



Handbook

IER1 – VTCT (Skillsfirst) Level 1 Award in Introduction to
Employment in Retail (RQF)

601/3046/5

Version 4.0

About Skillsfirst

VTCT is a market-leading Awarding, Assessment and End-point Assessment (EPA) Organisation offering vocational and technical qualifications in a range of 'services to people' sectors.

The VTCT group of companies are comprised of three innovative awarding brands: VTCT, iTEC and Skillsfirst. Together they have over 2,500 approved centres in over 40 countries across the world.

The qualifications suite offered by VTCT (Skillsfirst) spans a range of sectors including Childcare, Business Services, Health & Social Care, Recruitment and Social Media.

For more information visit us at www.vtct.org.uk and www.skillsfirst.co.uk, contact our dedicated Customer Support Team via email at customersupport@vtct.org.uk and customerservices@skillsfirst.co.uk or call 0121 270 5100

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1 Qualification at a glance

Qualification title	VTCT (Skillsfirst) Level 1 Award in Introduction to Employment in Retail (RQF)
Qualification number	601/3046/5
Product code	IER1
Age range	There are no age limits attached to learners undertaking this qualification unless this is a legal requirement of the process or the environment, such as needing special training to use storage equipment.
Total Qualification Time (TQT)	70
Guided Learning (GL) hours	53
Assessment	To be awarded this qualification, learners must successfully achieve the following assessments: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Portfolio of evidence• Skills-based assessment (if applicable)
Entry requirements	There are no formal entry requirements for learners undertaking this qualification; however centres must ensure that learners have the potential and opportunity to gain evidence for the qualification in the work place.
Support materials	Support materials can be found on the website (if applicable)

2 Qualification information

2.1 Qualification aim and design

The Level 1 Award in Introduction to Employment in Retail will provide the basic knowledge, skills and understanding for those wishing to work in Retail and have limited or no prior knowledge of working in the industry. These could include learners who are new to the workplace or returners to work who wish to build their confidence and gain an insight into the Retail environment.

2.2 Progression opportunities

This qualification will also provide the learner with a foundation to enable progression onto the Intermediate Apprenticeship in Retail or into employment

3 Qualification structure

To be awarded the VTCT (Skillsfirst) Level 1 Award in Introduction to Employment in Retail (RQF) learners must achieve all mandatory units.

The minimum TQT required to achieve this qualification is **70**.

Product code	Unit title	Level	GLH	Unit reference number
Mandatory units (Group M):				
RKA18	Understanding the business of retail	1	8	A/502/5756
RKA19	Understanding customer service in the retail sector	1	17	T/502/5819
RKA20	Understanding how a retail business maintains health, safety and security on its premises	1	15	M/502/5804
RKA21	Understanding the retail selling process	1	13	T/502/5805

4 Centre requirements

4.1 Resources

Centres must possess the physical resources needed to support the delivery of the programme and the assessment of knowledge and skills, which should therefore be of industry standard. Where specific resources are required these have been indicated in individual units.

4.2 People1st

The Level 1 Award in Introduction to Employment in Retail is based on the units developed by Skillsmart Retail and endorsed by People1st who are now the sector skills council for retail. Their contact details are:

People1st Group
Hospitality House
11-59 High Road
London
N2 8AB
Tel: 020 3074 1222

Email www.people1st.co.uk

This handbook provides details, which centres will need to apply in order to assess and internally verify/quality assure the Level 1 Award in Introduction to Employment in Retail and includes the:

- occupational expertise of those who assess performance, and internally verify/quality assure assessments
- continuous professional development
- summary of assessment methods

4.3 Occupational expertise of those who assess performance and internally verify/quality assure assessments

Assessors and internal verifiers (IVs)/quality assurers (IQAs) are appointed by the recognised centre and approved by Skillsfirst through the external verifier (EV).

Assessors and IV/IQAs should:

- have verifiable relevant experience and current knowledge of the occupational working area at, or above, the level they are assessing or verifying/quality assuring. This experience and knowledge must be of sufficient depth to be effective and reliable when judging learner competence or verifying/quality assuring assessment processes and decisions. This could be verified by:
 - curriculum vitae and references
 - possession of a relevant qualification
 - corporate membership of a relevant professional institution
- be prepared to participate in training activities for their CPD
- be employed directly or contractually by the same centre as the learner or
- be acting as a counter signatory on a short-term basis for a maximum period of 18 months, where the assessor/IV has not achieved the relevant award.

While the Assessor/Verifier (A/V) and the Assessor/Internal Quality Assurance (TAQA) units are valued as qualifications for centre staff, they are not currently a requirement for this qualification. It is strongly recommended, however, that staff must be able to show occupational competence,

through mapping their competences and knowledge against the relevant NOS and the assessor and verifier requirements.

Centre staff may undertake more than one role, e.g. tutor and assessor or internal verifier/moderator/quality assurer, but must never internally verify/moderate/ quality assure their own assessments.

4.3.1 Internal verifiers/Quality assurers

The IV/IQA is responsible for the approved centre's assessment quality. Therefore, in addition to the above, IV/IQAs must also:

- provide evidence of knowledge, understanding and application of the regulatory authorities' code of practice
- undertake CPD to ensure that they are working to the current NOS in assessment and verification
- only verify the decisions of assessors which fall within their acknowledged area of technical and occupational competence.

4.3.2 Assessors

Assessors should only assess in their area of technical and occupational competence and must be approved by Skillsfirst.

4.4 Employer direct model

Where employers opt for an 'employer direct' model, any qualification requirements for assessors and internal verifiers may be waived.

The 'employer direct' model is where colleagues, supervisors and/or managers in the workplace are involved in the assessment process. Under this model, the employer, with the agreement of Skillsfirst may choose between:

- achieving the appropriate approved qualifications for assessment/verification or
- demonstrating that their (the employer's) training and development activity undertaken to prepare, validate and review these assessment roles, maps 100% to the national occupational standards which these qualifications are based on. The mapping process must be agreed by Skillsfirst as providing the equivalent level of rigour and robustness as achievement of the approved assessment/verification qualification.

Each application to use the employer direct model will be considered on an individual organisation and qualification basis and agreed by the qualification regulators, including the sector skills council. Prospective organisations must be able to confirm that their in-house practices conform to the requirements of the standards in association with Skillsfirst.

4.5 Continuous professional development (CPD)

Centres are responsible for ensuring that assessors and IV/IQAs plan and maintain their CPD.

Centres are expected to support their assessors and IV/IQAs in ensuring that their knowledge remains current of the occupational area and of best practice in delivery, mentoring, training, assessment and verification, and that it takes account of any national or legislative developments.

Centres may have generic criteria and personnel specifications in addition to the above

4.6 Total Qualification Time (TQT)

Each qualification has a Total Qualification Time (TQT) value based on the total number of hours learning required to achieve it. The TQT value reflects the number of supervised learning hours

required to achieve the knowledge and assessment requirements, plus the length of time a learner would need to take to achieve the skills and capabilities to be deemed competent. All RQF qualifications are subject to an evaluation process to determine their fitness-for-purpose.

5 Assessment

5.1 Summary of assessment methods

For this qualification, learners will be required to provide a portfolio of evidence for **each** unit.

5.2 Assessment principles

Units will be achieved through the acquisition of evidence by the learner and submission to their assessor. Units may be assessed through a number of different sources and forms, which must meet the requirements of assessment criteria.

- Assessment should normally be at the learner's workplace, but where the opportunity to assess across the range of standards is unavailable other comparable working environments may be used, following agreement from the external verifier.
- A holistic approach towards the collection of evidence should be encouraged, assessing activities generated by the whole work experience rather than focusing on specific tasks. e.g. If the learner communicates with a customer whilst engaged in business administration activities these can be assessed against both business administration and customer service elements.
- Assessors can only assess in their acknowledged area of occupational competence.
- Assessors and IV/IQAs will be registered with their centre and be accountable to the organisation for their assessment practice.
- Health and safety of customers/clients and employees must be maintained throughout the assessment process and if any person carrying out assessment or verification activities does not feel that there is due regard to health and safety then that person should refuse to continue with the activity(ies) until satisfied that due regard to health and safety is being taken.

5.3 Assessment principles

The learner may produce evidence from a range of sources which should be recorded in some form. A record of evidence will confirm to the assessor their confidence in the learner's competence and breadth and depth of knowledge and understanding in being able to competently meet the functional requirements of all the units.

The assessor will need to be assured that the learner can:

- meet all the learning outcomes of a unit
- pass all the assessment criteria of a unit

An assessor may request additional evidence if they are not satisfied with the evidence presented by the learner. If this occurs, it may need to be agreed in partnership with the learner and the assessor.

5.3.1 Professional discussion

Professional discussion is encouraged as a supplementary form of evidence to confirm a learner's competence. Such discussions should not be based on a prescribed list of questions but be a structured discussion which enables the assessor to gather relevant evidence to ensure the learner has a firm understanding of the standard being assessed.

5.3.2 Realistic working environment (RWE)

Assessment of this qualification should ideally be carried out within the workplace, however, where this is not possible learners can be assessed within an approved RWE that replicates a real work setting. Ideally, a RWE should include time pressures, work problems, interruptions, accountabilities

and the necessary equipment and materials to do the job. By doing so, sector employers can be confident that competence achieved in an RWE will be continued into employment. RWEs can offer many opportunities to employers and individuals that have limited access to assessment. The number of hours learners work and their input is not prescribed, as it is acknowledged that RWEs cannot operate without some flexibility. However, centres must provide evidence that the following criteria are being met as well as fulfilling the Skillsfirst criteria for this purpose

5.4 Simulation and witness testimony

Simulation or witness testimony is warranted where the centre can demonstrate that performance evidence has been impossible to obtain in the work environment.

5.4.1 Simulation

Simulation can be used to assess learners where the opportunity to assess naturally occurring evidence is unlikely or not possible, for example assessment relating to a breach of confidentiality or privacy, health and safety, fire and emergency procedures. It should not include routine activities that must be covered by performance evidence. It should only be used when performance evidence is unlikely to be generated through normal working practices.

5.4.2 Witness testimony

Skillsfirst recognise the use of witness testimony and expert witness testimony as appropriate methods for assessors to collect evidence on candidate's performance.

Witness testimonies can be obtained from people that are occupationally competent and who may be familiar with the national occupational standards, such as the learner's line manager. They may also be obtained from people who are not occupationally competent and do not have a knowledge of the national occupational standards such as other people within the learner's workplace, customers and suppliers.

The assessor must judge the validity of the witness testimony and these may vary depending on the source. Witness testimonies can only support the assessment process and may remove or reduce the need to collect supplementary evidence. However, centres must comply with Skillsfirst guidance over the occupational competence and briefing of witnesses in the use of witness testimony.

5.5 Recognition of prior learning (RPL)

RPL recognises how the contribution of a learner's previous experience could contribute to a qualification. Should any opportunities for RPL be identified, it is important that a complete process of recognising prior experience and learning is undertaken, by ensuring that:

- it covers relevant or appropriate experience for previous activities, as well as accredited learning and qualifications
- it is incorporated into the assessment planning, with details of how this will take place
- mapping of prior learning to the national occupational standards to identify gaps is documented and auditable
- assessment methods or processes for recognising prior experience and learning, are documented and made available to the external verifier
- the audit trail covers the whole process and methodology of RPL
- the authenticity and currency of presented evidence is established by the assessor
- where observation or expert witness testimony is a unit assessment method requirement, this activity is undertaken after learner registration for the qualification

In considering the appropriateness of any single piece of evidence, the following should be considered:

- Content – the degree to which the content of any previous accredited learning meets the requirements of the national occupational standards against which it is being presented as evidence.
- Performance and knowledge – the degree to which the previous learning covered both performance and knowledge. Some learning will only have offered and tested the latter, in which case RPL will only recognise the meeting of knowledge requirements. Performance will require further assessment. Although unlikely, the reverse (performance tested but not knowledge) could be true in which case knowledge and understanding would need further assessment.
- Relevance of context – the degree to which the context of the learning gained and assessed, relates to the current context of learner' work roles. If the context was different, assessors will need to satisfy themselves of learners' ability to transfer the learning gained into their current setting.
- Currency – how recently the learning was gained. Learners would need to demonstrate current knowledge and understanding of areas such as legislation, policy and practice etc, which may have changes since the previous learning programmes were undertaken.
- Authenticity – how the ownership of the evidence is established to ensure it was generated by the learner.

6 Units

Unit Handbook

RKA18 – Understanding the business of retail

Unit reference number: A/502/5756

Level: 1

Guided Learning (GL) hours: 8

Unit aim

The purpose of this unit is to provide learners with the knowledge and understanding of the retail sector. It introduces learners to the supply chain and different types of retail outlets and occupations found within the sector.

Learning outcomes

There are **five** outcomes to this unit. The learner will:

LO1 Understand how retail outlets differ in size and type

LO2 Understand the range of retail operations

LO3 Understand the retail supply chain

LO4 Understand the contribution which the retail sector makes to the economy

LO5 Understand how customers' concerns influence the products and services offered by retailers

Unit content

Endorsement of the unit by a sector or other appropriate body

This unit has been developed by Skillsmart Retail and is endorsed by People1st, the sector skills council for retail.

Unit assessment

Learners will be required to provide a portfolio of evidence indicating that they have met all the unit outcomes and assessment criteria.

Learning outcomes

Learning Outcome	Assessment Criteria
LO1 Understand how retail outlets differ in size and type	1.1 List the different retail channels and state the main features of each one
	1.2 Identify the sizes and types of retail outlets typically found in a variety of retail locations such as high streets or retail business parks

Learning Outcome	Assessment Criteria
LO2 Understand the range of retail occupations	2.1 State how retail occupations differ between small, medium and large retail businesses
	2.2 Identify the usual entry points and progression opportunities for a variety of retail occupations
	2.3 Outline the skills, personal attributes and behaviours required for a range of retail occupations

Learning Outcome	Assessment Criteria
LO3 Understand the retail supply chain	3.1 List the sources from which retailers obtain products
	3.2 Outline the key stages of a product's journey through the supply chain

Learning Outcome	Assessment Criteria
LO4 Understand the contribution which the retail sector makes to the economy of the United Kingdom	4.1 Outline the size of the retail sector, using information such as the: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the number of people employed the number of retail businesses the amount of money spent by customers every year

Learning Outcome	Assessment Criteria
LO5 Understand how customers' concerns influence the products and services offered by retailers	5.1 Outline environmental issues of concern to retail customers
	5.2 Outline ethical issues of concern to retail customers
	5.3 List the main advantages to retailers of being responsive to customers' environmental and ethical concerns

RKA18 Document History

Version	Issue Date	Changes	Role
V1.0	31/01/2023	Re-branded	Qualification Administrator

Unit Handbook

RKA19 – Understanding customer service in the retail sector

Unit reference number: T/502/5819

Level: 1

Guided Learning (GL) hours: 17

Unit aim

The purpose of this unit is to provide learners with the knowledge and understanding of retail customer service. It focuses on the importance of communicating with customers and creating positive initial impressions. It also introduces learners to the different types of customer complaints and problems.

Learning outcomes

There are **five** outcomes to this unit. The learner will:

LO1 Understand the importance of customer service to a retail business

LO2 Understand what gives customers a positive initial impression of a retail business and its staff

LO3 Understand how customer service is adapted to meet the needs of individual and customers

LO4 Understand the importance of communication to the delivery of customer service

LO5 Understand a variety of customer complaints and problems

Unit content

Endorsement of the unit by a sector or other appropriate body

This unit has been developed by Skillsmart Retail and is endorsed by People1st, the sector skills council for retail.

Unit assessment

Learners will be required to provide a portfolio of evidence indicating that they have met all the unit outcomes and assessment criteria.

Learning outcomes

Learning Outcome	Assessment Criteria
LO1 Understand the importance of customer service to a retail business	1.1 State what is meant by customer service in a retail business
	1.2 Outline how customer service contributes to the success of a retail business

Learning Outcome	Assessment Criteria
LO2 Understand what gives customers a positive initial impression of a retail business and its staff	2.1 Outline the factors which contribute to a customer's initial impression of a retail business
	2.2 Outline how the staff of a retail business can help to give customers a positive initial impression

Learning Outcome	Assessment Criteria
LO3 Understand how customer service is adapted to meet the needs of individual customers	3.1 List the types of service which customers may need, including helping with gaining access to products
	3.2 List the main ways of meeting customer needs for service, including ways of giving customers access to products, facilities and information

Learning Outcome	Assessment Criteria
LO4 Understand the importance of communication to the delivery of customer service	4.1 Outline how written communication can contribute to the effectiveness of customer service
	4.2 Outline how spoken communication and body language can contribute to the effectiveness of customer service
	4.3 State how different types of questions can be used to find out what customers need
	4.4 State why it is important to listen to customers

Learning Outcome	Assessment Criteria
LO5 Understand a variety of customer complaints and problems	5.1 List the main types of customer complaints and problems
	5.2 Identify solutions to typical customer complaints and problems
	5.3 Outline the ways in which the law protects the rights of consumers

RKA19 Document History

Version	Issue Date	Changes	Role
V1.0	31/01/2023	Re-branded	Qualification Administrator

Unit Handbook

RKA20 – Understanding how a retail business maintains health, safety and security on its premises

Unit reference number: M/502/5804

Level: 1

Guided Learning (GL) hours: 15

Unit aim

The purpose of this unit is to provide learners with the knowledge and understanding of maintaining security as well as health and safety on retail premises. It introduces learners to the relevant legislation and provides an overview of different procedures for maintaining health and safety, and security.

Learning outcomes

There are **three** outcomes to this unit. The learner will:

LO1 Know the main provisions of health and safety legislation in relation to a retail business

LO2 Know how health and safety are maintained on the premises of a retail business

LO3 Know how cash and stock are kept secure on the premises of a retail business

Unit content

Endorsement of the unit by a sector or other appropriate body

This unit has been developed by Skillsmart Retail and is endorsed by People1st, the sector skills council for retail.

Unit assessment

Learners will be required to provide a portfolio of evidence indicating that they have met all the unit outcomes and assessment criteria.

Learning outcomes

Learning Outcome	Assessment Criteria
LO1 Know the main provisions of health and safety legislation in relation to a retail business	1.1 State the role of employees and employers in relation to relevant health and safety legislation
	1.2 State when and why the control of substances, which are hazardous to health, is important
	1.3 State where to find information on company health and safety policies

Learning Outcome	Assessment Criteria
LO2 Know how health and safety are maintained on the premises of a retail business	2.1 List the risks and hazards which commonly occur on the premises of a retail business
	2.2 Outline precautions to reduce the risk of accidents
	2.3 Outline precautions to reduce the risk of fire
	2.4 List the main types of fire extinguisher, and the materials each should be used on
	2.5 Outline procedures for the safe manual lifting and moving of stock
	2.6 State why high standards of cleanliness and hygiene should apply to the staff and premises of a retail business

Learning Outcome	Assessment Criteria
LO3 Know how cash and stock are kept secure on the premises of a retail business	3.1 List the main causes of stock loss
	3.2 List the different types of shop theft and where and when each type typically occurs
	3.3 List the methods of payment typically accepted in retail outlets
	3.4 Outline the main ways of preventing loss when handling payments
	3.5 Outline the main checks for maintaining the security of cash and non-cash payments

RKA20 Document History

Version	Issue Date	Changes	Role
V1.0	31/01/2023	Re-branded	Qualification Administrator

Unit Handbook

RKA21 – Understanding the retail selling process

Unit reference number: T/502/5805

Level: 1

Guided Learning (GL) hours: 13

Unit aim

The purpose of this unit is to provide learners with the knowledge and understanding of selling within a retail environment. It introduces learners to the selling process and the purpose of product information.

Learning outcomes

There are **three** outcomes to this unit. The learner will:

LO1 Understand the selling process

LO2 Understand how to find out what the customer wants

LO3 Understand how product information can be used to promote sales

Unit content

Endorsement of the unit by a sector or other appropriate body

This unit has been developed by Skillsmart Retail and is endorsed by People1st, the sector skills council for retail.

Unit assessment

Learners will be required to provide a portfolio of evidence indicating that they have met all the unit outcomes and assessment criteria.

Learning outcomes

Learning Outcome	Assessment Criteria
LO1 Understand the selling process	1.1 Identify the key steps of the selling process
	1.2 Outline the key skills and qualities required of successful sales staff

Learning Outcome	Assessment Criteria
LO2 Understand how to find out what the customer wants	2.1 State when and how to acknowledge, greet and approach customers
	2.2 State how to find out what customers want

Learning Outcome	Assessment Criteria
LO3 Understand how product information can be used to promote sales	3.1 List common concerns a customer may have when buying a product
	3.2 State how providing information about the product can increase its attractiveness to the customer
	3.3 Describe the difference between the features and benefits of products
	3.4 Identify basic rules for demonstrating products to customers
	3.5 State where to obtain different types of product information

RKA21 Document History

Version	Issue Date	Changes	Role
V1.0	31/01/2023	Re-branded	Qualification Administrator

IER1 Document History

Version	Issue Date	Changes	Role
v4.0	31/01/2023	Formatting and re-branding. No content amendment.	Data Administrator