



## Course

# Level 3 Customer Service Specialist Apprenticeship standard



Course duration:  
15 months

## Summary

### Knowledge

- Business knowledge and understanding
- Customer journey knowledge
- Knowing your customers and their needs
- Customer service culture and environmental awareness

### Skills

- Business-focused service delivery
- Providing a positive customer experience
- Working with your customers/customer insights
- Customer service performance
- Service improvement

### Behaviours

- Develop self
- Ownership/responsibility
- Team working
- Equality
- Presentation

## Learn more about becoming a 'professional' in providing direct customer support in your company with our Level 3 Customer Service Specialist Apprenticeship.

A customer service specialist is an important advocate for great customer service. They act as a key point for dealing with more complex or technical customer requests, complaints and queries. You can look forward to a varied and in-depth course, which should last around 15 months depending on your previous experience.

### Who is it for?

We've designed this apprenticeship to provide access to development opportunities for individuals who have previous experience of working with customers in some form and strong inter-personal skills. You will want to build on this experience by developing your knowledge and practical skills to be able to handle more complicated customer situations and share your knowledge with your wider team.

### What will you learn?

As you work towards this apprenticeship, you will learn how to manage complicated customer problems and to gather and analyse data and customer information. You will influence change and improvements in how your company looks after its customers. You can learn more about these in the table overleaf. Alongside this, and following an initial assessment, we will work with you, your manager and mentor to create an individual training plan. This will include development of skills such as reading, writing, speaking, listening and communication in English as well as maths, in preparation for Level 2 Functional Skills. Within this plan there will also be activities and learning to improve your personal soft skills.

### What comes next?

On completion, you will be eligible to join the Institute of Customer Service as an Individual member at Professional level. If you wish to progress your customer service career, you may be eligible for further professional membership, including management.

## Knowledge

| Area   | Learning aims and development   |
|--|---|
| <b>Business knowledge and understanding</b>                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understand what continuous improvement means in a service environment and how your recommendations for change impact your organisation</li> <li>Understand the impact your service provision has on the wider organisation and the value it adds</li> <li>Understand your organisation's current business strategy in relation to customers and make recommendations for its future</li> <li>Understand the principles and benefits of being able to think about the future when taking action or making service related decisions</li> <li>Understand a range of leadership styles and apply them successfully in a customer service environment</li> </ul> |
| <b>Customer journey knowledge</b>                                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understand and critically evaluate the possible journeys of your customers, including challenges and the end-to-end experience</li> <li>Understand the reasons why customer issues and complex situations sometimes need referral or escalation for specialist attention</li> <li>Understand the underpinning business processes that support you in bringing about the best outcome for customers and your organisation</li> <li>Understand commercial factors and authority limits for delivering the required customer experience</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Knowing your customers and their needs / customer insight</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Know your internal and external customers and how their behaviour may require different approaches from you</li> <li>Understand how to analyse, use and present a range of information to provide customer insight</li> <li>Understand what drives loyalty, retention and satisfaction and how they impact on your organisation</li> <li>Understand different customer types and the role of emotions in bringing about a successful outcome</li> <li>Understand how customer expectations can differ between cultures, ages and social profiles</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Customer service culture and environmental awareness</b>      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Keep current, knowledge and understanding of regulatory considerations, drivers and impacts in relation to how you deliver for customers</li> <li>Understand your business environment and culture and the position of customer service within it</li> <li>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</li> <li>Understand how to find and use industry best practice to enhance your own knowledge</li> </ul>  |

## Skills

| Area  | Learning aims and development   |
|---|---|
| <b>Business-focused service delivery</b>              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrate a continuous improvement and future focussed approach to customer service delivery including decision making and providing recommendations or advice</li> <li>• Resolve complex issues by being able to choose from and successfully apply a wide range of approaches</li> <li>• Find solutions that meet your organisations needs as well as the customer requirements</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Proving a positive customer experience</b>         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Through advanced questioning, listening and summarising negotiate mutually beneficial outcomes</li> <li>• Manage challenging and complicated situations within your level of authority and make recommendations to enable and deliver change to service or strategy</li> <li>• Use clear explanations, provide options and solutions to influence and help customers make choices and agree next steps</li> <li>• Explore and interpret the customer experience to inform and influence achieving a positive result for customer satisfaction</li> <li>• Demonstrate a cost conscious mind-set when meeting customer and the business needs</li> <li>• Identifying where highs and lows of the customer journey produce a range of emotions in the customer</li> <li>• Use written and verbal communication to simplify and provide complex information in a way that supports positive customer outcome in the relevant format</li> </ul> |
| <b>Working with your customers / customer insight</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proactively gather customer feedback, through a variety of methods</li> <li>• Critically analyse, and evaluate the meaning, implication and facts and act upon it</li> <li>• Analyse your customer types, to identify or anticipate their potential needs and expectations when providing your service</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Customer service performance</b>                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain a positive relationship even when you are unable to deliver the customer's expected outcome</li> <li>• When managing referrals or escalations take into account historical interactions and challenges to determine next steps</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Service improvement</b>                            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analyse the end to end service experience, seeking input from others where required, supporting development of solutions</li> <li>• Make recommendations based on your findings to enable improvement</li> <li>• Make recommendations and implement where possible, changes in line with new and relevant legislation, regulations and industry best practice</li> </ul>   |

## Behaviours

| Area                              | Learning aims and development  |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| <b>Develop self</b>               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Proactively keep your service, industry and best practice knowledge and skills up-to-date</li> <li>Consider personal goals related to service and take action towards</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Ownership / responsibility</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Personally commit to and take ownership for actions to resolve customer issues to the satisfaction of the customer and your organisation</li> <li>Exercises proactivity and creativity when identifying solutions to customer and organisational issues</li> <li>Make realistic promises and deliver on them</li> </ul> |
| <b>Team working</b>               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work effectively and collaboratively with colleagues at all levels to achieve results</li> <li>Recognise colleagues as internal customers</li> <li>Share knowledge and experience with others to support colleague development</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Equality</b>                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adopt a positive and enthusiastic attitude being open minded and able to tailor your service to each customer</li> <li>Be adaptable and flexible to your customer needs whilst continuing to work within the agreed customer service environment</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Presentation</b>               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Analyse the end to end service experience, seeking input from others where required, supporting development of solutions</li> <li>Demonstrate brand advocacy, values and belief when dealing with customer requests to build trust, credibility and satisfaction</li> </ul>   |

## Additional skills

As well as the core curriculum, you will develop a number of additional skills throughout the course of your apprenticeship:

### NCFE functional skills

You will work on developing positivity and confidence in the use of maths and English skills in real world and employment-based situations.

#### Maths

Through the Level 2 Functional Skills qualifications you will demonstrate a sound grasp of mathematical skills at the appropriate level and the ability to apply mathematical thinking effectively to solve problems in the workplace and in other real-life situations.

#### English

Through the Level 2 Functional Skills qualifications you will demonstrate the ability at an appropriate level to read, write, speak, listen and communicate in English, and to apply these skills effectively to a range of purposes in the workplace and in other real-life situations

### British values

As part of your apprenticeship, we will discuss five key values and their impact and importance in the workplace. These will be democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance of those of different faiths and beliefs.

### Soft skills development

Personal Learning and Thinking Skills (PLTS) are generic skills that are essential to life, learning and work. Developing these will make a significant impact on your ability to contribute confidently both within and outside of their working environment. PLTS include independent enquiry, creative thinking, reflection, team working, self-management and effective participation.

### PREVENT

PREVENT is part of the government's CONTEST strategy of which education is a fundamental part. The aim of the strategy is "to reduce the risk to the UK and its interests overseas from terrorism so that people can go about their lives freely and with confidence." CONTEST is split into four work-streams that are known within the counter-terrorism community as the 'four Ps': Prevent, Pursue, Protect, and Prepare.



#### Plan

We take into consideration your skills at each stage of the process, planning the learning and follow-up activities.

#### Do

You undertake the learning and activities that have been planned.

#### Check

We check your learning using a combination of assignments, discussions and observations of workplace activities, ensuring that skills, knowledge and behaviours are embedded and being practised.

#### Act

If areas of further learning are identified, reinforcement training is planned in and provided.