

## Customer Service Specialist Overview

Level 3

Typical Length 12 Months

Overview of role

The main purpose of a customer service specialist is to be a 'professional' for direct customer support within all sectors and organisation types. You are an advocate of Customer Service who acts as a referral point for dealing with more complex or technical customer requests, complaints, and queries. You are often an escalation point for complicated or ongoing customer problems. As an expert in your organisation's products and/or services, you share knowledge with your wider team and colleagues

### What apprentices will learn:

Knowledge	What the apprentice must know
<b>Business Knowledge and Understanding</b>	Understand your organisation's current business strategy in relation to customers and make recommendation for its future.
	Understand the impact your service provision has on the wider organisation and the value it adds
	Understand what continuous improvement means in a service environment and how your recommendations for change impact your organisation
	Understand the principles and benefits of being able to think about the future when taking action or making service-related decisions
	Understand a range of leadership styles and apply them successfully in a customer service environment
Knowledge	What the apprentice must know
<b>Customer Journey knowledge</b>	Understand and critically evaluate the possible journeys of your customers, including challenges and the end-to-end experience
	Understand the reasons why customer issues and complex situations sometimes need referral or escalation for specialist attention
	Understand the underpinning business processes that support you in bringing about the best outcome for customers and your organisation
	Understand commercial factors and authority limits for delivering the required customer experience
Knowledge	What the apprentice must know

<b>Knowing your customers and their needs/Customer Insight</b>	Know your internal and external customers and how their behaviour may require different approaches from you
	How to analyse, use and present a range of information to provide customer insight
	Understand what drives loyalty, retention and satisfaction and how they impact on your organisation
	Understand different customer types and the role of emotions in bringing about a successful outcome
	Understand how customer expectations can differ between cultures, ages and social profiles
<b>Knowledge</b>	<b>What the apprentice must know</b>
<b>Customer service culture and environment awareness</b>	Keep current, knowledge and understanding of regulatory considerations, drivers and impacts in relation to how you deliver for customers
	Understand your business environment and culture and the position of customer service within it
	Understand your organisation structure and what role each department needs to play in delivering Customer Service and what the consequences are should things go wrong
	Understand how to find and use industry best practice to enhance own knowledge
<b>Skills</b>	<b>What the apprentice must know</b>
<b>Business focused service delivery</b>	Demonstrate a continuous improvement and future focussed approach to customer service delivery including decision making and providing recommendations or advice
	Resolve complex issues by being able to choose from and successfully apply a wide range of approaches
	Find solutions that meet your organisation's needs as well as the customer requirements
<b>Skills</b>	<b>What the apprentice must know</b>
<b>Providing a positive customer experience</b>	Through advanced questioning, listening and summarising negotiate mutually beneficial outcomes
	Manage challenging and complicated situations within your level of authority and make recommendations to enable and deliver change to service or strategy
	Use clear explanations, provide options and solutions to influence and help customers make choices and agree next steps
	Explore and interpret the customer experience to inform and influence achieving a positive result for customer satisfaction

	Demonstrate a cost-conscious mind-set when meeting customer and the business needs
	Identify where highs and lows of the customer journey produce a range of emotions in the customer
	Use written and verbal communication to simplify and provide complex information in a way that supports positive customer outcome in the relevant format
<b>Skills</b>	<b>What the apprentice must know</b>
<b>Working with your customers / customer insights</b>	Proactively gather customer feedback, through a variety of methods. Critically analyse, and evaluate the meaning, implication and facts and act upon it
	Analyse your customer types, to identify or anticipate their potential needs and expectations when providing your service
<b>Skills</b>	<b>What the apprentice must know</b>
<b>Customer service performance</b>	Maintain a positive relationship even when you are unable to deliver the customer's expected outcome
	When managing referrals or escalations take into account historical interactions and challenges to determine next steps
<b>Skills</b>	<b>What the apprentice must know</b>
<b>Service improvement</b>	Analyse the end to end service experience, seeking input from others where required supporting development of solutions
	Make recommendations based on your findings to enable improvement
	Make recommendations and implement where possible, changes in line with new and relevant legislation, regulations and industry best practice
<b>Behaviours</b>	<b>What the apprentice must know</b>
<b>Develop self</b>	Proactively keep your service, industry and best practice knowledge and skills up-to-date
	Consider personal goals related to service and take action towards achieving them
<b>Behaviours</b>	<b>What the apprentice must know</b>
<b>Ownership / Responsibility</b>	Personally, commit to and take ownership for actions to resolve customer issues to the satisfaction of the customer and your organisation
	Exercises proactivity and creativity when identifying solutions to customer and organisational issues

	Make realistic promises and deliver on them
<b>Behaviours</b>	<b>What the apprentice must know</b>
<b>Team working</b>	Work effectively and collaboratively with colleagues at all levels to achieve results
	Recognise colleagues as internal customers
	Share knowledge and experience with others to support colleague development
<b>Behaviours</b>	<b>What the apprentice must know</b>
<b>Equality</b>	Adopt a positive and enthusiastic attitude being open minded and able to tailor your service to each customer
	Be adaptable and flexible to your customer needs whilst continuing to work within the agreed customer service environment
<b>Behaviours</b>	<b>What the apprentice must know</b>
<b>Presentation</b>	Demonstrate brand advocacy, values and belief when dealing with customer requests to build trust, credibility and satisfaction
	Ensure your personal presentation, in all forms of communication, reflects positively on your organisation's brand

## Delivery

This apprenticeship is delivered in the workplace and at one of our fully equipped training centres around the country. The apprentice gains the knowledge, skills and experience for managing teams and projects in line with an organisation's operational or departmental strategy.

The apprenticeship training is tailored to the needs of the individual employer and is delivered by highly qualified and technically competent training advisors. The programme is a blended combination of on the job tuition plus off the job master classes, workshops, e-learning content and professional discussions.

Additional training may be included such as short courses in mentoring, speaking and listening skills or giving presentations as appropriate.

Before taking their end-point assessment apprentices must:

achieve level 2 English and maths (equivalent to GCSEs at grades A\* to C)