

**-SQA- SCOTTISH QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY**

**Hanover House  
24 Douglas Street  
GLASGOW G2 7NQ**

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**NATIONAL CERTIFICATE MODULE DESCRIPTOR**

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**-Module Number-** 5120021 **-Session-** 1991-92  
**-Superclass-** BA

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**-Title-** **CUSTOMER CONTACT (x 1/2)**

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**-DESCRIPTION-**

Purpose

The module introduces the student to the basic communication skills required when dealing with different types of customers/visitors:

The aim is to enable the student to handle customers effectively while ensuring good customer relations.

It will be of particular interest to students wishing to pursue a career in the service industries. When taken in conjunction with 5120031 Introduction to Selling Skills, 5120081 Payments Handling, 5120061 Introduction to Retail Merchandising and 5120071 Basic Retail Skills this module complements the Certificate in Retail Distribution. If taken as part of a broader programme, an integrative approach should be adopted in dealing with common areas within different modules.

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Preferred Entry Level

No formal entry requirements.

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Outcomes

The student should:

1. establish contact with customer/visitor using a range of communication techniques;
2. establish the needs of a customer through building a rapport;
3. receive and direct visitors;
4. deal with customers' complaints while maintaining customer goodwill.

Assessment  
Procedures

Acceptable performance in the module will be satisfactory achievement of the Performance Criteria specified for each Outcome.

The following abbreviations are used below:

PC Performance Criteria  
IA Instrument of Assessment

**Note:** The Outcomes and PCs are mandatory and cannot be altered. The IA may be altered by arrangement with SQA. (Where a range of performance is indicated, this should be regarded as an extension of the PCs and is therefore mandatory).

**OUTCOME 1****ESTABLISH CONTACT WITH CUSTOMER/VISITOR  
USING A RANGE OF COMMUNICATION TECHNIQUES**

## PCs

- (a) Explains correctly the importance of projecting a good company image.
- (b) Uses correct non-verbal signals when approaching the customer.
- (c) Uses listening and questioning techniques effectively.

IA Multiple Choice Questions and Role play

1.1 The student will be presented with 10 questions structured as follows:

- (i) company image - 2 (1-self, 1-general)
- (ii) non-verbal signals - 4 (1-gesture, 1-facial expression, 1-eye contact, 1-proximity)
- (iii) listening skills - 2 (1-observation, 1-appropriate response)
- (iv) questioning skills - 2 (open question) (handling customer objections)

Satisfactory performance will be that the student correctly answers eight out of ten questions. It will not be acceptable for two incorrect answers to appear in one section.

1.2 Students will be required to complete a role play in a customer contact situation.

The role play will also assess the practical elements of Outcome 3 PC (a) and (c).

Satisfactory performance will be that the student demonstrates the correct use of non-verbal signalling, listening and questioning techniques when communicating with customers/visitors.

Evidence of achievement should be recorded by the tutor with the aid of an appropriate checklist modelled on PC (b) and (c) and Outcome 3 PC (a) and (c).

## **OUTCOME 2**

### **ESTABLISH THE NEEDS OF A CUSTOMER THROUGH BUILDING A RAPPORT**

PCs

- (a) Listens and questions politely and effectively in order to elicit customer requirements.
- (b) Uses correct listening and questioning techniques when making and receiving telephone calls.

IA Role-play

Students will be required to successfully complete role-play in 2 customer contact situations as indicated in PC (a) and (b).

PC (a) assesses listening and questioning techniques, and should assess students' ability to elicit customer requirements through effective interpretation of the various customer signals, verbal and non-verbal:

Student checklist during role-play will assess:-

- questioning techniques (probing, leading, closed)
- listening skill (no distractions, avoid interruptions)
- appropriate response
- ability to convey information accurately
- building rapport with customer (relaxing the customer)

PC (b) assesses telephone techniques. A student checklist during roleplay will assess:

- correct manner
- tone of voice
- clarity of speech, diction
- quality of information
- interpretation of customer requirements
- referral
- questioning techniques

The tutor will observe with a checklist which shall contain sections relevant to each PC.

Satisfactory performance will be that students display competence in each aspect of the PC.

### **OUTCOME 3**

### **RECEIVE AND DIRECT VISITORS**

PCs

- (a) Greets visitors in a polite manner.
- (b) Explains the importance of security procedures when receiving visitors.
- (c) Gives clear instructions to direct visitors to correct locations/ personnel.

IA The practical elements of PC (a) and (c) will be assessed in conjunction with the role play identified in Outcome 2. The underpinning knowledge of PC (a) and (c) and PC (b) will be assessed by Short Answer Questions as detailed below:

The student will be presented with 8 questions covering:

- 2 - the effect on company image of greeting visitors correctly/incorrectly
- 1 - necessity to ask for identification
- 1 - issue of visitors badges
- 1 - documentation (visitors book, signing in and out)
- 1 - store layout (directing customers in optimum time)
- 2 - personnel structure/location

Satisfactory performance will be demonstrated by 6 correct responses.

### **OUTCOME 4**

### **DEAL WITH CUSTOMERS' COMPLAINTS WHILE MAINTAINING CUSTOMER GOODWILL**

PCs

- (a) Uses a calm and controlled manner while handling a difficult customer.
- (b) Describes possible sources of customer complaint.
- (c) Explains customer complaints procedure within an organisation with reference to responsibility accurately.
- (d) Explains relevant legislation relating to sale of goods and trades description.

IA Role Play - PC(a)  
Short Answer Questions - PC(b), (c) and (d)

1.1 Role Play

The tutor will give the student a brief which requires the student to enact 2 different customer complaint scenarios. The student will take the role of a sales assistant and have to deal with different complaints eg. an angry customer bringing back faulty merchandise, an impatient customer complaining of delay in service, a customer who has damaged her coat on equipment etc. Satisfactory performance will be that the student resolves the situation successfully or refers to the appropriate authority on each occasion. Evidence of achievement should be recorded by the tutor with the aid of an appropriate checklist with sections relating to:

- (i) tone of voice
- (ii) eye contact
- (iii) body language
- (iv) questioning technique
- (v) listening technique

1.2 Short Answer Questions.

The student will be presented with 8 questions, structured as follows:

type of complaints,	- 2
complaints procedures, company policies, individual responsibilities, company image,	- 4
legislation,	- 2

Satisfactory performance will be demonstrated by 6 correct responses with not more than 1 error permitted in any one section.

**The following sections of the descriptor are offered as guidance.  
They are not mandatory.**

### CONTENT/CONTEXT

Corresponding to Outcomes 1-4:

1. Customer contact philosophies and policies which determine how company image is projected by employee and the importance of customer contact in terms of company image. The effect on profitability and job satisfaction. Definition of a customer.  
Employee characteristics through non-verbal communication; personal appearance/hygiene, body language, facial expression, proximity, mannerisms and eye contact. Approach to customer, form of greeting, polite acknowledgement, with a smile. Exploration of questioning and listening techniques through accurate observation.
2. Methods of reading customer non-verbal signals, characteristics and personality, including customer type and demeanour; talkative, price-conscious, critical, undecided, impatient, superior or slow to understand. Appropriate responses to various customer types. Customer motives - implicit and explicit. Awareness of customers with special needs and disabilities. Analysis of customer expectation through skilled questioning techniques;- leading, probing and closed. Customer feedback, open responses to encourage rapport. Effect on improved sales, and customer satisfaction. Importance of empathy with customer to enhance professionalism. Telephone skills: tone of voice, clarity of speech, diction and correct referral procedures.
3. Behaviour skills which affect receiving and directing visitors. Verbal and non-verbal communication. Personal appearance and hygiene. The company image and the student's role in relation to that image. The reasons for security procedures in identifying and escorting visitors. Different company policies: appointment system visitors book, use of internal telephone/communication system.

Look at store layouts in relation to customer flow and security and the need to have an accurate knowledge of positioning of department and merchandise. Procedures for accidents and emergencies with particular attention to speed in contacting the appropriate person eg. First Aid Officer. Procedures for alerting senior staff of suspected theft.

Different company personnel structures: the chain of authority; in particular the most appropriate person to contact if the one specified by a visitor is not available.

4. Customer contact skills: verbal and non verbal communication, questioning and listening skills. Types of complaints: for example quality, size, delay, bad service etc. The possible remedies and preventive measures. Different company complaints procedures. Chain of responsibility for dealing with complaints, starting with assistant progressing through supervisor, management, to Head Office dept. Customer Service Desks and Head Office dept. who deal with customer complaints. Legislation including Sale of Goods Act, Trades Description Act, HASAW and Weights and Measures Act.
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### SUGGESTED LEARNING AND TEACHING APPROACHES

Role-play, observation and group discussion are the main teaching/learning approach. It would be a useful aid to learning to video participants while role-playing.

A group project may be suitable for the collection of information about differing company procedures, staff responsibilities and legislation. For those with industrial experience the participants may be able to bring a lot of information about their own work-place.

An integrative approach across Outcomes should be encouraged and this could be reflected in the roleplays for assessment purposes.

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