gain customer loyalty; skills and knowledge of staff, meeting customer expectations, exceeding customer expectations, providing a competitive edge, setting organisation apart, known for quality of customer service, attracting 'hard to reach' customers*

AC1.2:   Explain the process of mapping the customer journey and its importance in delivering effective customer service

- Mapping the customer journey: *identifying all the experiences of a customer from entry to exit in a customer service setting and the customer's response to each of those experiences*

- Stages within the customer journey*:*
  - o *identify the key journey steps in a sequential order*
  - o *for each step, identify the customer's response (what they do, how they think and feel) against the organisation's intended customer response*
  - o *identify points of interaction in the journey (face to face, verbal, physical)*
  - o *identify those points in the customer service process that have the most impact on the customer experience and the elimination of potential negative impacts*

- Importance in delivering effective customer service: *opportunity to see things from the customer's perspective, identifies customer needs and expectations, identifies areas of weakness in service, drives change to improve service, influences strategy, policies and procedures, improves customer retention, increases organisational efficiency and effectiveness*

AC1.3: **Describe techniques used to identify service failures**

- Techniques for identifying service failures*:*
  - analysis of customer feedback – *negative feedback, specific issues where poor service cited*
  - monitoring – *quality checks with staff, observations of staff to reveal potential trends in service failures*
  - benchmarking against competitor and/or organisational standards – *service level agreements (SLAs), identifying service failures*
  - auditing of the supply chain – *quality of service provided by suppliers, service partners*

AC1.4: **Explain the concept and importance of the service profit chain**

- Service profit chain*: establishes relationships between customer loyalty and customer satisfaction, profitability and revenue growth, value of service offered by loyal and productive employees*
- Importance of the service-profit chain*:*
  - profitability and revenue growth – *link with organisation's vision and mission*
  - customer loyalty – *alignment with profit, growth (retention, repeat business, and referrals)*
  - customer satisfaction –*relationship with customer loyalty, service designed and delivered to meet targeted customer needs*
  - external service value – *association with customer satisfaction, an organisation's ability to create value for the customer*
  - employee retention – *recognition of the value of loyal employees*
  - employee productivity – *connection with satisfied and loyal employees, more productive, customer focused, high level of customer service*
  - employee satisfaction – *employee loyalty driven by employee satisfaction*
  - internal service quality – *engaging employees to ensure employee satisfaction through effective workplace design, job design, employee selection, development, employee rewards, recognition; tools for serving customers that can assist an organisation in increasing its financial performance and competitiveness*

AC 1.5: Describe methods of measuring organisational effectiveness in the delivery of customer service

- Measuring organisational effectiveness*:*

  o monitoring *policies and procedures – reviewing policies for effectiveness, review of code of practice for dealing with customers, reporting customer problems, analysis against organisational service standards*

  o analysing customer feedback *– compliments and complaints, analysis of data for trends, types of complaints by category, review against organisation's performance targets and service level agreements (SLAs)*

  o benchmarking *– monitoring the service offer against key performance indicators both internal and external, staff's knowledge of products and/or services, sales targets, attendance and continuity of staff*

  o comparability research *– comparison (against own performance, competitors' performance), identifying gaps (in the customer experience, type and range of products and/or services)*

  o evaluation *– organisational objectives for leadership and management, communication of service standards, monitoring performance, support for staff, training of staff, dealing with poor performance, capability procedures*

  o strategic review *– strategic objectives for service offer and standards, organisational objectives for customer service and staff, operational plans for dealing with customers and risk assessment against service failure*

AC 2.1: Explain the importance of a brand to customers and to an organisation

- Importance to customers*: brand awareness, knowledge of a brand, experience with a brand, expectations fulfilled, safe option, reliability*

- Importance to organisation*: brand identity, the outward expression of a brand, customer retention, reputation, distinguishes organisation from competitors*

AC 2.2: Explain how branding can influence customers' perception of an organisation and its products and/or services

- Brand associations*: memories, personal experience, perceptions, trust, good value, images, beliefs, customer values*

- Brand image*: professional, trustworthy, competent, reliable, competitive, ethical*

- Brand promotion*: organisation's website, logo, advertising style, social media*

- Brand influence*: customers' perceptions, alters customers' expectations*

AC 2.3: Explain the potential impact of good and poor customer service on a brand

- Potential impacts of good and poor customer service*:*
  - brand loyalty – *maintained or increases with good customer service, decreases with poor customer service*
  - reputation – *maintained or increases with good customer service, decreases with poor customer service (poor customer service experiences are more likely to be shared than good experiences)*
  - brand image – *positive image associations with good customer service, negative image associations with poor customer service*
  - revenue – *maintained or increases with good customer service (customers are willing to pay more for a reputable brand), revenue reduced with poor customer service*

AC 3.1: Explain the features of different customer service models and customer service standards

- Features of customer service models*:*
  - increasing customer satisfaction – *being responsive, helpful, courteous, increasing range of products and/or services, providing value for money*
  - decreasing customer complaints – *ensuring accurate information given, resolution of queries and problems*
  - creating an atmosphere of service – *both internal and external, staff training, leadership and management, adherence to policies and procedures*
  - providing excellent service – *being attentive, meeting and exceeding customer needs and expectations, ensuring knowledge of staff, assistance and advice given to customers*
- Customer service standards*:*
  - continual updating of policies and procedures to meet customers' needs – *conforming with equality and diversity, 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*

AC 3.2: Explain the relationship between customer service and operational areas of an organisation

- Operational*: standards of customer service, understanding of customer expectations, knowledge of products and/or services, product and/or services specialists, visual signing and directions, customer environment*

- Human resources*: recruitment and selection of staff, training and development of staff, customer service procedures and policies*

- Finance: *resources*, *financial services and payment advice, warranties and insurance*

- Customer services*: telephone and online support, exchanges and refunds, deliveries, after-sales services*

- Marketing*: consultancy services, marketing materials, sales information, advertising strategies*

AC 3.3: Explain the relationship between customer service and continuous improvement processes

- Communication and dialogue with customers*:*
  - o communication – *face to face, online, telephone*
  - o relationship – *provides information on good or bad customer service, revisions to support improvements on protocols when dealing with customers, providing advice and guidance, knowledge of products and/or services, revisions to policies and procedures supporting service offer and service standards, communication with customers in writing, marketing materials, initiating and updating Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system information*

- Interaction with customers*:*
  - o interaction – *establishing wants and needs of customers, customer expectations, providing products and/or services, providing additional services*
  - o relationship – *information gained from review and customer feedback supports improvements in the customer journey, quality of the service offer, service standards, resolving customer problems, staff training, processes and procedures, potential improvements for service partners*

AC 3.4:   Explain the costs and benefits of customer service to an organisation

- Providing customer service*: recruitment and selection of customer service staff, induction of new staff, training of new and existing staff*

- Customer service environment*: organisational premises (design, décor, ambiance), design of website for customer service*

- Additional customer services*: information and advice (verbal, written), consultancy, delivery*

- Benefits*: satisfied customers, new and additional customers, morale of staff, staff retention, customer loyalty, increased revenue, competitive edge*

- Costs*: financial, resources (staffing, time, equipment, materials)*

AC 3.5:   Explain the impact of organisational values on how customers create their expectations

- Organisational values*:*

  o vision and mission – *customers' perception of positive connection with organisation's values*

  o service offer – *values based on customer charters and codes of practice, ethical beliefs, commitment to quality of products and/or services*

  o brand – *brand image, brand identity and brand awareness, perceptions of quality of product and/or service, place in the market, value for money*

  o impact – *customer expectations are linked to their perception of a brand, perception of customer experience, values related to customer service, quality of products and/or services, preferences on access to additional services, personal lifestyle, personal views on integrity of transactions, ethical values, customer recognition and reward*

AC 3.6:   Explain how organisational values impact on meeting customer expectations

- Meeting customer expectations*:*

  o customer service – *providing quality customer service, experienced and knowledgeable staff, well-trained staff, social and communication skills of staff, personal presentation of staff*

  o products and/or services – *product and/or service knowledge of staff, technical support, specialist advice and guidance*

  o additional services – *online support, help desks, delivery, after sales*

  o flexibility – *late opening, weekend, online*

  o payment – *varied and flexible, interest free or low interest rate, flexible duration for payment*

AC 4.1: **Explain the implications of consumer-related legislation on customer service delivery**

Consumer-related legislation:

o *Consumer Rights Act 2015*

– goods and data must match the description; be of a satisfactory quality; be fit for a particular purpose

– consumer has short term right to reject, request repair or replacement of faulty goods; within 30 days of supply

– the trader must provide repair or replacement at no cost to consumer, within a reasonable time, without causing significant inconvenience

– where repair or replacement fail, entitlement to further repairs or replacement or claim a price reduction or right to reject

– after 6 months consumer has to prove defect/fault present at time of purchase

o *Service must be carried out with reasonable care and skill; information said or written to the consumer is binding where the consumer relies on it; must be done for a reasonable price; must be carried out within a reasonable time*

o *Consumer Credit Act 1974* – credit agreements, cooling off periods, credit and store cards, protection from faulty goods, counterfeit goods, poor service, problems with contracts, problems with rogue traders

o *Trade Descriptions Act 1968* – product and/or services descriptions to be accurate (in writing, verbally)

o *The Consumer Protection Act 1987* – goods purchased (credit card, store card, credit agreement), consumer protection against non-delivery of goods, faulty goods, misrepresentation

o *Consumer Contracts Regulations 2013* – location of retailer and purchaser, delivery deadlines, cooling-off period, rights to cancellation, confirmation of purchase, rights to a refund

o *The Consumer Protection from Unfair Trading Regulations 2008* – the regulations ban traders in all sectors from using unfair commercial practices towards consumers, a general ban on conduct below a level which may be expected towards consumers (honest market practice/good faith), misleading practices, aggressive sales techniques

- *Implications of consumer-related legislation on customer service delivery:*
  - *products supplied and/or services provided must meet regulations and legislation, failure to comply could result in prosecution, fines or imprisonment may be applied, staff need to follow clear procedures in order to remain compliant, organisations must have clear procedures in place and staff should be trained in these procedures*

AC 4.2 Explain the implications of confidentiality and data protection legislation for the collection, storage and use of customer information

- The Data Protection Act 1998, eight principles*:*
  - *fairly and lawfully processed – transparency*
  - *processed for limited purposes – fixed to the transaction*
  - *adequate, relevant and not excessive – limitations*
  - *accurate and up to date*
  - *not kept for longer than is necessary – time and duration*
  - *processed in line with your rights – ability to sight personal details and information held*
  - *secure – securely stored, controlled access, controlled circulation*
  - *not transferred to other countries without adequate protection – EU regulations*
- Implications*:*
  - *data (paper and electronic) stored according to legislation (no longer than is necessary)*
  - *sharing of information is restricted and controlled (within organisation, customers and to external organisations)*
  - *disclosing of information (confirming identity/security questions)*
  - *fines for non-compliance*
  - *damage to organisation's reputation*

Information for tutors

Suggested resources

Books

Arden TG and Edwards SE – *Best Practice Guide for Customer Service Managers: An Activity-based Workbook for Leaders of Teams That Strive for Service Excellence (Customer Service Best Practice Guides)* (Customer 1st International, 2009) ISBN 9780954874421

Harris E K – *Customer Service: Pearson New International Edition: A Practical Approach* (6th Edition), (Pearson Education Ltd, 2014) ISBN 9781292040356

Websites

www.gov.uk – Information on consumer law and customers' rights

www.ico.org.uk – Information Commissioners Office (ICO), information on data protection legislation

www.instituteofcustomerservice.com – Information and guidance on many aspects of customer service

www.skillscfa.org – Skills CFA is the Sector Skills Council for a whole range of business skills sectors, including customer service

www.tradingstandards.gov.uk – Information on consumers' rights

Other

Customer Focus magazine – produced by the Institute of Customer Service and includes information on customer service practice, including topical issues relating to the customer service industry

Assessment

This unit can be assessed internally through a Portfolio of Evidence, or it can be assessed externally through an onscreen test. More information about each method of assessment is given overleaf. This should be read in conjunction with *Section 8 Assessment*.

External assessment

External assessment is through an onscreen test. Pearson will set and mark this test. The test lasts for 45 minutes and is worth 30 marks. The assessment is available on demand.

The test assesses all of the learning outcomes and uses each individual assessment criterion and the associated *Unit amplification* as a base for the questions.

Internal assessment

Internal assessment is through an internally and externally quality assured Portfolio of Evidence. 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.

To ensure that the assessment tasks and activities enable learners to produce valid, sufficient, authentic and appropriate evidence that meets the assessment criteria, centres should follow the *Unit assessment guidance* given below.

There are no sector-related assessment requirements for this unit.

Unit assessment guidance

The following is the required assessment method for this unit.

All learning outcomes in this unit must only be assessed by structured written assessment to allow the learner to demonstrate the depth and breadth of evidence required to meet the assessment criteria. Due to the nature of the individual learning outcomes and the size of the unit, it is likely that a series of linked or separate assessment tasks is needed for this unit rather than a single project. While the learning outcomes mainly require the learner to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of general customer service concepts and principles, there are some opportunities for learners to relate this to their working environment and working experiences and this should be utilised in the design of the assessment. Evidence could be presented in a range of formats such as written reports, presentation slides, workbooks and directed assignments, as long as they allow the learner to present the evidence required to meet the assessment criteria.

Unit 3: Resolve Customers' Problems

Unit reference number: K/506/2169

Level: 3

Credit value: 4

Guided learning hours: 19

Unit type: Competence

Unit summary

This unit gives you the knowledge, understanding and skills to be able to deal with customer problems in a convenient, cost effective, and timely manner.

Even when an organisation provides excellent customer service their customers can experience problems because their expectations are greater than the organisation can satisfy. Listening to customer problems and then delivering good solutions requires a well-planned and organised effort. This unit is important to customer service because many customers judge how good customer service is by the way organisations handle problems. It is worth remembering that poorly handled customer problems can easily turn into customer complaints.

In this unit you will learn how to deal with customer problems in a way that provides a positive outcome for the customer and the organisation. You will understand the different techniques that can be used for monitoring customer problems and how the resolution of customers' problems can not only inform improvements to the service the organisation provides but also contributes to customer loyalty and business performance. You will be able to assess the suitability of a range of potential solutions for customers' problems and explain these to customers, including their benefits and drawbacks. You will also be able to negotiate solutions that meet customers' and organisational requirements, whilst adhering to organisational policies and procedures and legal and ethical requirements.

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 outline the requirements the learner is expected to meet to achieve the unit.

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria
1 Understand the monitoring and resolution of customers' problems	1.1 Assess the suitability of a range of techniques for monitoring customer problems
	1.2 Explain how to use the resolution of customers' problems to improve products and/or services
	1.3 Explain how the successful resolution of customers' problems contributes to customer loyalty and enhanced business performance
	1.4 Explain the features of negotiating techniques used to resolve customers' problems
2 Be able to deal with customers' problems	2.1 Confirm the nature and cause of customers' problems
	2.2 Explain when customers' problems should be treated as complaints
	2.3 Explain the benefits to customers and the organisation of the options available to solve problems
	2.4 Explain the drawbacks to customers and the organisation of the options available to solve problems
	2.5 Explain to customers the options for resolving their problems
	2.6 Agree solutions that meet customers' and organisational requirements within their own levels of authority
	2.7 Inform colleagues of the nature of problems and actions taken
	2.8 Evaluate the effectiveness of the resolution of customers' problems
	2.9 Adhere to organisational policies and procedures, legal and ethical requirements when dealing with customers' problems

Unit amplification

AC1.1: **Assess the suitability of a range of techniques for monitoring customer problems**

- Techniques*: e.g. business process monitoring, sampling customer feedback, monitoring repeat customers, measuring customer satisfaction*

- Customers' problems*: types of problems, e.g. identified by the customer, identified by the organisation, caused by a procedure or systems failure, caused by a lack of resources*

AC1.2: **Explain how to use the resolution of customers' problems to improve products and/or services**

- Improve products and/or services*: e.g. integrating solutions to customers' problems into product and/or service development; recording and sharing unique solutions to problems; analysing trends based on type of resolution; root cause analysis; analysis of problems and resolutions based on customer 'touch points' and 'moments of truth'*

AC1.3: **Explain how the successful resolution of customers' problems contributes to customer loyalty and enhanced business performance**

- Contributing to customer loyalty*: e.g. keeping existing customers, selling more to existing customers, reducing customer complaints*

- Enhanced business performance*: market leadership, above industry profits, retaining workforce positive corporate brand, creates possible USP for the organisation*

AC1.4: **Explain the features of negotiating techniques used to resolve customers' problems**

- Negotiating techniques*: including, using tradable concessions or variables; use of persuasion techniques e.g. storytelling and painting pictures, mirroring; use documents to persuade, illustrate position and establish credibility, e.g. position statements, proposals; gather information about partners, e.g. using open-ended questions, active listening, eye contact, use of silence*

Information for tutors

Suggested resources

Books

Adair J − *Decision Making and Problem Solving: Creating Success* (2nd Edition), (Kogan Page, 2013) ISBN 9780749466961

Customer Service Training Institute − *Rapid & Efficient Problem Solving* (CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2013) ISBN 9781493553693

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 and the requirements of the Assessment Strategy.

To ensure that the assessment tasks and activities enable learners to produce valid, sufficient, authentic and appropriate evidence that meets the assessment criteria, centres should apply the *Unit assessment guidance* and the requirements of the Assessment Strategy below.

Wherever possible, centres should adopt a holistic approach to assessing the units in the qualification. This gives the assessment process greater rigour and minimises repetition, time and the burden of assessment on all parties involved in the process.

Unit assessment requirements

This unit must be assessed in the workplace in accordance with the Skills CFA Business Administration, Customer Service and Management and Leadership Assessment Strategy in *Annexe A*. Simulation is not allowed for this unit. All evidence of occupational competence should be generated through performance under workplace conditions; this includes evidence of achievement for knowledge-based learning outcomes and associated assessment criteria.

Unit assessment guidance

This guidance supports assessors in making decisions about how best to assess each unit and the evidence needed to meet the assessment requirements of the unit. Centres can adapt the guidance for learners and the particular assessment context, as appropriate.

The main evidence collection methods for demonstrating achievement of learning outcome 2 are likely to be a combination of direct observation and professional discussion with the learner, supported by a review of relevant work products. The evidence collected can be based on situations where the learners is handling and resolving internal or external customer problems, whether face to face, by email and/or by telephone.

Direct observation is suitable where the learner is dealing with customers problems face-to-face and/or by telephone or communicating verbally with colleagues; this would provide evidence for AC2.1, AC2.5 AC2.6 and AC2.7. The assessor can do the observation unobtrusively using professional discussion to evidence the knowledge underlying the performance being undertaken.

Work products seen during an observed performance or separately from observed performance should be evaluated and commented on by the assessor (e.g. emails, letters and/or records of telephone calls from or to a customer or colleague). These could be an alternative source of evidence for AC2.1, AC2.5, AC2.6 and AC2.7 in the instances where the interactions with customers and colleagues are by email. For example, for AC2.6 letters, emails or diary entries detailing the solution that was agreed with the customer; or emails to colleagues informing them of the customer problems or solutions.

The professional discussion could focus on providing evidence for AC2.2 to AC2.4 as well as providing evidence for the knowledge and understanding underpinning the learner's performance. For example, for A2.6 and AC2.8, the learner could explain the rationale for the agreed solutions to customer problems and the process and criteria used to evaluate the effectiveness of the resolutions to customers problems. The evidence for learning outcome 2 can be further supported by a witness testimony from an appropriate person within the workplace. For example, for AC2.9, confirmation from a line manager that the learner has followed the correct organisational policies when dealing with customers' problems.

Evidence to confirm the achievement of learning outcome 1 could be integrated into the professional discussion for learning outcome 2, therefore providing the learner with the opportunity to link and apply their knowledge to their workplace activities as well easing the burden of assessment for both the assessor and the learner. There are good opportunities to relate the assessment of the knowledge requirements to the competence activities. For example, for AC1.2 the learner could explain how the solutions to specific customer problems could be used to improve the products and/or services offered by the organisation.

Alternatively, evidence could be provided through the use of a reflective account, where the learner could also address the underpinning knowledge and understanding requirements for learning outcome 2. Learners' responses or statements to meet the knowledge requirements must be at a sufficient depth and breadth to meet the level of demand of the operative verbs.

Evidence of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) can also be used within the unit to confirm competence. Wherever possible, the learning outcomes in this unit should be assessed holistically across the qualification.

Unit 4: Principles of Business

Unit reference number: D/506/1942

Level: 3

Credit value: 10

Guided learning hours: 74

Unit type: Knowledge

Unit summary

Having commercial awareness and an understanding of business operations is essential in helping organisations to achieve their objectives. Being able to manage budgets and finances, and having an understanding of sales and marketing functions are important factors in sustaining financial viability that contributes to the innovation process and growth a business.

In this unit, you will learn about the structure and legal obligations of companies, how business markets operate and how they shape the behaviour of business activity.

This unit gives you an opportunity to consider the importance of innovation in meeting business objectives. You will consider the benefits, risks and implications of innovation to a business. You will explore the different models of business innovation and how they can be used to plan and support new ways of working, or to develop new products and services.

You will go on to gain an understanding of financial terminology and financial management to improve your business skills. You will consider the importance of financial viability. Knowing how budgets are used and managed will help you to understand the consequences of poor financial management.

Finally, you will explore the principles of marketing and the main types of market research used to make marketing decisions. You will gain an understanding of the relationship between sales and marketing in business and consider how they work together to achieve a common goal.

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 outline the requirements the learner is expected to meet to achieve the unit.

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria
1 Understand business markets	1.1 Explain the characteristics of different business markets
	1.2 Explain the nature of interactions between businesses within a market
	1.3 Explain how an organisation's goals may be shaped by the market in which it operates
	1.4 Describe the legal obligations of a business
2 Understand business innovation and growth	2.1 Define business innovation
	2.2 Explain the uses of models of business innovation
	2.3 Identify sources of support and guidance for business innovation
	2.4 Explain the process of product or service development
	2.5 Explain the benefits, risks and implications associated with innovation
3 Understand financial management	3.1 Explain the importance of financial viability for an organisation
	3.2 Explain the consequences of poor financial management
	3.3 Explain different financial terminology
4 Understand business budgeting	4.1 Explain the uses of a budget
	4.2 Explain how to manage a budget
5 Understand sales and marketing	5.1 Explain the principles of marketing
	5.2 Explain a sales process
	5.3 Explain the features and uses of market research
	5.4 Explain the value of a brand to an organisation
	5.5 Explain the relationship between sales and marketing

Unit amplification

This content has been written in an expanded format to facilitate both onscreen testing and portfolio assessment. Learners presenting work for portfolio assessment are not expected to evidence all of the amplification. Learners who are to be assessed by the onscreen test could be tested on any aspect of the amplification.

AC1.1:   Explain the characteristics of different business markets

- Different business markets*: perfect competition, imperfect competition*
- Perfect competition (no participants are large enough to have the market power to set the price of an identical product)*: large number of buyers and sellers, no barriers to entry or exit, perfect information, zero transaction costs, rational buyers, no externalities*
- Imperfect competition (a market structure showing some but not all features of competitive markets)*: incorporates monopolies (when a specific organisation is the only supplier of a particular commodity); monopolistic competition (many businesses sell products that are differentiated from one another, product differentiation); oligopoly (a market that is dominated by a small number of sellers); monopsony (a market in which only one buyer interfaces with many sellers, the buyer dictates terms to its suppliers)*

AC1.2:   Explain the nature of interactions between businesses within a market

In a perfect competition market

- *Interactions: many consumers buy a standardised product from many small businesses, no one seller sets the price, sellers and consumers accept the going price*

Interactions in an imperfect competition market

- Monopolies*: all consumers will purchase a specific product from one business, the business: will set the price for that product*
- Monopolistic competition*: consumers will purchase differentiated products that are similar but not identical from different businesses, businesses will compete to sell their product, demand for the product will affect the price*
- Oligopoly*: consumers buy from a small number of large businesses, high interdependence between the businesses, businesses must take into consideration the reaction of the market to their actions*
- Monopsony*: consumer has the power to dictate price to the business selling, one large consumer interacting with many smaller businesses*

AC1.3: **Explain how an organisation's goals may be shaped by the market in which it operates**

Organisations operating under a market of perfect competition

- Primary organisational goals*: profit maximisation, profitability, sales (value, volume), service level, customer satisfaction*

- Additional organisational goals*: growth, achieving a state of imperfect competition (increasing market share, influencing consumer choice, influencing product price, expanding product range)*

Organisations operating under a market of imperfect competition

- Primary organisational goals*: profit maximisation, profitability, sales (value, volume), growth, internationalisation, market share, market power, satisfying stakeholders, return on capital employed (ROCE), service level, customer satisfaction, corporate responsibility; ethical issues, welfare*

- Additional organisational goals*: achieving a state of monopoly, i.e. when a specific organisation is the only supplier of a particular commodity, to join a state of oligopoly, i.e. a market that is dominated by a small number of sellers*

Organisations operating under both perfect and imperfect competition markets

- Market factors affecting an organisation's goals*: demand, supply, costs, revenues, price determination, profit, output determination, elasticity, inelasticity, equilibrium*

AC1.4: **Describe the legal obligations of a business**

- Legal obligations of a business: *legal structure (sole trader, limited company, business partnership, social enterprise) and compliance with associated statutory requirements; responsibilities for insurance, liability, national insurance; intellectual property; employment law (covering pay, tax, national minimum wage, holidays, time off, sickness, maternity/paternity leave, pensions, rights at work, redundancies, dismissals, disciplinaries, contracts, working hours); consumer protection (covering credit and store cards, faulty goods including digital content, counterfeit goods, poor service, problems with contracts, rogue traders); requirement to report financial performance to Companies House*

AC2.1: **Define business innovation**

- Business innovation*: creative process, product or service development, new ways of increasing business efficiency or improving profitability, successfully exploiting a new idea, adding value to products, services or markets to differentiate the business from the competitors*

AC2.2: Explain the uses of models of business innovation

Uses of models of business innovations

- Industry model innovation*: moving into new industries or creating new industries*

- Revenue model innovation*: generating revenue through offering re-configuration (product/service/value mix) and pricing models*

- Enterprise model innovation*: changing extended enterprise and networks with employees, suppliers, customers and others, including capability/asset configuration*

AC2.3: Identify sources of support and guidance for business innovation

Sources of support and guidance for business innovation

- Internal sources*: market research (primary, secondary), customer focus groups, workshops, senior management teams, boards of directors, internal stakeholders*

- External sources*: local enterprise partnerships, Business Networking groups (BNI, Chambers of Commerce), websites, industry, government (policy, guidance, funding), trade bodies, Intellectual Property Office, trade events, external stakeholders*

AC2.4: Explain the process of product or service development

Eight stage process for new product development

- Idea generation*: SWOT analysis, market research, customer feedback, analysis of competitor offer, brainstorming new product ideas*

- Idea screening*: eliminating unsound concepts, target market (size, growth), competitive pressures, market trends, product/service profitability*

- Concept development and testing*: intellectual property issues, product/service features, product/service benefits, consumer reaction to product/service concept, production cost-effectiveness, production costs, product/service feasibility, prospective customer liaison*

- Business analysis*: estimating likely selling price, estimating sales volume, estimating profitability and break-even point, potential return on investment*

- Beta testing and market testing*: production of physical prototype or mock-up, testing the product, testing the packaging design, conduct customer focus groups, introduce product/service at trade shows, pilot study, distribution channels*

- Technical implementation*: estimation of resources required, finalise quality management system, resource estimation, operational management plan, publish technical communications (data sheets, specifications), finalise supplier agreements, finalise logistics plan, resource plan publication, contingency planning*

- Commercialisation*: product/service launch activities, promotional material creation and publication, advertising activities, distribution*

pipeline, critical path analysis

- Review of market performance and product pricing: *customer reaction, impact of the product on existing portfolio, value analysis (internal, external) competition response analysis, analysis of value segments (price, value, demand), review of production costs, forecast of unit volumes, revenue and profit, review of after-sales service*

AC2.5: Explain the benefits, risks and implications associated with innovation

- Benefits associated with innovation: *improvements to products, improvements to processes, improvements to services, organisational growth, development of new markets, offering unique selling points, opening niche markets, improved reputation, improved brand recognition, smarter working practices, improve customer experience*

- Risks associated with innovation: *failing to meet operational requirements (quality, cost, scheduling, service, resource), failing to meet commercial requirements (insufficient sales, decline in customer base), failing to achieve a return on investment, organisational culture (resistance to change, unsupportive systems and processes, insufficient support from leadership and management)*

- Implications associated with innovation: *corporate strategy, stakeholder collaboration (internal/external), corporate social responsibility, attitude to change, employee skills and training, customer perception*

AC3.1: Explain the importance of financial viability for an organisation

- Financial viability: *ability of an organisation to achieve its operating objectives, and fulfil its mission or goals over a long-term period*

- Importance of financial viability: *maintain operations, provide adequate resources (staffing, equipment, plant and machinery, working capital, facilities, administration), determine solvency, determine profitability, inform planning, investment and corrective action, cashflow*

AC3.2: Explain the consequences of poor financial management

- Financial management: *financial planning (analysing, budgeting, resource allocation, assets), financial control (monitoring of income and expenditure), financial decision making (safeguarding, reporting and review)*

- Consequences of poor financial management: *variance against the budget and business plan, wastage, cashflow problems, insolvency, legal implications, reputation and sales affected, theft, insolvency, cessation of business operations*

AC3.3: Explain different financial terminology

- Financial terminology: *income, expenditure, transaction, cashflow, accounts, gross profit, net profit, capital, debtors, creditors, turnover, profit and loss account, balance sheet, fixed costs, variable costs, break-even point, tax, VAT, assets, depreciation, investments, accruals, stock, liabilities, shares*

AC4.1:   Explain the uses of a budget

- Budget*: financial plan; types (master, capital, sales, production, cashflow, marketing)*

- Uses*: to control income and expenditure; to establish numerical priorities and targets; to provide direction and co-ordination; to assign responsibilities; to improve efficiency; to monitor performance; to inform management decisions; to plan future activities; supporting innovation; funding training*

AC4.2:   Explain how to manage a budget

- How to manage a budget*: identifying priorities and timescales; negotiating and agreeing financial resources; accurate recording of income and expenditure; monitoring income and expenditure against planned activity; taking corrective actions if budgets are not met; investigate unaccounted variances; updating budgets; dealing with unforeseen internal and external situations and changes; negotiating revisions to budget; reporting and communicating changes*

AC5.1:   Explain the principles of marketing

- Marketing*: a process that identifies and anticipates customer needs and satisfies those needs profitably*

Principles of marketing (marketing mix: the 7 Ps)

- Product*: features and appearance of goods and services*

- Price*: how much customers pay for products*

- Place*: point where products are made available to customers*

- Promotion*: how customers are informed about products*

- People*: those responsible for all aspects of marketing*

- Physical presence*: how customers view the product, service, staff, organisation, brand*

- Process*: how products and services are delivered to customers*

AC5.2: **Explain a sales process**

Sales process

- Prospecting for sales*: identify target market, identifying possible leads, networking, initial contact, business to business referrals; social media*

- The approach*: sales calls, mailings, e-shots, qualifying leads, arranging the sales meeting; establish rapport and trust*

- Establish customer needs*: identifying needs and requirements, questioning, listening, gaining understanding*

- The presentation*: meeting the established customer needs, explanation, demonstration, establishing the benefits of the product/service*

- Overcome objections*: negotiating, fine-tuning*

- The close*: deal, agreement, next steps*

- Follow-up*: after-sales contact, relationship management*

AC5.3: **Explain the features and uses of market research**

- Features*: qualitative, quantitative; primary and secondary research; customer surveys, questionnaires, comment cards, word of mouth recommendations*

- Uses*: to measure customer behaviour, buying patterns, preferences and sales trends, success of product development, brand awareness/reputation, changes in markets, emergence of new markets; consider PESTLE (political, economic, social, technological, legal, environmental factors), competitor activities, test ideas*

AC5.4: **Explain the value of a brand to an organisation**

- Brand*: name, logo, image, design, symbol, key product identifiers, brand language, perceived quality, unique selling point*

- Value of a brand*: brand equity, consumer perception, consumer recognition of brand, consumer relationships, consumer loyalty, differentiation from competitors, trust; market share, profit margins, prestige, competitive advantage*

AC5.5: Explain the relationship between sales and marketing

- Positive relationships between sales and marketing*: information sharing, joint planning, alignment, common goals, trust and respect between functions and activities, open communication to achieve common agendas, consultation on important topics, teamwork, shared Client Relationship Management functions*

- Positive effects of the sales and marketing relationship on the overall business*: improved knowledge of the consumer need, feedback from sales team on marketing campaigns to inform and improve future efforts, increased sales, increased customer satisfaction, improved product development, increased business innovation*

- Potential areas of conflict between sales and marketing*: cultural (differing mind-sets leading to misunderstanding), economic (profit margin vs. ease of sale), informational (communication, physical separation), organisational (responsibility, decision making)*

- Negative effects of the sales and marketing relationship on the overall business*: lack of communication, information not shared, distrust and misunderstanding, conflicting goals, constrained product development, constrained business innovation*

Information for tutors

Suggested resources

Books

Brassington F and Pettitt S – *Essentials of Marketing*, 3rd edition, (Pearson, 2012) ISBN 9780273727644

Dyson J R – *Accounting for Non-Accounting Students*, 8th edition (FT/Prentice Hall, 2010) ISBN 9780273722977

Jobber D and Ellis-Chadwick F – *Principles and Practice of Marketing*, 7th edition (McGraw-Hill Education, 2013) ISBN 9780077140007

Marsh C – *Financial Management for Non-Financial Managers (Strategic Success)*, (Kogan Page, 2012) ISBN 9780749464677

Shim A, Shim J and Siegel J – *Budgeting Basics and Beyond*, 4th edition (John Wiley and Sons, 2012) ISBN 9781118096277

Websites

www.acas.org.uk – a government-funded agency that advise on industrial relations and employment issues

www.accountingweb.co.uk – accounting news, information and case studies

www.bbc.co.uk/business – BBC business website:

www.businessballs.com – information on skills for personal and professional development

www.gov.uk – government services and information

www.youtube.com – community site for videos

Assessment

This unit can be assessed internally through a Portfolio of Evidence, or it can be assessed externally through an onscreen test. More information about each method of assessment is given below. This should be read in conjunction with *Section 8 Assessment*.

External assessment

External assessment is through an onscreen test. Pearson will set and mark this test. The test lasts for 45 minutes and is worth 30 marks. The assessment is available on demand.

The test assesses all of the learning outcomes and uses each individual assessment criterion and the associated *Unit amplification* as a base for the questions.

Internal assessment

Internal assessment is through an internally and externally quality assured Portfolio of Evidence. 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.

To ensure that the assessment tasks and activities enable learners to produce valid, sufficient, authentic and appropriate evidence that meets the assessment criteria, centres should follow the *Unit assessment guidance* given below.

There are no sector-related assessment requirements for this unit.

Unit assessment guidance

The following is the required assessment method for this unit.

All learning outcomes must only be assessed by structured written assessment to allow the learner to demonstrate the depth and breadth of evidence required to meet the assessment criteria. This could be one single project or a series of linked or separate tasks. While the learning outcomes mainly require the learner to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of general business concepts and principles, there are some opportunities for learners to relate this to their working environment and working experiences and this should be utilised in the design of the assessment. Evidence could be presented in a range of formats such as reports, presentation slides, workbooks and directed assignments, as long as they allow the learner to present the evidence required to meet the assessment criteria.

Unit 5:   Understand Customers and Customer Retention

Unit reference number: J/506/2910

Level: 3

Credit value: 4

Guided learning hours: 35

Unit type: Knowledge

Unit summary

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 about customers is extremely important as it allows organisations to cater for them at an individual level and thus provide excellent customer service.

In this unit you will gain an understanding of how good customer relationships help to retain customers and how this benefits an organisation.

You will learn how customer service organisations use customer service data to measure customer satisfaction and organisational performance in order to set objectives for organisational improvements.

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 outline the requirements the learner is expected to meet to achieve the unit.

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria
1 Understand Customer Relationship Management (CRM)	1.1 Explain the concept of the 'customer experience'
	1.2 Explain different methods of segmenting and characterising customers
	1.3 Explain the purpose and scope of CRM
	1.4 Describe the features of an effective CRM system
	1.5 Explain the uses of CRM data in customer service delivery
2 Understand customer retention	2.1 Explain the term 'customer retention'
	2.2 Explain the benefits of customer retention to an organisation
	2.3 Explain the factors that influence customer retention
	2.4 Describe techniques used to attract and retain customers
	2.5 Explain how to assess the extent of customer loyalty
	2.6 Explain the factors involved in customer recovery
3 Understand the measurement of customer satisfaction	3.1 Describe techniques used to analyse performance data
	3.2 Explain the factors to be taken into account in setting performance targets and objectives
	3.3 Explain the features and uses of a range of techniques to measure customer satisfaction

Unit amplification

This content has been written in an expanded format to facilitate both onscreen testing and portfolio assessment. Learners presenting work for portfolio assessment are not expected to evidence all of the amplification. Learners who are to be assessed by the onscreen test could be tested on any aspect of the amplification

AC 1.1:   Explain the concept of the 'customer experience'

- Customer experience*: sum of all experiences a customer has with an organisation when they buy or use products and/or services, includes before, during and after the purchase or usage, customers' perception and interpretation of all interactions with an organisation, quality of experience (whether useful, usable, enjoyable)*

AC 1.2:   Explain different methods of 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*

AC 1.3:   Explain the purpose and scope of CRM

- Purpose of customer relationship management*:*
  - o   managing customer details and information – *upkeep of personal data on customers, changes in purchasing profile of products and/or services, recording new or additional business for suppliers and service partners*
  - o   support sales and marketing purposes – *use customer data to target and attract new customers, win new clients and contracts, develop advertising messages, inform customers about special offers, events and new products and/or services*
  - o   customer retention – *use customer data to better understand customer needs, eliminate obstacles and problems, improve customer experience, build customer loyalty, support development of products and/or services that meet customers' needs*
  - o   increase profitably – *decrease customer management costs, increase sales through customer retention and new customers*

- Scope of customer relationship management*:*
  - relationships – *developing and maintaining mutually beneficial relationships with strategically significant partners (internal and external customers, suppliers, service partners, owners); aim to produce positive feelings between the organisation and partners*
  - focus – *creating long-term value for the organisation and its partners; tailoring service offer to meet customer needs, customer requirements not products and/or services*

AC 1.4: Describe the features of an effective CRM system

- Features*:*
  - information stored is purposeful – *detail on individual or organisation, assists in selling products and/or services, retains up-to-date and accurate details on the customer*
  - has multi functionality – *key dates with customers, dates of last on site visit, last telephone call with customer, credit status and debit alerts*
  - focuses on – *improving customer service, providing flexibility to analyse customer contact and transactions, information on compliments and/or complaints, highest spend and lowest spend, likes and dislikes of customer, seasonal requirements linked to notable dates, celebrations, special requirements*
  - data protection – *safe and secure storage for all customer information, policies in place for safe and secure storage and retrieval*

AC 1.5: Explain the uses of CRM data in customer service delivery

- Communication preferences*:*
  - method – *on customer premises, phone call, email, text, letter*
- Frequency and timing of communications*:*
  - customer profiling – *categorising customers, information on high spend, low spend, individual or an organisation, types of products and/or services used, delivery preferences, payment preferences*
  - analysis – *annual customer spend, products and/or services, payment profile, budget status*
  - marketing – *direct mail shots, advertising, events, relevance to customer, relevant new products and/or services*

AC 2.1: Explain the term 'customer retention'

- Customer retention*: maintaining regular custom from individuals and organisations, providing the right products and/or services for customers, awareness of competitors, regular dialogue, providing excellent customer service, meeting and exceeding customer expectations*

- Core values in retaining customers*: setting service standards, customer charters, training of staff, the customer service environment to include public areas, service areas and facilities*

AC 2.2: Explain the benefits of customer retention to an organisation

- Benefits*: direct value to an organisation in financial terms, indirect value to an organisation, to include obtaining customer data, customer preferences, likes and dislikes, direct marketing opportunities, continuous customer information, customer testimonial, recommendations*

AC 2.3: Explain the factors that influence customer retention

- Factors that influence customer retention*: service offer of the organisation, internal service standards of the organisation, type of customer service models used, level of customer service provided, social skills of staff, staff knowledge of products and/or services, environment for customers, advice, information and support provided to customers, quality of products and/or services provided, location of organisation, accessibility of organisation, flexibility of provision, to include online services, value for money, follow up service provided, comparison with competitors' offers, position in market place, customers' perception of organisation's brand*

AC 2.4: Describe techniques used to attract and retain customers

- Techniques*: marketing and promotion (direct mail shots on offers, events, providing current information on products and/or services, providing customer loyalty schemes)*

- Providing additional services*: complimentary services, general and or specific advice on products and/or services, dialogue with customers, keeping customers informed and involved*

- Use of CRM system*: to predict customers' future wants and needs for products and/or services*

AC 2.5: Explain how to assess the extent of customer loyalty

- How to assess*: obtaining customer feedback face to face, surveys and questionnaires, (online, social media, telephone polls, focus groups)*

- Analysis of repeat custom and purchases*: review the use of loyalty schemes, online purchases, analysis of new customers by customer referral*

AC 2.6: **Explain the factors involved in customer recovery**

- Factors involved in customer recovery*: value of the customer to organisation, high or low spend, reputation of organisation impacted upon negative views of customers*

- Loss of business to competitors*: re-engagement with customer, establishing why customer left, communication and reparation with customer, customer incentives to return, compensating the customer for bad service*

- Follow up*: communication with customer following the provision of customer service*

AC 3.1: **Describe techniques used to analyse performance data**

- Performance data*:*

  o results of questionnaires or surveys – *online, focus groups, face to face, telephone polls*

  o compliments – *staff, product and/or service, volume, repetition*

  o complaints – *staff, product and/or service, action and follow up, resolution, volume, repetition*

- Analysis techniques*:*

  o performance analysis – *scorecards, dashboards (created from CRMs)*

  o performance variation – *comparison (by time, by product and/or by service), internal, with competitors*

  o performance measured – *matched to bench mark (meeting, exceeding)*

  o trends and indicators: *statistics, profiles*

AC 3.2: **Explain the factors to be taken into account in setting performance targets and objectives**

- Factors*: poor customer service, large numbers of complaints, errors made, areas of non-compliance with legislation and procedures, levels of sales of products and/or services, returning customers, new customers, need for training staff, promote team work*

- Setting performance targets*: use of current data relating to customer satisfaction, establishing realistic and measureable targets against customer satisfaction (reduction of complaints, increase of customer spend, increase of new customers by referral)*

- Setting objectives for customer satisfaction*: culture of customer service within organisation, staff awareness of operational objectives for customer service, setting of organisational objectives, objectives should be Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-bound (SMART), defining key performance indicators for customer satisfaction, consulting with staff across organisation*

AC 3.3: **Explain the features and uses of a range of techniques to measure customer satisfaction**

Techniques

- Questionnaires (face to face, telephone polls)
  - features – *one to one with staff member, time consuming, limited information*
  - use – *to obtain both objective and subjective information, quantifiable, qualitative*
- Online surveys*:*
  - features – *large number of targeted participants, no staff needed to deliver, incentives offered to complete*
  - use – *to obtain both objective and subjective information, quantifiable, qualitative*
- Customer focus groups*:*
  - features – *specific customer group (by product and/or service, by region, by age), allows for additional customer comments, maximum opportunities for customers to provide detailed feedback*
  - use – *to gain qualitative feedback on specific product and/or service*
- Overall uses*: gauging customer satisfaction (quality of service, 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*

Information for tutors

Suggested resources

Books

Alexander D & Turner D – *The CRM Pocketbook (Management Pocketbook Series)* (Management Pocket Books, 2002) ISBN 9781870471978

Buttle F & Maklan S – *Customer Relationship Management* (2nd Edition), (Taylor & Francis Ltd, 2008) ISBN 9781856175227

Peelen E & Beltman R – *Customer Relationship Management* (2nd Edition), (Pearson Education Ltd, 2014) ISBN 9780273774952

Websites

www.instituteofcustomerservice.com – The ICS website provides information and guidance on many aspects of customer service

Other

Customer Focus magazine – produced by the Institute of Customer Service, has information on customer service practice, including topical issues relating to the customer service industry.

Assessment

This unit can be assessed internally through a Portfolio of Evidence, or it can be assessed externally through an onscreen test. More information about each method of assessment is given below. This should be read in conjunction with *Section 8 Assessment*.

External assessment

External assessment is through an onscreen test. Pearson will set and mark this test. The test lasts for 35 minutes and is worth 25 marks. The assessment is available on demand.

The test assesses all of the learning outcomes and uses each individual assessment criterion and the associated *Unit amplification* as a base for the questions.

Internal assessment

Internal assessment is through an internally and externally quality assured Portfolio of Evidence. 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.

To ensure that the assessment tasks and activities enable learners to produce valid, sufficient, authentic and appropriate evidence that meets the assessment criteria, centres should follow the *Unit assessment guidance* given overleaf.

There are no sector-related assessment requirements for this unit.

Unit assessment guidance

Due to the nature of the individual learning outcomes and the size of the unit, different types of assessment are needed to produce sufficient and appropriate evidence to demonstrate achievement of the learning outcomes. The following are the required assessment methods for this unit.

Learning outcome 1 can either be assessed by a structured written assessment or professional discussion. If written assessment is used, it should allow the learners to contextualise and relate the concepts to their own working environment and work experiences. For example, learners could demonstrate their understanding of Customer Relationship Management (CRM) by drawing on their experience of using their organisation's CRM system in delivering customer service. Learners can provide evidence in different formats such as presentation slides, directed assignments, written reports and workbooks, as long as they allow the learner to present the evidence required to meet the assessment criteria. If professional discussion is used then this should be integrated, as far as possible, with the assessment of work-based competencies in related competence units. For example, the learning outcome could be holistically assessed with the competence unit titled '*Organise and Deliver Customer Service'*, where the learner is required to apply their understanding of segmentation and CRM in planning and delivering customer service. The professional discussion must be recorded and supported by a signed witness statement from the assessor and the learner's notes or visual aids. The assessor must ensure that the signed statement includes sufficient detail to support the assessment decisions for the learning outcome and the related assessment criteria.

Learning outcomes 2 and 3 must only be assessed by structured written assessment to allow the learners to demonstrate the depth and breadth of evidence required to meet the assessment criteria. This could be one single project assignment or a series of linked or separate tasks. The assessment should provide opportunities for learners to relate the concepts and techniques to their working environment and working experiences, and this should be utilised in the design of the assessment. Evidence could be presented in a range of formats similar to those stated above. The use of a reflective account would be appropriate for the assessment of learning outcome 3 if the learner has applied the concepts and techniques indicated in the related unit amplification to their work practices. For example, a learner who has completed the unit titled, '*Gather, Analyse, and Interpret Customer Feedback'*, would have carried out appropriate work activities to support the use of a reflective account. If used, the reflective account must cover the learning outcomes content and meet the level of demand required by the operative verbs in the related assessment criteria.

Unit 6: Manage Personal and Professional Development

Unit reference number: T/506/2952

Level: 3

Credit value: 3

Guided learning hours: 12

Unit type: Competence

Unit summary

This unit focuses on the learning processes that underpin the development of personal and professional skills. The Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) defines continuing professional development (CPD) as 'the need for individuals to keep up to date with rapidly changing knowledge' and in this unit you will learn how to identify and evaluate your own personal and professional development needs.

Businesses will want to know that, as an individual, you have taken personal responsibility for ensuring that you have the skills and knowledge necessary to meet the challenges of an ever-changing world, and that you are keeping up to date in terms of new knowledge, techniques and developments as related to your role. You will look at the benefits of creating a personal development plan (PDP) and set your own targets to create such plans for yourself, then, with the advice and feedback of other, maintain them.

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 outline the requirements the learner is expected to meet to achieve the unit.

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria
1 Be able to identify personal and professional development requirements	1.1 Compare sources of information on professional development trends and their validity
	1.2 Identify trends and developments that influence the need for professional development
	1.3 Evaluate their own current and future personal and professional development needs relating to the role, the team and the organisation
2 Be able to fulfil a personal and professional development plan	2.1 Evaluate the benefits of personal and professional development
	2.2 Explain the basis on which types of development actions are selected
	2.3 Identify current and future likely skills, knowledge and experience needs using skills gap analysis
	2.4 Agree a personal and professional development plan that is consistent with business needs and personal objectives
	2.5 Execute the plan within the agreed budget and timescale
	2.6 Take advantage of development opportunities made available by professional networks or professional bodies
3 Be able to maintain the relevance of a personal and professional development plan	3.1 Explain how to set specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bound (SMART) objectives
	3.2 Obtain feedback on performance from a range of valid sources
	3.3 Review progress toward personal and professional objectives
	3.4 Amend the personal and professional development plan in the light of feedback received from others

Information for tutors

Suggested resources

Books

Routledge C and Carmichael J – *Personal Development and Management Skills* (CIPD, 2007) ISBN 9781843981480

Websites

www.businessballs.com – free resources and advice on personal development planning

www.cipd.co.uk – the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD), web page dedicated to continuing professional development (CPD) plus materials and factsheets. Membership is required for full access to the site

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 and the requirements of the Assessment Strategy.

To ensure that the assessment tasks and activities enable learners to produce valid, sufficient, authentic and appropriate evidence that meets the assessment criteria, centres should apply the *Unit assessment guidance* and the requirements of the Assessment Strategy below.

Wherever possible, centres should adopt a holistic approach to assessing the units in the qualification. This gives the assessment process greater rigour and minimises repetition, time and the burden of assessment on all parties involved in the process.

Unit assessment requirements

This unit must be assessed in the workplace in accordance with Skills CFA Business Administration, Customer Service and Management and Leadership Assessment Strategy in *Annexe A*. Simulation is not allowed for this unit. All evidence of occupational competence should be generated through performance under workplace conditions; this includes evidence of achievement for knowledge-based learning outcomes and associated assessment criteria.

Unit assessment guidance

This guidance supports assessors in making decisions about how best to assess each unit and the evidence needed to meet the assessment requirements of the unit. Centres can adapt the guidance for learners and the particular assessment context, as appropriate.

Evidence to demonstrate achievement of learning outcomes 1, 2 and 3 is likely to come from a combination of a review of the learner's work products, professional discussion or reflective accounts and witness testimony.

For learning outcome 1, the learner's work products could include their research notes and findings on professional development trends, as well as notes/records from the evaluation of their current and future personal development needs (AC1.1 and AC1.2). The learner's available work products should be reviewed by the assessor and used to support the professional discussion to evidence the knowledge and understanding underpinning their performance. In the professional discussion, the learner could explain how they validated the information from the different sources and how they used this information to decide which trends and developments reflected their professional development needs.

For learning outcome 2, the learner's work products could include their personal development plan and records or notes from their skills gap analysis. The evidence from the review of available work products should be supported by a professional discussion, which could be based around the learner's choice of learning methods and development activities, agreed as a part of the development plan, the general process for developing and agreeing the development plan, and the effectiveness of the development activities in achieving the objectives of the development plan (AC2.2, AC2.3, AC2.4 and AC2.5). The assessor should ensure that the professional discussion covers the evidence to meet the requirements of AC2.1; to achieve this, the learner could weigh up the benefits of personal and professional development for the employer and the employee from a professional as well as a personal perspective.

For learning outcome 3, the learner's work products could include records of agreed objectives and feedback on performance received from others (for example one-to-one meeting notes, performance development review records or appraisal records), CPD records and their amended personal development plan. The learner's available work products should be reviewed by the assessor and could be used as a basis for the professional discussion. To evidence the achievement of AC3.1 and the knowledge and understanding underpinning the learner's performance, the professional discussion could focus on how the learner's SMART objectives were set, who they received feedback on their performance from, and why, and how they determined their progress against the objectives.

Witness testimony from colleagues and the line manager should also be used, as appropriate across the unit, to confirm the learner's competence in managing their personal and professional development (AC1.3, AC2.5, AC2.6, AC3.2 and AC3.3).

The use of a reflective account is a suitable alternative to professional discussion throughout the assessment of this unit. If this is used, the learner should comment on how their development activities address the knowledge and understanding requirement as outlined above for the professional discussion.

Evidence of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) can also be used within the unit to confirm competence. Wherever possible, the learning outcomes in this unit should be assessed holistically across the qualification.

Unit 7: Develop Resources to Support Consistency of Customer Service Delivery

Unit reference number: Y/506/2166

Level: 3

Credit value: 5

Guided learning hours: 21

Unit type: Competence

Unit summary

This unit supports the key function of creating a customer service knowledge base. A customer service knowledge base is built up continuously as the organisation learns from interaction with its customers. A knowledge base may contain a wide variety of information about customers and their transactions with the organisation. It may be drawn from a wide variety of sources. It will, in any case, rely on the actions of you and colleagues in direct contact with customers to build and grow as a useful customer service tool.

In this unit you will learn about the structure of a knowledge base and how it is used. You will understand how information about customers is put on to a knowledge base and how information is updated and maintained. You will learn the content requirements of information and how it should be referenced.

You will be able to create a customer knowledge base and develop resources to support the delivery of excellent customer service to customers.

This unit should only be undertaken if your organisation has a systematic and technology supported approach to building a customer knowledge base.

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 outline the requirements the learner is expected to meet to achieve the unit.

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria
1 Understand how knowledge resources are used to support customer service delivery	1.1 Explain the structure of a customer service knowledge base
	1.2 Explain the uses of a customer service knowledge base
	1.3 Explain the use of customers' frequently asked questions to support customer service delivery
	1.4 Explain the input and update routines for adding to the knowledge base
	1.5 Explain the content requirements of resource materials and how they should be expressed
2 Be able to create and maintain a customer service knowledge base	2.1 Identify the information that should be included in a customer service knowledge base
	2.2 Confirm that a knowledge base is kept up to date
	2.3 Promote the contents and use of a knowledge base
3 Be able to develop customer service resource materials	3.1 Describe the types of questions frequently asked by customers
	3.2 Identify the types of resources needed to support customer service delivery from an analysis of customer needs
	3.3 Identify who will use the resources and in what way
	3.4 Develop resources that meet organisational requirements
	3.5 Communicate the availability and nature of the resources to those who will use them

Unit amplification

AC 1.1: Explain the structure of a customer service knowledge base

- Customer service knowledge base*: i.e. online database where information is collected, organised, shared, searched, retrieved and used; resources to support effective customer service delivery, e.g. most common customer problems and resolutions, troubleshooting information, how-to articles, user manuals, Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) and answers*

- Structure*: dependencies, e.g. type of knowledge, knowledge ownership, needs and characteristics of customers; features, including use of hierarchies, tags, groupings or catalogues of information, e.g. customer segments, topic/subject area, FAQs; information accessibility and interaction, e.g. registration, logins, ability to comment; integration with other customer service delivery systems and platforms*

AC1.2: Explain the uses of a customer service knowledge base

- Uses*: allows customers immediate access to information when needed; supports customers in finding accurate responses to queries; reduces the pressure and stress on customer service teams; provides training for customer service staff; improves the efficiency and effectiveness of customer service teams*

AC1.3: Explain the use of customers' frequently asked questions to support customer service delivery

- *Use of FAQs*: e.g. *provides an understanding of common customers' queries; enables knowledge resources to be tailored to provide the right information; reduces customer service delivery costs; enhances the customer experience*

AC1.4: Explain the input and update routines for adding to the knowledge base

- The knowledge to meet this AC depends on particular organisational requirements and context. Learners need to apply the knowledge specific to their organisation to meet this AC

- The organisational routine could possibly include practices such as*: having established roles, e.g. knowledge owner, reviewer, publisher; established standard for the quality of information; processes for review and categorisation of information; version control; input permissions*

AC1.5: **Explain the content requirements of resource materials and how they should be expressed**

- The knowledge to meet this AC depends on particular organisational requirements and context. Learners need to apply the knowledge specific to their organisation to meet this AC

- General best practice for knowledge base content includes*: e.g. provision of only relevant and appropriate information, easy to access, provides definition of any jargon and technical terms, written at average readability level, consistent styling, technically and grammatically accurate, uses clear action-based titles*

Information for tutors

Suggested resources

Books

Hinton M – *Introducing Information Management: The Business Approach* (Routledge, 2005) ISBN 9780750666688

Lehaney B, Lovett P and Shah M – *Business Information Systems and Technology: A Primer (Routledge Series in Information Systems)* (Routledge, 2011) ISBN 9780415559195

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 and the requirements of the Assessment Strategy.

To ensure that the assessment tasks and activities enable learners to produce valid, sufficient, authentic and appropriate evidence that meets the assessment criteria, centres should apply the *Unit assessment guidance* and the requirements of the Assessment Strategy below.

Wherever possible, centres should adopt a holistic approach to assessing the units in the qualification. This gives the assessment process greater rigour and minimises repetition, time and the burden of assessment on all parties involved in the process.

Unit assessment requirements

This unit must be assessed in the workplace in accordance with the Skills CFA Business Administration, Customer Service and Management and Leadership Assessment Strategy in *Annexe A*. Simulation is not allowed for this unit. All evidence of occupational competence should be generated through performance under workplace conditions; this includes evidence of achievement for knowledge-based learning outcomes and associated assessment criteria.

Unit assessment guidance

This guidance supports assessors in making decisions about how best to assess each unit and the evidence needed to meet the assessment requirements of the unit. Centres can adapt the guidance for learners and the particular assessment context, as appropriate.

Evidence to demonstrate achievement of learning outcomes 2 and 3 is likely to come from a combination of examining learner work products and direct observation, supported by professional discussion and witness testimony. Evidence from direct observation of the learner and/or their work products should be supported by professional discussion around the learner's performance and work products to provide further evidence for the assessment criteria. Work products could include: records from the analysis of customer feedback, records of the process of identifying FAQs and agreeing the responses, records of communication with colleagues (e.g. emails, meetings notes), a range of the materials developed, promotional documentation and events records (e.g. posters, social media activity, presentation slides) and any records of the outcomes of pilot and trials.

Within the discussion, learners could provide explanations for their decision-making around the processes used and how the processes contributed to the outcomes, with reference to the work products. Alternatively, a reflective account could be used in a similar manner to complement the evidence from work products. Witness testimony could also be used to confirm that the learner has consistently met the requirements over a period of time as well as met the organisational requirements.

Evidence to confirm the achievement of learning outcome 1 could be integrated into the professional discussion for learning outcomes 2 and 3 providing the opportunity for the learner to link and apply their knowledge to their workplace activities. Alternatively, evidence could be provided through the learner's reflective account. Learners' responses or statements to meet the requirements for AC1.1 – AC1.5 must be at a sufficient depth and breadth to meet the level of demand expected from an explanation. For example, to meet the standards of an explanation, the learner's response for AC1.5 should have sufficient detail about the possible groupings and cataloguing used to structure the organisation's knowledge base as well as the different accessibility and interaction features such as logins, registrations, commenting and voting features etc.

Evidence of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) can also be used within the unit to confirm competence. Wherever possible, the learning outcomes in this unit should be assessed holistically across the qualification.

Unit 8: Use Service Partnerships to Deliver Customer Service

Unit reference number: D/506/2167

Level: 3

Credit value: 3

Guided learning hours: 20

Unit type: Competence

Unit summary

Service partnerships are important in the successful delivery of customer service as they provide a service chain to offer additional products and/or services that would not been offered by an individual organisation.

In this unit you will learn about service partnerships, how to work effectively in a service chain and how to develop the links with service partners that are key in maintaining relationships.

You will understand the roles and responsibilities of partners involved in a service chain, the advantages and limitations in using service partnerships, and how formal and informal agreements can be used in working with partners. You will understand how positive working relationships are built and maintained within a partnership, how communication between partners is undertaken, and learn about the negotiation techniques in dealing with service partners. You will also learn about conflict of interest in a service partnership and the ways in which it can be resolved.

You will be able to demonstrate your competence in delivering customer service in a service partnership and be able to identify areas for improvement.

You should choose this unit only if you are able to identify a service chain that relies on you in your role developing effective service partnerships.

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 outline the requirements the learner is expected to meet to achieve the unit.

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria
1 Understand the use of a service partnership in customer service delivery	1.1 Explain the roles and responsibilities of the partners involved in a service chain
	1.2 Explain the advantages and limitations of using a service partnership
	1.3 Explain the use and value of formal and informal service level agreements
2 Understand ways of building relationships within a customer service partnership	2.1 Describe effective communication methods for dealing with service partners
	2.2 Explain how to develop positive relationships with service partners
	2.3 Describe negotiating techniques for dealing with service partners
	2.4 Describe actions that can be taken to resolve any conflict of interest with service partners
3 Be able to deliver customer service within a customer service partnership	3.1 Identify the levels of authority that exist within a service partnership
	3.2 Keep service partnership colleagues up to date with progress, developments and issues that might affect the quality of delivery
	3.3 Establish service procedures that are acceptable to all members of a service partnership
	3.4 Agree with service partners priorities and resolutions relating to conflicts of interest
	3.5 Identify areas for improvement from the analysis of a range of sources of information

Unit amplification

AC1.1: **Explain the roles and responsibilities of the partners involved in a service chain**

- Service partnership*: definition (mutual cooperation and responsibility, effective communications, defined roles and responsibilities); service level agreements (SLAs)*

- Service partners*: internal and external partners, e.g. suppliers of goods and/or support services*

- Partners roles and responsibilities*: dependent on formal or informal agreement; power and authority based on agreed partnership structure; agreed procedures and priorities, e.g. conflict of interest*

AC1.2: **Explain the advantages and limitations of using a service partnership**

- Advantages*: e.g. specialist skills, shared logistics, stronger buying power, ability to cater for hard-to-reach customers*

- Limitations*: brand, e.g. potential loss of brand identity, risks to reputation; leadership and management, e.g. blurring of responsibilities, service standards weakened; impact on customer expectations, e.g. broken customer promises, unknown or unnoticed moments of truth*

AC1.3: **Explain the use and value of formal and informal service level agreements**

- Formal SLA*: uses, e.g. helps to define service offer, performance measurement, customer problem management, clear responsibilities of parties*

- Value*: e.g. parties legally bound, agreed penalties and rewards, greater confidence in quality of performance, easier termination of agreement*

- Informal SLA*: uses, e.g. suits SLA between internal departments, enables the quality of service to be benchmarked, test marketing products and/or services*

- Value*: e.g. not legally binding, raises standard for internal departments, allows for evaluative processes*

AC2.1: **Describe effective communication methods for dealing with service partners**

- Face to face*: e.g. meetings, work groups, seminars*

- Online*: e.g. Adobe Connect, Google Hangout, Skype, Webex*

- Written*: e.g. email, fax, letters*

- Telecommunications*: e.g. conference calls, video conferencing*

AC2.2: **Explain how to develop positive relationships with service partners**

- Structure*: management structures, who is responsible for activities, departmental line management responsibility*

- Working relationship*: shared values, service level agreements*

- Policies and procedures*: health and safety, welfare, pay, ways of working*

- Communication*: planned, informed, circulated*

AC2.3: **Describe negotiating techniques for dealing with service partners**

- Negotiation*: definition; purpose, e.g. aims to secure an outcome as close as possible to objectives; requires reasonableness and flexibility*

- Negotiation process*: building relationships, exploring interests of parties, addressing interest of all parties, compromising and creating alternatives, agreeing*

- Negotiating techniques*: including, using tradable concessions or variables; use of persuasion techniques e.g. storytelling and painting pictures, mirroring; use documents to persuade, illustrate position and establish credibility, e.g. position statements, proposals; gather information about partners, e.g. using open-ended questions, active listening, eye contact, use of silence*

AC2.4: **Describe actions that can be taken to resolve any conflict of interest with service partners**

- Conflict of interest (COI)*: definition*

- Actions to resolve*:*
  o *refer all parties back to original contracts and agreements, e.g. terms and conditions, service level agreement, roles and responsibilities, COI declarations*
  o *seek advice, e.g. legal, expert, peer*

- Communication*: verbal, in writing, timely, e.g. as soon as COI identified*

- Involving others*: senior managers, unions, arbitration*

- Finding solutions*: change of staff, drawing up new agreements, creating declaration of interest, remove objection*

Information for tutors

Suggested resources

Books

Balloch S and Taylor M – *Partnership Working Policy and Practice*, (Policy Press, 2001) ISBN 9781861342201

Deering A and Murphy A –*The Partnering Imperative: Making Business Partnerships Work* (John Wiley & Sons, 2003) ISBN 9780470851593

Sobel A – *All for One: 10 Strategies for Building Trusted Client Partnerships* (John Wiley & Sons, 2009) ISBN 9780470380284

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 and the requirements of the Assessment Strategy.

To ensure that the assessment tasks and activities enable learners to produce valid, sufficient, authentic and appropriate evidence that meets the assessment criteria, centres should apply the *Unit assessment guidance* and the requirements of the Assessment Strategy below.

Wherever possible, centres should adopt a holistic approach to assessing the units in the qualification. This gives the assessment process greater rigour and minimises repetition, time and the burden of assessment on all parties involved in the process.

Unit assessment requirements

This unit must be assessed in the workplace in accordance with the Skills CFA Business Administration, Customer Service and Management and Leadership Assessment Strategy in *Annexe A*. Simulation is not allowed for this unit. All evidence of occupational competence should be generated through performance under workplace conditions; this includes evidence of achievement for knowledge-based learning outcomes and associated assessment criteria.

Unit assessment guidance

This guidance supports assessors in making decisions about how best to assess each unit and the evidence needed to meet the assessment requirements of the unit. Centres can adapt the guidance for learners and the particular assessment context, as appropriate.

Evidence to demonstrate achievement of learning outcome 3 is likely to come from a combination of direct observation and an examination of learner work products, supported by professional discussion and witness testimony.

Evidence from direct observation could come from the learner managing meetings and/or briefing sessions with service partners to update them on progress and to establish service procedures and priorities. This evidence should be supported by professional discussion around the learner's work products and performance to provide further evidence for the assessment criteria.

Work products could include any of the following provided they are created and generated by the learner: records of communication with service partners (minutes of meetings, emails), written progress reports, analysis of data, action plans/improvement plans for identified issues, and written agreements, for example service procedures, conflicts of interest. The professional discussion could focus on the levels of authority within the service partnership (AC3.1), the rationale for any agreed procedures, priorities and resolutions (AC3.3 and AC3.4) and the process and criteria used in identifying areas for improvement (AC3.5). Alternatively, a reflective account could be used in a similar manner to complement the evidence from work products and observation. Witness testimony may also be used to support evidence on how well the learner conducted meetings and to confirm that the agreed procedures and priorities were beneficial to the organisation and service partners.

Evidence to confirm the achievement learning outcomes 1 and 2 could be integrated into the professional discussion for learning outcome 3, therefore giving the learner the opportunity to link and apply their knowledge to their workplace activities. Learners' responses or statements to meet the knowledge requirements must be at a sufficient depth and breadth to meet the level of demand of the operative verbs. Work products that may provide evidence for learning outcome 3 could be used as a basis for the discussion, for example the written agreement around conflicts of interest for AC3.4 could also be used as the basis of the professional discussion to meet AC2.4. Similarly, the learner could refer to evidence from meetings and interactions with service partners (AC3.2, AC3.3 and AC3.4) to meet the knowledge requirements for AC2.1, AC2.2 and AC2.3. Alternatively, the learner's reflective account could be used to evidence the achievement of learning outcomes 1 and 2.

Evidence of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) can also be used in the unit to confirm competence. Wherever possible, the learning outcomes in this unit should be assessed holistically across the qualification.

Unit 9:   Resolve Customers' Complaints

Unit reference number: R/506/2151

Level: 3

Credit value: 4

Guided learning hours: 22

Unit type: Competence

Unit summary

This unit gives learners the knowledge, understanding and skills to be able to manage and resolve customers' complaints.

Customers' complaints are time consuming and can be troublesome. Only a fraction of dissatisfied customers will actually complain, however, of all the customers who encounter a problem, the majority do not tell you but they do tell their friends and family. When customers do complain, how the organisation deals with the complaint can have a big impact on the organisation. Customer complaint handling is a skill and done properly it can enhance an organisation's reputation and retain and gain new customers.

In this unit, you will learn how to deal with customers' complaints in a way that provides a positive outcome for customers and the organisation. You will understand how different customer-complaint monitoring techniques can be used to collect data and how the data can be used to improve the service the organisation provides. You will also learn about the advantages and limitations of offering compensation or replacements and the implications of admitting liability on the basis of a customer complaint.

You will be able to confirm the nature, cause and implications of customer complaints so that solutions can be found that meet customer and organisational requirements. You will learn about techniques used in negotiation and conflict management. You will then be able to use these techniques to agree on solutions with customers that address the complaint without going outside the limits of your authority, while adhering to organisational policies and procedures, and legal and ethical requirements.

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 outline the requirements the learner is expected to meet to achieve the unit.

Learning outcomes		Assessment criteria	
1	Understand the monitoring and resolution of customers' complaints	1.1	Assess the suitability of a range of monitoring techniques for customers' complaints
		1.2	Explain how to identify those complaints that should prompt a review of the service offer and service delivery
		1.3	Explain negotiating techniques used to resolve customers' complaints
		1.4	Explain conflict management techniques used in dealing with upset customers
		1.5	Explain organisational procedures for dealing with customer complaints
		1.6	Explain when to escalate customers' complaints
		1.7	Explain the cost and regulatory implications of admitting liability on the basis of a customer complaint
		1.8	Explain the advantages and limitations of offering compensation or replacement products and/or services
2	Be able to deal with customers' complaints	2.1	Confirm the nature, cause and implications of customers' complaints
		2.2	Take personal responsibility for dealing with complaints
		2.3	Communicate in a way that recognises customers' problems and understands their points of view
		2.4	Explain the advantages and limitations of different complaint response options to customers

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria
	2.5 Explain the advantages and limitations of different complaint response options to the organisation
	2.6 Keep customers informed of progress
	2.7 Agree solutions with customers that address the complaint and which are within the limits of their own authority
	2.8 Record the outcome of the handling of complaints for future reference
	2.9 Adhere to organisational policies and procedures, legal and ethical requirements when dealing with customers' complaints

Unit amplification

AC1.1: **Assess the suitability of a range of monitoring techniques for customers' complaints**

- Monitoring techniques*: e.g. customer feedback cards, web-based customer satisfaction surveys, mystery shopping, social media feedback, mentions by external media*

- Suitability*: factors, e.g. fit with customer service strategy, ease of use of metrics, selection of relevant measures*

AC1.2: **Explain how to identify those complaints that should prompt a review of the service offer and service delivery**

- Identifying complaints*: based on types of complaints, e.g. indicates breakdowns in service delivery, potential to damage the reputation of the organisation, cause potential financial damage, regarding products faults and quality, linked to health and safety products and/or services*

AC1.3: **Explain negotiating techniques used to resolve customers' complaints**

- Basis of negotiating or bargaining power*: large customer, e.g. greater bargaining power; small customer, e.g. less individual bargaining power, possible power base through social media or pressure groups*

- Negotiating techniques*: e.g. listening and questioning techniques to gather information; use of empathy; identifying the root cause of the 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*

AC1.4: **Explain conflict management techniques used in dealing with upset customers**

- Conflict management*: definition; negotiation techniques*

- Conflict management techniques*: e.g. showing empathy, remaining calm when dealing with difficult customers, identifying the root cause of the complaint; explore best solutions with the customer; offering alternative solutions; use of escalation procedures*

AC1.5: **Explain organisational procedures for dealing with customer complaints**

- The knowledge to meet this AC depends on the particular organisational requirements and context. Learners need to apply the knowledge specific to their organisation to meet this AC

General knowledge may include:

- Procedures*: 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*

AC1.6: **Explain when to escalate customers' complaints**

- Escalation*: levels of authority in the organisation; limits of own authority, limits of knowledge, losing control of the situation, level and speed of progress*

AC1.7: **Explain the cost and regulatory implications of admitting liability on the basis of a customer complaint**

- Financial costs*: e.g. individual compensation claims, class action compensation claims, out of court settlements, regulatory fines, cost to brand image*

- Regulatory implications*: regulatory investigations arising from customer complaints, e.g. Financial Ombudsman such as the Office of Gas and Electricity Markets (Ofgem) and Water Service Regulation Authority (known as Ofwat); potential closure of the organisation*

AC1.8: **Explain the advantages and limitations of offering compensation or replacement products and/or services**

- Advantages*: e.g. customer retention, enhanced reputation for resolving issues; positive media coverage*

- Limitations*: e.g. customers may still change supplier, increased costs, satisfactory resolution may not be known widely*

Information for tutors

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 and the requirements of the Assessment Strategy.

To ensure that the assessment tasks and activities enable learners to produce valid, sufficient, authentic and appropriate evidence that meets the assessment criteria, centres should apply the *Unit assessment guidance* and the requirements of the Assessment Strategy below.

Wherever possible, centres should adopt a holistic approach to assessing the units in the qualification. This gives the assessment process greater rigour and minimises repetition, time and the burden of assessment on all parties involved in the process.

Unit assessment requirements

This unit must be assessed in the workplace in accordance with the Skills CFA Business Administration, Customer Service and Management and Leadership Assessment Strategy in *Annexe A*. Simulation is not allowed for this unit. All evidence of occupational competence should be generated through performance under workplace conditions; this includes evidence of achievement for knowledge-based learning outcomes and associated assessment criteria.

Unit assessment guidance

This guidance supports assessors in making decisions about how best to assess each unit and the evidence needed to meet the assessment requirements of the unit. Centres can adapt the guidance for learners and the particular assessment context, as appropriate.

The main evidence collection methods for demonstrating achievement of learning outcome 2 are likely to be a combination of direct observation and professional discussion with the learner, supported by a review of relevant work products. The evidence collected can be based on situations where the learner is handling and resolving internal or external customer complaints, whether face to face, by email and/or by telephone.

Direct observation is suitable where the learner is handling customers' complaints face to face and/or by telephone, this would provide evidence for AC2.1, AC2.3 AC2.6 and AC2.7. The assessor can carry out the observation unobtrusively using professional discussion to evidence the knowledge underlying the performance being undertaken.

Product evidence seen during an observed performance or separately from observed performance should be evaluated and commented on by the assessor (e.g. emails, letters, spreadsheets, completed records, Word documents and database reports). These could be an alternative source of evidence for AC2.1, AC2.3, AC2.6 and AC2.7 in the instances where the interactions with customers are by email. They can also provide evidence for AC2.8.

The professional discussion could focus on providing evidence for AC2.4 and AC2.5 as well as for the knowledge and understanding underpinning the learner's performance. For example, for AC2.7, the learner could explain the rationale for the choice of options offered to customers. Similarly, for AC2.2 the learner could explain how they took ownership and personal responsibility for customers' complaints. The evidence for learning outcome 2 can be further supported by a witness testimony from an appropriate person in the workplace, for example for AC2.9 confirmation from a line manager that the learner has followed the correct organisational policies when dealing with customers' complaints.

Evidence to confirm the achievement of learning outcome 1 could be integrated into the professional discussion for learning outcome 2 and would give the learner the opportunity to link and apply their knowledge to their workplace activities as well ease the burden of assessment for both the assessor and the learner. There are good opportunities to relate the assessment of the knowledge requirements to the competence activities, for example for AC1.2 the learner might use examples of complaints they have resolved to explain the reasoning behind a service review. An example for AC1.4 might be where the learner explains the negotiating techniques they have used in situations where customers were upset. Alternatively, evidence could be provided through the use of a reflective account, where the learner could address the underpinning knowledge and understanding requirements for learning outcome 2. Learners' responses or statements to meet the knowledge requirements must be at a sufficient depth and breadth to meet the level of demand of the operative verbs.

Evidence of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) can also be used within the unit to confirm competence. Wherever possible, the learning outcomes in this unit should be assessed holistically across the qualification.

Unit 10: Gather, Analyse and Interpret Customer Feedback

Unit reference number: D/506/2170

Level: 3

Credit value: 5

Guided learning hours: 24

Unit type: Competence

Unit summary

Gathering information about customers and their needs is an important and essential process for any business that wants to understand the needs of their customers.

This unit gives you the knowledge, understanding and skills to be able to gather and analyse customer feedback and interpret it to understand customers' requirements and how well those requirements are being met.

Successful organisations know their customers and can anticipate their needs and requirements. These organisations gather and use customer feedback systematically so that they can shape their services to meet the challenges that the business environment provides. Information about customers is also used by the organisation to develop and improve its customer service. The gathering, analysis and interpretation of customer feedback can be done in a variety of ways, some formal and some informal. Good customer information provides a sound basis for all customer service transactions.

In this unit you will learn how to identify and use appropriate data collection techniques for the purpose of customer service feedback analysis. You will be able to choose an appropriate survey method to gather customer feedback data, use different methods to analyse the data and finally, you will be able to interpret the analysis findings to help recommend customer service improvements.

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 outline the requirements the learner is expected to meet to achieve the unit.

Learning outcomes		Assessment criteria	
1	Understand how to gather, analyse and interpret customer feedback	1.1	Describe methods of collecting data for customer research
		1.2	Explain random sampling techniques used to collect data
		1.3	Explain how to evaluate bias in non-random samples
		1.4	Explain the principles of questionnaire design
		1.5	Assess the suitability of a range of techniques to analyse customer feedback
		1.6	Explain techniques used to monitor the quality of data collected
		1.7	Explain the use of software to record and analyse customer feedback
		1.8	Explain the validation issues associated with customer feedback
		1.9	Explain the importance of anonymising comments from customers who do not wish to be identified
2	Be able to plan the collection of customer feedback on customer service issues	2.1	Identify the objectives of collecting customer feedback
		2.2	Justify the reasons for selecting different data collection methods
		2.3	Develop a data collection and analysis plan that specifies the sampling frame, data collection and recording methods and timeframe
3	Be able to gather customer feedback	3.1	Collect customer feedback using the sampling frame identified in a customer service plan
		3.2	Record data in a way that makes analysis straightforward
		3.3	Verify that all data is handled in line with legal, organisational and ethical policies and procedures

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria
4 Be able to analyse and interpret customer feedback to recommend improvements	4.1 Use data analysis methods to identify patterns and trends in customer feedback
	4.2 Use the findings of a data analysis to identify areas for improvement to customer service
	4.3 Present the findings of an analysis in the agreed format
	4.4 Recommend improvements in response to the findings of an analysis

Unit amplification

AC1.1: Describe methods of collecting data for customer research

- Customer research*: types, e.g. primary, secondary, qualitative, quantitative*

- Methods*: e.g. questionnaires, telephone surveys, customer panels, face to face interviews, focus groups, mystery shoppers, on-line surveys, social media*

AC1.2: Explain random sampling techniques used to collect data

- Random sampling*: definition of a sample population; probability sampling*

- Techniques*: sampling for population characteristics, e.g. all buyers of a certain product; sampling frame, e.g. an organised list of all members of a certain population; random number generation, e.g. using a computer program to generate a random number between say 1 and 1000; stratified sampling, e.g. reflecting the make-up of that population*

AC1.3: Explain how to evaluate bias in non-random samples

- Non-random sampling*: e.g. accidental, haphazard or convenience sampling; quota sampling; snowball sampling*

- Evaluating factors*: comparison to target population, selection bias, over representation and under representation of particular population groups, identifying non-responsive groups*

AC1.4: Explain the principles of questionnaire design

- Principles*: identifying the purpose of the questionnaire, e.g. survey objective; data collection methods; order of questions; length of questionnaire; question formats; how data will be processed; piloting questionnaires*

- Questionnaire design*: types of questions and responses, e.g. Likert Scales, Yes/No answers, multiple choice questions, numbered responses, open ended questions*

AC1.5: Assess the suitability of a range of techniques to analyse customer feedback

- Suitability*: e.g. survey objectives, format of customer feedback, use of survey outcomes*

- 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*

AC1.6: Explain techniques used to monitor the quality of data collected

- Techniques*: data triangulation, investigator triangulation, theory triangulation, methodological triangulation, standardisation of results*

AC1.7: Explain the use of software to record and analyse customer feedback

- Computer Software*: e.g. spreadsheets, database, specialist data analysis software, e.g. Nvivo, Atlasti*

- Recording data*: e.g. coding results of a survey using qualitative data coding or quantitative data coding*

- Analysing data*: the process of inspecting, cleaning, transforming, and modelling data, using basic statistics of important variables, e.g. mean, mode and median, pictorial representations, e.g. scatter plots, correlations and association, cross-tabulations*

AC1.8: Explain the validation issues associated with customer feedback

- 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 increases generalisability of results*

AC1.9: Explain the importance of anonymising comments from customers who do not wish to be identified

- Anonymising*: e.g. increased participation, honesty of responses, privacy of respondents, complying with Data Protection Act 1998, avoid restricting access and publication*

Information for tutors

Suggested resources

Books

Hayes B − *Measuring Customer Satisfaction and Loyalty: Survey Design, Use, and Statistical Analysis Methods* (3rd Edition), (ASQ Quality Press, 2008) ISBN 9780873897433

Hill N, Brierley J and McDougall R − *How to Measure Customer Satisfaction* (2nd Edition), (Gower Publishing, 2003) ISBN 9780566085956

Leland K and Bailey, K − *Customer Service for Dummies* (3rd Edition), (Wiley Publishing, Inc, 2006) ISBN 9780471768692

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 and the requirements of the Assessment Strategy.

To ensure that the assessment tasks and activities enable learners to produce valid, sufficient, authentic and appropriate evidence that meets the assessment criteria, centres should apply the *Unit assessment guidance* and the requirements of the Assessment Strategy below.

Wherever possible, centres should adopt a holistic approach to assessing the units in the qualification. This gives the assessment process greater rigour and minimises repetition, time and the burden of assessment on all parties involved in the process.

Unit assessment requirements

This unit must be assessed in the workplace in accordance with the Skills CFA Business Administration, Customer Service and Management and Leadership Assessment Strategy in *Annexe A*. Simulation is not allowed for this unit. All evidence of occupational competence should be generated through performance under workplace conditions; this includes evidence of achievement for knowledge-based learning outcomes and associated assessment criteria.

Unit assessment guidance

This guidance supports assessors in making decisions about how best to assess each unit and the evidence needed to meet the assessment requirements of the unit. Centres can adapt the guidance for learners and the particular assessment context, as appropriate.

The main evidence collection methods for demonstrating achievement of learning outcomes 2, 3 and 4 are likely to be a combination of observation, review of the learner's work products and professional discussion. For AC2.1 – AC2.3 the learner's work products may include planning notes (including the calculation of costs for data collection) and the plan and resources (e.g. questionnaire, interview questions) produced for the collection and analysis of data. Within the discussion, the learner could use these products as a basis for justifying different elements of the plan and how it will meet the customer focus objectives.

The evidence from observing the collection of customer feedback for learning outcome 3 should be supported by a discussion around the collected data (AC3.1 – AC3.3); the professional discussion could focus on the justification of how the data is recorded, how data collection was monitored to ensure compliance with the sampling frame and the rationale for the actions taken to verify compliance with the relevant policies and procedures.

The supporting evidence for AC4.1 – AC4.3 is likely to be work products that the learner has produced in the analysis and interpretation of the customer feedback; for example, for AC4.1 the learner might produce a report, graphs and/or tables based on the data that has been collected. It is essential that the work products can provide evidence of the learners understanding of the data analysis techniques that have been used and where this is not possible then the professional discussion should be used to demonstrate a sufficiency of knowledge. Witness testimony could also be used to support the learner's competence over time.

Evidence to confirm the achievement of learning outcome 1 could be integrated into the professional discussion for learning outcomes 2, 3 and 4 which would give the learner the opportunity to link and apply their knowledge to their workplace activities as well easing the burden of assessment for both the assessor and the learner. There are plenty of opportunities to relate the assessment of the knowledge requirements to the competence activities. For example, the assessment for the knowledge in AC1.1 – AC1.4 could be incorporated in the supporting professional discussion for the competence activities for AC2.1 – AC2.3. Similarly, the same approach could be applied for the knowledge in AC1.5 – AC1.9 in relation to the competence activities across the assessment criteria in learning outcomes 3 and 4. Alternatively, evidence could be provided through the use of a reflective account, where the learner could also address the underpinning knowledge and understanding requirements for learning outcomes 2, 3 and 4. Learners' responses or statements to meet the knowledge requirements must be at a sufficient depth and breadth to meet the level of demand of the operative verbs.

Evidence of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) can also be used within the unit to confirm competence. Wherever possible, the learning outcomes in this unit should be assessed holistically across the qualification.

Unit 11: Monitor the Quality of Customer Service Interactions

Unit reference number: K/506/2172

Level: 3

Credit value: 5

Guided learning hours: 27

Unit type: Competence

Unit summary

This unit gives you the knowledge, understanding and skills to be able to monitor and analyse customer service interactions. It will also help you understand how customer service can support and benefit an organisation.

Organisations are facing increased competition for their products and/or services now that customers can buy from suppliers located around the world using the Internet. Customer service can provide an edge to an organisation's service offer and it can make a difference to profit margins through repeat business and customer referrals. Building a business based on excellent customer service includes constantly monitoring the quality of customer service interactions to ensure the organisation maintains the required standard.

In this unit you will learn about different methods and techniques that can be used for monitoring the quality of customer service interactions and how they can identify possible improvements. You will be able to use these methods and techniques to maintain quality standards. You will be able to monitor, assess and feedback to colleagues on the quality of customer service interactions.

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 outline the requirements the learner is expected to meet to achieve the unit.

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria
1 Understand how to monitor the quality of customer service interactions	1.1 Describe techniques for monitoring the quality of customer service interactions
	1.2 Explain organisational procedures and guidelines for customer service delivery
	1.3 Explain the advantages and limitations of different methods for monitoring the quality of customer service interactions
	1.4 Explain how to construct a representative sample of customer service interactions for monitoring purposes
	1.5 Explain how data protection legislation applies to monitoring the quality of customer service interactions
	1.6 Explain how monitoring actions taken can identify possible improvements in customer service interactions
	1.7 Explain techniques to gather customer feedback
2 Be able to prepare to monitor the quality of customer service interactions	2.1 Identify the criteria against which the quality of customer service interactions will be monitored
	2.2 Specify a sampling frame that would provide information to meet monitoring objectives
	2.3 Select monitoring techniques that are capable of collecting the required information
	2.4 Ensure that staff and customers are made aware of the fact that they will be monitored

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria
3 Be able to monitor the quality of customer service interactions	3.1 Monitor the quality of customer service interactions with minimal disruption to business
	3.2 Assess the quality of customer service interactions against agreed criteria
	3.3 Identify patterns and trends in colleagues' performance
	3.4 Give constructive feedback to colleagues on the quality of customer service interactions

Unit amplification

AC1.1: **Describe techniques for monitoring the quality of customer service interactions**

- Techniques*: formal feedback systems*, e.g. *customer comment cards, feedback facility on the organisations websites, silent monitoring phone calls, mystery shopper, post-contact customer survey; informal feedback collection*, e.g. *customer comments, repeat customers, referrals by customers to new customers*

AC1.2: **Explain organisational procedures and guidelines for customer service delivery**

- The knowledge to meet this AC depends on the particular organisational requirements and context. Learners need to apply the knowledge specific to their organisation to meet this AC

- General knowledge may include:

  o procedures for customer service delivery – *different types, e.g. answering the telephone, confirming identity, resolving customer problems*

  o guidelines – *e.g. returns policy, industry best practice, regulatory requirements*

AC1.3: **Explain the advantages and limitations of different methods for monitoring the quality of customer service interactions**

- 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*

AC1.4: **Explain how to construct a representative sample of customer service interactions for monitoring purposes**

- Representative samples*: random and non-random data collection methods; stratified sample; sampling for population characteristics; set up a sampling frame; using random number generation*

AC1.5: **Explain how data protection legislation applies to monitoring the quality of customer service interactions**

- Data Protection Act 1998*: purpose; guiding principles, e.g. key personnel involved with data protection, obtaining permission to contact customers, recording of telephone conversations, data that can be retained, security of customer service data, forms of electronic data to include emails, voice recordings, photos, CCTV recordings*

AC1.6: **Explain how monitoring actions taken can identify possible improvements in customer service interactions**

- Possible improvements*: e.g. identifies customer needs and expectations, identifies areas of weakness in service, influences policies and procedures, indicates if training or retraining of staff is necessary, improved service procedures, targeted improvement programmes*

AC1.7: **Explain techniques to gather customer feedback**

- Techniques*: e.g. questionnaires, telephone surveys, customer panels, face to face interviews, focus groups, mystery shoppers, on-line surveys, social media*

Information for tutors

Suggested resources

Books

Hays B – *Measuring Customer Satisfaction and Loyalty: Survey Design, Use, and Statistical Analysis Methods* (3rd Edition), (ASQ Quality Press, 2008)
ISBN 9780873897433

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 and the requirements of the Assessment Strategy.

To ensure that the assessment tasks and activities enable learners to produce valid, sufficient, authentic and appropriate evidence that meets the assessment criteria, centres should apply the *Unit assessment guidance* and the requirements of the Assessment Strategy below.

Wherever possible, centres should adopt a holistic approach to assessing the units in the qualification. This gives the assessment process greater rigour and minimises repetition, time and the burden of assessment on all parties involved in the process.

Unit assessment requirements

This unit must be assessed in the workplace in accordance with the Skills the CFA Business Administration, Customer Service and Management and Leadership Assessment Strategy in *Annexe A*. Simulation is not allowed for this unit. All evidence of occupational competence should be generated through performance under workplace conditions; this includes evidence of achievement for knowledge-based learning outcomes and associated assessment criteria.

Unit assessment guidance

This guidance supports assessors in making decisions about how best to assess each unit and the evidence needed to meet the assessment requirements of the unit. Centres can adapt the guidance for learners and the particular assessment context, as appropriate.

The primary source of evidence for learning outcome 2 will likely be a review of learner work products supported by professional discussion. Work products for AC2.1 to AC2.3 could include a written monitoring plan or planning notes detailing the proposed criteria for monitoring the service delivery, the monitoring techniques to be used and the agreed sampling frame. For AC2.4, work products could include communications sent to staff to inform them of the planned monitoring activities. These work products should be reviewed by the assessor and used as a basis for the professional discussion to evidence the learner's underpinning knowledge and understanding. For example, the learner could explain the process for identifying the monitoring criteria used (AC2.1) and the basis on which the monitoring techniques were selected for use (AC2.3).

Evidence for learning outcome 3, AC3.1 could be gathered form direct observation, work products and professional discussion to confirm the learner's depth and breadth of knowledge about how to monitor the quality of customer service interaction. For example, for AC3.2 the work products could be the learner's completed assessment of the quality of customer service interactions in their own work area (or their organisation) with a discussion around how the learner agreed the criteria for the assessment and how they ensured that the monitoring activities did not disrupt the business activities.

Evidence to confirm the achievement of learning outcome 1 could be integrated into the professional discussion for learning outcomes 2 and 3 which gives the learner the opportunity to link and apply their knowledge to their workplace activities, as well easing the burden of assessment for both the assessor and the learner. There are good opportunities to relate the assessment of the knowledge requirements to the competence activities. For example, the discussion could be based around the benefits of the particular monitoring activities used, the rationale and process for choosing the sampling frame used, how the Data Protection Act and organisational procedures were applied in carrying out the monitoring activities and how the outcomes of the monitoring activities will be used to improve the organisation's customer service.

Alternatively, evidence could be provided through the use of a reflective account, where the learner could also address the underpinning knowledge and understanding requirements for learning outcomes 2 and 3. Learners' responses or statements to meet the knowledge requirements must be at a sufficient depth and breadth to meet the level of demand of the operative verbs. As some of the assessment criteria refer to organisational requirements and procedures, witness testimony may be required.

Evidence of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) can also be used within the unit to confirm competence. Wherever possible, the learning outcomes in this unit should be assessed holistically across the qualification.

Unit 12: Communicate Verbally with Customers

Unit reference number: D/506/2119

Level: 2

Credit value: 3

Guided learning hours: 14

Unit type: Competence

Unit summary

Communicating with customers verbally is an important part of any customer service role. It is vital that it is carried out correctly and effectively in order to provide customer satisfaction and to present a favourable image of the organisation.

In this unit you will learn how to communicate verbally with customers by understanding what effective communication is and why it is important in customer service. You will need to understand when different questioning techniques can be used to communicate verbally with customers and why they are chosen. You will also need to understand the different tones of voice and types of body language used and how this impacts upon the customer's impression of the service they are given. Finally, you will need to know the different types of verbal and non-verbal signals that customers use to show how they are feeling.

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 outline the requirements the learner is expected to meet to achieve the unit.

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria
1 Understand how to communicate verbally with customers	1.1 Explain the importance of effective communication in customer service
	1.2 Explain how tone of voice, choice of expression and body language can affect the way customers perceive their experience
	1.3 Explain why 'customer service language' is used
	1.4 Describe different questioning techniques that can be used when communicating with customers
	1.5 Describe verbal and non-verbal signals that show how a customer may be feeling
	1.6 Describe the types of information needed when communicating verbally with customers
2 Be able to use customer service language to communicate with customers	2.1 Identify customers' wants and priorities
	2.2 Listen 'actively' to what customers are saying
	2.3 Communicate clearly, concisely and professionally with customers
	2.4 Use a tone of voice and expression that reinforces messages when communicating with customers
	2.5 Use language that reinforces empathy with customers
	2.6 Adapt their response in accordance with customers' changing behaviour
	2.7 Provide information and advice that meets customers' needs
	2.8 Maintain organisational standards of behaviour and communication when interacting with customers

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria
	2.9 Check that customers have understood what has been communicated
	2.10 Adhere to organisational policies and procedures, legal and ethical requirements when communicating verbally with customers

Unit amplification

AC1.1: **Explain the importance of effective communication in customer service**

- Effective communication*: communication process, i.e. sender, receiver, message, noise, feedback loop; communication skills, e.g. active listening, questioning skills, non-verbal communications; importance, e.g. better understanding of customer's needs, expectations and perspective, customers understand product features and benefits, improves profitability and reputation of the organisation*

AC1.2: **Explain how tone of voice, choice of expression and body language can affect the way customers perceive their experience**

- Tone of voice*: friendly, angry, happy, sad, excited, bored/uninterested. The tone used is chosen in relation to the situation, e.g. in a stressful situation, tone of voice may be angry and curt; in a relaxed situation, tone of voice may be friendly*

- How tone of voice*, expression and body language can affect the customer's perception: e.g. in a stressful situation, choice of words may be non-confrontational; in a relaxed situation, choice of words may be more informal/friendly*

- Body language*: open, closed, thoughtful, nervous, bored, disbelieving, indecisive*

- Types of actions that show the different types of body language*: inappropriate body language, e.g. folded arms, sluggish posture, finger tapping, fiddling with objects; appropriate language, e.g. eye contact, clear speech*

AC1.3: **Explain why 'customer service language' is used**

- Customer service language*: types, i.e. organisation specific customer language or industry accepted best practice language; reasons for use, e.g. reminds employees of service standards, supports consistent customer service delivery, improves the customer experience*

AC1.4: **Describe different questioning techniques that can be used when communicating with customers**

- Different types of questioning techniques*: probing, open, closed, funnel, leading, rhetorical*

AC1.5: **Describe verbal and non-verbal signals that show how a customer may be feeling**

- Verbal signals*: tone of voice and verbal language used by customer*

- Non-verbal signals*: facial expressions, body language, environment relating to customer feelings*

AC1.6: **Describe the types of information needed when communicating verbally with customers**

- Types of information*: product information, organisational policies and procedures, customers' needs and expectations, alternative product information and availability, competitor pricing and service offers*

Information for tutors

Suggested resources

Books

Leland K and Bailey K – *Customer Service for Dummies,* 3rd Edition
(Wiley Publishing Inc., 2011) ISBN 978047176892

Lucas R W – *Customer Service Skills for Success,* 5th Edition (McGraw-Hill Higher
Education, 2011) ISBN 9780071315920

Websites

www.brockport.edu – Brockport Education is a USA education establishment that
has information on customer service language. A useful publication is *Customer
Service Language*

www.businesstrainingworks.com – Business Training Works, includes information
on customer service language

www.mindtools.com – Mind Tools, includes information on communication and
personal career skills

www.skillsyouneed.com – Skills you Need has information on customer service
skills and skills needed for life, personal and work development

www.yourdictionary.com – Your Dictionary, search for information on body
language for customer service

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 and the
requirements of the Assessment Strategy.

To ensure that the assessment tasks and activities enable learners to produce valid,
sufficient, authentic and appropriate evidence that meets the assessment criteria,
centres should apply the *Unit assessment guidance* and the requirements of the
Assessment Strategy below.

Wherever possible, centres should adopt a holistic approach to assessing the units
in the qualification. This gives the assessment process greater rigour and minimises
repetition, time and the burden of assessment on all parties involved in the
process.

Unit assessment requirements

This unit must be assessed in the workplace in accordance with Skills CFA Business
Administration, Customer Service and Management and Leadership Assessment
Strategy in *Annexe A*. Simulation is not allowed for this unit. All evidence of
occupational competence should be generated through performance under
workplace conditions; this includes evidence of achievement for knowledge-based
learning outcomes and associated assessment criteria.

Unit assessment guidance

This guidance supports assessors in making decisions about how best to assess each unit and the evidence needed to meet the assessment requirements of the unit. Centres can adapt the guidance for learners and the particular assessment context, as appropriate.

The primary source of evidence for this unit is direct observation of the learner (in customer service situations in their work environment) communicating verbally with customers. This could include observing face to face and telephone conversations of the learner working in customer service situations. To provide further evidence for the assessment criteria in learning outcome 2, this evidence should be supported with questions and answers around the learner's performance and any relevant work products. For example, the learner could be questioned about the organisational policies and procedures for communicating with customers to provide additional evidence for AC2.10.

Witness testimony could be used to evidence the less observable assessment criteria (such as AC2.8 and AC2.10) within the unit and can also be used to corroborate the competence of the learner over time.

Question and answer (Q&A) sessions are suitable for meeting the requirements of learning outcome 1 and could be integrated into the assessment of learning outcome 2 to give the learner the opportunity to link and apply their knowledge to their workplace activities. For example, the learner could be asked to explain how they thought their tone of voice and body language affected the customer's perception of their experience in a specific observed situation. Learners may be more comfortable producing a learner diary to evidence their achievement of learning outcome 1 and this is also acceptable. The learner's responses must indicate a depth and breadth of knowledge required for the level of demand of the operative verbs.

Evidence of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) can also be used within the unit to confirm the learner's competence. Wherever possible, the learning outcomes in this unit should be assessed holistically across the qualification.

Unit 13: Communicate with Customers in Writing

Unit reference number: T/506/2126

Level: 2

Credit value: 3

Guided learning hours: 20

Unit type: Competence

Unit summary

Communicating with customers in writing is an important part of any customer service role. It is vital that it is carried out correctly and effectively in order to provide customer satisfaction and to present a favourable image of the organisation.

In this unit you will develop your knowledge and skills in this area by exploring why it is important to use different forms of written communication for different purposes in customer service, the different practices for producing different forms of written communication, and the benefits and limitations of using written communication with customers. You will gain understanding of the importance of confidentiality and data protection when using written communication with customers.

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 outline the requirements the learner is expected to meet to achieve the unit.

Learning outcomes		Assessment criteria	
1	Understand how to communicate with customers in writing	1.1	Explain why it is necessary to use different forms of written communication for different purposes
		1.2	Describe practices for producing different forms of written communications
		1.3	Describe the potential benefits and limitations associated with communicating with customers in writing
		1.4	Explain the implications of confidentiality and data protection in communicating with customers in writing
2	Be able to plan written communications to customers	2.1	Identify the objective(s) of the communication
		2.2	Gather the information needed to draft the communication
		2.3	Select the form of written communication that is most likely to lead to customer satisfaction within the service offer
3	Be able to communicate with customers in writing	3.1	Produce communications that recognise customers' points of view in accordance with organisational standards, styles and tone
		3.2	Use language that is clear and concise, adapting it to meet identified customer needs
		3.3	Record decisions and actions taken and the reasons for them
		3.4	Adhere to organisational policies and procedures, legal and ethical requirements when communicating with customers in writing

Unit amplification

AC1.1: Explain why it is necessary to use different forms of written communication for different purposes

- Written communications*: formats, e.g. letter, newsletter, memorandum, report, notice, email*

- Use of different forms*: different audiences (internal and external); whether formal or informal context; urgency of response; purpose of communications, e.g. deal with problems and complaints, provide information to queries, follow up and after sales, marketing*

AC1.2: Describe practices for producing different forms of written communications

- Practices for producing different forms of written communication*: use of 'house style' and templates; business conventions for written communications (salutations, close, paragraphing); proof-reading conventions (grammar, spelling, sentence construction); circulation, e.g. restricted, open; storage*

AC1.3: Describe the potential benefits and limitations associated with communicating with customers in writing

- Benefits*: e.g. customer and organisation has a written record of communications; customer details can help to generate and maintain a customer database listing; helps with promotion of organisation and offers that may be available to customers*

- Limitations*: e.g. impersonal; inability to use verbal or non-verbal cues; may be poorly written and therefore misunderstood; may not be read by customer; inability to gauge customer reaction to information as it is not face to face*

AC1.4: Explain the implications of confidentiality and data protection in communicating with customers in writing

- Legislation*: Data Protection Act 1998*

- Implications of confidentiality and data protection*: restricted access and use of personal information; information used with appropriate permissions; sensitive internal information could be recorded or distributed in error; the organisation's reputation could end up being tarnished and damaged; organisations can be fined for incorrect use of data; loss of business*

Information for tutors

Suggested resources

Book

Lucas R W – *Customer Service Skills for Success* (5th Edition), (McGraw-Hill Higher Education, 2011) ISBN 0071315926

Website

www.itgovernance.co.uk – IT Governance Ltd, information on data protection

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 and the requirements of the Assessment Strategy.

To ensure that the assessment tasks and activities enable learners to produce valid, sufficient, authentic and appropriate evidence that meets the assessment criteria, centres should apply the *Unit assessment guidance* and the requirements of the Assessment Strategy below.

Wherever possible, centres should adopt a holistic approach to assessing the units in the qualification. This gives the assessment process greater rigour and minimises repetition, time and the burden of assessment on all parties involved in the process.

Unit assessment requirements

This unit must be assessed in the workplace in accordance with Skills CFA Business Administration, Customer Service and Management and Leadership Assessment Strategy in *Annexe A*. Simulation is not allowed for this unit. All evidence of occupational competence should be generated through performance under workplace conditions; this includes evidence of achievement for knowledge-based learning outcomes and associated assessment criteria.

Unit assessment guidance

This guidance supports assessors in making decisions about how best to assess each unit and the evidence needed to meet the assessment requirements of the unit. Centres can adapt the guidance for learners and the particular assessment context, as appropriate.

Evidence to demonstrate achievement of learning outcomes 2 and 3 is likely to come from a combination of examination of the learner's work products, witness testimony and question and answer (Q&A). There may be some opportunities to observe the learner in their work environment and, where this is possible, it should be used support the other sources of evidence.

The learner work products could include any written business communications produced, whether in writing or electronically, such as emails, letters, texts or reports. These could be communications to internal or external customers. Work products could also include the learner's personal work notes or records of decisions and actions taken during communications with customers.

The work products should be evaluated and commented on by the assessor. For example, the assessor should examine samples of the business communications (e.g. letters and emails) to assess the learner's use of language to meet AC3.2. However, the products themselves should be kept in their normal place and the assessor should signpost where they are kept. To provide further evidence for the assessment criteria associated with these learning outcomes, this evidence should be supported with a question and answer (Q&A) session around the learner's performance and work products. For example, the learner could be asked to explain why they have chosen a particular method of communication for a specific context (AC2.3) or how they have adapted their language style to meet the identified needs of customers (AC3.2).

Witness testimony is also a suitable assessment method to evidence the less observable assessment criteria (for example AC3.4) within the unit and can be used to corroborate the competence of the learner and support competence over time.

Question and answer (Q&A) sessions are suitable for meeting the requirements of learning outcome 1 and could be integrated into the assessment of learning outcomes 2 and 3 to allow the learner to link and apply their knowledge to their workplace activities. For example, the learner could be asked to relate their explanation of the need to use different types of written communication (AC1.1) to their choice of written communication methods in different situations (AC2.3). Learners may be more comfortable producing a learner diary to evidence achievement of learning outcome 1 and this is also acceptable. The learner's responses must indicate a depth and breadth of knowledge required for the level of demand of the operative verbs.

Evidence of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) can also be used within the unit to confirm the learner's competence. Wherever possible, the learning outcomes in this unit should be assessed holistically across the qualification.

Unit 14: Promote Additional Products and/or Services to Customers

Unit reference number: L/506/2133

Level: 2

Credit value: 2

Guided learning hours: 14

Unit type: Competence

Unit summary

Within all work sectors, whether private, public or voluntary, organisations place significant importance on the value of selling or promoting additional products or services to their customers. This practice not only benefits the organisation through increased sales and service users, but also promotes customers' confidence by keeping their best interests central to the service provided and also caring for their needs and expectations.

In this unit you will learn how to match additional products or services to your customers' needs and what skills and techniques you will need to develop in order to become effective at this practice. You will also learn about how to keep your knowledge and skills up to date and understand who can help you to achieve this.

You will develop your knowledge and skills in the promotion of additional products and/or services and have the opportunity to demonstrate your competence in the workplace.

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 outline the requirements the learner is expected to meet to achieve the unit.

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria
1 Understand the promotion of additional products and/or services to customers	1.1 Describe organisational policies and procedures on the promotion of additional products and/or services
	1.2 Explain the importance of keeping product/service knowledge up to date
	1.3 Explain how to match products and/or services to customer needs
	1.4 Describe techniques to promote additional products and/or services
2 Be able to promote additional products and/or services to customers	2.1 Identify opportunities to promote additional products and/or services that are likely to improve the customer experience
	2.2 Promote the benefits of additional products and/or services that are likely to be of interest to customers
	2.3 Provide information to customers that will help them to decide whether to select additional products and/or services
	2.4 Adhere to organisational policies and procedures, legal and ethical requirements when promoting products and/or services

Unit amplification

AC1.1: **Describe organisational policies and procedures on the promotion of additional products and/or services**

- The knowledge to meet this AC depends on the particular organisational requirements and context. Learners need to apply the knowledge specific to their organisation to meet this AC

- Additional products/services*: those that extend or complement the use or access of the item/service obtained*

AC1.2: **Explain the importance of keeping product/service knowledge up to date**

- Product/service knowledge*: e.g. features and benefits, price, warranties, instructions for use, product technical knowledge*

- Importance*: reasons e.g. confidence (staff, customer), personal effectiveness (meeting targets, job requirements), meeting customer needs, responding to customer queries effectively, overcoming objections*

AC1.3: **Explain how to match products and/or services to customer needs**

- Matching to customer needs*: methods, e.g. identifying customer needs (questioning techniques, active listening), offering suggestions, comparing products/services available, overcoming objections, effective communication skills (verbal, non-verbal)*

AC1.4: **Describe techniques to promote additional products and/or services**

- Techniques to promote*: AIDA model, questioning, communication style, offering discounts/incentives, explaining benefits, making the customer want the additional product/service*

Information for tutors

Suggested resources

Books

Bird T and Cassell J – *Brilliant Selling: What the Best Salespeople Know, Do and Say*, 2nd Edition (Pearson Business, 2012) ISBN 9780273771203

Kamin M – *10 Steps to Successful Customer Service,* 1st Edition (ASTD Press, 2010) ISBN 9781562865900

McManus S and Newby T – *Customer Service Pocket Book,* 3rd Edition (Management Pocketbooks Ltd, 2013) ISBN 978190661055

Timm P R – *Customer Service: Career Success Through Customer Loyalty,* 5th Edition (Prentice Hall, 2010) ISBN 9780135063972

Watkinson M – *The Ten Principles Behind Great Customer Experiences* (FT Publishing International, 2013) ISBN 0273775081

Websites

www.businessballs.com – information on different business related topics suited to this unit such as: communication skills, selling techniques, body language, customer service, games to improve skills and understanding of relevant topics

www.instituteofcustomerservice.com – information regarding customer satisfaction surveys, research information to improve customer service levels in business and source of additional customer service resources

Other

Customer Focus (Institute of Customer Service) – magazine containing information relating to customer service practice including topical issues relating to the customer service industry.

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 and the requirements of the Assessment Strategy.

To ensure that the assessment tasks and activities enable learners to produce valid, sufficient, authentic and appropriate evidence that meets the assessment criteria, centres should apply the *Unit assessment guidance* and the requirements of the Assessment Strategy overleaf.

Wherever possible, centres should adopt a holistic approach to assessing the units in the qualification. This gives the assessment process greater rigour and minimises repetition, time and the burden of assessment on all parties involved in the process.

Unit assessment requirements

This unit must be assessed in the workplace in accordance with Skills CFA Business Administration, Customer Service and Management and Leadership Assessment Strategy in *Annexe A.* Simulation is not allowed for this unit. All evidence of occupational competence should be generated through performance under workplace conditions; this includes evidence of achievement for knowledge-based learning outcomes and associated assessment criteria.

Unit assessment guidance

This guidance supports assessors in making decisions about how best to assess each unit and the evidence needed to meet the requirements. Centres can adapt the guidance as appropriate for learners and the particular assessment context, as appropriate.

Evidence to achieve this unit is likely to come from a combination of direct observation, learner work products and witness testimony. Evidence to meet the requirements for AC 2.2 and AC2.3 would come from direct observation of the learner carrying out sales activities, including promoting additional products and/or services. Activities could relate to either a sales role where customers are paying for a product or service in the private sector, or where customers are receiving a service that is provided within the public or voluntary sector.

Evidence from direct observation could be supported by examining work products, for example, service and sales orders generated by the learner could provide further evidence to meet the requirements for AC2.2 and AC2.3. Witness testimony from line managers would also strengthen and support the evidence collected from direct observations, for example, to meet the requirements for AC2.4.

Planned question and answer sessions (Q&A) and learner statements are valid assessment methods and can be used to corroborate the learner's competence against AC2.1 as well as meet the requirements of the knowledge assessment criteria in learning outcome 1. The learner's responses must be at the appropriate breadth and depth to meet the level of demand of the knowledge assessment criteria. For example, the response for AC1.1 and AC1.4 must have sufficient detail about the policies and procedures for promoting additional products or services within the organisation that they work and include descriptions of the techniques that are effective in meeting this area of competence.

Evidence or recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) can also be used within the unit to confirm competence. Wherever possible, the learning outcomes in this unit should be assessed holistically across the qualification.

Unit 15: Exceed Customer Expectations

Unit reference number: Y/506/2135

Level: 2

Credit value: 3

Guided learning hours: 15

Unit type: Competence

Unit summary

The level of customer service an organisation offers is often what distinguishes them from their competitors. Exceeding customer expectations will ensure an organisation is offering their customers excellent customer service.

This unit will give you the knowledge to understand how to exceed customer expectations, looking at areas such as legislation, organisational policies, and customer perception of adding value. You will then go on to demonstrate exceeding customer expectation naturally through your activities at work. This will include explaining your service offer to your customers, identifying options that add value and keeping records of any actions you take.

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 outline the requirements the learner is expected to meet to achieve the unit.

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria
1 Understand how to exceed customer expectations	1.1 Explain how customers form expectations of the service they will receive
	1.2. Explain legislation, organisational policies and procedures that can limit or vary the service offer
	1.3. Explain the types of actions that customers are likely to perceive as adding value
	1.4. Explain how to recognise when actions taken to offer added value could be built into the service offer
2 Be able to exceed customer expectations	2.1 Identify differences between customers' expectations and needs and the service offer
	2.2 Explain the service offer clearly and concisely to customers
	2.3 Identify options that offer added value without affecting other customers adversely
	2.4 Make offers to customers within their own authority levels
	2.5 Take action to ensure that customers are aware that offers made to them have added value and exceed the service offer
	2.6 Record agreements made and actions taken

Unit amplification

AC1.1: **Explain how customers form expectations of the service they will receive**

- Customer expectations*: what is expected from the organisation to include; quality, price, service, products and/or services*

- How expectations are formed*: through perceived reputation of the organisation, existing advertising, including brochures, leaflets, special offers, price, previous experience of the product/service, the opinions of friends, direct dealings with the company*

AC1.2: **Explain legislation, organisational policies and procedures that can limit or vary the service offer**

- Legislation*: different pieces of legislation will be applicable to different organisations. Learners need to apply the legislation specific to their organisation to meet this AC. However, some legislation common to most organisations which offer customer service include:* Competition Act 1998; Consumer Credit Act 1974*;*The Consumer Protection from Unfair Trading Regulations 2008; The Unfair Terms in Consumer Contracts Regulations 1999

- Organisational policies and procedures*: the knowledge to meet this AC depends on the particular organisational requirements and context. Learners need to apply the knowledge specific to their organisation to meet this AC.*

AC1.3: **Explain the types of actions that customer are likely to perceive as adding value**

- Added value*: offering additional products or services to extend or complement the use of the product purchased or service obtained with very little or no additional cost*

- Type of actions to add value*: including putting on special offers e.g. buy one, get one free (BOGOF), going the extra mile, being customer focused, being attentive towards customers, good product knowledge, free delivery, extended guarantee, extended refund or exchange policy, follow up calls*

AC1.4: **Explain how to recognise when actions taken to offer added value could be built into the service offer**

- When to build added value into the service offer*: when customer need has been identified through customer surveys, customer comments, to attract new customers, customer thinking about switching to competitor, to retain loyal customers*

Information for tutors

Suggested resources

Books

Heppell M – *Five Star Service: How to Deliver Exceptional Customer Service* (Pearson Education, 2010) ISBN 978023734383

Leland K, Bailey K – *Customer Service for Dummies* (Wiley Publishing Inc., 2006) ISBN 9780471768692

Nash S, Nash D – *Exceeding Customer Expectations; find out what your customers want and give them even more* (Pathways, 2000) ISBN 9781857035643

Websites

www.customerserviceexcellence.uk.com- provides best practice customer service case studies.

www.instituteofcustomerservice.com - the Institute of Customer Service (ICS) - the independent, professional membership body for the customer service sector. There is a resources section where a glossary of terms, down-loadable resources and guidance notes are available.

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 and the requirements of the Assessment Strategy.

To ensure that the assessment tasks and activities enable learners to produce valid, sufficient, authentic and appropriate evidence that meet the assessment criteria, centres should apply the *Unit assessment guidance* and the requirements of the Assessment Strategy given below.

Wherever possible, centres should adopt a holistic approach to assessing the units in the qualification. This gives the assessment process greater rigour and minimises repetition, time and the burden of assessment on all parties involved in the process.

Unit assessment requirements

This unit must be assessed in the workplace in accordance with Skills CFA Business Administration, Customer Service and Management and Leadership Assessment Strategy in *Annexe A*. Simulation is not allowed for this unit. All evidence of occupational competence should be generated through performance under workplace conditions; this includes evidence of achievement for knowledge-based learning outcomes and associated assessment criteria.

Unit assessment guidance

This guidance supports assessors in making decisions about how best to assess each unit and the evidence needed to meet the requirements. Centres can adapt the guidance for learners and the particular assessment context, as appropriate.

Learning outcome 1 is knowledge-based and should be assessed using evidence that will confirm the knowledge of the learner, such as questioning or discussion. This could be achieved through a professional discussion with the learning following an interaction with a customer to determine whether the learner has understood the customer's expectations of the service they have given them. The learners could explain the types of actions that customers are likely to perceive as adding value and how to recognise building this in to the service offer. Further discussion or questioning could follow around organisational policies and legislation to cover. The assessment of the learner could be linked with learning outcome 2.

Learning outcome 2 is competency based and the methods of assessment undertaken must allow the learner to demonstrate their competence through naturally occurring evidence in the work place. A primary assessment method could be direct observation of the learner explaining the service offer to a customer where differences have been identified between the customer's expectations and their needs, then making an offer leading to exceeding the customer expectations without affecting other customers adversely. This observation could be supported with product evidence, such as a record of an offer made to a customer records that have been generated by the learner, where the offer made has been recorded to cover. A witness testimony from a line manager could be used to confirm that the learner has undertaken this activity with the customer within the limits of their authority.

It is good practice to combine the assessment of learning outcomes 1 and 2 through holistic assessment. An example of how this could be achieved would be through a direct observation of the learner making an offer to a customer that exceeds their expectations to meet some or all of the assessment criteria in learning outcome 2, followed by questioning that is related to the tasks within the direct observation and the assessment criteria in learning outcome 1.

Unit 16: Deliver Customer Service Whilst Working on Customers' Premises

Unit reference number:	**T/506/2143**
Level:	**2**
Credit value:	**4**
Guided learning hours:	**20**
Unit type:	**Competence**

Unit summary

This unit is all about providing service to customers on their own premises. It is important that you understand how to deliver excellent customer service in the customers' homes, to ensure that the customers' needs and expectations have been met.

This unit will help you to understand the importance of preparation and using appropriate behaviour in line with organisational standards whilst working at your customers' premises. As well as being technically competent, you must be polite and communicate positively with customers in relation to the organisation's products and services, as well as keeping customers informed at all times about the progress of the work being carried out. It is important that you respect customers' properties while maintaining your own security and safety.

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 outline the requirements the learner is expected to meet to achieve the unit.

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria
1 Understand how to deliver customer service whilst working on customers' premises	1.1 Describe the preparations that need to be made prior to a visit
	1.2 Explain the importance of being positive about the product and/or service
	1.3 Explain organisational standards of presentation, behaviour and communication
	1.4 Explain the purpose of advising customers why work cannot be carried out that has not been previously agreed
	1.5 Explain how to identify possible risks relating to the work to be carried out
	1.6 Explain the way in which legislation affects the work to be carried out
2 Be able to deliver customer service whilst working on customers' premises	2.1 Identify themselves to customers
	2.2 Take action to ensure that customers know when, why and for how long work will be carried out on their premises
	2.3 Confirm with customers the nature of work to be carried out on their premises
	2.4 Keep customers informed of progress, delays, variations to work to be carried out and follow up needed
	2.5 Treat customers, their premises and property with consideration
	2.6 Confirm that the customer is satisfied with the outcome
	2.7 Maintain their own personal safety and security and that of customers whilst on customers' premises

Unit amplification

AC1.1: **Describe the preparations that need to be made prior to a visit**

- Preparations*: health and safety requirements, e.g. protective clothing; location of premises; specific customer requirements, e.g. contract information, customer needs; resources and equipment*

AC1.2: **Explain the importance of being positive about the product and/or service**

- Importance*: e.g. to ensure good customer service is maintained, to manage customer expectations, to retain custom and secure repeat business*

- Being positive*: ways, e.g. demonstrating confidence in the product or service, outlining the benefits of the product or service, approving the customer's choice*

AC1.3: **Explain organisational standards of presentation, behaviour and communication**

- Content for this assessment criterion should be based on the standards of presentation, behaviour and communication of the learner's organisation

- Personal behaviour could include*: being polite, confident, showing respect for personal space and possessions, using positive body language, having a positive attitude, respect for confidentiality, dependability, tolerance, professional approach*

- Personal presentation could include*: well groomed, dressed according to organisation's standards, good personal hygiene*

- Communication standards could include*: professional manner, respectful language, friendly, listening to the customer, speaking clearly and concisely*

AC1.4: **Explain the purpose of advising customers why work cannot be carried out that has not been previously agreed**

- Previously agreed work*: e.g. the terms and conditions of any contract, price, amount of work to be undertaken, time-scales*

- Purpose*: to avoid customer dissatisfaction, e.g. disputes, complaints, rejection; to manage customer expectations; ensure contractual obligations are met*

AC1.5: **Explain how to identify possible risks relating to the work to be carried out**

- Identifying risks*: ways, e.g. risk assessment, monitoring progress of work, skills assessment of staff*

- Risks relating to work*: e.g. going over budget, invalidating any warrantees through misuse of equipment or not following manufacturer's instructions, health and safety being compromised*

AC1.6: **Explain the way in which legislation affects the work to be carried out**

- Legislation*: Health & Safety at Work Act 1974 (employer and employee responsibilities); Equality Act 2010 (discrimination, harassment, victimisation, equality of opportunity) Data Protection Act 1998*

- Effect on work to be carried out*: staff resources , e.g. number of persons required to do a job, qualifications of individuals; correct equipment, e.g. protective clothing, lifting equipment; delays due to health and safety requirements not in place, pieces of equipment not tested; implementing systems and procedures, e.g. risk assessment, procedures to securely record customer information, equality and diversity policy*

Information for tutors

Suggested resources

Books

Heppell M – *Five Star Service: How to Deliver Exceptional Customer Service*, (2nd Edition), (Pearson Education Ltd, 2010) ISBN 9780273734383

Leland K and Bailey K – *Customer Service of Dummies* (3rd Edition), (Wiley Publishing Inc., 2006) ISBN 9780471768692

Nash S and Nash D – *Exceeding Customer Expectations: find out what your customers want – and give them even more* (Pathways, 2000) ISBN 9781857035643

Websites

www.customerserviceexcellence.uk.com – provides customer service best practice case studies.

www.instituteofcustomerservice.com – The Institute of Customer Service is the independent, professional membership body for the customer service sector. There is a resources section where a glossary of terms, downloadable resources and guidance notes are available.

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 and the requirements of the Assessment Strategy.

To ensure that the assessment tasks and activities enable learners to produce valid, sufficient, authentic and appropriate evidence that meet the assessment criteria, centres should apply the *Unit assessment guidance* and the requirements of the Assessment Strategy given below.

Wherever possible, centres should adopt a holistic approach to assessing the units in the qualification. This gives the assessment process greater rigour and minimises repetition, time and the burden of assessment on all parties involved in the process.

Unit assessment requirements

This unit must be assessed in the workplace in accordance with Skills CFA Business Administration, Customer Service and Management and Leadership assessment strategy in *Annexe A.* Simulation is not allowed for this unit. All evidence of occupational competence should be generated through performance under workplace conditions; this includes evidence of achievement for knowledge-based learning outcomes and associated assessment criteria.

Unit assessment guidance

This guidance supports assessors in making decisions about how best to assess each unit and the evidence needed to meet the requirements. Centres can adapt the guidance for learners and the particular assessment context, as appropriate.

Learning outcome 1 is knowledge-based and should be assessed using evidence that will confirm the knowledge of the learner, such as questioning or discussion. This could be achieved following professional discussion with the line manager or assessor on preparation that needs to be undertaken prior to visiting a customer's premises and what risks there may be relating to the work to be carried out. This could also be linked to the assessment of the learner with learning outcome 2 where the line manager or assessor could lead a discussion on how the learner will meet the organisational standards of presentation, behaviour and communication. Further questioning of the learner on the importance of being positive about the products or services and the importance of advising customers why work that has not been previously agreed cannot be carried out, would be appropriate.

Learning outcome 2 is competency-based and should be assessed using evidence that will confirm the competence of the learner, such as direct observation of the learner delivering customer service at their customer's premises where they are given the opportunity to keep their customer informed on action to be taken and progress made. Product evidence such as emails or letters informing the customer of delays or variations to the work to be carried out could also be included. Additional evidence to support the direct observation and/or product evidence could be a learner statement or witness testimony where the learner can explain how they know that their customer is satisfied with the outcome of the service and that they have adhered to organisational and legislative standards.

It is good practice to combine the assessment of learning outcomes 1 and 2 through holistic assessment. An example of how this could be achieved would be through a direct observation of the learner working on a customer's premises to meet some or all of the assessment criteria in learning outcome 2, followed by questioning that is related to the tasks within the direct observation and the assessment criteria in learning outcome 1.

Unit 17: Deliver Customer Service to Challenging Customers

Unit reference number: F/506/2159

Level: 2

Credit value: 3

Guided learning hours: 16

Unit type: Competence

Unit summary

Delivering customer service to challenging customers is part of many customer service roles. It is important that it is done effectively in order to provide customer satisfaction, meet the needs and expectations of the customer and present a positive image of the organisation.

In this unit you will learn how to deliver customer service to challenging customers by understanding the different types of challenging customers in the customer service environment and being able to explain organisation procedures and standards for how to behave when dealing with challenging situations. You will also understand different behaviours that make it challenging to deal with customers and know the difference between aggressive and assertive behaviour. You will know techniques for dealing with challenging behaviour and also how to agree actions that may be out of the service offer, but within your limits of authority. Finally, you will know why it is important to keep colleagues informed when challenging customers want their situation escalated.

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 outline the requirements the learner is expected to meet to achieve the unit.

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria
1 Understand the delivery of customer service to challenging customers	1.1 Describe different types of challenging customers in the customer service environment
	1.2 Explain an organisation's procedures and standards of behaviour for dealing with challenging customers
	1.3 Explain behaviours that make it challenging to deal with customers
	1.4 Explain the difference between assertive and aggressive behaviour
	1.5 Describe techniques to deal with customers' challenging behaviour
	1.6 Explain their own levels of authority for agreeing actions outside the service offer
	1.7 Explain why it is important that colleagues are informed when challenging customers re-open or escalate matters
2 Be able to deal with challenging customers	2.1 Identify the signs that indicate that a customer is challenging
	2.2 Express understanding of customers' point of view without admitting liability
	2.3 Explain to customers the limits of the service they can offer
	2.4 Explain to customers the reasons for an organisation's position and policy
	2.5 Agree a way forward that balances customer satisfaction and organisational needs
	2.6 Obtain help from colleagues when options for action are beyond their level of authority
	2.7 Adhere to organisational policies and procedures, legal and ethical requirements when dealing with challenging customers

Unit amplification

AC1.1: Describe different types of challenging customers in the customer service environment

- Different types of challenging customers*: 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*

AC1.2: Explain an organisation's procedures and standards of behaviour for dealing with challenging customers

- The knowledge to meet this AC depends on the particular organisational requirements and context. Learners need to apply the knowledge specific to their organisation to meet this AC

- Procedures and standard of behaviours could include*: staying calm and polite; listening carefully; empathising with how the visitor is feeling; apologising sincerely for problems; offer solutions but not overpromising; use questioning techniques; seek help from a colleague; use escalation procedures*

AC1.3: Explain behaviours that make it challenging to deal with 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*

AC1.4: Explain the difference between assertive and aggressive behaviour

- Assertive behaviour*: definition (to act in ones best interest, stand up for oneself, maintaining relationships); verbal and nonverbal assertive behaviours; bill of assertive rights*

- Aggressive behaviour*: definition (forcing own point of view onto others, violating the rights of other people); emotions and behaviours, e.g. anger, aggressive body language, threatening behaviours; passive aggressive behaviours, e.g. sarcasm, resentful, obstructive*

AC1.5: Describe techniques to deal with customers' challenging behaviour

- Techniques include*: 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*

AC1.6: Explain their own levels of authority for agreeing actions outside the service offer

- The knowledge to meet this AC depends on the learner's role in their particular organisational context. Learners need to apply the knowledge specific to their organisation to meet this AC

- Levels of authority*: job role remit; lines of authority and responsibility in organisation*

- Organisational Procedures*: discretional actions allowed*

AC1.7: Explain why it is important that colleagues are informed when challenging customers re-open or escalate matters

- Importance of informing colleagues*: e.g. 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*

Information for tutors

Suggested resources

Books

Harris E K – Customer Service: A Practical Approach, 6th Edition
(Pearson Publishing, 2012) ISBN 9780132742399

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 and the requirements of the Assessment Strategy.

To ensure that the assessment tasks and activities enable learners to produce valid, sufficient, authentic and appropriate evidence that meet the assessment criteria, centres should apply the *Unit assessment guidance* and the requirements of the Assessment Strategy given below.

Wherever possible, centres should adopt a holistic approach to assessing the units in the qualification. This gives the assessment process greater rigour and minimises repetition, time and the burden of assessment on all parties involved in the process.

Unit assessment requirements

This unit must be assessed in the workplace in accordance with Skills CFA Business Administration, Customer Service and Management and Leadership Assessment Strategy in *Annexe A*. Simulation is not allowed for this unit. All evidence of occupational competence should be generated through performance under workplace conditions; this includes evidence of achievement for knowledge-based learning outcomes and associated assessment criteria.

Unit assessment guidance

This guidance supports assessors in making decisions about how best to assess each unit and the evidence needed to meet the assessment requirements of the unit. Centres can adapt the guidance for learners and the particular assessment context, as appropriate.

The primary source of evidence for demonstrating achievement of this unit is direct observation of the learner delivering customer service to challenging customers. The customers may be internal or external and learners must be directly communicating with these customers, whether by telephone, face-to-face or email.

Evidence from direct observation could be supported by examining work products such as emails sent to customers and file notes. This provides further evidence to meet the requirements, for example AC2.2 – AC2.7. Witness testimony could also be used to strengthen and support the evidence collected from direct observations, particularly against AC2.6.

Planned question and answer sessions (Q&A) and learner statements are valid assessment methods for learning outcome 1 and can also be used to corroborate the learner's competence against AC2.4. The learner's responses must be at the appropriate breadth and depth to meet the level of demand of the knowledge ACs; for example, the response for AC1.2 and AC1.3 must have sufficient detail about regulatory and legislative requirements that affect how customer information is processed and also provide sufficient detail about their workplace policies and procedures that affect the way this information is collected, stored and used.

Evidence of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) can also be used within the unit to confirm the learner's competence. Wherever possible, the learning outcomes in this unit should be assessed holistically across the qualification.

Unit 18: Develop Customer Relationships

Unit reference number: Y/506/2149

Level: 2

Credit value: 3

Guided learning hours: 18

Unit type Competence

Unit summary

Developing customer relationships is a vital part of any customer service role. It is important that it is carried out positively and professionally in order to meet the needs and expectations of the customer, to gain customer loyalty and to present a positive image of the organisation.

In this unit you will learn how to develop customer relationships by learning about relationship management systems and processes in place that help you to meet customer expectations over time. You will gain understanding of what customer loyalty and retention are, and their value to an organisation. Finally, you will find out what you can and cannot offer customers within the limits of your own authority.

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 outline the requirements the learner is expected to meet to achieve the unit.

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria
1 Understand how to develop customer relationships	1.1 Describe the importance of developing relationships with customers
	1.2 Explain the value of customer loyalty and retention
	1.3 Explain how customers' expectations may change over time
	1.4 Explain the use of customer feedback as a means of developing customer relationships
	1.5 Explain the limits of their own authority to make alternative service offers to customers
	1.6 Describe the use of Customer Relationship Management systems and processes to meet customers' expectations
	1.7 Explain the importance of regular communication in the development of both internal and external customer relationships
2 Be able to develop relationships with customers	2.1 Give help and information that meets or exceeds customers' expectations
	2.2 Identify new ways of helping customers based on their feedback
	2.3 Share feedback from customers with others
	2.4 Identify added value that the organisation could offer customers
	2.5 Bring to customers' attention products or services that may interest them

Unit amplification

AC1.1: **Describe the importance of developing relationships with customers**

- Importance*: e.g. customer loyalty, customer retention, increased revenue, customer satisfaction*

AC1.2: **Explain the value of customer loyalty and retention**

- Customer loyalty and customer retention*: definitions; impact of customer loyalty on customer retention*

- Value of customer loyalty and retention*: e.g. reduced costs, repeat business, increased profit, reduced risk, improved reputation*

AC1.3: **Explain how customers' expectations may change over time**

- Change in customer expectations*: explicit, e.g. mental targets for a product's performance, implicit, e.g. comparison of an organisation's products/services against other organisations' products/services, situational expectations, interpersonal expectations, evolution of product/services over time*

AC1.4: **Explain the use of customer feedback as a means of developing customer relationships**

- Use of customer feedback*: service improvement, e.g. identify service strengths that can be built on and applied widely, identify areas for improvement, identify ways of improving; staffing, e.g. aids staff morale, staff development; encourages innovation*

AC1.5: **Explain the limits of their own authority to make alternative service offers to customers**

- Limits of own authority*: authority within the organisation to enable the decision-making process; relevant knowledge to be able to make an alternative service offer*

AC1.6: **Describe the use of Customer Relationship Management systems and processes to meet customers' expectations**

- Customer Relationship Management system (CRM)*: definition; management of customer facing activities*

- Use of CRM systems and processes*: shifts the focus from product to customer; streamlines offers to what the customer requires; helps to reduce staff stress; aids the buying and selling process; helps with organisational cultural change*

AC1.7: **Explain the importance of regular communication in the development of both internal and external customer relationships**

- Importance of regular communication:
  - internal customer relationship: *e.g. keeps staff up to date, allows for a seamless customer service relationship, shared ownership, empowers staff to develop positive customer relationships*

  - external customer relationship: *e.g. open and honest communication, enhances feelings of loyalty and value*

Information for tutors

Suggested resources

Books

Harris E K – *Customer Service: A Practical Approach,* (5th Edition), (Prentice Hall, 2009) ISBN 9780135109311

Leland K and Bailey K – *Customer Service for Dummies* (3rd Edition), (Wiley Publishing Inc., 2011) ISBN 9780471768692

Lucas R W – *Customer Service Skills for Success* (5th Edition), (McGraw-Hill Higher Education, 2011) ISBN 9780071277501

Websites

www.businessballs.com – Business Balls, information on management and customer relationship management

www.simplybusiness.co.uk – Simply Business, information on customer retention and loyalty

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 and the requirements of the Assessment Strategy.

To ensure that the assessment tasks and activities enable learners to produce valid, sufficient, authentic and appropriate evidence that meets the assessment criteria, centres should apply the *Unit assessment guidance* and the requirements of the Assessment Strategy below.

Wherever possible, centres should adopt a holistic approach to assessing the units in the qualification. This gives the assessment process greater rigour and minimises repetition, time and the burden of assessment on all parties involved in the process.

Unit assessment requirements

This unit must be assessed in the workplace in accordance with Skills CFA Business Administration, Customer Service and Management and Leadership Assessment Strategy in *Annexe A*. Simulation is not allowed for this unit. All evidence of occupational competence should be generated through performance under workplace conditions; this includes evidence of achievement for knowledge-based learning outcomes and associated assessment criteria.

Unit assessment guidance

This guidance supports assessors in making decisions about how best to assess each unit and the evidence needed to meet the assessment requirements of the unit. Centres can adapt the guidance for learners and the particular assessment context, as appropriate.

Observation is the main source of evidence for this unit. The evidence can come from observations of the learner interacting with internal and external customers. Alternatively, a professional discussion could be held with the learner to discuss different situations where they have developed relationships with customers. This could be supported with a witness testimony from a team leader or a colleague which could be used to corroborate the competence of the learner.

Product evidence, for example emails, letters, promotional materials produced by the learner in order to develop customer relationships, seen during an observed performance or professional discussion, must be evaluated and commented on by the assessor. Professional discussion and questioning are suitable and appropriate assessment methods to confirm the knowledge of the learner for learning outcome 1. However, to demonstrate their knowledge level for learning outcome 1 (AC 1.1 to 1.7) learners may be more comfortable with writing a statement, this is acceptable as long as the learners' responses are at the appropriate breadth and depth to meet the level of demand of the knowledge ACs. For example, AC1.2 asks for an explanation of the value of customer loyalty and retention, so definitions or descriptions of customer loyalty and retention would not meet the AC sufficiently. Learners need to show that they understand the importance of customer loyalty and customer retention and the effect on the organisation.

Evidence of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) can also be used within the unit to confirm competence. Wherever possible, the learning outcomes in this unit should be assessed holistically across the qualification.

Unit 19: Support Customer Service Improvements

Unit reference number: T/506/2160

Level: 2

Credit value: 3

Guided learning hours: 12

Unit type Competence

Unit summary

As customers' expectations of customer service rise, it is important that those working in the customer service sector are aware of this and make changes to improve their service to meet these expectations.

As a customer service assistant, it is part of your role to support the changes implemented by your organisation. This unit will give you the knowledge you need to be able to support customer service improvements. You will be required to complete the unit in a real working environment. You will need to be able to identify potential improvements within the limits of your authority, and work with colleagues to support customer service improvements and present them positively to your customers.

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 outline the requirements the learner is expected to meet to achieve the unit.

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria
1.1 Understand how to support customer service improvements	1.1 Describe different sources of information that may help identify ways of improving customer service
	1.2 Describe the constraints on suggesting improvements to customer service
	1.3 Explain the limits of their own authority in implementing improvements
2 Be able to identify the potential for improvements to customer service	2.1 Use information from a range of sources to understand the customer experience
	2.2 Identify potential areas where customer service could be improved from an analysis of information
	2.3 Make recommendations for improvement that are based on evidence from analysed information
3 Be able to support the implementation of improvements to customer service	3.3 Implement agreed improvements within the limits of their own authority
	3.2 Inform customers of improvements to customer service
	3.3 Identify the impact of improvements to customer service and feedback to relevant people

Unit amplification

AC1.1: **Describe different sources of information that may help identify ways of improving customer service**

- Sources of information*: to include customer feedback, staff suggestion box*

- Ways of improving customer service*: e.g. acting positively on feedback from customers, adapting service offer, staff training, changes to procedures*

AC1.2: **Describe the constraints on suggesting improvements to customer service**

- Constraints*: to include costs, staff resources, differing customer and staff perceptions, time, legislation and regulations*

AC1.3: **Explain the limits of their own authority in implementing improvements**

- Limits of own authority*: level of responsibility within organisation, product knowledge, level of expertise, experience or knowledge of the procedure*

Information for tutors

Suggested resources

Books

Heppell M – *Five Star Service: How to Deliver Exceptional Customer Service* (Pearson Education, 2010) ISBN 9780273734383

Leland K and Bailey K – *Customer Service for Dummies* (John Wiley & Sons, 2006) ISBN 9780471768692

Websites

www.customerserviceexcellence.uk.com – includes best practice case studies

www.instituteofcustomerservice.com – the independent, professional membership of customer service. Includes a resources section with a glossary of terms, downloadable resources and guidance notes

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 and the requirements of the Assessment Strategy.

To ensure that the assessment tasks and activities enable learners to produce valid, sufficient, authentic and appropriate evidence that meets the assessment criteria, centres should apply the *Unit assessment guidance* and the requirements of the Assessment Strategy below.

Wherever possible, centres should adopt a holistic approach to assessing the units in the qualification. This gives the assessment process greater rigour and minimises repetition, time and the burden of assessment on all parties involved in the process.

Unit assessment requirements

This unit must be assessed in the workplace in accordance with Skills CFA Business Administration, Customer Service and Management and Leadership Assessment Strategy in *Annexe A.* Simulation is not allowed for this unit. All evidence of occupational competence should be generated through performance under workplace conditions; this includes evidence of achievement for knowledge-based learning outcomes and associated assessment criteria.

Unit assessment guidance

This guidance supports assessors in making decisions about how best to assess each unit and the evidence needed to meet the assessment requirements of the unit. Centres can adapt the guidance for learners and the particular assessment context, as appropriate.

Learning outcome 1 is knowledge-based and should be assessed using evidence that will confirm the knowledge of the learner, such as asking the learner which sources of information they would use to identify ways to improve customer service.

A professional discussion would also be a suitable way for the learner to explain the limits of their own authority in implementing improvements. A reflective account would be a suitable piece of evidence for the assessment of AC1.3, where the learner could show their understanding and indicate how this impacts on their current work practice or past experience.

Learning outcomes 2 and 3 are competency-based and their methods of assessment must allow the learner to demonstrate their competence through naturally occurring evidence in the workplace, such as direct observation of the learner identifying possible improvements and supporting their implementation. This could be achieved by the learner using information from a range of sources (AC2.1) whilst they are being observed and then identifying potential areas where the service could be improved (AC2.2), before making recommendations to their organisation (AC2.3). Product evidence such as emails confirming the learner's involvement could be used to supplement the observation. A witness statement could be obtained from the learner's line manager to confirm that they had implemented the improvements that they had recommended (AC3.1), informed the customers of these improvements (AC3.2) and then given further feedback to their organisation on the impact of these improvements on customer service (AC3.3).

It is good practice to combine the assessment of learning outcomes 1, 2 and 3 through holistic assessment. This could be achieved through directly observing the learner while they identify and support the implementation of improvements (to meet some or all of the assessment criteria in learning outcomes 2 and 3), and questioning them while they complete the tasks within learning outcome 1.

Unit 20:

Support Customers Through Real-time Online Customer Service

Unit reference number: A/506/2161

Level: 2

Credit value: 3

Guided learning hours: 15

Unit type: Competence

Unit summary

Online systems are offered by organisations to enhance their service offer to customers. In order for customers to receive a positive experience it is essential that they are able to obtain support at the time they are using the online system.

This unit is for learners whose job involves helping customers to find their way through on-line systems. It will help you to understand how to support customers through knowing how to use your own organisation's online systems. You will be able to understand what the customer is trying to achieve, how the system allows for that and what point they have reached in terms of finding the right route. You will also learn about questioning techniques and communication styles so that you will be able to help customers to understand and use your organisation's on-line system.

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 outline the requirements the learner is expected to meet to achieve the unit.

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria
1 Understand how to support customers through real-time online customer service	1.1 Explain how an organisation's online customer service system works
	1.2 Explain how to navigate their own customer service site
	1.3 Describe the questioning techniques that may be used when supporting customers through real-time on-line customer services
	1.4 Explain how to adapt their own communication style to meet customers' ability to use online systems
2 Be able to establish the customer service support needed by customers	2.1 Identify customers' familiarity with the site
	2.2 Identify the difficulties faced by customers when navigating websites
	2.3 Identify the support for customers that will meet their needs
3 Be able to support online customer service in real-time	3.1 Step through screen sequences while the customer operates the system
	3.2 Communicate with customers in terms they can understand
	3.3 Inform customers of what is happening and why certain steps are required
	3.4 Adhere to organisational policies and procedures, legal and ethical requirements when supporting customers through on-line customer service

Unit amplification

AC1.1: **Explain how an organisation's online customer service system works**

- The knowledge to meet this AC depends on the particular organisational systems and services. Learners need to apply the knowledge specific to their organisation to meet this AC

- Types of online customer service systems*: live chat/help, knowledge base (Frequently Asked Questions), video chat, click to call*

AC1.2: **Explain how to navigate their own customer service site**

- The knowledge to meet this AC depends on particular organisational requirements and context. Learners need to apply the knowledge specific to their organisation to meet this AC

- Website navigation*: styles, e.g. text links, breadcrumbs, navigation bar, sitemap, drop down menus*

AC1.3: **Describe the questioning techniques that may be used when supporting customers through real-time on-line customer services**

- Questioning techniques*: open, closed, probing, funnel, leading*

- Real-time online support*: supporting the customer at the actual time they are seeking help, with an immediate response*

AC1.4: **Explain how to adapt their own communication style to meet customers' ability to use online systems**

- Communications style*: e.g. friendly, formal, informal, in line with organisational standards and procedures; adapting style, e.g. mirroring customer communication style, based on customer needs/requirements, cultural and language differences*

Information for tutors

Suggested resources

Books

Collier M – *The Ultimate Online Customer Service Guide: How to Connect with your Customers to Sell More!* (John Wiley & Sons, 2011), ISBN 9780470637708

Heppell M – *Five Star Service: How to Deliver Exceptional Customer Service*, (2nd Edition), (Pearson Education Ltd, 2010) ISBN 9780273734383

Leland K and Bailey K – *Customer Service of Dummies* (3rd Edition), (Wiley Publishing Inc., 2006) ISBN 9780471768692

Nash S and Nash D – *Exceeding Customer Expectations: find out what your customers want - and give them even more* (Pathways, 2000) ISBN 9781857035643

O'Ciosog M – *Contact Centre CXM: Customer Service Today and Tomorrow*, (1st Edition) (CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2013) ISBN 9781492267256

Websites

www.customerserviceexcellence.uk.com –provides customer service best practice case studies

www.instituteofcustomerservice.com – the Institute of Customer Service is the independent, professional membership body for the customer service sector. There is a resources section where a glossary of terms, down-loadable resources and guidance notes are available.

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 and the requirements of the Assessment Strategy.

To ensure that the assessment tasks and activities enable learners to produce valid, sufficient, authentic and appropriate evidence that meet the assessment criteria, centres should apply the *Unit assessment guidance* and the requirements of the Assessment Strategy given below.

Wherever possible, centres should adopt a holistic approach to assessing the units in the qualification. This gives the assessment process greater rigour and minimises repetition, time and the burden of assessment on all parties involved in the process.

Unit assessment requirements

This unit must be assessed in the workplace in accordance with Skills CFA Business Administration, Customer Service and Management and Leadership assessment strategy in *Annexe A.* Simulation is not allowed for this unit. All evidence of occupational competence should be generated through performance under workplace conditions; this includes evidence of achievement for knowledge-based learning outcomes and associated assessment criteria.

Unit assessment guidance

This guidance supports assessors in making decisions about how best to assess each unit and the evidence needed to meet the requirements. Centres can adapt the guidance as appropriate for learners and the particular assessment context, as appropriate.

Learning outcome 1 is knowledge-based. This learning outcome could be assessed by the learner carrying out research on the customer service online systems used by their own organisation and producing a report on the functionality and use of these systems. The report could include screenshots and other images of the online systems. This should then be supplemented by questioning and discussion with the learner to satisfy the requirements of AC1.3 and AC1.4.   Alternatively, this could be assessed holistically with learning outcomes 2 and 3 whereby a question and answer session is carried out with the learner after they have been observed supporting customers with online systems.

Learning outcomes 2 and 3 are competency-based and should be assessed using evidence that will confirm the competence of the learner. This is best done through direct observation of the learner whilst they are supporting customers online and witness testimony. The learner must satisfy the requirements of the assessment criteria by using the appropriate questioning techniques to establish customers' knowledge of the customer service system and the navigation difficulties they are facing. Learners then need to use the customers' responses to decide on the support needed and then provide this support by helping them to navigate the site accordingly and communicating the relevant information appropriately, based on their needs. This observation should be supported by other evidence such as learner notes and a discussion with the learner covering how they decided on the support needed by customers. In addition, a witness testimony from a knowledgeable and competent person, such as the line manager of the learner, should be used to provide supplementary evidence of the learner's ability to use the system correctly, and in line with organisational policies and procedures.

Unit 21: Use Social Media to Deliver Customer Service

Unit reference number: J/506/2163

Level: 2

Credit value: 3

Guided learning hours: 18

Unit type: Competence

Unit summary

Social media is used universally by organisations as a platform to communicate business-related information. As more organisations use social media to connect with their customers, there is a requirement for customer service assistants to gain knowledge in this area.

This unit is ideal if you are working in an organisation that uses social media as part of the customer service strategy. You will look at social media in a business environment to understand how it is used in customer service. You will also be required to demonstrate your skills in dealing with customers using social media by using your organisation's systems to communicate with your customers.

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 outline the requirements the learner is expected to meet to achieve the unit.

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria
1 Understand social media in a business environment	1.1 Explain how different social media platforms can be used for customer service
	1.2 Describe different audience groups for a range of social media platforms
	1.3 Explain the importance of monitoring customer posts in social media networks
	1.4 Explain organisational policy and guidelines for the use of social media for customer service purposes
	1.5 Explain the etiquette of communication within different social media platforms
	1.6 Explain the importance of security settings and how they are used on different social media platforms
	1.7 Identify the information that can be shared when colleagues are involved in exchanges using social media
2 Be able to deal with customers using social media	2.1 Monitor social media to identify customer questions, requests and comments
	2.2 Make responses that are appropriate to posts made by customers on social media networks
	2.3 Take action to ensure that customers are satisfied before closing dialogue
	2.4 Adhere to organisational policies and procedures, legal and ethical requirements when dealing with customers using social media

Unit amplification

AC1.1: **Explain how different social media platforms can be used for customer service**

- Social media platform*: definition (sharing or exchange of information; virtual communities and networks); types of social media platforms, e.g. Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, Google+, YouTube (these social media platforms are considered appropriate at the time of publication)*

- Use of social media in customer service*: customer relationship marketing, e.g. Facebook page to communicate information and share experiences; widen customer base, gain business, make new contacts; marketing and advertising, e.g. sending messages to customers about product launches; to add value to your service offer; market intelligence*

AC1.2: **Describe different audience groups for a range of social media platforms**

- Different audience groups*: based on age, interest, needs, gender, location, hobbies, businesses that may use the organisation's services*

AC1.3: **Explain the importance of monitoring customer posts in social media networks**

- Monitoring customer posts*: use of tools, e.g. Google Alerts, HootSuite, Trackur, Yext Tweetbeep; use of a monitoring programme; team to manage posts and respond to customers according to SLA*

- Importance of monitoring customer posts*: to respond to customer queries; remove inappropriate posts such as those using offensive language; manage brand reputation; to establish the level of customer service provided by the organisation; identify strengths and weaknesses in customer service; keep up to date with trends/customer preferences*

AC1.4: **Explain organisational policy and guidelines for the use of social media for customer service purposes**

- The knowledge to meet this AC depends on particular organisational requirements and context. Learners need to apply the knowledge specific to their organisation to meet this AC

- General guidelines include*: follow organisational policies and procedures at all times; never disclose commercially sensitive or privacy marked information; comply with copyright rules; use disclaimers where appropriate; never discuss competitors, partners and customers without permission; maintain personal privacy*

AC1.5: **Explain the etiquette of communication within different social media platforms**

- Etiquette of communication: *type of language, e.g. appropriate, formal, informal; acceptable amount of time in replying to customer posts, e.g. SLA; appropriate use of media e.g. video, pictures, text*

AC1.6: **Explain the importance of security settings and how they are used on different social media platforms**

- Importance of security settings: *e.g. to ensure customer confidentiality, data protection of customers' personal details, avoid fraudulent use of customer information, minimise misuse of the social media platform*

- Security settings: *e.g. privacy settings, password, user name, ID number, email address, memorable data, customer personal security information*

AC1.7: **Identify the information that can be shared when colleagues are involved in exchanges using social media**

- The knowledge to meet this AC depends on particular organisational policies and context. Learners need to apply the knowledge specific to their organisation to meet this AC

Information for tutors

Suggested resources

Books

Bailey K and Leland K – *Online Customer Service of Dummies*, (Wiley Publishing Inc., 2001) ISBN 978-0764553165

Collier M – *The Ultimate Online Customer Service Guide: How to Connect with your Customers to Sell More!* (John Wiley & Sons, 2011) ISBN 9780470637708

Heppell M – *Five Star Service: How to Deliver Exceptional Customer Service*, 2nd Edition (Pearson Education, 2010) ISBN 978-0273734383

Hill-Wilson M and Blunt C – *Delivering Effective Social Customer Service: How to Redefine the Way You Manage Customer Experience and Your Corporate Reputation*, 1st Edition (John Wiley & Sons, 2013) ISBN 9781118662670

Nash, S and Nash D – *Exceeding Customer Expectations: find out what your customers want - and give them even more* (Pathways, February 2000) ISBN 9781857035643

Websites

www.callcentrehelper.com – an online contact centre magazine covering topical subjects

www.customerserviceexcellence.uk.com – provides customer service best practice case studies

www.instituteofcustomerservice.com – the Institute of Customer Service is the independent, professional membership body for the customer service sector. There is a resources section where a glossary of terms, down-loadable resources and guidance notes are available

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 and the requirements of the Assessment Strategy.

To ensure that the assessment tasks and activities enable learners to produce valid, sufficient, authentic and appropriate evidence that meets the assessment criteria, centres should apply the Unit assessment guidance and the requirements of the Assessment Strategy overleaf.

Wherever possible, centres should adopt a holistic approach to assessing the units in the qualification. This gives the assessment process greater rigour and minimises repetition, time and the burden of assessment on all parties involved in the process.

Unit assessment requirements

This unit must be assessed in the workplace in accordance with Skills CFA Business Administration, Customer Service and Management and Leadership Assessment Strategy in *Annexe A*. Simulation is not allowed for this unit. All evidence of occupational competence should be generated through performance under workplace conditions; this includes evidence of achievement for knowledge-based learning outcomes and associated assessment criteria.

Unit assessment guidance

This guidance supports assessors in making decisions about how best to assess each unit and the evidence needed to meet the assessment requirements of the unit. Centres can adapt the guidance for learners and the particular assessment context, as appropriate.

Learning outcome 1 is knowledge based and should be assessed using appropriate methods such as questioning or professional discussion. For example, the assessor could ask the learner questions about the importance of monitoring customer posts for AC 1.3 after having observed them using a social media platform to respond to a customer's post.

Learning outcome 2 is competency based; therefore the learner should be assessed using evidence that will confirm competence, such as direct observation of the learner dealing with customers using social media. The record of the conversation can be used as evidence that the learner has dealt with the customer appropriately and using organisational procedures. Work products, witness testimony and reflective accounts can also complement any observations completed.

It is good practice to combine the assessment of learning outcomes 1 and 2 through holistic assessment, as shown in the examples above.

Evidence of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) can also be used within the unit to confirm competence. Wherever possible, the learning outcomes in this unit should be assessed holistically across the qualification.

Unit 22: Champion Customer Service

Unit reference number: D/506/2153

Level: 4

Credit value: 4

Guided learning hours: 17

Unit type: Competence

Unit summary

This unit is about acting as a champion for customer service in an organisation, being constantly alert for issues that affect customer service, analysing these issues and their implications, challenging on behalf of the customer and passing on your knowledge and expertise to others.

Being a customer service champion involves examining the behaviours and processes that have most impact on the way your customers see you and your organisation. Champions have to be customer service winners who are genuinely customer-focused employees focused on and empowered to improve the customer experience at every stage. Your customers can be anyone to whom you provide a service and may be internal to your organisation or they may be external customers.

Staff members with high levels of responsibility for customer service have an important role to play as champions of excellent service within their organisations. Customer service champions need to have a great deal of knowledge and expertise about customer service from which others can benefit.

In this unit you will learn how to champion customer service within your organisation and to recognise excellent behaviour in other organisations. Using a range of techniques you will learn how to evaluate the effectiveness of customer service in your organisation. You will be able to identify where improvements can be made to customer service and be able to promote customer service to colleagues in the organisation taking on the role of being a champion for customer service.

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 outline the requirements the learner is expected to meet to achieve the unit.

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria
1 Understand how to champion customer service	1.1 Evaluate the importance of viewing operations from the customer's viewpoint
	1.2 Analyse the role of service partners in providing customer service
	1.3 Evaluate the effectiveness of information collection systems and reports
	1.4 Describe organisational decision-making processes and limits of their own authority
	1.5 Assess the suitability of a range of monitoring techniques to identify opportunities for customer service improvements
	1.6 Describe activities that give added value to the service chain
2 Be able to identify the scope for improvements to customer service	2.1 Monitor customer service delivery to identify issues that are important to customer service
	2.2 Analyse the implications of improvements to customer service
	2.3 Identify customer service issues relating to new products and/or services
	2.4 Identify the strategic and managerial implications of changes to customer service and the service offer
3 Be able to champion customer service	3.1 Promote the role of customer service within an organisation's operational plans
	3.2 Inform individual staff members about their role in championing customer service
	3.3 Promote the benefits of effective customer service

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria
	3.4 Provide validated customer service advice and information to colleagues
	3.5 Support others to identify areas for improvement to customer service
	3.6 Monitor the effectiveness of advice and information given
	3.7 Take actions to ensure that customer service delivery meets agreed standards

Unit amplification

AC1.1: **Evaluate the importance of viewing operations from the customer's viewpoint**

- Customer's viewpoint*: adopting a customer-centred approach; customer relationship management (CRM); mapping customer touch points; identifying moments of truth; continuous improvements to service delivery policies and procedures; focus on meeting customers' needs*

- Importance*: 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 and referenceability, supports information exchange, increases cross selling and up selling opportunities, customer retention*

AC1.2: **Analyse the role of service partners in providing customer service**

- Service partners*: internal and external partners, e.g. suppliers of goods and/or support services; organisations that provide specialist services to other organisations*

- Role of service partners*: e.g. call handling, claims handling, despatch, providing legal services, maintenance services, specialist contractors, IT services, Public Relations companies*

- Partners responsibilities*: contingent on formal or informal agreement, power and authority based on agreed partnership structure, agreed procedures and priorities*

- Service level agreements*: with internal and external partners*

AC1.3: **Evaluate the effectiveness of information collection systems and reports**

- Information collection systems*: e.g. customer feedback cards, on-line customer feedback collection, social network metrics system, loyalty cards*

- Information reports*: written or oral, specific or general reports, e.g. customer feedback on using system X, social media reports e.g. number of 'hits' per hour/day/week*

AC1.4: **Describe organisational decision-making processes and limits of their own authority**

- The knowledge to meet this AC depends on the particular organisational processes and context. Learners need to apply the knowledge specific to their organisation to meet this AC

- General guidance may include:

    o level of decision-making – *strategic, tactical or operational/administrative*

    o quality of decision-making – *SMART objectives and success criteria; use of valid and reliable information to support decision-making; cost-benefit analysis of impact of decisions; ethics, social responsibility and sustainability; consequences*

    o responsibilities – *level of decision-making*; *level of authority and responsibility; organisational approval procedures, e.g. multiple level sign off, finance department sign off, internal requisition process*

AC1.5: **Assess the suitability of a range of monitoring techniques to identify opportunities for customer service improvements**

- Monitoring techniques*: formal feedback systems, e.g. customer comment cards, feedback facility on the organisations websites, silent monitoring phone calls, mystery shopper, post-contact customer survey, complaints; informal feedback collection, e.g. customer comments, repeat customers, referrals by customers to new customers, customer forums*

AC1.6: **Describe activities that give added value to the service chain**

- Primary activities*: inbound logistics, operations, out bound logistics, service, marketing and sales*

- Support activities*: procurement, technology developments, infrastructure, human resources*

- Adding value*: analysis of the service chain, identifying costs savings, removing blockages, removing unnecessary systems and processes, recruiting customer service focussed people, training the customer service team, motivating the customer service team, e.g. providing incentives, using technology to provide improved customer service e.g. using social media, easy access to support materials e.g. handbooks and manuals*

Information for tutors

Suggested resources

Books

Barlass S – *Creating Customer Service Champions* (SB Marketing Group, Inc, 2011)
ASIN: B004MDLW94

Di Julius R – *What's the Secret: To Providing a World-Class Customer Experience* (John Wiley & Sons, 2008) ISBN 9780470196120

Shapira Z – *Organizational Decision Making* (Cambridge University Press, 2002)
ISBN 9780521890502

Zimmermann A – *The Service Payoff: How Customer Service Champions Outserve and Outlast the Competition* (Peak Performance Publishing, 2011)
ISBN 9781937125004

Websites

www.tutor2u.net/business/organisation/decisionmaking.htm – This website provides information about the process of decision making

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 and the requirements of the Assessment Strategy.

To ensure that the assessment tasks and activities enable learners to produce valid, sufficient, authentic and appropriate evidence that meets the assessment criteria, centres should apply the *Unit assessment guidance* and the requirements of the Assessment Strategy below.

Wherever possible, centres should adopt a holistic approach to assessing the units in the qualification. This gives the assessment process greater rigour and minimises repetition, time and the burden of assessment on all parties involved in the process.

Unit assessment requirements

This unit must be assessed in the workplace in accordance with the Skills CFA Business Administration, Customer Service and Management and Leadership Assessment Strategy in *Annexe A*. Simulation is not allowed for this unit. All evidence of occupational competence should be generated through performance under workplace conditions; this includes evidence of achievement for knowledge-based learning outcomes and associated assessment criteria

Unit assessment guidance

This guidance supports assessors in making decisions about how best to assess each unit and the evidence needed to meet the assessment requirements of the unit. Centres can adapt the guidance for learners and the particular assessment context, as appropriate.

Evidence to demonstrate achievement of learning outcomes 2 and 3 could be gathered through a combination of direct observation of the learner and a review of their work products, supported by a professional discussion and/or reflective account and witness testimony.

Evidence for learning outcome 2 could include a review of the learner's work products, for example, the documented process of the monitoring activities, evidence of data analysis from the monitoring process (AC2.1, AC2.2) or reports produced to support AC2.3 and AC2.4. For learning outcome 3, direct observation of the learner promoting customer service within the organisation could provide evidence for AC3.1, AC3.2, AC3.3 and AC3.4. Alternatively, evidence for these assessment criteria could come from the learner's work products such as presentation slides, written or verbal records of communications to colleagues relating to championing customer service. Witness testimony could provide useful supporting evidence for the assessment criteria above, for example, how the learner has helped colleagues to improve customer service (AC3.5).

Observation and work products evidence provided for learning outcomes 2 and 3 should be supported by a professional discussion and/or reflective account based around the evidence to corroborate the learner's competence. For example, for learning outcome 2, a reflective account would give the learner the opportunity to comment on how they identified the customer service issues and the strategic and managerial implications of the changes to be made (AC2.3 and AC2.4). For learning outcome 3, the learner could describe the actions taken to ensure customer service delivery meets standards and explain why these actions were appropriate (AC3.7).

A reflective account by the learner, designed to meet all the assessment criteria and applied to their job role would be seen as the most suitable and effective way to evidence learning outcome 1, and could be integrated into the reflective account if used for learning outcomes 2 and 3. This would provide the opportunity for the learner to link and apply their knowledge to their work activities. For example, the work products and supporting reflective account used to evidence AC2.1 and AC2.3 could be used to support the evidence that would meet AC1.1 and AC1.2.

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) can also be used within the unit to confirm competence. Wherever possible, the learning outcomes in this unit should be assessed holistically across the qualification.

Unit 23: Build and Maintain Effective Customer Relations

Unit reference number: R/506/2179

Level: 4

Credit value: 6

Guided learning hours: 25

Unit type: Competence

Unit summary

Building and developing effective customer relations is a vital aspect of customer service. Strong customer relations will help your organisation identify and understand your customers' expectations, encourage a way of working that is based on partnership and mutual trust, and establish and maintain customer loyalty.

In this unit you will learn how to build effective relationships with customers. You will understand how to undertake mapping exercises using different techniques against stakeholders working with your organisation, how influence may be used to improve customer relationships and how to evaluate the benefits of customer loyalty. You will learn about compromise in dealing with customers and how to evaluate the benefits of a customer centred approach for the organisation.

You will be able to demonstrate your competence in developing relationships with customers, maintaining and monitoring how effective the organisation's relationships are with customers and how, through consultation with customer's, improvements can be made.

This unit is for you only if you are in a position to influence the way your organisation determines the level of service offered to different customers.

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 outline the requirements the learner is expected to meet to achieve the unit.

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria
1 Understand how to build effective relationships with customers	1.1 Analyse stakeholder mapping techniques
	1.2 Analyse the features of influencing techniques
	1.3 Explain how influencing techniques can be used to improve the relationship with customers
	1.4 Evaluate the benefits and value of relationships with customers and customer loyalty
	1.5 Explain how techniques to manage expectations are applied to the management of customers
	1.6 Explain different types of acceptable compromise
	1.7 Evaluate the benefits of adopting a 'customer-centred' approach
2 Be able to determine the scope for building effective relationships with customers	2.1 Identify the customers with whom relationships should be developed
	2.2 Identify the interests and concerns of customers with whom relationships should be developed
	2.3 Evaluate the scope for and limitations of building relationships with different types of customer

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria
3 Be able to develop effective relationships with customers	3.1 Behave in a way that creates mutual trust and respect
	3.2 Provide information and perform actions within agreed timescales
	3.3 Take account of feedback provided by customers
	3.4 Keep customers up to date with new products and/or services and developments
	3.5 Assess regularly the extent to which customers' expectations are met
	3.6 Use personal influence and authority to ensure that customer needs are met or exceeded
4 Be able to review and improve relationships with customers	4.1 Monitor customer relationships and developments
	4.2 Take action to ensure that others complete agreed actions within agreed timescales
	4.3 Address changes to customer service methods that may have an effect on customer relationships
	4.4 Collect feedback from customers on their levels of satisfaction
	4.5 Recommend improvements to customer service based on analyses of the effectiveness of customer relationships

Unit amplification

AC1.1: Analyse stakeholder mapping techniques

- Types of stakeholder*: primary, secondary, key, internal, external, connected*

- Stakeholder mapping*: purpose, e.g. identifies potential conflicts, gaps, contradictions or incompatibilities between stakeholders, supports on-going two-way communication; mapping process, e.g. identifying key stakeholders, defining their concerns and issues, assessing their level of commitment or resistance*

- Mapping techniques*: e.g. basic stakeholder analysis (Bryson 1995), power versus interest grids (Eden and Ackerman 1998), stakeholder-influence diagrams (Eden and Ackerman 1998); features of techniques, e.g. two–by-two matrix, stakeholder interest and power as dimensions; importance of influence relationships; benefits and limitations of techniques; suitability of contexts*

AC1.2: Analyse the features of influencing techniques

- Influencing techniques*: e.g. determining outcomes and objectives of the engagement process; setting the scene; understanding needs and values of other party; empathy*

- Features of influencing techniques*: e.g. reciprocity, commitment and consistency, social proof, authority, scarcity, tradable concessions*

AC1.3: Explain how influencing techniques can be used to improve the relationship with customers

- Impact on customer relationship*: e.g. open lines of communication, better understanding of customer needs, builds trust with customer, encourage long term relationship with customers, encourage customer feedback on service offer and products and/or service*

AC1.4: Evaluate the benefits and value of relationships with customers and customer loyalty

- Customer relationships*: building relationships, e.g. direct marketing, customer relationship management (CRM); relationship building principles, e.g. handle different customers differently, anticipate customer needs, continuously learn about customers, interact personally with customers; benefits and value, e.g. improved customer experience, increased efficiency and effectiveness in service delivery; targeted marketing efforts, automated analytics and reporting, customer loyalty*

- Customer loyalty*: definition; benefits and value, e.g. reduced operating costs, repeat business, increased customer retention rates, increased profitability, positive brand image*

AC1.5: **Explain how techniques to manage expectations are applied to the management of customers**

- Managing expectations*: process, i.e. setting expectations, articulating risks and issues, communicating progress, monitoring expectations, influencing expectations; skills needed, e.g. influencing skills, communication skills, negotiation skills (concessions and compromises)*

- Use of expectation management techniques in customer management*: e.g. generating and negotiating solutions to problems and complaints; resolving customer problems before they become complaints; maintaining positive relationship with customer; maintaining customer expectations in line with the service offer*

AC1.6: **Explain different types of acceptable compromise**

- Acceptable compromise*: different types, e.g. compromise half measures; give-and-take; agreement; accommodate; concession*

AC1.7: **Evaluate the benefits of adopting a 'customer-centred' approach**

- Customer-centred approach*: definition, i.e. an approach that considers customer service delivery from the perspective of customers; purpose of approach, e.g. gaining trust, building loyalty and referenceability; principles, e.g. set business goals for customer service, understand user requirements, design the customer service experience, implement the design, measure and adapt*

- Benefits*: e.g. satisfied customers, satisfied staff, building customer loyalty, increasing status and reputation of the organisation, potential for increased revenue streams, potential for building the organisation brand*

Information for tutors

Suggested resources

Books

Inghilleri L, Solomon M – *Exceptional Service, Exceptional Profit: The Secrets of Building a Five-Star Customer Service Organization* (Amacom, 1 April 2010)
ISBN 9780814415382

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 and the requirements of the Assessment Strategy.

To ensure that the assessment tasks and activities enable learners to produce valid, sufficient, authentic and appropriate evidence that meets the assessment criteria, centres should apply the *Unit assessment guidance* and the requirements of the Assessment Strategy below.

Wherever possible, centres should adopt a holistic approach to assessing the units in the qualification. This gives the assessment process greater rigour and minimises repetition, time and the burden of assessment on all parties involved in the process.

Unit assessment requirements

This unit must be assessed in the workplace in accordance with the Skills CFA Business Administration, Customer Service and Management and Leadership Assessment Strategy in *Annexe A*. Simulation is not allowed for this unit. All evidence of occupational competence should be generated through performance under workplace conditions; this includes evidence of achievement for knowledge-based learning outcomes and associated assessment criteria.

Unit assessment guidance

This guidance supports assessors in making decisions about how best to assess each unit and the evidence needed to meet the assessment requirements of the unit. Centres can adapt the guidance for learners and the particular assessment context, as appropriate.

Customers may be internal or external to the organisation and by choosing their customers carefully the learner may be able to demonstrate their knowledge and ability to build and maintain customer relationships. Possible evidence sources may be from an established customer relationship that could be developed further or a new customer offering the opportunity to create a new relationship.

Evidence to meet the requirements of learning outcomes 2, 3 and 4 is likely to come from a combination of direct observation and/or examination of the learner's work products, supported by professional discussion and/or reflective account and witness testimony.

Evidence to demonstrate achievement of learning outcome 2 could come from the records of a stakeholder mapping activity used to identify customers for relationship building (AC2.1 and AC2.2).

The analysis could be supported by the learner's reflective account of how they evaluated the scope and limitations of building relationships with the identified customers, including the criteria used in the process (AC2.3).

Direct observation could provide the evidence to meet the requirements of learning outcome 3. The observation should be planned with the learner to capture as much evidence as is possible in a holistic manner and could include all the interactions with staff and customers, such as service of products, providing information and advice and/or promoting new product lines; these would support the following assessment criteria, AC3.3, AC3.4 and AC3.6. Work products could provide further evidence for AC3.4 and include information on products and services referred to by the learner. Evidence from direct observation of the learner could be further supported by a reflective account, focussing on providing evidence for AC3.3, AC3.5 and AC3.6. The reflective account could include examples of when and how customer feedback has been used to make improvements to products and/or services. Witness testimony could be an evidence source for AC3.1 either written or verbal and collected from suitable customers and other personnel.

For learning outcome 4, work products could come from the learners reports on monitoring customer relationships and addressing changes to service methods (AC 4.1 and AC4.3). Witness testimony could confirm this process over time and provide evidence towards AC4.2. Work products could provide evidence for AC4.4 and could include a customer satisfaction survey. The results should be presented in a manner to provide information against any set criteria used for the survey and the learner should provide an overall outcome. AC4.5 could be evidenced through a report produced by the learner and could link to the other assessment criteria such AC 4.4, there will be a requirement to make an assessment on the effectiveness of customer relationships and how as an outcome improvements can be made, the learner should provide the impact of such improvements and provide a framework for monitoring the progress on implementing such improvements.

Evidence from direct observation of the learner and their work products should be supported by professional discussion to provide further evidence for the assessment criteria associated with these learning outcomes. For example, professional discussion with the learner could focus on the learner's rationale for the customer satisfaction survey carried out to meet AC4.4 and include detail of and reasons for selecting the representative sample.

A reflective account would be seen as the most appropriate and manageable assessment method to meet the cognitive level of demand of the operative verbs in learning outcome 1. For example, for AC1.1, AC1.2, AC1.4 and AC1.7 the learner's account needs to link closely with the requirements of analysis and/or evaluation and evidence will need to show examples of how this was undertaken in relationship to mapping techniques and influencing techniques. The learner should relate their own experiences within their job to support content and use real examples.

Evidence of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) can also be used within the unit to confirm the learner's competence. Wherever possible, the learning outcomes in this unit should be assessed holistically across the qualification.

Unit 24: Manage a Customer Service Award Programme

Unit reference number: L/506/2181

Level: 4

Credit value: 4

Guided learning hours: 15

Unit type: Competence

Unit summary

This unit gives you the knowledge, understanding and skills to be able to plan and manage an award programme (for individuals or teams) that will build a customer service focussed culture in your organisation.

A customer service award programme can make a valuable contribution to your organisation's customer service strategy. It serves the dual role of motivating team members and displaying to customers your commitment to customer service.

People have a natural need to feel good about the jobs they do. By regularly rewarding and recognising members of staff when they do something right you motivate them to keep doing good work. People thrive when they receive personal recognition for the work they do and although a salary is important it never replaces the need for genuine appreciation for their efforts. Although everyone is expected to do their jobs well, recognition encourages and motivates staff members to exceed what is expected of them.

In this unit you will learn about the reasons for introducing a customer awards programme and the important role they play in developing a customer centred organisational culture in the organisation. You will be able to plan and manage a customer service award programme that will recognise the value that employees add to the organisation and evaluate its effectiveness.

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 outline the requirements the learner is expected to meet to achieve the unit.

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria
1 Understand the management of a customer service award programme	1.1 Justify the reasons for an award programme
	1.2 Explain how to make use of a customer service award programme as a promotional tool
	1.3 Explain the likely impact of organisational culture on a customer service award programme
	1.4 Explain the requirements of a business case for a customer service award programme
2 Be able to plan a customer service award programme	2.1 Define specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bound (SMART) objectives for the award programme
	2.2 Evaluate the benefits, drawbacks and costs of different options for a customer service award programme
	2.3 Select the option that best meets the objectives of the award programme
	2.4 Develop a plan that specifies roles, responsibilities, actions, resources, contingencies and timescales
	2.5 Develop award criteria that are transparent and fair
3 Be able to manage a customer service award programme	3.1 Promote the award programme with the dual purpose of motivating team members and engaging customers
	3.2 Take action to ensure that award winners are recognised in a way that demonstrates organisational commitment to excellent customer service
	3.3 Evaluate the effectiveness of a customer service award programme

Unit amplification

AC1.1:   Justify the reasons for an award programme

- Types of Award programme*: e.g. length of service, recognition of achievement (individual, team, project), incentive based, customer nominated*

- Reasons*: impact on staff, e.g. attendance, motivation, competition, recognition; impact on customer service standards, e.g. maintaining and improving customer service levels; investing in people; raising staff morale*

AC1.2:   Explain how to make use of a customer service award programme as a promotional tool

- Use as promotional tools*: e.g. national and international customer service excellence awards; company recognition of customer service excellence; customer testimonials; press releases; on-line promotion of award winners; use of social media to promote*

AC1.3:   Explain the likely impact of organisational culture on a customer service award programme

- Organisational Culture*: definition (values, beliefs, norms); importance of positive organisational culture*

- *Types of organisational culture:*
  - *positive culture – characteristics, e.g. atmosphere of confidence and respect, trust and engagement, staff go the extra mile*
  - *negative culture – characteristics, e.g. lack of cooperation and enthusiasm, blame culture, lack of responsibility*

AC1.4:   Explain the requirements of a business case for a customer service award programme

- Requirements*: objectives of award programme; robust data analysis e.g. cost benefit analysis, return on investment; budget; benefits and risks; meeting the organisation's vision and mission; recognition of quality, e.g. Investors in People*

Information for tutors

Suggested resources

Books

Harvard Business Press – *Developing a Business Case: Pocket Mentor Series* (Harvard Business School publishing, 2010) ISBN 9781422129760

Heppell M – *Five Star Service: How to Deliver Exceptional Customer Service* (2nd Edition), (Pearson Business, 2010) ISBN 9780273734383

Hyken S – *Amaze Every Customer Ever Time: 52 Tools for Delivering the Most Amazing Customer Service on the Planet* (Greenleaf book group press, 2013) ISBN 9781626340091

Websites

www.investorsinpeople.co.uk – Home page of Investors In People includes information about how an organisation can gain recognition for valuing it's staff. The website provides information about the IIP accreditation framework.

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 and the requirements of the Assessment Strategy.

To ensure that the assessment tasks and activities enable learners to produce valid, sufficient, authentic and appropriate evidence that meets the assessment criteria, centres should apply the *Unit assessment guidance* and the requirements of the Assessment Strategy below.

Wherever possible, centres should adopt a holistic approach to assessing the units in the qualification. This gives the assessment process greater rigour and minimises repetition, time and the burden of assessment on all parties involved in the process.

Unit assessment requirements

This unit must be assessed in the workplace in accordance with the Skills CFA Business Administration, Customer Service and Management and Leadership Assessment Strategy in *Annexe A*. Simulation is not allowed for this unit. All evidence of occupational competence should be generated through performance under workplace conditions; this includes evidence of achievement for knowledge-based learning outcomes and associated assessment criteria.

Unit assessment guidance

This guidance supports assessors in making decisions about how best to assess each unit and the evidence needed to meet the assessment requirements of the unit. Centres can adapt the guidance for learners and the particular assessment context, as appropriate.

Learning outcomes 2 and 3 involve the learner planning and managing a customer service award programme. This could be for individuals or teams within the organisation.

Evidence to demonstrate achievement of learning outcome 2 is likely to come from the examination of the learner's work products such as, a list of the SMART objectives that have been devised for the award programme, terms of reference and agreed criteria on how the awards would be awarded, (AC2.1). Emails to colleagues, letters, minutes of meetings or a work plan could provide evidence of AC2.2, AC2.3, AC2.4 and AC2.5. This evidence should be reviewed by the assessor and used to support a professional discussion to evidence the underpinning knowledge and understanding.

Evidence for learning outcome 3 could include direct observation of the learner and examination of any work products that are produced. For example, evidence for AC3.1 might be a record of a training event where the learner promoted the award programme to staff members. Evidence for AC3.2 might be a customer service awards event organised by the learner whilst evidence for AC3.3 could be a report based on data collected over a period of time that is measured against the SMART objectives previously defined for AC2.1. This evidence should be supported by a professional discussion around the learner's performance and/or work products to provide further evidence for the assessment criteria.

Learning outcome 1 is about the learner's understanding of the management of a customer service award programme. Evidence to demonstrate achievement of this learning outcome could come from a professional discussion and this evidence could be integrated into the professional discussion for learning outcomes 2 and 3 giving the learner the opportunity to link and apply their knowledge to their workplace activities. The learner must demonstrate both a depth and breadth of knowledge at an appropriate level for the operative verbs. For example, for AC1.2 the learner could explain how a customer service award programme would link to the achievement of the organisation's business objectives. When providing evidence for AC1.3 the learner might explain how organisational culture can be influenced and benefit from a customer service award programme.

Witness testimony and evidence of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) can also be used within the unit to confirm competence. Wherever possible, the learning outcomes in this unit should be assessed holistically across the qualification.

Unit 25: Manage the Use of Technology to Improve Customer Service

Unit reference number: Y/506/2183

Level: 4

Credit value: 4

Guided learning hours: 14

Unit type: Competence

Unit summary

This gives you the knowledge, understanding and skills to be able to improve customer service through the use of technology.

Technology has led the way in developing services that an organisation can offer to its customers by offering a range of facilities that would be difficult to provide using other forms of media. We have become accustomed to seeing advertising that directs us to an organisation's website for further information with access 24 hours for 365 days a year. Organisations can use technology to monitor and improve the level of customer service through the use of 'Metrics' that provide data on such things as the speed of response or customer buying patterns.

In this unit you will learn how to identify opportunities to improve your organisation's customer service through the use of technology. You will be able to collect customer service metrics and implement changes that have been identified through the analysis of the data they have provided. You will understand how to manage technology and be able to analyse the service data it produces to improve the overall experience of customer service users.

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 outline the requirements the learner is expected to meet to achieve the unit.

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria
1 Understand how to manage the use of technology to improve customer service	1.1 Analyse developments in information and communication technology that relate to customer service
	1.2 Analyse the features, functions and implications of technology for customer service delivery
	1.3 Explain how to monitor the use of technology to improve customer service
2 Be able to identify opportunities for customer service improvement through the use of technology	2.1 Review the effectiveness of customer service delivery against agreed criteria
	2.2 Identify how customer service delivery could be improved by the introduction or adaptation of technology
	2.3 Assess the costs of changes in the use of technology to improve customer service delivery
	2.4 Make recommendations for changes in the use of technology through a costed business case
3 Be able to implement changes in technology to improve customer service	3.1 Plan the implementation of changes in the use of technology in a way that minimises disruption to business
	3.2 Update colleagues on the implementation and expected benefits of new technology
	3.3 Provide staff with training in the use of new technology
	3.4 Monitor the implementation of changes in the use of technology in line with the plan
	3.5 Evaluate the effectiveness of changes in the use of technology against agreed evaluation criteria

Unit amplification

AC1.1: **Analyse developments in information and communication technology that relate to customer service**

- Developments in ICT*: internet, e.g. customer service knowledge base, social media, live chat, online shopping and payments; mobile technology, e.g. Apps*

AC1.2: **Analyse the features, functions and implications of technology for customer service delivery**

- Features*: e.g. accessibility, availability, ease of use, Internet connectivity*

- Functions*: e.g. on-line customer support, product support, accessibility to product information, order fulfilment, on-line payment systems, e-shopping*

- Implications*: e.g. affordability, cost savings, efficiency of business functions, greater customer satisfaction, greater market share through excellent customer service, targeted advertising*

AC1.3: **Explain how to monitor the use of technology to improve customer service**

- Monitoring*: process, e.g. establish service levels; set organisational targets, e.g. response times; agree targets with managers and employees; gather customer service metrics, e.g. speed of response times; monitor targets during year, e.g. three, six and nine months; report to management and reset targets for subsequent time period*

Information for tutors

Suggested resources

Books

Harris E – *Customer Service: Pearson New International Edition: A Practical Approach* (6th Edition), (Pearson Education Ltd, 2014) ISBN 9781292040356

Kumar V – *Profitable Customer Engagement: Concept, Metrics and Strategies* (SAGE Publications Pvt. Ltd, 2013) ISBN 9788132113409

Kumar V and Reinartz W – *Customer Relationship Management: Concept, Strategy, and Tools* (2nd Edition), (Springer, 2012) ISBN 9783642201301

Websites

www.customerthink.com – The Customer Think website has a list of different customer service metrics that could be used by organisations

www.instituteofcustomerservice.com – The Institute of Customer Service website has a list of possible articles related to the use of Customer Service metrics in different organisations

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 and the requirements of the Assessment Strategy.

To ensure that the assessment tasks and activities enable learners to produce valid, sufficient, authentic and appropriate evidence that meets the assessment criteria, centres should apply the *Unit assessment guidance* and the requirements of the Assessment Strategy below.

Wherever possible, centres should adopt a holistic approach to assessing the units in the qualification. This gives the assessment process greater rigour and minimises repetition, time and the burden of assessment on all parties involved in the process.

Unit assessment requirements

This unit must be assessed in the workplace in accordance with the Skills CFA Business Administration, Customer Service and Management and Leadership Assessment Strategy in *Annexe A*. Simulation is not allowed for this unit. All evidence of occupational competence should be generated through performance under workplace conditions; this includes evidence of achievement for knowledge-based learning outcomes and associated assessment criteria.

Unit assessment guidance

This guidance supports assessors in making decisions about how best to assess each unit and the evidence needed to meet the assessment requirements of the unit. Centres can adapt the guidance for learners and the particular assessment context, as appropriate.

Evidence to demonstrate achievement of learning outcomes 2 and 3 is likely to come from examining learner work products, supported by professional discussion or reflective account and witness testimony. Direct observation could be used however, opportunities may be limited.

Work products that could provide evidence for learning outcome 2 may include, for example, for AC2.1, report/notes from the learner's review detailing the effectiveness of customer service delivery. For AC2.4, communications to colleagues detailing the business case recommendations for changes in the use of technology. A reflective account could be used based around this evidence to corroborate the learner's underlying understanding and knowledge and also provide evidence for learning outcome 1.

Evidence to meet learning outcome 3, AC3.2 and AC3.3 could include direct observation of the learner together with the naturally occurring work products that are produced including; written and/or verbal evidence used to make a case for the implementation of technology to improve customer service, e.g. evidence for AC3.2 might be in a written form, e.g. Power point presentation, email or newsletter and/or a verbal communication used to update colleagues on how to use the new technology. A record of staff attendance at a training session would provide further evidence for AC3.3. The assessor can do the observation unobtrusively using professional discussion to support the knowledge underlying the performance being undertaken. Alternatively, a reflective account could be used to complement the observation. Product evidence for AC3.1 may include a plan to implement the proposed changes in the use of technology to support customer service. The plan should include measurable criteria that can be used to evaluate the effectiveness of the technology. Evidence for AC3.4 and AC3.5 could be a record of monitoring the new technology in operation over a period of time and providing a reflective evaluation of its effectiveness as measured against the criteria provided in the implementation plan.

Based on the cognitive demand requirements of learning outcome 1, the most suitable form of evidence would be a reflective account as this method allows the learner to provide responses of sufficient depth and breadth to meet the level of demand of the operative verbs. If reflective account is used, it could be integrated into the reflective account if used for learning outcomes 2 and 3 and could provide the learner with the opportunity to link and apply their knowledge to their workplace activities.

Witness testimony and evidence of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) can also be used within the unit to confirm competence. Wherever possible, the learning outcomes in this unit should be assessed holistically across the qualification.

Unit 26:   Support Customers using Self-service Equipment

Unit reference number:	H/506/2977
Level:	2
Credit value:	3
Guided learning hours:	18
Unit type:	Competence

Unit summary

In organisations where customers use self-service equipment, some customers may need support in using the equipment, whereas others may not wish you to intervene. It is important that you are able to recognise what help and intervention is needed and to provide it in a way that pleases the customer and builds their confidence in the use of the equipment.

This unit is aimed at learners whose jobs involve helping and encouraging customers to operate self-service equipment in order to improve their customer experience.

This unit requires you to understand the self-service equipment that is offered to, and used by the customers in your organisation. You will follow instructions on the operation of the equipment and carry out tasks using the equipment in order to understand how the self service equipment works in your organisation and identify the problems that your customers are likely to experience. You will also be required to help customers use your organisation's self-service equipment, once you have identified the help that they need.

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 outline the requirements the learner is expected to meet to achieve the unit.

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria
1 Understand how to support customers using self-service equipment	1.1 Explain how the self-service equipment works
	1.2 Describe problems that are commonly encountered by customers when using self-service equipment
	1.3 Explain demonstration techniques to use when supporting customers using self-service equipment
	1.4 Explain organisational procedures for the use of equipment and fault-reporting
2 Be able to identify the help needed by customers using self-service equipment	2.1 Identify signs that show when a customer is having difficulty with the self-service equipment
	2.2 Identify a style and level of intervention that meets customers' needs
3 Be able to help customers to use self-service equipment	3.1 Maintain a professional, polite and approachable manner while monitoring customers' use of equipment
	3.2 Use staff override functions to enable self-service equipment to be used by customers
	3.3 Explain to customers how to use the equipment and complete the transaction
	3.4 Report equipment-related errors and issues to the right person

Unit amplification

AC1.1: Explain how the self-service equipment works

- The knowledge to meet this AC depends on particular organisational requirements and context. Learners need to apply the knowledge specific to their organisation to meet this AC

AC1.2: Describe problems that are commonly encountered by customers when using self-service equipment

- Self-service equipment*: e.g. self-service tills, petrol pumps, automatic payment points, cash machines, deposit points, ticket machines, automatic check in desks, entry systems, registration points*

- Problems commonly encountered*: lack of confidence in using the equipment, lack of understanding of how to use the equipment, reluctance to follow instructions, misinterpretation of instructions, fear of making a mistake*

AC1.3: Explain demonstration techniques to use when supporting customers using self-service equipment

- Demonstration techniques*: oversee customer using equipment, show customer how to use equipment, use written instructions*

- The knowledge to meet this AC depends on particular organisational requirements and context. Learners need to apply the knowledge specific to their organisation to meet this AC

AC1.4: Explain organisational procedures for the use of equipment and fault-reporting

- The knowledge to meet this AC depends on particular organisational requirements and context. Learners need to apply the knowledge specific to their organisation to meet this AC

Information for tutors

Suggested resources

Books

Heppell M - *Five Star Service: How to Deliver Exceptional Customer Service*, 2nd Edition (Pearson Education Ltd, 2010) ISBN 9780273734383

Leland K and Bailey K - *Customer Service of Dummies*, 3rd Edition (Wiley Publishing Inc., 2006) ISBN 9780471768692

Nash S and Nash D - *Exceeding Customer Expectations: find out what your customers want - and give them even more*, (Pathways, 2000) ISBN 9781857035643

Websites

www.customerserviceexcellence.uk.com – Customer Service Excellence, provides customer service best practice case studies.

www.instituteofcustomerservice.com – The Institute of Customer Service is the independent, professional membership body for the customer service sector. There is a resources section where a glossary of terms, down-loadable resources and guidance notes are available.

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 and the requirements of the Assessment Strategy.

To ensure that the assessment tasks and activities enable learners to produce valid, sufficient, authentic and appropriate evidence that meet the assessment criteria, centres should apply the *Unit assessment guidance* and the requirements of the Assessment Strategy given below.

Wherever possible, centres should adopt a holistic approach to assessing the units in the qualification. This gives the assessment process greater rigour and minimises repetition, time and the burden of assessment on all parties involved in the process.

Unit assessment requirements

This unit must be assessed in the workplace in accordance with Skills CFA Business Administration, Customer Service and Management and Leadership Assessment Strategy in *Annexe A*. Simulation is not allowed for this unit. All evidence of occupational competence should be generated through performance under workplace conditions; this includes evidence of achievement for knowledge-based learning outcomes and associated assessment criteria.

Unit assessment guidance

This guidance supports assessors in making decisions about how best to assess each unit and the evidence needed to meet the assessment requirements of the unit. Centres can adapt the guidance for learners and the particular assessment context, as appropriate.

Learning outcome 1 focuses on the self service equipment that is offered to the customers of the learner's organisation of which the learner needs to demonstrate their understanding. This could be achieved by the learner explaining to the assessor how they support their customers using self-service equipment using their own organisation's systems and procedures or providing written statements that confirm their knowledge and understanding of the equipment used.

Learning outcomes 2 and 3 are competency based; therefore the learner should be assessed using evidence that will confirm competence. For example, to achieve AC2.1, AC2.2, AC3.1 and AC3.3 direct observation of the learner showing the customer how to use the equipment would be appropriate. The learner could show a professional and polite approach, after demonstrating that they have identified signs that show when a customer is having difficulty with the equipment and what style and level of intervention will meet their customer's needs. Product evidence, such as a faulty equipment report could be used to cover AC3.4 and a witness testimony from a line manager or candidate statement could be used for AC3.2 to confirm that the learner has used 'staff override' when supporting a customer.

It is good practice to combine the assessment of learning outcomes 1, 2 and 3 through holistic assessment. An example of how this could be achieved would be through a direct observation of the learner helping the customer using their organisation's self-service equipment, after identifying the help required, that will meet some or all of the assessment criteria in learning outcomes 2 and 3 as described above. This could be followed up by questioning or discussion that is directly related to what was seen in the direct observation and the assessment criteria in learning outcome 1. For criteria that cannot be met through live observation, a Witness Testimony from a knowledgeable and competent person, such as the line manager of the learner, could be used.

Evidence of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) can also be used within the unit to confirm the learner's competence.

Unit 27: Provide Post-transaction Customer Service

Unit reference number: K/506/2978

Level: 2

Credit value: 5

Guided learning hours: 22

Unit type: Competence

Unit summary

As customer expectations of customer service grow, organisations need to ensure they offer excellent post-transaction customer service.

To complete this unit, you will need to be in a customer service role where you are part of the post-transaction service. Using the policies and procedures of your organisation, you will develop your understanding and explain the purpose and range of post-transactional activities on offer as well as look at the advantages and disadvantages. You will also demonstrate your skills in a post-transaction customer service job role.

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 outline the requirements the learner is expected to meet to achieve the unit.

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria
1 Understand post-transaction customer service	1.1 Explain organisational policies and procedures for post-transaction customer service
	1.2 Explain the purposes and range of post-transaction activities
	1.3 Explain the implications of sales contracts, guarantees and warranties to post transaction customer service
	1.4 Explain how legislation and regulation affect customers' rights
	1.5 Explain the advantages and disadvantages of post-transaction customer service programmes
2 Be able to provide post-transaction customer service	2.1 Implement a programme of planned post-transaction interventions in line with organisational guidelines
	2.2 Use unplanned opportunities post-transaction to provide customer service
	2.3 Identify reasons for contacting customers post-transaction
	2.4 Confirm customers' levels of satisfaction post-transaction
	2.5 Make recommendations to decision makers to enhance customer satisfaction
	2.6 Present a professional and helpful image

Unit amplification

AC1.1: **Explain organisation policies and procedures for post-transaction customer service**

- The knowledge to meet this AC depends on the particular organisational requirements and context. Learners need to apply the knowledge specific to their organisation to meet this AC

- Post transaction elements*: invoicing procedures, returns policy, customer complaints procedures, product tracking/warranty, installation and repairs policy*

AC1.2: **Explain the purposes and range of post-transaction activities**

- Purposes*: e.g. to answer any questions on the product or service the customer may have following the transaction, to maintain a good reputation, to deal with customer complaints, to encourage additional sales*

- Types of post-transaction activities*: after sales care, e.g. packaging, installation, repairs, warranties*

AC1.3: **Explain the implications of sales contracts, guarantees and warrantees to post transaction customer service**

- Sales contracts*: terms and conditions, e.g. cancellation charges, cancellation time-scales, cooling off period*

- Guarantees*: definition; features, e.g. legally binding, in addition to customers' rights under consumer law*

- Warranties*: definition; features, e.g. act as insurance policy, legal contract, can be used in conjunction with guarantees*

- Implications*: point of referral if a legal case is brought, provide legal protection to the consumer against faulty or substandard products and or services, legal obligation of supplier*

AC1.4: **Explain how legislation and regulation affect customers' rights**

- Legislations*: e.g. Consumer Protection Act 1987, Trade Descriptions Act 1968, Sale of Goods Act 1979, Data Protection Act 1998*

- Regulations*: e.g. Payment Services Regulations 2009, Consumer Contracts Regulations 2013*

- Effect on customers' rights*: e.g. ability to obtain a refund, ability to cancel transactions, goods are fit for purpose, return faulty goods, control of personal information*

AC1.5: **Explain the advantages and disadvantages of post-transaction customer service programmes**

- Advantages*: e.g. an opportunity for the organisation to 'put things right' when the customer is dissatisfied, gives the customer confidence in the organisation, provides opportunity to up sell and cross sell*

- Disadvantages*: e.g. customer becomes more demanding, can be costly to the organisation, requires additional resources*

Information for tutors

Suggested resources

Books

Heppell M – *Five Star Service: How to Deliver Exceptional Customer Service*, 2nd Edition (Pearson Education Ltd, 2010) ISBN 9780273734383

Leland K and Bailey K – *Customer Service of Dummies*, 3rd Edition (Wiley Publishing Inc., 2006) ISBN 9780471768692

Nash S and Nash D – *Exceeding Customer Expectations: find out what your customers want - and give them even more*, (Pathways, 2000) ISBN 9781857035643

Websites

www.customerserviceexcellence.uk.com – provides customer service best practice case studies

www.instituteofcustomerservice.com – the Institute of Customer Service is the independent, professional membership body for the customer service sector. There is a resources section where a glossary of terms, down-loadable resources and guidance notes are available

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 and the requirements of the Assessment Strategy.

To ensure that the assessment tasks and activities enable learners to produce valid, sufficient, authentic and appropriate evidence that meet the assessment criteria, centres should apply the *Unit assessment guidance* and the requirements of the Assessment Strategy given below.

Wherever possible, centres should adopt a holistic approach to assessing the units in the qualification. This gives the assessment process greater rigour and minimises repetition, time and the burden of assessment on all parties involved in the process.

Unit assessment requirements

This unit must be assessed in the workplace in accordance with Skills CFA Business Administration, Customer Service and Management and Leadership assessment strategy in *Annexe A*. Simulation is not allowed for this unit. All evidence of occupational competence should be generated through performance under workplace conditions; this includes evidence of achievement for knowledge-based learning outcomes and associated assessment criteria.

Unit assessment guidance

This guidance supports assessors in making decisions about how best to assess each unit and the evidence needed to meet the requirements. Centres can adapt the guidance as appropriate for learners and the particular assessment context, as appropriate.

It is good practice to combine the assessment of learning outcomes 1 and 2 through holistic assessment. Learning outcome 1 is knowledge based and the ACs require explanations, therefore these should be assessed using appropriate methods such as questioning or professional discussions. For example, the learner could use a sales contract they have drawn up for a customer to contribute towards evidence of knowledge for part of AC1.3, by being questioned on, or explaining through discussion the process they followed in completing it. Any existing knowledge the learner may have around post-transaction customer service should be explored and built upon through discussion with the learner based on their job role, before assessment takes place. This could be used as evidence of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL).

Learning outcome 2 is skills based, therefore the learner should be assessed using evidence that will confirm competence, such as direct observation of the learner dealing with customers in a post-transactional situation for AC2.1, followed by questioning or discussion that is directly related to AC1.1 – explaining the organisational policies and procedures followed during the interaction with the customer.

For ACs 2.1 to AC2.5, an assessment of planned and unplanned post-transaction interventions is required; work products such as an email to a customer explaining the reason for contacting them post transaction could be used for AC2.3 and a report to the line manager on enhancing customer satisfaction could be used as evidence for AC2.5. If it is not possible to confirm learner competence via direct observation, assessors/tutors could collect evidence from different sources; such as witness testimony from a competent and knowledgeable person, such as the learner's line manager and use this in conjunction with a reflective account produced by the learner.

Unit 28: Develop a Social Media Strategy for Customer Service

Unit reference number: D/506/2962

Level: 4

Credit value: 5

Guided learning hours: 16

Unit type: Competence

Unit summary

This unit gives you the knowledge, understanding and skills related to how social media can enhance the delivery of customer service to improve an organisation's reputation and brand recognition.

The development of the Internet has meant that organisations have to have an on-line presence in the form of a website. Increasingly it means that business has to interact with its customers through social media such as Facebook and Twitter. The rapid development of social media means that customer service strategies have to accommodate this form of communication to enhance the organisation's reputation.

In this unit you will learn how to develop a customer service social media strategy to present a positive image of your organisation. You will also learn how to promote the benefits of working with your organisation to a wide audience and to provide an improved level of customer service to your customers. You will be able to develop a customer service social media strategy to promote your organisation and be a champion for social media within your organisation.

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 outline the requirements the learner is expected to meet to achieve the unit.

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria
1 Understand the development of a customer service social media strategy	1.1 Explain the role of social media within the organisation's customer service strategy
	1.2 Analyse the components and scope of a social media strategy and its links with other aspects of the organisation
	1.3 Explain the importance of marketing and brand values for the organisation's strategy
	1.4 Explain the functionality and features of external social media tools
	1.5 Analyse media management tools in relation to social networking
	1.6 Evaluate the way in which the organisation's use of social media contributes to business performance
2 Be able to develop a customer service social media strategy	2.1 Evaluate the factors affecting the development of a customer service social media strategy
	2.2 Assess the suitability of different methods of engaging customers using social media
	2.3 Analyse competitor presence and activity in social media
	2.4 Formulate a vision for a social media strategy that takes account of the organisation's operating environment and practical constraints
	2.5 Develop a strategy that is consistent with the organisation's overall business strategy and objectives and addresses identified risks
	2.6 Evaluate the extent to which existing organisational structures and processes are capable of delivering the strategy

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria
3 Be able to promote the benefits of social media networking to customer service	3.1 Evaluate the benefits and drawbacks of using social media for dissemination purposes
	3.2 Analyse the benefits and consequences of social media engagement with customers
	3.3 Promote on-going dialogue with customers through social networking
	3.4 Act as a social media 'champion' within the organisation
	3.5 Analyse the risks attached to the use of social media

Unit amplification

AC1.1:   Explain the role of social media within the organisation's customer service strategy

- The knowledge to meet this AC depends on the particular organisational requirements and context. Learners need to apply the knowledge specific to their organisation to meet this AC

- General roles may include*: providing customer support, promotion of products and/or services, external communications, customer relationship management, promote reputation and brand image, data collection, identifying customer trends*

AC1.2:   Analyse the components and scope of a social media strategy and its links with other aspects of the organisation

- Components:

    o *goals of a social media strategy, e.g. brand awareness, increased sales, strengthening customer loyalty, increase market share*

    o *engagement, e.g. selling, providing information, commenting*

    o *time spent on maintaining social media, e.g. constant monitoring, only when customers are on-line, 24 hour availability*

    o *promotion of special deals to customers, e.g. what to promote, when to promote, seasonal promotions, holiday promotions*

- Scope*: developing an on-line presence through social media sites, identifying which sites to use and how the sites will be used, e.g. Facebook, Twitter, Linkedin, Google+, YouTube; using specialist social media sites, on-line blogs*

AC1.3:   Explain the importance of marketing and brand values for the organisation's strategy

- The knowledge to meet this AC depends on the particular organisational requirements and context. Learners need to apply the knowledge specific to their organisation to meet this AC

- General knowledge may include:

    o importance – *how price, product, promotion, and place can be applied to build a social media strategy*

    o using social media to build brand awareness – *brand targeting and promotion, website design to promote brand values, fulfilling customer expectations of the brand, building brand loyalty, awareness of the globalisation of brands, e.g. Coca-Cola, Adidas, Virgin Atlantic*

AC1.4: Explain the functionality and features of external social media tools

- External social media tools*: definition, i.e. software programmes that manage multiple social media websites, e.g. Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest; practical business use, e.g. communication and sharing of information, building a brand community, customer service, marketing*

- Functionality and features*: analytics, e.g. Google+ Metrics, Facebook Insights and Twitter; feedback function, e.g. comments, 'like'; multi-platform connectivity; key word search; reporting; filtering; tracking; monitoring*

AC1.5: Analyse media management tools in relation to social networking

- *Social Media management tools: range of tools, e.g. Buffer, HootSuite, IFTTT, TweetDeck, Sprout Social, Crowdbooster*

- Analysis to include*: features and functionality; benefits and limitations; suitability and uses in a customer service context*

AC1.6: Evaluate the way in which the organisation's use of social media contributes to business performance

- The knowledge to meet this AC depends on the particular organisational requirements and context. Learners need to apply the knowledge specific to their organisation to meet this AC

- Contributions*: e.g. handling positive feedback from customers, handling negative feedback; general knowledge related to the use of social media may include; disseminating information about products and/or services; identifying buying trends; brand management; Image management*

Information for tutors

Suggested resources

Books

Gray A − *Brilliant Social Media: How to Start, Refine and Improve Your Social Business Media Strategy (Brilliant Business)* (Pearson International, 2013) ISBN 9781292001135

Macarthy A − *500 Social Media Marketing Tips: Essential Advice, Hints and Strategy for Business: Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, Google+, YouTube, Instagram, LinkedIn, and More!* (CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2013) ISBN 9781482014099

Macarthy A − *The Guide to Social Media Images for Business: How to Produce Photos, Pictures, Infographics, Memes, and Presentations That Inspire and Sell* (Andrew Macarthy, 2014) ASIN: B00LMMV0J0

Sterne J − *Social Media Metrics: How to Measure and Optimize Your Marketing Investment (New Rules Social Media Series)* (John Wiley & Sons, 2010) ISBN 9780470583784

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 and the requirements of the Assessment Strategy.

To ensure that the assessment tasks and activities enable learners to produce valid, sufficient, authentic and appropriate evidence that meets the assessment criteria, centres should apply the *Unit assessment guidance* and the requirements of the Assessment Strategy below.

Wherever possible, centres should adopt a holistic approach to assessing the units in the qualification. This gives the assessment process greater rigour and minimises repetition, time and the burden of assessment on all parties involved in the process.

Unit assessment requirements

This unit must be assessed in the workplace in accordance with the Skills CFA Business Administration, Customer Service and Management and Leadership Assessment Strategy in *Annexe A*. Simulation is not allowed for this unit. All evidence of occupational competence should be generated through performance under workplace conditions; this includes evidence of achievement for knowledge-based learning outcomes and associated assessment criteria.

Unit assessment guidance

This guidance supports assessors in making decisions about how best to assess each unit and the evidence needed to meet the assessment requirements of the unit. Centres can adapt the guidance for learners and the particular assessment context, as appropriate.

Evidence to demonstrate achievement of learning outcomes 2 and 3 is likely to come from examining learner work products, supported by professional discussion and/or reflective account and witness testimony. Direct observation could be used however, opportunities may be limited.

Work products could include; the learner's devised social media strategy document (AC2.5), outputs of the learner's analyses and evaluation that supports the development of the social media strategy, e.g. analysis of competitor presence (AC2.3) or evaluation of factors affecting the development of a strategy and the capabilities of the organisation in delivering it (AC2.1, AC2.6); records evidencing the learner promoting and championing social media, e.g. e-mails, blogs, minutes of meetings, presentations (AC3.3 and AC3.4) and outputs of the learner's analyses and evaluation that evidences the benefits, drawbacks and risks associated with using social media to network with customers. Evidence from direct observation of the learner could come from the learner promoting the benefits to the organisation of using social media, perhaps through a presentation (AC3.3, AC3.4).

Evidence from any direct observation of the learner and their work products should be supported by professional discussion or reflective account to provide further evidence for the associated assessment criteria. This could focus on, for example, the learner's rationale for the vision formulated for the strategy (AC2.4) and the decision making involved in developing the social media strategy (AC2.5).

Witness testimony could also be used to support direct observation evidence and confirm the learner's competence over time, for example for AC3.3 and AC3.4.

Evidence to demonstrate achievement of learning outcome 1 might be a reflective account designed to meet all assessment criteria and applied to the learner's job role. This method would be the most efficient and effective way of meeting the cognitive requirements of the ACs. This evidence could be integrated into the learner's reflective account if used for learning outcomes 2 and 3 therefore providing the opportunity for the learner to link and apply their knowledge to their workplace activities. Learners' responses must be at a sufficient depth and breadth to meet the level of demand of the operative verbs.

There are good opportunities to relate the assessment of the knowledge requirements to the competence activities, for example, the learner could provide an analysis of the components of a social media strategy (AC1.2), indicating how it is consistent with the organisation's overall business strategy (AC2.5) and how the use of social media contributes to the organisation's overall business performance (AC1.6).

Evidence of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) can also be used within the unit to confirm competence. Wherever possible, the learning outcomes in this unit should be assessed holistically across the qualification.

Unit 29: Negotiate in a Business Environment

Unit reference number: H/506/1912

Level: 3

Credit value: 4

Guided learning hours: 18

Unit type: Competence

Unit summary

Negotiation skills are vital when working in a business environment. Negotiation means effectively being able to articulate your position on issues to gain support from others, generate multiple alternatives to a problem and to present these in an effective way.

An effective negotiator works to achieve 'win/win' outcomes that others can accept and utilises skills such as diplomacy and compromise. Negotiation is based on good communication skills; however, there are a number of tools and techniques that can be used for effective negotiation. Negotiating is about achieving results, but is not necessarily about being results-oriented.

In this unit you will learn how to develop relevant and appropriate strategies for successful negotiation. You will demonstrate skills and behaviours and the use of negotiation techniques to resolve different situations within a business environment. You will consider the effectiveness of the negotiation techniques and explore the benefits of researching other parties involved before negotiations taking place. You will take part in negotiations within a business context and apply identified negotiation strategies and techniques to conclude negotiations and achieve objectives.

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 outline the requirements the learner is expected to meet to achieve the unit.

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria
1 Understand the principles underpinning negotiation	1.1 Describe the requirements of a negotiation strategy
	1.2 Explain the use of different negotiation techniques
	1.3 Explain how research on the other party can be used in negotiations
	1.4 Explain how cultural differences might affect negotiations
2 Be able to prepare for business negotiations	2.1 Identify the purpose, scope and objectives of the negotiation
	2.2 Explain the scope of their own authority for negotiating
	2.3 Prepare a negotiating strategy
	2.4 Prepare fall-back stances and compromises that align with the negotiating strategy and priorities
	2.5 Assess the likely objectives and negotiation stances of the other party
	2.6 Research the strengths and weaknesses of the other party
3 Be able to carry out business negotiations	3.1 Carry out negotiations within responsibility limits in a way that optimises opportunities
	3.2 Adapt the conduct of the negotiation in accordance with changing circumstances
	3.3 Maintain accurate records of negotiations, outcomes and agreements made
	3.4 Adhere to organisational policies and procedures, and legal and ethical requirements when carrying out business negotiations

Unit amplification

AC1.1: **Describe the requirements of a negotiation strategy**

- Negotiation strategies*: types, e.g. problem solving, contending, yielding, compromising, inaction*

- Components of a negotiation strategy*: process, e.g. prepare, discuss, clarify goals, propose, negotiate, agree, implement action; approach, e.g. hard, soft, assertive, empathetic*

- Desired negotiation outcomes*: defeat other party, collaborate, accommodate, withdraw*

- Requirements of negotiation*: e.g. reach an understanding, resolve points of difference, to gain advantage, craft outcomes that satisfy interests*

- Consequences of negotiation*: win, lose, alternative solutions*

AC1.2: **Explain the use of different negotiation techniques**

Negotiation techniques

- Pre Negotiation*: problem analysis, e.g. interests of other party; preparation, e.g. identifying negotiation goals and outcomes, conducting research on other party, setting negotiation parameters and fall-back position, confirming available resources*

- During Negotiation*: active listening, e.g. body language; emotional control, e.g. head over heart; verbal communication, e.g. clear, effective, state desired outcomes, questioning, exercising silence; collaboration and teamwork, e.g. working towards mutually agreeable solutions; problem solving, e.g. solving the problem rather than focussing on the goal; decision making, e.g. being decisive; interpersonal skills, e.g. forming working relationships, patience, powers of persuasion; ethics and reliability, e.g. maintaining ethical standards, trust, executing promises and agreements*

AC1.3: **Explain how research on the other party can be used in negotiations**

- Other party*: colleague, direct report, management, e.g. middle, senior, executive; customers, suppliers*

- Research uses*: inform your negotiation strategy, gain advantage*

- Research areas*: who they are, interests, strengths and weaknesses, performance, expected outcome, negotiating style, what they have to trade, perceived needs, issues that can influence their outcome, potential barriers to negotiation*

AC1.4:   Explain how cultural differences might affect negotiations

- Cultural differences*: people, e.g. religion, nationality, past experiences; businesses, e.g. operations, ethics, reputation; nations, e.g. language, infrastructure, government*

- Affects*: proactive, e.g. appropriate communication, appropriate negotiation style; reactive, e.g. risk of misunderstanding or misinterpretation*

Information for tutors

Suggested resources

Books

Borg J – *Body Language: 7 Easy Lessons to Master the Silent Language*, (Pearson, 2009) ISBN 9780137002603

Borg J – *Persuasion: The Art of Influencing People* (3rd Edition) (Pearson, 2010) ISBN 9780273734161

Boynton A and Fischer B – *Virtuoso Teams: Lessons from Teams That Changed Their Worlds*, (Financial Times/Prentice Hall, 2005) ISBN 9780273702184

Goleman D – *Emotional Intelligence & Working with Emotional Intelligence*, (Bloomsbury Publishing, 2004) ISBN 9780747574569

Websites

www.entrepreneur.com/article/203168 – article about negotiating in business

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 and the requirements of the Assessment Strategy.

To ensure that the assessment tasks and activities enable learners to produce valid, sufficient, authentic and appropriate evidence that meets the assessment criteria, centres should apply the *Unit assessment guidance* and the requirements of the Assessment Strategy given below.

Wherever possible, centres should adopt a holistic approach to assessing the units in the qualification. This gives the assessment process greater rigour and minimises repetition, time and the burden of assessment on all parties involved in the process.

Unit assessment requirements

This unit must be assessed in the workplace in accordance with the Skills CFA Assessment Strategy for Business Administration, Customer Service and Management and Leadership in *Annexe A*. Simulation is not allowed for this unit. All evidence of occupational competence should be generated through performance under workplace conditions; this includes evidence of achievement for knowledge-based learning outcomes and associated assessment criteria.

Unit assessment guidance

This guidance supports assessors in making decisions about how best to assess each unit and the evidence needed to meet the assessment requirements of the unit. Centres can adapt the guidance for learners and the particular assessment context, as appropriate.

For learning outcome 1, assessors should ensure learners adhere to the use of command verbs such as "describe" and "explain". Guidance may be needed to clarify requirements of command verbs before assessment activities are planned.

For AC1.1 and AC1.2, assessors should consider capturing evidence of knowledge and understanding through well-structured and pre-planned professional discussions or question and answer (Q&A) sessions that enable learners to demonstrate a full understanding of the requirements of a negotiation strategy and techniques. The professional discussion or question and answer sessions should be set in the context of the learner's work as far as possible to provide the opportunity for the learner to link and apply their knowledge and understanding to their work activities.

For AC1.4, assessment could include discussions or oral question and answer sessions providing opportunities for the learner to explain how they have considered cultural differences in negotiation strategies. Assessors could have the opportunity to capture the consideration of cultural differences through observations of negotiations. This could be supported with a question and answer session to the learner about how cultural differences affected their negotiations or could have affected their negotiations, depending on the situation.

Learning outcomes 2 and 3 could largely be assessed through work products. For AC2.1; AC2.3 and AC2.4 learners could provide naturally occurring evidence such as negotiation plans, project plans or documented negotiation objectives. Where naturally occurring evidence is available for assessment, this will provide opportunities to holistically assess; however further professional discussion could be required in order to confirm competence when preparing and using negotiation strategies in their role.

Depending on the style of the negotiation (formal or informal), learners may or may not generate naturally occurring evidence therefore alternative methods of assessment will be required.

For AC2.5 and AC2.6, work product evidence could take the form of research notes on the other party which have been used to inform negotiation strategies. This could be combined with AC1.3 to give learners opportunities to provide examples of research activities undertaken and what they have learned about other parties.

For AC3.3, the learner could demonstrate the maintenance of records through work product. For example internal and/or external communications such as meeting minutes and emails, supplemented with witness testimonies from colleagues who have been present during these negotiations.

For AC2.2 evidence could include professional discussions surrounding responsibilities and scope for negotiations, alternatively, learners can choose to present detailed reflective accounts for assessment. Assessors are encouraged to assess AC2.2 early into this unit, outcomes of which could inform assessment plans for other assessment criteria, particularly in learning outcome 1.

For AC3.1 and AC3.2, opportunities for direct observation could be available to assess competence when applying appropriate negotiation techniques. Where opportunities to observe are not possible, learners can choose to provide detailed reflective accounts of situations where they have taken part in negotiations with other parties, supported with witness testimony to confirm validity. This evidence could provide links to AC1.2 and AC1.3 through learner reflection on their use of research into other parties, the use of negotiation techniques and the effectiveness of these processes.

For AC3.4, learners should be able to confirm adherence to policies and procedures in the context of their role and the negotiations being assessed. This could be assessed through reflective account, supported with witness testimony to confirm validity. Policies and procedures could relate to communications, human resources (employment law), business planning and objectives or organisational values. Ethics could be assessed in conjunction with AC1.4 and associated assessments of competence where cultural differences have been considered in negotiations.

Evidence of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) can be used in the unit to confirm competence.

Unit 30: Promote Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in the Workplace

Unit reference number: T/506/1820

Level: 3

Credit value: 3

Guided learning hours: 15

Unit type: Competence

Unit summary

As the working population of the UK changes it becomes more important that businesses promote equality, diversity and inclusion in their workplaces.

In this unit you will look at the differing aspects of equality, diversity and inclusion, the law that protect employees from discrimination and harassment and the effects of this legislation on the organisational policies and practices. You will gain an understanding not only of the differences between equality, diversity and inclusion but also how they impact on the organisation as a whole, and, as the workforce diversifies to include older workers and an increasing number of people from differing cultures, backgrounds and ethnic minorities how everyone in the workplace must contribute to its promotion. You will understand the importance in today's workplace of being an employee that behaves in a way that supports inclusion, and will be able to support equality, diversion and inclusion in the business, ensuring both legal and moral duties are covered.

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 outline the requirements the learner is expected to meet to achieve the unit.

Learning outcomes		Assessment criteria	
1	Understand the organisational aspects of equality, diversity and inclusion in the workplace	1.1	Explain the difference between equality, diversity and inclusion
		1.2	Explain the impact of equality, diversity and inclusion across aspects of organisational policy
		1.3	Explain the potential consequences of breaches of equality legislation
		1.4	Describe nominated responsibilities within an organisation for equality, diversity and inclusion
2	Understand the personal aspects of equality, diversity and inclusion in the workplace	2.1	Explain the different forms of discrimination and harassment
		2.2	Describe the characteristics of behaviour that supports equality, diversity and inclusion in the workplace
		2.3	Explain the importance of displaying behaviour that supports equality, diversity and inclusion in the workplace
3	Be able to support equality, diversity and inclusion in the workplace	3.1	Ensure colleagues are aware of their responsibilities for equality, diversity and inclusion in the workplace
		3.2	Identify potential issues relating to equality, diversity and inclusion in the workplace
		3.3	Adhere to organisational policies and procedures, and legal and ethical requirements when supporting equality, diversity and inclusion in the workplace

Unit amplification

AC1.1:   Explain the difference between equality, diversity and inclusion

- Equality*: definition (equality of opportunity in employment, pay, promotion)*

- Diversity*: definition (valuing individual differences, including: life styles, cultures, ethnicity, religion, gender)*

- Inclusion*: definition (taking actions; creating environments of respect and acceptance)*

AC1.2:   Explain the impact of equality, diversity and inclusion across aspects of organisational policy

- Impact*: Human Resources policies, e.g. recruitment and promotion, working practices (flexible working), disciplinary and grievance, discrimination and harassment, pay and reward; service provision and customer service policies; procurement and sales policies*

AC1.3:   Explain the potential consequences of breaches of equality legislation

- Legislation*: the Equality Act 2010 (9 protected characteristics); discrimination*

- Consequences*: e.g. disputes, involvement of trade unions, involvement of ACAS (the Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service), employment tribunals, legal action, financial penalties, damage to reputation of organisation*

AC1.4:   Describe nominated responsibilities within an organisation for equality, diversity and inclusion

- Nominated responsibilities*: specific person dependant on organisational structure; responsibilities, e.g. formulating, monitoring, evaluating and reviewing policies, creating a culture that supports equality and diversity, implementing Codes of Practice*

AC2.1:   Explain the different forms of discrimination and harassment

- Discrimination*: definition; forms of discrimination including direct, indirect, harassment, victimisation, associative, perceptive; Equality Act 2010 (9 protected characteristics)*

AC2.2: **Describe the characteristics of behaviour that supports equality, diversity and inclusion in the workplace**

- Characteristics of personal behaviour*: appropriate communications, e.g. using styles appropriate to different people and situations, non-discriminatory language; allowing others to express their views; being tolerant and open-minded; showing respect for the background, values, beliefs and custom of colleagues; integrity, fairness and consistency in decision-making*

AC2.3: **Explain the importance of displaying behaviour that supports equality, diversity and inclusion in the workplace**

- Importance*: e.g. promotes a culture of inclusion and respect, improves team working, increases productivity, removes barriers to recruitment and progression, attracts and retains staff with different talents and competencies*

Information for tutors

Suggested resources

Websites

www.acas.org.uk – ACAS guidance on the Equality Act 2010

www.equalityhumanrights.com – The Equality and Human Rights Commission (HER) published guidance for employers on the Equality Act of 2010

www.gov.uk – government services and information website which provides guidance on the Equality Act 2010

www.legislation.gov.uk – this website is managed by the National Archives on behalf of HM Government. Original and revised editions of legislation can be found to include the Equality Act

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 and the requirements of the Assessment Strategy.

To ensure that the assessment tasks and activities enable learners to produce valid, sufficient, authentic and appropriate evidence that meets the assessment criteria, centres should apply the *Unit assessment guidance* and the requirements of the Assessment Strategy below.

Wherever possible, centres should adopt a holistic approach to assessing the units in the qualification. This gives the assessment process greater rigour and minimises repetition, time and the burden of assessment on all parties involved in the process.

Unit assessment requirements

This unit must be assessed in the workplace in accordance with Skills CFA Business Administration, Customer Service and Management and Leadership Assessment Strategy in *Annexe A*. Simulation is not allowed for this unit. All evidence of occupational competence should be generated through performance under workplace conditions; this includes evidence of achievement for knowledge-based learning outcomes and associated assessment criteria.

Unit assessment guidance

This guidance supports assessors in making decisions about how best to assess each unit and the evidence needed to meet the assessment requirements of the unit. Centres can adapt the guidance for learners and the particular assessment context, as appropriate.

The main sources of evidence to meet learning outcome 3 are a review of the learner's work products, professional discussion and witness testimony. The learner's work products could include evidence of communications to colleagues regarding their responsibilities for equality, diversity and inclusion, for example, sent emails, presentation slides etc. (AC3.1). Work products could also include documents detailing the potential issues relating to equality, diversity and inclusion in the workplace; this may be the learner's review notes, a formal report, email or presentation slides (AC3.2).

These work products should be reviewed by the assessor to confirm that they meet the requirements of the assessment criteria and could be used to support the professional discussion to evidence the learner's underpinning knowledge and understanding. For example, the learner could explain the different responsibilities for equality, diversity and inclusion in the workplace (AC3.1) and how they ensured that they acted within the organisations policy and procedures and the legal and ethical requirements when supporting equality, diversity and inclusion in their workplace (AC3.3). Witness testimony from colleagues or line manager could also be used to provide supporting evidence for these assessment criteria.

Evidence to confirm the achievement of learning outcomes 1 and 2 could be integrated into the professional discussion for learning outcome 3, providing the opportunity for the learner to link and apply their knowledge to the workplace activities. For example, the learner could be asked to explain how they used their understanding of AC1.2 and AC2.2 to identify the potential issues in their workplace (AC3.2). The learner's responses to meet the assessment criteria in learning outcomes 1 and 2 must be at a sufficient depth and breadth to meet the level of demand of the operative verbs. For example, the learner's response on explaining the impact of equality, diversity and inclusion across organisational policy (AC1.2) should go beyond just identifying the different areas that has been affected but should also include reasons why these particular areas are affected and examples of the impact in practice.

Evidence of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) can also be used within the unit to confirm competence. Wherever possible, the learning outcomes in this unit should be assessed holistically across the qualification.

Unit 31: Manage Team Performance

Unit reference number: A/506/1821

Level: 3

Credit value: 4

Guided learning hours: 21

Unit type: Competence

Unit summary

In this unit you will look at how to manage team performance through benchmarking that includes setting and maintaining standards and other quality management techniques. When used properly, benchmarking can be a great way to improve the performance of a team, and so help the business to stay competitive.

Having a carefully-designed process to ensure high performance and quality of work is the key to getting the most out teams. You will learn how to manage the work of a team and assess its performance to ensure the optimum outcome. You will also learn about the importance of communication within a team and how to manage communications to ensure that everyone understands the purpose of the team and its goals.

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 outline the requirements the learner is expected to meet to achieve the unit.

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria
1 Understand the management of team performance	1.1 Explain the use of benchmarks in managing performance
	1.2 Explain a range of quality management techniques to manage team performance
	1.3 Describe constraints on the ability to amend priorities and plans
2 Be able to allocate and assure the quality of work	2.1 Identify the strengths, competences and expertise of team members
	2.2 Allocate work on the basis of the strengths, competences and expertise of team members
	2.3 Identify areas for improvement in team members' performance outputs and standards
	2.4 Amend priorities and plans to take account of changing circumstances
	2.5 Recommend changes to systems and processes to improve the quality of work
3 Be able to manage communications within a team	3.1 Explain to team members the lines of communication and authority levels
	3.2 Communicate individual and team objectives, responsibilities and priorities
	3.3 Use communication methods that are appropriate to the topics, audience and timescales
	3.4 Provide support to team members when they need it
	3.5 Agree with team members a process for providing feedback on work progress and any issues arising
	3.6 Review the effectiveness of team communications and make improvements

Unit amplification

AC1.1: Explain the use of benchmarks in managing performance

- Benchmarks*: definition (performance measurement standards); based on an organisation's own experience, industry practice or regulatory requirements*

- Benchmarking*: definition; types, e.g. internal, external, strategic, performance, process*

- Using benchmarking in performance management*: e.g. maintain team performance in line with industry and/or organisational standards; identify areas for targeted improvement activities, e.g. training needs; set standards for reward systems, e.g. performance-related pay; evaluate the effectiveness of workforce performance initiatives*

AC1.2: Explain a range of quality management techniques to manage team performance

- Team performance management*: purpose, e.g. establishing performance goals; identifying any gap between current and desired performance; planning, implementing and monitoring changes to improve*

- Techniques*: performance objectives, e.g. strategic and operational; performance review meetings, e.g. one-to-one meetings, appraisal meetings; 360 degree feedback; personal development plans (PDPs); reward systems, e.g. performance-related pay, bonus payments, team-based pay*

AC1.3: Describe constraints on the ability to amend priorities and plans

- Constraints*: e.g. resource availability in other functional areas; regulatory, industry or organisational requirements; deliverables and timescales agreed with internal and/or external customers; existing workload and competence of team members*

Information for tutors

Suggested resources

Books

Jones S, Schilling D – *Measuring Team Performance* (Jossey-Bass, 2000) ISBN 9780787945695

Muller-Camen M, Croucher R, Leigh S – *Human Resource Management: A Case Study Approach* (CIPD, 2008) ISBN 9781843981657

Websites

www.cipd.co.uk – The Charted Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD), offers a range of guidance on HR, learning and development and employment law issues, for example a Performance Management factsheet. Membership is required for full access

www.managers.org.uk – the Chartered Institute of Management, offers practical advice on management issues with a range of online resources on management topics. Membership is required to access the materials

www.mindtools.com – resources on many business and management topics, including team management

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 and the requirements of the Assessment Strategy.

To ensure that the assessment tasks and activities enable learners to produce valid, sufficient, authentic and appropriate evidence that meets the assessment criteria, centres should apply the *Unit assessment guidance* and the requirements of the Assessment Strategy below.

Wherever possible, centres should adopt a holistic approach to assessing the units in the qualification. This gives the assessment process greater rigour and minimises repetition, time and the burden of assessment on all parties involved in the process.

Unit assessment requirements

This unit must be assessed in the workplace in accordance with Skills CFA Business Administration, Customer Service and Management and Leadership Assessment Strategy in *Annexe A*. Simulation is not allowed for this unit. All evidence of occupational competence should be generated through performance under workplace conditions; this includes evidence of achievement for knowledge-based learning outcomes and associated assessment criteria.

Unit assessment guidance

This guidance supports assessors in making decisions about how best to assess each unit and the evidence needed to meet the assessment requirements of the unit. Centres can adapt the guidance for learners and the particular assessment context, as appropriate.

Evidence to demonstrate achievement of learning outcomes 2 and 3 is likely to come from a combination of direct observation, review of the learner's work products, witness testimony and professional discussion or reflective account. Wherever possible, and with the appropriate permissions, the learner could be observed in team/departmental meetings, one-to-one meetings, appraisal meetings and other relevant contexts.

Evidence from any direct observation of the learner should be supported by a professional discussion around the learner's performance and work products to provide further evidence for the assessment criteria. The learner's work products could include minutes from team meetings, team work plans, team rotas/allocations, anonymised personal development plans and any relevant communications to team members or colleagues (for example email to team members detailing the lines of communication and authority). The work products should be reviewed by the assessor and used to support the professional discussion to evidence the knowledge and understanding underpinning the learner's performance. Within the professional discussion, the learner could explain how they determined the strengths, competences and expertise of team members, how they used this information in allocating/planning the team's work and the decision making and rationale for any work plans in terms of priorities, critical activities and resource availability (AC2.1 and AC2.2). The professional discussion could also cover the reasons for the choice of communication methods used and the criteria used to assess the effectiveness of team communications, and how they relate to the improvements made (AC3.3 and AC3.6). Alternatively, a reflective account could be used in a similar manner to assess the underpinning knowledge and understanding. Witness testimony from team members and the line manager could also be used to confirm evidence for a number of assessment criteria (AC2.5, AC3.4 and AC3.5), as well as confirm that the learner has consistently met the requirements over a period of time.

Evidence to confirm the achievement of learning outcome 1 could be integrated into the professional discussion or reflective account for learning outcome 2, giving the learner the opportunity to link and apply their knowledge to the workplace activities. For example, the learner could comment on how they have used benchmarks in managing the team performance; where the learner has not used these they could explain how these may be used in the future to better manage their team's performance. This would link AC1.1 to AC2.3. In a similar manner, if appropriate, the learner could be asked to describe any constraints they faced in amending work plans to meet changing circumstances and how they dealt with these constraints; if the learner did not face any actual constraints they could describe possible constraints relative to their context and how they would have dealt with them (AC1.3 linked to AC2.4).

The learner's responses or statements to meet the requirements of AC1.1 to 1.3 must be in sufficient depth and breadth to meet the level of demand relative to the operative verbs. For example, for AC1.2, the learner would need to explain at least two techniques and show clearly how they have used them, or could use them, to manage their team's performance.

Evidence of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) can also be used within the unit to confirm competence. Wherever possible, the learning outcomes in this unit should be assessed holistically across the qualification.

Unit 32: Manage Individuals' Performance

Unit reference number: J/506/1921

Level: 3

Credit value: 4

Guided learning hours: 20

Unit type: Competence

Unit summary

This unit covers the concept of managing individuals that are underperforming.

In this unit you will learn how to manage underperformance in the workplace. When issues concerning underperformance are not addressed and managed, both appropriately and sensitively, it can lead to unhealthy and unproductive outcomes that may affect the entire workplace.

You will look at how establishing effective performance management systems can have significant benefits for the business and how this can lead to happier, more motivated and better performing employees. You will learn how to manage individuals' performances in the workplace to maintain morale and use best practice to ensure that all staff are performing at their best.

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 outline the requirements the learner is expected to meet to achieve the unit.

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria
1 Understand the management of underperformance in the workplace	1.1 Explain typical organisational policies and procedures on discipline, grievance and dealing with underperformance
	1.2 Explain how to identify causes of underperformance
	1.3 Explain the purpose of making individuals aware of their underperformance clearly but sensitively
	1.4 Explain how to address issues that hamper individuals' performance
	1.5 Explain how to agree a course of action to address underperformance
2 Be able to manage individuals' performance in the workplace	2.1 Agree with team members specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bound (SMART) objectives that align to organisational objectives
	2.2 Delegate responsibility to individuals on the basis of their expertise, competence, skills, knowledge, and development needs
	2.3 Apply motivation techniques to maintain morale
	2.4 Provide information, resources and ongoing mentoring to help individuals meet their targets, objectives and quality standards
	2.5 Monitor individuals' progress towards objectives in accordance with agreed plans
	2.6 Recognise individuals' achievement of targets and quality standards

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria
	2.7 Adhere to organisational policies and procedures, and legal and ethical requirements when managing individuals' performance in the workplace

Unit amplification

AC1.1: **Explain typical organisational policies and procedures on discipline, grievance and dealing with underperformance**

- Disciplinary policy*: definition; policy content e.g. timekeeping, absence, health and safety, use of organisational facilities and equipment; Equality Act (2010); policy access*

- Disciplinary procedure*: purpose, e.g. deals with discipline issues and underperformance; ensures rules and standards are maintained; format, i.e. ACAS Code of Practice on Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures; mediation*

- Grievances*: definition; causes e.g. bullying and harassment, discrimination, new working practices, organisational change*

- Grievance procedure*: definition; purpose; format i.e. ACAS Code of Practice on Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures*

AC1.2: **Explain how to identify causes of underperformance**

- Underperformance*: types e.g. failure to perform the duties of the job role; failure to perform to the required standard; poor productivity; disruptive or negative behaviour; high rate of absence*

- Causes*: e.g. employee lack of clarity of expectations; lack of knowledge/skills; goals/standards/policies and consequences unclear; interpersonal differences; poor personal motivation; inappropriate or insufficient training; low morale in the workplace*

AC1.3: **Explain the purpose of making individuals aware of their underperformance clearly but sensitively**

- Purpose*: e.g. highlights where and why performance was not in line with expectations; explores how performance may be improved; positive way of improving future performance; provides positive reinforcement*

- Handling underperformance sensitively*: e.g. use communication styles based on people and situations; understanding individuals' needs, feelings and motivations; taking account of cultural differences; individuals treated with respect*

AC1.4: **Explain how to address issues that hamper individuals' performance**

- Addressing issues*: clear systems in place to identify problems; assessing the gravity of problems; support and coaching; mentoring; constructive feedback; use of disciplinary procedures*

AC1.5: **Explain how to agree a course of action to address underperformance**

- Addressing underperformance*: possible interventions/actions, e.g. enhance ability (resupply, retrain, refit, reassign, release); improve motivation (performance goals, performance feedback, Performance Improvement Plan)*

- Agreeing course of action*: methods, e.g. meeting with employee and union representative/person of their choice; open discussion with employee; joint solution devised; plan of action drawn up; follow-up meeting; agreeing SMART objectives; progress reviews*

Information for tutors

Suggested resources

Books

Armstrong M and Baron A – *Managing Performance: Performance Management in Action (Developing Practice),* 2nd edition (Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development, 2004) ISBN 9781843981015

Hutchinson S – *Performance Management: Theory and Practice* (Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development, 2013) ISBN 9781843983057

Lloyd K – *Performance Appraisals and Phrases For Dummies* (John Wiley & Sons, 2009) ISBN 9780470498729

Websites

www.acas.org.uk – ACAS, provides free advice on workplace-related issues. These recommended publications can be found on the website:

- How to manage performance (advisory booklet)
- ACAS Code of Practice on Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures
- Discipline and Grievances at Work – The ACAS Guide

www.cipd.co.uk – the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development has a variety of free factsheets available on their website on performance management. A recommended publication is Performance Management: an overview

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 and the requirements of the Assessment Strategy.

To ensure that the assessment tasks and activities enable learners to produce valid, sufficient, authentic and appropriate evidence that meets the assessment criteria, centres should apply the *Unit assessment guidance* and the requirements of the Assessment Strategy below.

Wherever possible, centres should adopt a holistic approach to assessing the units in the qualification. This gives the assessment process greater rigour and minimises repetition, time and the burden of assessment on all parties involved in the process.

Unit assessment requirements

This unit must be assessed in the workplace in accordance with Skills CFA Business Administration, Customer Service and Management and Leadership Assessment Strategy in *Annexe A*. Simulation is not allowed for this unit. All evidence of occupational competence should be generated through performance under workplace conditions; this includes evidence of achievement for knowledge-based learning outcomes and associated assessment criteria.

Unit assessment guidance

This guidance supports assessors in making decisions about how best to assess each unit and the evidence needed to meet the assessment requirements of the unit. Centres can adapt the guidance for learners and the particular assessment context, as appropriate.

Evidence to demonstrate achievement of learning outcome 2 is likely to come from a combination of direct observation, review of the learner's work products, witness testimony and professional discussion or reflective account. Where possible, and with the appropriate permissions, the learner could be observed in team/departmental meetings, one-to-one meetings, interim performance reviews, appraisal meetings and other relevant contexts.

Evidence from any direct observation of the learner should be supported by a professional discussion around the learner's performance and work products, to provide further evidence for the assessment criteria. The learner's work products could include minutes from team meetings, anonymised personal development plans, performance reviews, performance plans, appraisal reports and one-to-one meeting notes, and relevant communications to colleagues (for example an email giving advice on a work issue/problem). The work products should be reviewed by the assessor and used to support the professional discussion to evidence the knowledge and understanding underpinning the learner's performance. Within the professional discussion, the learner could explain the rationale for delegating particular tasks to specific individuals, the basis for the agreed SMART objectives and the rationale for their choice of motivation techniques and recognition of achievement (AC2.1, AC2.2, AC2.3 and AC2.6). The discussion could also cover the organisational, ethical and legal requirements associated with performance management (AC2.7). Alternatively, a reflective account could be used in a similar manner to assess the underpinning knowledge and understanding. Witness testimony from colleagues and the line manager should also be used to confirm that the learner has consistently met the requirements over a period of time, as well as met organisational, legal and ethical requirements (AC2.1 and AC2.7).

Evidence to confirm the achievement of learning outcome 1 could be integrated into the professional discussion or reflective account for learning outcome 2, giving the learner the opportunity to link and apply their knowledge to the workplace activities. For example, the relationship between disciplinary and grievance procedures and performance management could be explored. The learner's responses or statements to meet the requirements of AC1.1 to 1.5 must be in sufficient depth and breadth to meet the level of demand expected from an explanation. For example, the learner's response on grievance and disciplinary procedures (AC1.5) should go beyond just a statement of the steps/stages and should include reasoning around the relevance of the steps/stages in relation to the purpose of the procedures.

Evidence of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) can also be used within the unit to confirm competence. Wherever possible, the learning outcomes in this unit should be assessed holistically across the qualification.

Unit 33: Collaborate with other Departments

Unit reference number: M/506/1931

Level: 3

Credit value: 3

Guided learning hours: 14

Unit type: Competence

Unit summary

An organisation cannot overlook the importance of collaboration and communication between departments. Business innovation and improvement requires collaboration amongst a variety of departments.

In this unit you will learn how to collaborate with other departments. Work completed by one department with total disregard of the importance of that work to others and to the organisation as a whole is a thing of the past. Collaboration is important, especially as organisations become more widespread and complex. The unit will also equip you with the ability to identify opportunities for collaboration between variety of departments, from research and development to production to marketing to customer service, and the ability to collaborate with departments, all to better the work and achieve the desired outcomes of the organisation.

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 outline the requirements the learner is expected to meet to achieve the unit.

Learning outcomes		Assessment criteria	
1	Understand how to collaborate with other departments	1.1	Explain the need for collaborating with other departments
		1.2	Explain the nature of the interaction between their own team and other departments
		1.3	Explain the features of effective collaboration
		1.4	Explain the potential implications of ineffective collaboration with other departments
		1.5	Explain the factors relating to knowledge management that should be considered when collaborating with other departments
2	Be able to identify opportunities for collaboration with other departments	2.1	Analyse the advantages and disadvantages of collaborating with other departments
		2.2	Identify with which departments collaborative relationships should be built
		2.3	Identify the scope for and limitations of possible collaboration
3	Be able to collaborate with other departments	3.1	Agree Service Level Agreements (SLAs), objectives and priorities of collaborative arrangements
		3.2	Work with other departments in a way that contributes to the achievement of organisational objectives

Unit amplification

AC1.1: **Explain the need for collaborating with other departments**

- 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*

- Need for collaboration*: reasons, e.g. cross-disciplinary skills and insight, innovation, builds trust, communication, stakeholder/team buy-in, greater productivity*

AC1.2: **Explain the nature of the interaction between their own team and other departments**

- The knowledge to meet this AC depends on the learner's own role and the particular organisational context. Learners need to apply the knowledge specific to their organisation to meet this AC

AC1.3: **Explain the features of effective collaboration**

- Features*: e.g. shared goals, respect for all perspectives, empowerment of individuals, open communication, equal access to information, a collective mind set*

AC1.4: **Explain the potential implications of ineffective collaboration with other departments**

- 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*

AC1.5: **Explain the factors relating to knowledge management that should be considered when collaborating with other departments**

- Knowledge management*: i.e. strategies and processes designed to identify, capture, structure, value, leverage, and share an organisation's intellectual assets to enhance its performance and competitiveness*

- Factors to consider*: tacit and explicit knowledge to be managed; availability of IT systems to support the process e.g. intranets, databases; organisational culture, e.g. trust and willingness to share knowledge; suitability of engagement approaches; intellectual property; collaborative technologies to manage knowledge, e.g. groupware*

Information for tutors

Suggested resources

Books

Taylor S. and Woodhams C – *Studying Human Resource Management* (CIPD, 2012) ISBN 9781843983125

Websites

www.forbes.com – Forbes, has a useful article on the habits of collaborative organisations by Jacob Morgan titled The 12 Habits of Highly Collaborative Organizations

www.kmworld.com – KMWorld supplies information on knowledge management. A recommended article is: What is KM? Knowledge Management explained by Michael Koenig. A subscription is required for full access to the site

www.cipd.co.uk – CIPD has a range of factsheets to provide introductory guidance on a range of HR issues. Membership is required for full access

Other

The Economist – has a good (subscription) archive that includes specialist features and articles on management topics.

How the workplace can improve collaboration – Steelcase has a 360 white paper publication on how the workplace can improve collaboration on their website at www.steelcase.com

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 and the requirements of the Assessment Strategy.

To ensure that the assessment tasks and activities enable learners to produce valid, sufficient, authentic and appropriate evidence that meets the assessment criteria, centres should apply the *Unit assessment guidance* and the requirements of the Assessment Strategy below.

Wherever possible, centres should adopt a holistic approach to assessing the units in the qualification. This gives the assessment process greater rigour and minimises repetition, time and the burden of assessment on all parties involved in the process.

Unit assessment requirements

This unit must be assessed in the workplace in accordance with Skills CFA Business Administration, Customer Service and Management and Leadership Assessment Strategy in *Annexe A*. Simulation is not allowed for this unit. All evidence of occupational competence should be generated through performance under workplace conditions; this includes evidence of achievement for knowledge-based learning outcomes and associated assessment criteria.

Unit assessment guidance

This guidance supports assessors in making decisions about how best to assess each unit and the evidence needed to meet the assessment requirements of the unit. Centres can adapt the guidance for learners and the particular assessment context, as appropriate.

The main sources of evidence to meet learning outcomes 2 and 3 are a review of the learner's work products, witness testimony and professional discussion.

For learning outcome 2, the learner's work products could include their notes or formal documentation relating to the department(s) with which collaborative relationships should be built, including the scope for and limitations of the potential collaborations (AC2.2 and AC2.3). These work products should be reviewed by the assessor to confirm that they meet the requirements of the specified assessment criteria, and could be used as the basis for the professional discussion with the learner to meet the requirements of AC2.1 as well to evidence the knowledge and understanding underpinning the learner's competence. For example, within the professional discussion the learner could explain the reasons for selecting the specific departments for collaboration in relation to the roles and responsibilities of those departments and the opportunities for synergies (AC2.2 and AC2.3).

For learning outcome 3, a combination of a review of the learner's work products, professional discussion and witness testimony could be used. Examples of work products could include the documented agreed SLAs, priorities and objectives of the collaborative arrangement or meeting notes indicating these (AC3.1). These work products should be reviewed by the assessor to ensure that they meet the requirements of the assessment criterion. The professional discussion could cover the content of SLAs and the process of developing the SLAs with the relevant departments. Witness testimony could also be used to provide evidence of the agreed SLAs as well as provide evidence that the learner can work with other departments in a way that contributes to the achievement of organisational objectives (AC3.2).

Evidence to confirm the achievement of learning outcome 1 could be integrated into the professional discussion for learning outcomes 2, providing the opportunity for the learner to link and apply their knowledge to the workplace activities. For example, the learner could be asked to explain the features of effective collaboration (AC1.3) in the context of how they have used them in collaborating and working with other departments (AC3.2). The learner's responses to meet the requirements for AC1.1 – 1.5 must be at a sufficient depth and breadth to meet the level of demand expected from an explanation. For example, the learner's response on the features of effective collaboration (AC1.3) should go beyond just statements but should include reasoning around why these features make the collaboration effective.

Evidence of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) can also be used within the unit to confirm competence. Wherever possible, the learning outcomes in this unit should be assessed holistically across the qualification.

Unit 34: Negotiating, Handling Objections and Closing Sales

Unit reference number: F/502/8612

Level: 3

Credit value: 4

Guided learning hours: 22

Unit type: Competence

Unit summary

The ability to negotiate, handle objections and close sales is important within some customer service roles. It is important that it is done correctly and effectively in order to provide customer satisfaction, meet the needs and expectations of the customer and present a favourable image of the organisation.

In this unit you will learn how to negotiate, handle and overcome objections in order to be able to close sales transactions effectively in a way that is mutually beneficial to both your customer and your organisation.

You will understand the limits of your own authority and responsibility when dealing with objections and the resources needed to be able to counter sales objections. You will learn how to plan and prepare for negotiations and how to use testimonials to progress a sale. You will learn about the advantages and disadvantages of different methods that can be used to close a sale and your own organisation's procedures for documenting the negotiated sale.

You will develop skills to be able to prepare for objections and negotiation with the customer, handle objections, negotiate with the customer and close the sale following negotiations.

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 outline the requirements the learner is expected to meet to achieve the unit.

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria
1 Understand how to handle objections and negotiate with the customer	1.1 Describe the scope of authority and responsibility when dealing with objections
	1.2 Identify the resources available to counter the sales objections
	1.3 Describe how to plan and prepare for negotiation
	1.4 Describe how to use testimonials to progress a sale
	1.5 Explain the advantages and disadvantages of different methods of closing a sale
	1.6 Explain organisational procedures for documenting the negotiated sale
2 Be able to prepare for objections and negotiation with the customer	2.1 Identify possible sales objections and appropriate responses prior to dealing with the customer
	2.2 Confirm authorisation to negotiate
	2.3 Prepare a negotiation plan that is capable of providing a mutually acceptable outcome
3 Be able to handle objections	3.1 Identify customer needs and wants in relation to objections by using a variety of questioning techniques
	3.2 Identify and prioritise customers' concerns
	3.3 Provide evidence to the customer of the strengths of the organisation's products or services
	3.4 Confirm with the customer that the objection(s) have been overcome
	3.5 Identify and respond to verbal and non-verbal buying signals in a way that is consistent with the nature of the signals

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria
4 Be able to negotiate with the customer	4.1 Carry out negotiations according to negotiation plan
	4.2 Promote the benefits of what is being offered to the customer
	4.3 Explain to the customer when and why no further adjustment is possible
	4.4 Obtain support to progress negotiation that is outside own level of authority
5 Be able to close the sale following negotiation	5.1 Apply a trial close in accordance with the negotiation plan
	5.2 Respond to any further objections and concerns
	5.3 Identify and make use of potential add-on, up-selling or cross-selling opportunities
	5.4 Summarise agreements made in accordance with organisational procedures and close the sale

Unit amplification

AC1.1: **Describe the scope of authority and responsibility when dealing with objections**

- Scope of authority and responsibility*: offering and agreeing pricing discounts, offers outside of the normal policies, responsibility of delivering products or services outside of contracts and agreements given, autonomy to be able to make sales decisions*

AC1.2: **Identify the resources available to counter the sales objections**

- Resources*: documents, e.g. organisation product catalogues, price lists, procedures and policies; internal information, e.g. past sale trends, current sales data, sales by target groups; external information, e.g. market share data, government statistics, expert panel estimates; people, e.g. managers, other sales persons*

AC1.3: **Describe how to plan and prepare for negotiation**

- Negotiation*: definition; purpose, e.g. aims to secure an outcome as close as possible to objectives; requires reasonableness and flexibility*

- Planning and preparation*: activities,* e.g. *researching other parties, preparing necessary documents and resources, problem analysis, identifying goals and outcomes, setting negotiation parameters and 'fall-back' positions; negotiation techniques, e.g. using tradable concessions or variables, mirroring, persuasion techniques, establish credibility*

AC1.4: **Describe how to use testimonials to progress a sale**

- Use of testimonials*: e.g. to add credibility to a service or product, to counteract an objection, to provide information on the product and/service, to help the customer to make the buying decision*

AC1.5: **Explain the advantages and disadvantages of different methods of closing a sale**

- Closing a sale*: purpose; methods, e.g. Direct Close, Trial Close, Wrap-up Close, Process Close, Analytical Close, Sales Promotion Close*

AC1.6: **Explain organisational procedures for documenting the negotiated sale**

- The knowledge to meet this AC depends on the particular organisational requirements and context. Learners need to apply the knowledge specific to their organisation to meet this AC

- Typical procedures could include*: d*ocumenting and recording of the sale electronically or manually; gaining authorisation for the sale; obtaining information from customer, e.g. personal details; storage of personal data, e.g. data protection; closing sales*

Information for tutors

Suggested resources

Books

Kench B – *Selling for Dummies* (2nd UK Edition), (John Wiley & Sons Ltd, 2013) ISBN 9781118489437

Websites

www.marketingdonut.co.uk – The Marketing Donut provides small business marketing advice, tools and resources on sales, including-sales techniques and negotiation

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 and the requirements of the Assessment Strategy.

To ensure that the assessment tasks and activities enable learners to produce valid, sufficient, authentic and appropriate evidence that meets the assessment criteria, centres should apply the *Unit assessment guidance* and the requirements of the Assessment Strategy below.

Wherever possible, centres should adopt a holistic approach to assessing the units in the qualification. This gives the assessment process greater rigour and minimises repetition, time and the burden of assessment on all parties involved in the process.

Unit assessment requirements

Assessment of this unit may be based on either the learner's performance at work or through simulation, as necessary, in accordance with the Skills CFA Sales Assessment Strategy in *Annexe C*. If the unit or a part of the unit is simulated, it must be undertaken in a realistic working environment (RWE).

Further guidance on RWEs can be found in the document *Edexcel NVQs, SVQs and competence-based qualifications – Delivery Requirements and Quality Assurance Guidance* available on our website.

Unit assessment guidance

This guidance supports assessors in making decisions about how best to assess each unit and the evidence needed to meet the assessment requirements of the unit. Centres can adapt the guidance for learners and the particular assessment context, as appropriate.

Direct observation of the learner in their workplace negotiating, handling objections and closing sales is a suitable source of evidence for learning outcomes 2, 3, 4 and 5, although opportunities maybe dependent on the learner's workplace. The observation could include observing face to face as well as telephone conversations of learners working in sales situations and can be done unobtrusively by the assessor. A digital voice recorder would be a useful and suitable assessment tool for the observation, as the assessor can then narrate what is being seen as the learner demonstrates own competence when negotiating, handling and closing sales with customers.

Learner work products (e.g. customer notes on computer systems, sales plans and customer orders) seen during an observed performance or separately from observed performance must be evaluated and commented on by the assessor. However, the products themselves should be kept in their normal place and the assessor signpost where they are kept. This evidence should be supported by professional discussion around the performance and work products to provide further evidence for the assessment criteria.

Witness testimony is also a suitable assessment method to support the less observable assessment criterion (e.g. AC4.4, AC5.4) within the unit and can be used to corroborate the competence of the learner and support competence over time.

Professional discussion is suitable for meeting the requirements of learning outcome s1 and could be integrated into the professional discussion for learning outcomes 2, 3, 4 and 5, therefore providing the opportunity for the learner to link and apply their knowledge to their workplace activities as well easing the burden of assessment for both the assessor and the learner. Learners may be more comfortable producing a learner diary to evidence achievement of learning outcome 1 and this is also acceptable. The learner's responses must indicate a depth and breadth of knowledge that is required for the level of demand of the operative verbs.

Evidence of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) can also be used within the unit to confirm competence. Wherever possible, the learning outcomes in this unit should be assessed holistically across the qualification.

Unit 35: Obtaining and Analysing Sales-related Information

Unit reference number: R/502/8615

Level: 3

Credit value: 4

Guided learning hours: 24

Unit type: Competence

Unit summary

This unit gives you the knowledge, understanding and skills to be able to obtain and analyse information. It will also help you understand the markets for products and/or services and the volume, mix and value of the products and/or services sold.

Current data is easy to obtain and can be analysed using software programmes such as a spreadsheet. Information about future buying trends is, at best, difficult to obtain, based on opinion and untrustworthy but it is what you have to rely on when planning for the future. Therefore it is important that you obtain good quality data and use appropriate methods to analyse the data in order to provide you with a firm base for future decision making.

In this unit you will learn about the importance of using up-to-date information when understanding the buying behaviour of customers. You will learn about different data sources and how they can be analysed to provide information to assist the sales planning process. You will be able to gather sales data using planned systems that you will analyse interpret and use in the planning process. You will also be able to use data analysis techniques to identify buyer trends, themes and patterns that can be used in future planning and decision making.

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 outline the requirements the learner is expected to meet to achieve the unit.

Learning outcomes		Assessment criteria	
1	Understand the uses of sales-related information	1.1	Explain the importance of up-to-date information for sales planning purposes
		1.2	Explain the benefits and risks of using a range of information sources to support sales activities
		1.3	Explain the limitations of sales-related information
		1.4	Explain the importance of reviewing sales data requirements for current and future use
2	Understand how to use tools and methods to analyse sales-related information	2.1	Explain the advantages and disadvantages of different systems to gather sales-related information
		2.2	Explain how to use different software packages for analysing and presenting sales-related information
3	Be able to obtain sales-related information about customers, markets and competitors	3.1	Specify the information needed to develop an understanding of customers, competitors and markets
		3.2	Identify sources that are capable of providing the required information about the organisation's markets, customers and competitors
		3.3	Collate sales-related information using planned systems and taking ad hoc opportunities to gather information, in a way that enables data manipulation, analysis and interpretation

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria
4 Be able to use tools and methods to analyse sales-related information	4.1 Select analytical tools and methods that are capable of providing the required degree of analysis of sales-related information
	4.2 Define the information needs of the target audience for different types of sales-related information
	4.3 Use the analytical protocols that are appropriate to the selected tools and methods
	4.4 Identify issues, trends, themes, linkages and interdependencies from an analysis of sales-related information
	4.5 Validate the reliability and validity of the findings of the analysis
	4.6 Provide sales-related information to the target audience within the agreed timescale and budget

Unit amplification

AC1.1: **Explain the importance of up-to-date information for sales planning purposes**

- Type of information*: e.g. organisational sales strategy, past sales trends, budget, staff levels, planned product developments, market intelligence, sales forecasts*

- Sales planning*: definition; planning cycle, e.g. weekly, monthly, annual*

- Importance*: e.g. to support effective decision-making; SMART target setting; operational planning; impact on marketing plan*

AC1.2: **Explain the benefits and risks of using a range of information sources to support sales activities**

- Information sources:
    - primary sources – *e.g. current sales data, actual receipts e.g. daily, weekly, monthly, sales by target groups, projected sales, budgets*
    - secondary sources – *e.g. competitors estimated sales, market share data, expert panel estimates, government statistics, trade associations, commercial suppliers of data*

- Assessing benefits and risks of information sources*: reliability, validity, relevance, source bias, generalisability*

AC1.3: **Explain the limitations of sales-related information**

- Sales related information*: e.g. sales by department, sales by geographical area, sales by agent, value of sales, units sold, frequency of sales, sales against budget, sales variance analysis, sales returns*

- Limitations*: e.g. accuracy of data, currency of data, past sales do not equal future sales, price changes through sales promotion*

AC1.4: Explain the importance of reviewing sales data requirements for current and future use

- Sales data requirements*: e.g. short and long term sales trends, number of sales, value of sales, products and/or services type sold, current and future sales trends, inventory reports*

- Importance:

  o current use – *e.g. budget analysis, variance analysis, identifying reasons why sales are above or below target, adjusting sales targets, planning to achieve targets, sourcing additional products and/or services, planning promotional activities*

  o future use – *e.g. short term and long term planning, sales forecasting, planning purchases of products and/or services, planning for peaks and troughs, future borrowing requirements, planning advertising campaigns*

AC2.1: Explain the advantages and disadvantages of different systems to gather sales-related information

- Systems*: e.g. judgement forecasting; electronic point of sale (EPOS) systems; manual and computerised accounting systems; statistical projections; trend analysis; market research; competitor analysis; evaluation of advertising; behavioural segmentation; customer feedback systems*

AC2.2: Explain how to use different software packages for analysing and presenting sales-related information

- Software packages*: e.g. spreadsheets; sales forecasting software; customer relationship software, e.g. Excel, Sage 50 Forecasting, Flightdeck*

- Analysis of sales related information*: different ways, e.g. by product and/or service, geographical, by outlet or office, correlation to particular circumstances; drilling down facility; 'what if' testing, identify sales patterns and customer characteristics*

- Presenting*: methods, e.g. data tables, graphs and charts, pivot tables, monthly demand forecasts, inventory reports*

Information for tutors

Suggested resources

Books

Janert PK – *Data Analysis with Open Source Tools* (O'Reilly Media, 2010) ISBN 9780596802356

Linoff GS and Berry MJA – *Data Mining Techniques: For Marketing, Sales, and Customer Relationship Management*, (3rd Edition), (John Wiley & Sons, 2011) ISBN 9780470650936

Maex D.and Brown PB– *Sexy Little Numbers: How to Use the Data You Have to Increase Sales and Grow Your Business at Virtually No Cost* (Crown Publishing Group, 2012) ISBN 9780307888341

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 and the requirements of the Assessment Strategy.

To ensure that the assessment tasks and activities enable learners to produce valid, sufficient, authentic and appropriate evidence that meets the assessment criteria, centres should apply the *Unit assessment guidance* and the requirements of the Assessment Strategy below.

Wherever possible, centres should adopt a holistic approach to assessing the units in the qualification. This gives the assessment process greater rigour and minimises repetition, time and the burden of assessment on all parties involved in the process.

Unit assessment requirements

Assessment of this unit may be based on either the learner's performance at work or through simulation, as necessary, in accordance with the Skills CFA Sales Assessment Strategy in *Annexe C*. If the unit or a part of the unit is simulated, it must be undertaken in a realistic working environment (RWE).

Further guidance on RWEs can be found in the document Edexcel NVQs, SVQs and competence-based qualifications – Delivery Requirements and Quality Assurance Guidance available on our website.

Unit assessment guidance

This guidance supports assessors in making decisions about how best to assess each unit and the evidence needed to meet the assessment requirements of the unit. Centres can adapt the guidance for learners and the particular assessment context, as appropriate.

The main evidence collection methods for demonstrating achievement of learning outcomes 3 and 4 are likely to be a combination of examining learner work products supported by professional discussion and witness testimony.

Work products may include; a project brief, reports, emails, power-point presentations, incident logs and diary entries. Witness testimony could be used to corroborate that the learner has performed an action to a satisfactory standard, e.g. AC3.3 and AC4.6 and to confirm that the learner has met the requirements consistently over time.

The professional discussion could focus on providing evidence for AC4.2, as well as the learner's rationale for information needed in AC3.1, AC3.2, AC4.1, and AC4.3. It could also focus on the process and techniques used by the learner in their analysis to meet the requirements of AC4.4 and AC4.5. The learner may have the opportunity to gather ad-hoc qualitative and/or quantitative data that could illustrate customer behaviour, an example may be the learner receiving and recording customer comments about a product and/or service (AC3.3).

Evidence to confirm the achievement of learning outcomes 1 and 2 could be integrated into the professional discussion for learning outcomes 3 and 4 allowing the learner the opportunity to link and apply their knowledge to their workplace activities. Learner's responses must be at a sufficient depth and breadth to meet the level of demand expected from an explanation. There may be opportunities to relate the assessment of the knowledge requirements to the competence activities, for example, AC1.1, AC1.2 and AC3.1, AC3.2 all relate to the information required and the sources of information that could be used for. AC2.1, AC2.2, and AC4.1 – AC4.4 all relate to tools and methods to analyse sales data.

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) can also be used within the unit to confirm competence. Wherever possible, the learning outcomes in this unit should be assessed holistically across the qualification.

Unit 36:   Buyer Behaviour in Sales Situations

Unit reference number: **K/502/8622**

Level: **3**

Credit value: **3**

Guided learning hours: **27**

Unit type: **Competence**

Unit summary

In this unit you will learn how to deal with buyer behaviour in sales situations and this will give you the knowledge to be able to apply the skills learnt to different sales environments, situations and customers. You will do this by learning different models of buyer behaviour, what impact the different models of buyer behaviour has on the sales cycle and how to respond to the buyer at each stage of the decision making process. You will need to know what influences consumers in the decision making process and how organisational processes affect the sales cycle.

You will need to be able to show competence within contacting customers, decision makers and influencers within the decision making cycle and respond to these people in a sales situation. Finally, you will need to be able to show competence at using objections as buying opportunities and confirm solutions with your customers.

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 outline the requirements the learner is expected to meet to achieve the unit.

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria
1 Understand the impact of different models of buyer behaviour on the sales cycle	1.1 Explain the consumer buying decision-making process
	1.2 Explain how the consumer buying decision-making process affects the sales cycle
	1.3 Describe the influences that affect the consumer decision-making process
	1.4 Explain the organisational buying decision-making process
	1.5 Explain how the organisational buying decision-making process affects the sales cycle
	1.6 Describe the influences that affect the organisational buying decision-making process
	1.7 Explain the impact of the different roles within the decision-making unit on the sales cycle
2 Be able to respond to the buyer at each stage of the decision making process	2.1 Use the methods for contacting customers, influencers and decision-makers appropriate to different stages of the buying decision-making process
	2.2 Respond to different decision-makers in a sales situation in a way that is appropriate to their role
	2.3 Use objections as buying opportunities
	2.4 Confirm solution(s) offered meet the needs and wants of decision-makers

Unit amplification

AC1.1: **Explain the consumer buying decision-making process**

- Consumer buying decision-making process*: definition (individual consumer process); stages, i.e. problem recognition, information search, evaluation of alternative products, purchase decision, post-purchase evaluation*

AC1.2: **Explain how the consumer buying decision-making process affects the sales cycle**

- Sales cycle*: definition, stages, i.e. planning/prospecting, contact/connect, investigate needs, make proposal, manage objections, close sale, follow up process*

- Effects*: greater involvement in entire buying process; observing buying triggers; creating and communicating value propositions; progress of cycle depends on customer buying decisions; good negotiation and influencing skills*

AC1.3: **Describe the influences that affect the consumer decision-making process**

- Influences*: consumer personal factors, e.g. motivation, personality, previous experience attitudes, lifestyle; product related factors, e.g. brand loyalty, perception of product and/or service, advertisements; external factors, e.g. economic climate, competition*

AC1.4: **Explain the organisational buying decision-making process**

- Organisational buying decision-making process*: definition; features, e.g. multi-person activity, formal process, multiple communication processes; difference between consumer buying process*

- Five stages*: need recognition and problem awareness (product specification); information search (supplier eligibility, product quality, cost); evaluation of supplier proposals; purchase decision (contract, product specification); post-purchase evaluation and feedback (meeting contractual agreements, formal process)*

- Types of purchase*: new task, straight re-buy, modified re-buy*

AC1.5: **Explain how the organisational buying decision-making process affects the sales cycle**

- Effects*: roles of personalities; relationship with key decision-makers and influencers; impact priorities, goals and budgeting and time constraints*

AC1.6: **Describe the influences that affect the organisational buying decision-making process**

- Influences*: external environmental factors, e.g. economic conditions, regulatory changes, competition, political context; internal organisational factors, e.g. purchasing policies and procedures, organisational structure, organisational goals and objectives; interpersonal and individual factors, e.g. risk taking ability, authority and responsibility, interpersonal conflict; situation factors, e.g. time, financial capacity*

AC1.7: **Explain the impact of the different roles within the decision-making unit on the sales cycle**

- Different Roles*: Initiator; Influencer; Decider; Buyer/Purchasing Manager; User; Gatekeeper*

Information for tutors

Suggested resources

Books

Kench B − *Selling for Dummies* (2nd Edition), (John Wiley & Sons Ltd, 2013) ISBN 9781118489437

Websites

www.tutor2u.net – contains some useful information on buyer behaviour

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 and the requirements of the Assessment Strategy.

To ensure that the assessment tasks and activities enable learners to produce valid, sufficient, authentic and appropriate evidence that meets the assessment criteria, centres should apply the *Unit assessment guidance* and the requirements of the Assessment Strategy below.

Wherever possible, centres should adopt a holistic approach to assessing the units in the qualification. This gives the assessment process greater rigour and minimises repetition, time and the burden of assessment on all parties involved in the process.

Unit assessment requirements

Assessment of this unit may be based on either the learner's performance at work or through simulation, as necessary, in accordance with the Skills CFA Sales Assessment Strategy in *Annexe C*. If the unit or a part of the unit is simulated, it must be undertaken in a realistic working environment (RWE).

Further guidance on RWEs can be found in the document *Edexcel NVQs, SVQs and competence-based qualifications – Delivery Requirements and Quality Assurance Guidance* available on our website.

Unit assessment guidance

This guidance supports assessors in making decisions about how best to assess each unit and the evidence needed to meet the assessment requirements of the unit. Centres can adapt the guidance for learners and the particular assessment context, as appropriate.

Direct observation of the learner in their workplace responding to the buyer at each stage of the decision making process is the primary source of evidence for learning outcome 2. This could include observing face to face as well as telephone conversations of learners working in sales costing/pricing situations. The observation can be done unobtrusively by the assessor.

Witness testimony and the learner's work products, (e.g. customer notes on computer systems, product leaflets, customer orders) seen during an observed performance or separately from observed performance must be evaluated and commented on by the assessor. However, the products themselves should be kept in their normal place and the assessor signpost where they are kept. This evidence should be supported by professional discussion around the performance and work products to provide further evidence for the assessment criteria. A digital voice recorder would be a useful and suitable assessment tool for the observation, as the assessor can then narrate what is being seen as the learner demonstrates own competence when negotiating, handling and closing sales with customers. This recording can then be referenced it the relevant assessment criterion demonstrated by the learner.

Witness testimony is also a suitable assessment method to support the less observable assessment criterion (e.g. AC2.2, AC2.3) in the unit and can be used to corroborate the competence of the learner and support competence over time.

Professional discussion is suitable for meeting the requirements of learning outcome 1 and could be integrated into the professional discussion for learning outcome 2, therefore providing the opportunity for the learner to link and apply their knowledge to their workplace activities as well as easing the burden of assessment for both the assessor and the learner. Learners may be more comfortable producing a learner diary to evidence the achievement of learning outcome 1 and this is also acceptable. The learner's responses or statements must indicate a depth and breadth of knowledge that is required for the level of demand of the operative verbs.

Evidence of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) can also be used within the unit to confirm competence. Wherever possible, the learning outcomes in this unit should be assessed holistically across the qualification.

Unit 37: Manage Incidents Referred to a Contact Centre

Unit reference number: K/503/0418

Level: 3

Credit value: 6

Guided learning hours: 30

Unit type: Competence

Unit summary

Some contact centres have specific responsibilities for dealing with emergency contacts. This involves contacts in which an organisation expects and/or demands the contact centre to be immediately responsive to handle an incident. These organisations will have a well-defined procedure designed to identify what is needed as quickly and accurately as possible. These procedures would need to be followed closely as they would have been developed in close consultation with those responding to incident requests and customers. Managing incidents involves following appropriate procedures, selecting and deploying resources using the correct communication channels and providing guidance to colleagues on incident handling and management.

This unit is concerned with being able to manage incidents through a contact centre, providing support to colleagues on incident management and understanding the management of incidents reported to a contact centre.

You will understand how to manage incidents, including their monitoring and review. You will be able to manage incidents received by the contact centre you work in. You will show that you can support colleagues when they are dealing with an incident through the deployment of contact centre resources.

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 outline the requirements the learner is expected to meet to achieve the unit.

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria
1 Be able to manage incidents through a contact centre	1.1 Respond to incoming contacts relating to incidents in accordance with organisational procedures
	1.2 Select resources that are available to deal with reported incidents
	1.3 Inform the selected personnel of their responsibilities in accordance with organisational procedures
	1.4 Specify the action needed from personnel that are deployed to deal with the incident in accordance with organisational procedures
	1.5 Monitor the management of the incident in accordance with organisational procedures
	1.6 Ensure that the correct decision paths have been followed to manage reported incidents
	1.7 Deal with queries and/or complaints about incident handling in accordance with organisational procedures
2 Be able to provide support to colleagues on incident management in a contact centre	2.1 Agree with colleagues the areas in which they need support and guidance in incident management
	2.2 Agree with colleagues the type of support that will provide them with support that is capable of meeting their identified needs
	2.3 Identify actions to improve team performance in incident handling from a review of incident management results

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria
3 Understand how to manage incidents reported to a contact centre	3.1 Explain the incident management services offered by the contact centre
	3.2 Describe the strengths and weaknesses of methods of assessing the validity and priority of the potential incident
	3.3 Explain the importance of clear communication using the most appropriate channel with those dealing with incidents
	3.4 Describe the strengths and weaknesses of ways of monitoring the actions of those deployed to deal with the incident
	3.5 Describe the strengths and weaknesses of different types of support for colleagues
	3.6 Explain the importance of reviewing incident management results

Unit amplification

AC3.1: **Explain the incident management services offered by the contact centre**

- The knowledge to meet this AC depends on the particular organisational context. Learners need to apply the knowledge specific to their organisation to meet this AC

- Services may include*: domestic, e.g. helpline services, maintenance and call out; utilities, e.g. reporting faults, installation; emergencies, e.g. Fire, Police, Ambulance; medical, e.g. NHS Direct; specialist, e.g., pandemic health issues, pollution control; commercial, e.g. IT disaster recovery*

AC3.2: **Describe the strengths and weaknesses of methods of assessing the validity and priority of the potential incident**

- Priority*: factors*, e.g. *seriousness of the incident, potential impact of the incident; method, e.g. risk assessment, predetermined critical incident response boundaries such as critical, high, medium and low, trigger levels*

- Assessing validity:

  o *content validity, i.e. the incident matches up to the predetermined incidents that the centre has rehearsed e.g. responding to a fire alert*

  o *criterion validity, i.e. the incident matches up to a predetermined set of criterion that will trigger a preconditioned response e.g. minor alert, intermediate alert, major alert*

AC3.3: **Explain the importance of clear communication using the most appropriate channel with those dealing with incidents**

- Channels*: e.g. telephone, emails, text, instant messaging; appropriateness depending on context*

- Importance*: e.g. avoids misunderstandings, clear requirements, clear action points, removes ambiguity, reduces anxiety and stress, promotes attention to detail, builds confidence in contact centre staff*

AC3.4: **Describe the strengths and weaknesses of ways of monitoring the actions of those deployed to deal with the incident**

- Monitoring*: purpose of monitoring*; *ways, e.g. direct observation, customer feedback, speed of initial response, cost of response, time taken to resolve the incident, daily, weekly, monthly review of incident response, response times e.g. information from incident reports, data collected from customers*

AC3.5: **Describe the strengths and weaknesses of different types of support for colleagues**

- Support for colleagues*: training and development, e.g. critical incident management training, critical reviews of incident responses, coaching; staff recognition schemes; health and well-being, e.g. counselling services, stress management training, peer support networks*

AC3.6: **Explain the importance of reviewing incident management results**

- Importance*: e.g. learning from experience, performance management, improving quality; improving effectiveness and efficiency, identify training needs, incorporating incident outcomes in handling techniques*

Information for tutors

Suggested resources

Books

Coleman TS – *A Practical Guide to Risk Management* (Research Foundation of CFA Institute, 2011) ISBN 9781934667415

Faggiano V, McNall J and Gillespie T – *Critical Incident Management: A Complete Response Guide, Second Edition* (CRC Press, 2011) ISBN 9781439874547

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 and the requirements of the Assessment Strategy.

To ensure that the assessment tasks and activities enable learners to produce valid, sufficient, authentic and appropriate evidence that meets the assessment criteria, centres should apply the *Unit assessment guidance* and the requirements of the Assessment Strategy below.

Wherever possible, centres should adopt a holistic approach to assessing the units in the qualification. This gives the assessment process greater rigour and minimises repetition, time and the burden of assessment on all parties involved in the process.

Unit assessment requirements

This unit must be assessed in a real working environment, i.e. assessment of learner performance at work in accordance with the Skills CFA Contact Centres Operations Assessment Strategy in *Annexe B*.

Unit assessment guidance

This guidance supports assessors in making decisions about how best to assess each unit and the evidence needed to meet the assessment requirements of the unit. Centres can adapt the guidance for learners and the particular assessment context, as appropriate.

The primary source of evidence for demonstrating achievement in this unit is likely to be direct observation of the learner managing incidents in their contact centre, including working with their colleagues. Observational evidence for learning outcomes 1 and 2 could be gathered by the assessor listening in on calls. Examples of observed activities may include for AC1.1 checking organisational procedures to ensure the correct actions are taken whilst dealing with an incident. For AC1.4 the learner may be observed giving instructions to personnel face to face or by using a communications device.

This evidence could be supported by the examination of the learner's work products, such as; incident reports, incident log records, improvement plans, management reports, emails, queries and complaints documentation and will provide further evidence to meet the requirements of, for example, (AC1.2, AC1.5, AC1.6, AC1.7, AC2.1, AC2.2 and AC2.3). Professional discussion should also be used to evidence the knowledge underlying the performance being undertaken and could focus on providing evidence for AC1.4 as well as, for example, the rationale for using resources selected and the process and criteria used for monitoring incidents, dealing with complaints and devising improvement plans (AC 1.2, AC1.5, AC1.7 and AC2.3).

Evidence to confirm the achievement of learning outcome 3 could be integrated into the professional discussion for learning outcomes 1 and 2, therefore providing the opportunity for the learner to link and apply their knowledge to their workplace activities as well easing the burden of assessment for both the assessor and the learner. There are good opportunities to relate the assessment of the knowledge requirements to the competence activities. For example, AC2.3 and AC3.6 both relate to reviewing incident management results, or, AC2.1, AC2.2 and AC3.4, AC3.5 all relate to monitoring and supporting colleagues. Learners' responses to meet the knowledge requirements must be at a sufficient depth and breadth to meet the level of demand of the operative verbs.

Witness testimony and evidence of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) can also be used within the unit to confirm competence. Wherever possible, the learning outcomes in this unit should be assessed holistically across the qualification.

Unit 38: Lead Direct Sales Activities in a Contact Centre Team

Unit reference number: D/503/0397

Level: 3

Credit value: 4

Guided learning hours: 8

Unit type: Competence

Unit summary

Many contact centres carry out direct sales activities which may be through inbound or outbound contacts and may or may not be the primary purpose of a particular contact. Sales processes may be basic and involve order-taking, routine involving a defined set of services or products or complex involving matching customer wishes or needs with any available service and/or product. Contact centre teamwork supports learning between colleagues especially in challenging areas such as sales. Sales plans are devised using available sales, market and customer information and are generally backed by targets and agreed with team members.

This unit is designed for those who are in a supervisory role. You will lead your team to prepare for direct sales activities, dealing with, and making sales to customers. You will also ensure compliance with organisational requirements and legislation.

In leading your team, you will identify and set targets with colleagues, providing encouragement, feedback and guidance in securing those targets and undertaking their daily activities. You will be able to gather relevant data on sales performance and prepare reports on improvement measures. You will also understand how to review sales activities, align sales techniques in line with customer's perspective and deal with customer problems.

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 outline the requirements the learner is expected to meet to achieve the unit.

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria
1 Be able to carry out sales activities in a contact centre	1.1 Prepare for a direct sales activity in accordance with organisational procedures
	1.2 Establish customer wishes and needs
	1.3 Offer options to customers by linking their wishes and needs to products and/or services
	1.4 Adapt their sales style and techniques to mirror customer wishes and behaviour
	1.5 Close the sale by agreement with the customer during the customer contact
	1.6 Record the confirmed order in accordance with organisational procedures
	1.7 Ensure compliance with relevant regulation and legislation that has an impact on direct sales through a contact centre
	1.8 Complete the authorisation or payment in accordance with organisational procedures
2 Be able to analyse contact centre sales data	2.1 Collate sales data from direct sales activities in a format that enables data manipulation
	2.2 Analyse sales performance against market and customer trends
	2.3 Summarise the results of the sales analysis to enable the formulation of a sales plan

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria
3 Be able to lead a team involved in direct sales activities in a contact centre	3.1 Identify sales activities which are capable of fulfilling the sales plan
	3.2 Agree realistic and achievable team sales targets including cross-selling and up-selling
	3.3 Monitor the team's sales performance against agreed targets
	3.4 Identify opportunities for improving sales performance through a review of contact centre team sales performance and approach
	3.5 Provide encouragement and guidance to team colleagues during sales activities
4 Understand sales activities in a contact centre team	4.1 Explain the features and benefits of the products and/or services offered or supported by the contact centre
	4.2 Explain the organisational and regulatory requirements of direct sales activities
	4.3 Explain the techniques for overcoming objections and questions from customers during sales activities
	4.4 Explain the importance of adapting their style and approach to mirror customers' style and perspective
	4.5 Explain the importance of setting a good example in a contact centre team
	4.6 Explain how to set sales targets including cross-selling and up-selling

Unit amplification

AC4.1: **Explain the features and benefits of the products and/or services offered or supported by the contact centre**

- The knowledge to meet this AC depends on particular organisational context and the goods and/or services offered. Learners need to apply the knowledge specific to their organisation to meet this AC

AC4.2: **Explain the organisational and regulatory requirements of direct sales activities**

- The organisational requirements depend on the particular organisational context and the procedures and policies in place - learners need to apply this knowledge to meet this aspect of the AC

- Policies that may be in place could include*: stock control, credit control, advertising, length of calls, use and/or non-use of scripts, up-selling and/or cross-selling, staffing e.g. sales, maintenance, support*

- Regulatory requirements*: e.g. Consumer Contracts Regulations 2013, Sale of Goods Act 1979*

AC4.3: **Explain the techniques for overcoming objections and questions from customers during sales activities**

- Techniques*: e.g. active listening, questioning techniques (open-ended, probing questions), confirming customers understanding, empathising with customers, clear explanation of product and/or service benefits, provide evidence to confirm value, honesty and openness in answering questions*

AC4.4: **Explain the importance of adapting their style and approach to mirror customers' style and perspective**

- Mirroring technique*: best practice principles in mirroring customer behaviour*

- Importance*: e.g. helps to build a rapport with customers, makes customers more receptive, encourages trust, increases the potential of making the sale*

AC4.5: Explain the importance of setting a good example in a contact centre team

- Leading by example*: e.g. demonstrating integrity, taking responsibility for actions, responding appropriately to constructive criticism, acknowledging areas for development, respecting individuality, taking an active role in team projects/work, actively demonstrating beliefs and principles*

- Importance*: e.g. provides vision and inspiration, encourages teamwork and team effort, builds trust between leader and team, supports development of team values and behaviours, supports development of team competencies*

AC4.6: Explain how to set sales targets including cross-selling and up-selling

- Principles in setting sales targets*: e.g. review business sales goals and past sales targets; consider team member's individual experience, training and past performance; assess competitor performance and sales activity; establish purpose of targets, e.g. to get new customers, maintain current customers; assess efficiency of contact centre systems and technology; involve team members in target setting; assess opportunities to cross-sell and up-sell; use SMART targets*

Information for tutors

Suggested resources

Books

Calvert N – *Gower Handbook of Call and Contact Centre Management* (Gower Publishing Ltd, 2004) ISBN 9780566085109

Mathibe A – *How to Survive (& Thrive) in a Call Centre (*Alison Mathiebe, 2011) ISBN 9783000352218

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 and the requirements of the Assessment Strategy.

To ensure that the assessment tasks and activities enable learners to produce valid, sufficient, authentic and appropriate evidence that meets the assessment criteria, centres should apply the *Unit assessment guidance* and the requirements of the Assessment Strategy below.

Wherever possible, centres should adopt a holistic approach to assessing the units in the qualification. This gives the assessment process greater rigour and minimises repetition, time and the burden of assessment on all parties involved in the process.

Unit assessment requirements

This unit must be assessed in a real working environment, i.e. assessment of learner performance at work in accordance with the Skills CFA Contact Centres Operations Assessment Strategy in *Annexe B*.

Unit assessment guidance

This guidance supports assessors in making decisions about how best to assess each unit and the evidence needed to meet the assessment requirements of the unit. Centres can adapt the guidance for learners and the particular assessment context, as appropriate.

Evidence to demonstrate achievement of learning outcomes 1, 2 and 3 is likely to come from a combination of direct observation of the learner leading direct sales activities with their contact centre team and examining their work products, supported by professional discussion and witness testimony.

Evidence from direct observation of the learner and/or their work products should be supported by professional discussion to provide further evidence for the assessment criteria associated with these learning outcomes. Work products could include; records, e.g. call logs, processed orders, payment or authorisation (AC1.6–AC1.8), collated sales data, analysis data and results (AC2.1-2.3). Team sales targets, performance monitoring and review records provided in support of further sales opportunities, could be linked with the direct observation of AC3.1 and improvement plans (AC3.1-AC3.5).

The professional discussion could focus on, the decision making and criteria used by the learner to offer customers options and close the sale (AC1.5), and in setting, monitoring and reviewing team sales targets (AC3.1-3.4). It could also focus on the learner's rationale for their approach with customers (AC1.2-1.3) and the analysis techniques used and formats chosen for presenting information (LO2).

Witness testimony could also be used to support the learner's competence over time and to confirm compliance with organisational and regulatory criteria.

Evidence to confirm the achievement of learning outcome 4 could be integrated into the professional discussion for learning outcomes 1, 2 and 3, therefore providing the opportunity for the learner to link and apply their knowledge to their workplace activities as well easing the burden of assessment for both the assessor and the learner. The learner's responses must be at a sufficient depth and breadth to meet the level of demand of an explanation. Work products that may provide evidence for learning outcomes 1, 2 and 3 could be used as a basis for the discussion, for example, evidence used for AC3.2 could be used as a basis for the professional discussion to meet AC4.6.

Evidence of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) can also be used within the unit to confirm competence. Wherever possible, the learning outcomes in this unit should be assessed holistically across the qualification.

Unit 39: Manage Diary Systems

Unit reference number:	**L/506/1807**
Level:	**2**
Credit value:	**2**
Guided learning hours:	**12**
Unit type:	**Competence**

Unit summary

Time is very important and it can be utilised in a very efficient way by maintaining a diary management system. The efficient planning and organisation of your own time and other people's is one of the most important activities that you can get involved with. The diary is one of the major resources within the office and without it none of us would know where we should be or what we should be doing at any given time.

In this unit you will learn the overarching purpose of providing support to manage diary systems. You will learn how important it is to keep diary systems up to date and how bookings and any changes are prioritised. With any system there are constraints and they will need to be managed efficiently. You will learn about problems that can occur and how to deal with them.

This unit also will give you the opportunity to manage a diary system in a practical way. You will learn what information is needed before diary entries can be made and how important it is that the entries are accurate, timely and kept up to date. Changes can cause inconveniences and therefore you will need to develop the skills to manage these to meet the needs of those involved and keep everybody informed. You will also be made aware that some information will be confidential and how you must ensure that this information remains confidential.

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 outline the requirements the learner is expected to meet to achieve the unit.

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria
1 Understand the management of diary systems	1.1 Explain the importance of keeping diary systems up to date
	1.2 Describe the basis on which bookings and changes are prioritised
	1.3 Explain any constraints relating to making bookings for people or facilities
	1.4 Describe the types of problems that can occur when managing diaries
2 Be able to manage diary systems	2.1 Obtain the information needed to make diary entries
	2.2 Make accurate and timely diary entries
	2.3 Respond to changes in a way that balances and meets the needs of those involved
	2.4 Communicate up-to-date information to everyone involved
	2.5 Keep diaries up-to-date
	2.6 Maintain the requirements of confidentiality

Unit amplification

AC1.1: **Explain the importance of keeping diary systems up to date**

- Diary systems*: allow organisations to plan and co-ordinate activities and resources; prioritise workload; effective time management; paper based; electronic on intranet; shared access by individuals, work teams and departments; supports managers, teams and departmental processes; record deadlines, e.g. project targets, specific work completion dates; personal area for reminders and 'to do' items*

- The importance of up to date diary systems*: staff access to accurate information; location of colleagues; when colleagues are free, e.g. meetings/activities arranged to suit availability; resources for a meeting/activity can be planned; cancelled activities deleted; allows efficiency of whole organisation; changes to arranged meetings advised*

AC1.2: **Describe the basis on which bookings and changes are prioritised**

- Prioritising bookings*: important deadlines to meet, policies and procedures, e.g. regular board meetings, weekly or monthly team meetings, discussing new policies or procedures; project planning or product development against targeted stages, need and urgency*

- Prioritising changes*: availability of facilities/accommodation; availability of minimum number of people needed to meet full attendance; important contributor unavailable on original date; meeting customers' needs; project profile, e.g. high, low; deadlines to be met*

AC1.3: **Explain any constraints relating to making bookings for people or facilities**

- Constraints*: conflicting demands; competing priorities; availability of resources; insufficient resources; insufficient information given; unavailable facilities; unable to access diary management system; specific location request not available; staff/visitors' availability*

AC1.4: **Describe the types of problems that can occur when managing diaries**

- Types of problems*: possible conflict with existing requests; overlap of multiple requests; duplicate or double bookings; not communicating requests or change in request; not confirming or recording requests; prioritising requests, e.g. rescheduling to high priority/emergency/urgency; poor communication*

Information for tutors

Suggested resources

Books

Craven R and Golabowski L – *The Complete Idiot's Guide to Meeting and Event Planning* (2nd Edition) (ALPHA, 2006) ISBN 9781592574629

Lapsley A – *Business & Administration Student Handbook Level 2* (CfA, 2010) ISBN 9780956773807

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 and the requirements of the Assessment Strategy.

To ensure that the assessment tasks and activities enable learners to produce valid, sufficient, authentic and appropriate evidence that meets the assessment criteria, centres should apply the *Unit assessment guidance* and the requirements of the Assessment Strategy below.

Wherever possible, centres should adopt a holistic approach to assessing the units in the qualification. This gives the assessment process greater rigour and minimises repetition, time and the burden of assessment on all parties involved in the process.

Unit assessment requirements

This unit must be assessed in the workplace in accordance with the Skills CFA Assessment Strategy for Business Administration, Customer Service and Management and Leadership in *Annexe A.* Simulation is not allowed for this unit. All evidence of occupational competence should be generated through performance under workplace conditions; this includes evidence of achievement for knowledge-based learning outcomes and associated assessment criteria.

Unit assessment guidance

This guidance supports assessors in making decisions about how best to assess each unit and the evidence needed to meet the assessment requirements. Centres can adapt the guidance for learners and the particular assessment context, as appropriate.

The primary source of evidence for demonstrating achievement of learning outcome 2 is direct observation of the learner carrying out their work activities relating to diary management. The diary system being managed can be either manual or electronic and could be the learner's own diary or that of colleagues. The diary management may relate to items such as travel, meetings, leave, conferences, deadlines, etc.

The evidence from the direct observation could be supported by examining work products such as completed diary entries or communications to colleagues notifying of changes (e.g. emails, memos) – this provides further evidence to meet the requirements, for example AC2.1 AC2.2 and AC2.4. To achieve AC2.3, learners need to provide evidence of prioritising requested changes to bookings and solving problems of conflicting demands by suggesting and negotiating alternative arrangements. Witness testimony could be used to support the evidence from direct observation for this assessment criterion as well as for AC2.5.

Questions and answers (Q&A) could be used to corroborate the competence of the learner (e.g. for AC2.6) as well as meeting the requirements of the knowledge assessment criteria in learning outcome 1. Alternatively, a learner diary could be used. There are good opportunities for the assessment of the knowledge in learning outcome 1 to applied and related to the learner's competencies in learning outcome 2. For example, the learner could be asked to describe the basis on which they made changes to bookings to ensure that they balanced the needs of all concerned. This allows the learner to apply their knowledge to their activities linked to AC2.3. To achieve the knowledge assessment criteria, the learner's responses must be at the appropriate breadth and depth to meet the level of demand of the knowledge assessment criteria; for example, the response for AC1.3 must have sufficient detail about the different types of constraints to meet the standards for an explanation.

Evidence of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) can also be used within the unit to confirm competence. Wherever possible, the learning outcomes in this unit should be assessed holistically across the qualification.

Unit 40: Contribute to the Organisation of an Event

Unit reference number: L/506/1869

Level: 2

Credit value: 3

Guided learning hours: 23

Unit type: Competence

Unit summary

The management of an event is crucial ensure an event is successful, and can be an activity undertaken by people working in a support role. It could involve planning and co-ordinating arrangements for a variety of events from arranging meetings, product launches, exhibitions and promotions to organising a full-scale conference. There are organisations that actually specialise in event management, which shows how important this function is.

In this unit you will learn what is involved in the planning of an event, and the importance of being aware of the different needs of delegates attending, the requirements of health, safety and security, and how to deal with any problems that may arise during the event.

You will have the opportunity to organise an event as a practical activity to give you the direct experience to plan, co-ordinate and arrange all the different stages involved. There will be practical considerations of booking venues and equipment, and other preparatory work, including sending information to delegates and organising resources. You will explore the support tasks involved during the event, together with follow up activities at the end of the event.

During these challenging activities you will develop skills in communication and liaising with others, time management, problem solving, negotiating, planning, resource management, teamwork, monitoring and evaluating.

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 outline the requirements the learner is expected to meet to achieve the unit.

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria
1 Understand event organisation	1.1 Explain the roles, responsibilities and accountabilities of individuals involved in the event
	1.2 Explain the purpose and features of different types of events
	1.3 Describe the type of resources needed for different types of events
	1.4 Describe the different needs attendees may have and how to meet these
	1.5 Explain the requirements of health, safety and security when organising events
	1.6 Describe the types of problems that may occur during events and how to deal with them
2 Be able to carry out pre-event actions	2.1 Identify venue requirements for an event
	2.2 Obtain resources within the agreed timescales
	2.3 Distribute pre-event documentation to delegates in accordance with the event plan
	2.4 Co-ordinate attendee responses within the agreed timescale
	2.5 Identify any special requirements of event attendees
3 Be able to set up an event	3.1 Set up layout and resources in accordance with the event plan
	3.2 Confirm that all identified resources are in place and meet requirements
	3.3 Behave in a way that maintains organisational values and standards

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria
4 Be able to carry out post-event actions	4.1 Ensure the venue is restored to the required conditions in accordance with the terms of the contract
	4.2 Carry out follow-up actions in accordance with the event plan and agreements made at the event

Unit amplification

AC1.1: **Explain the roles, responsibilities and accountabilities of individuals involved in the event**

- Event leader*: depending on seniority within organisation allocating or obtaining budget required; discussing purpose and requirements with the event organiser, e.g. numbers involved, type of venue required, facilities, catering, accommodation, other resources; providing information on delegates/target audience to be invited; staff involved; visiting speakers; monitoring costs and evaluating the event*

- Event organiser:

    o *liaising with event leader: organising a venue and location that meets budget and costs allocated; facilities, e.g. presentation room, layout, breakout rooms; resources; catering; delegate requirements; parking adjacent to accommodation; bookings; access transport; special needs*

    o *responsibilities: setting up programme; liaising with presenters; setting event objectives; presentation materials; arranging visiting speakers; invitations; event programme; acceptances; preparation and distribution of delegate materials; final delegate lists; name badges; confirming numbers to venue*

    o *current legal requirements: law of contract (with venue, outside speakers, suppliers); agreements; health and safety, and security (safe keeping of delegate and organisation's belongings and equipment)*

    o *during the event: check rooms, equipment, materials, safety and security, meet delegates for registration, record delegates attending, resolve problems if arise, monitor presentations and activities to meet programme times*

- Support staff working with the event leader*: availability; timely preparation of presentations and event materials*

- Venue staff*: providing room accommodation and equipment as booked; timely catering requirements; healthy, safe and secure environment*

AC1.2: **Explain the purpose and features of different types of events**

- Types of event*: meetings; conferences; business dinners/awards ceremonies; exhibitions; courses/workshops; networking events/conferences; promotional events/product launch; fundraising events*

- Internal*: involving own staff but possible external speakers*

- External*: involving own staff and outside delegates, e.g. customers*

- Confidential*: concerning finance, issues of company strategy*

- Routine/formal*: held on a regular basis and a requirement either legally or as an organisation's procedure, e.g. Annual General Meeting, regular board meeting*

- Non-routine/informal*: e.g. ad hoc meetings as needed by the operations of an organisation, regular team meetings*

AC1.3: **Describe the type of resources needed for different types of events**

- Types of resources:
  - *budget; costs*
  - *room/venue (size, location, date); breakout rooms*
  - *presentation equipment*
  - *other equipment (copying facilities)*
  - *adjacent overnight accommodation*
  - *refreshment facilities (bookings, delegates with special dietary requirements)*
  - *visiting speakers/presenters*
  - *list of delegates to be invited; invitations (event brief, date, venue, map, transport details); record of acceptances or those unable to attend*
  - *programme and relevant documentation*
  - *attendance list; name badges*
  - *writing material for delegates*

AC1.4: **Describe the different needs attendees may have and how to meet these**

- Different needs*: access arrangements to venue and within meeting rooms, e.g. lifts, wheelchair access, ramps, handrails, room facilities for any overnight accommodation; transport support; audio links or documents in braille; special dietary requirements*

AC1.5: **Explain the requirements of health, safety and security when organising events**

- Requirements of health, safety and security:
  - *venue is free of hazards: checks made of room(s); equipment PAT tested; secure and safe cabling*
  - *security of event materials: confidentiality of information and communications*
  - *security of delegate belongings when breaks taken*
  - *aware of any fire alarm systems and practices: inform delegates; alert delegates to emergency exits and meeting point*
  - *room and facilities direction signs in place*
  - *recording attendance*

AC1.6: **Describe the types of problems that may occur during events and how to deal with them**

- Problems and resolutions:
  - *non-delivery of resources: last-minute photocopying*
  - *late or non-arrival of presenter: make contact to clarify time of arrival; inform event leader of outcome; re-organise programme timing, e.g. if presenter arriving later; discuss alternative activity with event leader to fill the time slot if non-arrival*
  - *unexpected higher number of delegates than expected creating inadequate room(s) or resources: sharing resources while extras prepared; adding more chairs; if insufficient space, need larger room or extra room; may cause doubling up presentations; ensuring available presenter*
  - *missing specific resources (special equipment) causing delay in presentation: rearranging programme to allow time to provide missing resource or use alternative method of presentation*
  - *delegate taken ill: how serious; call emergency services or deal with via venue's first aid facility; inform contact person for delegate*

Information for tutors

Suggested resources

Books

Craven R and Golabowski L – *The Complete Idiot's Guide to Meeting and Event Planning* (2nd Edition) (ALPHA, 2006) ISBN 9781592574629

Friedmann S – *Meeting and Event Planning for Dummies* (John Wiley & Sons, 2003) ISBN 9780764538599

Websites

www.businesscasestudies.co.uk – The Times 110: business case studies

www.evolutionevent.com – Event Management Company: case studies of events organised for major companies

www.skillscfa.org – Skills CFA is the Sector Skills council for a whole range of business skills sectors

Other

Haymarket Business Publications Ltd – Event Exhibitions and live events information

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 and the requirements of the Assessment Strategy.

To ensure that the assessment tasks and activities enable learners to produce valid, sufficient, authentic and appropriate evidence that meets the assessment criteria, centres should apply the *Unit assessment guidance* and the requirements of the Assessment Strategy below.

Wherever possible, centres should adopt a holistic approach to assessing the units in the qualification. This gives the assessment process greater rigour and minimises repetition, time and the burden of assessment on all parties involved in the process.

Unit assessment requirements

This unit must be assessed in the workplace in accordance with the Skills CFA Assessment Strategy for Business Administration, Customer Service and Management and Leadership in *Annexe A.* Simulation is not allowed for this unit. All evidence of occupational competence should be generated through performance under workplace conditions; this includes evidence of achievement for knowledge-based learning outcomes and associated assessment criteria.

Unit assessment guidance

This guidance supports assessors in making decisions about how best to assess each unit and the evidence needed to meet the assessment requirements. Centres can adapt the guidance for learners and the particular assessment context, as appropriate.

The primary source of evidence for demonstrating achievement of learning outcome 2, learning outcome 3 and learning outcome 4 is direct observation of the learner carrying out their work activities relating to the organisation of an event.

The evidence from the direct observation for learning outcome 2, learning outcome 3 and learning outcome 4 could be supported by examining work products such as notes produced, checklists and non-verbal communication to colleagues, venues and/or customers, e.g. emails, letters etc. – this provides further evidence to meet the requirements, for example AC2.1, AC2.2, AC2.3, AC2.4, AC2.5 and AC4.2. To achieve AC3.5, learners need to provide evidence of following up actions in accordance with the brief either through emails, verbal communication and/or records showing actions have been followed up. Witness testimony could be used to support the evidence from direct observation for this assessment criterion as well as for AC2.3, AC2.5, AC3.3 and AC4.1.

Questions and answers (Q&A) could also be used to provide supporting evidence of the learner's competence. For example, the learner could be asked to explain how to behave in a way that maintains organisational values and standards (AC3.3).

Questions and answers (Q&A) or learner diary could be used to meet the requirements of learning outcome 1. If Q&A is used then it should be integrated with the assessment for learning outcome 2 to provide the opportunity for the learner to link and apply their knowledge to their workplace activities. There are good opportunities to relate the assessment of the knowledge requirements to the competence activities. For example, the learner could be asked to describe the types of resources needed for different types of events. This relates the assessment of AC1.3 to that of AC2.2. Similarly, the learner could be asked to describe the different needs attendees may have and how to meet these; their description could be supported by the appropriate work products. This links AC1.4 to AC2.5. If a learner diary is used, then the entries should be contextualised to the learner's performance to link and apply the knowledge requirements in a similar manner as with the Q&A. The learner's answers must have sufficient range and breadth to meet the assessment requirements. For example, the learner needs to describe at least three types of problems that may occur during events and how to deal with them (AC1.6).

Evidence of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) can also be used within the unit to confirm competence. Wherever possible, the learning outcomes in this unit should be assessed holistically across the qualification.

Unit 41: Provide Reception Services

Unit reference number: H/506/1814

Level: 2

Credit value: 3

Guided learning hours: 15

Unit type: Competence

Unit summary

The receptionist plays a key role in promoting the image of the business and ensuring that external and internal stakeholders are linked to the right person quickly and efficiently. They are very often the first person that an external customer will speak to or see so it is vital that the person fulfilling this role is knowledgeable about the organisation and its products and services, understands the structure of the organisation so can direct queries and questions to the correct person or department and that all health and safety processes and procedures are adhered to when visitors are welcomed into the organisation.

In this unit you will learn how to develop your skills by exploring key functions that a receptionist is responsible for. You will look at how visitors are welcomed into the organisation and how they are dealt with in terms of recording their presence and directing them to the correct area of the organisation. You will also consider how telephone calls are dealt with and how to deal with those calls or visitors who can be challenging.

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 outline the requirements the learner is expected to meet to achieve the unit.

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria
1 Understand reception services	1.1 Explain the receptionist's role in representing an organisation
	1.2 Explain an organisation's structure and lines of communication
	1.3 Describe an organisation's standards of presentation
	1.4 Explain the health, safety and security implications of visitors to a building
	1.5 Explain how to deal with challenging people
2 Be able to provide a reception service	2.1 Welcome visitors in accordance with organisational standards
	2.2 Direct visitors to the person they are visiting in accordance with organisational standards
	2.3 Record visitors' arrivals and departures in accordance with organisational procedures
	2.4 Provide advice and accurate information within organisational guidelines on confidentiality
	2.5 Keep the reception area tidy and materials up-to-date
	2.6 Answer and deal with telephone calls within organisational standards
	2.7 Adhere to organisational procedures on entry, security, health and safety

Unit amplification

AC1.1: Explain the receptionist's role in representing an organisation

- Receptionist's role: *first Point of contact; meet and greet both internal and external visitors*

- Personal attributes: *polite; knowledgeable; informative; helpful*

- *Give positive image of self and organisation*

AC1.2: Explain an organisation's structure and lines of communication

- The knowledge to meet this AC depends on the particular organisational requirements and context. Learners need to apply the knowledge specific to their organisation to meet this AC

- Lines of communication: *channel through which people share information*

- Internal communication channels: *email; meetings; intranets; telephone*

- Communication structure: *chain of command; formal and informal communications; downward and upward communications*

AC1.3: Describe an organisation's standards of presentation

- The knowledge to meet this AC depends on the particular organisational requirements and context. Learners need to apply the knowledge specific to their organisation to meet this AC

- General standards of presentation include: *well groomed; dressed according to organisation's standards; good personal hygiene; professional appearance; positive body language*

AC1.4: Explain the health, safety and security implications of visitors to a building

- Health, safety and security implications of visitors: *legal responsibility for visitors health and safety while they are on the premises; make visitors aware of planned fire drills; appropriate level of security clearance and access to certain areas*

AC1.5: Explain how to deal with challenging people

- Challenging behaviour: *arguing with staff, questioning staff competence, demanding impossible solutions, not accepting limitations and procedures, making inappropriate personal comments, angry behaviours*

- Deal with challenging people via telephone or in person: *remain calm and polite; use active listening techniques; empathise with visitor; apologise sincerely for problems; use questioning techniques; offer solutions within own authority; escalate issues where resolution is difficult or not possible*

Information for tutors

Suggested resources

Books

Carysforth C – *Administration NVQ Level 2* (Heinemann, 2006)
ISBN 9780435463335

Sutherland J and Sutherland D – *Business and Administration NVQ Level 2* (Hodder Education, 2011) ISBN 9781444144208

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 and the requirements of the Assessment Strategy.

To ensure that the assessment tasks and activities enable learners to produce valid, sufficient, authentic and appropriate evidence that meets the assessment criteria, centres should apply the *Unit assessment guidance* and the requirements of the Assessment Strategy below.

Wherever possible, centres should adopt a holistic approach to assessing the units in the qualification. This gives the assessment process greater rigour and minimises repetition, time and the burden of assessment on all parties involved in the process.

Unit assessment requirements

This unit must be assessed in the workplace in accordance with the Skills CFA Assessment Strategy for Business Administration, Customer Service and Management and Leadership in *Annexe A.* Simulation is not allowed for this unit. All evidence of occupational competence should be generated through performance under workplace conditions; this includes evidence of achievement for knowledge-based learning outcomes and associated assessment criteria.

Unit assessment guidance

This guidance supports assessors in making decisions about how best to assess each unit and the evidence needed to meet the assessment requirements. Centres can adapt the guidance for learners and the particular assessment context, as appropriate.

The primary source of evidence for demonstrating achievement of learning outcome 2 is direct observation of the learner carrying out their reception duties. Reception services include meeting, greeting and directing visitors, answering the telephone and keeping the reception area tidy.

The evidence from direct observation could be supported by examining work products such as the records of visitors made by the learner in the organisation's systems – this provides further evidence to meet AC2.3. Witness testimony could also be used to provide evidence of consistent performance as well as supporting evidence for many of the assessment criteria in learning outcome 2. Questions and answers (Q&A) could also be used to fill in any gaps in the observation evidence.

For example, the learner could be asked to describe how their behaviour and communications on particular observed occasions complied with the organisational policies on confidentiality, security and health and safety (AC2.4 and AC2.7). The learner could also be asked to describe their organisational standards for meeting and greeting visitors and how they have met these on the observed occasions (AC2.1).

Questions and answers (Q&A) or learner diary could be used to meet the requirements of learning outcome 1. If Q&A is used then it should be integrated with the assessment for learning outcome 2 to provide the opportunity for the learner to link and apply their knowledge to their workplace activities. There are good opportunities to relate the assessment of the knowledge requirements to the competence activities. For example, the learner could be asked to explain their organisational structure and lines of communication in relation to how they have used it to contact staff and direct visitors – this links AC1.2 to AC2.2. Similarly, the learner could be asked to explain how they represent their organisation in their role as receptionist making reference to their demonstrated behaviours and activities in learning outcome 2 – this links AC1.1 to many of the assessment criteria in learning outcome 2. If a learner diary is used, then the entries should be contextualised to the learner's performance to link and apply the knowledge requirements in a similar manner as with the Q&A. The learner's answers must have sufficient range and breadth to meet the requirements. For example, the learner needs to explain at least three different ways of dealing with challenging people. As some of the assessment criteria refer to organisational requirements and context, witness testimony from line manager or other appropriate personnel may be required.

Evidence of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) can also be used within the unit to confirm competence. Wherever possible, the learning outcomes in this unit should be assessed holistically across the qualification.

Unit 42: Buddy a Colleague to Develop their Skills

Unit reference number: M/506/1895

Level: 2

Credit value: 3

Guided learning hours: 19

Unit type: Competence

Unit summary

Buddying is an important part of helping to develop skills and knowledge needed to carry out any role in an organisation. It will give you the opportunity work with a new member of staff in your organisation and introduce them to their new work colleagues and surroundings. It gives you the opportunity to pass on knowledge learned whilst being employed in the company and to help to solve day to problems that a new member of staff will encounter. You will also be able to develop your own leadership and people skills as well as develop the confidence of your buddy.

In this unit you will learn how to give positive and constructive criticism to a colleague working within the confines of the expectations of a buddy. You will have the opportunity to develop new techniques which will build a relationship with your buddy, skills you will be able to use in later life in different situations. Being a buddy means being organised and setting dates for monitoring and checking on progress, and creating action plans and sticking to them. You will get the opportunity to pass on your experience and give your buddy advice and guidance.

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 outline the requirements the learner is expected to meet to achieve the unit.

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria
1 Understand how to buddy a colleague	1.1 Describe what is expected of a buddy
	1.2 Explain techniques to give positive feedback and constructive criticism
	1.3 Explain techniques to establish rapport with a buddy
2 Be able to plan to buddy a colleague	2.1 Agree which aspects of a colleague's work may benefit from buddying
	2.2 Confirm organisational requirements for standards of behaviour, presentation, communication and performance of a buddy colleague
	2.3 Agree a schedule of meetings that minimise disruption to business
	2.4 Agree specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bound (SMART) buddying objectives
3 Be able to support a buddy colleague carrying out work activities	3.1 Remain unobtrusive while a buddy colleague carries out their work activities
	3.2 Provide examples of how to carry out tasks correctly
	3.3 Identify instances of good practice and areas for improvement through observation
	3.4 Praise a buddy colleague on well completed tasks
	3.5 Give constructive feedback on ways in which a buddy could improve performance
	3.6 Offer a buddy hints and tips based on personal experience

Unit amplification

AC1.1: Describe what is expected of a buddy

- Expectations of a buddy*: to give key information about the organisation and reduce uncertainty; introductions to key members of staff; advise on where to go for additional help if required; explain organisational processes and procedures; be a point of contact, e.g. support, advice, guidance; arrange regular meetings to check progress and answer questions; maintain confidentiality*

AC1.2: Explain techniques to give positive feedback and constructive criticism

- Techniques to giving positive feedback and constructive criticism*: start and end with a compliment; keep eye contact at all times when giving feedback; use humour where applicable; be specific; include examples; choose a suitable time and place to deliver feedback*

AC1.3: Explain techniques to establish rapport with a buddy

- Techniques to establish rapport*: be friendly and approachable; hold structured face to face meetings which is informative and builds confidence; balance the talking between both people; be available when required to answer routine questions, this could be either face to face or via e-mail or telephone; work closely to improve the situation and make their introduction to the organisation a better experience; listen; validate thoughts and opinions of others*

Information for tutors

Suggested resources

Books

Carysforth C – *Administration NVQ Level 2* (Heinemann, 2006)
ISBN 9780435463335

Sutherland J and Sutherland D – *Business and Administration NVQ Level 2*
(Hodder Education, 2011) ISBN 9781444144208

Websites

www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newCDV_24.htm – Mind Tools: mentoring skills

www.mrc-cbu.cam.ac.uk/documents/equality/MRC%20Guidance%20for%
20Mentors.pdf – Medical Research Council: guidance for mentors

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 and the requirements of the Assessment Strategy.

To ensure that the assessment tasks and activities enable learners to produce valid, sufficient, authentic and appropriate evidence that meets the assessment criteria, centres should apply the *Unit assessment guidance* and the requirements of the Assessment Strategy below.

Wherever possible, centres should adopt a holistic approach to assessing the units in the qualification. This gives the assessment process greater rigour and minimises repetition, time and the burden of assessment on all parties involved in the process.

Unit assessment requirements

This unit must be assessed in the workplace in accordance with the Skills CFA Assessment Strategy for Business Administration, Customer Service and Management and Leadership in *Annexe A.* Simulation is not allowed for this unit. All evidence of occupational competence should be generated through performance under workplace conditions; this includes evidence of achievement for knowledge-based learning outcomes and associated assessment criteria.

Unit assessment guidance

This guidance supports assessors in making decisions about how best to assess each unit and the evidence needed to meet the assessment requirements. Centres can adapt the guidance for learners and the particular assessment context, as appropriate.

The evidence for demonstrating achievement of learning outcome 2 and learning outcome 3 is likely to come from a combination of direct observation of the learner acting within their role as a buddy, examination of the learner's work products, questions and answers (Q&A) and witness testimony. Buddying can relate to mentoring and shadowing and can refer to a new employee or an existing colleague.

The learner's work products for learning outcome 2 could include the agreed development plan for the buddy, notes from meetings, diary showing schedule meetings and records of relevant communications, e.g. emails – these would provide evidence for AC2.1, AC2.3, AC2.4. Q&A and/or witness testimony could be used to provide evidence for AC2.2.

The evidence from any direct observation for learning outcome 3 could be supported by examining work products such as reports, notes from meetings and record of communications to buddies, e.g. emails – this would provide further evidence to meet the assessment requirements, for example, AC3.3, AC3.4, AC3.5 and AC3.6. Witness testimony could be used to support the evidence from direct observation for all the assessment criteria in learning outcome 3. Q&A can be used to close any gaps in the evidence required, for example AC3.3 and AC3.6.

Questions and answers (Q&A) or learner diary could be used to meet the assessment requirements of learning outcome 1. It is good practice to relate the assessment of the knowledge with the competence activities carried out by the learner. For example, the learner could explain the techniques to give positive feedback and constructive criticism by drawing on how they have done this to meet AC3.5. Learners' responses must be at the appropriate breadth and depth to meet the level of demand of the knowledge assessment criteria; for example, the responses must have sufficient detail about the techniques to give positive feedback and constructive criticism (AC1.2) and the techniques to establish rapport with a buddy (AC1.3).

Evidence of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) can also be used within the unit to confirm competence. Wherever possible, the learning outcomes in this unit should be assessed holistically across the qualification.

Unit 43: Employee Rights and Responsibilities

Unit reference number: L/506/1905

Level: 2

Credit value: 2

Guided learning hours: 16

Unit type: Knowledge

Unit summary

All employees should have a good understanding of their rights and responsibilities specific to the organisation, industry and sector in which they work. Being aware of and conversant with the rules, principles and regulations governing employment rights and responsibilities will help protect both employee and employer, ensuring that work practice is undertaken in a mutually respectful and safe environment.

In this unit you will learn about the roles and occupations in your organisation and industry and in other organisations, industries and sectors. You will explore career pathways and progression opportunities and learn where you can source relevant information and advice to help you when making decisions about your career. You will develop an awareness of employer rights and responsibilities including standards and expectations required of you as an employee. You will gain an understanding of employment legislation and how it affects your role and responsibilities within your employment as well as develop awareness of sources of support for issues affecting your employment.

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 outline the requirements the learner is expected to meet to achieve the unit.

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria
1 Understand the role of organisations and industries	1.1 Explain the role of their own occupation within an organisation and industry
	1.2 Describe career pathways within their organisation and industry
	1.3 Identify sources of information and advice on an industry, occupation, training and career pathway
	1.4 Describe an organisation's principles of conduct and codes of practice
	1.5 Explain issues of public concern that affect an organisation and industry
	1.6 Describe the types, roles and responsibilities of representative bodies and their relevance to their own role
2 Understand employers' expectations and employees' rights and obligations	2.1 Describe the employer and employee statutory rights and responsibilities that affect their own role
	2.2 Describe an employer's expectations for employees' standards of personal presentation, punctuality and behaviour
	2.3 Describe the procedures and documentation that protect relationships with employees
	2.4 Identify sources of information and advice on employment rights and responsibilities

Unit amplification

AC1.1: **Explain the role of their occupation within an organisation and industry**

- The knowledge to meet this AC depends on the learner's own occupation and role within their organisation. Learners need to apply the knowledge specific to their organisation to meet this AC

AC1.2: **Describe career pathways within their organisation and industry**

- The knowledge to meet this AC depends on the learner's own occupation and role within their organisation. Learners need to apply the knowledge specific to their organisation to meet this AC

AC1.3: **Identify sources of information and advice on an industry, occupation, training and career pathway**

- Sources of information and advice:

  o *within an organisation: e.g. line manager, HR department, organisation information systems*

  o *outside an organisation: e.g. sector skills councils, careers services, relevant websites, professional bodies*

AC1.4: **Describe an organisation's principles of conduct and codes of practice**

- The knowledge to meet this AC depends on the particular organisational requirements and context. Learners need to apply the knowledge specific to their organisation to meet this AC

AC1.5: **Explain issues of public concern that affect an organisation and industry**

- Issues of public concern*: consider the effects of recent high profile events on the industry, e.g. loss of personal data, mis-sold products or services; phone hacking*

- Effects of public concern on an organisation and industry*: introduction of legislation and good practice; increase in public awareness; changes to organisational procedures; own responsibilities*

AC1.6: **Describe the types, roles and responsibilities of representative bodies and their relevance to their own role**

- The knowledge to meet this AC depends on the learner's own occupation and role within their organisation. Learners need to apply the knowledge specific to their organisation to meet this AC

AC2.1: **Describe the employer and employee statutory rights and responsibilities that affect their own role**

- Employee statutory rights and responsibilities*: current employment legislation, e.g. Equal Pay Act 1970, Working Time Regulations 2007; current anti-discrimination legislation, e.g. Equality Act 2010, gender, sexual preference, nationality, race, religion, colour, disability, age; contract of employment, e.g. written terms and conditions, minimum wage, sick pay, time off, grievance procedures; health and safety (own, others, use of equipment, lifting and handling); security, e.g. data protection, information security, premises, equipment*

- Employer statutory rights and responsibilities*: duty of care to employees, e.g. risk assessments, provide protective equipment if needed, emergency procedures, safe systems of work; employer liability insurance; safeguarding; appropriate training and development, e.g. induction, organisation systems, use of equipment, health and safety*

- How statutory rights affect own role*: equal opportunities; career progression; personal safety and security; safeguarding; own responsibilities*

AC2.2: **Describe an employer's expectations for employees' standards of personal presentation, punctuality and behaviour**

- Personal presentation*: well groomed; dressed according to organisation's standards; good personal hygiene*

- Punctuality*: on time (at the start of the working day, coming back from lunch); leave on time; on time for meetings*

- Behaviour*: polite; helpful; confident; attentive; positive body language; positive attitude; respect confidentiality; discretion; dependability; tolerance; welcoming; pleasant; professional*

AC2.3: **Describe the procedures and documentation that protect relationships with employees**

- Procedures that protect relationships with employees*: health and safety; security; grievance procedures; whistle blowing*

- Documentation that protects relationships with employees*: contract of employment; written terms and conditions; payslip; published organisation policies; documented processes and procedures; records of training and development*

AC2.4: **Identify sources of information and advice on employment rights and responsibilities**

- Sources of information and advice on employment rights and responsibilities:

  o *inside the organisation: contract of employment; written terms and conditions; line manager; HR department; trade union representative*

  o *outside the organisation: Trade Union; Citizen's Advice Bureau; ACAS; Government websites; employment lawyer*

Information for tutors

Suggested resources

Websites

www.acas.org.uk – The Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service: a government funded agency which provides advice on industrial relations and employment issues

www.cipd.co.uk – Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development: the professional body for HR and people development

www.hse.gov.uk – Health and Safety Executive: providing information on health and safety rights and responsibilities

www.legislation.gov.uk – Managed by the National Archives: publishing all UK legislation

www.skillscfa.org – Skills CFA is the Sector Skills council for a whole range of business skills sectors, including customer service

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.

To ensure that the assessment tasks and activities enable learners to produce valid, sufficient, authentic and appropriate evidence that meets the assessment criteria, centres should apply the *Unit assessment guidance* given below. This guidance should be read in conjunction with *Section 8 Assessment*.

Wherever possible, centres should adopt a holistic approach to assessing the units in the qualification. This gives the assessment process greater rigour and minimises repetition, time and the burden of assessment on all parties involved in the process.

Unit assessment requirements

There are no sector-related assessment requirements for this unit.

Unit assessment guidance

This guidance supports assessors in making decisions about how best to assess each unit and the evidence needed to meet the assessment requirements. Centres can adapt the guidance for learners and the particular assessment context, as appropriate.

The evidence demonstrating achievement of learning outcome 1 and learning outcome 2 can be collected through a presentation. Evidence can be gathered from the presentation and can be supported by any research the learner undertakes in order to produce and present their presentation. Learners should use their current occupation in the Customer Service Sector or should be allocated a theoretical occupation and organisation they can work from.

To achieve AC1.1, AC1.2 and AC1.3, learners need to explain where their occupation fits in the Customer Service Sector and describe the career pathway they can pursue. They will also need to reference places they can go for information and advice on the industry, occupation, training and career pathway.

To achieve AC1.4, AC1.5 and AC1.6, learners need to describe their organisation's principles of conduct and codes of practice, explain issues of public concern that affect their organisation and industry and then go on to describe representative bodies and how the roles and responsibilities of these bodies are relevant to their role.

Learners should then focus on their organisation. They should describe theirs and their employer's statutory rights and responsibilities and how these affect their role (AC2.1), their employer's expectations on personal presentation, punctuality and behaviour (AC2.2), procedures and documentation that the employers relationship with their employees (AC2.3) and reference sources where people can go for advice on employment rights and responsibilities (AC2.4).

It is recommended that learners' do not reproduce large chunks of information verbatim from company handbooks or legislation, but contextualise it to their job.

Learners' responses must be at the appropriate breadth and depth to meet the level of demand of the assessment criteria. Questions and answers (Q&A) could be used to corroborate the learners' knowledge by allowing them to give examples of good and/or bad practice to help support their presentation (e.g. AC2.2).

Evidence of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) can also be used within the unit to confirm competence. Wherever possible, the learning outcomes in this unit should be assessed holistically across the qualification.

Unit 44: Processing Sales Orders

Unit reference number: M/502/8587

Level: 2

Credit value: 2

Guided learning hours: 17

Unit type: Competence

Unit summary

This unit aims to provide the knowledge and skills needed to process sales orders and help learners to understand the importance of the sales order processing in fulfilling customer orders.

In this unit you will learn how to perform the most important functions in the process chain, from presales to customer payment. The areas of credit control and accounting are also touched on. In this unit you will learn how to process sales orders from the start of the process to its completion. You will understand the importance of the process to the organisation and to the customer. You will be able to describe the checking processes that must be undertaken to ensure the products have been correctly supplied and that payment has been received. You will be able to process sales orders using systems that operate in the workplace ensuring that the order is completed accurately and promptly to meet the customers' requirements.

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 outline the requirements the learner is expected to meet to achieve the unit.

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria
1 Understand how to process and follow up sales orders	1.1 Explain the importance of sales order processing
	1.2 Describe organisational processes for ordering products and/or services
	1.3 Describe different sources of information used to check customer credit
	1.4 Describe the different payment methods accepted by sales orientated organisations
	1.5 Explain the role of the despatch function
	1.6 Describe service standards relating to sales order completion
	1.7 Explain the importance of storing information securely

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria
2 Be able to process sales orders	2.1 Identify customer sales order requirements
	2.2 Check that the credit status of the customer meets organisational standards
	2.3 Confirm the availability of products and/or services to the customer
	2.4 Ensure that information given to the customer about delivery, timing and price is accurate
	2.5 Ensure that the sale is authorised following the organisation's procedures
	2.6 Finalise the transaction in accordance with organisational procedures
	2.7 Ensure that the customer is aware of the terms and conditions of sale
	2.8 Ensure that the customer's requirements are communicated to those responsible for fulfilling sales orders
	2.9 Identify who to go to when in need of support with sales order processing problems
3 Be able to follow up sales order processing	3.1 Keep the customer informed of the sales order progress and any problems with the sale order
	3.2 Advise the customer of current discounts and special offers
	3.3 Check all information is stored securely

Unit amplification

AC1.1: Explain the importance of sales order processing

- Sales order processing: *receiving sales orders, checking against purchase order, checking customer's credit worthiness, checking stock availability, arranging delivery, invoicing, maintaining records, sales authorisation, terms and conditions of sale*

- Importance: *e.g. main source of organisational revenue, creates accountability, provides information for financial planning and budgeting, production planning*

AC1.2: Describe organisational processes for ordering products and/or services

- The knowledge to meet this AC depends on the particular organisational requirements and context. Learners need to apply the knowledge specific to their organisation to meet this AC

- Relevant types of procedures and processes: *sales order processing, credit checking procedures, replenishment procedures*

- Processing sale orders: *departments involved, e.g. sales, credit control, distribution, warehouse/stores, accounting; documents, e.g. customer order, invoice, despatch advice, credit note*

AC1.3: Describe different sources of information used to check customer credit

- Customer credit check: *sources, e.g. bank, credit referencing agency, visits by credit staff, credit insurers, Register of Judgements, Insolvency Service; importance, e.g. avoid bad debts, protect future sales, reduce need for loans*

AC1.4: Describe the different payment methods accepted by sales orientated organisations

- Payment methods: *cash, cheques, credit cards, credit accounts, bank transfer*

AC1.5: Explain the role of the despatch function

- Despatch role: *assisting sales teams, handling client issues and enquiries, checking customer orders, e.g. prices and discounts, coordinating with other departments, e.g. accounts, purchasing and product despatch, performing administrative duties*

AC1.6:   Describe service standards relating to sales order completion

- Service standards*: agreed lead times, accuracy of information and delivery, meeting customer expectations*

- Sales order completion*: activities, e.g. monitoring the process, communication with the customer, arranging product delivery, raising shipment documentation*

AC1.7:   Explain the importance of storing information securely

- Storing information securely*: importance, e.g. compliance with organisational policy, compliance with legislation (Data Protection Act 1998), protection of confidential information; methods of storing sales information, e.g. computer database, manual filing*

Information for tutors

Suggested resources

Books

Johnston R, Clark G and Shulver M – *Service Operations Management: Improving Service Delivery*, 4th Edition (Pearson Education Ltd, 2012) ISBN 9780273740483

Jay R. and Clarke J – *Data Protection Compliance in the UK*, 2nd Edition (IT Governance Publishing, 2010) ISBN 9781849280471

Websites

www.something4.com/news/sales-order-processing – provides an over view of a generalised sales order processing system.

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 and the requirements of the Assessment Strategy.

To ensure that the assessment tasks and activities enable learners to produce valid, sufficient, authentic and appropriate evidence that meets the assessment criteria, centres should apply the *Unit assessment guidance* and the requirements of the Assessment Strategy given below.

Wherever possible, centres should adopt a holistic approach to assessing the units in the qualification. This gives the assessment process greater rigour and minimises repetition, time and the burden of assessment on all parties involved in the process.

Unit assessment requirements

Assessment of this unit may be based on either the learner's performance at work or through simulation, as necessary, in accordance with the Skills CFA Sales Assessment Strategy in *Annexe C*. If the unit or a part of the unit is simulated, it must be undertaken in a realistic working environment (RWE).

Further guidance on RWEs can be found in the document *Edexcel NVQs, SVQs and competence-based qualifications – Delivery Requirements and Quality Assurance Guidance* available on our website.

Unit assessment guidance

This guidance supports assessors in making decisions about how best to assess each unit and the evidence needed to meet the requirements. Centres can adapt the guidance as appropriate for learners and the particular assessment context, as appropriate.

The principal source of evidence for this unit is direct observation of the learner in the workplace carrying out their work activities relating to processing sales data.

Questions and answers (Q&A) or a professional discussion could be used to corroborate the competence of the learner as well as meet the requirements of learning outcome 1. For example, for AC1.4 the learner could describe the different payment methods accepted by the employing organisation. For AC1.6 the learner could describe the service standards that have been devised by the employing organisation.

A further example could be that while the learner is answering a question for AC3.3 in relation to secure storage of the information, the same answer could be extended to include AC1.7, as the learner could demonstrate how to store the information securely and at the same time explain verbally the importance of storing the information securely.

The primary sources of evidence for learning outcome 2 is direct observation of the learner in the work place and the inspection of work products such as sales orders, emails, letters and reports printed from computer records produced by the learner. Evidence for AC2.1, AC2.3, AC2.5, AC2.7 and AC2.8 can be taken from an original sales order that the learner has processed for a customer. Evidence for AC2.2, AC2.4, might be available from a computerised sales order processing system or from paper records available in the workplace. Evidence for AC2.6 might be found on the sales order in the form of a signature or other type of acknowledgement that the documentation is complete and can be passed on to the next stage of the order processing system.

Evidence for learning outcome 3 could be in the form of an email to a customer, AC3.1, AC3.2 that tells the customer how the order is progressing and about any special offers that may be available. Alternatively, the learner could be observed giving similar information to a customer. For AC3.3 the learner could be asked questions about the security systems under which the customer's details are stored.

Evidence of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) can also be used within the unit to confirm competence. Wherever possible, the learning outcomes in this unit should be assessed holistically across the qualification.

Unit 45: Bespoke Software

Unit reference number: J/502/4397

Level: 3

Credit value: 4

Guided learning hours: 30

Unit type: Competence

Unit summary

Many administrators are required to use bespoke software to complete tasks within their wider administrative role. This unit is about the skills and knowledge needed by an administrator to use bespoke software tools and techniques. Bespoke software is software that is written for a specific function in an organisation. This software could be unique to that organisation.

In this unit, you will develop the skills to select and use a range of advanced bespoke software tools and techniques for complex or non-routine information. The software and functions used will be complex and, at times, involve having the idea that there may be a tool or function to make your task easier, e.g. improve efficiency or create an effect. You will explore technical support and self-teach, to learn how to input, select and modify information using bespoke software.

You will explore the use of the software's functionality to organise information. You will effectively manipulate process and present information as an output, checking that the output meets needs, legal and company requirements, and responding appropriately to quality problems.

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 outline the requirements the learner is expected to meet to achieve the unit.

Learning outcomes		Assessment criteria	
1	Input and combine information using bespoke software	1.1	Input relevant information accurately so that it is ready for processing
		1.2	Select and use appropriate techniques to link and combine information within the application and across different software applications
2	Create and modify appropriate structures to organise and retrieve information efficiently	2.1	Evaluate the use of software functions to structure, layout and style information
		2.2	Create, change and use appropriate structures and/or layouts to organise information efficiently
		2.3	Manage data files effectively, in line with local and/or legal guidelines and conventions for the storage and use of data where available
3	Exploit the functions of the software effectively to process and present information	3.1	Select and use appropriate tools and techniques to edit, analyse and format information
		3.2	Check information meets needs, using IT tools and making corrections as necessary
		3.3	Identify and respond appropriately to quality problems to ensure that outcomes are fit for purpose and meet needs
		3.4	Select and use presentation methods to aid clarity and meaning

Information for tutors

Suggested resources

Books

The textbooks used depend on which software is used. The software manufacturer's user guides and resources are often sufficient for the level of work required in this unit. Third party user guides such as in-house tutorials, may also be available for bespoke software.

Websites

Some bespoke software packages have their own websites/help pages. These are often sufficient for the level of work required in this unit.

Where the official websites/help pages have insufficient information, learners should consider using:

● raising support tickets with the software manufacturer

● in-house/intranet pages

● third party technical sites, e.g. forums, expert blogs

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 and the requirements of the Assessment Strategy.

To ensure that the assessment tasks and activities enable learners to produce valid, sufficient, authentic and appropriate evidence that meets the assessment criteria, centres should apply the *Unit assessment guidance* and the requirements of the Assessment Strategy given below.

Wherever possible, centres should adopt a holistic approach to assessing the units in the qualification. This gives the assessment process greater rigour and minimises repetition, time and the burden of assessment on all parties involved in the process.

Unit assessment requirements

Evidence of achievement can be derived from a variety of sources. Learners who use IT skills directly in their day-to-day work can prove their competence while doing so. Alternatively, learners can use scenarios and knowledge tests, or a mixture of both, to demonstrate competence.

For further guidance on assessing this unit, please refer to the e-skills UK ITQ Assessment Strategy in *Annexe D*.

Unit assessment guidance

This guidance supports assessors in making decisions about how best to assess each unit and the evidence needed to meet the assessment requirements of the unit. Centres can adapt the guidance for learners and the particular assessment context, as appropriate.

A holistic approach to assessment is suggested for this unit. Assessors should encourage learners to capture and record evidence as an ongoing process at each stage of database development, for example a learner diary recording practice against each assessment criterion.

The primary assessment method is likely to be direct observation of the learner using the software; however, work products, for example screenshots and documentation produced in the course of completing work tasks can also be used.

For AC1.1, the learner could use software techniques to determine accuracy, e.g. spellcheck/grammar check.

For AC1.2, evidence for the selection of techniques could take the form of a discussion, supported by work products such as screen captures or screen recordings demonstrating the learners' use of techniques.

Learners should be familiar with a range of tools and techniques at this level but it is expected that they will use appropriate resources to research methods of dealing with novel or uncommon requirements.

Learning outcome 2 could be assessed through the presentation of work products such as a short evaluative report or presentation (AC2.1), screen captures or screen recordings showing creation, change and use of structures (AC2.2) and copies of storage records and local guidelines (AC2.3). This evidence should be supported with professional discussion or reflective account to assess how the learner uses appropriate structures and adheres to guidelines and conventions in their work. For AC2.2, learners could build on the evaluation work performed in AC2.1.

Where making a copy of documentation is impractical or disallowed, a witness statement and reference to the document's location is sufficient.

Learning outcome 3 is likely to be assessed through direct observation of the learner using the functions of the software in their job role. This should be supported with professional discussion or reflective account to demonstrate the learner's understanding of the reasoning behind any decisions made in the selection process (AC3.1) and how the final product satisfies the specific requirements of the task (AC3.2; AC3.3).

Evidence of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) can be used in the unit to confirm competence.

12 Further information and useful publications

To get in touch with us visit our 'Contact us' pages:

- 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.pearsonschoolsandfecolleges.co.uk

Key publications:

- *Adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties – Access and Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments, General and Vocational qualifications* (Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ))

- *Equality Policy* (Pearson)

- *Recognition of Prior Learning Policy and Process* (Pearson)

- *UK Information Manual* (Pearson)

- *BTEC Apprenticeships Quality Assurance Handbook* (Pearson)

- *UK Quality Vocational Assurance Handbook* (Pearson).

All of these publications are available on our website.

Further information and publications on the delivery and quality assurance of NVQ/Competence-based qualifications are available at our website: qualifications.pearson.com

Our publications catalogue lists all the material available to support our qualifications. To access the catalogue and order publications, please go to the resources page of our website, qualifications.pearson.com

13 Professional development and training

Professional development and training

Pearson supports UK and international customers with training related to our qualifications. This support is available through a choice of training options offered on our website: http://qualifications.pearson.com/en/support/training-from-pearson-uk.html#step1

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 at: http://qualifications.pearson.com/en/support/training-from-pearson-uk.html#step1. 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.

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 some regional network events to allow you to share your experiences, ideas and best practice with colleagues in your region.

Regional support: our team of Regional Quality Managers, based around the country, are responsible for providing quality assurance support and guidance to anyone managing and delivering NVQs/Competence-based qualifications. The Regional Quality Managers can support you at all stages of the standard verification process as well as in finding resolutions of actions and recommendations as required.

To get in touch with our dedicated support teams please visit our website at: http://qualifications.pearson.com/en/support/contact-us.html

Online support: find the answers to your questions by browsing over 100 FAQs on our website or by submitting a query using our Work Based Learning Ask the Expert Service. You can search the database of commonly asked questions relating to all aspects of our qualifications in the work-based learning market. If you are unable to find the information you need, send us your query and our qualification or administrative experts will get back to you. The Ask the Expert service is available on our website at: www.qualifications.pearson.com/

Online forum

Pearson Work Based Learning Communities is an online forum where employers, further education colleges and workplace training providers can seek advice and clarification about any aspect of our qualifications and services, and share knowledge and information with others. The forums are sector specific and cover business administration, customer service, health and social care, hospitality and catering and retail. The online forum is available on our website at: www.pearsonwbl.edexcel.com/Our-support

14 Contact us

We have a dedicated Account Support team, across the UK, to give you more personalised support and advice. To contact your Account Specialist:

Email: wblcustomerservices@pearson.com
Telephone: 0844 576 0045

If you are new to Pearson and would like to become an approved centre, please contact us by:

Email: wbl@pearson.com
Telephone: 0844 576 0045

Complaints and feedback

We are working hard to give you excellent service. However, if any element of our service falls below your expectations, we want to understand why, so that we can prevent it from happening again. We will do all that we can to put things right.

If you would like to register a complaint with us, please email wblcomplaints@pearson.com.

We will formally acknowledge your complaint within two working days of receipt and provide a full response within seven working days.

Annexe A: Skills CFA Assessment Strategy for Business Administration, Customer Service and Management and Leadership

1. Introduction

This Assessment Strategy provides principles and guidance to Awarding Organisations for the assessment of competence-based units and qualifications (including Scottish Vocational Qualifications and National Vocational Qualifications) within Business Administration, Customer Service and Management and Leadership in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

This document outlines Skills CFA principles in regards to:

● external quality control of assessment

● requirements of assessor and verifiers

● evidence

● employer direct model.

These principles are in addition to the generic criteria that Awarding Organisations must meet for delivery of qualifications as required by the qualification regulators, for example Ofqual's Regulatory Arrangements for the Qualifications and Credit Framework and any regulatory requirements specified by the SQA Accreditation.

This strategy should only be used for the assessment of the Business Administration, Customer Service and Management and Leadership competence-knowledge based units and qualifications owned by Skills CFA. Units which have been imported by Skills CFA into their apprenticeships or competence-based qualifications will be assessed in compliance with their relevant assessment strategies. Awarding Organisations may assess knowledge-only units as they see fit.

2. External quality control of assessment

The quality of the assessment process is the responsibility of Awarding Organisations. However, Skills CFA encourages flexibility and innovation of approach, alongside robust systems to support quality control. Awarding Organisations are also encouraged to detail their approach to external verification, risk assessment and data requests.

2.1 External verification

- Awarding Organisations are responsible for the competence of external verifiers. It is the responsibility of Awarding Organisations to monitor centres' performance in accordance with regulatory requirements.

- Awarding Organisations must consistently apply external verification processes at all assessment centres delivering competence-based qualifications. These should be underpinned by standard risk assessment and risk management processes.

2.2 Risk assessment

- Awarding Organisations must carry out standard risk assessments for all qualification assessment centres that are delivering competence-based qualifications. Identified risks must be managed appropriately.

- Awarding Organisations must retain evidence to prove that a risk assessment has been carried out for each approved centre, and that a strategy to minimise any identified risk has been implemented.

2.3 Data requests

- Each quarter, Awarding Organisations must provide registration and achievement data at all qualification levels and unit levels (where possible) to Skills CFA.

3. Requirements of assessors, external and internal verifiers

Candidates may be assessed, moderated or verified at work either by several appointed individuals.

3.1 Assessors

The primary responsibility of an Assessor is to assess candidates' performance in a range of tasks and to ensure the evidence submitted by the candidate meets the requirements of the assessment criteria.

It is important that an assessor can recognise occupational competence as specified by the national standard. Assessors therefore need to have a thorough understanding of assessment and quality assurance practices, as well as have in-depth technical understanding related to the qualifications for which they are assessing candidates.

To be able to assess candidates, Assessors must:

● hold an appropriate qualification, as specified by the appropriate regulatory authority, confirming their competence to assess candidates undertaking competence-based units and qualifications. Assessors holding older qualifications must be able to demonstrate that they are assessing to the current standards;

<div align="center">OR</div>

● be working toward an appropriate qualification, as specified by the appropriate regulatory authority. An Assessors working towards an appropriate qualification must ensure their decisions are countersigned by a suitably-qualified assessor/verifier and should be supported by a qualified assessor throughout their training period.

● be "occupationally competent". Assessors must provide current evidence of competence, knowledge and understanding in the areas to be assessed. This will normally be achieved through demonstrating competence in the roles which are to be assessed or demonstrated by relevant experience and continuing professional development (CPD) which may include the achievement of qualifications relevant to the areas being assessed.

● have a full and current understanding of the units of competence and requirements of the qualifications being assessed, including the quality of assessment and the assessment process.

It is the responsibility of approved centres to select and appoint assessors.

3.2 External quality assurer (EQA)[1]

The primary responsibility of EQAs is to assure quality of internal verification and assessments across the centres for which they are responsible. EQAs must have a thorough understanding of quality assurance and assessment practices, as well as in-depth technical knowledge related to the qualifications that they are externally verifying.

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[1] Also known as External Verifier (EV)

EQAs must:

- hold an appropriate qualification as specified by the appropriate regulatory authority, confirming their competence to verify competence-based assessments. EQAs holding older qualifications must be able to demonstrate that they are verifying to the current standards;

<div align="center">OR</div>

- be working toward an appropriate qualification, as specified by the appropriate regulatory authority. If EQAs are working towards an appropriate qualification, their decisions must be countersigned by a suitably qualified EQA[2] and should be supported by a qualified EQA throughout their training period.

- be "occupationally competent". EQAs must demonstrate sufficient and current understanding of the qualifications to be verified, and know how they are applied in business.

- demonstrate competent practice in external verification of assessment, and demonstrate understanding of the principles and practices of external verification of assessment, including the quality of assessment and the assessment process.

It is the responsibility of the awarding body to select and appoint EQAs.

3.3 Internal quality assurer (IQA)[3]

A primary responsibility of IQAs is to assure the quality and consistency of assessments by the assessors for whom they are responsible. IQAs therefore need to have a thorough understanding of quality assurance and assessment practices, as well as sufficient technical understanding related to the qualifications that they are internally verifying. It will be the responsibility of the approved centre to select and appoint IQAs.

IQAs must:

- hold an appropriate qualification, as specified by the appropriate regulatory authority, confirming their competence to internally verify competence-based assessments and candidates. IQAs holding older qualifications must be able to demonstrate that they are verifying to the current standards;

<div align="center">OR</div>

- be working toward an appropriate qualification, as specified by the appropriate regulatory authority. If an IQA is working towards an appropriate qualification, their decisions must be countersigned by a suitably qualified IQA[4] and should be supported by a qualified IQA throughout their training period.

- be "occupationally competent". IQAs must demonstrate sufficient and current understanding of the qualifications to be internally verified, and know how they are applied in business.

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[2] The need for countersigning the decisions of EQAs working towards a qualification, applies to England and Wales and not Scotland.

[3] Also known as Internal Verifier (IV)

[4] The need for countersigning the decisions of IQAs working towards a qualification, applies to England and Wales and not Scotland.

- demonstrate competent practice in internal verification of assessment, and demonstrate understanding of the principles and practices of internal verification of assessment, including the quality of assessment and the assessment process.

Skills CFA and awarding organisations requires all assessors, moderators and verifiers to maintain current Business Administration, Customer Service and Management and Leadership competence to deliver these functions. Skills CFA recognises this can be achieved in many ways. However, such information must be formally recorded in individual CPD records that are maintained in assessment centres.

4. Evidence

4.1 Evidence from Workplace Performance

- Evidence of occupational competence of all competence units at any level, should be generated and collected through performance under workplace conditions. This includes the knowledge-based learning outcomes and assessment criteria of the competence units.

- These conditions would be those typical to the candidate's normal place of work. The evidence collected under these conditions should also be as naturally occurring as possible. It is accepted that not all employees have identical workplace conditions and therefore there cannot be assessment conditions that are identical for all candidates. However, assessors must ensure that, as far as possible, the conditions for assessment should be those under which the candidate usually works.

4.2 Simulation

- Simulation can be applied to all units listed in Section 7 (Appendix B).

- Where simulation is used for units at Level 2 and above, it should only form a small part of the evidence for the qualification.

- Evidence may be produced through simulation solely in exceptional circumstances. The exceptional circumstances, under which simulation is possible, are those situations that are not naturally or readily occurring, such as response to emergencies.

- Simulation must be undertaken in a 'realistic working environment' (RWE). A RWE is "an environment which replicates the key characteristics in which the skill to be assessed is normally employed". The RWE must provide conditions the same as the normal day-to-day working environment, with a similar range of demands, pressures and requirements for cost-effective working. Guidelines for using RWE can be found in Section 6 (Appendix A).

5. Employer direct model

Skills CFA encourages the use of an employer direct model. The employer direct model is where colleagues, supervisors and/or managers in the workplace are involved in the assessment process. Under this model, the employer, with the agreement of their Awarding Organisation may choose between:

● Achieving the appropriate regulatory body approved unit qualifications for assessment; **OR**

● Demonstrating that the employer's training and development activity undertaken to prepare, validate and review these assessment roles, maps 100% to the National Occupational Standards which these qualifications are based on. The mapping process must be agreed by the Awarding Organisation as providing the equivalent level of rigour and robustness as achievement of the unit qualification

In order to use the employer direct model:

● **An organisation must:**

  o *have staff who have achieved, or be working towards achieving, appropriate regulatory body approved unit qualifications for assessment, moderation or verification; OR*

  o *seek guidance and approval from an awarding organisation to demonstrate that they have:*

    – appropriate processes in place to facilitate assessment, moderation or verification functions

    – carried out 100% mapping of the trainer, supervisor or managers' assessment, moderation or verification skills and knowledge to the National Occupational Standards upon which the qualifications above are based.

● **An Awarding Organisation must:**

  o *offer this model to employers only*

  o *supply information on the requirements for internal and external moderation/verification activities to assessment centres.*

6. Appendix A – Realistic Working Environment Guidelines

Realistic Working Environment (RWE) can be applied to all the units in Appendix B:

It is essential that organisations wishing to operate a RWE operate in an environment which reflects a real work setting. This will ensure that any competence achieved in this way will be sustained in real employment.

To undertake the assessment in a RWE the following guidelines must be met:

1   the RWE is managed as a real work situation

2   assessment must be carried out under realistic business pressures

3   all services that are carried out should be completed in a way, and to a timescale, that is acceptable in business organisations

4   candidates must be expected to achieve a volume of work comparable to normal business practices

5   the range of services, products, tools, materials and equipment that the candidates use must be up to date and available

6   account must be taken of any legislation or regulations in relation to the type of work that is being carried out

7   candidates must be given workplace responsibilities to enable them to meet the requirements of the units

8   customer perceptions of the RWE is similar to that found in the work situation being represented

9   candidates must show that their productivity reflects those found in the work situation being represented.

7. Appendix B – Simulation: a list of units

Simulation can only be applied to the following competence units:

Business Administration

Skills CFA Ref.	Unit title	Level
B&A 3	Work with others in a business environment	1
B&A 4	Health and safety in a business environment	1
B&A 5	Manage time and workload	1
B&A 6	Use a telephone and voicemail system	1
B&A 7	Prepare text from notes	1
B&A 8	Meet and welcome visitors in a business environment	1
B&A 9	Handle mail	1
B&A 10	Use office equipment	1

Customer Service

Skills CFA Ref.	Unit title	Level
CS 2	Communication in customer service	1
CS 3	Record details of customer service problems	1
CS 4	Deal with customer queries, requests and problems	1

Management and Leadership

Skills CFA Ref.	Unit title	Level
M&L 17	Manage conflict within a team	3
M&L 31	Discipline and grievance management	4
M&L 44	Manage redundancy and redeployment	4

Annexe B: Skills CFA Assessment Strategy for Contact Centres Operations

1. Introduction

1.1 The Contact Centre Operations Assessment Strategy is designed to provide awarding organisations/bodies with a robust and flexible approach to deliver assessment for Contact Centre NVQs and competence-based qualifications.

2. External quality control

2.1 Awarding organisations/bodies will provide qualifications and quality assurance that support their delivery to all Contact Centre Operations NVQs and competence-based qualification assessment centres in line with regulatory requirements in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

2.2 Awarding organisations/bodies will carry out standard risk assessments in each Contact Centre Operations NVQ and competence based qualification assessment centre and manage all identified risks appropriately.

2.3 Awarding organisations will consistently apply external verification processes at all Contact Centre Operations NVQ and competence-based qualification assessment centres, underpinned by standard risk assessment and risk management processes.

2.4 Awarding organisations/bodies will supply SkillsCFA (CFA) with quarterly reports on:

- Registration and achievement data at qualification level, and unit level where available

3. Assessing performance

3.1 Assessment of the units in the Contact Centre NVQs must be undertaken in a real working environment i.e. assessment of candidate performance at work, with the exception of the units assigned to the level 1 Award, which may be assessed in a realistic working environment (RWE) - see section 4 (below).

3.2 Units which have been imported by the CFA in their Contact Centre Operations NVQs will be assessed in compliance with the imported assessment strategies.

4. Realistic working Environment for NVQ units

4.1 Only the Level 1 NVQ Award in Contact Centres can be assessed in a realistic working environment.

4.2 Awarding organisations will provide guidance for centres on RWEs. Awarding organisations will make sure RWEs, "provide an environment which replicates the key characteristics of the workplace in which the skill to be assessed is normally employed".

5. Occupational expertise to assess performance, and moderate and verify assessments

5.1 Candidates work achievements must be assessed, moderated or verified at work by:

a. **Assessors, moderators or verifiers** who have achieved, or are working towards achievement of, the appropriate regulatory body approved qualifications for assessment, moderation or verification. Those who are working towards achievement of, the appropriate regulatory body approved qualifications for assessment, moderation or verification **should have their decisions countersigned by an individual that is already qualified in that particular role.;**

<div align="center">

OR

</div>

b. **A trainer, supervisor** or **manager,** elected by an employer, who must either:

1. Have achieved, or be working towards achieving, appropriate regulatory body approved unit qualifications for assessment, moderation or verification;

<div align="center">

OR

</div>

2. Seek guidance and approval from their awarding organisation to demonstrate that the;

- Organisation has appropriate processes in place to facilitate assessment, moderation or verification functions;

- Trainer, supervisor or manager is able to map their assessment, moderation or verification skills and knowledge 100% to the National Occupational Standards upon which the qualifications above are based. This is known as the employer direct model.

5.2 **Assessors** must be occupationally competent to make Contact Centre Operations assessment judgements about the level and scope of individual candidate performance at work; and occupationally competent to make assessment judgements about the quality of assessment and the assessment process.

5.3 **External Moderators/Verifiers or Internal Moderators/Verifiers** must be occupationally competent to make Contact Centre Operations moderation and verification judgements about the quality of assessment and the assessment process.

5.4 Awarding organisations/bodies will supply information on the requirements for internal and external moderation/verification activities to Contact Centre assessment centres.

5.5 The CFA and awarding organisations/bodies require all assessors, moderators and verifiers to have a sound knowledge and understanding of Contact Centre competence to deliver these functions. The CFA recognises this can be achieved in many ways but must be recorded in individual continual professional development (CPD) records that are maintained in Contact Centre Operations assessment centres.

Annexe C: Skills CFA Assessment Strategy for Sales

1. Introduction

1.1 The Sales Assessment Strategy is designed to provide awarding organisations with a robust and flexible approach to deliver assessment for Sales NVQs/SVQs and competence-based qualifications.

2. External quality control

2.1 Awarding organisations will provide qualifications and quality assurance that support their delivery to all Sales NVQs/SVQs and competence-based qualification assessment centres in line with regulatory requirements in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

2.2 Awarding organisations/bodies will carry out standard risk assessments in each Sales NVQ/SVQ and competence based qualification assessment centre and manage all identified risks appropriately

2.3 Awarding organisations/bodies will consistently apply external verification processes at all Sales NVQ/SVQ and competence based qualification assessment centres, underpinned by standard risk assessment and risk management processes.

2.4 Awarding organisations/bodies will supply SkillsCFA with reports: Quarterly: provide registration and achievement data at qualification levels and unit level where possible.

3. Assessing performance

3.1 Assessment of all units at any level of Sales NVQs/SVQs and competence-based qualifications may be based on either candidate performance at work or through simulation, as necessary (See Section 4 below).

3.2 Units which have been imported by the CFA in their Sales NVQs/SVQs and competence- based qualifications will be assessed in compliance with their relevant assessment strategies.

4. Simulation of NVQ/SVQ units

4.1 If a unit or part of a unit at any level is simulated, it must be undertaken in a 'realistic working environment' (RWE).

4.2 Awarding organisations will provide guidance for centres on RWEs. Awarding organisations will make sure RWEs, "provide an environment which replicates the key characteristics of the workplace in which the skill to be assessed is normally employed".

5. Occupational expertise to assess performance, and moderate and verify assessments

5.1 Candidates must be assessed, moderated or verified at work either by:

a. **Assessors, moderators** or **verifiers** who have achieved or are working towards achievement of the appropriate regulatory body approved unit qualifications for assessment, moderation or verification;

OR

b. A **trainer, supervisor** or **manager**, employed by an organisation, who must either:

1. Have achieved or be in the process of achieving the appropriate regulatory body approved unit qualifications for assessment, moderation or verification; or,

2. Seek guidance and approval from an awarding organisation to demonstrate that the;

- Organisation has appropriate processes in place to facilitate assessment, moderation or verification functions

- Trainer, supervisor or manager is able to map their assessment, moderation or verification skills and knowledge 100% to the NOS upon which the qualifications above are based, and the A and V units. This is known as the employer direct model in Scotland.

5.2 **Assessors** must be occupationally competent to make Sales assessment judgements about the level and scope of individual candidate performance at work or in RWEs; and, occupationally competent to make assessment judgements about the quality of assessment and the assessment process.

5.3 **External Moderators/Verifiers** or **Internal Moderators/Verifiers** must be occupationally competent to make Sales moderation and verification judgements about the quality of assessment and the assessment process.

5.4 Awarding organisations will supply information on the requirements for internal and external moderation/verification activities to Sales assessment centres.

5.5 The sector requires all assessors, moderators and verifiers to maintain current Sales competence to deliver these functions. The CFA recognises this can be achieved in many ways but must be recorded in individual continual professional development (CPD) records that are maintained in Sales assessment centres.

Annexe D: e-skills ITQ UK Assessment Strategy

ITQ Assessment Strategy – England, Wales and Northern Ireland

This document sets out the ITQ assessment strategy appropriate for England, Wales and Northern Ireland. Arrangements for Scotland are published separately. Changes from the existing arrangements are summarised at the end of the document.

1. Introduction

1.1 Background to the new ITQ Framework

The 2008 development of the National Occupational Standards (NOS) for Using IT and this associated assessment strategy are a key tool in the planned delivery of the Sector Skills Agreement for IT (SSA).

The SSA is uniting employers, educators, government and others to create a coherent strategy for IT skills based on a common, employer-led plan of action, that will transform the IT skills landscape such that:

- All organisations in every sector will be fully realising the potential of IT to help drive their business goals, so that the UK is a world leader in its exploitation of IT for innovation, service and business competitiveness.

- All individuals in the UK will have - and will continue to develop - the IT user skills necessary to fully participate in the e-economy.

- IT user skills will enhance individuals' employability, social lives and ability to benefit from online services.

World class research cited in the Qualifying for the Information Age – the e-skills UK Sector Qualification and Learning Strategy[1] (SQLS) identifies, that workers in virtually all occupations need to be able to use more sophisticated IT systems more effectively to create new sources of customer value. Users will not only need increased levels of skills in basic desk top technology; they will also increasingly need to be skilled in security management and IT support processes and tools, and also the use of communications and mobile technologies.

The SSA for IT sets out a clear target state for stakeholders delivering and beneficiaries receiving better IT user skills:

- A simplified, flexible framework for recognising achievement in IT skills operates across the UK, throughout both the education system and industry.

The SQLS, together with the associated Action Plan, designed to deliver on the SSA, identifies the following principle[2] for delivering on this target.

- Principle 4: The ITQ Framework will be used to organise and position learning and qualifications within the coherent environment. All IT user qualifications and learning will be recorded through a recognised Record of Achievement

This means that:

- All IT User qualification and learning will be based on common unit descriptions directly aligned to the National Occupational Standards for IT Users and encompassed in the ITQ Framework.

- Qualifications and learning are described in a consistent way, which is understood by employers and learners.

- Learners at all stages will engage with a common environment that will enable seamless progression.

- There is recognition and central aggregation of all individuals' elements of learning and achievement within a formal record that is meaningful to employers.

- Funding agencies are able to monitor achievement and return on investment.

The National Occupational Standards (NOS) for Using IT and enhancement of the flexibility of the ITQ both in terms of content and how it is delivered will form a major part of the implementation of the SQLS for IT users. This will enable further alignment of all IT user qualifications and learning with the NOS, within the ITQ Framework.

1.2 Qualifications and Credit Framework

The ITQ Framework is designed to support the development of IT user qualifications, based on units of credit, for accreditation onto the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF)[3], which is a new way of recognising skills and qualifications. The QCF does this by awarding credit for qualifications and units (small steps of learning). It enables people to gain qualifications at their own pace along flexible routes.

This new approach is anticipated to deliver the following benefits. For learners the QCF will:

- offer more freedom, choice and flexibility

- give easy access to information about the commitment needed for different routes to achievement, letting learners balance that commitment with family, work and other responsibilities

- allow them to build up credits at their own pace and combine them in a way that will help them get where they want to be

- enable them to transfer credits between qualifications to avoid having to repeat learning

- record all their achievements on an electronic learner record, encouraging them and others to value their past achievements.

For learning providers (schools, colleges, training providers, workplaces) the QCF will:

- enable them to design more flexible programmes, suitable to the individual needs of learners

- help them improve retention and progression rates by recognising smaller steps of achievement

- track all learners' achievements through the use of a unique learner number (ULN) and an individual's electronic learner record, giving providers standard information about each learner's past achievements

- help them describe achievements to employers and learners in a language that is easy to understand.

For employers the QCF will:

- help them to measure quickly the level and size of achievements of prospective employees
- enable them to get in-house training recognised within a national framework
- describe levels of achievement in terms everyone can understand
- make training options and pathways clear, helping employees and employers find the right training for their learning and business needs.

The regulatory arrangements for the QCF[4] set out the following aims and design principles for accredited qualifications.

The aim of the QCF is to support the establishment, maintenance and continuing development of a qualifications system that is:

- inclusive – able to recognise the achievements of all learners at any level and in any area of learning
- responsive – enabling individuals and employers to establish routes to achievement that are appropriate to their needs, and recognized organisations to develop units and qualifications in response to demand
- accessible – building a system based on clear design features that are easy for all users to understand
- non-bureaucratic – based on mutual trust and confidence, supported by a robust and proportionate approach to regulation and quality assurance.

The QCF is designed to provide a structure within which:

- unit-based qualifications can be located
- achievements are recognised through the award of credits and qualifications
- the level and size of achievements can be easily identified
- the mechanisms necessary to allow the accumulation and transfer of credits between qualifications and awarding organisations operate
- learners are given the maximum flexibility and range of opportunities to progress and receive recognition for their achievements.

1.4 England, Northern Ireland and Wales

The qualifications regulators in England (Ofqual), Wales (DCELLS) and Northern Ireland (CCEA) have been working to design the regulatory arrangements for the QCF[5], which were published by Ofqual in August 2008.

Work towards the QCF has been underpinned in particular by the three country test and trial period for the QCF, and also informed by the following developments undertaken in Northern Ireland and Wales.

1.4.1   The Northern Ireland Credit and Transfer Scheme (NICATS)

The Northern Ireland Credit Accumulation and Transfer System (NICATS)[6] is a framework, which was developed for to allow learning to be recognised in all its shapes and forms, no matter how it is acquired. It is a set of principles and guidelines, which should allow us to value, describe, measure and recognise all learning. This includes learning in traditional settings such as schools, colleges and universities and also learning within the community and the workplace.

It is based on a set of principles and guidelines which allows:

● all candidate achievement to be recognised and recorded on a personal Credit Transcript

● small blocks of learning to be assessed and given credit

Credit provides the basic language for recognising achievement, as a measure of the level of demand of the learning and the amount of learning achieved.

1.4.2 The Credit and Qualifications Framework for Wales (CQFW)

The Credit and Qualifications Framework for Wales (CQFW)[7] started in 2003 and is being progressively implemented. The framework merges the concepts of volume of learning achievements (credit) and the demands made by that learning on the learner (level) to create a system that is able to embrace all types and styles of learning, and all qualifications.

The vision for the single CQFW will underpin the following five key goals:

● enable everyone to develop and maintain essential skills

● encourage people to become lifelong learners

● exploit the knowledge in businesses and educational institutions

● encourage business and workers to gain new skills

● help people within their communities to develop new skills.

1.5 Policy changes

The ITQ assessment strategy is designed to support the development of the SQLS principle for an ITQ Framework, by setting out the requirements for an up-to-date IT user qualification based on the NOS, tailored to the needs of businesses and their staff. The ITQ assessment strategy also needs to take account of changes to policy and the qualifications environment as outlined above and the associated assessment requirements. Key changes include the following.

● Credit frameworks

e-skills UK will derive QCF framework units from the NOS in collaboration with Awarding Bodies to meet employers and learners needs and contribute to the ITQ.

● Embedded Functional Skills[8] [FS] within 14-19 curricula and qualifications

The revised IT User NOS embed the Functional Skills ICT [FS ICT] within the following three areas of competence that relate directly to FS ICT:

o *'IT User fundamentals' [IUF:FS]*

o *'IT Communication fundamentals' [ICF:FS]*

o *'IT Software fundamentals' [ISF:FS]*

- Basic skills

  The revised IT User NOS embed ICT Skills for Life and signpost opportunities for naturally occurring numeracy and literacy, within the three areas of competence with embedded FS.

- Personal learning and thinking skills

  The revised IT User NOS signpost opportunities for naturally occurring personal, learning and thinking skills [PLTS] within the three areas of competence with embedded Functional Skills [FS] and within the mandatory area of competence 'Improving productivity in using IT'.

- 'Full' level 2 qualification design principles[9]

  The revised ITQ has been designed to take account of the proposed credit value of more than 13 credits for a full level 2 qualification.

- Foundation Learning Tier[10]

  The revised ITQ framework has also been designed to take account of the proposed progression pathways for the Foundation Learning Tier, through allowing for the inclusion of FS Mathematics and English, and also for personal, learning and thinking skills [PLTS].

1.6 Principles of ITQ suite of qualifications

Three principles underpin the proposed ITQ suite of qualifications.

1 Flexibility of approach in response to sector, employer and learner needs:

- for sectors – to tailor and contextualise IT training both to reflect the increasing diversity of job roles and the use of specific systems and software

- for employers – to ensure skills application and development enables practical exploitation of the potential of IT for business improvement

- for learners – to ensure they are equipped with the appropriate skills to support their personal or career development.

2 Flexibility of content – to stimulate and inspire new learning and support progression, the ITQ offers a range of solutions varying in:

- size – from taster courses and bite-sized units to full-time programmes of study

- level of complexity – from Entry Level to Level 3

- content – incorporating a range of options for different IT systems and applications.

3 Flexibility of assessment method as appropriate to the individual and the unit, which minimises the assessment burden for learners. The ITQ can therefore accommodate both:

- electronic testing using simulation, tests and tasks

- portfolio-based evidence demonstrating the application of skills, knowledge and understanding.

2. ITQ Assessment strategy

This assessment strategy is being developed in consultation with employers, training providers, awarding bodies and the regulatory authorities.

2.1 Scope of the assessment strategy

This assessment strategy applies to all units and qualifications that are aligned to the IT User NOS and accredited onto credit frameworks to be included in the final ITQ Framework (both directly and partly aligned).

During the transition period, the assessment arrangements for existing 'contributing' units and NQF qualifications will apply.

2.2 Choice of assessment method

All ITQ units may be assessed using any method, or combination of methods, which clearly demonstrates that the learning outcomes and assessment criteria have been met. Assessments must also take into account the additional information provided in the unit Purpose and Aims relating to the level of demand of

- the activity, task, problem or question and the context in which it is set;
- the information input and output type and structure involved; and
- the IT tools, techniques or functions to be used.

Examples of recommended assessment methods are included in *Appendix A*:

2.3 Mandatory unit assessment

In order to reflect the standards of competence expected by employers, assessment of the mandatory unit (Improving Productivity using IT) within Certificates and Diplomas must demonstrate that candidates can apply their relevant skills and knowledge to develop a specified outcome, product or solution. The candidate must independently determine, select and apply the necessary IT tools and techniques to achieve their goal.

The assessment design must cover the following aspects:

- Objectives for using IT – understanding the context in which IT is to be used or the conditions that may affect the way IT is to be used; understanding what outcome needs to be developed, and the expectations and requirements that the outcome must meet;

- Application of IT skills and knowledge – understanding what is involved in a piece of work and the best way to get it done;

- Evaluation of the use of IT – being able to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the use of IT, including identifying improvements to inform future work

2.4 Accreditation of prior achievement (APA)

For candidates starting their studies towards the ITQ under the QCF the process for accreditation of prior achievement is straightforward. Under the QCF, awarding bodies agree to mutual recognition of achievement, so that candidates will be able to count any relevant units towards the ITQ regardless of which awarding body issues the certificates.

Many people may have developed their skills in using IT through undertaking existing or 'legacy' accredited units, qualifications or from non-accredited units and employer training schemes, such as:

● the QCF ITQ in trials between September 07 and August 09

● the current ITQ, which is technically a Scottish or National Vocational Qualification [S/NVQ]

● Functional Skills ICT, ICT Skills for Life [Basic Skills] and in Essential Skills ICT (Northern Ireland);

● legacy units from VQs or VRQs accredited on the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) or accredited by the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA);

● vendor units and qualifications; and

● employer training schemes.

The ITQ Framework lists which units or schemes can contribute to the ITQ, and whether there are any limits on counting credit from such achievement. The up-to-date ITQ Framework, will be published on the e-skills UK website.

Acceptance of contributing qualifications is mandatory for all ITQ Awarding Bodies irrespective of the originating Awarding Body (AB). An Awarding Body offering ITQs must accept recognised units and qualifications from any other AB if the following conditions are met:

● the candidate presents the original qualification, unit certificate or other agreed record of achievement for inspection by the ITQ centre; and

● the unit was achieved no more than three years prior to the date of presentation to the centre. It is the responsibility of the AB and their centres to ensure that a representative sample of certificated skills and knowledge are still current.

Some approved contributing units entitle candidates to claim exemptions for more than one ITQ unit. In such cases, the candidate does not have to claim exemptions for all of the possible ITQ units unless he/she chooses to do so.

2.5 Progression

Candidates may carry forward credits for a period of 3 years to support progression from ITQ Award to ITQ Certificate, and from ITQ Certificate to ITQ Diploma or from Level 1 to 2, or Level 2 to 3.

Candidates may not include the same unit at more than 1 level in any qualification. Thus a candidate who has completed, for example, both Word Processing at Level 1 (3 credits) and Word Processing at Level 2 (4 credits) may only count credits from the higher level towards the qualification.

2.6 Assessment roles and quality assurance

2.6.1   Assessors, internal and external moderators/verifiers

The new ITQs are not NVQs, therefore there is no need for assessors to hold the A1 qualification, or for verifiers to hold the V1 qualification, or indeed to be working towards these qualifications.

To ensure the quality of assessment decisions, it is expected that awarding bodies will have in place methods to ensure that assessors, internal and external moderators/verifiers have:

● the necessary IT skills and experience to assess the units and qualifications they are making judgements on, such as demonstrated by holding an ITQ at level 3. Centres must maintain a current register of curriculum vitae (CVs), including reference to continuing professional development.

e-skills UK do not require assessors, internal or external moderators/verifiers to hold assessor qualifications beyond those required by the awarding or regulatory body.

2.6.2   Standardisation, moderation and verification

Awarding Bodies must use quality assurance systems that are fit for purpose for the assessment method(s) being used and are in line with the relevant regulatory requirements.

For example:

● internal/external moderation of externally set examinations or online tests;

● external moderation of externally set and internally marked tasks;

● records to authenticate candidate's evidence for assessment;

● internal standardisation/external moderation of scenario based assignments set by centres;

● internal moderation/verification of internally assessed evidence by a suitably qualified internal moderator/verifier using procedures approved by the awarding body; and

● external moderation/verification of internally assessed evidence by a suitably qualified external moderator/verifier using procedures specified by the awarding body.

2.7 Joint Awarding Body Forum

Awarding Bodies, through the quality control mechanisms specified by the regulatory authorities, must ensure a rigorous and effective control of centres and the assessment and verification process so that judgement of what is valid, authentic, current, reliable and sufficient evidence is maintained across all assessment contexts.

To ensure consistency of assessment it is required that all Awarding Bodies routinely participate in the e-skills UK Joint Awarding Body Forum which will be the focus for ensuring that assessment and verification of competence is carried out consistently and fairly across all assessment contexts.

The Awarding Body Forum will, within the individual Awarding Bodies agreed methodologies, develop and maintain a common understanding of the standards and promote good assessment and verification practice.

Appendix A – Guidance for Awarding Bodies on recommended assessment methods

The following methods are recommended for the assessment of IT User skills, knowledge and understanding for all ITQ units.

● e-assessment;

● knowledge tests;

● scenario-based assessment;

● portfolio of evidence taken from activities involving the use of contemporary ICT systems;

● witness testimony;

● professional discussion;

● other methods which have been approved by e-skills UK and the Awarding Body.

Whatever method is used, Awarding bodies must have appropriate systems and procedures to:

● ensure that assessment arrangements meet relevant assessment design principles and quality assurance regulations; and

● make sample assessment materials available for discussion by the Joint Awarding Body Forum, as required.

A.1 e-Assessment

Online or e-assessment may be used to assess some learning outcomes and assessment criteria relating to performance, knowledge and understanding, for example, of the performance skills in formatting text or understanding of the reasons for choosing different software tools.

Awarding Bodies, employers or providers may develop e-assessments. Where e-assessment is used, Awarding Bodies must ensure that on each assessment occasion:

● the performance, knowledge and understanding being assessed matches that specified in the relevant ITQ unit;

● the level is sufficiently challenging; and

● the assessment methodology used is robust and reliable.

Where employers or providers develop e-assessments, these should be agreed in advance with the Awarding Body.

A.2 Knowledge tests

Knowledge tests, often delivered electronically, can be used to assess some learning outcomes and assessment criteria relating to knowledge and understanding, for example, knowledge of security risks or organisational guidelines.

Awarding Bodies, employers or providers may develop knowledge tests. Where knowledge tests are used, Awarding Bodies must ensure that on each testing occasion:

● the knowledge being tested matches that specified in the relevant ITQ unit;

● the level is sufficiently challenging; and

● the assessment methodology used is robust and reliable.

Where employers or providers develop knowledge tests, these should be agreed in advance with the awarding body.

A.3 Scenario based assessment

'Scenarios' may be developed to provide a purpose for using IT, which requires the candidate to undertake practical tasks or activities that produce assessable outcomes. Scenarios may be combined with other methods of assessment, for example to provide a purpose for a series of online assessment tasks.

Awarding Bodies, employers or providers may develop scenarios. The scenario and associated tasks must be carefully designed to ensure that:

● the performance, knowledge and understanding being assessed matches that specified in the relevant ITQ unit;

● the level is sufficiently challenging; and

● the demands and constraints result in the purposeful use of IT, and where relevant reflect those that would typically be met in a real work context.

A.4 Portfolio assessment

Valid evidence can arise from:

● activities undertaken for or at work;

● the search for employment (e.g. CVs, job applications and emails to potential employers);

● social activities (e.g. club membership databases, posters and websites), such as:

　o *enterprise activities (e.g. business plans, budgets and marketing materials);*

　o *voluntary activities (e.g. cash flows, programmes and newsletters); or*

　o *learning and studying subjects other than IT (e.g. internet research for a geography assignment, reports/dissertations and presentations).*

By the very nature of IT, activities can be carried out in a variety of locations not confined to the traditional office setting.

Portfolio evidence should arise naturally from tasks and activities involving the use of IT and may include:

- product outcomes – in the form of outputs or screenshots produced using IT – which should form the majority of evidence; and

- ephemeral evidence – where this is the only evidence for an element (for example, of planning), should be cross checked by professional discussion and backed up by brief written evidence – for example in the form of annotations, storyboards or 'witness statement' (see below).

e-skills UK actively encourages the use of electronic portfolio management tools.

A.5 Witness statements

A 'witness' is someone who provides a written statement about the quality and authenticity of a candidate's work for assessment purposes. To make a statement the witness must have first hand experience of the candidate's performance and understanding of knowledge, skills and understanding required to do the work. Witnesses can be drawn from a wide range of people who can attest to performance, including line managers and experienced colleagues from inside the candidate's organisation.

A witness statement may be needed when the candidate is performing day-to-day activities, which leave little or no evidence behind, for example, agreeing the outcomes to be produced using IT and any deadlines that need to be met or understanding and meeting organisational guidelines for data security and file storage. The witness can, in particular, provide evidence relating to the candidate's competence:

- when reviewing, testing and recommending ways of improving productivity using IT towards [IPU] the mandatory unit for ITQ Certificates and Diplomas;

- when using specialist or bespoke IT software applications;

- in meeting customer requirements;

- of working within organisational guidelines.

Appendix B – Summary of key changes to the ITQ

	Current position	**Proposed approach**
Type	NQF accredited NVQ	QCF accredited qualification
Titles	Level 1 NVQ for IT Users (ITQ) Level 2 NVQ for IT Users (ITQ) Level 3 NVQ for IT Users (ITQ)	Level 1 ITQ Award in IT User Skills Level 1 ITQ Certificate in IT User Skills Level 1 ITQ Diploma in IT User Skills Level 2 ITQ Award in IT User Skills Level 2 ITQ Certificate in IT User Skills Level 2 ITQ Diploma in IT User Skills Level 3 ITQ Award in IT User Skills Level 3 ITQ Certificate in IT User Skills Level 3 ITQ Diploma in IT User Skills
Unit template	Consists of: ● Statements of competence ● Knowledge criteria ● Knowledge components ● Skills criteria ● Skills component Key skills in IT related but not integrated	Consists of: ● Learning outcomes ● Assessment criteria Skills and knowledge components are indicative and will not form the basis of assessment (unless defined through a syllabus or test specification) Functional skills ICT integrated into 3 new units
Rules of combination	Defined in terms of points totals	Defined for each level in terms of QCF unit credit values Spiky profile extended to include Entry level units
Accreditation of prior achievement	Exemption for recognised contributing units and qualifications	No change
Assessment strategy	Assessment must follow NVQ Code of Practice11 Assessment must be based on purposeful activities Assessors must hold a "D" or "A" award	Assessment must adhere to the Regulatory Arrangements for the QCF12 Assessment for mandatory unit must demonstrate purposeful application of skills and knowledge Assessors must be appropriately trained

Abbreviations used in this document

AB   Awarding Body

AoC   Area of Competence

APA   Accreditation of Prior Achievement

APL   Accreditation of Prior Learning

CCEA   Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (Northern Ireland)

CQFW   Credit and Qualification Framework for Wales

DCELLS   Department for Children, Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills Wales)

FLT   Foundation Learning Tier

FS   Functional Skills

FS ICT   Functional Skills ICT

IPU   Improving Productivity using IT (mandatory unit in ITQ Certificate and Diploma programmes)

NICATS   Northern Ireland Credit Accumulation and Transfer System

NOS   National Occupational Standards

NQF   National Qualifications Framework

NVQ   National Vocational Qualification

PLTS   Personal Learning and Thinking Skills

QCA   Qualifications and Curriculum Authority

QCF   Qualifications and Credit Framework

SCQF   Scottish Credit and Qualification Framework

SQA   Scottish Qualifications Authority

SQLS   Sector Qualifications and Learning Strategy

SSA   Sector Skills Agreement

SVQ   Scottish Vocational Qualification

ULN   Unique Learner Number

VQ   Vocational Qualification

VRQ   Vocationally Related Qualification

Endnotes

1. Available for download at: www.e-skills.com/SQLS

2. See SQLS (e-skills UK, 4th April 2008) page 5.

3. For more information about the QCF visit the following link on the QCA website: www.qca.org.uk/QCF. The ITQ Framework is also designed to fit the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF).

4. Further information about the regulatory requirements of QCF is available for download at: www.ofqual.gov.uk/qcf.

5. The Regulatory Arrangements for the Qualifications and Credit Framework, August 2008 are available to download here: www.ofqual.gov.uk/QCF

6. Further information about NICATS is available for download here: www.nicats.ac.uk

7. Further information about CQFW is available here: Welsh Assembly Government, Educational and Skills, CQFW

8. Trials with centres and learners commenced in 2007 for ICT Functional Skills in England. ICT Functional Skills standards have been defined from Entry 1 to Level 2. The ICT Functional Skills standards are comparable to the ICT Essential Skills standards in Northern Ireland and to the ICT Skills for Life standards in England.

9. QCA, April 2008

10. Currently 4 progression pathways have been defined for FLT in England.

11. The NVQ Code of Practice covers: administrative resources; equality of opportunity; expertise of external verifiers; centre registration and approval; and data requirements; issue of certificates; enquiries and appeals; customer service, monitoring and evaluation; use of languages/assessment; application of assessment methodology (including the role and qualifications for assessors, internal and external verifiers; sampling and external reporting); and dealing with malpractice

12. The Regulatory Arrangements for the QCF covers: Delivery of assessment – roles and responsibilities, procedures and systems, access, special consideration, personal interest, standardisation and quality assurance; Centre recognition; Award of credits; Award of qualifications; Ongoing review; Fees; Data requirements; Awards outside England, Wales and Northern Ireland; Use of languages; Appeals; Dealing with malpractice; Customer service; and Submitting qualifications for accreditation

Annexe E: Personal, Learning and Thinking Skills mapping

PLTS	Units	1: Organise and Deliver Customer Service L3	3: Resolve Customers' Problems L3	6: Manage Personal and Professional Development L3
Independent Enquirers				
1	identify questions to answer and problems to resolve		AC2.1	AC1.2, AC2.3
2	plan and carry out research, appreciating the consequences of decisions			AC1.2
3	explore issues, events or problems from different perspectives		AC2.3, AC2.4	AC1.3
4	analyse and evaluate information, judging its relevance and value			AC1.1
5	consider the influence of circumstances, beliefs and feelings on decisions and events	AC3.4	AC2.3, AC2.4	AC1.3
6	support conclusions, using reasoned arguments and evidence		AC2.6	AC1.3
Creative Thinkers				
1	generate ideas and explore possibilities	AC2.5	AC2.3, AC2.4	AC2.3
2	ask questions to extend their thinking		AC2.1	AC2.4, AC3.2
3	connect their own and others' ideas and experiences in inventive ways	AC3.1		AC3.4
4	question their own and others' assumptions			AC1.3, AC3.2
5	try out alternatives or new solutions and follow ideas through	AC3.4	AC2.6	AC2.5
6	adapt ideas as circumstances change	AC3.4		AC3.4
Reflective Learners				
1	assess themselves and others, identifying opportunities and achievements			AC3.2, AC3.3
2	set goals with success criteria for their development and work			AC2.4, AC3.4
3	review progress, acting on the outcomes	AC3.3, AC3.4		AC3.3, AC3.4
4	invite feedback and deal positively with praise, setbacks and criticism			AC2.3, AC3.2
5	evaluate experiences and learning to inform future progress			AC1.3, AC2.3, AC3.3
6	communicate their learning in relevant ways for different audiences			AC2.1, AC3.4

PLTS	Units	1: Organise and Deliver Customer Service L3	3: Resolve Customers' Problems L3	6: Manage Personal and Professional Development L3
Team Workers				
1 collaborate with others to work towards common goals		AC3.2		AC3.2, AC3.4
2 reach agreements, managing discussions to achieve results		AC3.2	AC2.6	AC3.4
3 adapt behaviour to suit different roles and situations, including leadership roles		AC3.4		
4 show fairness and consideration to others		AC3.1, AC3.2		
5 take responsibility, showing confidence in themselves and their contribution		AC3.1	AC2.6	
6 provide constructive support and feedback to others			AC2.7	
Self-Managers				
1 seek out challenges or new responsibilities and show flexibility when priorities change		AC3.4		AC2.5
2 work towards goals, showing initiative, commitment and perseverance		AC3.4	AC2.6	AC2.5
3 organise time and resources, prioritising actions		AC2.3, AC2.5, AC3.4		
4 anticipate, take and manage risks		AC2.6	AC2.6	
5 deal with competing pressures, including personal and work-related demands		AC3.1		AC1.3, AC2.5
6 respond positively to change, seeking advice and support when needed				AC3.2, AC3.4
7 manage their emotions, and build and maintain relationships			AC2.6	AC3.2
Effective Participators				
1 discuss issues of concern, seeking resolution where needed		AC3.3, AC3.4		
2 present a persuasive case for action		AC3.2	AC2.5	
3 propose practical ways forward, breaking these down into manageable steps		AC3.3	AC2.5	
4 identify improvements that would benefit others as well as themselves		AC3.3		AC2.3, AC2.4
5 try to influence others, negotiating and balancing diverse views to reach workable solutions		AC3.1, AC3.2	AC2.6	AC2.4
6 act as an advocate for views and beliefs that may differ from their own		AC2.1, AC3.4	AC2.7	