

CFACSA14 (SQA Unit Code – H9XX 04)

Use customer service as a competitive tool



Overview

This Standard is part of the Customer Service Theme of Impression and Image. This Theme covers the Customer Service behaviours and processes that have most impact on the way your customer sees you and your organisation. Remember that customers include everyone you provide a service to. They may be external to your organisation or they may be internal customers.

Customer service contributes to an organisation's competitive position. Customers of many organisations have choices about the services or products they use and who supplies them. Often the technical features and cost of the service or product are almost identical. If this is the case, the quality of the customer service offered makes all the difference to which supplier the customer chooses. This Standard is about how you can play your part in ensuring that your organisation makes the best possible use of the competitive advantage that can be gained from offering superior customer service. It covers how you use customer service as a tool to compete effectively with other providers of similar services or products. The Standard is not for you if your organisation does not compete actively with others.

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Performance criteria

Organise customer service to gain a competitive advantage

You must be able to:

- P1 develop your own and colleagues' understanding of the services or products offered by your organisation
- P2 define your organisation's service offer and the ways in which it compares with those of your competitors
- P3 set an example for colleagues and present an image to your customers that reinforces your organisation's service offer
- P4 encourage customer service actions that create and develop customer loyalty

Deliver a competitive service

You must be able to:

- P5 take positive actions and encourage colleagues to take actions that provide individual customers with added value within your organisation's service offer
- P6 remind your customers about your service offer and the extra benefit it provides over those of your competitors
- P7 offer additional technical advice to customers within your organisation's service offer
- P8 show awareness of the financial implications of any added value actions that you or your colleagues might offer
- P9 meet customer service targets to ensure that your customers see the benefit of dealing with you rather than with a competitor
- P10 re-direct customers to other service providers without causing offence when their expectations cannot be met by your organisation's service offer
- P11 ensure that customers who have shown a previous interest in repeat and additional services are reminded of this
- P12 encourage colleagues to offer complementary services or products when customer satisfaction indicates that your customers would be interested in them

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Knowledge and understanding

You need to know and understand:

- K1 the factors that lead to customers' belief that they are enjoying value for money
- K2 how to research and compare services or products, including using the internet and social media sources
- K3 the services or products offered by your organisation
- K4 the services or products offered by competitors
- K5 features and benefits of services or products that are seen by customers as added value
- K6 the purpose of adding non-chargeable items to the service offer in order to impress customers and develop customer loyalty
- K7 how to portray a positive image that reinforces your organisation's competitive position
- K8 your organisation's customer service targets and cost implications of added value actions to improve the organisation's competitive position
- K9 complementary services or products that may be of interest to your customers

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SQA Evidence Requirements to Support this Unit

This Unit is designed to assess the skills and knowledge of candidates in the workplace. Candidate evidence should be generated under workplace conditions (**either paid or voluntary**) and evidence must be generated with different customers on different occasions over a sufficient period of time.

Observation should be the primary and preferred source of evidence of competent performance wherever possible. Observation of candidate performance will be supported by other methods of assessment which may include:

- ◆ witness testimony
- ◆ questioning
- ◆ candidate statement
- ◆ professional discussion
- ◆ product and photographic evidence,
- ◆ relevant active documentation, reports, presentations and
- ◆ other valid evidence which relates directly to learner performance under workplace conditions

A combination of performance and knowledge evidence is required to enable the assessor to confirm that the learner is competent.

Simulation should only be used in exceptional circumstances and it should only be for small parts of the Unit. Simulated assessments **must** be undertaken in a realistic working environment (RWE). A RWE is 'an environment which replicates the key characteristics in which the skill to be assessed is normally employed'. The RWE must provide conditions that are 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 the Assessment Strategy for Customer Service SVQs at link: <http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/16732.html>

SQA's Guide to Assessment is designed to provide support for everyone who assesses for SQA qualifications. It looks at the principles of assessment, and brings together information on assessment in general as well as on best practice in assessment. The Guide to Assessment can be downloaded free from SQA's website www.sqa.org.uk

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Suite

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Competition; services; products; customer service; communication; problem solving; behaviours; work with others; team working