apprenticeship
FRAMEWORK

Contact Centre Operations (England)

IMPORTANT NOTIFICATION FOR ALL APPRENTICESHIP STARTS FROM 22 AUGUST 2017

Modifications to SASE came into effect on 22 August 2017. Accordingly, SASE publication DFE-00167-2017 applies **both** to new Apprenticeship starts from 22 August 2017 **and** all Apprenticeships commenced before and not completed by 22 August 2017.

For more details of the changes please read the following preface page to the framework document.

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=FR03935

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Apprenticeships

CHANGES TO THE ENGLISH AND MATHS REGULAR MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS FOR APPRENTICESHIP STARTS FROM 22 AUGUST 2017 AND APPRENTICESHIPS REMAINING INCOMPLETE ON 22 AUGUST 2017.

Modifications to SASE came into effect on 22 August 2017. Accordingly, SASE publication DFE-00167-2017 applies both to new Apprenticeship starts from 22 August 2017 and all Apprenticeships commenced before and not completed by 22 August 2017.

The modifications allow for an exemption to the English and Maths regular minimum requirements for people with Special Educational Needs, Learning Difficulties or Disabilities. This means that adjusting the minimum requirements to Entry Level 3 in English and Maths can be considered by the provider, on an individual and case-by-case basis, where **all of the conditions** of the updated SASE section 18 (Intermediate level) or section 37 (Advanced level) for have been satisfied and can be evidenced.

Full details relating to the exceptions eligibility criteria are contained in:

Sections 15-23 of SASE for Intermediate Level Apprenticeships
Sections 34-42 of SASE for Advanced Level Apprenticeships

When applying this exemption, providers must **STILL** consider how to enable the Apprentice to access further literacy and numeracy development – including Level 1 and Level 2 courses – as part of their overall training provision.

The modifications to SASE have also extended the list of qualifications that meet the minimum English requirements to allow for a British Sign Language (BSL) qualification, at the appropriate level, to be accepted as an alternative to a qualification in English, where **BSL is the primary language of the Apprentice**.

Full details relating to BSL acceptance are contained in:

Section 5(f) of SASE for Intermediate Level Apprenticeships
Section 28(f) of SASE for Advanced Level Apprenticeships

Furthermore, the SASE modifications have further extended the list of qualifications that meet the minimum English and Maths requirements to allow for the acceptance of a range of UK-wide qualifications, as an alternative to qualifications gained in England.

Full details relating to the list of acceptable qualifications are contained in:

Sections 5(g-j) and 6(f-i) of SASE for Intermediate Level Apprenticeships
Sections 28(g-j) and 29(f-i) of SASE for Advanced Level Apprenticeships

The modifications include reference to the new numerical grades in the reformed GCSE system and the **minimum** grade requirements. A grade 4 (new grading) will be considered equivalent to a grade C (old grading). A grade 2 (new grading) will be considered equivalent to a Grade E (old grading).

Full details relating to the numerically graded GCSEs are contained in:

Sections 5 and 6 of SASE for Intermediate Level Apprenticeships
Sections 28 and 29 of SASE for Advanced Level Apprenticeships

Please note that some frameworks may have English and Maths grade/level requirements that are **above** the SASE **regular** minimum requirements. The exceptions relating to the use of British Sign Language or Entry Level 3 qualifications, detailed above, **do not apply** to **industry-specific** minimum entry requirements. Please check specific framework documents to ascertain where this is the case and/or check directly with the Issuing Authority responsible for the framework.

The updated version of SASE, and guidance documents, can be accessed here:
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/630068/Specification_of_Apprenticeship_Standards_for_England_.pdf

Contact Centre Operations (England)

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Framework summary

Contact Centre Operations

Intermediate Level Apprenticeship in Contact Centre Operations

This framework includes information on Personal Learning and Thinking Skills

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
- Functional skills

Contact Centre Operations

Advanced Level Apprenticeship in Contact Centre Operations

This framework includes information on Personal Learning and Thinking Skills

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

Combined qualifications available to this pathway:

N/A

This pathway also contains information on:

- Employee rights and responsibilities
- Functional skills

Framework information

Information on the Issuing Authority for this framework:

Skills CFA

The Apprenticeship sector for occupations in business and administration, customer service, enterprise and business support, human resources and recruitment, industrial relations, leadership and management, marketing and sales (also includes contact centres and third sector).

Issue number: 16	**This framework includes:**
Framework ID: FR03935	Level 2 Level 3
Date this framework is to be reviewed by: 31/01/2016	This framework is for use in: **England**

Short description

The Contact Center Operations Intermediate and Advanced Apprenticeships in England were developed in response to employers need for high levels 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.

Intermediate 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.

Advanced 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 apprenticeship has been proposed and developed by Skills CFA, with employers, training providers, colleges and awarding organisations feeding into the development of the apprenticeship and the qualification. Employer input was collected through online consultations and steering group meetings. Employer organisations involved in the development of this framework include BT.

Developer of this framework

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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 in September 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 September 2016 in order to remove qualifications.

Qualifications removed

- HABC Level 3 Certificate In Contact Centre Operations (QCF) (600/8857/6)
- HABC Level 3 NVQ Diploma in Contact Centre Operations (QCF) (600/8858/8)

Qualifications added

N/A

Qualifications that have been extended

N/A

Purpose of this framework

Summary of the purpose of the framework

Defining Apprenticeships

An apprenticeship is a job with an accompanying skills development programme, designed by employers in the sector. It allows the apprentice to gain technical knowledge and real practical experience, along with personal skills, required for their immediate job and future career. These are acquired through a mix of learning in the workplace, formal off the job learning and the opportunity to practice and embed new skills in a real work context. This broader mix differentiates the apprenticeship experience from training delivered to meet narrowly focused job needs.

All apprentices commencing their apprenticeship must have an **Apprenticeship Agreement** between the employer and the apprentice.This can be used to reinforce the understanding of the requirements of the Apprenticeship.

On completion of the apprenticeship the apprentice must be able to undertake the full range of duties, in the range of circumstances appropriate to the job, confidently and competently to the standard set by the industry.

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 their employees respond to customers is vital to achieving customer satisfaction and loyalty. This has lead 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 centre 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.

Contact centres in the UK currently employ around 650,000 people. Currently, 3,000 apprentices complete contact centre apprenticeships every year and this is predicted to rise by 1,000 each year. 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 intermediate 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 Advanced 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 an intermediate 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 advanced 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 (England)

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 operations

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;
- undertaken work experience or work placement experience;
- completed the Duke of Edinburgh Award or similar award;
- achieved GCSEs or A levels;
- achieved QCF Awards, Certificates or Diplomas;
- undertaken a Young Apprenticeship;
- completed a level 2 Apprenticeship from another sector (for Advanced Apprenticeship applicants);
- achieved a Foundation or Higher Diploma, particularly related Diplomas in Business, Administration and Finance and Retail and Hospitality.

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

Initial Assessment

Initial assessment must be used to ensure that applicants have a fair opportunity to demonstrate their ability. Learning programmes can then be tailored to meet a range of abilities and to recognise prior knowledge and experience.

Level 2

Title for this framework at level 2

Intermediate Level 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: **51** credits

- 28 credits for competence qualification
- 13 credits for knowledge qualification
- 10 credits for transferable skills (English and mathematics)

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.

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 Edexcel	28	93-172	N/A
C1c	600/1247/X	Skillsfirst	28	93-172	N/A
C1d	600/5106/1	Industry Qualifications	28	93-172	N/A
C1e	600/8132/6	i Can Qualifications Limited	28	93-172	N/A
C1f	600/8856/4	Highfield Awarding Body for Compliance	28	93-172	N/A
C1g	601/4126/8	BIIAB	28	93-172	N/A
C1h	601/3329/6	Future (Awards and Qualifications) Ltd	28	93-172	N/A
C1i	601/6598/4	Training Qualifications UK Ltd	28	93-172	N/A
C1j	600/1257/2	NCFE	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 Ltd (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	600/8112/0	i Can Qualifications Limited	13	93-104	N/A
K1f	600/8855/2	Highfield Awarding Body for Compliance	13	93-104	N/A
K1g	601/4125/6	BIIAB	13	93-104	N/A
K1h	601/3328/4	Future (Awards and Qualifications) Ltd	13	93-104	N/A
K1i	601/6598/4	Training Qualifications UK Ltd	13	93-104	N/A
K1j	600/1292/4	NCFE	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	600/6813/9	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 provide 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 (England)

Functional Skills / GCSE (with enhanced functional content) and Key Skills (England)

Apprentices must complete or have completed one of the English transferable skills qualifications and one of the Mathematical transferable skills qualifications listed below in order to successfully complete their Apprenticeship and this will carry the QCF five credit values. If they do not have these qualifications as part of their evidence an Apprenticeship certificate cannot be awarded.

English	Minimum level or grade	Credit value
Functional Skills qualification in English	1	5
GCSE qualification in English (with enhanced functional content)	E	5
Key Skills qualification in Communication achieved either before September 2013 as part of the Apprenticeship, or...*	1	5
GCSE Qualification in English*	E	N/A
A' Level or AS Level qualification in English Language*	E	N/A
A' Level or AS Level qualification in English Literature*	E	N/A
A' Level or AS Level qualification in English Language and Literature*	E	N/A
GCSE or O' Level qualification in English Language**	C	N/A
A' Level or AS Level qualification in English Language**	E	N/A
A' Level or AS Level qualification in English Literature**	E	N/A
A' Level or AS Level qualification in English Language and Literature**	E	N/A

* *achieved before September 2012 and within the 5 years immediately prior to starting an Apprenticeship.*

** *achieved before September 2012, otherwise at any time prior to starting the Apprenticeship.*

Mathematics	Minimum level or grade	Credit value
Functional Skills qualification in Mathematics	1	5
GCSE qualification (with enhanced functional content) in Mathematics	E	5
Key Skills qualification in Application of Number achieved either before September 2013 as part of the Apprenticeship, or... *	1	5
GCSE qualification in Mathematics*	E	N/A
A' level or AS Level qualification in Mathematics*	E	N/A
A' Level or AS Level qualification in Pure Mathematics*	E	N/A
A'Level or AS Level qualification in Further Mathematics*	E	N/A
GCSE or O'Level qualification in Mathematics**	C	N/A
A' Level or AS Level qualification in Mathematics**	E	N/A
A' Level or AS Level qualification in Pure Mathematics**	E	N/A
A' Level or AS Level qualification in Further Mathematics**	E	N/A

* *achieved before September 2012 and within the 5 years immediately prior to starting an Apprenticeship.*

** *achieved before September 2012, otherwise at any time prior to starting the Apprenticeship.*

Inclusion of Information and Communications Technology (ICT)

Only English and mathematics are included as required transferable skills in the Contact Centre Intermediate Apprenticeship. This reflects previous issues with the IT Key Skills in contact centres. Employers stress that IT work in contact centres is based on bespoke technology and software with highly defined processes and procedures which contact centre employees must follow. Employees would not have computers or access to computers with software that allowed many of the tasks required in both the IT and ICT Key and Functional Skills. Employees would be trained in the organisations bespoke systems and technology and would not be allowed to deviate from this.

Progression routes into and from this pathway

Progression into the Intermediate Apprenticeship in Contact Centre Operations

Progression into this intermediate 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:

- undertaken learning in the Foundation Learning Curriculum;
- achieved QCF Awards, Certificates or Diplomas;
- undertaken a Young Apprenticeship programme;
- achieved GCSEs or A levels;
- achieved a (14 - 19) Foundation or Higher Diploma in Business, Administration and Finance or Hospitality.

Learners may also progress into the Intermediate Apprenticeship without prior qualifications.

Progression from the Intermediate Apprenticeship in Contact Center Operations

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

- the Level 3 Advanced Apprenticeship in Contact Center Operations;
- other Level 3 Advanced Apprenticeships such as Customer Service, Business & Administration, Retail and Sales;
- the Advanced (14 – 19) Diplomas in a range of related sectors, including Business, Administration and Finance, Public Services, Hospitality and Retail;
- further education to undertake customer service, business related or other qualifications.

With additional training, intermediate 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 & Safety 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 skill, trade or occupation, 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 of conduct and codes of practice;
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 Instructus Skills ERR workbook, available from the Instructus Skills E-learning portal (elearning.instructus.org) - the workbook has been designed to enable apprentices to work their way through a series of questions and activities which will bring the ERR to life, making the learning more meaningful and long lasting and enhance 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 delivery is needed.

As the ERR component has been achieved, please mark the relevant tick box on ACE, there is no longer a requirement to evidence ERR completion when applying for apprenticeship certificates. However, we recommend that an internal record of ERR achievement is retained.

Level 3

Title for this framework at level 3

Advanced Level 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: 68 credits

- 42 credits for competence qualification
- 16 credits for knowledge qualification
- 10 credits for transferable skills (English and mathematics)

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 advanced apprentices will have some prior experience in a contact centre role to allow them to complete the advanced 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 Edexcel	42	86-237	N/A
C1c	600/1248/1	Skillsfirst	42	86-237	N/A
C1d	600/8004/8	i Can Qualifications Limited	42	86-237	N/A
C1e	601/4124/4	BIIAB	42	86-237	N/A
C1f	601/6600/9	Training Qualifications UK Ltd	42	86-237	N/|A
C1g	600/1255/9	NCFE	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	600/8065/6	i Can Qualifications Limited	16	106-121	N/A
K1e	601/4127/X	BIIAB	16	106-121	N/A
K1f	601/6599/6	Training Qualifications UK Ltd	16	106-121	N/A
K1g	600/1251/1	NCFE	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.

K1a - K1h provides the underpinning knowledge and understanding for qualifications C1a - C1h.

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 (England)

Functional Skills / GCSE (with enhanced functional content) and Key Skills (England)

Apprentices must complete or have completed one of the English transferable skills qualifications and one of the Mathematical transferable skills qualifications listed below in order to successfully complete their Apprenticeship and this will carry the QCF five credit values. If they do not have these qualifications as part of their evidence an Apprenticeship certificate cannot be awarded.

English	Minimum level or grade	Credit value
Functional Skills qualification in English	2	5
GCSE qualification in English (with enhanced functional content)	C	5
Key Skills qualification in Communication achieved either before September 2013 as part of the Apprenticeship, or...*	2	5
GCSE Qualification in English*	C	N/A
A' Level or AS Level qualification in English Language*	E	N/A
A' Level or AS Level qualification in English Literature*	E	N/A
A' Level or AS Level qualification in English Language and Literature*	E	N/A
GCSE or O' Level qualification in English Language**	C	N/A
A' Level or AS Level qualification in English Language**	E	N/A
A' Level or AS Level qualification in English Literature**	E	N/A
A' Level or AS Level qualification in English Language and Literature**	E	N/A

* *achieved before September 2012 and within the 5 years immediately prior to starting an Apprenticeship.*

** *achieved before September 2012, otherwise at any time prior to starting the Apprenticeship.*

Mathematics	Minimum level or grade	Credit value
Functional Skills qualification in Mathematics	2	5
GCSE qualification (with enhanced functional content) in Mathematics	C	5
Key Skills qualification in Application of Number achieved either before September 2013 as part of the Apprenticeship, or... *	2	5
GCSE qualification in Mathematics*	C	N/A
A' level or AS Level qualification in Mathematics*	E	N/A
A' Level or AS Level qualification in Pure Mathematics*	E	N/A
A'Level or AS Level qualification in Further Mathematics*	E	N/A
GCSE or O'Level qualification in Mathematics**	C	N/A
A' Level or AS Level qualification in Mathematics**	E	N/A
A' Level or AS Level qualification in Pure Mathematics**	E	N/A
A' Level or AS Level qualification in Further Mathematics**	E	N/A

* *achieved before September 2012 and within the 5 years immediately prior to starting an Apprenticeship.*

** *achieved before September 2012, otherwise at any time prior to starting the Apprenticeship.*

Inclusion of Information and Communications Technology (ICT)

Only English and mathematics are included as required transferable skills in the Contact Centre Advanced Apprenticeship. This reflects previous issues with the IT Key Skills in contact centres. Employers stress that IT work in contact centres is based on bespoke technology and software with highly defined processes and procedures which contact centre employees must follow. Employees would not have computers or access to computers with software that allowed many of the tasks required in both the IT and ICT Key and Functional Skills. Employees would be trained in the organisations bespoke systems and technology and would not be allowed to deviate from this.

Progression routes into and from this

pathway

Progression into the Level 3 Advanced Apprenticeship for Contact Centre Operations

Progression into this advanced apprenticeship may be from a side 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 Intermediate Apprenticeship in Contact Centre Operations;
- a Level 2 Intermediate Apprenticeship in Customer Service;
- a Level 2 Intermediate Apprenticeship in another business related area including Business and Administration, Sales and Team Leading;
- QCF Awards, Certificates or Diplomas;
- GCSEs or A levels;
- a (14-19) Foundation or Higher Diploma in Business Administration and Finance, Hospitality or Retail business.

Learners may also progress into the advanced apprenticeship without prior qualifications.

Most learners progressing into the Contact Centre Advanced 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 Contact Centre Intermediate Apprenticeship, although all individuals should be judged on their own merits, experiences and capabilities.

Progression from the Level 3 Advanced Apprenticeship for Contact Centre Operations

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

- the Level 4 Higher Apprenticeship in Contact Centre Operations Management;
- a Higher Apprenticeship in Business & Professional Administration or Leadership & Management;
- 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;
- a range of Customer Service, Contact Centres, Sales, Business related and other undergraduate programmes;
- 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, advanced 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 (ERR) 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 & Safety 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 skill, trade or occupation, 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 of conduct and codes of practice;
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 Instructus Skills ERR workbook, available from the Instructus Skills E-learning portal (elearning.instructus.org) - the workbook has been designed to enable apprentices to work their way through a series of questions and activities which will bring the ERR to life, making the learning more meaningful and long lasting and enhance 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 delivery is needed.

As the ERR component has been achieved, please mark the relevant tick box on ACE, there is no longer a requirement to evidence ERR completion when applying for apprenticeship certificates. However, we recommend that an internal record of ERR achievement is retained.

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 inbalance 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 (14-19) Diploma in Business, Administration and Finance, although all Diplomas have underpinning equality and diversity themes
- 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 guided learning (England)

Total GLH for each pathway

Level 2 Contact Centre Operations Intermediate Apprenticeship

The minimum Guided Learning Hours (GLH) for the Contact Centre Operations Intermediate Apprenticeship is 369 hours. It is expected that the apprenticeship will last a minimum of 12 months, but a flexible approach to learning is encouraged for learners who have prior learning or experience. To comply with SFA requirements, learners aged 16-18 must spend a minimum of 12 months on this apprenticeship programme. Learners aged 19+ must also spend a minimum of 12 months on this apprenticeship programme, unless they have documented evidence of accredited or recognised prior learning. Where documented evidence of accredited or recognised prior learning is provided, learners aged 19+ must still spend a minimum of six months on this apprenticeship.

Please note, to comply with the Apprenticeship, Skills, Children and Learning Act, a minimum of 280 Guided Learning Hours within the first year of the apprenticeship and at least 280 Guided Learning Hours (pro rata) in each subsequent year must be completed.

Regardless of how long the apprenticeship takes, the minimum 369 hours of Guided Learning must be met.

Level 3 Contact Centre Operations Advanced Apprenticeship

The minimum Guided Learning Hours (GLH) for the Contact Centre Operations Advanced Apprenticeship is 399 hours. It is expected that the apprenticeship will last a minimum of 18 months, but a flexible approach to learning is encouraged for learners who have prior learning or experience. To comply with SFA requirements, learners aged 16-18 must spend a minimum of 12 months on this apprenticeship programme. Learners aged 19+ must also spend a minimum of 12 months on this apprenticeship programme, unless they have documented evidence of accredited or recognised prior learning. Where documented evidence of accredited or recognised prior learning is provided, learners aged 19+ must still spend a minimum of six months on this apprenticeship.

Please note, to comply with the Apprenticeship, Skills, Children and Learning Act, a minimum of 280 Guided Learning Hours within the first year of the apprenticeship and at least 280 Guided Learning Hours (pro rata) in each subsequent year must be completed.

Regardless of how long the apprenticeship takes, the minimum 399 hours of Guided Learning

must be met.

Guided Learning Hours can be attached to both the accredited and un-accredited parts of the apprenticeship, and will include, for example, inductions, completion of the ERR workbook, reviews, training, the qualifications, career discussions, Personal Learning and Thinking Skills (PLTS), Functional Skills or Key Skills and any other activities which help the apprentice gather the required skills and underpinning knowledge needed within their job role.

It is recommended that a plan is developed at the outset of the apprenticeship programme to determine how the Guided Learning Hours requirements will be met.

Minimum off-the-job guided learning hours

Level 2 Contact Centre Operations Intermediate Apprenticeship

The total off-the-job Guided Learning Hours for the Contact Centre Operations Intermediate Apprenticeship is 126 hours, made up as follows:

- 30 hours for Functional Skills (15 hours per Functional Skill)
- 47 hours (minimum) for the knowledge based qualification
- 25 hours for activities including inductions, ERR national outcomes and Personal Learning and Thinking Skills
- 24 hours of off-the-job coaching and mentoring to support the apprentice.

Level 3 Contact Centre Operations Advanced Apprenticeship

The total off-the-job Guided Learning Hours for the Contact Centre Operations Advanced Apprenticeship is 144 hours, made up as follows:

- 30 hours for Functional skills (15 hours per Functional Skill)
- 53 hours (minimum) for the knowledge based qualification
- 25 hours for activities including inductions, ERR national outcomes and Personal Learning and Thinking Skills
- 36 hours of off-the-job coaching and mentoring to support the apprentice.

How this requirement will be met

Off-the-job Guided Learning Hours refers to the time taken to develop the technical skills and to develop knowledge of theoretical concepts across a range of contexts. It can be seen as time away from "the immediate pressures of the job", and may include all of the following (non-exclusive) activities:

- individual and Group teaching
- coaching
- distance learning

- e-learning
- feedback and Assessment
- guided study
- learning with peers/networked or collaborative learning
- mentoring.

Off-the-job Guided Learning Hours must:

- achieve clear and specific outcomes which contribute directly to the successful achievement of the framework and this may include accredited and non-accredited elements of the framework;
- 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.

It should be noted that the Guided Learning Hours attached to the Functional Skills and the knowledge qualifications are split between off-the-job and on-the-job learning hours. The expectation is that apprentices will undertake some learning off-the-job to achieve the underpinning knowledge attached to each qualification, supported by on-the-job learning to embed this knowledge and practice its application whilst learning on-the-job.

Evidence of completion of off the job training:

There is no requirement for the achievement of GLH to be evidenced at the point of claiming a completion certificate. However, we recommend that an internal record of GLH achievement is kept for auditing purposes.

Minimum on-the-job guided learning hours

Level 2 Contact Centre Operations Intermediate Apprenticeship

The total on-the-job Guided Learning Hours for the Contact Centre Operations Intermediate Apprenticeship is 243 hours, made up as follows:

- 60 hours for Functional Skills (30 hours per Functional Skill)
- 93 hours (minimum) for the competence based qualification
- 46 hours (minimum) for the knowledge based qualification
- 44 hours of on-the-job coaching and mentoring to support the apprentice, including the development of their Personal Learning and Thinking Skills.

Level 3 Contact Centre Operations Advanced Apprenticeship

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

- 60 hours for Functional Skills (30 hours per Functional Skill)
- 86 hours (minimum) for the competence based qualification
- 53 hours (minimum) for the knowledge based qualification
- 56 hours of on-the-job coaching and mentoring to support the apprentice, including the development of their Personal Learning and Thinking Skills.

How this requirement will be met

On-the-job Guided Learning Hours refers to the time taken to develop the practical skills applied in the context of a job role. It can be seen as the time the apprentice spends being guided whilst undertaking normal activities as part of their job role, and which provide opportunities to learn, develop and practice skills.

On-the-job Guided Learning Hours must:

- achieve clear and specific outcomes which contribute directly to the successful achievement of the framework and this may include accredited and non-accredited elements of the framework;
- 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.

It should be noted that the Guided Learning Hours attached to the Functional Skills and the knowledge qualifications are split between off-the-job and on-the-job learning hours. The expectation is that apprentices will undertake some learning off-the-job to achieve the underpinning knowledge attached to each qualification, supported by on-the-job learning to embed this knowledge and practice its application whilst learning on-the-job.

Evidence of completion of on the job training:

There is no requirement for the achievement of GLH to be evidenced at the point of claiming a completion certificate. However, we recommend that an internal record of GLH achievement is kept for auditing purposes.

Personal learning and thinking skills assessment and recognition (England)

Summary of Personal Learning and Thinking Skills

All 6 Personal Learning and Thinking Skills (PLTS) must be achieved and evidenced by the Apprentice as part of the framework requirements. The PLTS have been mapped to the mandatory units of the competence qualifications to demonstrate where these skills are likely to naturally occur. This mapping can be downloaded from the Skills CFA website here.

Where the mapping shows PLTS are not fully covered by the mandatory units of the competence qualification within the Intermediate and Advanced Apprenticeships, the PLTS must be integrated into the apprenticeship programme either within the competence and knowledge qualifications themselves, or within other areas of the programme, such as the ERR workbook, Functional/Key Skills, or through the general activities performed by the apprentice in the course of their job role or apprenticeship.

A Guide for Practitioners has been developed by the Skils CFA to provide additional information on how to integrate the achievement of all 6 PLTS, which is available from the Skills CFA website. The guide focuses on the importance of introducing PLTS during induction so that apprentices can learn to recognise for themselves when and how the PLTS are being demonstrated. The guide also includes an example of how the PLTS can be mapped to a sample of optional units within the Intermediate and Advanced Apprenticeships.

As achievement of PLTS can be marked in a tick box when claiming Apprenticeship completion certification via ACE, there is no longer a requirement to evidence PLTS completion when applying for apprenticeship certificates. However, we recommend that an internal record of PLTS achievement is retained.

Creative thinking

People think creatively by generating and exploring ideas. They try different ways to tackle a problem, working with others to find imaginative solutions and outcomes that are of value.

Creative Thinking skills encompass:

- generating ideas and exploring possibilities
- asking questions to extend thinking
- connecting own and others' ideas and experiences in inventive ways
- questioning own and others' assumptions

- trying out alternatives or new solutions and following ideas through
- adapting ideas as circumstances change.

Independent enquiry

People process and evaluate information in their investigations, planning what to do and how to go about it. They make informed and well-reasoned decisions, recognising that others have different beliefs and attitudes.

Independent Enquiry skills encompass:

- identifying questions to answer and problems to resolve
- planning and carrying out research, appreciating the consequences of decisions
- exploring issues, events or problems from different perspectives
- analysing and evaluating information, judging its relevance and value
- considering the influence of circumstances, beliefs and feelings on decisions and events
- supporting conclusions, using reasoned arguments and evidence.

Reflective learning

People evaluate their strengths and limitations, setting themselves realistic goals with criteria for success. They monitor their own performance and progress, inviting feedback from others and making changes to further their learning.

Reflective Learning skills encompass:

- assessing yourself and others, identifying opportunities and achievements
- setting goals with success criteria for your personal development and work
- reviewing progress, acting on the outcomes
- inviting feedback and dealing positively with praise, setbacks and criticism
- evaluating experiences and learning to inform your future progress
- communicating your learning in relevant ways for different audiences.

Team working

People work confidently with others, adapting to different contexts and taking responsibility for their own part. They listen to and take account of different views. They form collaborative relationships, resolving issues to reach agreed outcomes.

Team Working skills encompass:

- collaborating with others to work towards common goals
- reaching agreements, managing discussions to achieve results
- adapting behaviour to suit different roles and situations, including leadership roles

- showing fairness and consideration to others
- taking responsibility, showing confidence in yourself and your contribution
- providing constructive support and feedback to others.

Self management

People organise themselves, showing personal responsibility, initiative, creativity and enterprise with a commitment to learning and self-improvement. They actively embrace change, responding positively to new priorities, coping with challenges and looking for opportunities.

Self Management skills encompass:

- seeking out challenges or new responsibilities and showing flexibility when priorities change
- working towards goals, showing initiative, commitment and perseverance
- organising time and resources, prioritising actions
- anticipating, taking and managing risks
- dealing with competing pressures, including personal and work-related demands
- responding positively to change, seeking advice and support when needed
- managing your emotions and building and maintaining relationships.

Effective participation

People actively engage with issues that affect them and those around them. They play a full part in the life of their school, college, workplace or wider community by taking responsible action to bring improvements for others as well as themselves.

Effective Participation skills encompass:

- discussing issues of concern, seeking resolution where needed
- presenting a persuasive case for action
- proposing practical ways forward, breaking these down into manageable steps
- identifying improvements that would benefit others as well yourself
- trying to influence others, negotiating and balancing diverse views to reach workable solutions
- acting as an advocate for views and beliefs that may differ from your own.

Additional employer requirements

There are no additional employer requirements.

apprenticeship
FRAMEWORKS ONLINE

For more information visit
www.afo.sscalliance.org