Change lives through learning

Open Awards Entry Level Award in

Customer Service (Entry 1) (RQF)

QAN: 603/6198/0

Qualification Guide

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Version Control	
V1.0	New Document
V1.1 2026	Rebranding. Updated information on provider staff requirements, assessment, IQA, EQA and standardisation. New sections added for resubmission and data collection.

About the Qualification

Title	Open Awards Entry Level Award in Customer Service (Entry 1) (RQF)
Qualification Accreditation Number	603/6198/0
Sector	14 Preparation for Life and Work
Level	Entry Level One
Funding	Please click here for more information
Pricing Information	Please click here for more information
Review Date	31/07/2029

Purpose	Prepare for Further Learning or Training and/or Develop Knowledge and/or Skills in a Subject Area
Sub-Purpose	Develop Knowledge and/or Skills in a Subject Area

Total Qualification Time/Guided Learning	
Total Qualification Time (hours)	40
Guided Learning (hours)	40

Age Range and Restrictions	
Pre -16	✓
16 – 18	✓
18+	✓
Any other restrictions specific to the qualification(s)	None

Any Specified Entry Requirements

There are no other restrictions on learner entry and no specific prior achievements required.

Recommended Assessment Method Summary

Learners will be required to complete a portfolio of evidence set and marked by the education provider and externally quality assured by Open Awards.

Learners must provide sufficient evidence that they have the required knowledge, skills and understanding of the assessment criteria and that it is their own work.

Types of evidence could include:

- Portfolio of evidence
- Observations
- Witness statements
- Assignment
- Professional discussion
- Reflective journals
- Presentations

Assessment practices must reflect the Equality and Diversity Policy of Open Awards.

Qualification Structure

Rules of Combination

Credit Value of the Qualification:	4
Minimum Credits to be achieved at the Level of the Qualification:	4
Mandatory Units A:	4

Qualification Units

Mandatory Units A (all units must be achieved to be awarded the qualification)

Unit Reference Number	Unit Name	Credits	Level
A/615/5594	Dealing with Customer Queries and Complaints	1	Entry Level One
J/615/5730	Developing Customer Service Skills	3	Entry Level One

Delivering this Qualification

Becoming a Provider

To deliver this qualification you must be a recognised Open Awards Provider. For more information, head to our website or contact the team on 0151 494 2072.

How to Deliver

To request to deliver this qualification, please login to the Portal and then click on 'Tracking' and 'Initiate a Workflow'. You will then need to select 'Apply to Deliver Regulated Qualification(s)'.

For support with this process, please see the following document in the Portal 'Provider Portal Guidance – Qualification Approval' or contact the team on customerservices@openawards.org.uk or 0151 494 2072.

Registering Learners

Once you are ready to deliver this qualification, you will need to register your learners in line with the timescales below:

Short courses (15 weeks or less) within 25 working days of the course start date.
Long courses (over 15 weeks) within 60 working days of the course start date.

You will need to register your learners via the Portal.

Quality Assurance and Standardisation

Delivery of this qualification must be done so in accordance with Ofqual regulatory guidelines and in line with Open Awards' quality assurance processes. Please see our website for more information.

Provider Staff Requirements

It is expected that providers will have staff with relevant subject knowledge and/or sector experience for their role in the delivery of the units/qualifications being offered.

Although it is not mandatory, best practice would be for:

- Assessors to hold the relevant D32/ D33/ A1/ AQA unit(s) (or equivalent), Level 3 Award in Education and Training and appropriate occupational competence

Providers are responsible for ensuring that their staff have access to appropriate training and support. They are also responsible for notifying Open Awards of staff changes.

Assessment

Open Awards units and qualifications have been designed around the principle that the learner will build evidence towards the achievement of the assessment criteria over a period of time. Each learner is required to build a portfolio of evidence to demonstrate that all the assessment criteria associated with each unit has been met.

Providers need to ensure that all evidence presented in a portfolio is:

Authentic	It should clearly be the work of the learner.
Valid	It should clearly demonstrate the knowledge or skills that are set out in the Assessment Criteria.
Reliable	It will, in general, produce the same range of responses from learners, as long as they are used in similar circumstances and with similar groups of learners.
Inclusive	It will ensure that no individual learner is excluded from the opportunity to show their achievement because of their individual background or experience.
Sufficient	There should be enough evidence of achievement to give the assessor confidence that all assessment criteria have been met and grades achieved.

Portfolios (including e-portfolios) used for collating learner evidence need to be presented in a manner that allows internal and external quality assurers to be able to easily locate evidence that meet specific assessment criteria. A completed portfolio should include, as a minimum:

- The name of the learner, assessor(s) and internal quality assurer
- A tracking sheet that states where to find evidence that each Assessment Criteria has been met.
- A statement signed by the learner that confirms that the evidence in the portfolio is their own work.
- Assignment briefs, where applicable.
- All evidence of learner achievement.
- Evidence of the tutor's feedback to the learner.

Assessment practices **must** reflect the Equality and Diversity Policy of Open Awards.

Providers are required to review and assess all learner evidence and must be satisfied that learners have achieved all learning outcomes and assessment criteria relating to the unit being assessed prior to deciding the learner has completed the unit. Providers will also ensure that the evidence produced by the learner is their own work.

Assessors retain records (e.g. Feedback Sheets, Individual Progress Record, Group Progress Record) on behalf of the Provider which are made available and used by the Provider's Internal Quality Assurer and Open Awards' Quality Assurance Team.

Resubmission

Learners should only attempt a summative assessment when their tutor has agreed that they have completed all relevant teaching/learning and formative assessment shows their understanding.

Each individual assessment criterion must be met or not met and cannot be partially achieved.

In this context, a resubmission refers to where a learner hands in their work on time or participates in a practical activity but has not demonstrated achievement of all assessment criteria. In this instance, the provider can set a second deadline to allow the learner to cover the missing criteria only.

Wherever possible, learners are not expected to resubmit the whole assessment, and an alternative assessment method may be used by the Provider where this would be appropriate. For example, questioning as a resubmission for knowledge-based criteria where an essay was previously used.

Resubmissions must:

- be proportionate to the degree of non-achievement
- be consistent with the way the learning outcome(s) were originally assessed
- be subject to a clear deadline
- be applied consistently in equivalent assessment situations, so that all learners have equivalent opportunities for resubmission and reassessment
- ensure that the additional or revised work being resubmitted is clearly distinguishable from the work originally submitted
- be subject to moderation

As the qualification is assessed over time, and against the full range of assessment criteria, it is not expected that a learner would be offered the opportunity to resubmit the qualification in its entirety. As above, opportunities should be given for learners to be assessed against specific assessment criteria where the provided evidence does not meet the criteria or the standard required. Providers are responsible for setting their own course duration/ length (typically 12 months) to ensure learners have sufficient time to complete all learning and assessment requirements.

Providers should use recording documentation to record assignment resubmissions and feedback to enable Open Awards to externally quality assure how this

requirement is implemented in practice, and so data can be monitored across and within providers.

If a learner does not pass all assessment criteria across the qualification, they will be issued with a unit transcript. If the learner decided to attempt the course again, the unit achievement could be used towards achievement of the qualification as a whole, provided that it was within the unit validity period to ensure its currency. Providers would be required to complete an initial assessment to identify gaps in knowledge and skills and apply to Open Awards to recognise the existing units in line with Open Awards' recognition of prior learning policy.

Data Collection

Providers must retain the following records and make this available to Open Awards when conducting external quality assurance and compliance activities, and on request.

Learner Details	Learner assessment records	Internal quality assurance records
• Learner name. • Date of birth. • Contact address. • Registration date. • Open Awards learner registration number. • Unique Learner Number (ULN) - where applicable. • Unit names and unit. codes for each unit completed.	• Name of the assessor(s) • The assessment methods used. • Evidence of the assessment decision being made. • Reasons for the assessment decision made. • The location of relevant supporting evidence.	• Name of the internal quality assurer(s). • Sampling strategy, including the sample selected and the rationale for choosing that sample. • Details of internal standardisation activities relating to the units. • Evidence of assessor competence (including copies of certificates, CVs and evidence of continuing professional development) • Records of certificates claimed. • Records of learner complaints – including outcomes. • Records of learner appeals – including outcomes.

These details are retained on the Open Awards registration and certification database. Providers **must** keep their own records in case of learner complaints, appeals or malpractice allegations.	Open Awards does not expect Providers to retain learner portfolios, which **must** be returned to the learner once results have been confirmed.	Records of certificates claimed are retained on the Open Awards database. Providers **must** keep their own records in case of learner complaints, appeals or malpractice allegations.

Training and support

Open Awards offers a variety of training and support to Providers. Our online training and support is free of charge and can be accessed on the following link ehttps://oalearn.org.uk/shop. An everlasting coupon (PLUC code) will be issued to each Provider to gain free access to these resources.

Internal Quality Assurance (IQA)

All Providers delivering Open Awards provision must operate rigorous internal quality assurance systems. A Provider must identify how they will internally quality assure and standardise their delivery and assessment before delivering a course.

It is a requirement for providers to complete their own pre-course verification of their assessment and delivery arrangements. This forms part of the internal quality assurance cycle.

Pre-verification activities must be undertaken to ensure that delivery and assessment arrangements:

- Meet the rules of combination for the qualification.
- Align with the assessment approach in the qualification guide.
- Are appropriate to the level.
- Have been mapped against all the Assessment Criteria for the unit.
- Enable students to generate the necessary evidence of achievement.
- Are inclusive and follow the principles of fair design. i.e., the assessment activities should:
  - be reliable
  - be valid
  - be fit for purpose
  - be transparent
  - recognise and respect equality and diversity
  - be written in appropriate and accessible language that is free from bias.

The internal quality assurer (IQA) needs to work with tutors/ assessors before a course begins to ensure that:

- Assessment tasks are planned in a coherent way to allow learners to meet all necessary assessment criteria
- Assessments are valid and appropriate to the level
- All tutors/ assessors ensure that assessment is fair and inclusive reflecting diverse needs
- Learners are made aware of assessment requirements at the beginning of the course
- Adequate and appropriate resources are in place to enable the learner to generate the required knowledge to meet the assessment criteria
- Recording systems are in place to monitor learner progress and achievement
- A process is in place to provide constructive feedback to each learner on their assessed work

Continued Quality Assurance

The quality of delivery, assessment and IQA will be reviewed on an ongoing basis throughout the course duration. As a minimum, this will include:

- Interim sampling at both the early and middle stages of the assessment process. This enables the IQA to check formative assessment and identify consistency or issues at an early stage for corrective action.
- Standardisation activities as outlined in this policy, and the course IQA plan.
- Quality checks on delivery and assessment including, observations and walk throughs, work scrutiny, learner feedback/ surveys.

Internal Quality Assurance

An effective internal quality assurance system ensures assessment practices and decisions are regularly reviewed and evaluated to ensure the validity of inferences which can be drawn from unit or qualification achievement.

Internal quality assurance is a process by which an approved Provider regularly samples and evaluates consistency and fairness of assessment decisions.

It involves three key processes:

1. Verification of assessment design (including assessment materials)
2. Verification of assessment decisions in line with the sampling strategy outlined below
3. Standardisation activities.

Sampling

In line with the Open Awards CASS strategy this qualification is rated low-risk. For low risk qualifications, the sample size of learners within the cohort will relate to the providers own IQA policy. The sample size should be reasonable in relation to the

size of the cohort to reassure quality of the work produced. Open Awards recommends a minimum of 3 or 10%, whichever is greater.

The IQA will increase the size of the sample if the minimum sample does not provide the necessary assurances.

Learners who withdraw from the course before completing the course are entitled to unit certification (for all units completed) so should be included in the IQA sample and documentation.

Claiming Results

Results for units cannot be claimed until an IQA has confirmed them in line with the agreed sampling strategy. Results will be claimed via the Open Awards Portal by the authorised Provider administrator.

External Quality Assurance (EQA)

Provider approval, compliance monitoring and external quality assurance for this qualification is carried out by the Open Awards Quality Assurance Team/External Quality Assurers who will confirm that the Provider is assessing to standard and ensure that there are robust internal quality assurance systems embedded.

Open Awards will also ensure that External Quality Assurers (EQA) must:

- Have good report writing, auditing and communication skills.
- Know where and when to access specialist sector advice, where additional specialist knowledge relating to assessment and verification decisions is concerned.

EQAs will monitor the Provider's processes and practice to ensure they meet Open Awards' qualification and regulatory requirements. The EQA will also provide support to Provider staff and give advice and guidance to facilitate improvements.

Although it is not mandatory, best practice would be for:

- External Quality Assurers to hold the relevant D34/ V1/ IQA unit(s) (or equivalent), Level 3 Award in Education and Training, Level 4 Award in the External Quality Assurance of Assessment Processes and Practice

Due to the level of the qualification, it is not deemed necessary for the EQA to have subject knowledge, instead they will focus on assessment decisions and IQA practices.

Standardisation

Providers are required to complete internal standardisation activities to ensure all assessors are making consistent and valid assessment decisions.

In addition, Providers are required contribute to national standardisation events, as a minimum once per year. Open Awards offers standardisation events and qualification-specific forums that are held throughout the year. Such events will also provide an opportunity to identify and share best practice. Up to date details of training and standardisation events can be found on our website.

Internal standardisation involves ensuring that, where there is more than one tutor/ assessor delivering Open Awards provision or more than one site, internally set tasks and the outcomes of internal assessment are consistent across the range of courses.

Training is led by the Open Awards Quality Assurance Team and coordinated across providers to ensure consistency. Training activities may include either face-to-face or online modes of delivery to ensure maximum attendance is facilitated.

For further guidance on Quality Assurance and Standardisation, please refer to the Provider Handbook.

Recognition of Prior Learning and Achievement (RPL)

RPL is a method of assessment that considers whether a learner can demonstrate that they can meet the assessment requirements for a unit through knowledge, understanding or skills they may already possess. Evidence of learning must be sufficient, reliable and valid.

It is the responsibility of the Provider to inform Open Awards at registration of any exemptions and/or equivalences for which a claim may be made. These claims will be subject to external quality assurance by the Open Awards Quality Assurance Team.

For more information, please see our Recognition of Prior Learning Policy found on the Portal.

Appendices and Links

The following documents can be viewed on the Open Awards website:

1. Provider Handbook
2. Enquiries, Complaints and Appeals Policy
3. Equality and Diversity Policy
4. Invoicing Policy
5. Privacy Policy

Further supporting information can be found on the Open Awards Portal.

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Open Awards
17 De Havilland Drive,
Estuary Commerce Park
Speke
Liverpool
L24 8N
0151 494 2072
enquiries@openawards.org.uk
www.openawards.org.uk
@openawards