

Unit title: Travel and Tourism: Customer Service (National 5)

Unit code: H2Y2 75

Superclass: BA

Publication date: February 2013

Source: Scottish Qualifications Authority

Version: 2.0 (May 2017)

Unit purpose

This unit has been designed as a mandatory unit of the National 5 Travel and Tourism Skills for Work Course but can also be taken as a free-standing unit. It is suitable for learners who have no previous experience.

The general aim of this unit is to allow learners to develop the skills and knowledge to enable them to meet the needs of customers. Learners will be able to develop communication skills and learn about promoting products and services and how to deal with customer issues.

Outcomes

Learners who complete this unit will be able to:

- 1 Establish and respond to customer needs in a travel and tourism environment.
- 2 Promote a wide range of products and/or services from the travel and tourism industry.
- 3 Deal with a customer issue in a travel and tourism environment.

Credit points and level

1 National unit credit at SCQF level 5: (6 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 5)

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Recommended entry to the unit

Entry to this unit is at the discretion of the centre.

Core Skills

Opportunities to develop aspects of Core Skills are highlighted in the support notes for this unit specification.

There is no automatic certification of Core Skills or Core Skill components in this unit.

Context for delivery

If this unit is delivered as part of a Course, it is recommended that it should be taught and assessed within the subject area of the Course to which it contributes.

The Assessment Support Pack (ASP) for this unit provides assessment and marking guidelines that exemplify the national standard for achievement. Centres wishing to develop their own assessments should refer to the ASP to ensure a comparable standard. A list of existing ASPs is available to download from SQA's website (<http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/46233.2769.html>)

Equality and inclusion

This unit specification has been designed to ensure that there are no unnecessary barriers to learning or assessment. The individual needs of learners should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment methods or considering alternative evidence.

Further advice can be found on our website www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements

National unit specification: statement of standards

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Acceptable performance in this unit will be the satisfactory achievement of the standards set out in this part of the unit specification. All sections of the statement of standards are mandatory and cannot be altered without reference to SQA.

Outcome 1

Establish and respond to customer needs in a travel and tourism environment.

Performance criteria

- (a) Open the interaction in a positive and helpful manner and adhering to guidelines.
- (b) Establish customer's detailed needs by using listening and questioning techniques.
- (c) Respond to customer's detailed needs by providing relevant information.
- (d) Respond to any non-verbal clues given by the customer.
- (e) Act upon opportunities to exceed customer expectations.
- (f) Conclude the interaction positively and adhering to guidelines.

Outcome 2

Promote a wide range of products and/or services from the travel and tourism industry.

Performance criteria

- (a) Describe the features and benefits of products and/or services.
- (b) Explain how further products and/or services could complement or provide an alternative to the previously selected products and/or services.
- (c) Demonstrate a knowledge of suitable methods of promotional activity for the selected products and/or services.
- (d) Explain why these methods of promotional activity are suitable.

Outcome 3

Deal with a customer issue in a travel and tourism environment.

Performance criteria

- (a) Gather information on the nature of the issue through effective questioning.
- (b) Identify and confirm with the customer the reasons for the issue arising.
- (c) Outline the organisational procedures for dealing with customer dissatisfaction.
- (d) Take appropriate action to resolve the customer's specific issue.
- (e) Maintain a positive attitude and manner throughout the interaction.
- (f) Explaining the importance of effective complaint handling.

Evidence requirements for this unit

Evidence is required to demonstrate that learners have achieved all outcomes and performance criteria.

Assessors should use their professional judgement, subject knowledge and experience, and understanding of their learners, to determine the most appropriate ways to generate evidence and the conditions and contexts in which they are used.

The learner will receive minimum support throughout the unit whilst generating the evidence required to achieve the national standard through each of the outcomes for this unit. This means that the teacher/lecturer should issue advice to learners to enable progress.

Evidence should be gathered at appropriate points throughout the unit under open-book conditions, ie learners should have access to their notes, books, the internet etc. Evidence could be retained in a folio.

Outcome 1 — performance and/or oral evidence

Performance evidence will be required which demonstrates, on one occasion, that the learner has established customer needs using effective communication skills and has responded to them in an appropriate manner. Learners should demonstrate during the interaction that they can:

- ◆ open the interaction in a positive and helpful manner while adhering to guidelines
- ◆ use appropriate questioning techniques and listening techniques to establish detailed customer needs
- ◆ provide a range of suitable information about products and/or services relevant to the customer's needs
- ◆ identify and respond to any non-verbal clues given by the customer
- ◆ acting upon opportunities to exceed customer expectations
- ◆ conclude the interaction positively while adhering to guidelines

Outcome 2 — written and/or oral evidence

Written and/or orally recorded evidence:

- ◆ describing in detail the features and benefits of three products and/or services available
- ◆ explaining in detail how the features and benefits of a further three products or services complement or provide an alternative to each of those previously selected
- ◆ demonstrating a suitable method of promoting the products and/or services selected
- ◆ explaining in detail why the methods of promotional activity are suitable

Outcome 3 — performance and/or oral evidence

Performance evidence will be required which demonstrates, on one occasion, that the learner has dealt with an issue. Learners should demonstrate during the interaction that they can:

- ◆ identify and gather information on the nature of a specific issue through effective questioning
- ◆ establish the reasons why the issue has arisen and confirm this with the customer
- ◆ outline the organisational procedures for dealing with an issue of this nature
- ◆ explain the actions they are going to take to resolve the customer's specific issue
- ◆ maintain a positive attitude and manner throughout the interaction
- ◆ explain the importance of effective complaint handling

Development of skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work

It is expected that learners will develop broad, generic skills through this unit. Employability is a key aspect of Skills for Work and is present throughout the unit. In addition, there are a number of other skills that learners will be expected to improve on and develop as they undertake this unit, these can be drawn from the main skills areas listed below. These must be built into the unit where there are appropriate opportunities.

1 Literacy

- 1.1 Reading
- 1.2 Writing
- 1.3 Listening and talking

4 Employability, enterprise and citizenship

- 4.1 Employability
- 4.4 Enterprise

5 Thinking Skills

- 5.2 Understanding
- 5.3 Applying
- 5.5 Creating

Amplification of these is given in SQA's *Skills Framework: Skills for Learning, Skills for Life and Skills for Work*. The level of these skills should be at the same SCQF level as the unit and be consistent with the SCQF level descriptor. Further information on building in skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work is given in the unit support notes.

National unit Support Notes

Unit title: Travel and Tourism: Customer Service (National 5)

Unit support notes are offered as guidance and 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 main purpose of this unit is to enable learners to understand the importance and principles of customer service and to develop the skills and qualities required to meet customer expectations in a travel and tourism environment. Outcome 1 focuses on establishing and responding to detailed customer needs, dealing effectively with customer interactions which may involve detailed enquiries and seeking opportunities to exceed customer expectations. Outcome 2 focuses on promoting a wide range of travel and tourism products and/or services, identifying features and benefits, complementary or alternative products and exploring different ways of promoting these to customers, including the rationale for these methods of promotion. In Outcome 3 the learner will explore the importance of effective complaint handling and further develop communication and problem solving skills in dealing with, and resolving, customer issues in line with organisational procedures.

Learners might explore who customers are in a range of travel and tourism contexts, and their possible needs and requirements. Particular needs could include customers with disabilities, families, business travellers and overseas visitors. Learners could also explore the different skills and qualities necessary in providing high standards of customer service, reflecting on their existing personal strengths and weaknesses and creating an action plan for improvement and development. This may link in to outcome 3 of the unit *Travel and Tourism: Employability* where learners are asked to evaluate their own potential for a chosen job in the travel and tourism industry.

Outcome 1

Learners will be asked to develop and demonstrate communication skills, using appropriate types of questioning, both open and closed, while responding to detailed customer needs, as well as effective listening skills. Learners will be asked to recognise and respond to non-verbal clues given by customers and should explore both verbal and non-verbal communication including body language and manner. Learners are expected also to identify and act upon opportunities to exceed customer expectations. Exposure to a wide range of customer contact situations could help develop possible ideas for 'going the extra mile'. The building of strong interpersonal skills and self-confidence may be achieved through regular practical work and self/peer review and discussion.

Learners will be asked to respond to detailed customer enquiries with relevant information, and might therefore wish to explore a wide range of sources of information and build up detailed reference material either on an individual or group basis. Such activities may present an opportunity for cross unit working with *Travel and Tourism: Scotland* (National 5) and *Travel and Tourism: UK and Worldwide* (National 5).

Outcome 2

Learners will be asked to demonstrate that they have effectively researched a wide range of products and/or services available from the travel and tourism industry (holidays, short breaks, travel, accommodation, attractions, events, etc.), identifying the features and benefits of those selected, demonstrating knowledge of suitable methods of promoting these and explaining the rationale for selecting these methods of promotional activity. Learners could be encouraged to build up their knowledge, using a range of different resources, of a wide variety of travel and tourism products, their features (quality, cost, key features, and comparison with similar products) and benefits/advantages, which can then be applied to given situations. Demonstrating suitable promotional activity will require the learner to show detailed knowledge of the selected products/services as well as an understanding of a range of different promotional methods.

The information gathered to meet the requirements of outcome 2 might also be used in outcome 1 where learners are asked to use information in meaningful customer interactions, matching suitable products and/or services to meet customer needs.

Outcome 3

Learners are asked to deal effectively with customer issues in a travel and tourism environment, building further on the communication skills (listening and talking) and personal qualities demonstrated in outcome 1 and developing awareness of possible customer problems and issues which might arise. Learners will be asked to explain organisational procedures for dealing with customer dissatisfaction. Where activities take place in a simulated work environment, learners might be encouraged to explore complaints procedures and formulate a suitable one for the simulated organisation. Learners will be expected to interact with customers to identify and confirm with the customer the nature of the issue arising and take appropriate action to resolve it.

An understanding of the importance and impact of customer service underpins the delivery of practical skills and case study examples might help learners explore the positive impacts of customer service (repeat customers, recommendations, increased sales, job satisfaction, etc) as well as the negative impacts of poor customer service (increase in number of complaints, lack of job satisfaction, poor reputation, loss of business, fewer jobs). Learners will be asked to explain the importance of effective complaint handling and the impact of poor customer service and badly handled complaints.

The unit should provide opportunities for self-reflection, and for the development of social skills and self confidence in preparation for employment in customer facing roles.

Guidance on approaches to delivery of this unit

The unit is intended to help the learner develop a deeper understanding of customer service in travel and tourism and to develop practical customer service skills to meet and exceed the detailed needs and requirements of customers.

Outcomes 1 and 3 of this unit involve the development of practical skills in customer service within the travel and tourism industry, interacting with customers and providing appropriate responses/solutions to meet detailed customer requirements. With this

focus on practical skills, it is desirable that learners are provided with a realistic environment within which to practice skills and where they will experience workplace conditions, deal with colleagues and customers, learn about working as part of a team and generally develop a good work ethic. This may be achieved through a partnership approach with local businesses enabling learners to gain practical work experience or work shadowing within a travel/tourism environment. Alternatively, and/or in addition, learners may, with minimal tutor guidance, set up their own simulated customer service environment. This would enable learners to develop skills in establishing the physical environment to support the delivery of customer service and, as a group activity, provide opportunities for cooperative working, innovation and creativity.

A work placement in the context of this unit might also provide opportunities for evidence to be generated for *Travel and Tourism: Employability* (National 5) and either *Travel and Tourism: Scotland* or *Travel and Tourism: UK and Worldwide* (National 5).

Outcome 2 involves learners in researching a wide range of products/services available in the travel and tourism industry and creating ideas for suitable promotional activities. Learners should be encouraged to consult a wide range of resources, and to create their own bank of information. The information sourced could be retained in a folio and could be used in responding to customer needs to meet the requirements of outcomes 1 and 3. Learners progressing from *Travel and Tourism: Customer Service* (National 4) could be given the option to build upon and add to their existing folio of evidence. There is significant scope for exploring different promotional activities which might include creating leaflets or posters, designing advertisements and copy, internet, video, radio, direct mail, etc. Learners will be expected to explain the suitability of selected methods of promotion which might include reference to budget, resources and expertise, relevance to target market, relevance to product selected, etc.

It is recommended that the main approaches to learning in the unit should be experiential and learner centred. It is suggested that a range of learning and teaching approaches are employed. These should be flexible and adaptable to meet the differing needs of learners and may include:

- ◆ teacher/tutor presentations
- ◆ independent student activities
- ◆ group work/activities
- ◆ discussions
- ◆ TV/DVD
- ◆ visits to travel/tourism businesses (eg Tourist Information Centres, travel agencies, visitor attractions, transport hubs)
- ◆ guest speakers from the travel and tourism industry
- ◆ case studies
- ◆ role play
- ◆ video
- ◆ self and peer review

In terms of developing customer service skills and personal qualities it is suggested that learners should be exposed to and observe a wide range of customer interactions, perhaps through work experience, work shadowing or independent or group visits to travel/tourism businesses. Feedback from observations could be used to build examples of best practice with learners subsequently given plenty of opportunity to implement and develop their skills within either a real or simulated environment. Video might be used to encourage learners to assess and reflect on their own performance in

practical exercises. Peer feedback may be a helpful tool in promoting individual and/or group learning.

Approaches to learning and teaching should recognise the varied customer service roles in travel and tourism which might include:

- ◆ Tourist Information Centre Advisor
- ◆ Travel Agent/Advisor
- ◆ Cabin Crew
- ◆ Resort Representative
- ◆ Tour Guide
- ◆ Tourist Guide
- ◆ Visitor Attraction Receptionist/Guide
- ◆ Airport Ground Crew

The needs and requirements of customers encountered within these different job roles will vary and, although learners will be required to develop generic customer service skills, centres may however wish to focus, depending on the needs of individual learners or groups of learners, on particular job roles. It is recognised that it is unlikely that all of these job roles will be available locally and, although links with local travel and tourism providers will help place learning in context, this should not limit the learners' experience where certain elements are not available, particularly where learners have a specific interest in developing customer service skills within a particular job role, for example working as Air Cabin Crew or as a Resort Representative. Tutors may wish to explore the possibility of a simulated work environment to support this learning and implement a range of the learning and teaching activities outlined above. This would also provide opportunity to produce evidence for the *Travel and Tourism: Employability* (National 5) unit.

Guidance on approaches to assessment of this unit

Evidence can be generated using different types of assessment. The following are suggestions only. There may be other methods that would be more suitable to learners.

Centres are reminded that prior verification of centre-devised assessments would help to ensure that the national standard is being met. Where learners experience a range of assessment methods, this helps them to develop different skills that should be transferable to work or further and higher education.

Evidence should be gathered at appropriate points throughout the unit under open-book conditions, ie learners should have access to their notes, books, the internet, etc. Evidence could be retained in a folio.

The learner will receive minimum support whilst generating the evidence required to achieve the national standard through each of the outcomes for the unit at SCQF level 5. This means that the teacher/lecturer may respond to specific questions from the learner to enable progress.

Outcome 1 requires learners to demonstrate that they can establish customer needs using effective communication skills and respond to these in an appropriate manner. Performance evidence is required which demonstrates, on one occasion, that the learner has used appropriate questioning techniques and listening techniques to establish detailed customer needs and has provided a range of suitable relevant

information, has identified and responded to non-verbal clues provided by the customer and has identified and acted on opportunities to exceed customer expectations.

In outcome 3 the learner is required to deal with a customer issue. Performance evidence is required which demonstrates, on one occasion, that the learner has dealt with a problem, identifying the nature of the specific problem, establishing why it has arisen, explaining organisational procedures and taking action to resolve the problem. In addition, the learner is required to provide written and/or orally recorded evidence in which they explain the importance of effective complaint handling and the impact of poor customer service and badly handled complaints.

Performance evidence could take the form of a role play within a simulated environment or be evidenced under supervision in a realistic working environment.

Performance evidence could be supported by an assessor observation checklist. If necessary, questioning may be used to supplement performance evidence if this does not fully cover the requirements of the outcomes. This could be recorded and retained as evidence.

Assessment may be holistic with the outcomes assessed concurrently, (for example, the performance evidence for outcomes 1 and 3).

For outcome 2 written and/or orally recorded evidence is required identifying the features and benefits of three selected products and/or services and of a further three complementary or alternative products/services. A folio of evidence could be produced by each learner. Learners progressing from *Customer Service in Travel and Tourism* (National 4) could be given the option to build upon and add to their folio of evidence. Evidence for the folio could be gathered throughout the unit as learners research the products and services offered in the travel and tourism industry and methods of promoting these. Performance, product or written and/or orally recorded evidence demonstrating a suitable method of promoting these products and/or services is required.

Evidence can be presented in a variety of formats, allowing the learner to choose a format or combination of formats which suits them best. This could include:

- ◆ e-portfolio
- ◆ written descriptions
- ◆ Powerpoint presentation
- ◆ personal blog or wiki
- ◆ poster/display
- ◆ video or broadcast
- ◆ talk

The information researched in outcome 2 may be evidenced in assessment for outcome 1 where learners are required to provide relevant information in response to customer needs. Learners may be able to demonstrate knowledge of specific products and demonstrate methods of promotion during customer interactions. Where such events occur these could be recorded and retained as performance evidence.

Where this unit is taken as part of the National 5 Travel and Tourism Skills for Work Course, practical settings and opportunities for the learner to develop and demonstrate their customer service skills could offer integration with the following Units:

- ◆ *Travel and Tourism: Employability* (National 5)
- ◆ *Travel and Tourism: Scotland* (National 5)
- ◆ *Travel and Tourism: UK and Worldwide* (National 5)

Opportunities for e-assessment

E-assessment may be appropriate for some assessments in this unit. By e-assessment we mean assessment which is supported by Information and Communication Technology (ICT), such as e-testing or the use of e-portfolios or social software. Centres which wish to use e-assessment must ensure that the national standard is applied to all learner evidence and that conditions of assessment as specified in the Evidence Requirements are met, regardless of the mode of gathering evidence. The most up-to-date guidance on the use of e-assessment to support SQA's qualifications is available at www.sqa.org.uk/e-assessment.

Opportunities for developing Core Skills

There is no automatic certification of Core Skills or Core Skill components in this unit. The completion of this unit will highlight, through self-reflection, the learner's progress against all of the Core and Essential Skills.

Communication

The delivery and assessment of this unit may offer opportunities to develop this Core Skill. Oral Communication involves using vocabulary and a range of spoken language structures appropriate to purpose and audience. This can be demonstrated in outcome 1 where learners are required to respond to customer needs by listening, questioning and responding appropriately. Also, in outcome 3 where learners have to deal with a customer issue and take appropriate action to resolve this issue. There will be a strong focus on the opportunity for further development in listening and talking as learners identify and practice skills in interacting with customers, listening and asking questions to determine requirements and responding verbally with appropriate information.

Working Co-operatively with Others

The delivery and assessment of this unit may offer opportunities to develop this Core Skill. Working Co-operatively with Others involves actively providing relevant and appropriate support to others. This can be demonstrated in outcome 1 and 3 where learners are required to respond to customer needs and deal with a customer issue. Learners may have the opportunity for work experience or work shadowing providing them with experience of workplace conditions, dealing with colleagues and customers and learning about working as part of a team. The unit offers opportunities for developing transferable practical customer service and communication skills and building self-confidence. Skills in innovation could be further developed through Identifying, and presenting, information, products and services to meet customer needs and identifying opportunities for sales.

Problem Solving

The delivery and assessment of this unit may offer opportunities to develop the Core Skill. Problem Solving is about using analysis and reasoning to make decisions and to create and suggest ideas, courses of action and strategies. This can be demonstrated in outcome 3 where learners have to deal with a customer issue by identifying the nature of the issue along with the reasons for this issue arising. The learner has to ensure that they take appropriate action to resolve the customer issue through analysis, reasoning and suggesting a course of action. Learners could further develop their understanding of the importance and impact of customer service, exploring and understanding customer needs and requirements and apply knowledge by matching available information, products and services to meet the identified needs of customers.

General information for learners

Unit title: Travel and Tourism: Customer Service (National 5)

This section will help you decide whether this is the unit for you by explaining what the unit is about, what you should know or be able to do before you start, what you will need to do during the unit and opportunities for further learning and employment.

The main purpose of this unit is to introduce you to the importance and principles of Customer Service and to identify and develop the skills and qualities required to meet customer expectations in a travel and tourism environment.

There are three outcomes in this unit.

- ◆ Outcome 1 focuses on establishing and responding to customer needs, dealing effectively with routine customer interactions. You will be asked to demonstrate that you can establish customer needs in a positive and helpful manner.
- ◆ Outcome 2 focuses on promoting a range of travel and tourism products and/or services, identifying features and benefits and exploring different ways of promoting these to customers.
- ◆ Outcome 3 requires you to deal with a customer issue. You will be asked to demonstrate that you can use communication and problem solving skills in dealing with, and resolving, customer issues.

Throughout this unit, you will explore who our customers are in a range of travel and tourism contexts, and their possible needs and requirements, including particular needs (for example these may include: customers with disabilities; families; business travellers; overseas visitors).

You may have the opportunity to progress to:

- ◆ other travel and tourism units and/or qualifications
- ◆ employment
- ◆ further education or training

Administrative information

Published: February 2013

Superclass: BA

History of changes to National unit Specification

Version	Description of change	Date
2.0	Unit moved into a new template. No change to unit content.	25/05/2017

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