



**education**

Department:  
Education  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

# **NATIONAL CERTIFICATE (VOCATIONAL)**

## **SUBJECT GUIDELINES**

### **CONTACT CENTRE OPERATIONS NQF Level 3**

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# **CONTACT CENTRE OPERATIONS – LEVEL 3**

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## INTRODUCTION

### A. What is Contact Centre Operations?

The contact centre industry is one of the fastest growing industries in South Africa. Contact centres evolve daily. The concept is that of an ongoing, organised “set” of human resources, procedures and methods designed to generate, analyse, disseminate, store and retrieve information. Contact centres comprehensively and seamlessly integrate every facet of business relating to the customer, whether this be marketing, sales, customer service or field support, by integrating people, process and technology. The objective is to create a long-term, mutually beneficial relationship with customers.

### B. Why is Contact Centre Operations important in the Marketing programme?

According to the Chartered Institute of Marketing, “Marketing is the management process responsible for identifying, anticipating and satisfying customer requirements; the satisfaction of consumer needs and wants becomes the rationale for everything the company does. If a company fails its customers, there is any number of rivals waiting to take over.”

Contact Centre Operations is the culmination of many different but related modern marketing developments. Clients communicate with companies through contact centres. In certain markets, there is little direct contact between producers and consumers. By collecting, analysing and interpreting facts, marketing research can find out what people want and why they want it. Clearly, marketing decisions are only as good as the information on which they are based. Marketing management uses information gathered by contact centres to plan and aid marketing decisions.

Adam Smith said in 1776: “Consumption is the sole end and purpose of all production and the interest of the producer ought to be attended to only so far as it may be necessary for promoting that of the consumer”.

### C. The link between the Contact Centre Operations Learning Outcomes and the Critical and Developmental Outcomes

Marketing effectiveness depends on communication, which means identifying and solving problems in reading and written activities and working effectively with others using interactive speech through a process of developing language capability across language applications in principles and strategies.

To contribute to the personal development of each student or employee and the social and economic development of the society, it must be the intention underlying any programme of learning including Contact Centre Operations to make an individual aware of the importance of:

- reflecting on and exploring a variety of strategies to learn and solve problems effectively;
- participating as responsible citizens in the life of local, national and global communities; and
- being culturally and aesthetically sensitive across a range of social contexts.

### D. Factors that contribute to achieving Contact Centre Operations Learning Outcomes

A student who is interested in marketing aims for an integrated approach, which embraces new opportunities in a dynamic, action-driven manner, based on an overall business philosophy. A consumer-orientated student provides customer satisfaction to achieve business objectives. This programme requires students with exceptional behaviour, who can work under pressure and stay focused and who possess good decision-making, communication and interpersonal skills. Customer relationship management, internal marketing and customer care form a fully integrated system.

Contact centres play a vital role in eradicating e-illiteracy and narrowing the digital gap in Africa.

## 1 DURATION AND TUITION TIME

This is a one year instructional programme comprising 200 teaching and learning hours. The subject may be offered on a part-time basis provided the candidate meets all of the assessment requirements.

Course preparation should consider students with special education needs (LSEN).

## 2 SUBJECT LEVEL FOCUS

Handle problems and emergencies in a Contact Centre

## 3 ASSESSMENT REQUIREMENTS

### 3.1 Internal assessment (50 percent)

#### 3.1.1 Theoretical component

The theoretical component will form 40 percent of internal assessment.

Internal assessment of the theoretical component of Contact Centre Operations Level 3 will take the form of observation, class questions, group work, (informal group competitions with rewards), individual discussions with students, class, topic- and semester tests, and internal examinations. Daily observations can be made when marking assignments of the previous day and class questions.

Assignments, case studies and tests can be done at the end of a topic. Tests and internal examinations must form part of internal assessment.

#### 3.1.2 Practical/application component

Practical components include applications, exercises and assignments. All practical components must be indicated in a Portfolio of Evidence (PoE).

The practical components will form 60 percent of internal assessment.

Internal assessment of the practical component of Contact Centre Operations Level 3 will take the form of assignments, practical exercises, case studies, practical examination in a simulated business environment.

Students may complete practical assignments on a daily basis. Assignments and case studies can also be done at the end of a topic. Practical examination can form part of internal practical assessment.

- **Some examples of practical assessments include, but are not limited to:**

- Presentations (lectures, demonstrations, group discussions and activities, practical work, observation, role play, independent activity, syntheses and evaluation)
- Exhibitions by learners
- Visits undertaken by learners based on a structured assignment task
- Research
- Task performance in a simulated/structured environment

- **Definition of the term “Structured Environment”**

“Structured environment” for the purpose of assessment refers to an actual or simulated workplace, or workshop environment. It is advised that a practicum room is available on each campus for practical assessment.

- **Evidence in practical/application assessments**

All evidence pertaining to evaluation of practical work must be reflected in the students’ Portfolio of Evidence (PoE). The tools and instruments constructed and used for the purpose of conducting such assessments must be clear form evidence contained in the PoE.

#### 3.1.3 Processing of Internal assessment mark for the year

A year mark out of 100 is calculated by adding the marks of the theoretical component and the practical component of the internal continuous assessment.

### 3.1.4 Moderation of internal assessment mark

Internal assessment is subjected to both internal and external moderation procedures as contained in the *National Examinations Policy for FET College Programmes*.

## 3.2 External assessment (50 percent)

A national examination is conducted annually in October or November by means of a paper set, marked and moderated externally.

Details in respect of external assessment are contained in the *Assessment Guidelines: Contact Centre Operations (Level 3)*.

## 4 WEIGHTED VALUES OF TOPICS

TOPICS	WEIGHTED VALUE
1. Apply out-bound Contact Centre operations	40
2. Apply in-bound and outbound Contact Centre operations within an emergency context	25
3. Service levels in Contact Centre Operations	15
4. Contact Centre problem solving	20
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100</b>

## 5 CALCULATION OF FINAL MARK

Internal assessment: Student's mark/100 x 50 = a mark out of 50 (a)

Examination mark: Student's mark/100 x 50 = a mark out of 50 (b)

**Final mark: (a) + (b) = a mark out of 100**

All marks are systematically processed and accurately recorded in order to be available as hard copy evidence for, amongst others, purposes of moderation and verification, as well as purposes of reporting.

## 6 PASS REQUIREMENTS

The student must obtain at least fifty (50) percent in ICASS and fifty (50) percent in the examination.

## 7 SUBJECT AND LEARNING OUTCOMES

On completion of Contact Centre Operations Level 3 the learner should have covered the following outcomes:

- Topic 1: Apply out-bound Contact Centre Operations
- Topic 2: Apply in-bound and outbound Contact Centre Operations within an emergency context
- Topic 3: Service levels in Contact Centre Operations
- Topic 4: Contact Centre problem solving

### 7.1 Topic 1: Apply outbound Contact Centre Operations

**7.1.1 & 7.1.2 Subject Outcome 1 and 2:** Place calls to customers and record information from customers

#### Learning Outcome:

- Place calls to correct customers as defined in workplace instructions or worksheets
- Make calls utilizing company specific technology or systems effectively
- Provide relevant, accurate information to customers
- Conduct and close calls within company specific time frames
- Identify the correct information for inputting purposes
- Input information accurately
- Record and put in according to company specific time frames
- Ensure that information captured is relevant to the customers' requirements
- Ensure that information captured is consistent with company specific formats and requirements
- Ensure that information is verified according to company standard practices

### 7.1.3 Subject Outcome 3: Respond to queries from customers

#### Learning Outcome:

- Respond to customers simultaneously according to company specific time frames and company responses and scripts
- Provide relevant information
- Respond to queries accurately.

*Range: 'Accurately' defines the correct choice of action to be taken*

### 7.1.4 Subject Outcome 4: Handle a sales transaction telephonically

#### Learning Outcome:

- Conclude sales transactions accurately and within company specific time frames
- Conclude sales transactions wherein the sale is confirmed where appropriate to do so
- Ensure that sales transaction discourse follows Contact Centre specific scripting or response requirements
- Ensure that the sales transaction is consistent with the customers' requirements

### 7.1.5 Subject Outcome 5: Provide follow up to customers' requests

#### Learning Outcome:

- Conduct follow up procedures consistently and timeously according to company specific requirements
- Ensure that follow up procedures are consistent with customer requirements

## 7.2 Topic 2: Apply in-bound and outbound Contact Centre operations within an emergency context

### 7.2.1 Subject Outcome 1: Retrieve calls within a contact centre from customers in emergency situations

#### Learning Outcome:

- Respond to customers appropriately as per the emergency service provision requirements
- Retrieve calls timeously according to service specific timeframe requirements
- Retrieve calls using company specified technology and systems accurately and effectively
- Retrieve calls according to service specific procedures and methodologies

### 7.2.2 Subject Outcome 2: Document information from customers in emergency situations

#### Learning Outcome:

- Elicit the correct information from customers in emergency situations
- Document and record information accurately
- Capture information within company specific timeframes
- Ensure that information captured is relevant according to the emergency situation
- Capture information consistently with service specific formats and requirements
- Verify information according to service standard practices

### 7.2.3 Subject Outcome 3: Respond within a Contact Centre to emergencies

#### Learning Outcome:

- Respond to emergencies accurately.  
*Range: Accurately defines the correct choice of action to be taken*
- Respond to emergencies timeously according to company specific timeframes
- Ensure that responses comply with service defined responses and scripts
- Ensure that responses are consistent with emergency service practices and procedures
- Provide relevant information
- Offer sufficient options and alternatives in order to effect a solution

#### **7.2.4 Subject Outcome 4:** Follow-up on customers in emergency situations

##### **Learning Outcome:**

- Conduct follow-up procedures consistently according to industry requirements
- Ensure that follow-up procedures are consistent with customer requirements
- Conduct follow-ups timeously according to service specific timeframes and laid down protocols
- Inform customers of escalation situations and pass follow-ups onto relevant parties

### **7.3 Topic 3: Service levels in Contact Centre Operations**

#### **7.3.1 Subject Outcome 1:** Demonstrate an understanding of company specific service levels

##### **Learning Outcome:**

- Explain all relevant service levels
- Describe and explain the purpose of service levels
- List, describe and explain the requirements of all relevant service levels.  
*Range: Service levels include but are not limited to management, information systems and information on systems and wall boards, sign on time, abandoned rate etc., shift changes*

#### **7.3.2 Subject Outcome 2:** Meet and maintain service levels

##### **Learning Outcome:**

- Implement relevant company specific levels
- Monitor implementation processes to ensure compliance
- Meet service level timeframes and targets consistently as per company specific requirements
- Identify and evaluate potential constraints in meeting and maintaining service levels

### **7.4 Topic 4: Contact Centre problem solving**

#### **7.4.1 Subject Outcome 1:** Obtain and evaluate project information to facilitate Contact Centre problem solving

##### **Learning Outcome:**

- Identify and agree to valid and reliable methods and sources for obtaining project information
- Enlist the co-operation of relevant parties in obtaining information
- Identify, obtain and evaluate available information from relevant parties in conjunction with higher authority
- Analyze information gathered to identify potential improvements

#### **7.4.2 Subject Outcome 2:** Provide advice and support regarding received information to facilitate problem solving

##### **Learning Outcome:**

- Provide advice and support at appropriate times and only when necessary
- Ensure that the methods of providing advice are sensitive to the personal needs and positions of the relevant individuals
- Provide advice and support only so far as is necessary to allow progress to be maintained and to enable individuals and groups to work autonomously
- Identify threats to the Contact Centre's success at an early stage

## **8 RESOURCE NEEDS FOR THE TEACHING OF CONTACT CENTRE OPERATIONS – LEVEL 3**

### **8.1 Physical resources**

- **Structured Marketing environment**

Completely equipped with all necessary material and devices and equipment that represents the practical environment as found in the Marketing sector, so that students can get hands on training and perform practical assignments for assessment purposes.

- **Technology and Research Centre**

- Computers, scanners and printers for students to complete assignments/case studies/projects and to do research
- Access to Internet
- Research software e.g. Encarta
- Subject related magazines/DVDs/videos
- Daily newspapers
- Reference books
- List of stakeholders involved in the training process for presentations/guest speakers/ practical experience
- Applicable legislation/Acts
- Secure stockroom

### **8.2 Human resources**

- A qualification in marketing/degree in Marketing/ three year teaching diploma/ recognition based on prior learning in this field of study
- Facilitation skills
- Assessor- and moderator qualifications
- Training in OBE Methodology
- Ongoing upskilling in new developments and innovations
- A full time Technology and Research Centre Manager

### **8.3 Other Resources:**

- Consumables e.g. stationery
- Student guides
- Assessment guides
- Logbooks
- Workbooks
- Files
- Calculators