



education

Department:
Education
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

NATIONAL CERTIFICATES (VOCATIONAL)

SUBJECT GUIDELINES

CONTACT CENTRE OPERATIONS

NQF LEVEL 2

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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, and hence, 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 an extremely vital role in eradicating e-illiteracy and narrowing the digital gap in Africa.

CONTACT CENTRE OPERATIONS – LEVEL 2

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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 student meets all the assessment requirements.

Students with special education needs (LSEN) must be catered for in a way that eliminates barriers to learning.

2 SUBJECT LEVEL FOCUS

The student is able to perform inbound contact centre operations.

3 ASSESSMENT REQUIREMENTS

3.1 Internal assessment (50 percent)

3.1.1 Theoretical component

The theoretical component forms 40 percent of the internal assessment mark.

Internal assessment of the theoretical component in Contact Centre Operations Level 2 takes 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. Lecturers can observe students when marking exercises from the previous day and asking class questions.

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

3.1.2 Practical component

The practical component forms 60 percent of the internal assessment mark.

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

Internal assessment of the practical component in Contact Centre Operations Level 2 takes the form of assignments, practical exercises, case studies and practical examinations in a simulated business environment.

Students may complete practical exercises daily. Assignments and case studies can be completed at the end of a topic. Practical examinations can form part of internal practical assessment.

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

- A. Presentations (lectures, demonstrations, group discussions and activities, practical work, observation, role-play, independent activity, synthesis and evaluation)
- B. Exhibitions by students
- C. Visits undertaken by students based on a structured assignment task
- D. Research
- E. Task performance in a "Structured Environment"

- **Definition of the term "Structured Environment"**

"Structured environment" for the purposes 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 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 to conduct these assessments must be clear from the evidence contained in the Portfolio of Evidence (PoE). A checklist of the practical work that will be

submitted with the Portfolio of Evidence (PoE) must be designed to facilitate the assessment of the Portfolio of Evidence (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 (40 percent) and the practical component (60 percent) of the internal continuous assessment (ICASS).

3.1.4 Moderation of internal assessment mark

Internal assessment is subjected to internal and external moderation procedures as set out 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(s) set and moderated externally. A practical component will also be assessed.

External assessment details and procedures are set out in the *Assessment Guidelines: Contact Centre Operations (Level 2)*.

4 WEIGHTED VALUES OF TOPICS

TOPICS	WEIGHTED VALUE
1. Identify Customers of Contact Centres	25
2. Inbound Contact Centre Operations	30
3. Operate Communication Equipment	25
4. Computer Packages in a Contact Centre	20
TOTAL	100

5 CALCULATION OF FINAL MARK

Internal assessment mark: 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 to be available as hard copy evidence for, amongst others, reporting, moderation and verification purposes.

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 2, the student should have covered the following topics:

- Topic 1: Identify Customers of Contact Centres
- Topic 2: Inbound Contact Centre Operations
- Topic 3: Operate Communication Equipment
- Topic 4: Computer Packages in a Contact Centre

7.1 Topic 1: Identify Customers of Contact Centres

Subject Outcome 1: Identify prospective customers and establish their needs.

Learning Outcomes:

The student should be able to:

- Develop sales contacts and networks to provide information to prospective customers.

- Identify customers using established methods.
- Establish a consultation method to identify customers.
- Establish opportunities for assessment and qualification processes.

Subject Outcome 2: Establish and build the customer base.

Learning Outcomes:

The student should be able to:

- Identify prospecting methods to establish and build the customer base.
- Establish information needs in accordance with the present and prospective customer base.
- Establish processes to record and assess customer information.
- Establish and maintain the customer database to integrate customer and sales information.
- Assess customer profiles to identify factors in relation to the marketplace in which they operate.

7.2 Topic 2: Inbound Contact Centre Operations

Subject Outcome 1: Retrieve calls from customers.

Learning Outcomes:

The student should be able to:

- Retrieve calls meticulously according to company-specific timeframe requirements.
- Retrieve calls accurately and effectively using company-specified technology and systems.
- Retrieve calls according to company-specific procedures and methodologies.

Subject Outcome 2: Input specific customer information in accordance with specific contact centre requirements.

Learning Outcomes:

The student should be able to:

- Identify the correct information for inputting purposes.
- Input information accurately according to company standards.
- Record and input information within company-specific timeframes.
- Capture relevant information according to the customers' requirements.
- Capture information that is consistent with company-specific formats and requirements.
- Verify information according to company standards and practices.

Subject Outcome 3: Respond to queries from customers.

Learning Outcomes:

The student should be able to:

- Respond to queries accurately.
Range: Accurately define the correct choice of action to be taken.
- Respond to customers meticulously within company-specific timeframes.
- Ensure that responses comply with company-defined responses and scripts.
- Provide relevant information.

Subject Outcome 4: Follow up on customer requests.

Learning Outcomes:

The student should be able to:

- Conduct follow-up procedures continually and ensure that follow-up procedures are consistent with customer requirements.
- Conduct follow-ups meticulously within company-specific timeframes.
- Inform customers of escalation situations and pass follow-ups to relevant parties.

7.3 Topic 3: Operate Communication Equipment

Subject Outcome 1: Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the operation of communication equipment.

Learning Outcomes:

The student should be able to:

- Describe communication etiquette and procedures and give reasons for maintaining such etiquette.
- Describe the procedure to be followed if communication equipment malfunctions and explain the importance of keeping such equipment in good working order.
- State company procedures for use of communication equipment.
- Explain departmental communication interrelationships and how all relevant departments rely on each other for communication to function effectively.

Subject Outcome 2: Demonstrate the ability to make decisions about practice and act accordingly.

Learning Outcomes:

The student should be able to:

- Secure communication equipment against unauthorised access and keep in a good working order.
- Use communication equipment correctly.
- Answer the communication system correctly and respond in a professional and courteous manner ensuring that all procedures are followed.
- Decide how to act in a given situation and give reasons for the decision.

Range: Criminal activities, evacuations and customer disputes

- Report malfunctioning communication equipment promptly to the relevant persons and give details of the malfunction.

Subject Outcome 3: Demonstrate the ability to learn from our actions and to adapt.

Learning Outcomes:

The student should be able to:

- Act responsibly in different contexts.
- Demonstrate different uses of communication equipment in different circumstances or situations.
- Describe the potential for using radios for security purposes.

7.4 Topic 4: Computer Packages in a Contact Centre

Subject Outcome 1: Demonstrate and apply knowledge of computer packages in a contact centre.

Learning Outcomes:

The student should be able to:

- Demonstrate knowledge of company-specific computer packages.
- Demonstrate and apply an understanding of company-specific packages and applications.
- Apply applications accurately in a company context.
- Use company-specific packages in a contact centre with confidence.

Subject Outcome 2 and 3: Input and verify data with company-specific packages in a contact centre.

Learning Outcomes:

The student should be able to:

- Input data accurately and within company-specific timeframes.
- Ensure that data captured are relevant and consistent with company-specific formats and requirements.
- Follow critical and closest routes when inputting data into packages.
- Complete all tasks within the company's timeframes.
- Verify data in company-specific packages and against the source of information.
- Identify inaccuracies and rectify correctly.
- Follow company-specific follow-up and close procedures.

8 RESOURCE NEEDS TO TEACH CONTACT CENTRE OPERATIONS – LEVEL 2

8.1 Physical resources

A "Structured Environment" that is equipped with all necessary material, devices and equipment to represent the practical environment found in the Marketing sector should be set up so that students can get hands-on training and perform practical assignments for assessment purposes.

8.2 Technology and Research Centre

- Computers, scanners and printers for students to complete assignments, case studies and projects
- Access to the Internet to do research
- Research software, for example, Encarta
- Subject-related magazines, DVDs and videos
- Daily newspapers
- Reference books
- List of stakeholders for presentations, guest speakers and practical experience
- Applicable legislation and acts
- Secure stockroom

8.3 Human resources

The lecturer should have:

- a qualification in Marketing or a three-year teaching diploma;
- recognition-based on prior learning in this field of study;
- facilitation skills;
- assessor and moderator qualifications;
- training in outcomes-based education methodology; and
- ongoing interest in new developments and innovations.

The lecturer should also be a full-time Technology and Research Centre manager.

8.4 Other resources

- Consumables, for example, stationery
- Assessment Guidelines
- Logbooks
- Workbooks
- Files
- Calculators