

The e-Skills UK Contact Centre Pathway (go forward >>)

go forward >> is a new qualification, devised in response to industry needs. At sector level the key objectives of the programme are

- ✓ To increase the number and suitability of new entrants into the Contact Centre industry by developing a pre employment qualification that merges vocational training with 'Skills for Life' training
- ✓ To reduce sector attrition rates through :
 - ❖ Ensuring the right people enter the sector and matched to the appropriate organisations within the sector
 - ❖ Ensuring people have the right skills and behaviours to be prepared for the role and culture

The content of the programme modules and the assessment mechanisms within this award have been devised from extensive employer consultation and 12 month piloting. Employer consultation shows that recruitment and attrition issues were skill based and linked to:

- Skills for Life - Numeracy, Literacy & IT [learn-ability]
- Lack of work related skills and behavioural competencies such as business awareness and emotional intelligence.

Go forward >> is aimed at learners looking to enter the contact centre industry either for the first time or following a break in employment within the sector. Specifically, it targets learners who not only need sector specific competencies but also behavioural competencies, soft skills and literacy and numeracy skills. Although not exhaustive, the award was developed with the following customer groups in mind:

- Unemployed including long term unemployed
- Returners to the labour market
- Over 50s
- Lone parents and other groups facing significant barriers to entering employment
- Those looking to re-skill from manufacturing and declining industries



"The course is more than just an ordinary call centre training course, it helps you realise things such as being positive about yourself and others, it's a great start to our new careers and provides all the help and support you need."

Customer Service Advisor and previous learner

"Thank you for the way you have changed all of our lives for the better. ... we are now better and fuller individuals being more outgoing and self assured of our capabilities. The time spent on this course has been one of the happiest experiences of our lives, making learning new skills a pleasure"

Customer Service Advisor and previous learner

Pilot in North East England

4 providers across 4 districts, Our track record is impressive:

- 95% retention rates on programme
- 85% of learners moving into permanent employment

"The course is great for people wanting a change of career. The course from my point of view was a great success; even before the end of my last week I had my first interview. Everything I have learned has helped me find a well paid job, which in turn has given me back my self respect and confidence."

Customer Service Advisor and previous learner

About the qualification and programme

go forward >> is recognised as the e-Skills UK sponsored route into employment within the contact centre industry and has been developed to form part of the e-skills UK suite of qualifications as follows:

- e-skills UK Contact Centre Pathway (branded *go forward >>*)
- e-skills UK Contact Centre Diploma
- e-skills UK Contact Centre Advanced Diploma
- e-skills UK Contact Centre Foundation Degree

This is a level 1 award and is dual accredited where learners have access to the following opportunities:

- VRQ in contact centre competencies (NOS level 1)
- National Tests (level 1) in literacy
- National Tests (level 1) in numeracy (optional)
- Key Skills Certificates at Level 1 in
 - Application of Number
 - Working with others
 - Improving own learning and performance
 - Working with others
 - Information Technology
 - Problem Solving
 - Communication
- e-skills UK accreditation

In order to prepare learners for dual accreditation, the award has been written in conjunction with full advice and guidance on delivery modes, learning processes and schemes of work. These can be summarised as follows:

- Full suite of training booklets for learners covering 25 programme modules embedded with skills for life teaching
- Set of learner manager guides detailing best practice learning processes to manage the learning journey for individuals
- Initial, formative and summative assessment tools
- Learning resources
- Tutor booklets covering 25 programme days and including session plans, activity-based guidance and coaching notes

Benefits to learners participating in the programme

- Understanding their suitability to the sector without the confidence knock backs of direct employment and possible drop out
- Supported learning from referral and initial assessment to exit and summative assessment
- Being equipped to overcome barriers to sustainable employment whether skill, behaviour or attitude based
- Developing important transferable skills and behaviours for employment outside of contact centres as appropriate
- Embedded skills for life learning
- Employer led and quality delivery through specially designed programme modules and learning resources
- Advantages over other candidates looking to enter the contact centre industry. In pilot, over 80% of learners moved into sustainable contact centre employment.



"After 20 years of being at home to bring up my family I decided that it was time for me to return back to work. I went to the job centre and they put me in touch with CCP. It's hard to put down everything I got and learned from the course. I do know that I am a more confident person for my time here and the lessons I have learned here have made a phenomenal difference to my life and I will be forever grateful for that."

Customer Service Advisor and previous learner

Benefits for Employers

The qualification is accompanied by an integrated training programme in which learners will have the opportunity to learn, practice and develop the competencies and skills required by the industry at entrant level in order to both access the sector and remain in sustainable employment. Specifically the qualification aims to give candidates:

- The technical and behavioural competencies required to enter and remain in the industry
- The appropriate Skills for Life and Key Skills to function effectively in the learning environment and workplace
- The skills and confidence to engage in employer specific induction and product /system training programmes
- An opportunity for learners to identify their suitability to the sector and individual organisations and cultures within that sector
- Engaging people into lifelong learning together with raising aspirations and achievement

In addition to increasing the numbers and suitability of those entering the contact centre environment, other benefits for employers are:

- Simplified recruitment processes, reduced cost and increased effectiveness through industry benchmark
- Widening access to contact centre employment through reaching groups such as lone parents, women returners, those with disabilities, those looking to re-skill, older people
- New entrants starting their career with clear and managed expectations about the sector