

Apprentice Preparation Guide



**Work-based Project,
Supported by an Interview**

Assessment Method: Work-based Project, Supported by an Interview

Preparing for your End-point Assessment

This document is designed to support you in preparing for the VTCT Skills Level 3 Customer Service Specialist v1.1 End-point Assessment.

During your End-point Assessment, **one** of the **three** assessment methods that you will undertake is a work-based project, supported by an interview.

All work on the work-based project will be undertaken following the gateway process over a two-month period.

You must submit all work-based project materials to VTCT Skills **2 weeks prior** to an interview date. This date will be agreed when you pass through the gateway process.

Overview of a Work-based Project, Supported by an Interview

In the work-based project, supported by an interview, you will submit a written report, on a project you have carried out. The subject of the project report should be agreed with VTCT Skills with guidance from your employer in order to allow them to comment on appropriateness for their business. The subject should cover a specific high-level challenge (such as a complaint or difficult situation) that you have dealt with explaining what it was, what actions were taken (planning and execution) the tools used, what solutions were offered, details of any recommendations made to change a policy or process and any feedback from the customer. Details should also include your responsibilities and results.

The written report **must be 2500 words** (+/- 10%), excluding annexes. The report should contain annexes that are attributable to you and the actions you took. Example evidence could be emails, letters, meeting notes, call logs, workflow documents or feedback.

The interview (to support the work-based project) is an assessment method which is a planned, in-depth, two-way conversation between the Independent Assessor and yourself, which allows you the opportunity to draw on what you have learnt and experienced during your apprenticeship.

Delivery of the Interview (to Support the Work-based Project)

The interview (to support the work-based project) will be conducted as follows:

- a 1:1 conversation with an Independent Assessor, with no other parties involved
- completed in an appropriate environment which is free from distractions and interruptions
- both parties may refer to your Work-based project and any supporting annexes to support the Interview

During the interview (to support the work-based project), the Independent Assessor will ask **10 questions** to provide you with the opportunity to cover the range of KSBs. The Independent Assessor will make use of the full allocated time for questioning to allow you the opportunity to evidence your occupational competence.

How long will the Interview (to Support the Work-based Project) take?

The interview (to support the work-based project) **must last for 60 minutes** and will be conducted and assessed by a VTCT Skills Independent Assessor.

The Independent Assessor has the discretion to increase the time by **up to 10%** for the interview (to support the work-based project) to allow you to finish a response to a question, where applicable.

Where will the Interview (to Support the Work-based Project) take place?

The interview will take place in your employer's workplace or your training provider's premises. The interview may be conducted face to face or remotely by video conferencing.

The interview should take place in a quiet room, free from distractions and influence, in a controlled environment.

- **What is a controlled environment?** *A controlled environment for an assessment refers to a setting where specific conditions are monitored to ensure fairness, security, and reliability in the assessment process across apprentices.*

Please note: the interview (to support the work-based project) will be recorded quality and safeguarding purposes.

How is Work-based Project, Supported by an Interview graded?

The Independent Assessor will use the grading criteria to assess the work-based project (supported by an interview). The assessment method will be graded Fail/Pass/Distinction.

Work-based Project, Supported by an Interview grading criteria

Fail criteria

Grading descriptors - Work-based project, supported by an interview
The Apprentice does not provide sufficient evidence to demonstrate that their performance meets the requirements of the pass criteria.
Fails to recommend improvements in customer service provision.
Does not demonstrate an understanding of customer journeys.
Shows limited ability in understanding customer journeys to ensure successful outcomes.

Pass criteria

You will achieve a pass grade if you provide evidence to meet all the Knowledge, Skills and Behaviour requirements set out for the work-based project supported by an interview and all of the criteria below:

Grading descriptors - Work-based project, supported by an interview
Evidence that they understand the impact of the organisation's mission statement and business strategy on customer service delivery and make recommendations for future improvements.
Ability to recommend improvement to the customer service provision, the steps required to implement this change and the benefit this change could have on the organisation and their own role.
Demonstrates an understanding of customer journeys within their organisation and how these are managed to ensure successful outcomes.
An understanding of the underpinning business processes that support them on bringing about the best outcome for customers and their organisation.
Provides evidence to show how they identify information which can be used by their organisation to provide customer insight and identify how this information can be analysed, used and presented.
Ability to discuss the internal and external factors influencing their business environment and culture.
Evidence knowledge of the departmental roles/functions within their organisational structure and their influence in customer service delivery.
Evidence of how they demonstrate the importance of effective communication among departments in providing good customer service.
Ability to identify potential causes of service failure and the consequences of these.
Evidence when they made decisions and recommendations to improve their own customer service delivery.
Demonstrates how they communicate with customers, gaining full information on their experience, and recommend improvements to customer service delivery to others.

Evidence how they proactively seek and gather customer feedback through a variety of methods and evaluate this feedback to make recommendations on possible improvements.
Ability to gather and analyse information about the types of customers their organisation has and explain how the service they provide meets their potential needs and expectations.
Evidence to show how they use the qualitative and quantitative customer experience data that their organisation gathers.
Evidences the way in which they analyse this data to recommend continuous improvement, showing when there is input from others where required.
Demonstrates how they take into consideration current legislation, compliance and regulatory guidance when making recommendations for change.

Distinction criteria

You will achieve a distinction grade for the work-based project supported by an interview if you provide evidence to meet all the pass criteria and all of the additional criteria below:

Grading descriptors - Work-based project, supported by an interview
Evidence to support their research and analysis of customer service standards and mission statements of other organisations, in comparison to their own organisations, to inform their recommendations.
Ability to consider the possible impact on their organisation of not considering the future in decision-making.
Demonstrates how knowing their customer and their needs has a direct impact on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • their working practices • organisational policy/procedures
Ability to demonstrate the importance of assessing the political, economic, social, technical, legal and environmental factors that influence the operation of their organisation.
Ability to identify and recognise when problems reoccur and discuss these reoccurring problems with others and recommend appropriate change(s).
Provides evidence to show when they analyse the risks and opportunities to implementing change.
Evidence when they evaluated the strengths and weaknesses of feedback methods used and recommended alternative methods likely to improve results, stating reasons for choice.
Evidence to show when they have proactively gathered customer feedback, through a variety of methods and used alternative recommendations to change the customer service level agreement in order to provide an improved service.
Demonstrates an ability to identify trends/recurring issues and analyse why they occurred and record possible ways of addressing them to ensure they do not reoccur.

Please follow the guide outlined below to support your preparation

What can I do to prepare for my End-point Assessment?	Completed Yes/No
Access and familiarise yourself with the 'Mock Assessment Form' for the work-based project, supported by an interview.	
Refer to the Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours that may be assessed during the interview. These are outlined in the table below.	
Collate pieces of evidence from your work-based project that demonstrate the relevant Knowledge, Skills and Behaviour which will be discussed in your Interview.	
Practice questions and answers with peers/assessors in preparation for your interview using the mock sample questions provided.	
Collaborate with others to seek constructive feedback on your interview performance.	
Incorporate any feedback from your peers/assessor to enhance your approach and to address any identified areas for improvement in readiness for your Interview.	
Approach the interview with confidence. Remember that it is an opportunity to showcase your knowledge and skills.	
Stay calm under pressure and communicate effectively throughout the interview.	
Remember to bring your identification with you on the day of your End-point Assessment. This can be one of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Driving licence • Employee ID • Passport 	

Planning and Preparing for your Work-based Project, Supported by an Interview

Knowledge

Business, knowledge and understanding	What do I need to remember?
Understand your organisation's current business strategy in relation to customers and make recommendation for its future.	
Understand what continuous improvement means in a service environment and how your recommendations for change impact your organisation	
Understand the principles and benefits of being able to think about the future when taking action or making service-related decisions	
Customer journey knowledge	
Understand and critically evaluate the possible journeys of your customers, including challenges and the end-to-end experience	
Understand the underpinning business processes that support you in bringing about the best outcome for customers and your organisation	
Customer service culture and environment awareness	
Understand your business environment and culture and the position of customer service within it	
Understand your organisation structure and what role each department needs to play in delivering Customer Service and what the consequences are should things go wrong	

Skills

Business focused service delivery	What do I need to remember?
Demonstrate a continuous improvement and future focussed approach to customer service delivery including decision making and providing recommendations or advice	
Providing a positive customer experience	
Explore and interpret the customer experience to inform and influence achieving a positive result for customer satisfaction	
Working with your customers/customer insights	
Proactively gather customer feedback, through a variety of methods. Critically analyse, and evaluate the meaning, implication and facts and act upon it	
Analyse your customer types, to identify or anticipate their potential needs and expectations when providing your service	
Service improvement	
Analyse the end-to-end service experience, seeking input from others where required supporting development of solutions	
Make recommendations based on your findings to enable improvement	
Make recommendations and implement where possible, changes in line with new and relevant legislation, regulations and industry best practice	

Following your End-point Assessment:

What happens following my End-point Assessment?	You will receive the results from your End-point Assessment within 10 working days.
What happens if I do not achieve my End-point Assessment?	If you do not achieve a pass result within this assessment method, you will be able to re-sit this assessment.

Appendix 1 - Work-based project Mapping Document with a Declaration of authenticity

Work-based Project, Supported by an Interview Mapping Document

VTCT Skills Level 3 Customer Service Specialist ST0071 v1.1

All columns of this mapping document are to be completed during the post gateway stage of the EPA period and submitted with the Work-based project and any supporting annexes for each apprentice. Please refer to the 'End-point Assessment Guidebook' and the 'Work-based project, Supported by an Interview' Apprentice Guidance Document when completing this document.

Please note: It is a requirement of the training provider to submit all the evidence electronically, via the 'Documents tab' on the Apprentice's dashboard within the epaPRO system. This must be in a scanned format, allowing the evidence package to be viewed remotely. VTCT Skills will not accept a link to an apprentice's individual e-portfolio.

Evidence number	KSBs:	Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours criteria:	Type of evidence submitted:	Reference number:
Example:				
1	Skills: Business focused service delivery	Demonstrate a continuous improvement and future focussed approach to customer service delivery including decision making and providing recommendations or advice	<i>Evidence of CPD</i>	1.1
2	Knowledge: Customer journey knowledge	Understand the underpinning business processes that support you in bringing about the best outcome for customers and your organisation	<i>Referral for escalation evidence</i>	1.2
	Knowledge: Business knowledge and understanding	Understand your organisation's current business strategy in relation to customers and make recommendation for its future		
	Knowledge: Business knowledge and understanding	Understand what continuous improvement means in a service environment and how your recommendations for change impact your organisation		
	Knowledge: Business knowledge and understanding	Understand the principles and benefits of being able to think about the future when taking action or making service-related decisions		

Declaration of Authenticity

The work submitted for the work-based project, supported by an interview, must be the Apprentice's own work. Should this evidence be copied from someone else or plagiarised in any other way, the Apprentice's End-point Assessment result may be void.

Apprentice Declaration

I confirm that all of the evidence submitted to VTCT Skills for my work-based project, supported by an interview, is my own work.

Apprentice name:	
Apprentice signature:	
Date:	

Training Provider/Employer Declaration

The following declaration can be provided by the training provider or the employer.

I have authenticated the Apprentice's work, and I am satisfied that to the best of my knowledge, the work submitted is solely that of the Apprentice.

Training provider/ employer name:	
Training provider/ employer signature:	
Date:	

Document History

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v1	04/02/2025	First published	Qualification Development Manager