

apprenticeship FRAMEWORK

Contact Centre Operations (Wales)

IMPORTANT NOTIFICATION FOR ALL APPRENTICESHIP STARTS FROM 14 OCTOBER 2016

Modifications to SASW came into effect on 14 October 2016. These changes relate to the **Essential Skills and Employer Rights and Responsibilities** requirements of a framework and they **ONLY** apply to new Apprenticeship starts on, or after, 14th October. Apprenticeship starts before this date must continue to meet the 2013 SASW requirements for Essential Skills and Employer Rights and Responsibilities.

For more details of the changes and how they will affect new apprenticeship starts, please read the following preface page to the framework document. NB: Please check the "Revising a Framework" section for information on any additional changes that may have been made to this framework.

Latest framework version?

Please use this link to see if this is the latest issued version of this framework:

afo.sscalliance.org/frameworkslibrary/index.cfm?id=FR03881

Issue date: 27 May 2016

Published by
Instructus

apprenticeship
FRAMEWORKS ONLINE
www.afo.sscalliance.org

CHANGES TO REQUIREMENTS FOR APPRENTICESHIP STARTS FROM 14TH OCTOBER 2016

These changes relate to the Essential Skills and Employer Rights and Responsibilities requirements of a framework and they ONLY apply to new Apprenticeship starts on, or after, 14th October 2016. Apprenticeship starts before this date must continue to meet the 2013 SASW requirements for Essential Skills and Employer Rights and Responsibilities.

Alternatives for Essential Skill qualifications

Foundation apprenticeships (Level 2): Where Essential Skills qualifications are specified in a foundation apprenticeship framework (Level 2), the apprenticeship framework must specify as a Welsh certificate requirement, the acceptance of one of the following recognised proxy qualifications.

For Communication:

- GCSE or iGCSE qualification in English language or literature to at least grade G (Level 1 equivalent); or
- O Level qualification in English language or literature to at least grade E; or
- A/AS Level qualification in English language or literature to at least grade E; or
- SCQF Level 4 – Communication Core Skills (Oral communication and written communication); or
- SQA National 4 English; or
- Functional Skills or Key Skills literacy qualifications in English provided the proxy qualification(s) attained are at Level 1 or above.

For Application of Number:

- GCSE or iGCSE qualification in Mathematics to at least grade G (Level 1 equivalent); or
- O Level qualification in Mathematics to at least grade E; or
- A/AS Level qualification in Mathematics to at least grade E; or
- SCQF Level 4 – Numeracy Core Skill (Graphical Information and using number); or
- SQA National 4 Mathematics; or
- Functional Skills or Key Skills numeracy qualifications in Mathematics provided the proxy qualification(s) attained are at Level 1 or above.

Apprenticeships (Level 3): Where Essential Skills qualifications are specified in an apprenticeship framework (Level 3), the apprenticeship framework must specify as a Welsh certificate requirement, the acceptance of one of the following recognised proxy qualifications.

For Communication:

- GCSE or iGCSE qualification in English language or literature to at least grade C (Level 2 equivalent); or
- O Level Qualification in English language or literature to at least grade C; or
- A/AS Level qualification in English or literature to at least grade E; or
- SCQF Level 5 – Communication Core Skills (Oral communication and written communication); or
- SQA National 5 English; or
- Functional Skills or Key Skills literacy qualifications in English provided the proxy qualification(s) attained is at Level 2 or above.

For Application of Number:

- GCSE or iGCSE qualification in Mathematics to at least grade C (Level 2 equivalent); or
- O Level Qualification in Mathematics to at least grade C; or
- A/AS Level qualification in Mathematics to at least grade E; or
- SCQF Level 5 – Numeracy Core Skill (Graphical information and using number); or
- SQA National 5 Mathematics; or
- Functional Skills or Key Skills numeracy qualifications in Mathematics provided the proxy qualification(s) attained are at Level 2 or above.

Higher Apprenticeships (Levels 4-7): Essential Skills requirements are as for an apprenticeship frameworks at Level 3.

CHANGES TO REQUIREMENTS FOR APPRENTICESHIP STARTS FROM 14TH OCTOBER 2016

Employer Rights and Responsibilities (ERR)

The final modification to SASW is to Employer Rights and Responsibilities (ERR) which is no longer compulsory in frameworks. Please refer to the Employer Rights and Responsibilities section within the framework document to confirm specific requirements.

Additional Information

It should be noted that SASW has also been modified to reflect existing improvements to Essential Skills Wales Qualifications. These improvements to ESW qualifications were signalled by the revised names:

- Essential Skills Wales Communication is now Essential Communication Skills (still 6 credits in size)
- Essential Skills Wales Application of Number Skills is now Essential Application of Number Skills (still 6 credits in size)
- Essential Skills Wales Information Communication Technology Skills is now Essential Digital Literacy Skills (still 6 credits in size)

Whilst there have been some amendments to the content of ESW qualifications, the most significant change has been to the assessment methodology for these qualifications.

From 1 January 2016, all new starts have had to follow the revised Essential Skill qualifications.

The updated version of SASW, and guidance documents, can be accessed here:

<http://gov.wales/topics/educationandskills/skillsandtraining/apprenticeships/providers/?lang=en&dgd>

Over the coming months, the Essential Skills section within AFO will be amended to reflect the SASW modifications and all current frameworks will be updated and reissued to incorporate these changes. In the meantime, if you are in any doubt as to the requirements of any framework then please contact the relevant Issuing Authority.

Contact Centre Operations (Wales)

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Framework summary

Contact Centre Operations

Foundation Apprenticeship in Contact Centre Operations

Pathways for this framework at level 2 include:

Pathway 1: Contact Centre Operations

Competence qualifications available to this pathway:

C1 - Level 2 NVQ Certificate in Contact Centre Operations

Knowledge qualifications available to this pathway:

K1 - Level 2 Certificate in Contact Centre Operations

K2 - Level 2 Certificate in Principles of Contact Centre Operations

Combined qualifications available to this pathway:

N/A

This pathway also contains information on:

- Employee rights and responsibilities
- Essential skills

Contact Centre Operations

Apprenticeship in Contact Centre Operations

Pathways for this framework at level 3 include:

Pathway 1: Contact Centre Operations

Competence qualifications available to this pathway:

C1 - Level 3 NVQ Diploma in Contact Centre Operations

Knowledge qualifications available to this pathway:

K1 - Level 3 Certificate in Contact Centre Operations

K2 - Level 3 Certificate in Principles of Contact Centre Operations

Combined qualifications available to this pathway:

N/A

This pathway also contains information on:

- Employee rights and responsibilities
- Essential skills

Framework information

Information on the Publishing Authority for this framework:

Instructus

The Apprenticeship sector for occupations in air conditioning, building services engineering, business and administration, cleaning, customer service, electro technical, electrical and electronic servicing, enterprise and business support, facilities management, heating and ventilating, housing, human resources and recruitment, industrial relations, leadership and management, marketing and sales (also includes contact centres and third sector), plumbing, property and refrigeration.

Issue number: 12	This framework includes:
Framework ID: FR03881	Level 2 Level 3
Date this framework is to be reviewed by: 03/01/2016	This framework is for use in: Wales

Short description

The Contact Center Foundation Apprenticeship and Apprenticeship in Wales respond to the employer need for high levels of skills in contact centres in a wide range of organisations. They have been developed, with the help of employers, to widen the pool of potential recruits into the Contact Centre industry and to up skill the existing workforce to meet their skills priorities.

Foundation Apprentices will work in job roles such as Trainee Agent, Contact Centre Agent, Help Desk Operative, Sales Advisor, Customer Service Advisor, Outbound Sales Agent, Inbound Sales Agent, Outbound Customer Service Agent, Inbound Customer Service Agent, Telephone Banking Advisor and Telesales Operator.

Apprentices will work in job roles such as Sales Team Leader, Customer Services Team Leader, Contact Centre Team Leader, Product Specialist, Supervisor, Support Analyst, and Contact Centre Manager.

Contact information

Proposer of this framework

This framework is published by Skills CFA on a non-statutory basis prior to the designation of issuing Authorities for Wales.

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Revising a framework

Contact details

Who is making this revision: Marina Popova
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Why this framework is being revised

This framework was revised by Skills CFA to in May 2016 in order to make amendments to the framework, as detailed below.

Summary of changes made to this framework

This framework was revised by Skills CFA in May 2016 in order to remove level 4 pathway due to expired NVQ qualifications.

Qualifications removed

Level 4 Higher Apprenticeship

- City and Guilds Level 4 NVQ Diploma in Contact Centre Operations (600/71288/2)
- Pearson Level 4 NVQ Diploma in Contact Centre Operations (600/1638/3)
- ILM Level 4 Extended Diploma in Leadership and Management (QCF) (600/5853/5)
- Pearson Level 4 NVQ Diploma in Management (QCF) (601/3401/X)

Qualifications added

N/A

Qualifications that have been extended

N/A

Purpose of this framework

Summary of the purpose of the framework

Profile of the Sector

The Contact Centre industry is one of the United Kingdom's fastest growing sectors. Through the increasingly sophisticated developments in communications technology, contact centres are playing an important role as a central point for communicating with and supporting customers, using both in-bound and out-bound communication channels such as telephones, emails, SMS and text messaging and other networking channels. The development of contact centres has led to an increasing number of service providers with organisations that are large enough to deliver contact centre operations throughout the UK. In addition, global business developments have led to many organisations operating contact centres throughout the world.

Many employers are starting to realise that how employees respond to customers is vital to achieving customer satisfaction and loyalty. This has led to major investments into the development of their workforce and improving the working conditions for their employees. Employers recognise the key role contact centre staff play in determining the quality of the contact centre experience. Therefore there is a need to raise contact centre standards by increasing the supply of people with high level contact centre skills. To do this contact center employers might want to up skill their current workforce and/or recruit new staff. Contact Centre Apprenticeships have a major role to play in this by helping employers address the skills gaps and shortages that they are experiencing and by providing a vehicle for introducing and raising contact skills in the workplace.

The Contact Centre industry is one of the United Kingdom's fastest growing sectors. The number of contact centres in the UK is expected to reach over 7,500 in 2015, representing a 17% growth in the sector since 2010. The growth of contact centres throughout the UK indicates higher numbers of job opportunities alongside an expansion of the contact centre market. For example, UK contact centre locations are now spread across all regions of the UK with the highest numbers of contact cCentres located in the South East and North West of England where there is an average of 100,000 contact centre agents. The need for high levels of contact centre skills is evident in many sectors. In particular the Finance, Travel and Tourism, Hospitality, Marketing and Retail, Telecommunications, Logistics, Power and Energy sectors. Contact Centres operate across all three sectors of the economy – private, public (e.g. the NHS, Police, Fire and Rescue), and not-for-profit, and can range in size from being very small to global.

There are many job roles that apply to Contact Centre Foundation apprentices. These will include jobs such as: Trainee Agent, Contact Centre Agent, Help Desk Operative, Sales

Advisor, Customer Service Advisor, Outbound Sales Agent, Inbound Sales Agent, Outbound Customer Service Agent, Inbound Customer Service Agent, Telephone Banking Advisor, and Telesales Operator. At the Apprenticeship level, contact centre job roles would include: Sales Team Leader, Customer Service Team Leader, Contact Centre Team Leader, Product Specialist, Supervisor, Support Analyst, and Contact Centre Manager.

The Contact Centre Apprenticeships include employer led, up to date, flexible qualifications which meet their demand for higher levels of contact centre skills, including softer-skills such as communication, team working, interpersonal skills and the ability to improve own learning and performance.

Whatever contact centre an apprentice might work in, they will be learning and understanding the key concepts of contact centre operations, customer service and how to apply this knowledge and skills in the workplace. For a Foundation apprentice these skills could involve technical skills to operate the communication technology, knowledge and skills needed to navigate software, communicating with customers, building relationships with customers and colleagues, resolving problems, promoting products and/or services, making sales, using appropriate communication channels, keeping records, gathering customer feedback and working in a team.

For an apprentice these skills could involve higher levels of technical skills to operate the communication technology, higher levels of knowledge and skills needed to navigate software, problem solving, improving customer satisfaction, team leading, improving customer loyalty, gathering and analysing customer feedback, processing complaints and maintaining reliable customer service.

Aims and objectives of this framework (Wales)

The aim of this apprenticeship framework is to provide employers in the public, private and not-for-profit sectors with a workforce that has excellent contact centre and customer service skills. By developing the knowledge and competencies required, contact centre apprentices will be able to contribute to improved operational delivery with increased customer satisfaction in the public and not-for profit sectors and attract new customers, improve customer loyalty and remain competitive and profitable in the private sector.

The main objectives are to:

1. increase the supply of people with high levels of communication skills to address the skills gaps and shortages found in contact centre organisations.
2. tap into the skills and talents of a diverse population by providing flexible entry routes into a career in contact centres or to use as a springboard to a career in specific sector.
3. equip individuals with the skills, knowledge and experience needed to provide excellent contact centre skills in a range of sectors.

4. provide apprentices with an opportunity to develop the skills, knowledge and experience they need to progress to roles with additional responsibilities and onto further and higher education, if they wish to do so.

Entry conditions for this framework

There are no mandatory entry requirements for this apprenticeship framework. However, employers are looking to attract applicants who have a keen interest in working in a contact centre environment and who enjoy talking to people. They expect applicants to understand the importance of having excellent communication skills, a positive approach towards problem solving, basic numeracy and literacy skills and a willingness to work flexibly according to employer requirements.

Entrants will come from diverse backgrounds and will come with a range of experience, age, personal achievements and, in some cases, prior qualifications and awards which may count towards the achievement of the Apprenticeship programme. Examples include having:

- held a position of responsibility at school or college; OR
- undertaken work experience or work placement experience; OR
- completed the Duke of Edinburgh Award or similar award; OR
- achieved GCSEs or A levels; OR
- achieved QCF Awards, Certificates or Diplomas; OR
- completed a level 2 foundation apprenticeship from another sector (for level 3 apprenticeship applicants); OR
- achieved a Business Administration and Finance Principal Learning Qualification as part of the Welsh Baccalaureate.

Apprentices who are undertaking the Contact Centre Apprenticeship are likely to have some prior experience in a contact centre or customer service role, although this is not a formal requirement.

Rules to avoid repeating qualifications

Processes exist to make sure that applicants with prior knowledge, qualifications and experience are not disadvantaged by having to repeat learning. Training providers and awarding organisations will be able to advise on the current rules for accrediting prior learning and recognising prior experience.

1. Essential Skills Wales (ESW)

- Key skills qualifications are accepted as alternatives to ESW qualifications provided the key skills qualification(s) attained are at the same level(s) as those specified for ESW qualifications.
- ESW qualifications achieved at the level specified in the framework, prior to commencing an apprenticeship can be accepted, provided that the required certificate is presented at the point of certification.

- ESW achieved in the context of the Welsh Baccalaureate Qualification (WBQ) can be accepted, provided the specific certification of the title(s) and level(s) of those ESW qualification is provided. The WBQ certificate itself does not provide this specific evidence.

Where an individual has achieved ESW at level 1 in either Application of Numbers, Communication or ICT or has the relevant key skill prior to starting a level 2 apprenticeship, the employer may allow the individual to study for ESW skills qualifications at level 2 as part of the apprenticeship.

2. Knowledge and competence qualifications

- If applicants already have one of the knowledge or competence qualifications before they start their apprenticeship, they can count this and do not have to redo the qualification, providing that they have achieved this qualification within 5 years of applying for the apprenticeship certificate. The hours they spent gaining this qualification will also count towards the minimum hours required for this framework.

3. Prior experience

- Applicants already working in the sector are able to have their prior experience recognised by the Awarding Organisation and this will count towards the competence and the knowledge qualifications in this framework.

Initial Assessment

Training providers and employers will use initial assessment to ensure that applicants have a fair opportunity to demonstrate their ability and to tailor programmes to meet individual needs, recognising prior qualifications and experience.

Level 2

Title for this framework at level 2

Foundation Apprenticeship in Contact Centre Operations

Pathways for this framework at level 2

Pathway 1: Contact Centre Operations

Level 2, Pathway 1: Contact Centre Operations

Description of this pathway

Contact Centre Operations

Total minimum credit value for this pathway: 53 credits

- 28 credits for competence qualification
- 13 credits for knowledge qualification
- 12 credits for Essential Skills Communications and Application of Number.

Entry requirements for this pathway in addition to the framework entry requirements

None, apart from those under general entry conditions.

Job title(s)	Job role(s)
Trainee Agent, Contact Centre Agent, Help Desk Operative, Sales Advisor, Customer Service Advisor, Outbound Sales Agent, Inbound Sales Agent, Outbound Customer Service Agent, Inbound Customer Service Agent, Telephone Banking Advisor, Telesales Operator.	Using bespoke communication systems, handling customer contacts through communication media, solving problems, recording contact transactions, cold calling and selling.

Qualifications

Competence qualifications available to this pathway

C1 - Level 2 NVQ Certificate in Contact Centre Operations					
No.	Ref no.	Awarding organisation	Credit value	Guided learning hours	UCAS points value
C1a	600/1135/X	City and Guilds	28	93-172	N/A
C1b	600/1635/8	Pearson Education (formerly Edexcel)	28	93-172	N/A
C1c	600/1247/X	Skillsfirst	28	93-172	N/A
C1d	600/1710/7	Pearson EDI	28	93-172	N/A
C1e	600/2451/3	OCR	28	93-172	N/A
C1f	600/2985/7	ProQual	28	93-172	N/A
C1g	600/5106/1	Industry Qualifications	28	93-172	N/A
C1h	600/8132/6	i Can Qualifications Limited	28	93-172	N/A
C1i	600/8856/4	Highfield Awarding Body for Compliance	28	93-172	N/A
C1j	601/4126/8	BIIAB	28	93-172	N/A

Knowledge qualifications available to this pathway

K1 - Level 2 Certificate in Contact Centre Operations					
No.	Ref no.	Awarding organisation	Credit value	Guided learning hours	UCAS points value
K1a	600/1137/3	City and Guilds	13	93-104	N/A
K1b	600/1637/1	Pearson Education (formerly Edexcel)	13	93-104	N/A
K1c	600/1292/4	NCFE	13	93-104	N/A
K1d	600/1121/X	Skillsfirst	13	93-104	N/A
K1e	600/1666/8	Pearson EDI	13	93-104	N/A
K1f	600/8112/0	i Can Qualifications Limited	13	93-104	N/A
K1g	600/8855/2	Highfield Awarding Body for Compliance	13	93-104	N/A
K1h	601/4125/6	BIIAB	13	93-104	N/A
K2 - Level 2 Certificate in Principles of Contact Centre Operations					
No.	Ref no.	Awarding organisation	Credit value	Guided learning hours	UCAS points value
K2a	600/2986/9	ProQual Awarding Body	13	93-104	N/A
K2b	600/6813/9	Industry Qualifications	13	93-104	N/A

Combined qualifications available to this pathway

N/A

Relationship between competence and knowledge qualifications

Apprentices must complete one competence qualification and one knowledge qualification from those listed within this pathway.

K1 and K2 provides the underpinning knowledge and understanding for qualifications C1a - C1j.

The only difference between K1 and K2 is the title, the knowledge covered by the qualifications is identical.

Learners are free to undertake the competence qualification with one awarding organisation and the knowledge qualification with another awarding organisation if they wish to do so.

Transferable skills (Wales)

Essential skills (Wales)

	Minimum level	Credit value
Communication	Level 1	6
Application of numbers	Level 1	6
IT	N/A	N/A

Progression routes into and from this pathway

Progression into the Level 2 Foundation Apprenticeship in Contact Centre Operations

Progression into this apprenticeship may be from a wide number of routes due to the varying backgrounds and past academic and work related experiences of apprentices. Such routes will including having:

- achieved QCF Awards, Certificates or Diplomas; OR
- achieved a Principal Learning Qualification as part of the Welsh Baccalaureate in Business Administration and Finance, Retail Business, ICT or Public Services; OR
- achieved GCSEs or A levels.

Learners may also progress into this apprenticeship without prior qualifications.

Progression from the Level 2 Foundation Apprenticeship in Customer Service

Level 2 apprentices, with support and opportunities in the workplace, can progress onto:

- the Level 3 Apprenticeship in Contact Center Operations; OR
- other Level 3 Apprenticeships such as Customer Service, Business & Administration, Retail and Sales; OR
- the Welsh Baccalaureate, including one of the Principal Learning Qualifications in a range of related sectors, such as Business, Administration and Finance, Information Technology, Public Services and Retail Business; OR
- further education to undertake customer service, business related or other qualifications.

With additional training, Level 2 apprentices may be able to progress in their careers to roles including Sales Team Leader, Customer Service Team Leader, Contact Centre Team Leader, Product Specialist, Supervisor, Support Analyst and Contact Centre Manager.

Employee rights and responsibilities

Employee rights and responsibilities (ERR) are embedded within the Level 2 Certificate in Contact Centre Operations, which automatically covers the key Employee Rights and Responsibilities, as follows:

1. knows and understands the range of employer and employee statutory rights and responsibilities under Employment Law. This should cover the apprentice's rights and responsibilities under the Employment Rights Act 1996, Equality Act 2010 and Health & Safe legislation, together with the responsibilities and duties of employers;
2. knows and understands the procedures and documentation in their organisation which recognise and protect their relationship with their employer. Health & Safety and Equality & Diversity training must be an integral part of the apprentice's learning programme;
3. knows and understands the range of sources of information and advice available to them on their employment rights and responsibilities. Details of Access to Work and Additional Learning Support must be included in the programme;
4. understands the role played by their occupation within their organisation and industry
5. has an informed view of the types of career pathways that are open to them;
6. knows the types of representative bodies and understands their relevance to their industry and organisation, and their main roles and responsibilities;
7. knows where and how to get information and advice on their industry, occupation, training and career;
8. can describe and work within their organisation's principles and codes of practice; and
9. recognises and can form a view on issues of public concern that affect their organisation and industry

Learners may also choose to undertake the CFA ERR workbook, available from the CFA website (www.skillsfcfa.org), although this is not a mandatory requirement within this pathway. The workbook has been designed to enable apprentices to work their way through a series of questions and activities which will bring ERR to life, making the learning more meaningful and long lasting and enhancing the employability skills of the apprentice.

Evidence of achievement of ERR

Learners who have completed the Level 2 Certificate in Contact Centre Operations will have automatically covered the ERR requirements, therefore no additional evidence of achievement is needed.

Level 3

Title for this framework at level 3

Apprenticeship in Contact Centre Operations

Pathways for this framework at level 3

Pathway 1: Contact Centre Operations

Level 3, Pathway 1: Contact Centre Operations

Description of this pathway

Contact Centre Operations

Total minimum credit value for this pathway: 70 credits

- 42 credits for competence qualification
- 16 credits for knowledge qualification
- 12 credits for Essential Skills Wales Communication and Application of Number.

Entry requirements for this pathway in addition to the framework entry requirements

There are no entry requirements for this pathway in addition to the general framework entry requirements.

However, it is likely that apprentices will have some prior experience in a contact centre role to allow them to complete the Apprenticeship, although this is not a formal requirement.

Job title(s)	Job role(s)
Sales Team Leader, Customer Service Team Leader, Contact Centre Team Leader, Product Specialist, Supervisor, Support Analyst, Contact Centre Manager.	Providing contact centre services to customers and colleagues, contributing to resource plan development, managing incidents referred to a contact centre, supporting team use of systems and technology and supervising customer service delivery.

Qualifications

Competence qualifications available to this pathway

C1 - Level 3 NVQ Diploma in Contact Centre Operations					
No.	Ref no.	Awarding organisation	Credit value	Guided learning hours	UCAS points value
C1a	600/1136/1	City and Guilds	42	86-237	N/A
C1b	600/1226/2	Pearson Education Ltd (formerly Edexcel)	42	86-237	N/A
C1c	600/1255/9	NCFE	42	86-237	N/A
C1d	600/1248/1	Skillsfirst	42	86-237	N/A
C1e	600/1645/0	Pearson EDI	42	86-237	N/A
C1f	600/2952/3	Pro Qual Awarding Body	42	86-237	N/A
C1g	600/8004/8	i Can Qualifications Limited	42	86-237	N/A
C1h	600/8858/8	Highfield Awarding Body for Compliance	42	86-237	N/A
C1i	601/4124/4	BIIAB	42	86-237	N/A

Knowledge qualifications available to this pathway

K1 - Level 3 Certificate in Contact Centre Operations					
No.	Ref no.	Awarding organisation	Credit value	Guided learning hours	UCAS points value
K1a	600/1138/5	City and Guilds	16	106-121	N/A
K1b	600/1636/X	Pearson Education Ltd (formerly Edexcel)	16	106-121	N/A
K1c	600/1123/3	Skillsfirst	16	106-121	N/A
K1d	600/1704/1	Pearson EDI	16	106-121	N/A
K1e	600/8065/6	i Can Qualifications Limited	16	106-121	N/A
K1f	600/8857/6	Highfield Awarding Body for Compliance	16	106-121	N/A
K1g	601/4127/X	BIIAB	16	106-121	N/A
K2 - Level 3 Certificate in Principles of Contact Centre Operations					
No.	Ref no.	Awarding organisation	Credit value	Guided learning hours	UCAS points value
K2a	600/2960/2	Pro Qual Awarding Body	16	106-121	N/A

Combined qualifications available to this pathway

N/A

Relationship between competence and knowledge qualifications

Apprentices must complete one competence qualification and one knowledge qualification from those listed within this pathway.

K1 and K2 provide the underpinning knowledge and understanding for qualifications C1a - C1i.

The only difference between K1 and K2 is the title, the knowledge covered by the qualifications is identical.

Learners are free to undertake the competence qualification with one awarding organisation and the knowledge qualification with another awarding organisation if they wish to do so.

Transferable skills (Wales)

Essential skills (Wales)

	Minimum level	Credit value
Communication	Level 2	6
Application of numbers	Level 2	6
IT	N/A	N/A

Progression routes into and from this pathway

Progression into the Level 3 Apprenticeship for Contact Centre Operations

Progression into this apprenticeship may be from a wide number of routes due to the varying backgrounds and past academic work related experiences of Apprentices. Such routes will include having achieved:

- a Level 2 Foundation Apprenticeship in Contact Centre Operations; OR
- a Level 2 Foundation Apprenticeship in Customer Service; OR
- a Level 2 Foundation Apprenticeship in another business related area including Business and Administration, Sales and Team Leading; OR
- QCF Awards, Certificates or Diplomas; OR
- achieved one of the Principal Learning Qualifications as part of the Welsh Baccalaureate for Business Administration and Finance, IT, Retail Business or Public Services; OR
- GCSEs or A levels.

Learners may also progress into this apprenticeship without prior qualifications.

Most learners progressing into the Level 3 Contact Centre Apprenticeship have some prior experience in a contact centre or customer service job role, although this is not a formal requirement. Learners who do not have any prior experience in a contact centre or customer service job role may be better suited to the Level 2 Contact Centre Operations Apprenticeship, although all individuals should be judged on their own merits, experiences and capabilities.

Progression from the Level 3 Apprenticeship for Contact Centre Operations

Apprentices, with support and opportunities in the workplace, can progress onto:

- a Higher Apprenticeship in Business & Professional Administration or Leadership & Management; OR

- further or higher education to undertake customer service, business related or other qualifications, including Foundation Degrees in, for example, Contact Centre Operations or Business Management; OR
- a range of Customer Service, Contact Centres, Sales, Business related and other undergraduate programmes; OR
- a range of Customer Service and other Professional Qualifications, including a Level 4 Diploma in Customer Service Management, a Level 4 Diploma in Contact Centre Operations or a Foundation Degree in Customer Service and Contact Centre Management.

With additional training, apprentices may be able to progress in their careers to roles including: Resource Scheduling Manager, Senior Planner, Team Manager, Key Account Manager, Senior Contact Centre Manager and a range of other senior contact centre and customer service related roles.

UCAS points for this pathway: N/A

Employee rights and responsibilities

Employee rights and responsibilities are embedded within the Level 3 Certificate in Contact Centre Operations, which automatically covers the key Employee Rights and Responsibilities, as follows:

1. knows and understands the range of employer and employee statutory rights and responsibilities under Employment Law. This should cover the apprentice's rights and responsibilities under the Employment Rights Act 1996, Equality Act 2010 and Health & Safe legislation, together with the responsibilities and duties of employers;
2. knows and understands the procedures and documentation in their organisation which recognise and protect their relationship with their employer. Health & Safety and Equality & Diversity training must be an integral part of the apprentice's learning programme;
3. knows and understands the range of sources of information and advice available to them on their employment rights and responsibilities. Details of Access to Work and Additional Learning Support must be included in the programme;
4. understands the role played by their occupation within their organisation and industry
5. has an informed view of the types of career pathways that are open to them;
6. knows the types of representative bodies and understands their relevance to their industry and organisation, and their main roles and responsibilities;
7. knows where and how to get information and advice on their industry, occupation, training and career;
8. can describe and work within their organisation's principles and codes of practice; and
9. recognises and can form a view on issues of public concern that affect their organisation and industry

Learners may also choose to undertake the CFA ERR workbook, available from the CFA website (www.skillsfcfa.org), although this is not a mandatory requirement within this pathway. The workbook has been designed to enable apprentices to work their way through a series of questions and activities which will bring ERR to life, making the learning more meaningful and long lasting and enhancing the employability skills of the apprentice.

Evidence of achievement of ERR

Learners who have completed the Level 3 Certificate in Contact Centre Operations will have automatically covered the ERR requirements, therefore no additional evidence of achievement is needed.

The remaining sections apply to all levels and pathways within this framework.

How equality and diversity will be met

According to national statistics, females represent over two thirds (69%) of employees working in contact centres in the UK. 34% of employees work part time and 85% are white. Although males are under-represented in contact centre occupations they are much more likely to have full time positions.

Possible reasons for the imbalance between males and females in the sector include the perception that:

- contact centre work is female orientated
- contact centre work does not provide high level skills or lead to professional status
- there is no clear, progressive, skill pathway

The growth and spread of contact centre operations and the increasing sophistication of contact centre technology has given rise to greater opportunities for jobs and careers throughout the UK. However, as the workforce and customer base becomes more diverse contact centres need to reflect that diversity and manage it effectively. This requires not only sensitivity to issues such as ethnicity, culture, gender and disability, but an awareness for different and more creative approaches that diversity in general brings to the business.

In order to address some of these issues, awareness of contact centre as a professional career route is being raised through.

- the Welsh Baccalaureate through the Principal Learning Qualifications in Business, Administration and Finance, IT and Public Services
- teaching resources for schools
- opportunities to engage with ethnic groups and improve occupational opportunities
- various careers websites for the contact centre Industry, which includes non-stereotypical images

Apprenticeships are seen as a vital route to encourage and facilitate a diverse set of individuals entering into contact centres. Entry conditions to this framework do not discriminate against any individuals, with the framework being open and accessible to all potential apprentices.

Mentoring is also prompted within the Apprenticeship to provide additional support and increase the chances of the apprentices staying. Training providers and employers must also comply with the Equality Act 2010 to ensure that applicants are not discriminated against in terms of entry to and promotion within, the industry, using the protected characteristics of:

- Age
- Disability

- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or Belief
- Gender
- Sexual orientation

Download the guidance on the Equality Act [here](#).

Skills CFA will monitor take up and achievement of all Apprenticeships and take steps to address any barriers to take up and achievement.

On and off the job training (Wales)

Summary of on- and off-the-job training

Training time for the Contact Centre Operations Apprenticeship programmes is split into on the job training hours and off the job training hours, as described below.

Total on the job and off the job training hours are as follows:

- Level 2 Contact Centre Operations - 374 hours
- Level 3 Contact Centre Operations - 404 hours
- Level 4 Contact Centre Operations Management - 449 hours

Off-the-job training

Level 2 Foundation Apprenticeship in Contact Centre Operations

The total off-the-job training for the Foundation Apprenticeship in Contact Centre Operations is 131 hours, made up as follows:

- 40 hours for Essential Skills Wales (20 hours per Skill)
- 47 hours (minimum) for the knowledge based qualification
- 20 hours for activities including inductions and the ERR workbook
- 24 hours of off-the-job coaching and mentoring to support the apprentice

Level 3 Apprenticeship in Contact Centre Operations

The total off-the-job training for the Apprenticeship in Contact Centre Operations is 149 hours, made up as follows:

- 40 hours for Essential Skills Wales(20 hours per Skill)
- 53 hours (minimum) for the knowledge based qualification
- 20 hours for activities including inductions and the ERR workbook
- 36 hours of off-the-job coaching and mentoring to support the apprentice

Level 4 Higher Apprenticeship in Contact Centre Operations

The total off-the-job training for the Higher Apprenticeship in Contact Centre Operations is 133 hours, made up as follows:

- 40 hours for Essential Skills Wales (20 hours per Skill)
- 37 hours (minimum) for the knowledge based qualification

- 20 hours for activities including inductions and the ERR workbook
- 36 hours of off-the-job coaching and mentoring to support the apprentice

How this requirement will be met

Training hours delivered under an Apprenticeship agreement may vary depending on the previous experience and attainment of the apprentice.

The amount of off-the-job training required to complete the Apprenticeship under the Apprenticeship agreement may then be reduced accordingly, provided the total number of off-the-job hours for this framework can be verified for Apprenticeship certification.

Previous attainment

Where a learner enters an Apprenticeship agreement having previously attained parts or all of the relevant qualifications, this prior learning needs to be recognised using either QCF credit transfer for achievements within the QCF; or through recording certificated learning outside of the QCF, for example Principal Learning qualifications.

For apprentices who have already achieved the relevant qualifications, they must have been certificated within five years of applying for the Apprenticeship Certificate.

Previous experience

Where a learner enters an Apprenticeship agreement with previous work-related experience, this prior learning needs to be recognised [see QCF Guidance on Claiming Credit for further details]. To count towards Apprenticeship certification, previous experience must be recorded using the appropriate Awarding Organisation's CQFW 'Recognition of Prior Learning' (RPL) procedures and the hours recorded may then count towards the off-the-job hours required to complete the Apprenticeship.

For apprentices with prior uncertificated learning experience, the off-the-job learning must have been acquired within five years of application for the Apprenticeship Certificate or have been continuously employed in the relevant job role in the industry for three years duration.

Off-the-job training needs to:

- be planned, reviewed and evaluated jointly between the apprentice and a tutor, teacher, mentor or manager;
- allow access as and when required by the apprentice either to a tutor, teacher, mentor or manager;
- be delivered during contracted working hours;
- be delivered through one or more of the following methods: individual and group teaching, e-learning, distance learning, coaching; mentoring, feedback and assessment; collaborative/networked learning with peers, guided study and induction.

Off-the-job training must be formally recorded, either in a diary, workbook, portfolio, or be verified by attendance records. This evidence needs to be checked and signed by the assessor and employer.

Evidence of off the job hours

The Apprenticeship Certificate Claim Form requires apprentices to acknowledge that they have received the minimum required levels of on the job and off the job training, as set out in the apprenticeship framework document. No other evidence is required to be uploaded to ACW.

On-the-job training

Level 2 Foundation Apprenticeship in Contact Centre Operations

The total on-the-job training for the Contact Centre Operations Foundation Apprenticeship is 243 hours, made up as follows:

- 80 hours for Essential Skills Wales (40 hours per Skill)
- 93 hours (minimum) for the competence based qualification
- 46 hours (minimum) for the knowledge based qualification
- 24 hours of on-the-job coaching and mentoring to support the apprentice

Level 3 Apprenticeship in Contact Centre Operations

The total on-the-job training for the Contact Centre Operations Apprenticeship is 255 hours, made up as follows:

- 80 hours for Essential Skills Wales (40 hours per Skill)
- 86 hours (minimum) for the competence based qualification
- 53 hours (minimum) for the knowledge based qualification
- 36 hours of on-the-job coaching and mentoring to support the apprentice

Level 4 Higher Apprenticeship in Contact Centre Operations

The total on-the-job training for the Contact Centre Operations Apprenticeship is 316 hours, made up as follows:

- 80 hours for Essential Skills Wales (40 hours per Skill)
- 200 hours (minimum) for the competence based qualification
- 36 hours of on-the-job coaching and mentoring to support the apprentice

How this requirement will be met

On-the job training is defined as skills, knowledge and competence gained within normal work duties.

These hours may vary depending on previous experience and attainment of the apprentice. Where a learner enters an Apprenticeship agreement having previously attained or acquired the appropriate competencies or knowledge, this prior learning needs to be recognised and documented using the relevant QCF credit transfer, QCF exemption or RPL procedures (as off-the-job above). The amount of on-the-job training required to complete the Apprenticeship under the Apprenticeship agreement may then be reduced accordingly, provided the total number of on-the-job hours for this framework can be verified for Apprenticeship certification.

Apprentices who commence training under a new Apprenticeship agreement with a new employer may bring a range of prior experience with them. When an apprentice can claim 25% or more hours towards the on-the-job framework total through prior learning acquired from previous full-time education, employment or other vocational programmes, then the apprentice's learning programme should include 'customisation'.

Training providers are encouraged to identify additional on-the-job training programmes that customise the learning to the new workplace. Customisation programmes may include:

- selecting appropriate additional Unit(s) from QCF qualifications, or relevant units recognised as Quality Assured Lifelong Learning [QALL] through a CQFW recognised body
- following Essential Skills at a level higher than that specified in the framework
- including one or more Wider Key Skills or other competency-based qualifications/units relevant to the workplace.

For apprentices who have already achieved the relevant qualifications, they must have been certificated within 5 years from the date of application for the Foundation Apprenticeship/Apprenticeship Certificate or have been continuously employed in the industry for three years. Job roles within Management & Team Leading require a thorough level of technical competence and knowledge, which will be undertaken through work-based training, practice and experience.

On-the-job learning must be formally recorded, either in a diary, workbook, portfolio, or be verified by attendance records. This evidence needs to be checked and signed by the learner and assessor.

Evidence of on the job training hours

The Apprenticeship Certificate Claim Form requires apprentices to acknowledge that they have received the minimum required levels of on the job and off the job training, as set out in the apprenticeship framework document. No other evidence is required to be uploaded to ACW.

Wider key skills assessment and recognition (Wales)

Improving own learning and performance

The Wider Key Skills are already covered within the core elements of the apprenticeship qualifications. No additional Wider Key Skills delivery is required.

Working with others

The Wider Key Skills are already covered within the core elements of the apprenticeship qualifications. No additional Wider Key Skills delivery is required.

Problem solving

The Wider Key Skills are already covered within the core elements of the apprenticeship qualifications. No additional Wider Key Skills delivery is required.

Additional employer requirements

There are no additional employer requirements.

apprenticeship
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www.afo.sscalliance.org