

Unit 216

Deliver customer service to challenging customers

UAN:	F/506/2159
Level:	2
Credit value:	3
GLH:	16
Relationship to NOS:	This unit is linked to the Customers Service (2013) National Occupational Standards: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• CFACSC4 Deliver customer service to challenging customers
Assessment requirements specified by a sector or regulatory body:	This unit is endorsed by Skills CFA Assessment Strategy Competence units (S/NVQ)
Aim:	This unit aims to develop the knowledge and skills required to deliver customer service to challenging customers. Upon completion of this unit, learners will be able to deal with challenging customers.

Learning outcome
The learner will: 1. understand the delivery of customer service to challenging customers
Assessment criteria
The learner can: 1.1 describe different types of challenging customers in the customer service environment 1.2 explain an organisation's procedures and standards of behaviour for dealing with challenging customers 1.3 explain behaviours that make it challenging to deal with customers 1.4 explain the difference between assertive and aggressive behaviour 1.5 describe techniques to deal with customers' challenging behaviour 1.6 explain their own levels of authority for agreeing actions outside the service offer 1.7 explain why it is important that colleagues are informed when challenging customers re-open or escalate matters .

Assessment guidance

Challenging customers:

eg

- angry
- aggressive
- abusive
- confused
- having special requirements

Organisation's procedures:

- service offer
- customer service policy
- policy on abusive behaviour

Standards of behaviour will relate to the standards of behaviour of both the staff and customer. The organisation could have a:

- policy on abusive behaviour
- point at which the challenging customer should be referred to others
- set procedure for the way in which staff handle such customers and the support that can be offered in their handling

Behaviours:

- unreasonable attitude
- unwilling to listen
- aggression
- lack of understanding
- frustration

Assertive and aggressive behaviour:

- assertive behaviour is where customer is confident and self-assured but not aggressive
- aggressive is where the customer is very unpleasant and most likely threatening or even abusive or violent. It is likely the organisation will have a policy on how such people should be handled

Techniques to deal with customers' challenging behaviour:

- remain calm
- listen
- talk clearly and confidently
- remain in control
- let them speak without interruption when they are angry
- ask questions and speak slowly and with concern in tone when they are confused
- alter communication to suit the customer
- ask for assistance from others where necessary
- if an angry customer try to move them away from other customers but do not allow yourself to be alone with them or out of sight of colleagues

Levels of authority:

The level at which a candidate can operate and make decisions.

Re-open or escalate matters:

- re-open means when customers reappear or make contact asking for the same problem or complaint to be looked at again.
- escalate means where they either ask for management to be involved or they contact management direct.

Evidence may be supplied by:

- professional discussion
- questioning
- reflective account
- legal requirements and organisational policies and procedures*

Learning outcome

The learner will:

2. be able to deal with challenging customers

Assessment criteria

The learner can:

- 2.1 identify the signs that indicate that a customer is **challenging**
- 2.2 express understanding of customers' point of view without **admitting liability**
- 2.3 explain to customers the **limits of the service** they can offer
- 2.4 explain to customers the reasons for an **organisation's position** and policy
- 2.5 agree a way forward that **balances customer satisfaction and organisational needs**
- 2.6 obtain help from colleagues when options for action are beyond their level of authority
- 2.7 Adhere to **organisational policies and procedures, legal and ethical requirements** when dealing with challenging customers.

Assessment guidance**Challenging customers:**

eg

- angry
- aggressive
- abusive
- confused
- having special requirements

Admitting liability:

Admitting that you or the organisation was at fault.

Limits of the service:

The point at which the organisation can offer no more.

Organisation's position:

The decision the organisation has taken.

Balances customer satisfaction and organisational needs:

Where the learner has to come to a decision on the point when the organisation cannot meet the customer's expectations. It is often the point at which it is not financially viable for the organisation to meet what the customer wants or not possible to do so. It may also be that giving in to one customer means others will want the same and so cause more problems for the organisation.

Organisational policies and procedures which relate to:

- roles and responsibilities showing limits of authority
- service offer
- handling of customer issues
- customer service policy and procedures*

Legal requirements:

eg

- Sale of Goods Act (Sale and Supply of Goods to Consumers Regulations)
- Trade Descriptions Act
- Data Protection Act
- Equality Act
- Health and Safety at Work Act

Ethical requirements:

- organisational principles
- values
- fairness

Evidence may be supplied by:

- observation
- witness testimony
- customer records*
- professional discussion
- questioning
- reflective account
- service offer*
- documentation*
- legal and ethical requirements and organisational policies and procedures*

Note: this unit is about delivering customer service to challenging customers. It is not about delivering customer service in normal situations. The candidate will require to be observed dealing with at **least three** challenging customers. Witness testimonies can be added if necessary.

* While the candidate can provide a copy of the organisational policies and of the organisational ethical policy/requirements (or refer to them), this on its own is not sufficient. The candidate will require to demonstrate their application and be able to discuss them, showing understanding of how they are applied. This also applies to legal requirements.

Internal/organisational documentation need not be held in the candidate's portfolio but held in the workplace with reference made to where it can be found and its relevance to the criteria.