

# Customer Service Professional Journey to Excellence

October 2011

## PDA LAUNCH SIGNALS START OF NEW ERA

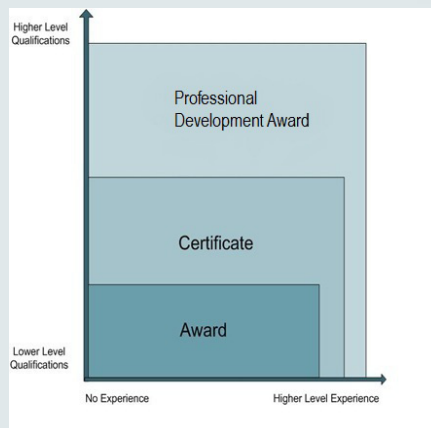
The long-term vision of the Customer Service Professional Qualification is complete with the launch of its third and final level – the Professional Development Award (PDA).

Co-funded by SOLACE, the PDA has been developed using informed feedback from graduates and other key stakeholders involved in the Qualification, with the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) playing a prominent role.

The Qualification has transformed customer service levels across the Scottish public sector since its launch in 2008 and this new development will offer even more opportunities for staff to enhance their skills and provide a better service for customers.

Following the success at the 2011 Cosla Excellence awards in the 'Securing a Workforce for the Future' category, the Qualification's partners – Renfrewshire Council, the Improvement Service and eCom Scotland – reaffirmed their commitment to further strengthen the Qualification.

The PDA, which has a Scottish Credit and Qualification Framework (SCQF) rating of Level 8 – 32 points – will perfectly complement the existing Award and Certificate levels, and help produce the next generation of graduates. The finishing touches are currently being put



to the PDA prior to its formal launch at the Society of Personnel Directors Scotland (SPDS) annual 2011 conference in November. It will initially be available at an extremely competitive price of £550 per candidate.

Michael Moran, Senior Organisational Development Adviser at Renfrewshire Council, drove the development of the PDA and has championed the Qualification nationally.

He said: "The design and subsequent launch of this final level of the Qualification would not have been possible without the support of a number of stakeholders."

"This includes financial support from SOLACE, honest and ongoing feedback and input from officers who attend the our Cognate Group and from Qualification graduates, and the project management and technical input from our IT partners, eCom Scotland.

"Most notable has been the significant advisory role provided by SQA, which ensured we had a robust assessment strategy and could then receive accreditation. Our thanks go to all of these stakeholders and we are confident the PDA will prove to be a positive addition to the Qualification."

The PDA is available to a diverse range of candidates - including team leaders, supervisors and junior/middle managers working in customer service delivery, or those aspiring to these roles.

Successful Certificate candidates can also undertake the PDA, while nominations from outside this core group will be accepted - with support from local delivery centres.

**Nominations are now being sought and can be sent to enquiries@customerserviceprofessional.co.uk**

## QUALIFICATION EARNS EUROPEAN RECOGNITION

The Customer Service Professional Qualification has been named as a finalist in the prestigious international eLearning Age Awards 2011.

It has been selected in the 'Best e-learning Project Securing Widespread Adoption' category at the eLearning Age Awards - which received around 250 entries from across the UK and Europe.

This nomination is a fantastic endorsement of the Qualification's impact across Scotland since the 2008 launch. There are currently 29 councils/associated bodies delivering the Qualification, with around 800 learners registered across Scotland. Of these, almost 300 candidates have graduated to date.

Martin Brown, Head of Customer Relationship Management with the Improvement Service, said: "The Qualification is transforming customer service across Scotland and is a positive example of the benefits of effective collaborative working."

"Portable across Scottish local government, the Qualification is providing career pathways for local government's diverse workforce and continues to go from strength to strength."



Steven McNab, HR Manager (Organisational Development), at Renfrewshire Council, said: "To be shortlisted is a remarkable achievement, given the number of entries and the calibre of organisations who enter these awards."

Linda Steedman, Managing Director of eCom Scotland, said: "Online learning is a proven way of transforming performance and has been integral to the Qualification's success. It embraces a unique, online format and applies leading practice in all areas."

The awards will be held on Thursday, November 10.

## QUALIFICATION PLAYS STARRING ROLE IN SQA FILM

The Customer Service Professional Qualification features prominently in a video case study focusing on customised awards endorsed by the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA).

Scottish local government's only online professional qualification certificated by the SQA, the Qualification's incredible success over the last three years was recognised by its inclusion in the video.

Featuring scenes shot at Renfrewshire Council's customer services centre, the film also contains interviews with Steven McNab, HR Manager (Organisational Development), at Renfrewshire Council, and Martin Brown, Head of Customer Relationship Management at the Improvement Service.



East Lothian Council's Janet Farrell, the 2010 Candidate of the Year, offers an insightful interview and delivers a glowing appraisal of the Qualification, and the impact it has had on her working life.

The video can be viewed here: <http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/173.html>

## GEARING UP FOR THE 2011 QUALIFICATION AWARDS



The 2010 winners

The 2011 Customer Service Professional Qualification Awards will take place in November as part of the Society of Personnel Directors Scotland (SPDS) annual conference.

Once again, there are three awards in the following categories: Candidate of the Year, Learning Coach of the Year and Champion of the Year.

Last year, the award ceremony was a major success. Janet Farrell (East Lothian Council) was named Candidate of the Year, Veronica Auld (East Lothian Council) was Learning Coach of the Year and Julie Candler (Dumfries and Galloway Council) was Champion of the Year.

Michael Moran, Senior

Organisational Development Adviser at Renfrewshire Council, said: "This awards ceremony has become a valuable addition to the local government calendar and it is only right that the hard work of all those who embrace the Qualification is recognised.

"Last year, all three categories were extremely competitive, with exceptional entries from across Scotland. Given the success and progress of the Qualification over the last 12 months, there are again a number of strong contenders."

The team leading the Qualification would like to wish all entrants the very best of luck in this year's awards.

## SQA PROVIDES ULTIMATE ENDORSEMENT

The Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) has paid a significant compliment to the Qualification by adopting it for its own staff.

In October, 25 staff and managers in SQA's Glasgow office took part in induction training for the Qualification - and in doing so became the 29th organisation to adopt it.

This is viewed as a major endorsement of the Qualification as SQA was deeply involved in its development and provide the certification at a national level for each successful candidate.

SQA has now illustrated its great faith in the Qualification by implementing it for use by its own workforce.

Karen McCallum, Director of Operations in SQA, welcomed the development and encouraged staff at Qualification induction events.

She said: "SQA regards the delivery of excellent customer service as one of our key priorities. Our employees are our

greatest asset in meeting this aim, and we know that they already deliver consistent excellent customer service to a diverse range of both external and internal customer groups.

"I am delighted that we now have the opportunity to recognise that through offering our employees the opportunity to access the Customer Service Professional Qualifications. I am sure they will enjoy the learning and that it will support ongoing service delivery."



## TEST DATE REMINDER

As part of the Qualification's ongoing quality assurance commitments, colleagues from the Central Administration Point (CAP) at Renfrewshire Council will periodically visit centres during induction and/or tests.

Centres are reminded to advise the CAP as early as possible of any newly-arranged inductions or test dates.

You can do this by notifying the Central Administration Point on 0141 840 3466 or by email [enquiries@customerserviceprofessional.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@customerserviceprofessional.co.uk)

## Features

- Light-touch to administer and deliver
- Portable across Scottish local government and beyond
- Single candidate management and registration point
- Ease of access
- Flexible to meet staff and organisational needs

## Bottom Line Benefits

- £750,000 council savings in developing and delivering the Qualification
- Faster, more efficient customer service
- Instant feedback and results for candidates sitting exams

## FIRST IS GRADUATES



**A QUARTET of Improvement Service employees have become Customer Service Professional Qualification graduates.**

**Malcolm Comerford, Leigh Rennie and Alison Ritchie all passed the Qualification's Award level, while Fiona Dick has completed the Certificate level.**

**All four were successful at the first time of asking to become the Improvement Service's first Qualification graduates.**

**Malcolm, an accountant, said: "I feel the Qualification has benefited me as much as those who work in frontline jobs."**

**Leigh, a Project Support officer, said: "The simple online learning system made the whole process enjoyable."**

**Alison, PA and Business Support assistant, said: "I'm certain the Qualification will have a positive impact on my working life."**



West Lothian graduates



Fife graduates

## RECENT GRADUATES

### Aberdeen City Council:

Susan Robbie (A) Kerry Thomson (C) Patricia Macleod (C)  
Alison Murray (C) Isobel Stewart (C) Elaine Brown (C) Jamie Gordon (C)

### Angus Council:

Shirley Taylor (A) Claire Louise Brown (A)  
Chloe Swilinski (A) Patricia Fletcher (A) Jade Dall (A)

### Argyll & Bute Council:

Marina Campbell (A) David Hanley (C)

### City of Edinburgh Council:

Angela Maria McGennity(A) Eileen Cossar (A)  
Michelle Moore (A) James Davis (A)

### East Ayrshire Council:

Hazel Sinclair (A) Sharon Lusk (A) Laura Owens (A) Evelyn Barr (A)

### East Lothian Council:

Alan Bathgate (A) Leanne Donald (A)  
Calum Colquhoun(A) Sharon Peel (C) Lesley Chapman (C)

### East Renfrewshire Council:

Maria Reid (A)

### Falkirk Council:

Julie Makarewicz (C) Yvonne Paton (C) Shona Boyle (C)

### Fife Council:

Colinette Pell (A) Rosemary Hamilton (A) Dorothy May Waines (A)  
Ryan Townsley (A) Nicola McKee (A)  
Kieran Hunter (A) Jane McQuade (A)

### North Ayrshire Council:

Sharon Street (A) Fiona Miller (A)

### North Lanarkshire Council:

Lynsey Buchanan (A) Jennifer McIndoe (A) Barry Clarke (A)  
Karen Bryce (A) Sheena Thompson (A) Christina Russell (A)  
William Shand (A) Helen Smith (A) Elizabeth Lawrie (A)  
Joyce Beattie (A) Susan Miller (A) Joanne McGinty (A) Shazia Jamil (A)  
John Neilson (A) Robert Donnelly (A) Linzi Robertson (A)

### Perth & Kinross Council

Vicky McNally (C)

### Renfrewshire Council:

Alan Glass (A) Carol-Ann Love (A) Nicola Howie (A)

### South Lanarkshire Council

Gemma Ellen Ballantyne (A)

### Strathclyde Fire Service:

Donna Mayberry (C)

### The Highland Council:

Claire Mary Breeze (A) Terri Fisher (A) Jane Ross (C)

### West Lothian Council

Daniel Matonti (C) Claire Robinson (C) Alyson Todd (C)  
John Gerard Allan (C) Lesley Bennett (C) Hazel Purves (C)