

SVQ 1 in Customer Service at SCQF Level 4

Scottish Vocational Qualifications

Specification

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Edexcel, BTEC and LCCI qualifications

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Purpose of this specification

This specification sets out:

- the type of qualification
- the objectives of the qualification
- any other qualifications that a candidate must have completed before taking the qualification
- any prior knowledge, skills or understanding which the candidate is required to have before taking the qualification
- the combination of units that a candidate must have completed before the qualification will be awarded and any pathways
- methods of assessment
- conditions of assessment including: the knowledge, skills and understanding that will be assessed as part of the qualification
- the criteria against which a candidate's level of attainment will be measured (such as assessment criteria)
- resources required, including roles, responsibilities and requirements, technical and physical
- evidence requirements
- assessment principles or requirements for the qualification, for example assessment strategies, assessment principles/requirements or any other appropriate guidelines
- assessment strategy as published by the relevant Sector Skills Council/Standards Setting Body
- the Modern/Technical/Professional Apprenticeship Framework(s) in which the qualification is included, where appropriate.

1 Introducing Scottish Vocational Qualifications

What are Scottish Vocational Qualifications?

Scottish Vocational Qualifications (SVQs) are work-based qualifications that give candidates the opportunity to develop and demonstrate their competence in the area of work or job role to which a particular qualification relates.

SVQs 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 SVQ Level 2 and above SVQs are recognised as the competence component of Modern Apprenticeship frameworks. Qualifications at SVQ Level 1 can be used in Traineeships, which are stepping stones to Apprenticeship qualifications.

For those who wish to take a work-based qualification, SVQs can be delivered as stand-alone qualifications outside of Apprenticeship frameworks.

SVQs allow flexible delivery that meets the individual candidate's needs. They are suitable for those in employment and for those who are studying at college and have a part-time job or access to a substantial work placement in order to demonstrate the competencies required for work.

Most candidates 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/or employers can offer these qualifications provided they have access to appropriate physical and human resources.

2 Explanation of levels

SVQs are available at five levels, reflecting the range and depth of skills, knowledge and experience that employees should have as they progress in their industry.

SVQ Level	Explanation of level
Level 1	At SVQ Level 1 (Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) Level 4), competence involves the application of knowledge and skills in the performance of a range of work tasks, most of which fall into a set pattern and do not change.
Level 2	At SVQ Level 2 (SCQF Level 5), candidates have to be able to show competence in a range of varied activities, in a variety of contexts. Some of the activities will be complex and they will be working in a job where they have individual responsibility or autonomy. The job may also involve collaboration with others, perhaps through membership of a work group or team.
Level 3	At SVQ Level 3 (either SCQF Level 6 or 7), candidates have to perform a broad range of activities in a variety of contexts, most of which are complex and non-routine. Candidates will usually be working with considerable responsibility and autonomy and may have supervisory or managerial responsibilities.
Level 4	At SVQ Level 4 (either SCQF Level 8 or 9), candidates need to show competence in a broad range of complex, technical or professional work activities. Activities will be performed in a wide variety of contexts and with a substantial degree of personal responsibility and autonomy. Candidates will often be responsible for the work of others and for allocating resources.
Level 5	At SVQ Level 5 (SCQF Level 11), candidates have to demonstrate competence in applying fundamental principles and complex techniques across a wide and often unpredictable variety of contexts. They will have substantial personal autonomy and often significant responsibility for the work of others, and for the allocation of substantial resources. Personal accountability for analysis and diagnosis, design, planning, execution and evaluation also feature strongly.

3 Qualification summary and key information

Qualification title	SVQ 1 in Customer Service at SCQF Level 4
Operational start date	01/09/2015
Minimum age	14 Please note that sector-specific requirements or regulations may prevent candidates of a particular age from embarking on this qualification. Please refer to the assessment strategy.
Number of required units	5
Credit points	20
Assessment	Portfolio of Evidence (internal assessment).
Grading information	The qualification and units are graded pass/fail.
Entry requirements	No prior knowledge, understanding, skills or qualifications are required before candidates register for this qualification. However, centres must follow the Pearson Access and Recruitment policy (see <i>Section 7, Access and Recruitment</i>).
Funding	Details of funding approval are available from Skills Development Scotland at: www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk and the Scottish Funding Council at: www.sfc.ac.uk Information is also available on the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) website: www.sqa.org.uk

The qualification title, unit titles and qualification code will appear on each candidate's final certificate. Centres should tell candidates this when recruiting them and registering them with Pearson. There is more information on certification in our *UK Information Manual*, available on our website, qualifications.pearson.com

4 Qualification rationale

Qualification objectives

The SVQ 1 in Customer Service at SCQF Level 4 is for candidates who work in or who want to work in the customer service sector. It is suitable for candidates who have little or no previous experience of the sector, including those returning to work after unemployment, not in employment, education or training (NEET) candidates and school leavers.

The qualification gives candidates the opportunity to:

- develop and demonstrate skills, knowledge and attitudes for working in a customer service role, carrying out a range of routine service-related tasks including communicating and dealing directly with customers
- have existing skills and knowledge recognised
- achieve a nationally-recognised SCQF Level 4 qualification
- develop personal growth and engagement in learning.

Relationship with previous qualifications

This qualification does not replace any previous qualifications.

Progression opportunities

Candidates who achieve the SVQ 1 in Customer Service at SCQF Level 4 can progress to the Modern Apprenticeship in Customer Service at Level 2, which includes the SVQ 2 in Customer Service at SCQF Level 5.

Candidates could also progress to employment in a customer service role, for example:

- Customer Service Assistant
- Telesales Operative
- Help Desk Assistant
- Call Centre Advisor.

Industry support and recognition

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

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.

5 Qualification structure

SVQ 1 in Customer Service at SCQF Level 4

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

Minimum number of credits that must be achieved	20
Number of mandatory units that must be achieved	2
Number of optional units that must be achieved	3
To achieve this qualification the candidate must complete 5 units. Both mandatory units plus a minimum of 1 unit from Group B, 1 unit from Group C and 1 unit from Group D.	

Unit	SQA unit code	Mandatory units	Credit points	SCQF Level
1	CFACSF1	Communicate in a Customer Service Environment	4	4
2	CFACSF2	Deliver Customer Service within the Rules	4	5
Unit	SQA unit code	Optional units – Group B	Credit points	SCQF Level
3	CFACSA1	Maintain a Positive and Customer-Friendly Attitude	5	4
4	CFACSA2	Behave in a Way that Gives a Good Customer Service Impression	5	4
Unit	SQA unit code	Optional units – Group C	Credit points	SCQF Level
5	CFACSB1	Do your Job in a Customer-Friendly Way	5	4
6	CFACSB2	Deliver Reliable Customer Service	5	5
7	CFACSB3	Deliver Customer Service on your Customer's Premises	5	5
8	CFACSB4	Recognise Diversity when Delivering Customer Service	5	5
9	CFACSB5	Deal with Customers across a Language Divide	8	5
10	CFACSB6	Use Questioning Techniques when Delivering Customer Service	4	5
11	CFACSB7	Deal with Customers Using Bespoke Software	5	5

Unit	SQA unit code	Optional units – Group C continued	Credit points	SCQF Level
12	CFACSB8	Maintain Customer Service through Effective Handover	4	5
13	CFACSB17	Deliver Customer Service in an Environmentally Friendly and Sustainable Way	3	5
Unit	SQA unit code	Optional units – Group D	Credit points	SCQF Level
14	CFACSC1	Recognise and Deal with Customer Queries, Requests and Problems	5	4
15	CFACSC2	Take Details of Customer Service Problems	4	4
16	CFACSC5	Monitor and Solve Customer Service Problems	6	6
17	CFACSC6	Apply Risk Assessment to Customer Service	10	7
18	CFACSC7	Process Customer Service Complaints	6	7

Centres should be aware that within the SVQ 1 at SCQF Level 4 qualification in this specification, candidates will be required to meet the demands of at least one unit at SCQF Level 5. Centres are advised to consider the support, guidance and opportunities they give to candidates to meet the demands of the higher-level unit.

6 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 candidates' needs. Candidates must be in employment or working with a training provider on a work programme or placement so that they can develop and demonstrate the occupational competence required.

Whichever mode of delivery is used, centres must make sure that candidates 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. Our policy on *Collaborative arrangements for the delivery of vocational qualifications* can be found on our website, qualifications.pearson.com

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 candidate recruitment, preparation and support, training and assessment delivery, and employer engagement.

Elements of good practice

Candidate recruitment, preparation and support

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

- providing initial advice and guidance, including work tasters, to potential candidates 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 candidates are matched to the programme best suited to their needs
- carrying out a thorough induction for candidates to ensure that they completely understand the programme and what is expected of them. For example, the induction should include 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 and the assessment process. It is good practice to involve the employer in the induction process. This helps employers 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 candidate to keep them engaged and motivated, and ensuring that there are open lines of communication between the candidate, 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 candidate, 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
- planning opportunities for the development and practising of skills on the job. On-the-job training presents an excellent opportunity to develop the candidate's routine expertise, resourcefulness, craftspersonship and business-like attitude. It is, therefore, important that there is intentional structuring of practice and guidance to supplement the learning and development provided through engagement in everyday work activities. Candidates need to have structured time to learn and practise their skills separate from their 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
- developing an holistic approach to assessment by matching evidence to different assessment criteria, learning outcomes and units as appropriate, thereby reducing the assessment burden on candidates 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
- discussing and agreeing with the candidate and employer suitable times, dates and work areas where assessment will take place. Candidates 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 candidates 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 candidates 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).

7 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.

- 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 candidates 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, see *Section 7, Access and recruitment*. For full details on the Equality Act 2010 go to www.legislation.gov.uk or www.scotland.gov.uk

8 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 candidates wishing to access the qualifications.

Centres must ensure that their candidate 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.

Prior knowledge, skills and understanding

No prior knowledge, understanding, skills or qualifications are required before candidates register for this qualification.

Access to qualifications for candidates with disabilities or specific needs

Equality and fairness are central to our work. Pearson's Equality Policy requires all candidates to have equal opportunity to access our qualifications and assessments and that our qualifications are awarded in a way that is fair to every candidate.

We are committed to making sure that:

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

For candidates 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. For information on reasonable adjustments and special consideration, see *Section 8, Assessment*.

9 Assessment

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

Language of assessment

Assessment of the internally assessed units 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 candidate registration.

A candidate 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*, available on our website at: qualifications.pearson.com

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 documents are on our website, qualifications.pearson.com

Internal assessment

The competence units in this qualification are assessed through an internally and externally quality assured Portfolio of Evidence made up of evidence gathered during the course of the candidate's work.

Each unit has specified assessment outcomes and standards that outline the required skills and techniques and knowledge and understanding. To pass each unit the candidate must:

- achieve **all** the specified outcomes and standards
- satisfy **all** the outcomes and standards by providing consistent and valid and reliable evidence for each criterion
- prove that the evidence is their own.

The candidate must have an assessment record that identifies the outcomes and standards 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 performance, behaviour and knowledge outcomes and standards, is:

Valid	relevant to the standards for which competence is claimed
Authentic	produced by the candidate
Consistent	achieved on more than one occasion
Current	usually not more than two years old
Sufficient	fully meets the requirements of the performance, behaviour and knowledge outcomes and standards.

Candidates 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 candidate can demonstrate that they can meet a unit’s outcomes and standards through knowledge, understanding or skills they already possess without undertaking a course of development. Candidates must submit sufficient, reliable, authentic and valid evidence for assessment. Evidence submitted that is 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, qualifications.pearson.com

- a combination of these.

Assessment strategy

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

Types of evidence

To achieve a unit, the candidate must gather evidence that shows that they have met the required standard specified in the assessment criteria, Pearson's quality assurance arrangements (please see *Section 10, Quality assurance of centres*) and the requirements of the assessment strategy given in *Annexe A*.

In line with the assessment strategy, evidence for internally assessed units can take a variety of forms as indicated below:

- direct observation of the candidate's performance by their assessor (O)
- outcomes from oral or written questioning (Q&A)
- products of the candidate's work (P)
- personal statements and/or reflective accounts (RA)
- outcomes from simulation (S) as specified in the assessment strategy in *Annexe A*
- professional discussion (PD)
- authentic statements/witness testimony (WT)
- expert witness testimony (EWT)
- evidence of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL).

Candidates can use the abbreviations in their portfolios for cross-referencing purposes.

Candidates can also use one piece of evidence to prove their knowledge, skills and understanding across different outcomes and standards and/or across different units. It is not necessary for candidates to have each standard assessed separately. They should be encouraged to reference evidence to the relevant standard. However, the evidence provided for each unit must clearly reference the unit 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 *Assessment* section of the unit.

Further guidance on the requirements for centre quality assurance and internal verification processes is available on our website, qualifications.pearson.com

Appeals

Centres must have a policy for dealing with appeals from candidates. 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 candidates have been given assessment decisions.

Centres must document all candidates' appeals and their resolutions. Further information on the appeals process can be found in the document *Enquiries and appeals about Pearson vocational qualifications policy*, available on our website, qualifications.pearson.com

Dealing with malpractice

Centres must have a policy for dealing with malpractice by candidates. This policy must follow the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) *General and Vocational qualifications: Suspected Malpractice in Examinations and Assessments Policies and Procedures*. Centres should follow their policy in dealing with candidate malpractice. There is no need to inform Pearson of candidate malpractice unless the candidate(s) in question have been certificated or their work quality assured.

Centres must report suspected malpractice by teachers or centres to the Investigations Team at Pearson before any investigation is undertaken by the centre. Centres should provide as much information as possible on the suspected malpractice in an email to pqsmalpractice@pearson.com. It is extremely important that malpractice is reported in a timely fashion, 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 candidates in line with the guidance given in the Pearson document *Supplementary guidance for reasonable adjustment and special consideration in vocational internally assessed units*. In most instances, adjustments can be achieved by following the guidance, for example allowing the use of assistive technology or adjusting the format of the evidence. We can advise you if you are uncertain as to whether an adjustment is fair and reasonable. Any reasonable adjustment must reflect the normal learning or working practice of a candidate 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*.

Both documents are on our website, qualifications.pearson.com

Special consideration

Centres must operate special consideration in line with the guidance given in the Pearson 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 only on a case-by-case basis. A separate application must be made for each candidate 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, qualifications.pearson.com

Credit transfer

Credit transfer describes the process of using a credit or credits awarded in the context of a different qualification or awarded by a different awarding organisation towards the achievement requirements of another qualification. All awarding organisations recognise the credits awarded by all other awarding organisations that operate within the SCQF.

If candidates achieve credits with other awarding organisations, they do not need to retake any assessment for the same units. The centre must keep evidence of unit achievement. Further information on credit transfer can be found in the document *SCQF Credit Accumulation and Transfer policy*, available on our website, qualifications.pearson.com

10 Centre recognition and approval

Centre recognition

Centres that have not previously offered SVQs through Pearson need to apply for, and be granted, centre recognition and approval as part of the process for approval to offer individual qualifications. Centres already delivering Pearson NVQs will not need to apply for centre approval to deliver Pearson SVQs but will need to apply for qualification approval.

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 Pearson SVQs is available on our website, qualifications.pearson.com

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.

11 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 candidates 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 competence-based 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 candidates
- number and turnover of assessors
- number and turnover of internal verifiers.

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 *Quality Assurance Handbook NVQ/SVQ* and the *Pearson Edexcel NVQs, SVQs and competence-based qualifications – Delivery Requirements and Quality Assurance Guidance* on our website, qualifications.pearson.com

12 Unit format

Each unit has the following sections.

Unit title

The unit title is on the SCQF and this form of words will appear on the candidate's Notification of Performance (NOP).

Unit code

Each unit is assigned a unit code that appears with the unit title on the SQA accredited qualification structure.

SCQF level

All units and qualifications within Scottish qualifications have a Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) level assigned to them. There are 12 levels of achievement which show the depth and complexity of learning/competence, skills and knowledge required to achieve the qualification.

Credit points

All units have credit points. Credit points show the volume of learning required to achieve a qualification. One SCQF credit point equals 10 notional learning hours.

Unit summary

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

Unit assessment requirements

The SSC set the assessment requirements. Candidates must provide evidence according to each of the requirements stated in this section.

Terminology

Key terms and concepts that feature in the unit.

Assessment outcomes and standards

The requirements the candidate is expected to meet to achieve the unit. These requirements are under subheadings of 'knowledge and understanding' and 'performance criteria'.

Knowledge and understanding

The knowledge that the candidate needs to be able to understand what they are doing and why.

Performance criteria

The level of competence the candidate has to achieve.

Unit 1: Communicate in a Customer Service Environment

Unit code:	CFACSF1
SCQF level:	4
Credit points:	4

Unit summary

You need to be able to communicate with customers and colleagues using language and concepts that they can understand.

This unit is about the language and basic principles that are at the heart of customer service and the skills you need to communicate effectively with customers and colleagues. It also covers how you fit into the customer service picture in your organisation and the contribution of your job to good customer service. You need to be able to describe and explain the services or products that your organisation offers and how it delivers customer service. This means that you need to use the right language to describe customer service and describe why an organisation needs to balance customer needs with what the organisation is willing and able to provide. Using that language, the unit will help you to understand how you and your job fit in.

Everybody involved in customer service needs to know the customer service content of their job.

Unit assessment requirements

Assessment of candidates in a realistic working environment, including work experience and work placement, is permitted for this unit. Please refer to the Skills CFA Assessment Strategy in *Annexe A* for specific guidelines on assessment in a Realistic Working Environment.

Terminology

Customer service; language; communication; work with colleagues; follow procedures; give information; types of customer; company procedures; services and products; answer questions; service offer; internal customer; external customer; teamwork; problem solving

Assessment outcomes and standards

To pass this unit, the candidate needs to demonstrate that they can meet all the assessment outcomes and standards for the unit. The standards outline the requirements the candidate is expected to meet to achieve the unit.

Knowledge and understanding	
1	who your customers are and the differences between an internal customer and an external customer
2	your organisation's services or products and how to find information about them
3	the connection between customer expectations and customer satisfaction in customer service
4	why good customer service is important to any organisation
5	why organisational procedures and teamwork are important to good customer service
6	the service offer of your organisation and the part you play in delivering it
7	who's who and who does what in delivering customer service in your organisation
8	the main characteristics of typical customers that you deal with, what impresses them and what might upset or annoy them
9	the kinds of information you need to give good service to customers
10	typical customer service problems in your work and who should be told about them
11	how the way you behave affects your customer's service experience

Performance criteria

Identify customers and their characteristics and expectations

- | | |
|---|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | recognise typical customers and their expectations |
| 2 | discuss customer expectations with colleagues using recognised customer service language |
| 3 | follow procedures through which you and your colleagues deliver effective customer service |

Identify your organisation's services or products

- | | |
|---|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 4 | outline your organisation's services or products to customers |
| 5 | list the information you need to deliver effective customer service and where that information can be found |
| 6 | discuss with colleagues the part you play in delivering your organisation's service offer |

Unit 2:

Deliver Customer Service within the Rules

Unit code:

CFACSF2

SCQF level:

5

Credit points:

4

Unit summary

There are rules set by organisations about what you can and cannot do for customers. Some of those rules are the result of general responsibilities set by legislation and apply to everybody. Other rules are specific to an industry so are followed by your organisation because of the business you are in. Some rules are set by your organisation alone because of the particular way it wants its customer service to be delivered.

This unit requires you to show that you know and understand all the rules that apply to customer service delivered by your organisation and how they apply to you and your job.

Unit assessment requirements

Assessment of candidates in a realistic working environment, including work experience and work placement, is permitted for this unit. Please refer to the Skills CFA Assessment Strategy in *Annexe A* for specific guidelines on assessment in a Realistic Working Environment.

Terminology

Industry; rules; legislation; customer service; organisational practices; organisation procedures; security; delivery; health; safety; external regulations; equality; confidentiality

Assessment outcomes and standards

To pass this unit, the candidate needs to demonstrate that they can meet all the assessment outcomes and standards for the unit. The standards outline the requirements the candidate is expected to meet to achieve the unit.

Knowledge and understanding	
1	organisational practices and procedures that relate to your customer service work
2	the limits of what you are allowed to do when delivering customer service
3	when and how you should refer to somebody in authority about the rules for delivering customer service
4	how you protect the security of customers and their property
5	how you protect the security of information about customers
6	your health and safety responsibilities as they relate to your customer service work
7	your responsibilities to deliver customer service whilst treating customers equally
8	why it is important to respect customer and organisation confidentiality
9	the main things you must do and not do in your job under legislation that affects your customer service work
10	the main things that you must do and not do in your job under external regulations that affect your customer service work

Performance criteria

Follow your organisation's customer service practices and procedures

1	follow organisational practices and procedures that relate to your customer service work
2	recognise the limits of what you are allowed to do when delivering customer service
3	refer to somebody in authority when you need to
4	work in a way that protects the security of customers and their property
5	work in a way that protects the security of data relating to customers

Follow legislation and external regulation that relate to customer service

6	work in a way that is safe for your customers and your colleagues
7	treat customers equally
8	respect confidentiality relating to customers and the organisation
9	work in a way that shows you are aware of the areas of your job that are covered by legislation and the things you must not do
10	work in a way that shows you are aware of the main external regulations that apply to your job and the things you must not do

Unit 3:

Maintain a Positive and Customer-Friendly Attitude

Unit code: CFACSA1

SCQF level: 4

Credit points: 5

Unit summary

Your attitude and the way you behave towards customers affects customer satisfaction. Simply following procedures may not be enough to provide good customer service. Customers like to deal with organisations whose staff show that they are willing and keen. Customers like to know that you and your colleagues want to help. You can show this by being friendly and positive and giving them your full personal attention.

Unit assessment requirements

Assessment of candidates in a realistic working environment, including work experience and work placement, is permitted for this unit. Please refer to the Skills CFA Assessment Strategy in *Annexe A* for specific guidelines on assessment in a Realistic Working Environment.

Terminology

Attitude; behaviour; listening; customer satisfaction; friendly; positive; personal attention focus; work with others; communication; body language; culture; personality

Assessment outcomes and standards

To pass this unit, the candidate needs to demonstrate that they can meet all the assessment outcomes and standards for the unit. The standards outline the requirements the candidate is expected to meet to achieve the unit.

Knowledge and understanding	
1	signs that a customer gives when seeking attention
2	what rapport is and what it looks, sounds and feels like
3	what is important enough to interrupt your work with a customer
4	positive and negative body language and facial expressions
5	that people are different and have different expectations for many reasons such as their age, culture and personality

Performance criteria

Show the right attitude for customer service

1	Speak to customers clearly and put them at their ease
2	Recognise how customers are feeling and establish a rapport with them
3	Show customers that you are willing and enthusiastic at all times
4	Recognise that each customer is different and treat them as individuals
5	Show customers respect at all times and in all circumstances
6	Show customers that you can be relied on
7	Show colleagues respect at all times and in all circumstances
8	Show colleagues that you can be relied on

Show appropriate and positive behaviours to customers

9	Recognise and respond when a customer wants or needs attention
10	Greet customers politely and positively
11	Focus on your customers and ignore distractions
12	React appropriately to situations that are important enough to interrupt your work with your customer
13	Thank customers for the information they have given or for doing business with your organisation
14	Help colleagues to provide good customer service

Unit 4:

Behave in a Way that Gives a Good Customer Service Impression

Unit code: CFACSA2

SCQF level: 4

Credit points: 5

Unit summary

This unit is all about how your behaviour affects the way your customers see you. Some of your customers expect different things from the service you offer but there are basic acceptable standards of behaviour and attitudes that you need to achieve. Your managers and supervisors also expect you to meet those standards. When you create the right impression and show a positive attitude, you reduce the risk of somebody being upset or dissatisfied with the way you deal with them. This unit is appropriate for you if you have carried out jobs where you had limited contact with customers, you are experiencing customer service work for the first time or you are just starting your first job.

If you have already successfully carried out full- or part-time work dealing directly with customers, this may not be the right unit for you and you should consider instead the unit – *Maintain a Positive and Customer-friendly Attitude*.

Unit assessment requirements

Assessment of candidates in a realistic working environment, including work experience and work placement, is permitted for this unit. Please refer to the Skills CFA Assessment Strategy in *Annexe A* for specific guidelines on assessment in a Realistic Working Environment.

Terminology

Behaviour; impression formation; good customer service; problem solving; behaviours; customer service principles; customer service professional; work with others; customer service language; knowledge; understanding

Assessment outcomes and standards

To pass this unit, the candidate needs to demonstrate that they can meet all the assessment outcomes and standards for the unit. The standards outline the requirements the candidate is expected to meet to achieve the unit.

Knowledge and understanding	
1	how the way you dress affects the way that your customers react to the service you provide
2	why your customers may see particular types of dress as inappropriate and how your organisation expects you to dress
3	why it is important for customers to feel that you are working hard to give them an excellent service
4	why good timekeeping and making sure you are where you are expected to be is important to giving excellent customer service
5	what behaviour is considered by most customers to be "good manners" and what is to considered to be "bad manners" or rudeness
6	what the most appropriate ways of communicating with your customers are, e.g. face to face, by telephone, text, e-mail, in writing or other social media
7	what the benefits are of using your chosen communication methods
8	what customers and colleagues might consider to be unsuitable language and why it may offend people
9	why customers feel better about the service they receive if you show a willing and friendly attitude
10	how to behave so that you appear to be willing and friendly with customers without being over familiar
11	what you can do to cooperate with colleagues in giving customer service and why that might be helpful

Performance criteria

Look and act the part

- | | |
|---|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | dress for customer service work in the way your organisation expects |
| 2 | show you are working hard and making efforts to impress customers |
| 3 | be in the right place at the right time to give a good impression and deliver good customer service |
| 4 | show good manners when dealing with your customers |

Relate to your customers and colleagues effectively

- | | |
|---|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 5 | talk clearly to customers using words that they can understand |
| 6 | talk to customers without using language that they would consider to be unsuitable |
| 7 | show a willing and friendly attitude when dealing with your customers without being over familiar |
| 8 | help and support colleagues to give good service to customers |

Unit 5:

Do your Job in a Customer-Friendly Way

Unit code:

CFACSB1

SCQF level:

4

Credit points:

5

Unit summary

The customer service your organisation gives is affected by the way you do your job. Whatever job you are doing, customers expect you to do it properly. They also expect you to consider their wishes and feelings while you are doing it. Doing your job properly involves following procedures and doing the tasks in your job correctly as well as having the appropriate relationship with customers.

This unit covers how you do your job with your customer in mind in a way that your organisation and supervisors find acceptable. It will help you to understand the parts of your job that are most important to good customer service.

Unit assessment requirements

Assessment of candidates in a realistic working environment, including work experience and work placement, is permitted for this unit. Please refer to the Skills CFA Assessment Strategy in *Annexe A* for specific guidelines on assessment in a Realistic Working Environment.

Terminology

Follow procedures; relationships; friendly; delivery; impression; dress code; customer expectations; share information; service offer; customer service; communication; problem solving; behaviours; work with others; team working

Assessment outcomes and standards

To pass this unit, the candidate needs to demonstrate that they can meet all the assessment outcomes and standards for the unit. The standards outline the requirements the candidate is expected to meet to achieve the unit.

Knowledge and understanding	
1	your organisation's dress code
2	how to do the tasks that make up your job
3	how long parts of the job take to do and how this may affect your customers
4	how to do your own work in an organised way
5	what your customers expect of you and your work
6	the service offer that your organisation makes in your area of work and how that affects the way you do things
7	what you are allowed to do and not allowed to do for customers
8	how to do your job in a way that is healthy and safe for you, your customers and your colleagues

Performance criteria

1	make a good first impression
2	follow the dress code of your organisation and present the right personal image to your customers
3	do the tasks that make up your job correctly and in a way that shows you know what your customers expect and what your organisation offers
4	show consideration to customers when carrying out the tasks required in your job
5	respond willingly to routine requests and questions from customers and recognise when to pass a request on to an appropriate colleague
6	share information with customers about how delivery of the service or product is going
7	work flexibly to help individual customers without reducing the level of service you give to others
8	share information with colleagues when they need it to provide good customer service

Unit 6:

Deliver Reliable Customer Service

Unit code:

CFACSB2

SCQF level:

5

Credit points:

5

Unit summary

This unit is all about how you deliver consistent and reliable service to customers. As well as being good with people, you need to work with your organisation's service systems to meet or exceed customer expectations.

In your job there will be many examples of how you combine your approach and behaviour with your organisation's systems. You need to prepare for each transaction with a customer, deal with different types of customers in different circumstances and check that what you have done has met customer expectations. To meet this standard you have to deliver excellent customer service over and over again.

Unit assessment requirements

Assessment of candidates in a realistic working environment, including work experience and work placement, is permitted for this unit. Please refer to the Skills CFA Assessment Strategy in *Annexe A* for specific guidelines on assessment in a Realistic Working Environment.

Terminology

Reliability; delivery; service systems; customer expectations; efficiency; balance needs; customer service; communication; problem solving; behaviours; work with others; teamwork

Assessment outcomes and standards

To pass this unit, the candidate needs to demonstrate that they can meet all the assessment outcomes and standards for the unit. The standards outline the requirements the candidate is expected to meet to achieve the unit.

Knowledge and understanding	
1	your organisation's services or products
2	your organisation's procedures and systems for delivering customer service
3	methods or systems for measuring an organisation's effectiveness in delivering customer service
4	your organisation's procedures and systems for checking service delivery
5	your organisation's requirements for health and safety in your area of work

Performance criteria

Prepare to deal with your customers

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|---|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | keep your knowledge of your organisation's services or products up-to-date |
| 2 | ensure that the area you work in is tidy, safe and organised efficiently |
| 3 | prepare and arrange everything you need to deal with your customers before your shift or period of work commences |

Give consistent service to customers

- | | |
|---|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 4 | make realistic customer service promises to your customers |
| 5 | ensure that your promises balance the needs of your customers and your organisation |
| 6 | keep your promises to your customers |
| 7 | inform your customers if you cannot keep your promises due to unforeseen circumstances |
| 8 | recognise when your customers' needs or expectations have changed and adapt your service to meet their new requirements |
| 9 | keep your customers informed if delivery of the service needs to involve passing them on to another person or organisation |

Check customer service delivery

- | | |
|----|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 10 | check that the service you have given meets your customers' needs and expectations |
| 11 | identify when you could have given better service to your customers and how your service could have been improved |
| 12 | share information with colleagues and service partners to maintain and improve your standards of service delivery |

Unit 7:

Deliver Customer Service on your Customer's Premises

Unit code: CFACSB3

SCQF level: 5

Credit points: 5

Unit summary

Many organisations deliver a service to their customers on the customer's own premises. This requires sensitive handling as people are particularly protective about their personal space. In this situation there is always the potential to detract from excellent customer service by using inappropriate language or behaviour or even by causing accidental damage to your customer's property.

This unit is about the process of providing a service on customer premises while ensuring that the customer enjoys the customer service experience and has confidence that the work carried out has been completed successfully.

This unit is not simply about working in a different building. Your customer will feel real ownership of the premises and will be, therefore, somewhat protective about them. In particular, this unit is for you if your job takes you into your customers' homes.

Unit assessment requirements

Assessment of candidates in a realistic working environment, including work experience and work placement, is permitted for this unit. Please refer to the Skills CFA Assessment Strategy in *Annexe A* for specific guidelines on assessment in a Realistic Working Environment.

Terminology

Delivery; premises; homes; customer service; communication; problem solving; behaviours; work with others; team working

Assessment outcomes and standards

To pass this unit, the candidate needs to demonstrate that they can meet all the assessment outcomes and standards for the unit. The standards outline the requirements the candidate is expected to meet to achieve the unit.

Knowledge and understanding	
1	what you can do to establish a rapport with customers
2	the importance of sensitivity to people's feelings about their own premises and possessions
3	the regulatory and legal restrictions on what you can and cannot do in all aspects of your work
4	the insurance implications of working on your customer's premises
5	the organisational procedures to follow if you cause any accidental damage on your customer's premises

Performance criteria

Establish a rapport with your customer

1	prepare for a visit to your customer's premises and ensure they know when and why you will be there
2	identify yourself to your customer showing official identification whenever possible
3	show a positive and friendly approach to the service you are about to give
4	use language and behaviour that show respect for your customer
5	explain to your customer exactly what you are going to do and approximately how long you expect the work to take
6	listen to any concerns that your customer may have and reassure them
7	keep your customer informed of progress and about any cause for delay that might take place
8	keep your customer informed of any variation to the work that could involve additional time or cost
9	consult your customer when you have to do work that they had not expected

Performance criteria

Combine customer service with your other skills and expertise

10	show respect to your customer's premises and possessions by treating them with care
11	make sure your customer is aware of your specialist technical skills
12	take time to give your customer confidence in your knowledge and skills
13	consider the customer service implications of each action and inform your customer of what will be involved
14	inform your customer when you have finished and reinforce how the work has been handled professionally
15	check that your customer is satisfied with the work and listen carefully to any feedback
16	inform your customer of timescales if any follow up work is involved
17	ensure that timescales for follow up work are kept
18	keep your customer informed if timescales for follow up work are not going to be met
19	explain clearly to your customer why you cannot do work that is not specified in the service offer
20	ensure that your customer has the appropriate details to contact your organisation if they need to

Unit 8: Recognise Diversity when Delivering Customer Service

Unit code: CFACSB4

SCQF level: 5

Credit points: 5

Unit summary

Many customer service situations involve dealing with diverse groups of people inclusively and with respect. Responses to diversity can lead to discrimination that might or might not be deliberate. Discrimination can result from simply not knowing the beliefs and preferences of different groups or may result from actions based on stereotyping rather than on solid evidence obtained from your customer.

This unit is about how you establish your customer's expectations and needs in a way that takes full account of them as an individual. The unit also covers the way you provide customer service to diverse groups of customers, each of which has common likes and dislikes.

Unit assessment requirements

Assessment of candidates in a realistic working environment, including work experience and work placement, is permitted for this unit. Please refer to the Skills CFA Assessment Strategy in *Annexe A* for specific guidelines on assessment in a Realistic Working Environment.

Terminology

Diversity; recognition; discrimination; beliefs; preferences; stereotyping; customer expectations; individual; customer service; communication; problem solving; behaviours; work with others; teamwork

Assessment outcomes and standards

To pass this unit, the candidate needs to demonstrate that they can meet all the assessment outcomes and standards for the unit. The standards outline the requirements the candidate is expected to meet to achieve the unit.

Knowledge and understanding	
1	the importance of recognising diversity in relation to legal, regulatory, ethical and social requirements
2	reasons why consideration of diversity and inclusion issues affect customer service
3	organisational guidelines to make customer service inclusive for diverse groups of customers
4	how to observe and interpret non-verbal clues
5	how to listen actively for clues about your customer's expectations and needs
6	techniques for obtaining additional information from customers through tactful and respectful questions
7	behaviour that might cause offence to specific groups of people to whom you regularly provide customer service
8	how to impress specific groups of people to whom you regularly provide customer service

Performance criteria

Respect customers as individuals and promote equality in customer service

1	observe verbal and non-verbal clues that provide information about your customer's expectations and needs
2	identify and avoid features of stereotypes that might be applied to your customer and could carry the risk of causing offence
3	identify aspects of your customer's appearance or communication which risk leading you to treat them differently
4	consider aspects of your customer's appearance or communication in the light of your own beliefs about various groups of people that include your customer
5	question your customer to ensure that the impressions you are forming about their expectations and wishes are based on sound evidence
6	adjust your interpretation of your customer's expectations and wishes as a result of further evidence you have collected by talking to your customer

Adapt customer service to recognise the different needs and expectations of diverse groups of customers

7	follow organisational procedures and guidelines that seek to make customer service inclusive for diverse groups of customers
8	show respect for your customer's individual beliefs, expectations and needs that may result from their membership of a particular group
9	vary your approach to your customer to take account of their beliefs, expectations and needs that result from their membership of a particular group
10	work with colleagues to identify consistent approaches that team members should adopt when dealing with a particular group

Unit 9:

Deal with Customers across a Language Divide

Unit code:

CFACSB5

SCQF level:

5

Credit points:

8

Unit summary

Customer service is frequently delivered across a language divide. Customer service centres may be located in one country but deal mainly with another. In a multicultural society many customers may have a different first language from those who are delivering customer service. This language divide can present a challenge to those who deliver customer service.

This unit is about preparing to deliver customer service across a language divide and seeing through that delivery. The unit covers the steps that are needed to deal with customers with different language preferences without having full access to your customer's first language.

You should choose this unit if you frequently deal across a language divide. Do not choose this unit if you come across customers who do not share your first language only occasionally.

Unit assessment requirements

Assessment of candidates in a realistic working environment, including work experience and work placement, is permitted for this unit. Please refer to the Skills CFA Assessment Strategy in *Annexe A* for specific guidelines on assessment in a Realistic Working Environment.

Terminology

Meeting; greeting; conversation; language barrier; language; first language; language divide; words; phrases; tone; volume; customer service; communication; problem solving; behaviours; work with others; teamwork; venue; customer; communicate; visitor

Assessment outcomes and standards

To pass this unit, the candidate needs to demonstrate that they can meet all the assessment outcomes and standards for the unit. The standards outline the requirements the candidate is expected to meet to achieve the unit.

Knowledge and understanding	
1	which languages you are most likely to encounter among groups of your customers
2	how to greet, thank and say farewell to customers in their first languages
3	the importance of dealing with customers in their first language if possible
4	how to explain to a customer that you cannot hold an extended conversation in their first language
5	the importance of tone, pace and volume when dealing with customers across a language divide
6	possible sources of assistance to use when a language barrier demands additional language skills

Performance criteria

Prepare to deal with customers with a different first language

1	identify the language or languages other than your own that you are most likely to come across when dealing with customers
2	learn a greeting, an expression of thanks and a farewell phrase in the language you expect to encounter
3	identify a source of assistance with a language you expect to encounter when delivering customer service
4	agree with colleagues informal signing options that may be used for key aspects of your services or products when dealing with somebody with a different first language
5	log useful words and phrases to support your dealings with a customer with a different first language
6	learn an appropriate phrase to explain to your customer in their first language that you do not speak that language fluently

Deal with customers who speak a different first language from your own

7	identify your customer's first language and indicate to them that you are aware of this
8	establish the expectations of your customer regarding whether they expect to deal in your first language or theirs
9	speak clearly and slowly if using a language which is not the first language for either you or your customer
10	maintain a consistent tone and volume when dealing with somebody across a language divide
11	listen closely to your customer to identify any words they may be using in a way that differs from the way you would generally use the same words
12	check your understanding of specific words with your customer using questions for clarification
13	seek appropriate assistance from colleagues if you are unable to complete a customer transaction because of language barriers
14	reword a question or explanation if your customer clearly does not understand your original wording
15	use a few words of your customer's first language to create a rapport

Unit 10: Use Questioning Techniques when Delivering Customer Service

Unit code: CFACSB6

SCQF level: 5

Credit points: 4

Unit summary

This unit is about how you use questioning in planned sequences and in spontaneous conversation to paint a picture of what your customer wants and how your organisation can deliver it.

This unit is for you if you come into contact with your customer face to face, through voice technology or online with immediate interaction. This unit is probably not for you if you deal with customers remotely when it takes time to exchange questions and responses.

Unit assessment requirements

Assessment of candidates in a realistic working environment, including work experience and work placement, is permitted for this unit. Please refer to the Skills CFA Assessment Strategy in *Annexe A* for specific guidelines on assessment in a Realistic Working Environment.

Terminology

Questioning; delivery; conversation; rapport; closed questions; open questions; customer service; communication; problem solving; behaviours; work with others; teamwork

Assessment outcomes and standards

To pass this unit, the candidate needs to demonstrate that they can meet all the assessment outcomes and standards for the unit. The standards outline the requirements the candidate is expected to meet to achieve the unit.

Knowledge and understanding	
1	why establishing rapport makes it easier to draw information from customers
2	ways to greet customers that immediately build rapport
3	reasons for using planned question patterns to draw out particular information
4	reasons for using spontaneous conversation to draw out particular information
5	the importance of active listening when seeking detailed information from customers
6	the differences between and uses of closed and open questions
7	the importance of explaining to customers why information is needed
8	why particular trigger questions are effective in gaining specific information
9	how to question and respond effectively using a chosen channel of communication or social media platform

Performance criteria

Establish rapport and identify customer concerns

1	greet your customer sincerely and invite a full and open response
2	use planned or spontaneous lines to indicate to your customer that you empathise with their initial enquiry
3	invite more detailed explanation from your customer
4	listen closely to your customer's responses to strengthen your understanding of their concerns
5	use both open and closed questions to make appropriate connection with your customer and open the door to more detailed investigation
6	identify and note your customer's feelings and mood in relation to the information you are seeking

Seek detailed information from customers using questioning techniques

7	follow a planned trail of questions to explore in detail customer concerns you have already identified
8	hold a spontaneous conversation with your customer to explore in detail customer concerns you have already identified
9	explain to your customer why you need the information you are asking for
10	use probing and searching questions that draw on comments or words used by your customer
11	thank your customer for the information in a way that encourages further open responses
12	follow organisational procedures to record your customer responses to inform future actions

Unit 11: Deal with Customers Using Bespoke Software

Unit code: CFACSB7

SCQF level: 5

Credit points: 5

Unit summary

Customer service is often delivered using bespoke software when dealing with customers face to face, by telephone or online. For the process to be effective, you must be able to navigate the system quickly by directly following recommended routes and using all the functionality of the system. Customers are unaware of the details of the system you are using and they must be kept informed of the different steps you are taking. Your use of the system must also ensure that you keep appropriate records of the transaction so that it can proceed successfully through the next stages. Most of all, customer satisfaction must drive the interaction and it should not appear to be dominated by the demands of the software.

This unit is for you if you are responsible for delivering service to customers at the same time as operating bespoke service software. Do not choose this unit if you do not make regular use of a bespoke software system when dealing with customers.

Unit assessment requirements

Assessment of candidates in a realistic working environment, including work experience and work placement, is permitted for this unit. Please refer to the Skills CFA Assessment Strategy in *Annexe A* for specific guidelines on assessment in a Realistic Working Environment.

Terminology

Bespoke software; contact centres; telephone; online; functionality; customer service; communication; problem solving; behaviours; work with others; teamwork; giving information; receiving information; services; products; customer; communicate

Assessment outcomes and standards

To pass this unit, the candidate needs to demonstrate that they can meet all the assessment outcomes and standards for the unit. The standards outline the requirements the candidate is expected to meet to achieve the unit.

Knowledge and understanding	
1	access and sign-on routines for the bespoke software system
2	the architecture and geography of the bespoke software system
3	different screen or menu routes that can be followed to meet customer requirements
4	sources of support and help for the bespoke software including manuals, help screens and help lines
5	the importance of preparing a work area before delivering customer service
6	search or other enquiry facilities within the bespoke software system
7	the importance of avoiding jargon and system terminology when communicating with customers
8	ways to respond to error messages when using a bespoke software system
9	referral points and sources of information when you are unable to meet customer needs using the bespoke software system
10	links between the bespoke software system and open networks or social media platforms that may be appropriate for communication with your customers

Performance criteria

Prepare to deliver customer service using bespoke software

1	sign on and open access to appropriate functions in the IT system
2	navigate the architecture and geography of the customer service site to ensure you can access all appropriate areas
3	explore screen or menu routes that are most appropriate for the customer service you are seeking to deliver
4	ensure that you are familiar with the software manual, help screens or help lines to know where to locate technical support when needed
5	prepare your work area to deliver customer service using bespoke software

Deliver customer service using bespoke software

6	identify your customer or the services or products they wish to access
7	follow organisational procedures to step through the system in a way that responds to your customer's needs
8	use search or other specialist functions within the software to respond to customer requests
9	enter new records using the bespoke software system
10	amend customer service records in the bespoke software system
11	communicate with your customers in terms they can understand relating to the software system
12	follow organisational procedures to lead the conversation in a way that makes it easy to follow the paths and sequences of the bespoke software
13	interpret error messages and act on them to support your customer service
14	following organisational procedures, refer your customer to a colleague if you are unable to complete the transaction

Unit 12:

Maintain Customer Service through Effective Handover

Unit code:

CFACSB8

SCQF level:

5

Credit points:

4

Unit summary

Customer service delivery in a team involves many situations when you are unable to see actions through and you pass on responsibility to a colleague. This sharing of responsibility should be organised and follow a recognised pattern. Most of all you need to be sure that, when responsibility is passed on, the actions are seen through. This involves routinely checking with your colleagues that customer service actions have been completed.

This unit is for you if your job involves service delivery as part of a team and you regularly pass on responsibility for completion of a customer service action to a colleague.

Unit assessment requirements

Assessment of candidates in a realistic working environment, including work experience and work placement, is permitted for this unit. Please refer to the Skills CFA Assessment Strategy in *Annexe A* for specific guidelines on assessment in a Realistic Working Environment.

Terminology

Delivery; responsibility; colleagues; working together; customer service; communication; problem solving; behaviours; work with others; giving information; teamwork; receiving information; services; products

Assessment outcomes and standards

To pass this unit, the candidate needs to demonstrate that they can meet all the assessment outcomes and standards for the unit. The standards outline the requirements the candidate is expected to meet to achieve the unit.

Knowledge and understanding	
1	your organisation's customer service procedures for the services or products you are involved in delivering
2	the appropriate colleagues to pass responsibility to for completing particular customer service actions
3	ways of ensuring that information is passed between you and your colleagues effectively
4	organisational procedures and acceptable communication media and platforms for passing information to colleagues
5	ways to remind yourself of actions that need to be checked when you have passed on responsibility to a colleague
6	the importance of checking tactfully with a colleague whether they have completed the customer service actions you were expecting
7	opportunities for contributing to review the way customer service actions are shared in customer service processes

Performance criteria

Agree joint responsibilities in a customer service team

1	identify services or products you are involved in delivering that rely on effective teamwork
2	identify steps in the customer service delivery process that rely on exchange of information between you and your colleagues
3	agree with colleagues when it is right to pass responsibility for completing a customer service action to another
4	agree with colleagues how information should be exchanged between you to enable another to complete a customer service action
5	identify ways of reminding yourself when you have passed responsibility to a colleague for completing a customer service action

Check that customer service actions are seen through by working together with colleagues

6	access reminders to identify when to check that a customer service action has been completed
7	ensure that you are aware of all details of customer service actions your colleague was due to complete
8	ask your colleague about the outcome of their completing the customer service action as agreed
9	identify the next customer service actions if your colleague has been unable to complete the actions you had previously agreed
10	work with colleagues to review the way in which customer service actions are shared

Unit 13: Deliver Customer Service in an Environmentally Friendly and Sustainable Way

Unit code: CFACSB17

SCQF level: 5

Credit points: 3

Unit summary

Environmental awareness and positive action on sustainability form an important part of the culture and strategy in many organisations. Those organisations have devised policies to ensure that they gain the approval of customers and other stakeholders by promoting a sustainable approach to their services or products. An ethical approach to the environment can enhance the organisation's reputation. This approach is achieved only if those delivering the service follow guidelines and procedures in order to display personal and organisational commitment to the environment and sustainability. This unit addresses the balances that must be found when delivering customer service while meeting environmental standards.

The unit is appropriate for you if your organisation has a clear commitment to sustainability and if aspects of your job role make a direct contribution to that.

Unit assessment requirements

Assessment of candidates in a realistic working environment, including work experience and work placement, is permitted for this unit. Please refer to the Skills CFA Assessment Strategy in *Annexe A* for specific guidelines on assessment in a Realistic Working Environment.

Terminology

Customer service delivery; customer service behaviours and processes; environmental awareness; positive action on sustainability

Assessment outcomes and standards

To pass this unit, the candidate needs to demonstrate that they can meet all the assessment outcomes and standards for the unit. The standards outline the requirements the candidate is expected to meet to achieve the unit.

Knowledge and understanding	
1	principles of environmental practices and ongoing sustainability that are relevant to customer service operations
2	organisational policies that link environmental issues with customer service
3	principles of energy saving and reducing carbon emissions
4	principles of waste management relevant to your organisation
5	the environmental issues and risks represented by your organisation's services or products
6	your organisation's procedures for energy, carbon emission and waste management
7	how to keep customers informed about your organisation's environmental policies and procedures
8	how to work with service partners to promote environmental and sustainable benefits
9	organisational procedures for passing on ideas for environmental improvements
10	the importance of having appropriate authority for implementing changes in customer service procedures
11	the importance of recognising that environmental actions involve cost for your organisation

Performance criteria

Follow organisational policies and procedures to deliver customer service in an environmental and sustainable way

1	encourage customers to contribute to your organisation's environmental policies
2	keep customers informed about your organisation's environmentally friendly and sustainable policies
3	contribute to activities and actions to improve your organisation's environmentally friendly approach
4	follow your organisation's procedures to promote environmentally friendly and sustainable approaches when dealing with service partners
5	keep service partners informed about your organisation's environmentally friendly and sustainable policies

Contribute to the development of environmentally friendly and sustainable customer service procedures

6	identify opportunities for energy and carbon emission savings when following organisational customer service procedures
7	identify opportunities for waste management improvements when following organisational customer service procedures
8	follow organisational procedures to inform those with appropriate authority of opportunities to improve environmental aspects of customer service
9	work with colleagues to implement environmental improvements in customer service
10	communicate with customers about environmental improvements in customer service

Unit 14: Recognise and Deal with Customer Queries, Requests and Problems

Unit code: CFACSC1

SCQF level: 4

Credit points: 5

Unit summary

No matter how good you are at providing consistent and reliable customer service, some of your customers will from time to time expect more. They can signal this in various ways and when they do you must know how to handle it.

Sometimes, customers ask different questions and request special treatment. You may be able to help them yourself and you certainly need to know who to ask for help if necessary. Some customers may be dissatisfied with the service and may present a problem. Your job is to recognise that there is a problem and make sure that the appropriate person deals with it.

Unit assessment requirements

The use of simulation and assessment in a realistic working environment, including work experience and work placement, is permitted for this unit. Please refer to the Skills CFA Assessment Strategy in *Annexe A* for specific guidelines on assessment in a Realistic Working Environment and the assessment of simulated activities.

Terminology

Customer queries; customer requests; customer problems; recognition; customer expectations; dissatisfaction; customer service; communication; problem solving; behaviours; work with others; giving information; teamwork; receiving information

Assessment outcomes and standards

To pass this unit, the candidate needs to demonstrate that they can meet all the assessment outcomes and standards for the unit. The standards outline the requirements the candidate is expected to meet to achieve the unit.

Knowledge and understanding	
1	who in the organisation is able to give help and information
2	limits of what they are allowed to do
3	what professional behaviour is
4	how to speak to people who are dissatisfied
5	how to deal with difficult people
6	what customers normally expect
7	how to recognise a problem from what a customer says or does
8	what kinds of behaviours/actions would make situations worse
9	the organisational procedures you must follow when you deal with problems or complaints
10	understand the types of behaviour that may make a problem worse

Performance criteria

Recognise and deal with customer queries and requests

- | | |
|---|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | deal with queries and requests from customers in a positive and professional way |
| 2 | seek information or help from a colleague if you cannot answer your customer's query or request |
| 3 | obtain help from a colleague if you are not able to deal with your customer's request |
| 4 | always tell your customer what is happening |

Recognise and deal with customer problems

- | | |
|----|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 5 | recognise when something is a problem from the customer's point of view |
| 6 | do not say or do anything which may make the problem worse |
| 7 | deal with a difficult customer calmly and confidently |
| 8 | recognise when to pass on a problem to an appropriate colleague |
| 9 | pass the problem on to your colleague with the appropriate information |
| 10 | check that the customer knows what is happening |

Unit 15:

Take Details of Customer Service Problems

Unit code: CFACSC2

SCQF level: 4

Credit points: 4

Unit summary

However good the customer service of your organisation is, some problems will occur. You may not have the authority or experience to deal with the problem yourself so it is important to collect helpful information for those who will deal with it. You need to be able to identify that there is a problem, discover detailed information about that problem and pass on the information so that the problem can be tackled.

This unit is about how to collect information about a customer service problem, pass it to the right people in your organisation and keep your customer informed about what is being done.

Unit assessment requirements

The use of simulation and assessment in a realistic working environment, including work experience and work placement, is permitted for this unit. Please refer to the Skills CFA Assessment Strategy in *Annexe A* for specific guidelines on assessment in a Realistic Working Environment and the assessment of simulated activities.

Terminology

Handling problems; collect information; identify problems; customer service; communication; problem solving; behaviours; work with others; teamwork; giving information; receiving information services; products

Assessment outcomes and standards

To pass this unit, the candidate needs to demonstrate that they can meet all the assessment outcomes and standards for the unit. The standards outline the requirements the candidate is expected to meet to achieve the unit.

Knowledge and understanding	
1	customer expectations of your organisation's services or products that may cause problems if they are not met
2	how to respond to customers who raise problems in a way that they will find calm and helpful
3	reference codes or identifiers your organisation uses to identify customers
4	what questions can be used to gather information that will be most helpful in resolving a problem
5	details your organisation needs to resolve a problem
6	details your organisation uses to identify specific customer transactions
7	the appropriate colleagues to whom you should pass on details of problems
8	your organisation's preferences for the way in which you should pass on details of problems
9	how to collect details of customer service problems expressed through social media

Performance criteria

Respond to customers who raise a problem

- | | |
|---|---------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | recognise when your customer is raising a problem |
| 2 | respond to your customer calmly and helpfully |
| 3 | take details that will identify your customer |

Gather details from customers who raise a problem

- | | |
|---|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 4 | ask your customer questions to clarify what has or has not happened to cause a problem |
| 5 | check your understanding of what your customer sees as the problem |
| 6 | ask your customer questions to clarify their expectations about the service or product that is now causing a problem |
| 7 | note the details of what your customer tells you about the problem |
| 8 | confirm with your customer details of what they have told you about the problem |

Pass details of problems raised by customers to the colleague who can deal with them

- | | |
|----|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 9 | collect details of any sources of information which your organisation uses to identify a customer transaction that is now causing a problem |
| 10 | gather any other details that are relevant to resolving the problem from colleagues, customer service records or product specifications |
| 11 | tell your customer what you will do with the details of the problem so that action is taken |
| 12 | tell your customer what to expect without making customer service promises that may not be met |
| 13 | pass the details to a colleague who is able to deal with the problem |

Unit 16:

Monitor and Solve Customer Service Problems

Unit code:

CFACSC5

SCQF level:

6

Credit points:

6

Unit summary

Your job involves delivering and organising excellent customer service. However good the service provided, some of your customers will experience problems and you will spot and solve other problems before your customers even know about them. This unit is about the part of your job that involves solving immediate customer service problems. It is also about changing systems to avoid repeated customer service problems.

Remember that some customers judge the quality of your customer service by the way that you solve customer service problems. You can impress customers and build customer loyalty by sorting out those problems efficiently and effectively. Sometimes a customer service problem presents an opportunity to impress a customer in a way that would not have been possible if everything had gone smoothly.

Unit assessment requirements

Assessment of candidates in a realistic working environment, including work experience and work placement, is permitted for this unit. Please refer to the Skills CFA Assessment Strategy in *Annexe A* for specific guidelines on assessment in a Realistic Working Environment.

Terminology

Monitor problems; solve problems; customer service problems; customer loyalty; impress; customer service; communication; problem solving; behaviours; work with others; team working; giving information; receiving information services; products

Assessment outcomes and standards

To pass this unit, the candidate needs to demonstrate that they can meet all the assessment outcomes and standards for the unit. The standards outline the requirements the candidate is expected to meet to achieve the unit.

Knowledge and understanding	
1	organisational procedures and systems for dealing with customer service problems
2	organisational procedures and systems for identifying repeated customer service problems
3	how the successful resolution of customer service problems contributes to customer loyalty with the external customer and improved working relationships with service partners or internal customers
4	how to negotiate with and reassure customers while their problems are being solved
5	the opportunities and potential for monitoring and solving customer service problems presented by remote information collection and sharing, such as through social media

Performance criteria

Solve immediate customer service problems

1	respond positively to customer service problems following organisational guidelines
2	solve customer service problems when you have sufficient authority to do so
3	work with others to solve customer service problems
4	keep customers informed of the actions being taken
5	check with customers that they are comfortable with the actions being taken
6	solve problems with service systems and procedures that might affect customers before they become aware of them
7	inform managers and colleagues of the steps taken to solve specific problems

Identify repeated customer service problems and options for solving them

8	identify repeated customer service problems
9	identify the options for dealing with a repeated customer service problem and consider the advantages and disadvantages of each option
10	work with others to select the best option for solving a repeated customer service problem, balancing customer expectations with the needs of your organisation

Take action to avoid the repetition of customer service problems

11	obtain the approval of somebody with sufficient authority to change organisational guidelines in order to reduce the chance of a problem being repeated
12	action your agreed solution
13	keep your customers informed in a positive and clear manner of steps being taken to solve any service problems
14	monitor the changes you have made and adjust them if appropriate

Unit 17:

Apply Risk Assessment to Customer Service

Unit code: CFACSC6

SCQF level: 7

Credit points: 10

Unit summary

This unit is about how formal or informal risk assessment techniques can be used to reduce the number and range of risks involved in the provision of customer service. These may be financial, reputational or health and safety risks. Awareness alone is rarely enough, so customer service sometimes involves identifying and assessing individual risks so that they can be classified and prioritised. This, in turn, enables you to take actions to minimise risks.

Unit assessment requirements

Assessment of candidates in a realistic working environment, including work experience and work placement, is permitted for this unit. Please refer to the Skills CFA Assessment Strategy in *Annexe A* for specific guidelines on assessment in a Realistic Working Environment.

Terminology

Risk assessment; risks; health; safety; awareness; identifying; assessing; classifying; prioritising; minimise risks; customer service; communication; problem solving; behaviours; work with others; teamwork; giving information; receiving

Assessment outcomes and standards

To pass this unit, the candidate needs to demonstrate that they can meet all the assessment outcomes and standards for the unit. The standards outline the requirements the candidate is expected to meet to achieve the unit.

Knowledge and understanding	
1	your organisation's customer service process and the moments of truth (those points in the customer service process that have most impact on the customer experience)
2	risk assessment techniques
3	how to evaluate risk using the probability of occurrence and consequences of occurrence
4	the nature of potential customer service risks including financial, reputational and health and safety risks
5	cost/benefit analysis
6	SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) and PESTLE (Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Legal, Environmental) analysis

Performance criteria

Analyse customer service processes for risk

1	identify different steps and stages in the customer service process and the moments of truth that offer most opportunity to impress or to disappoint customers
2	identify the financial risks in each stage of the customer service process
3	identify the reputational risks in each stage of the customer service process
4	identify the health and safety risks in each stage of the customer service process
5	identify the risk of delivering sub-standard services or products in each stage of the customer service process
6	ensure that your customers are aware of any risks that might impact on them
7	develop staff awareness of the risks you have identified

Assess customer service risks and take appropriate actions

8	assess the probabilities of each risk that you have identified
9	assess the potential consequence of each risk in terms of finance, reputation and health and safety
10	classify each risk as high, medium or low, taking into account its probability and potential consequences
11	work with colleagues to identify any actions that might be taken to reduce risk
12	take appropriate actions to minimise the overall customer service risk profile by adapting procedures

Unit 18:

Process Customer Service Complaints

Unit code: CFACSC7

SCQF level: 7

Credit points: 6

Unit summary

This unit is about the process of handling complaints. In any customer service situation a customer who is not satisfied may resort to making a complaint. Complaints may be justified or unjustified but in either case your customer expects you to respond and to offer some resolution or compensation. Complaints require investigation and the different options for their resolution to be considered. Your organisation may have detailed and formal procedures for dealing with complaints.

Unit assessment requirements

Assessment of candidates in a realistic working environment, including work experience and work placement, is permitted for this unit. Please refer to the Skills CFA Assessment Strategy in *Annexe A* for specific guidelines on assessment in a Realistic Working Environment.

Terminology

Complaints; problems; procedures; resolution; compensation; customer service; communication; problem solving; behaviours; work with others; teamwork; giving information; receiving information; services; products

Assessment outcomes and standards

To pass this unit, the candidate needs to demonstrate that they can meet all the assessment outcomes and standards for the unit. The standards outline the requirements the candidate is expected to meet to achieve the unit.

Knowledge and understanding	
1	how to monitor the level of complaints and identify those that should provoke a special review of the service offer and service delivery
2	why dealing with complaints is an inevitable part of delivering customer service
3	organisational procedures for dealing with complaints
4	how to negotiate a solution with your customer that is acceptable to that customer and to the organisation
5	the regulatory definition of a complaint in your sector and the regulatory requirements of how complaints should be handled and reported
6	when to escalate a complaint by involving more senior members of the organisation or an independent third party
7	the cost and regulatory implications of admitting liability for an error made by your organisation
8	how to spot and interpret signals that your customer may be considering making a complaint
9	techniques for handling conflict
10	the importance of dealing with a complaint promptly
11	why the offer of compensation or replacement service or products may not always be the best options for resolving a complaint
12	how the successful handling of a complaint presents an opportunity to impress a customer who has been dissatisfied
13	the most effective forms of response when complaints are submitted through different channels such as social media

Performance criteria

Recognise the signs that a query or problem is about to produce a complaint

1	identify signs that a customer is becoming dissatisfied with the customer service of your organisation
2	take action to change the situation so that the query or problem does not result in a complaint
3	take actions to change your customer service approach in order to avoid future complaints when a justified complaint has been made

Deal with a complaint effectively

4	ensure that you have a clear understanding of the nature and details of the complaint
5	investigate the facts of the complaint in order to establish whether it should be dealt with as a justified complaint or an unjustified complaint
6	identify all the possible options for a solution and consider the benefits and drawbacks of each option for your customer and for your organisation
7	assess the risks to your organisation of choosing each option
8	report the findings of your investigation to your customer and offer your chosen solution
9	escalate the complaint by involving more senior members of your organisation or an independent third party if there is sufficient reason to do so
10	give feedback to other colleagues involved which will help them avoid future complaints
11	keep clear records of the way the complaint has been handled to avoid later misunderstandings

13 Further information and useful publications

To get in touch with us, visit our 'Contact us' page:

- 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)
- *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 SVQ/Competence-based qualifications are available on our website, qualifications.pearson.com

Our publications catalogue lists all the material available to support our qualifications. To access the catalogue and order publications, go to the resources page on our website, qualifications.pearson.com

14 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, qualifications.pearson.com

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 candidate-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: qualifications.pearson.com. 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

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

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, 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 on our website, qualifications.pearson.com

15 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.



Skills CFA
Assessment Strategy
Competence Units (S/NVQ)

Business Administration
Customer Service SVQs
Management and Leadership

April 2015

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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, EQAs and IQAs

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:

- 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;

AND ONE OF EITHER OF THE FOLLOWING

- 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;

OR

- be working toward an appropriate qualification, as specified by the appropriate regulatory authority. Any 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; **AND** 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.

EQAs must:

- be “occupationally competent”. EQAs must demonstrate sufficient and current understanding of the qualifications to be verified, and know how they are applied in business;

AND ONE OF EITHER OF THE FOLLOWING

- 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;

OR

- 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 EQA² and should be supported by a qualified EQA throughout their training period; **AND** 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.

¹ Also known as External Verifier (EV)

² The need for countersigning the decisions of EQAs working towards a qualification applies to England and Wales and Scotland

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:

- 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;

AND ONE OF EITHER OF THE FOLLOWING

- 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;

OR

- 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 IQA⁴ and should be supported by a qualified IQA throughout their training period; **AND** 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 require 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.

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 Scotland

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 (QCF) 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 QCF units listed in *Appendix B*.
- Where simulation is used for QCF 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). An 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 *Appendix A*.
- Simulation can also be used for SVQs. However, where simulation is used for SVQ units, it should only be for small parts of the units (at any level), in exceptional circumstances only, and undertaken in RWE.

5 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:**

- have staff who have achieved, or be working towards achieving, appropriate regulatory body approved unit qualifications for assessment, moderation or verification;

OR

- seek guidance and approval from an awarding organisation to demonstrate that they have:
 - appropriate processes in place to facilitate assessment, moderation or verification functions
 - carry 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:**

- offer this model to employers only
- 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 an RWE operate in an environment that 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 an 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 QCF units

Simulation can be applied to the following competence units only.

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

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