

Level 1 Introductory Certificate in Customer Service Qualification Specification

Summary

This qualification aims to develop the learner's knowledge of the key areas that are required to promote and support good customer service. It can also contribute to the development of key skills in communication, working with others, and problem solving.

Learning Outcomes

To be successful in this qualification a learner must have the knowledge to be able to:

- Demonstrate an understanding of the importance of the provision of good customer service in all sectors.
- Identify customer and organisational needs and expectations in respect of service levels delivered in all businesses.
- Describe the differences between strong and weak customer care, particularly relating to a professional image, communication skills and complaint handling.
- Recognise how to present a professional image and identify techniques for communicating positively and effectively with customers, including verbal and non-verbal communications.
- Identify the techniques used to handle customer complaints appropriately.

Expectation of Successful Learners

The qualification is a knowledge-based qualification. Successful learners will have knowledge of the basic principles of customer service within industry. The qualification does not develop or assess actual competence in delivering customer service.

Successful learners will need to practice real-life situations in context under close supervision in the workplace. There should be no assumption of actual competence on completion of this qualification.

A statement from City & Guilds has been added into the learner pack for the qualification to ensure that it is clear what the learners can expect from the qualification.

Content

Section One - Introduction to Customer Service

At the end of this section learners should be able to:

- Describe customer service
- Explain why it is important to the success of every organisation
- Identify who their customers are
- Identify the draw backs of poor customer service
- Explain how to promote good service
- Demonstrate an understanding of customer service needs and expectations.

Indicative Content:

- 1.1 Outline knowledge of basic principles - maintaining good customer service at all times; treating all customers with respect; identifying and meeting customer needs; providing the service expected by the company.
- 1.2 Understanding why customer service is important to the company and to you – it helps to make the organisation successful, generates repeat business, assists profit and growth.
- 1.3 Identifying external and internal customers and their importance to the organisation.
- 1.4 Appreciate the draw backs of not serving internal and external customers effectively, e.g. poor reputation, loss of business, loss of profit, loss of jobs.
- 1.5 Overview of your own role in customer service including own and company's image, meeting legal obligations, practising good communication skills, solving problems appropriately.
- 1.6 Identifying typical customer needs and expectations and good practice in meeting these in a variety of situations.
- 1.7 Gaining insight into employer and employee responsibilities in relation to achieving a safe and healthy environment for customers, including an understanding of the local and national legislation relating to Health and Safety.

Section Two - Effective Communication**Aims****At the end of this section learners should be able to:**

- Demonstrate some understanding of the importance of developing effective communication.
- Describe the effects of ineffective or inappropriate communication.
- Start to apply a range of verbal and non-verbal communication and telephone techniques.

Indicative Content:

- 2.1 Consider the impact upon the customer and the organisation of effective and ineffective communications – i.e. confusion and misunderstanding, annoyed and unhappy customers, loss of business, loss of profit.
- 2.2 Explain the importance of listening to customers and how to demonstrate to customers that you are taking notice of what they say.
- 2.3 Provide an overview of the use of some non-verbal techniques such as use of eye movements, gestures including the use of body, face and hands, facial expressions, physical evidence i.e. appearance.
- 2.4 Show an awareness of your tone of voice and expression when dealing with customers. For example, how to use the tone of your voice to the best advantage – avoiding using raised voices, harsh tones and high pitched voice.
- 2.5 Provide an insight into how to use verbal and non-verbal communications whilst on the telephone.

Section Three - Presenting a Positive Professional Image

Aims:

At the end of this section learners should be able to:

- Explain the importance of 'first impressions'.
- Explain the importance of presenting a positive attitude and professional image.
- Identify some of the appropriate verbal and non-verbal communication methods to be used in different customer situations.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the need for personal space.

Indicative Content:

- 3.1 Explain the importance of portraying a 'positive and professional' image in the context of customer service - the impact of the way we speak, dress and deal with people.
- 3.2 Explain why it is necessary to deal with customers promptly and politely and how in doing so it helps the perception of good customer service.
- 3.3 Demonstrate an awareness of the importance of and use of verbal and non-verbal communications in developing a positive and professional image to instil confidence in the customer.
- 3.4 Explain the importance of allowing customers personal space whilst serving them - the negative effect of overpowering the customer.

Section Four - Handling Customer Complaints

Aims

At the end of this section learners should be able to:

- Explain why customers complain.
- Appreciate the benefits of receiving customer complaints.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the techniques involved in handling difficult customer situations.
- Explain ways of handling complaints positively.

Indicative Content:

- 4.1 Identify a broad range of reasons why customers complain e.g. faulty goods, poor levels of service, time delays, rudeness, service not meeting expectations.
- 4.2 Demonstrate the importance of listening to the complaint and not making early judgements.
- 4.3 Appreciate the benefits of customer complaints in terms of supporting efforts for continuous improvement within the business.
- 4.4 Explain how to avoid defensive behaviour in stressful situations.
- 4.5 Demonstrate an understanding of how to gain support and assistance from line-managers when handling complaints.
- 4.6 An overview of various techniques of handling complaints positively, including consultation/listening, discussing proposed actions, keeping customers informed of actions/timings and ensuring that complaints are resolved satisfactorily.
- 4.7 The role of customer services departments in supporting the customer service process.

Assessment

Assessment will determine whether learners have achieved the standard required to obtain a City & Guilds International Introductory Award in Customer Service (Service Sector).

Learners will undertake a one-hour test that has 40 Multiple choice (two option) questions. The learner will need to select the correct answers and the pass mark is 80%. The test will be marked by City & Guilds.

Particular Assessment Requirements

It is important that particular assessment requirements of learners are recognised and provision made for these. Information on the assessment of learners with particular assessment requirements has been provided by City & Guilds and can be access on the City & Guilds Website in the following document:

- Access to Assessment - candidates with particular requirements.

Delivery Advice

The total guided learning hours for this qualification are 7 and it is expected that learners will spend this time in a classroom based learning environment.