



Group Award Specification for:

NPA in Customer Service at SCQF level 4

NPA in Customer Service at SCQF level 5

NPA in Customer Service at SCQF level 6

Group Award Code: GP84 44, GP85 45, GP86 46

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Contents

1	Introduction.....	1
2	Qualifications structure	4
	2.1 Structure.....	4
3	Aims of the qualifications	5
	3.1 General aims of the qualifications	5
	3.2 Specific aims of the qualifications	5
4	Recommended entry to the qualifications	6
	4.1 Core Skills entry profile	6
5	Additional benefits of the qualification in meeting employer needs.....	7
	5.1 Mapping of qualification aims to units	8
	5.2 Mapping of National Occupational Standards (NOS)	10
	5.3 Mapping of Core Skills development opportunities across the qualifications	11
	5.4 Assessment strategy for the qualifications	12
6	Guidance on approaches to delivery and assessment.....	14
	6.1 Sequencing/integration of units.....	15
	6.2 Recognition of prior learning	15
	6.2.1 Articulation and/or progression.....	16
	6.3 Opportunities for e-assessment	16
	6.4 Support materials.....	16
	6.5 Resource requirements.....	16
7	General information for centres	17
8	Glossary of terms	18
9	General information for learners	20

1 Introduction

This document was previously known as the arrangements document. The purpose of this document is to:

- ◆ assist centres to implement, deliver and manage the qualification.
- ◆ provide a guide for new staff involved in offering the qualification.
- ◆ inform course managers, teaching staff, assessors, learners, employers and HEIs of the aims and purpose of the qualification.
- ◆ provide details of the range of learners the qualification is suitable for and progression opportunities.

Rationale for the development of the award

Customer service impacts on all occupational sectors. Employees working in, for example, hotels, retail outlets, travel organisations, beauty therapy, hairdressing, sports centres, local authorities or voluntary organisations all require effective customer service skills and knowledge.

Instructus Skills (formerly known as Skills CFA, the UK's leading cross-sector apprenticeship authority and government-recognised standard setting body for customer service) stated on its website (August 2016) that, *as an occupational group, it is difficult to determine the exact size of the workforce involved in delivering customer service, however in 2010 it was estimated that just over 2.5 million people were employed in sales and customer service occupations across the UK. Employers across all sectors are giving increasing attention to the quality of service they provide to customers. This focus is being driven by the demands of customers who have increasingly higher expectations alongside a more individualised service.*

Behind the increasing importance of customer service are three major drivers for change:

- ◆ The UK economy is increasingly service-led; 80% of employment is now based on services.
- ◆ Technology has promoted the globalisation of communication and commerce by reducing the importance of national and geographic boundaries.
- ◆ Across all sectors, the use of social media is changing the relationship between organisations and their customers in terms of expectations, loyalty and power.

SQA has therefore developed a suite of group awards and units in customer service and the following National Progression Awards (NPAs) are part of this suite:

- ◆ NPA in Customer Service at SCQF level 4
- ◆ NPA in Customer Service at SCQF level 5
- ◆ NPA in Customer Service at SCQF level 6

Employees in customer service sectors increasingly need transferrable skills to operate across different environments. The growing use of social media has created a need for new digital knowledge and skills, as well as adaptability in communicating with customers.

This new suite of NPAs provides opportunities for learners to develop the ability to communicate effectively, use social media in a customer service context, and understand product and service requirements in customer service.

The different levels of these NPAs provide flexibility and allow centres to deliver the qualification that best meets the needs and abilities of learners.

The awards have been developed by a Qualifications Development Team (QDT) with representation from schools, colleges, community enterprise programmes and outreach services.

These NPAs in Customer Service are suitable for delivery in the senior phase of secondary school/college, or by training providers in potential partnership with local employers.

Title and aims of the award

The QDT had considerable discussion on the title of the NPAs, but it was felt that the generic 'Customer Service' title was the best fit for the units making up the NPAs.

The NPAs in Customer Service allow learners to gain knowledge and practical skills for working in a customer service sector.

These qualifications can be awarded either on a unit by unit basis, or as group awards at SCQF levels 4, 5 and 6.

Target group

There is a wide target group for the NPAs in Customer Service. The NPAs are suitable for those interested in dealing with customers or gaining employment in customer service in a wide variety of organisations and sectors. The qualifications are also suitable for preparation for a work placement, or for learners currently employed in customer service who wish to enhance their skills and knowledge.

No prior knowledge or experience in customer service is needed to undertake these NPAs.

Employment opportunities

Learners achieving the NPAs in Customer Service at SCQF levels 4, 5 or 6 should have enhanced their customer service skills and knowledge and be able to apply these to a real situation. Therefore, they will be able to provide professional customer service to the benefit of themselves and to the organisations which they work for now or in the future.

As noted above, a wide range of customer service roles are available for those achieving the NPAs, across organisations in the public, private and voluntary sectors. These could include customer service support roles face to face with the public, over the telephone, or even through social media platforms or by increasingly popular online chat services.

Entry and progression routes

The table below provides examples of progression pathways to and from the NPAs in Customer Service.

Progression pathways

SCQF level	NQ/NPA/NC	HNC/HND	Work-based
10	Honours degree eg, BA (Hons) Marketing, BA (Hons) Business		
9	Ordinary degree eg, BA Marketing, BA Business		
8		HND Marketing HND Business	SVQ in Customer Service at SCQF level 8 PDA in Customer Service within a Public Sector Organisation
7		HNC Marketing HNC Business	
6	NPA in Customer Service NPA Business Skills		SVQ in Customer Service at SCQF level 6
5	NPA in Customer Service Award in Customer Service Principles and Practice NPA in Business and Marketing		SVQ in Customer Service at SCQF level 5 Award in Customer Service
4	NPA in Customer Service NPA in Business and Marketing		SVQ in Customer Service at SCQF level 4
3	Award in Personal Development		

While the NPAs in Customer Service at SCQF levels 4, 5 and 6 are not designed for progression through the levels, due to considerable overlap in content between the levels, centres may deem this appropriate for particular learners and there are no barriers to using the awards in this way. Centres are best placed to make this decision based on needs of the individual learner.

The three levels of NPA allow flexibility in delivery for centres with mixed ability classes.

2 Qualifications structure

Each group award is made up of 3 SQA unit credits, comprising 18 SCQF credit points. A mapping of Core Skills development opportunities is available in Section 5.3.

2.1 Structure

NPA in Customer Service (SCQF level 4)

4 code	2 code	Unit title	SQA credit	SCQF credit points	SCQF level
J2GA	44	Communication Skills for Customer Service	1	6	4
J2GG	44	Social Media for Customer Service	1	6	4
J2GD	44	Customer Service: Product and Service Requirements	1	6	4

NPA in Customer Service (SCQF level 5)

4 code	2 code	Unit title	SQA credit	SCQF credit points	SCQF level
J2GB	45	Communication Skills for Customer Service	1	6	5
J2GK	45	Social Media for Customer Service	1	6	5
J2GE	45	Customer Service: Product and Service Requirements	1	6	5

NPA in Customer Service (SCQF level 6)

4 code	2 code	Unit title	SQA credit	SCQF credit points	SCQF level
J2GC	46	Communication Skills for Customer Service	1	6	6
J2GL	46	Social Media for Customer Service	1	6	6
J2GF	46	Customer Service: Product and Service Requirements	1	6	6

3 Aims of the qualifications

The NPAs in Customer Service are designed to provide learners with the skills and knowledge in communication, social media and product and service knowledge that will enable them to provide professional customer service.

3.1 General aims of the qualifications

In general, the NPAs in Customer Service will:

- 1 Enhance learners' digital skills
- 2 Enhance learners' employability skills
- 3 Develop transferable skills, including Core Skills
- 4 Enhance learners' confidence and self-belief
- 5 Enable progression to further generic and/or customer service qualifications within the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF)

3.2 Specific aims of the qualifications

More specifically, the NPAs in Customer Service will provide learners with the opportunity to:

SCQF level 4

- 6 Develop practical customer service skills and knowledge
- 7 Develop basic communication skills and skills in working with others
- 8 Develop basic knowledge and skills in the use of social media for customer service

SCQF level 5

- 9 Develop practical skills and knowledge in delivering customer service through social media
- 10 Develop skills and knowledge required for dealing effectively with customer needs, including customer dissatisfaction
- 11 Develop enhanced communication skills and skills in working with others
- 12 Develop research skills and an awareness of the importance of product knowledge in meeting customer needs

SCQF level 6

- 13 Investigate the theory of communication in relation to customer service
- 14 Develop good communication skills using various methods of communication and enhance listening, clarifying and summarising skills
- 15 Evaluate the use of advanced technology in the delivery of customer service through social media
- 16 Develop an understanding of the importance of product/service knowledge in meeting and exceeding customer needs

4 Recommended entry to the qualifications

Entry to this qualification is at the discretion of the centre. The following information on prior knowledge, skills, experience or qualifications that provide suitable preparation for this qualification has been provided by the Qualification Design Team (QDT) as guidance only.

This award should be open to all learners where centres feel there is a realistic chance of achievement. Please see information provided in the Core Skills entry profile section below.

4.1 Core Skills entry profile

The Core Skill entry profile covers the NPAs in Customer Service at SCQF levels 4, 5 and 6, providing a summary of the associated assessment activities which exemplify why a particular level has been recommended for these qualifications. The information could be used to identify if additional learning support needs to be put in place for learners whose Core Skills profile is below the recommended entry level, or whether learners should be encouraged to undertake an alternative level or learning programme.

To begin a NPA in Customer Service, the learner should ideally have a SCQF entry level at one level below that of the group award, as detailed in the following tables. A range of assessment activities are listed which exemplify the need for this. These will develop the learner's Core Skills profile to that of the Group Award on completion of the award.

NPA in Customer Service at SCQF level 4 (GP84 44)

Core Skill	Recommended SCQF entry profile	Associated assessment activities
Communication	SCQF level 3	Verbally communicating with a customer demonstrating appropriate tone, pitch, volume, eye contact, body language, listening skills, etc.
Problem Solving	SCQF level 3	Gathering information on a problem using open and closed questions and explaining actions to resolve the issue.
Working with Others	SCQF level 3	Demonstrating a positive and helpful attitude with customers.

NPA in Customer Service at SCQF level 5 (GP85 45)

Core Skill	Recommended SCQF entry profile	Associated assessment activities
Communication	SCQF level 4	Outlining the legal and ethical requirements when interacting with customers using social media.
Information and Communication Technology (ICT)	SCQF level 4	While there is no requirement for learners to use IT, they do need to evaluate the different features of a number of different social media platforms.
Problem Solving	SCQF level 4	Dealing with complex customer complaints.
Working with Others	SCQF level 4	Applying interpersonal skills to establish and maintain positive interaction with a customer.

NPA in Customer Service at SCQF level 6 (GP86 46)

Core Skill	Recommended SCQF entry profile	Associated assessment activities
Communication	SCQF level 5	Explaining the different types of social media platform that can be used to interact with customers and the features and benefits of a range of products and/or services.
Information and Communication Technology (ICT)	SCQF level 5	Investigating an organisation and its products and services, which is likely to involve accessing information through the internet.
Problem Solving	SCQF level 5	Evaluating the quality of customer service by seeking customer views and proposing ways of achieving improvements.
Working with Others	SCQF level 5	Working with others in the design and evaluation of a customer service policy.

5 Additional benefits of the qualification in meeting employer needs

These qualifications were designed to meet a specific purpose and what follows are details on how that purpose has been met through mapping of the units to the aims of the qualifications. Through meeting the aims, additional value has been achieved by linking the unit standards with those defined in national occupational standards and/or trade/professional body requirements. In addition, significant opportunities exist for learners to develop the more generic skills, known as Core Skills, through doing this qualification.

5.1 Mapping of qualification aims to units

Code	Unit title	Aims															
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
SCQF level 4																	
J2GA 44	Communication Skills for Customer Service		X	X	X	X	X	X									
J2GG 44	Social Media for Customer Service	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X								
J2GD 44	Customer Service: Product and Service Requirements		X	X	X	X	X	X									
SCQF level 5																	
J2GB 45	Communication Skills for Customer Service		X	X	X	X					X	X					
J2GK 45	Social Media for Customer Service	X	X	X	X	X				X							
J2GE 45	Customer Service: Product and Service Requirements		X	X	X	X					X	X	X				
SCQF level 6																	
J2GC 46	Communication Skills for Customer Service		X	X	X	X								X	X		
J2GL 46	Social Media for Customer Service	X	X	X	X	X										X	
J2GF 46	Customer Service: Product and Service Requirements		X	X	X	X											X

General aims

- 1 Enhance learners' digital skills
- 2 Enhance learners' employability skills
- 3 Develop transferable skills, including Core Skills
- 4 Enhance learners' confidence and self-belief
- 5 Enable progression to further generic and/or customer service qualifications within the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF)

Group Award Specification: NPA in Customer Service at SCQF level 4 (GP84 44)

NPA in Customer Service at SCQF level 5 (GP85 45)

NPA in Customer Service at SCQF level 6 (GP86 46)

Specific aims — SCQF level 4

- 6 Develop practical customer service skills and knowledge
- 7 Develop basic communication skills and skills in working with others
- 8 Develop basic knowledge and skills in the use of social media for customer service

Specific aims — SCQF level 5

- 9 Develop practical skills and knowledge in delivering customer service through social media
- 10 Develop skills and knowledge required for dealing effectively with customer needs, including customer dissatisfaction
- 11 Develop enhanced communication skills and skills in working with others
- 12 Develop research skills and an awareness of the importance of product knowledge in meeting customer needs

Specific aims — SCQF level 6

- 13 Investigate the theory of communication in relation to customer service
- 14 Develop good communication skills using various methods of communication and enhance listening, clarifying and summarising skills
- 15 Evaluate the use of advanced technology in the delivery of customer service through social media
- 16 Develop an understanding of the importance of product/service knowledge in meeting and exceeding customer needs

5.2 Mapping of National Occupational Standards (NOS)

Code	Unit title	National Occupational Standard		
SCQF level 4				
J2GA 44	Communication Skills for Customer Service	CFACSF1	CFACSC2	CFACSC1
J2GG 44	Social Media for Customer Service	CFACSC1	CFACSF1	
J2GD 44	Customer Service: Product and Service Requirements	CFACSC1	CFACSF1	

Code	Unit title	National Occupational Standard			
SCQF level 5					
J2GB 45	Communication Skills for Customer Service	CFACSF2	CFACSB2	CFACSB6	CFACSB17
J2GK 45	Social Media for Customer Service	CFACSB7	CFACSA13	CFACSA19	
J2GE 45	Customer Service: Product and Service Requirements	CFACSF2	CFACSA5		

Code	Unit title	National Occupational Standard		
SCQF level 6				
J2GC 46	Communication Skills for Customer Service	CFACSC5	CFACSD8	CFACSD13
J2GL 46	Social Media for Customer Service	CFACSC5	CFACSA13	CFACSD13
J2GF 46	Customer Service: Product and Service Requirements	CFACSC5	CFACSA15	

CFACSA13	Deal with customers in writing or electronically
CFACSA15	Organise the promotion of additional services or products to customers
CFACSA19	Deal with customers using a social media platform
CFACSA5	Promote additional services or products to customers
CFACSB2	Deliver reliable customer service
CFACSB6	Use questioning techniques when delivering customer service
CFACSB7	Deal with customers using bespoke software
CFACSC1	Recognise and deal with customer queries, requests and problems
CFACSC2	Take details of customer service problems
CFACSC5	Monitor and solve customer service problems
CFACSD13	Monitor the quality of customer service transactions
CFACSD8	Work with others to improve customer service
CFACSF1	Communicate in a customer service environment
CFACSF2	Deliver customer service within the rules

Group Award Specification: NPA in Customer Service at SCQF level 4 (GP84 44)

NPA in Customer Service at SCQF level 5 (GP85 45)

NPA in Customer Service at SCQF level 6 (GP86 46)

5.3 Mapping of Core Skills development opportunities across the qualifications

NPA in Customer Service at SCQF level 4

Unit code	Unit title	Communication			Numeracy		ICT		Problem Solving			Working with Others	
		Written (Reading)	Written (Writing)	Oral	Using Number	Using Graphical Information	Accessing Information	Providing/ Creating Information	Critical Thinking	Planning and Organising	Reviewing and Evaluating	Working Co-operatively with Others	Reviewing Co-operative Contribution
J2GA 44	Communication Skills for Customer Service	S	S	S					S			S	S
J2GG 44	Social Media for Customer Service	S	S	S			S	S					
J2GD 44	Customer Service: Product and Service Requirements	S	S	S			S	S				S	S

NPA in Customer Service at SCQF level 5

J2GB 45	Communication Skills for Customer Service	S	S	S					S			S	S
J2GK 45	Social Media for Customer Service	S	S	S			S	S					
J2GE 45	Customer Service: Product and Service Requirements	S	S	S			S	S				S	S

NPA in Customer Service at SCQF level 6

J2GC 46	Communication Skills for Customer Service	S	S	S					S			S	S
J2GL 46	Social Media for Customer Service	S	S	S			S	S					
J2GF 46	Customer Service: Product and Service Requirements	S	S	S			S	S	S				

Group Award Specification: NPA in Customer Service at SCQF level 4 (GP84 44)

NPA in Customer Service at SCQF level 5 (GP85 45)

NPA in Customer Service at SCQF level 6 (GP86 46)

5.4 Assessment strategy for the qualifications

SCQF level 4

Unit	Assessment		
	Outcome 1	Outcome 2	Outcome 3
Communication Skills for Customer Service (J2GA 44)	Open-book, controlled conditions Short report	Open-book, controlled conditions Role play, scenario	Open-book, controlled conditions Role play, scenario
Social Media for Customer Service (J2GG 44)	Open-book, controlled conditions Research project with findings recorded via blog, wiki, discussion forum or other collaborative software		Open-book, controlled conditions Scenario-based multiple choice test
Customer Service: Product and Service Requirements (J2GD 44)	Open-book Investigation and short report	Open-book Performance evidence (eg, role play) supplemented by questioning	

SCQF level 5

Unit	Assessment		
	Outcome 1	Outcome 2	Outcome 3
Communication Skills for Customer Service (J2GB 45)	Open-book, controlled conditions Research project	Observation checklists Observation of learner in different customer care situations in real or simulated practical scenarios	
Social Media for Customer Service (J2GK 45)	Open-book, controlled conditions Research project with findings recorded via blog, wiki, discussion forum or other collaborative software		
Customer Service: Product and Service Requirements (J2GE 45)	Open-book Written/oral evidence	Performance evidence supplemented by questioning	

SCQF level 6

Unit	Assessment		
	Outcome 1	Outcome 2	Outcome 3
Communication Skills for Customer Service (J2GC 46)	Open-book, controlled conditions Short report/assessor's checklist Observation of learner in different customer care situations in real or simulated practical scenarios	Research project	N/A
Social Media for Customer Service (J2GL 46)	Open-book, controlled conditions Research project with findings recorded via blog, wiki, discussion forum or other collaborative software		
Customer Service: Product and Service Requirements (J2GF 46)	Open-book Research project/report/folio	Small research project covering qualitative and quantitative customer feedback	

6 Guidance on approaches to delivery and assessment

The NPAs in Customer Service are intended for delivery to school pupils in the senior phase, and other learners including college students or mature learners wishing to find out more about customer service.

These NPAs allow learners to develop skills and knowledge in modern customer service environments, which are fast changing with the introduction of internet shopping and social media. Learners must demonstrate the ability to manage information and communicate effectively.

The NPAs in Customer Service are designed to be flexible in terms of delivery and may be used differently to suit the particular requirements of different centres. The NPAs are small awards (3 SQA credits/18 SCQF credits) and can be delivered in schools and colleges as part of general course provision, either as a free-standing qualification or as part of a full-time course in conjunction with other complementary NPAs and free-standing units. The NPAs can also be used in conjunction with relevant work placements.

Training providers may deliver these NPAs in partnership with employers as free-standing qualifications for customer service staff or as an introduction to the Modern Apprenticeship in Customer Service.

The delivery and assessment of these NPA units is intended to be of a practical nature wherever possible, reflecting the practical nature of customer service.

Learning and teaching approaches could include:

- ◆ Role play
- ◆ Simulated workplace environments
- ◆ Individual and group work reinforced by handouts and worksheets
- ◆ Internet research
- ◆ Work placement visits
- ◆ Visiting speakers
- ◆ Learner presentations
- ◆ E-assessment supported by ICT, e-portfolios and checklists

These methods are indicative and neither mandatory nor exhaustive.

Since a major part of the customer service industry makes use of social media, it is advisable that learners should be encouraged to become familiar with the wide range of social media platforms that are in common use for customer service.

Centres should consider the inclusion of the following topics: data protection (GDPR); misuse of mobile phones, tablets and computers; 'dos' and 'don'ts' of social networking sites and the ability to handle difficult customers.

The social media units have been written in such a way as to allow centres to use actual social media platforms or, where this is not possible, to cover the requirements of the unit through other means, eg, scenarios with screen shots.

There are opportunities for integrated learning and assessment across units and where possible a holistic approach should be taken to the delivery and assessment of the group award.

6.1 Sequencing/integration of units

The NPAs in Customer Service embrace Curriculum for Excellence, with specific opportunities for:

- ◆ Learning through self-development and team working
- ◆ Contributing and sharing values within customer services environments
- ◆ Accepting responsibility on a personal and task related basis

While sequencing of units is at the discretion of centres, it is suggested that the *Communication Skills for Customer Service* unit is delivered prior to the *Social Media for Customer Service* or *Customer Service: Product and Service Requirements* units, given the importance of communication skills to both these units and in general to a customer service environment.

The structure of the qualifications allows centres a degree of flexibility in delivery. The awards could be offered:

- ◆ In a practical setting which could be within the learner's current place of employment, a placement scenario or a simulated practical learning environment.
- ◆ As a full-time short programme, day release, or evening class.
- ◆ Using a combination of delivery styles. For example, learners may want to study on a half-day/evening basis or combine evening (or day release) study with some distance/open/online learning.

6.2 Recognition of prior learning

SQA recognises that learners gain knowledge and skills acquired through formal, non-formal and informal learning contexts.

In some instances, a full group award may be achieved through the recognition of prior learning. However, it is unlikely that a learner would have the appropriate prior learning and experience to meet all the requirements of a full group award.

The recognition of prior learning may **not** be used as a method of assessing in the following types of units and assessments:

- ◆ HN Graded Units
- ◆ Course and/or external assessments
- ◆ Other integrative assessment units (which may or not be graded)
- ◆ Certain types of assessment instruments where the standard may be compromised by not using the same assessment method outlined in the unit
- ◆ Where there is an existing requirement for a licence to practice
- ◆ Where there are specific health and safety requirements
- ◆ Where there are regulatory, professional or other statutory requirements
- ◆ Where otherwise specified in an assessment strategy

More information and guidance on the *Recognition of Prior Learning* (RPL) may be found on our website www.sqa.org.uk.

The following sub-sections outline how existing SQA unit(s) may contribute to this group award. Additionally, they also outline how this group award may be recognised for professional and articulation purposes.

6.2.1 Articulation and/or progression

Section one highlights potential progression routes to and from the NPAs in Customer Service.

The NPAs in Customer Service are not designed for progression through the levels, as there is considerable overlap in content between the levels. The three levels of NPA also allow flexibility in delivery for centres with mixed ability classes.

6.3 Opportunities for e-assessment

There are many opportunities for e-assessment in these awards, particularly within the *Social Media for Customer Service* units, with the use of e-portfolios or social media software.

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.

6.4 Support materials

Assessment support packs are available which reinforce the practical aspects of the unit specifications, as well as setting a common standard across centres.

6.5 Resource requirements

Centres delivering these NPAs must have the necessary quality assurance systems in place for delivery of the awards. All staff involved must have the necessary occupational skills and experience for delivery of all three units.

Centre partnerships with employers may allow learners to gain experience in a real customer service environment, as long as health and safety legislations have been covered.

The following resources are desirable for centres to provide a meaningful learning experience for learners:

- ◆ Access to the internet to undertake research on various organisations and their customer service policies and standards
- ◆ Access to social media platforms to allow learners to consider the use of social media in providing customer service.

7 General information for centres

Equality and inclusion

The unit specifications making up this group award have been designed to ensure that there are no unnecessary barriers to learning or assessment. The individual needs of learners will 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.

Internal and external verification

All assessments used within this/these qualification(s) should be internally verified, using the appropriate policy within the centre and the guidelines set by SQA.

External verification will be carried out by SQA to ensure that internal assessment is within the national guidelines for these qualifications.

Further information on internal and external verification can be found in *SQA's Guide to Assessment* (www.sqa.org.uk/GuideToAssessment).

8 Glossary of terms

Embedded Core Skills: is where the assessment evidence for the unit also includes full evidence for complete Core Skill or Core Skill components. A learner successfully completing the unit will be automatically certificated for the Core Skill. (This depends on the unit having been successfully audited and validated for Core Skills certification.)

Finish date: The end of a group award's lapsing period is known as the finish date. After the finish date, the group award will no longer be live and the following applies:

- ◆ learners may not be entered for the group award
- ◆ the group award will continue to exist only as an archive record on the Awards Processing System (APS)

Lapsing date: When a group award is entered into its lapsing period, the following will apply:

- ◆ the group award will be deleted from the relevant catalogue
- ◆ the group award specification will remain until the qualification reaches its finish date at which point it will be removed from SQA's website and archived
- ◆ no new centres may be approved to offer the group award
- ◆ centres should only enter learners whom they expect to complete the group award during the defined lapsing period

SQA credit value: The credit value allocated to a unit gives an indication of the contribution the unit makes to an SQA group award. An SQA credit value of 1 given to an SQA unit represents approximately 40 hours of programmed learning, teaching and assessment.

SCQF: The Scottish Credit and Qualification Framework (SCQF) provides the national common framework for describing all relevant programmes of learning and qualifications in Scotland. SCQF terminology is used throughout this guide to refer to credits and levels. For further information on the SCQF visit the SCQF website at www.scqf.org.uk.

SCQF credit points: SCQF credit points provide a means of describing and comparing the amount of learning that is required to complete a qualification at a given level of the Framework. One National Unit credit is equivalent to 6 SCQF credit points. One National Unit credit at Advanced Higher and one Higher National Unit credit (irrespective of level) is equivalent to 8 SCQF credit points.

SCQF levels: The level a qualification is assigned within the framework is an indication of how hard it is to achieve. The SCQF covers 12 levels of learning. HNCs and HNDs are available at SCQF levels 7 and 8 respectively. Higher National Units will normally be at levels 6–9 and graded units will be at level 7 and 8. National Qualification Group Awards are available at SCQF levels 2–6 and will normally be made up of National Units which are available from SCQF levels 2–7.

Signposted Core Skills: refers to opportunities to develop Core Skills arise in learning and teaching but are not automatically certificated.

History of changes

It is anticipated that changes will take place during the life of the qualification and this section will record these changes. This document is the latest version and incorporates the changes summarised below. Centres are advised to check SQA's APS Navigator to confirm they are using the up to date qualification structure.

NOTE: Where a unit is revised by another unit:

- ◆ No new centres may be approved to offer the unit which has been revised.
- ◆ Centres should only enter learners for the unit which has been revised where they are expected to complete the unit before its finish date.

Version Number	Description	Date

Acknowledgement

SQA acknowledges the valuable contribution that Scotland's colleges have made to the development of this qualification.

9 General information for learners

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

The purpose of the National Progression Awards (NPAs) in Customer Service is to develop the skills and knowledge essential to providing customer service. The customer service industry is fast growing and gaining a NPA in Customer Service could provide you with employment opportunities in a range of different customer care industries — for example, hotels, retail outlets, sport centres, railway stations, airports or call centres.

You can undertake the NPA in Customer Service at SCQF levels 4, 5 or 6. You might complete the NPA as part of a work placement, although it is not essential that you are in a work placement to achieve the award.

The awards are each made up of three mandatory customer service units. These cover communication, social media, and products and service requirements in customer service. The units build on each other, becoming more complex and challenging at each level.

During this award, you will gain an understanding of the importance of communicating with customers effectively, the different social media platforms used to deliver customer service, and skills in engaging with customers, both face-to-face and through social media. Depending on the level of award you undertake, you may also develop your awareness of customer service and social media policies, the structure and roles which exist within organisations, and the key role of product and /or service knowledge in providing customer care.

The units in these awards can be assessed in a variety of ways, for example through practical exercises such as role plays, or through observation during work placements. You will also carry out research into areas of customer service and may be asked to present your findings through discussion or in a portfolio.

There may be opportunities to develop the Core Skills of *Communication, Information and Communication Technology (ICT), Problem Solving* and *Working with Others* during these awards although there is no automatic certification of these Core Skills.