

CUSTOMER SERVICE SPECIALIST APPRENTICESHIP LEVEL 3



For new or existing staff

This apprenticeship standard is suitable for professionals who provide direct customer support within all sectors and organisation types. Apprentices will demonstrate their ability to deal with more complex and technical customer requests, complaints and queries, as well as gathering and analysing data and customer information that influences change and improvements in service. Apprentices will utilise both organisational and generic IT systems to carry out their role with an awareness of digital technologies. This apprenticeship is suitable for customer service professionals working in many environments, including contact centres, retail, webchat, the service industry and any other customer service point.

Qualification

Customer Service Specialist Standard

Completion of this apprenticeship will lead to eligibility to join the Institute of Customer Service as an individual member at Professional level. Should you choose to progress on a customer service path, you may be eligible for further professional membership including management.

Completers may want to progress to Customer Service career path

Delivery model and duration:

Workplace delivery with a structured scheme of work.

Duration: 18 months plus up to 3 months End Point Assessment

Ideal for:

- Team Leader
- Customer Service
- Supervisor/Manager
- Contact Centre Supervisor/Manager
- Customer Relationship Manager

The apprenticeship will cover the following core areas:

- Impact of service provision on wider organisation
- Industry best practices
- Solutions to organisational needs and customer requirements
- Understanding costs
- Customer relationship management
- Personal service goals
- Adaptability
- Communication and personal presentation

Benefits to business:

- Apprentices provide skilled workers for the future
- Apprenticeships increase staff loyalty and retention
- Apprenticeships increase a company's productivity
- Apprentices can revitalise a company

Entry Criteria:

- GCSEs in English and maths grade 9 - 4 or A* - C

Benefits for learners:

- Apprentices are paid at least the apprenticeship minimum wage with many employers paying more
- Gain a nationally recognised qualification that can lead to higher education as well as full time employment
- Gain genuine, consistent work experience
- Getting into employment earlier means there's potential for you to progress in your career quickly

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End Point Assessment

The End Point Assessment will test the entire Standard, and be undertaken as follows:

- Practical Observation with Q&A's
- Work Base Project supported by an interview
- Professional Discussion

Components

English and Mathematics qualifications completed in line with the apprenticeship funding rules.

Unit

Overview

Organise and Deliver Customer Service

This unit focuses on the requirements for organising and delivering customer service. Your role may or may not involve supervisory or management responsibilities but you will be expected to take some responsibility for the resources and systems you use that support the service you give. You will learn about implications for customer service when promoting products and/or services. You will learn who should be involved in the organisation of customer service delivery and about the importance of differentiating between customers' wants, needs and expectations. You will understand how customers are segmented for the purpose of providing customer service delivery and how the analysis of the 'customer journey' is undertaken. Through your job role you will demonstrate your ability to plan for the delivery of customer service and your competence in delivering it.

Understand the Customer Service Environment

In this unit you will learn how different customer service models and standards support the structure of customer service and the costs and benefits of this service to an organisation. You will learn about the link between customer service and the process of continuous improvement and how customers' expectations are formed. You will gain an understanding of how organisations measure the effectiveness of the customer service they provide, how customer service can sometimes fail and how problems can be rectified. You will gain an understanding of the importance of 'brand', how an organisation's brand can affect customers' perceptions and how good or bad service can have an impact on that brand. You will also learn about consumer legislation and data protection and how they affect customer service.

Resolve Customer's Problems

In this unit you will learn how to deal with customer problems in a way that provides a positive outcome for the customer and the organisation. You will understand the different techniques that can be used for monitoring customer problems and how the resolution of customers' problems can not only inform improvements to the service the organisation provides, but also contributes to customer loyalty and business performance. You will be able to assess the suitability of a range of potential solutions for customers' problems and explain these to customers, including their benefits and drawbacks. You will also be able to negotiate solutions that meet customers' and organisational requirements, whilst adhering to organisational policies and procedures and legal and ethical requirements.

Principles of Business

This unit gives you an opportunity to consider the importance of innovation in meeting business objectives. You will consider the benefits, risks and implications of innovation to a business. You will explore the different models of business innovation and how they can be used to plan and support new ways of working, or to develop new products and services. You will go on to gain an understanding of financial terminology and financial management to improve your business skills. You will consider the importance of financial viability. Knowing how budgets are used and managed will help you to understand the consequences of poor financial management.

Understand Customers and Customer Retention

In this unit you will gain an understanding of how good customer relationships help to retain customers and how this benefits an organisation. You will learn how customer service organisations use customer service data to measure customer satisfaction and organisational performance in order to set objectives for organisational improvements.

Manage Personal and Professional Development

This unit focuses on the learning processes that underpin the development of personal and professional skills. The Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) defines continuing professional development (CPD) as 'the need for individuals to keep up to date with rapidly changing knowledge' and in this unit you will learn how to identify and evaluate your own personal and professional development needs.