

Higher National Unit Specification

General information for centres

Unit title: Customer Care

Unit code: DJ43 33

Unit purpose: This unit is designed to enable the candidate to recognise and develop effective customer care within a work environment appropriate to his/her needs. This unit will be relevant to candidates wishing to develop their knowledge and understanding of a key area of importance and value in today's world of work.

On completion of the Unit the candidate should be able to:

1. Identify key principles of effective customer care.
2. Recognise the importance of establishing and maintaining relationships with customers.
3. Develop a customer care strategy for an organisation.

Credit points and level: 1 HN Credit at SCQF level 6: (8 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 6*)

**SCQF credit points are used to allocate credit to qualifications in the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF). Each qualification in the Framework is allocated a number of SCQF credit points at an SCQF level. There are 12 SCQF levels, ranging from Access 1 to Doctorates.*

Recommended prior knowledge and skills: Access to this unit is at the discretion of the centre although candidates should possess good communication and interpersonal skills. Communication to a level of Intermediate 2 or above would be beneficial.

Core skills: There may be opportunities to gather evidence towards the core skill of communication within this Unit, although there is no automatic certification of core skills or core skills components.

Context for delivery: If this Unit is delivered as part of a group award, it is recommended that it should be taught and assessed within the subject area of the group award to which it contributes through the contextualisation of material as appropriate to the discipline. The unit may also be delivered as a stand alone unit.

Assessment: Evidence for this unit could be generated through two assessments. Outcomes 1 and 2 could be assessed holistically using restricted response questions. Outcome 3 could be assessed by a practical assignment.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards

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The sections of the Unit stating the Outcomes, knowledge and/or skills, and evidence requirements are mandatory.

Where evidence for Outcomes is assessed on a sample basis, the whole of the content listed in the knowledge and/or skills section must be taught and available for assessment. Candidates should not know in advance the items on which they will be assessed and different items should be sampled on each assessment occasion.

Outcome 1

Identify key principles of effective customer care

Knowledge and/or skills

- ◆ Identification of customers
- ◆ Product and/or service knowledge
- ◆ Meeting the customer's needs

Outcome 2

Recognise the importance of establishing and maintaining relationships with customers

Knowledge and/or skills

- ◆ Communication skills
- ◆ Factors which contribute to excellent customer care
- ◆ Recognise the impact of excellent, acceptable or poor customer service on a business

Evidence requirements for Outcomes 1 and 2

The candidate will be required to demonstrate his/her knowledge and/or skills by undertaking a contextualised assessment which holistically assessed Outcomes 1 and 2 and covers all areas of knowledge and skills from Outcome 1 and a minimum of 2 areas of knowledge and/or skills from Outcome 2. Evidence may be presented in written and/or oral form. If evidence is presented orally the assessor should record key words from the candidate's answer against a checklist detailing the knowledge and/or skills required.

The assessment of these outcomes should be undertaken in open book controlled conditions in a single sitting of approximately 1-2 hours.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Customer Care

Assessment guidelines for Outcomes 1 and 2

A contextualised assessment could be devised which holistically assessed both Outcomes 1 and 2 on a sampling basis. The assessment could be in the form of 8-10 restricted response questions. Answers will vary in length depending on the question asked but somewhere between 100-150 words would be acceptable.

Outcome 3

Develop a customer care strategy for an organisation

Knowledge and/or skills

- ◆ Planning a customer care strategy
- ◆ Setting standards for customer care
- ◆ Methods of obtained feedback
- ◆ Qualitative and quantitative feedback

Evidence requirements

The candidate will be required to demonstrate his/her knowledge and/or skills by undertaking a contextualisation assignment which covers all areas of knowledge and/or skills from Outcome 3. Evidence may be presented in written and/or oral form. If evidence is presented orally the assessor should record key words from the candidate's answer against a checklist detailing the knowledge and/or skills required.

The assessment of this outcome should be undertaken in open book conditions.

Assessment guidelines

The assignment should be contextualised. The candidate could be asked to consider a scenario either fictional or real and develop an appropriate strategy for customer care within the given organisation.

Administrative Information

Unit code:	DJ43 33
Unit title:	Customer Care
Superclass category:	BA
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Additional copies of this Unit specification can be purchased from the Scottish Qualifications Authority. Please contact the Customer Contact Centre for further details, telephone 0845 279 1000.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes

Unit title: Customer Care

This part of the Unit specification is offered as guidance. The support notes are not mandatory.

While the exact time allocated to this Unit is at the discretion of the centre, the notional design length is 40 hours.

Guidance on the content and context for this Unit

The unit is intended for candidates who wish to develop knowledge and understanding of a key area of importance in today's world of work.

The unit is expressed in generic terms but it should be related to a context which is familiar to candidates.

Outcome 1 covers the key principles of customer care — knowing your customers, product or service knowledge and meeting your customers' needs. Time should be taken to ensure candidates recognise that in today's competitive environment customers' needs often need to be exceeded rather than just met. Expectations and needs of both internal and external customers should be considered. The opportunity should be taken to explore the difference between customer service and customer care when looking at meeting customers' needs. The need for knowledgeable staff and the ways in which staff can gain knowledge of the organisations products and/or services should be discussed.

Outcome 2 allows candidates to explore the importance of establishing and maintaining relationships with customers. Various types/forms of communication should be looked at including face to face, using the telephone, written communication both traditional and electronic, body language, active listening skills, effective questioning techniques and the need for empathy. Opportunities for role play are numerous within this outcome.

Time should be made to consider the impact of excellent, acceptable or poor customer service on an organisation and candidates should be encouraged to define factors which contribute to excellent customer care. This might be done through use of video or through discussion of personal experiences of candidates then related to the context in which they are studying. To complete this outcome time should be spent looking at how to best deal with difficult customers and complaints.

Outcome 3 offers the opportunity for candidates to examine how a customer care strategy is developed. Where possible candidates should look at examples of customer care standards appropriate to their field of study making use of current industry standards, benchmarking and mission statements.

Candidates should also explore methods of obtaining feedback. Qualitative and quantitative data should be defined.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Customer Care

Guidance on the delivery and assessment of this Unit

This unit may be delivered as part of a group award or as a stand alone unit. It is important to contextualise the content to make it as relevant as possible to the candidates' needs. A range of techniques can be employed for delivery including group discussion and role play where appropriate. Candidates should also be encouraged to source findings relating to current standards and organisational policies through use of internet resources.

Examples provided in class could be in the form of fictional or real scenarios/case studies.

It is recommended that Outcomes 1 and 2 are assessed holistically using restricted response questions. An alternative method of assessment could be a case study with questions. Either method should be done on the basis of sampling all areas of knowledge and skills

Open learning

This unit could be delivered by open learning providing suitable assessment arrangements can be agreed for controlled assessment conditions.

Candidates with additional support needs

This Unit specification is intended to ensure that there are no artificial barriers to learning or assessment. The additional support needs of individual candidates should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments or considering alternative Outcomes for Units. For information on these, please refer to the SQA document *Guidance on Special Assessment Arrangements for Candidates with Additional Support Needs* (BA 2399, SQA, due 2004).

General information for candidates

Unit title: Customer Care

This unit is designed to enable you to recognise and develop effective customer care within a work environment appropriate to your area of study.

This unit will help develop your knowledge and understanding of this key area of importance and value in today's world of work.

The unit is made up of three outcomes.

Outcome 1 covers the key principles of customer care — knowing your customers, knowing the product or service you are providing and the importance of meeting customer needs. You will also learn about the internal and external customer.

Outcome 2 explores the importance of establishing and maintaining relationships with customers. You will learn about various communication techniques which will help you deal effectively with your customers and find out about the impact customer service has on an organisation.

Outcome 3 gives you the opportunity to look at how a customer care strategy is developed and considers the need for feedback from customers.

In order to complete this unit successfully you will be required to achieve a satisfactory level of performance in two assessed pieces of work. The first assessment will normally cover both Outcomes 1 and 2 and will be undertaken in controlled conditions although you will be able to use your notes. This is shown as an open book assessment but done under the supervision of a tutor or mentor. You will have approximately 1-2 hours to do this.

The second assessment may take the form of an assignment. You will be provided with some information which you will use as a platform to develop a customer care strategy. This second piece of assessed work will relate to the knowledge and/or skills you have learned about in Outcome 3 and should take you no longer than 3 hours. You will be able to make use of your notes.