

Customer Service Specialist Level 3 Apprenticeship Standard Programme Outline

Overview of the Programme

This programme is designed for apprentices who want to further develop their skills, knowledge and behaviours for a job role involving being a professional in direct customer support within all sectors and organisation types providing customer service products and services for businesses and other organisations. Successful completion of the programme will lead to an Apprenticeship Certificate as a Customer Service Specialist

What types of activities are covered as part of the Customer Service Specialist Apprenticeship Standard

The main purpose of a customer service specialist is to be a 'professional' for direct customer support within all sectors and organisation types. You are an advocate of Customer Service who acts as a referral point for dealing with more complex or technical customer requests, complaints, and queries. You are often an escalation point for complicated or ongoing customer problems. As an expert in your organisation's products and/or services, you share knowledge with your wider team and colleagues. You gather and analyse data and customer information that influences change and improvements in service. Utilising both organisational and generic IT systems to carry out your role with an awareness of other digital technologies. This could be in many types of environment including contact centres, retail, webchat, service industry or any customer service point.

What does the Customer Service Specialist Apprenticeship Standard consist of?

<u>Knowledge</u>	
Business Knowledge and Understanding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand what continuous improvement means in a service environment and how your recommendations for change impact your organisation. • Understand the impact your service provision has on the wider organisation and the value it adds • Understand your organisation's current business strategy in relation to customers and make recommendations for its future • Understand the principles and benefits of being able to think about the future when taking action or making service related decisions • Understand a range of leadership styles and apply them successfully in a customer service environment
Customer Journey knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand and critically evaluate the possible journeys of your customers, including challenges and the end-to-end experience • Understand the reasons why customer issues and complex situations sometimes need referral or escalation for specialist attention • Understand the underpinning business processes that support you in bringing about the best outcome for customers and your organisation • Understand commercial factors and authority limits for delivering the required customer experience
Knowing your customers and their	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know your internal and external customers and how their behaviour may require different approaches from you

needs/ Customer Insight	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand how to analyse, use and present a range of information to provide customer insight • Understand what drives loyalty, retention and satisfaction and how they impact on your organisation • Understand different customer types and the role of emotions in bringing about a successful outcome • Understand how customer expectations can differ between cultures, ages and social profiles
Customer service culture and environment awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep current, knowledge and understanding of regulatory considerations, drivers and impacts in relation to how you deliver for customers • Understand your business environment and culture and the position of customer service within it • Understand your organisation structure and what role each department needs to play in delivering Customer Service and what the consequences are should things go wrong • Understand how to find and use industry best practice to enhance own knowledge
<u>Skills</u>	
Business focused service delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate a continuous improvement and future focussed approach to customer service delivery including decision making and providing recommendations or advice • Resolve complex issues by being able to choose from and successfully apply a wide range of approaches • Find solutions that meet your organisations needs as well as the customer requirements
Providing a positive customer experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through advanced questioning, listening and summarising negotiate mutually beneficial outcomes • Manage challenging and complicated situations within your level of authority and make recommendations to enable and deliver change to service or strategy • Use clear explanations, provide options and solutions to influence and help customers make choices and agree next steps • Explore and interpret the customer experience to inform and influence achieving a positive result for customer satisfaction • Demonstrate a cost conscious mind-set when meeting customer and the business needs • Identifying where highs and lows of the customer journey produce a range of emotions in the customer • Use written and verbal communication to simplify and provide complex information in a way that supports positive customer outcome in the relevant format.
Working with your customers / customer insights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proactively gather customer feedback, through a variety of methods. Critically analyse, and evaluate the meaning, implication and facts and act upon it • Analyse your customer types, to identify or anticipate their potential needs and expectations when providing your service
Customer service performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain a positive relationship even when you are unable to deliver the customer's expected outcome • When managing referrals or escalations take into account historical interactions and challenges to determine next steps

Service improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyse the end to end service experience, seeking input from others where required, supporting development of solutions Make recommendations based on your findings to enable improvement Make recommendations and implement where possible, changes in line with new and relevant legislation, regulations and industry best practice
<u>Behaviours</u>	
Developing self	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proactively keep your service, industry and best practice knowledge and skills up-to-date Consider personal goals related to service and take action towards achieving them
Ownership/ Responsibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Personally commit to and take ownership for actions to resolve customer issues to the satisfaction of the customer and your organisation Exercises proactivity and creativity when identifying solutions to customer and organisational issues Make realistic promises and deliver on them
Team working	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work effectively and collaboratively with colleagues at all levels to achieve results Recognise colleagues as internal customers Share knowledge and experience with others to support colleague development
Equality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adopt a positive and enthusiastic attitude being open minded and able to tailor your service to each customer Be adaptable and flexible to your customer needs whilst continuing to work within the agreed customer service environment
Presentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrate brand advocacy, values and belief when dealing with customer requests to build trust, credibility and satisfaction Ensure your personal presentation, in all forms of communication, reflects positively on your organisation's brand

Functional Skills Units	
Functional Skills in English Level 2	credit value 5
Functional Skills in Maths Level 2	credit value 5

Programme of Study

The period of learning, development and continuous assessment is managed by the employer, in most cases with the support of a training provider. The on-programme pace will be driven by apprentice as well as by the breadth of experience an employer can offer, but will typically be a minimum of 12 months, prior to the end-point assessment taking place.

Off-the-job guided learning hours – This will equate to 20% of the apprentices working hours and could include:

- Workshops
- Meetings with Tutor

- Online Learning
- Learning about a new product/service/resource
- Supervised learning – knowledge or practical skill
- Attending a review or appraisal

This equates to approximately 7 learning hours a week over the duration of the programme based on a 35 hour working week.

Delivery by Quest Training and the Employer

Activity	Delivery Method	Location	Duration
Initial assessment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diagnostic assessments • Learning Styles Questionnaire • Skills Scan • Application/enrolment/ILR • Recognition of prior learning • Individual Learning Plan 	Via computer package Via computer link Via computer link Checking GCSE/other qualifications gained	Workplace Face to face or via digital media e.g. Zoom	2 hours per learner
Induction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quest Training Apprentice Handbook • Apprenticeship Programme • Skills Scan - review • Functional Skills • Health & Safety • Health & Wellbeing • Equality, Diversity & Inclusion • Safeguarding/Prevent • British Values 	Tutor input using a range of methods including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theory input • Handouts • Workbooks • Presentations • Discussions • Question & answer sessions • Practical activities 	Workplace Face to face or via digital media e.g. Zoom	Flexible arrangements e.g. 1 day 2 half days 3 x 2 hour sessions
Tutorials/teaching delivery <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skills, Knowledge & Behaviours • Functional Skills 	One-to-one and/or group learning sessions with Tutor <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 Learning modules using a range of Blended Learning for the Knowledge Skills and Behaviours This will include regular revision and assessment of learning	Workplace and/or agreed venue Face to face or via digital media e.g. Zoom	According to individual apprentice needs
Progress reviews	Every 8-10 weeks with the apprentice, tutor and employer to review progress towards “Gateway Readiness”	Workplace Face to face or via digital media e.g. Zoom	30 minutes
Mock End-Point Assessment	Practice assessments in line with the End-Point Assessment Plan throughout the programme	Workplace and/or agreed venue Face to face or via	According to individual apprentice needs

Activity	Delivery Method	Location	Duration
		digital media e.g. Zoom	
Functional Skills Qualifications <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practice 	One-to-one with tutor	Workplace and/or agreed venue	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exams 	English reading English writing English speaking, listening & communicating Maths	Quest Training or employer venue	75 minutes 75 minutes 30 minutes 90 minutes

End-Point Assessment Plan

The End-Point Assessment is planned with the Independent End-Point Assessor, Employer and Apprentice

The end-point assessment is synoptic and takes place at the end of the apprentice's learning and development. The requirement is that the end-point assessment is completed within 3 months from the start of the end-point assessment period.

Assessment Method	Weighting	Duration	To Achieve a Pass, Merit or Distinction
Practical observation with Q&As.	Need to pass all the grading criteria	Within 3 months of EPA period -1 hour Practical observation including questioning	Judgement made against grading criteria
Work based project, supported by an interview.	Need to pass all the grading criteria	Within 2 months of EPA period - 1 hour interview will take place before the end of the 3 month EPA period.	Judgement made against grading criteria
Professional discussion supported by portfolio evidence.	Need to pass all the grading criteria	Within 3 months of the EPA period – 1 hour	Judgement made against grading criteria