NVQs in Customer Service Levels 1 - 4
31 August 2011

1. The qualifications and standards

- **Structure and content**

Assessment Team:	Findings:
	Overall centres are providing solid evidence of CPD against the customer service standards. Assessors and Internal Quality Assurance personal hold relevant assessment and/or IQA qualifications or have counter-signatories in place. Overall, centres ensure that members of the assessment team are available for interview by the External Verifier. Where there are weaknesses within centres, the External Verifiers have provided recommendations and/or action points. These have included: • Updating of CPD activities to reflect current customer service standards • Attendance at OCR training events • Requests to see original assessor/internal quality assurance certificates • Timescales for achievement of relevant qualifications .
Resources:	Findings: There has been an increase in centres trialling E-portfolios with their candidates with very positive results. Centres are advised, however, to ensure that the e-portfolio system they use reflect the current standards. It is the responsibility of the centre if there are anomalies identified during an External Verification visit. There is also an increase in the use of digital recorders for recording discussions between assessors and candidates and assessors and expert witnesses.

	A number of centres have created workbooks for their candidates to use in order to provide evidence of knowledge. Weaknesses in relation to resources, is usually connected to assessment personnel and this has tended to be due to redundancies or centres closing.
Candidate Support:	**Findings:** External Verifiers reported that the majority of centres provide excellent candidate support. This was also confirmed by many of the candidates during the interview process with the External Verifier. Support has included: • Good induction programmes ensuring that candidates are fully aware of their responsibilities and that of the centre • Assessment planning ensures that candidates have access to regular assessment and select units appropriate to their job role • Good range of valid assessment methods including access to e-portfolio systems and digital recording equipment Some centres were given recommendations in relation to their use of valid assessment methods. There was little variety in the assessment methods used and this had not been noted by the IQA process.
Assessment and Verification:	**Findings:** The majority of centres have made a successful transition from the NQF qualifications to the QCF qualifications and have therefore successfully had DCS transferred. Overall the assessment and internal quality assurance processes are robust and have a clear audit trail. Issues identified by the External Verifiers included: • Insufficient internal quality assurance of candidate portfolios. This has meant that the consistency and standardisation of assessment practice has been weak. • Limited use of a range of assessment methods • Weak planning of IQA activities to include observation of assessors, interview of candidates • Lack of training on QCF qualifications and rules of combination

Management Systems and Records:	**Findings:** The vast majority of External Verifiers have referred to the management systems and records in a positive light, stating that centres having relevant, robust policies and procedures in place, used and evaluated. Centres must ensure that they: a) Can present all DCS portfolios claimed since the last visit to the External Verifier b) Retain copies of all assessment and internal quality assurance documentation to confirm a clear audit trail. This is particularly important if portfolios go missing. c) Arrange for assessment personnel to be available during the visit as requested by the External Verifier d) Have accurate records of candidate registrations and achievements
Assessment Summary:	**Findings:** Generally, the delivery of the customer service qualifications has proved successful within centres. Many centres have adapted to the QCF qualifications with very little difficulty which has enabled them to have DCS transferred. Although there has been an increase in number of approvals for customer service, it has also been noted that registrations have reduced. The factors relating to this has included a reduction in available funding for apprenticeships and/or centres closing or having to reduce the number of programmes they offer.

2. Sector Developments

Funding continues to be an issue with the delivery of the qualifications. The QCF model has created an issue with the amount of funding available per CEU. This has resulted in some centres withdrawing from offering certain qualifications as they are no longer cost effective. Other areas within the UK have different priority routes and therefore availability of apprenticeship places are limited.

Although centres have embraced the QCF qualifications, they are disappointed with the repetition with respect to the knowledge requirements within each of the units.