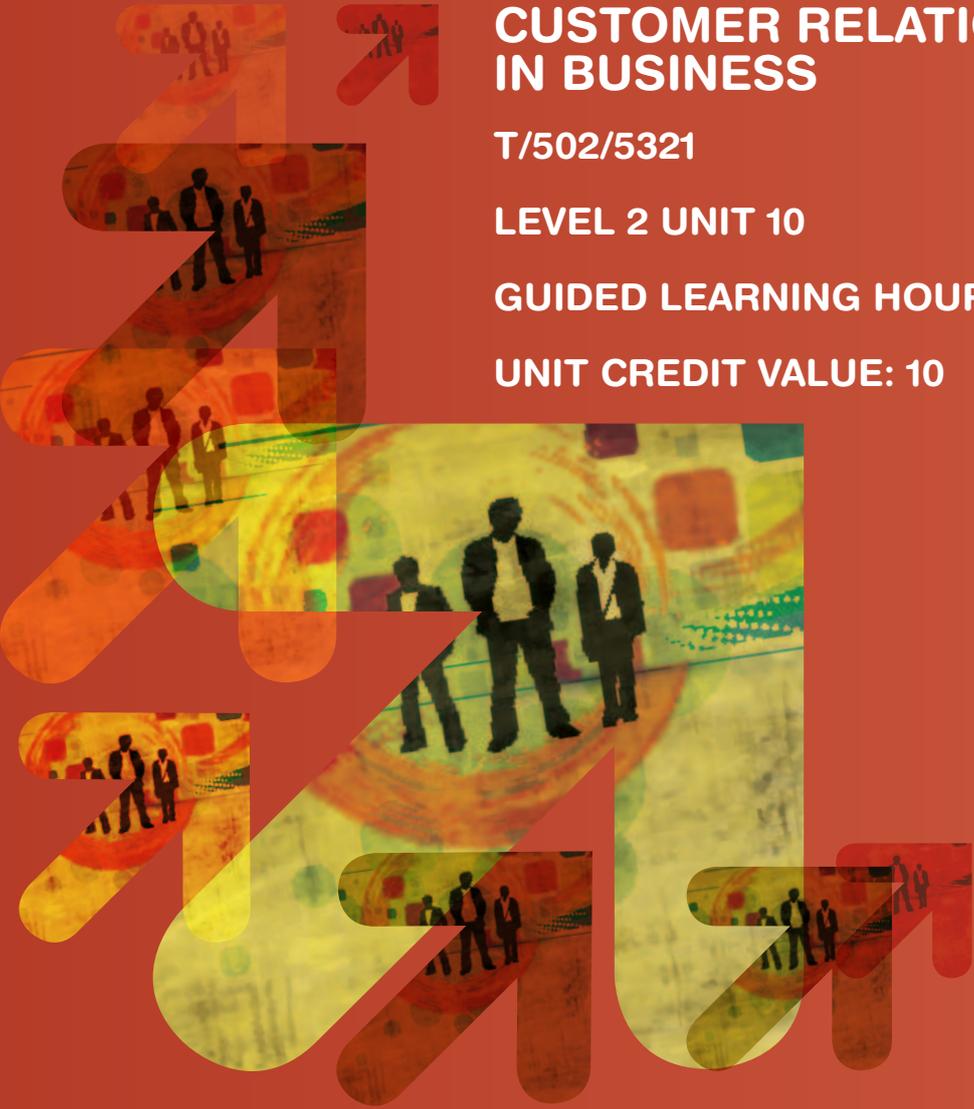




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# OCR LEVEL 2 CAMBRIDGE TECHNICAL CERTIFICATE/DIPLOMA IN BUSINESS



## CUSTOMER RELATIONS IN BUSINESS

T/502/5321

LEVEL 2 UNIT 10

GUIDED LEARNING HOURS: 60

UNIT CREDIT VALUE: 10



# CUSTOMER RELATIONS IN BUSINESS

T/502/5321

LEVEL 2 UNIT 10

## INTRODUCTION TO THE UNIT

Customer relations involve the identification and satisfaction of customer needs and expectations, which is critically important for businesses, employees and customers. Good customer service provides a range of benefits to organisations, not just monetary ones but also an increase in reputation in the eye of the customer. Good customer relations are important to all sectors of the UK economy, especially the service sector. Customer service is not limited to external customers but it also includes internal customers. In order to provide a good level of customer service, employees need to possess appropriate presentation, communication and interpersonal skills. These skills could be acquired through training and work experience. However, employing skilled professionals is not the only concern of businesses. Customer relations must also be consistent across all the business functions, providing a similar level of customer service experience to every customer. To ensure these goals, businesses use a variety of methods for monitoring and evaluating their customer service as well as its consistency and reliability.

This unit will raise learners' awareness of the issues related to good and poor customer relations, the skills needed to provide consistent and reliable customer service and the methods used by organisations to monitor and evaluate customer service performance, as well as using this information to recommend possible improvements to the delivery of customer service within the organisation studied.

## AIM OF THE UNIT

By the end of this unit learners will know how organisations provide customer service, demonstrate the presentation and interpersonal skills used in customer service, know the benefits of consistent and reliable customer service to organisations and the methods used in monitoring and evaluating customer service.

## PURPOSE OF THE UNIT

Customer relations have a profound impact on businesses, their employees and customers. This unit will help learners to understand the importance of customer service in satisfying customers' needs and will provide the opportunity for learners to develop and demonstrate their customer relations skills. It is important for learners to understand that customer relations are not limited to the sales function but take place across all areas of the organisation, especially those that have direct contact with customers. This unit will help learners to understand the importance of meeting the needs and expectations of internal as well as external customers to improve the chances of the organisation being successful.

## ASSESSMENT AND GRADING CRITERIA

Learning Outcome (LO)	Pass The assessment criteria are the pass requirements for this unit.  The learner will:	Merit To achieve a merit the evidence must show that, in addition to the pass criteria, the learner is able to:	Distinction To achieve a distinction the evidence must show that, in addition to the pass and merit criteria, the learner is able to:
1 Know how customer service is provided in business	P1 Describe three different types of customers and their needs and expectations		
	P2 Outline the benefits of good customer service in a selected organisation	M1 Analyse the impact of poor customer service on a selected organisation	D1 Evaluate the consequences to a selected organisation of good and poor customer service
2 Be able to apply appropriate presentation and interpersonal skills in customer service situations	P3 Demonstrate presentation, communication and interpersonal skills in different customer service situations	M2 Analyse the strengths and weaknesses of own presentation, communication and interpersonal skills in different customer service situations	D2 Evaluate own skills and performance in different customer service situations, incorporating this into a personal development plan
3 Understand how consistent and reliable customer service contributes to customer satisfaction	P4 Explain what contributes to consistent and reliable customer service		
4 Know how to monitor and evaluate customer service within an organisation	P5 Describe how customer service can be monitored and evaluated		
	P6 Outline how improvements to the customer service in an organisation could be made		

## TEACHING CONTENT

The unit content describes what has to be taught to ensure that learners are able to access the highest grade.

Anything which follows an i.e. details what must be taught as part of that area of content.

Anything which follows an e.g. is illustrative, it should be noted that where e.g. is used, learners must know and be able to apply relevant examples to their work though these do not need to be the same ones specified in the unit content.

### **Learning Outcome 1 Know how customer service is provided in business**

- Types of customers:
  - External; customers: customers with particular needs, new and existing customers
  - Internal customers (e.g. different departments, colleagues, managers, etc)
- Customer needs: receiving information, product comparison, receiving advice, delivery, customers with special needs
- Customer expectations: safety (e.g. product safety, clean and safe premises), product quality, best price conditions, compliance with legislation, fair treatment, polite, knowledgeable and presentable staff, accessibility (e.g. disabled customers, families with young children).
- Customer service definitions, good customer service vs. poor customer service
- Benefits to the organisation: customer retention, new customers, free advertising (e.g. word of mouth recommendations, social networking websites), increased turnover and profits, reputation, employee retention and recruitment
- Benefits to the employees: achieve sales targets, increase pay through incentives, professional recognition, job satisfaction and security
- Benefits to the customer: customer satisfaction, positive experience, reliance on the business, confidence in the product or service.

### **Learning Outcome 2 Be able to apply appropriate presentation and interpersonal skills in customer service situations**

- Presentation skills
- Professional appearance (e.g. dress code, personal hygiene and presentation).
- Work area appearance (e.g. clean and pleasant environment, presentable marketing materials and samples, healthy, safe and secure area)
- Communication skills: verbal and written. Verbal: voice, pitch, pace, active listening, questioning, message clarity (e.g. avoiding use of slang or jargon), dealing with difficult customers (e.g. abusive, angry, upset), dealing with customers with specific needs. Written: (e.g. spelling, punctuation, grammar, page layout, font size)

- Interpersonal skills: attitude and behaviours (e.g. attentive, polite, efficient, respectful, body language: facial expressions, eye contact, posture, gestures).

### **Learning Outcome 3 Understand how consistent and reliable customer service contributes to customer satisfaction**

- Consistent and reliable customer service: product quality, consistent product delivery, consistent employee performance (e.g. presentation, behaviour, attitude, product knowledge, knowledge of internal procedures), product availability, accessibility (e.g. facilities for customers with specific needs), dealing with complaints, stable pricing and conditions of sale
- Measures of customer satisfaction: external customers (complaints analysis, repeat business, word of mouth publicity), internal customers: (effective teamwork, employee retention).

### **Learning Outcome 4 Know how to monitor and evaluate customer service within an organisation**

- Methods of monitoring customer service: customer surveys, questionnaires, employee skills audit, complaints and compliments, informal staff and customer feedback, mystery shopper, comment cards, observation
- Measures of evaluating customer service: performance management reviews, turnover, profitability, level of complaints, employee retention, repeat custom, new custom.
- Improvements to the quality of service: clear and specific product or service information, fast response, warranties.
- Improvements to employee relations: incentives, working conditions, job satisfaction, work-life balance, training and qualifications
- Organisational improvements: appropriate promotion and advertising, fast delivery, guarantees, product quality, training to staff, competitive pricing and sale conditions, safe and attractive environment, appropriate facilities for customers with specific needs.

It is important to maintain focus on the current law and practice in this area. The list given above is neither prescriptive nor exhaustive. Where legislation has been revised learners will consider the most up to date version as that will reflect current industry practice.

## DELIVERY GUIDANCE

### Learning Outcome 1

A group discussion could help learners to identify types of customers and their needs and expectations. It is important that learners differentiate between needs and expectations and they arrive at their own understanding of these terms. Also, the needs and expectations of customers with specific needs could be discussed. DVDs and case studies could help to raise awareness of the needs of different types of customer. Learners could research local organisations and report on the types of customers and their needs and expectations.

Learners are likely to have their own opinion about good and poor customer service based on their own experiences, mostly as customers. Learners with sales experience could be encouraged to discuss their knowledge with the group. It is important that learners realise the value of good customer service to a business and the consequences that poor customer service can bring upon organisations. To achieve this the learners should take on the viewpoint of the business and the employees that provide customer service, and not just the viewpoint of the customer. Learners could research a recent customer service related case study from the news or a television programme and present their findings to the rest of the group. Also, role plays with examples of good and poor customer service could be enacted by the learners. These activities could be followed by a discussion on the benefits of good customer service.

### Learning Outcome 2

This learning outcome could be linked to Unit 6 Verbal and non-verbal communications in business contexts, and Unit 9 Personal selling in business.

Learners could be introduced to this topic with the use of customer service training DVDs. It is important to give learners opportunities to try these skills for themselves with role play activities before expecting them to undertake a real life customer service situation. Learners could go on a fact-finding trip to retailers to research the skills displayed by staff and present their findings in a poster or group presentation. A visiting speaker from a customer service organisation could discuss and share their customer service skills and practice with the learners.

This learning outcome allows the learner to put into practice their knowledge and understanding gained from this

learning outcome and other units of the qualification. The learner should be given the opportunity to complete this in a 'real life' customer service situation. This could be linked to a Young Enterprise or similar activity, work experience, part time employment or volunteering. The demonstration of customer service does need to involve real skills within a range of situations, and include presentation, communication and interpersonal skills. Learners should be encouraged to reflect on what skills they are best at and which ones need improvement.

### Learning Outcome 3

One of the main issues about consistency and reliability of customer service is that it links directly with customer expectations and that a gap sometimes exists between these expectations and what is provided by the organisation. Learners need to understand the difference between the terms consistent and reliable. Customer service scenarios requiring a judgement about the level of service given could help learners with this issue, as could applying their own perception of this to organisations that they have dealings with or work for. The learners could research via the internet, local businesses and case studies to raise their awareness; they could then present their findings.

### Learning Outcome 4

The learners should understand how monitoring and evaluation are used within business. A speaker from a local business could discuss how they monitor and evaluate customer service. This could be followed by a question and answer session.

The learners could identify different methods of monitoring customer service and report their findings. Learners could design some of the methods used for monitoring, like surveys and questionnaires. The learner could test a range of methods on the rest of the group, and if possible, on a local organisation. More sophisticated techniques, like "mystery shopper", could be presented through DVDs. The learners could identify different measures of evaluating and undertake an assessment of the performance of the customer service function in a business. All these activities may be drawn together in a group discussion about the benefits for a business of monitoring and evaluating customer service.

The learners must be able to suggest how an organisation could improve its customer service. In order to do this

learners could undertake the monitoring and evaluation of customer service within a selected organisation, evaluate the findings and make decisions on what improvements could be made. The learners could focus on quality improvements, employee improvements and organisational improvements. As a group the learners could discuss the effect the improvements could have, as well as the benefits and difficulties of implementing improvements to customer service.

## GUIDANCE ON ASSESSMENT

### P1

#### Scenario and task:

You have been asked to contribute towards an article on customer service for a local newsletter. You could research a variety of businesses in the area and create a report describing a minimum of three different types of customers, and their needs and expectations

### P2, M1, D1

#### Scenario and task:

A local business has commissioned a report on its customer service activities. You should research and report on the customer service activities of a selected business and the benefits of good customer service to the company. You also need to analyse and evaluate the consequences of the good and poor customer service provided by the organisation in order to satisfy M1 and D1 criteria.

### P3

#### Scenario and task:

You have acquired a part time role that will involve dealing with customers in a variety of different situations. You must demonstrate a range of customer service skills (including demonstration, communication and interpersonal skills) in a variety of situations.

### M2, D2

#### Scenario and task:

As part of your induction into your new role you have been asked to carry out an analysis and evaluation of your customer service skills.

**M1 Task:** You must analyse your skills and identify your strengths and weaknesses when carrying out customer service within a variety of different situations.

**D1 Task:** You should use your analysis and suggest how you would improve your skills. You must develop an improvement plan setting out how you intend to achieve this.

### P4, P5, P6

#### Scenario and task:

You have been asked by a local business to report on how it can match the customer service provided by its competitors. You could undertake research and report on how the consistent and reliable customer service provided by the competitors is achieved; how improvements could be made by the business to match this level of service and how these improvements could be monitored and evaluated.

## LINKS TO NOS

**CfA Unit F2** Follow the rules to deliver customer service  
(Partial)

**CfA Unit F1** Communicate using customer service language  
(Partial)

**CfA Unit A3** Communicate effectively with customers  
(Partial)

**CfA Unit A6** Process information about customers (Partial)

**CfA Unit D2** Support customer service improvements  
(Partial)



## **CONTACT US**

Staff at the OCR Customer Contact Centre are available to take your call between 8am and 5.30pm, Monday to Friday.

We're always delighted to answer questions and give advice.

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