

# Questions and Answers

## Transitioning to the new Customer Service Practitioner Apprenticeship Standards

15 March 2017

### 1. How do we quality assess the new standards?

*As an independent end-point assessment organisation, we are required to have a quality assurance process that follows the requirements of the assessment plan. As a training provider/employer you have no set quality assurance requirements but we advise you to have a quality assurance process to ensure consistency in the training and delivery of the programme to meet the customer service practitioner standard.*

### 2. What happens if a learner fails the end-point assessment, is there another charge?

*Yes there is a separate charge for end-point assessment so resits have to be paid for. The price varies with the standard as some standards require all components of the end-point assessment to be retaken others allow individual components. Prices for resits can be found on Walled Garden from May 2017. We recommend you agree with employers who will pick up the cost of resits and confirm this in your written agreement. Also refer to the latest guidance from the SFA relating to the 20% funding cap and how resits can be covered by this fee.*

### 3. Can you book the end-point assessment for after the 12 months before due to the 90-day requirement? Does this mean apprentices will be on for 15/16 months including the end-point assessment?

*The funding and performance management rules state, "The end-point assessment can only be taken after the minimum duration has been completed. You must ensure that the entire duration of the apprenticeship standard for both training and end-point assessment is recorded on the ILR as a minimum of 372 days to be eligible for funding." City & Guilds is working to reduce the 12-week reservation window. There is nothing to stop providers looking to reserve an end-point assessment after 9 months of the journey for 3 months' time – as long as it meets the requirements above.*

### 4. Have you done a webinar for retail as yet?

*We aim to run webinars for each of the new standards we offer – and we usually make the recordings, presentations and Q&A's available afterwards. Make sure you're signed up for our [customer alerts](#) or visit our [events page](#). The retail event hasn't been scheduled yet.*

### 5. Who is the 'customer' in the end-point assessment pack?

*The customer is a SFA contract holder and deliverer of the apprenticeship on the register of apprenticeship training providers (RoATP).*

**6. What happens if the learner leaves the employer when nearly completed?**

*As in all SFA guidance this will affect the provider's achievement rates. If a learner leaves employment before completing their end-point assessment then it may be possible for them to still complete the end-point assessment if they have met all the prerequisites of the gateway.*

**7. Is SmartScreen included in the end-point assessment cost or is this an additional cost?**

*No, there is an additional subscription cost as some centres have already purchased SmartScreen. Prices will be available on Walled Garden from May 2017.*

**8. Will Business Administration be in the same format as Customer Service with a task manual?**

*We intend to publish a task manual for the Business Administrator standards but will set the format once the assessment plan is finalised by the trailblazer group to ensure it meets the requirements.*

**9. Can recognition of prior learning be used still?**

*Recognition of prior learning can't be used as evidence for end-point assessment. Some standards, such as customer service, require learners to produce showcase evidence based on them gathering evidence from their on-programme journey. This is reviewed as part of the end-point assessment but is still not recognition of prior learning as such.*

**10. Can you clarify - is the fee per learner?**

*All published fees for end-point assessment are per learner.*

**11. Is there going to be a Business Administration Level 2 apprenticeship?**

*There is no Level 2 Business Administration apprenticeship standard in development. However, we believe that there has been a trailblazer expression of interest submitted to Department for Education / BIS.*

**12. Is the mapping guide only available in the Walled Garden once you have approval to deliver the Customer Service Standard?**

*The mapping document is available to all centres that are currently approved and delivering the existing City & Guilds Diploma in Customer Service (5530). This will also be available if you apply for approval/set-up for the new Customer Service Practitioner apprenticeship standards.*

**13. Where will the end-point assessment centres be?**

*For the Customer Service standard end-point assessment will be held at employer's premises – as this is a requirement of the assessment plan. It will vary with other standards so it is important to review all standards and the assessment plans you intend to deliver. For other standards it is important to check the assessment plan as it may vary from standard to standard.*

**14. Is there a refund or part refund on the fee if the learner leaves the programme before taking the end-point assessment?**

*City & Guilds charges a small registration fee upfront for each apprenticeship standard. We then ask for the learners to make a request an end-point assessment 12 weeks in advance. This will allow us to meet the expected demand for end-point assessment and to ensure maximum efficiency. If a learner leaves the programme before the 12 weeks no additional fee will be paid – within the 12 weeks we will apply a sliding scale of refunds/charges.*

**15. If you have to choose a month 90 days before, how will we know if the learner will be ready to take the end-point assessment?**

*It's the responsibility of providers and employers to ensure that the learner has satisfied all pre-checks and balances within the standard and is at gateway.*

**16. Will all end-point assessments be delivered face-to-face? Or on an individual basis and would we be expected to have a group of learners ready at the same time?**

*For the Customer Service Practitioner standard end-point assessment will be individual and observation will be face-to-face. We encourage providers to book groups for assessment to process apprentices effectively and for ease of their administration and set up. There will be no group assessment although a group of, for example, three learners can be available on the day for individual assessment. Given part of the end assessment takes place at the employers premises it may not be possible to assess multiple learners on the same day.*

**17. Will there be any additional charges for the task and end-point assessment packs?**

*No – the registration fee published on the Walled Garden for the Customer Service Practitioner Apprenticeship Standards includes access to all the assessment-related tasks and assessment packs for end-point assessment.*

**18. Could you explain more on the '20% of the job training', is it relevant for this qualification?**

*It is relevant for all apprenticeship standards and there is not a mandatory qualification in this standard. See SFA funding guidance for clarity.*

**19. Can the showcase be paper based if the employer wants this method?**

*The Apprentice Showcase can be paper based, however we will require it to be provided to us in an electronic format ie PDF to save customers incurring postage costs.*

**20. If we do not go down the qualification route and deliver learning rather than the mapped QCF, what support will we get from City & Guilds? Will there be an equivalent to the EQA available to support?**

*Once you register for the Customer Service Practitioner Standards on the Walled Garden you will be able to access the task manual and end-point assessment pack. If you do not deliver the accredited*

qualification there will be no requirement to have an EQA visit. However, we can provide consultancy support which is an additional service and cost. City & Guilds will also continue to provide support through its team of dedicated technical advisors.

## **21. Are City & Guilds looking for end-point assessment approvals for new Team Leader/Supervisor, or Operations Management?**

*ILM (as a business unit within City and Guilds London Institute) is approved to offer end-point assessment for both the Team Leader/Supervisor and Operations/Departmental Manager standards. Please contact ILM for further details.*

## **22. What is a showcase? What will this look like?**

*In our end-point assessment pack for centres/employers and candidates, we will provide further guidance on the Showcase and the evidence we expect it to contain. However, the assessment plan outlines it as follows:*

### *Apprentice Showcase*

*The apprentice showcase is compiled after 12 months of on-programme learning. The showcase enables apprentices to reflect and present examples of their development over the whole on-programme period. With guidance from the employer and/or training provider the apprentice will select appropriate evidence from the on programme portfolio to demonstrate the minimum requirements of the standard at the final stage of the programme as an 'Apprentice Showcase'. This will attest to professional competence at the level. The apprentice showcase will be reviewed and assessed by the independent assessor. The evidence contained in the apprentice showcase will be assessed against the following areas of the standard as highlighted in Appendix A:*

- *Understanding the organisation*
- *Meeting regulations and legislation*
- *Systems and resources*
- *Product and service knowledge*
- *Influencing skills*
- *Personal organisation*
- *Dealing with customer conflict and challenge*
- *Developing self*
- *Being open to feedback*
- *Team working*

*Employers within the sector have strongly expressed that end-point assessment methods should be flexible, and where possible delivered virtually due to the impact of demand fluctuation on the quality of customer service within the sector. The apprentice showcase, as agreed by the employer and apprentice with the assessment organisation, can therefore be assessed face to face or remotely. It can be showcased by the learner through the delivery of a presentation or by a virtual form of assessment such as submission of a report, storyboard, journal etc. to the assessment organisation.*

*The apprentice showcase will be assessed against an externally set brief, written by the assessment organisation, working with Employers and other stakeholders, as appropriate, to ensure consistency. It is expected that the externally set brief will include elements such as work-based evidence, including*

*customer feedback, recordings, manager statements, and witness statements. It will also include evidence from others, such as mid- and end-of-year performance reviews, and feedback. It is important to acknowledge that the employer and training provider will work together throughout the on-programme learning, ensuring all learning is consistently applied throughout the apprenticeship and not just at the end-point assessment or in the Apprentice Showcase. The apprentice will then present to the independent assessor to provide an opportunity for them to interview the apprentice and delve deeper in to the learning and experience. This is to ensure rigor, competence and independence.*

**23. Can other e-portfolios (not learning assistant) be used for the showcase?**

*Apprentices can collate their showcase within any e-portfolio. However, City & Guilds will require the showcase evidence to be provided to us for assessment. It is important that any providers using other systems check that this functionality is available.*

**24. Will Business Administration Level 3 have a showcase?**

*We are still waiting for the assessment plan to be published for the Business Administrator – so we can't answer this until the assessment plan has been approved. We will update once this has been approved ready for delivery. Please ensure that you have registered for the City & Guilds [email updates](#).*

**25. Will the observation be in person or remote?**

*The observation for Customer Service Practitioner will be in person.*

**26. Does the apprentice need to have a qualification in maths/English as part of the apprenticeship?**

*The Customer Service Practitioner Standard entry requirements state:*

*Apprentices will be required to have or achieve Level 1 English and Maths and to have taken Level 2 English and Maths tests prior to the end-point assessment Gateway.*

**27. Is this the end of the IQA and ultimately EQA visits?**

*No – the changes only apply currently to apprenticeships. As the on-programme does not mandate a qualification as such there is no IQA or EQA activity required by City & Guilds. However, in standards which do mandate a qualification there will be requirements for IQA and EQA. However, we would recommend all providers still carry out some form of internal quality assurance to ensure that learners are ready to be assessed for end-point assessment and have every chance of succeeding.*

**28. Will a candidate need to register at the beginning of the qualification or when they are ready for end-point assessment?**

*Yes – we will require learners to be registered with City & Guilds. This will allow us to provide access to any on programme support materials and to help plan for future demand and ensure we can fulfil our service. But please note, there is no qualification involved as this is not a mandatory requirement. However, City & Guilds is currently developing a new Customer Service Practitioner qualifications which*

*will require a separate registration and fee – we recommend that providers discuss with their employers whether they would see value in this.*

**29. What qualification will the staff need for delivery? Assessor qualifications or teaching qualifications, and if teaching at what level?**

*The assessment plan clearly states the requirements for end-point assessors. It makes no stipulation for the training provider or employer staff. It would obviously be expected they have occupational expertise and assessment or training or mentoring experience and/or qualifications would be advantageous.*

**30. Will the £580 be subject to VAT or is it exempt?**

*No VAT is charged on City & Guilds end-point assessment.*

**31. What is the role of the IQA in the new apprenticeships if there is no formal qualification in the framework?**

*Although, there is no formal qualification requirement we would highly recommend providers would still have an IQA role as part of their internal quality assurance process and procedures.*

**32. Will the new qualifications be added to the standard so it can be paid for from funding as per new SFA rules?**

*The Trailblazer group decided that a qualification was not mandatory for this standard. We would suggest that all providers continue to check under SFA guidance around what can be funded.*

**33. Will the current TAQA and IQA qualifications continue as stand alone?**

*TAQA and IQA qualifications are still valid as stand-alone qualifications but may not be required for all standards.*

**34. I am attending as EQA in NI so funding in apprenticeships etc. differ, however I want to know about what is happening in GB as it inevitably will have some implications for NI.**

*Historically, it has been possible to deliver component parts of apprenticeship frameworks into England, Wales, and Northern Ireland. The new apprenticeship standards only currently apply to England so for providers working across nations it is important to review the emerging apprenticeship policy in the nations.*

**35. Do you anticipate that changes may be required with the introduction of the Institute of Apprenticeships?**

*We are working closely with the Institute of Apprenticeships (which is still in its infancy) to support and review the implementation of the reforms. City & Guilds has led the way over the past couple of years with support around the reforms and we expect this to continue and is a key benefit of continuing to work with us. We will keep our centres informed of any changes at a policy level but also related to individual standards.*

*The Institute of Apprenticeships will be undertaking reviews of the new apprenticeship standards but this activity is not anticipated to begin this year. No changes are expected in the short/medium term.*

**36. How long will the current Customer Service Standards be available for?**

*It is likely that the standards will have a shelf-life of three years – we will expect the trailblazer group/Institute of Apprenticeships to review all standards on a three year rolling basis.*

**37. Do you know the cost of end-point assessment yet?**

*The cost of end-point assessment varies with each standard- this is because the cost is closely linked to the assessment plan and the costs associated with it. It is very difficult for City & Guilds to price its service until the final assessment plan has been signed off and published. These will be available on the Walled Garden and via your business manager or dedicated contact.*

**38. What will your 'reasonable adjustment' policy be for learners with ASN ALN?**

*It will follow our normal process (ie JCQ, but with a City & Guilds online application system). However, there's an extra stage at the end for end-point assessment, where the arrangements for the individual assessments are put in place. This will be built into the booking process. All access arrangements for the end-point assessment, should reflect the candidate's normal way of working while on-programme. For end-point assessment, we are currently expecting centres to provide people in some cases, eg sign language interpreters. This is something we'll need to review after the first year.*

**39. How can I access the mappings from the current Standards?**

*The mapping document is available to all centres that are currently approved and delivering the existing City & Guilds, Diploma in Customer Service (5530). This will also be available to access if you apply for approval for the new Customer Service Practitioner Apprenticeship Standards. Password is available on Walled Garden.*

**40. If an employer uses City & Guilds as end-point assessment, is the expectation that they will do a qualification? I.e. City & Guilds resources be focused on the qualification, or will the resources be able to be used without doing a qualification?**

*The resources will be focused on the standards rather than the qualification.*

**41. When will you be notifying any person who has applied for end-point assessment if they have been successful?**

*It is our intention to provide informal feedback on the day of the end-point assessment as to whether learners have passed their end-point assessment. This may not always be possible depending upon the standards and the component parts (eg some end-point assessments require an online test and results may not have been processed on the same day).*

**42. Will learning assistant be updated to reflect building a portfolio for the showcase. Will the showcase with C&G be an e-portfolio or alternatives?**

*Learning Assistant has already been updated to support the showcase requirements, and the building of the portfolio will meet the requirements of City & Guilds.*

**43. How many times can a learner take an end-point assessment?**

*Unless stated in the standard a learner can take end-point assessment as many times as they see fit.*

**44. Can this qualification be taken by employees who have been in post for some time?**

*Yes, if they meet the SFA eligibility criteria – please refer to SFA for further guidance.*

**45. Can a current centre have access to the Independent Assessor Pack, as a guide?**

*The end-point assessment packs, both for centres/employers, will be available in early May 2017.*

**46. If we don't deliver the qualification, do the tutors need to have occupational expertise?**

*It would be expected that tutors have occupational expertise. Staff will also be required to act as mentors and so be able to work with the employers and learners. They will expect your staff to have occupational expertise.*

**47. How long does registration last for? It sounds like it needs to be done straight away to get the pack, but end-point assessment cannot take place for 12 months?**

*Typically registration is valid for 36 months – from the date it is made or until the last certification date (whichever is earlier).*

**48. How much is registration?**

*Customers registering for the Customer Service Practitioner Standards will pay a fee of £100 on registration and will then pay the balance when they make their end-point assessment reservation request. These fees include the task manual, end-point assessment guidance documentation, mapping to the existing qualification.*

**49. Are City & Guilds going to be an end-point assessment organisation for the standard?**

*Yes we already are on the register – RoAAO – for the Customer Service Practitioner Standards and around twenty other standards.*

**50. Will there be new SmartScreen resources; at present we are spending time mapping the old resources?**

*We will be developing new resources which will support the new qualification and the Customer Service Practitioner Standards.*

**51. How much does it cost for SmartScreen?**

*The cost for the new SmartScreen support materials is £350 – irrelevant of learner numbers.*

**52. How long does the registration last for?**

*Typically registration is valid for 36 months – from the date it is made or until the last certification date (whichever is earlier).*

**53. Is the role of the end-point assessment assessor freelance?**

*We will recruit assessors in a variety of ways based upon a number of factors such as standard requirements, predicted volume of learners etc. This will be reviewed regularly. We welcome applications from consultants – please visit [cityandguilds.com/apprenticeships](http://cityandguilds.com/apprenticeships) to apply.*

**54. What happens if a learner fails part of the end-point assessment?**

*Within the Customer Service Practitioner standard it allows the learner to re-sit the component that they have failed. Other standards may require the learner to re-sit all components again.*

**55. We are a current provider with you and will most likely use you as our end-point assessment, do I need approval to deliver the new standard?**

*Yes, you will need approval/set-up for the standards that you would like to deliver.*

**56. How much notice do we have to give you when booking the end-point assessment?**

*Reservations for booking end-point assessment must be completed 90 days in advance.*

**57. When will the end-point assessment pack be available?**

*The end-point assessment packs will be available in May 2017.*

**58. How many times can a learner re-sit, should they fail the observation or professional discussion?**

*Unless stated in the standard a learner can take end-point assessment as many times as they see fit. However, it is important that the resit fees are agreed in advance with the employer – as stated in the earlier question.*

**59. The Level 2 standards state that they have to achieve Level 1 in Maths and English, and take the Level 2 test by the end of the programme. What does that mean if they don't pass? What if they took a Level 2 test prior to the apprenticeship, ie at school but failed?**

*We are currently seeking some further clarification from the SFA on this question – we will update the answer when we have a suitable response from them.*

**60. What is the charge for any element of resit?**

*Each component has a separate resit charge which will be available on the Walled Garden from May 2017.*

**61. We use OneFile, not Learning Assistant. Does that disadvantage us?**

*The choice of e-portfolio is up to the provider, and no provider will be disadvantaged as long as the requirements of the standards are met. However, it is important that your e-portfolio provider can provide required evidence to your chosen end point assessment organisation.*

**62. Will organisations with the customer services qualification be able to access the new qualifications without having to re-apply for additional courses?**

*We will offer a fast track application process for the new qualification if you currently deliver the existing Diploma in Customer Service (5530) qualification.*

**63. Does the training provider 'mentor' need to be assessor or teacher qualified?**

*There is no requirement in the customer service assessment plan that the mentor be qualified. The assessment plan makes no stipulation for the training provider or employer staff. It would obviously be expected they have occupational expertise and assessment or training or mentoring experience and/or qualifications would be advantageous. Please note, that this may vary from standard to standard.*

**64. Where on Walled Garden are the mappings?**

*The mapping document is available within the Level 2 Diploma in Customer Service documents section of the website. The password is available on Walled Garden.*

**65. If the employer is to identify when an apprentice is ready for the gateway, how can you insist on a 90 day pre-registration. What if they are not ready?**

*The day registration is in place as it allows City & Guilds to have an indication of future demand for its end-point assessment services. If the standard is minimum 12 months duration then we would expect after 9 months for the provider to have a good idea if they are likely to be ready for assessment in a further 3 months' time. If learners are not ready there will be other windows available monthly, we plan to be as flexible as possible.*

**66. Are there any stipulations as per how much contact a learner requires?**

*Guidance is available from the SFA in Apprenticeship Funding: rules and guidance for employers, version 1 released in February 2017.*

**67. Are observations and guided discussions still counted towards evidence; especially in organisations that have strict confidentiality rules e.g. hospitals, surgeries?**

*There will then be an expectation that as much as possible is presented. There will obviously be evidence that cannot be presented and there will therefore be a requirement on witness testimony and/or the learner having recorded discussions with a manager.*

**68. Is there a period before a re-sit can be taken after failure of end-point assessment?**

*Some standards indicate this in the assessment plan. For the customer service standard there is no defined period so we would recommend that the provider and employer will need to ensure they have satisfied themselves that the learner is at the agreed gateway and is confident the learner is suitably prepared to achieve end-point assessment next time around.*

**69. Do we have to register the learner to obtain the task manual? Or can this just be purchased?**

*Yes you will need to register to access the task manual as this is part of the on programme and end-point assessment package.*

**70. Will there be an additional cost for the qualification approval and what will registration and certification costs be?**

*The price of the new customer service qualification is still to be confirmed. The price for the existing Level 2 Diploma in Customer Service can be obtained via the Walled Garden. If you do not currently deliver the City & Guilds Diploma in Customer Service you would need to apply for qualification approval (QAP).*

**71. If you use our tutors for end-point assessment how is their practice monitored/standardised?**

*We will be recruiting end-point assessors from a variety of sources. All end-point assessors used will be fully trained and briefed by City & Guilds. Assessors practice will be monitored and standardised in a variety of ways and standardisation events will take place to ensure best practice is upheld within our offer.*