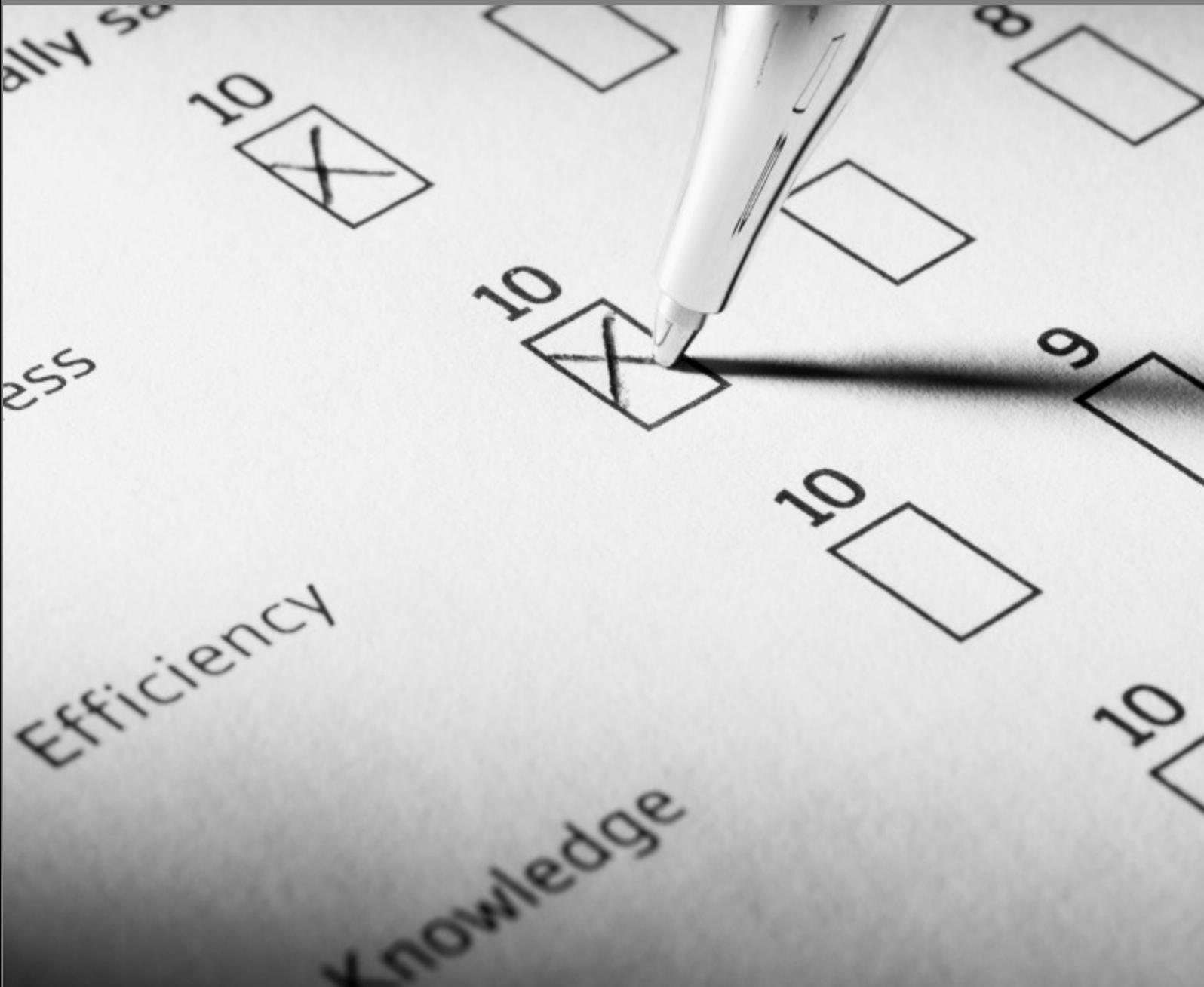# Receive and place incoming telephone calls

## D1.HFO.CL2.09

## Assessor Manual

# Receive and place incoming telephone calls

## D1.HFO.CL2.09

## Assessor Manual

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) was established on 8 August 1967. The Member States of the Association are Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Viet Nam.

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# Competency Based Assessment (CBA) – An Introduction for Assessors

Assessment is the process of identifying a participant's current knowledge, skills and attitudes sets against all elements of competency within a unit of competency.

## Suggested Assessment Methods

For each unit of competency a number of assessment tools have been identified including:

- Work Projects
- Oral Questions
- Written Questions
- Third Party Statements
- Observation Checklists.

Instructions and Evidence Recording Sheets have been identified in this Assessment Manual for use by Assessors.

## Alternative Assessment Methods

Whilst the above mentioned assessment methods are suggested assessment methods, the assessor may use an alternate method of assessment taking into account:

a) The nature of the unit
b) The strengths of participants
c) The number of participants in the class
d) Time required to complete assessments
e) Time dedicated to assessment
f) Equipment and resources required.

Alternate assessment methods include:

- Practical demonstrations
- Practical demonstrations in simulated work conditions
- Problem solving
- Portfolios of evidence
- Critical incident reports
- Journals
- Oral presentations
- Interviews
- Videos
- Visuals/slides/audiotapes
- Case Studies

- Log books
- Projects and Role plays
- Group projects
- Recognition of Prior Learning.

Whilst there is no specific instruction or evidence collection documents for all the alternative assessment methods, assessors can record competency in the 'Other' section within the 'Competency Recording Sheet'.

## Selection of Assessment Methods

Each assessor will determine the combination of Assessment Methods to be used to determine Competency for each Competency Unit on a student by student basis.

'Sufficient' evidence to support the 'Pass Competent'/'Not Yet Competent' decision must be captured.

In practice this means a minimum of 2 – 3 Assessment Methods for each candidate for each Competency Element is suggested.

At least one method should provide evidence of practical demonstration of competence.

The following assessment methods deemed to provide evidence of practical demonstration of competence include:

- Practical Work Projects
- Third Party Statement
- Observation Checklist.

## Assessing Competency

Competency based assessment does not award grades, but simply identifies if the participant has the knowledge, skills and attitudes to undertake the required task to the specified standard.

Therefore, when assessing competency, an assessor has two possible results that can be awarded:

- 'Pass Competent' (PC)
- 'Not Yet Competent' (NYC).

### Pass Competent (PC)

If the participant is able to successfully answer or demonstrate what is required, to the expected standards of the performance criteria, they will be deemed as 'Pass Competent' (PC).

The assessor will award a 'Pass Competent' (PC) if they feel the participant has the necessary knowledge, skills and attitudes in all assessment tasks for a unit.

### Not Yet Competent' (NYC)

If the participant is unable to answer or demonstrate competency to the desired standard, they will be deemed to be 'Not Yet Competent' (NYC).

This does not mean the participant will need to complete all the assessment tasks again. The focus will be on the specific assessment tasks that were not performed to the expected standards.

The participant may be required to:

a) Undertake further training or instruction

b) Undertake the assessment task again until they are deemed to be 'Pass Competent'.

## Regional Qualifications Framework and Skills Recognition System

The 'Regional Qualifications Framework and Skills Recognition System', also known as the 'RQFSRS' is the overriding educational framework for the ASEAN region.

The purpose of this framework is to provide:

- A standardised teaching and assessment framework

- Mutual recognition of participant achievement across the ASEAN region. This includes achievement in individual Units of Competency or qualifications as a whole.

The role of the 'RQFSRS' is to provide, ensure and maintain 'quality assurance' across all countries and educational providers across the ASEAN region.

## Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

Recognition of Prior Learning is the process that gives current industry professionals who do not have a formal qualification, the opportunity to benchmark their extensive skills and experience against the standards set out in each unit of competency/subject.

This process is a learning and assessment pathway which encompasses:

- Recognition of Current Competencies (RCC)

- Skills auditing

- Gap analysis and training

- Credit transfer.

## Code of Practice for Assessors

This Code of Practice provides:

- Assessors with direction on the standard of practice expected of them

- Candidates with assurance of the standards of practice expected of assessors

- Employers with assurance of the standards maintained in the conduct of assessment.

The Code detailed below is based on the International Code of Ethics and Practice (The National Council for Measurement in Education [NCME]):

- The differing needs and requirements of the person being assessed, the local enterprise and/or industry are identified and handled with sensitivity

- Potential forms of conflict of interest in the assessment process and/or outcomes are identified and appropriate referrals are made, if necessary

- All forms of harassment are avoided throughout the planning, conducting, reviewing and reporting of the assessment outcomes

- The rights of the candidate are protected during and after the assessment

- Personal and interpersonal factors that are not relevant to the assessment of competency must not influence the assessment outcomes

- The candidate is made aware of rights and process of appeal

- Evidence that is gathered during the assessment is verified for validity, reliability, authenticity, sufficiency and currency

- Assessment decisions are based on available evidence that can be produced and verified by another assessor

- Assessments are conducted within the boundaries of the assessment system policies and procedures

- Formal agreement is obtained from both the candidate and the assessor that the assessment was carried out in accordance with agreed procedures

- The candidate is informed of all assessment reporting processes prior to the assessment

- The candidate is informed of all known potential consequences of decisions arising from an assessment, prior to the assessment

- Confidentiality is maintained regarding assessment results

- The assessment results are used consistently with the purposes explained to the candidate

- Opportunities are created for technical assistance in planning, conducting and reviewing assessment procedures and outcomes.

## Instructions and Checklist for Assessors

### Instructions

General instructions for the assessment:

- Assessment should be conducted at a scheduled time that has been notified to the candidate

- Facilitators must ensure participants are made aware of the need to complete assessments and attend assessment sessions

- If a participant is unable to attend a scheduled session, they must make arrangements with the Assessor to undertake the assessment at an alternative time

- At the end of the assessment the Assessor must give feedback and advise the participant on their PC/NYC status

- Complete the relevant documentation and submit to the appropriate department.

### Preparation

- Gain familiarity with the Unit of Competency, Elements of Competency and the Performance Criteria expected

- Study details assessment documentation and requirements

- Brief candidate regarding all assessment criteria and requirements.

### Briefing checklist

- Begin the assessment by implementing the following checklist and then invite the candidate to proceed with assessment.

## Checklist for Assessors

| | Tick (✓) | Remarks |
|---|---|---|
| **Prior to the assessment I have:** | | |
| Ensured the candidate is informed about the venue and schedule of assessment. | | |
| Received current copies of the performance criteria to be assessed, assessment plan, evidence gathering plan, assessment checklist, appeal form and the company's standard operating procedures (SOP). | | |
| Reviewed the performance criteria and evidence plan to ensure I clearly understood the instructions and the requirements of the assessment process. | | |
| Identified and accommodated any special needs of the candidate. | | |
| Checked the set-up and resources for the assessment. | | |
| **During the assessment I have:** | | |
| Introduced myself and confirmed identities of candidates. | | |
| Put candidates at ease by being friendly and helpful. | | |
| Explained to candidates the purpose, context and benefits of the assessment. | | |
| Ensured candidates understood the assessment process and all attendant procedures. | | |
| Provided candidates with an overview of performance criteria to be assessed. | | |
| Explained the results reporting procedure. | | |
| Encouraged candidates to seek clarifications if in doubt. | | |
| Asked candidates for feedback on the assessment. | | |
| Explained legal, safety and ethical issues, if applicable. | | |
| **After the assessment I have:** | | |
| Ensured candidate is given constructive feedback. | | |
| Completed and signed the assessment record. | | |
| Thanked candidate for participating in the assessment. | | |

## Instructions for Recording Competency

### Specifications for Recording Competency

The following specifications apply to the preparation of Evidence Gathering Plans:

- A Competency Recording Sheet must be prepared for each candidate to ensure and demonstrate all Performance Criteria and Competency Elements are appropriately assessed. This Sheet indicates how the Assessor will gather evidence during their assessment of each candidate

- This Competency Recording Sheet is located at the end of the Assessment Plan

- It is the overriding document to record competency

- The Assessor may vary the Competency Recording Sheet to accommodate practical and individual candidate and/or workplace needs

- Assessor must place a tick (✓) in the 'Assessment Method' columns to identify the methods of assessment to be used for each candidate

- Multiple Competency Elements/Performance Criteria may be assessed at the one time, where appropriate

- The assessor and participant should sign and date the Competency Recording Sheet, when all forms of evidence and assessment have been completed

- The assessor may provide and feedback or clarify questions which the participant may have in regards to the assessment grade or findings

- All documents used to capture evidence must be retained, and attached to the Competency Recording Sheet for each candidate for each Competency Unit.

## Instructions for Different Assessment Methods

### Specifications for Work Project Assessment

These guidelines concern the use of work projects.

The work projects identified in the Training Manuals involve a range of tasks, to be performed at the discretion of the Assessor.

Work project tasks can be completed through any form of assessment as identified in the Trainer and Trainee Manuals and stated at the start of this section.

Assessors should follow these guidelines:

- Review the Work Projects at the end of each 'Element of Competency' in the Trainee Manual to ensure you understand the content and what is expected

- Prepare sufficient resources for the completion of work activities including:

  - Time – whether in scheduled delivery hours or suggested time participants to spend outside of class hours

  - Resources – this may involve technical equipment, computer, internet access, stationery and other supplementary materials and documents

- Prepare assessment location (if done in class) making it conducive to assessment

- Explain Work Projects assessment to candidate, at the start of each Element of Competency. This ensures that participants are aware of what is expected and can collate information as delivery takes place

- Assessors can use the following phrase as a guide (where an 'X' is identified, please input appropriate information):

  "At the end of each Element of Competency there are Work Projects which must be completed. These projects require different tasks that must be completed.

  These work projects are part of the formal assessment for the unit of competency titled X:

  - You are required to complete these activities:

    a)  Using the 'X' method of assessment

    b)  At 'X' location

    c)  You will have 'X time period' for this assessment

  - You are required to compile information in a format that you feel is appropriate to the assessment

  - Do you have any questions about this assessment?"

- Commence Work Project assessment:

  - The assessor may give time for participants to review the questions at this time to ensure they understand the nature of the questions. The assessor may need to clarify questions

  - Participants complete work projects in the most appropriate format

  - Participants must submit Work Project evidence to the assessor before the scheduled due date

- Assessor must assess the participant's evidence against the competency standards specified in each Element of Competency and their own understanding. The assessor can determine if the participant has provided evidence to a 'competent' standard

- Transcribe results/details to Competency Recording Sheet

- Forward/file assessment record.

### Specifications for Oral Question Assessment

These guidelines concern the use of oral questioning.

Assessors should follow these guidelines.

- Prepare Assessment Record for Oral Questioning. One record for each candidate:

  - Enter Student name

  - Enter Assessor name

  - Enter Location

- Familiarise self with Questions to be asked

- Prepare assessment location (table and chairs) making it conducive to assessment

- Explain Oral Questioning assessment to candidate, using the following phrase as a guide (where a 'X' is identified, please input appropriate information):

  *"These oral questions are part of the formal assessment for the unit of competency titled X.*

  *There are X questions and you are required to answer all of them to the best of your ability and I will record whether or not you have answered correctly.*

  *We have 60 minutes for this assessment.*

  - I will give you feedback at the end of the assessment
  - Do you have any questions about this assessment?"

- Commence Oral Questioning assessment:

  - Complete Assessment Record for the Oral Questioning by:

    a) Ticking PC or NYC, as appropriate

    b) Entering 'Remarks' as required

    c) Completing Oral Questioning within 60 minutes

- Complete Oral Questioning and provide feedback to candidate
- Transcribe results/details to Competency Recording Sheet
- Forward/file assessment record.

### *Specifications for Written Question Assessment*

These guidelines concern the use of written questioning.

Assessors should follow these guidelines:

- Familiarise self with Questions and Answers provided

- Print and distribute copies of 'Written Questions' for participants. Ideally this should take place with adequate time for participants to answer all questions before the expected due date

- Explain Written Questioning assessment to candidate, using the following phrase as a guide (where a 'X' is identified, please input appropriate information):

  "These written questions are part of the formal assessment for the unit of competency titled X.

  There are X questions and you are required to answer all of them to the best of your ability.

  You may refer to your subject materials, however where possible try to utilise your existing knowledge when answering questions.

  Where you are unsure of questions, please ask the Assessor for further instruction. This may be answering the question orally or asking the assessor to redefine the question.

  We have X time for this assessment:

  - The due date for completion of this assessment is X

  - On this date you must forward the completed questions to the assessor by X time on the date of X

  - Do you have any questions about this assessment?"

- The assessor may give time for participants to review the questions at this time to ensure they understand the nature of the questions. The assessor may need to clarify questions

- Participants may record written answers (where possible)

- Participants must submit the written answers to the assessor before the scheduled due date

- Assessor must assess the participant's written answers against the model answers provided as a guide, or their own understanding. The assessor can determine if the participant has answered the questions to a 'competent' standard

- Transcribe results/details to Competency Recording Sheet

- Forward/file assessment record.

### Specifications for Observation Checklist

These specifications apply to the use of the Observation Checklist in determining competency for candidates.

Only an approved assessor is authorised to complete the Observation Checklist.

The assessor is required to observe the participant, ideally in a simulated environment or their practical workplace setting and record their performance (or otherwise) of the competencies listed on the Observation Checklist for the Competency Unit.

To complete the Observation Checklist the Assessor must:

- Insert name of candidate

- Insert assessor name

- Insert identify of location where observations are being undertaken

- Insert date/s of observations – may be single date or multiple dates

- Place a tick in either the 'Yes' or 'No' box for each listed Performance Criteria to indicate the candidate has demonstrated/not demonstrated that skill

- Provide written (and verbal) feedback to candidate – as/if appropriate

- Sign and date the form

- Present form to candidate for them to sign and date

- Transcribe results/details to Competency Recording Sheet for candidate

- Forward/file Observation Checklist.

This source of evidence combines with other forms of assessment to assist in determining the 'Pass Competent' or 'Not Yet Competent' decision for the participant.

### Specifications for Third Party Statement

These specifications relate to the use of a relevant workplace person to assist in determining competency for candidates.

The Third Party Statement is to be supplied by the assessor to a person in the workplace who supervises and/or works closely with the participant.

This may be their Supervisor, the venue manager, the Department Manager or similar.

The Third Party Statement asks the Supervisor to record what they believe to be the competencies of the participant based on their workplace experience of the participant. This experience may be gained through observation of their workplace performance, feedback from others, inspection of candidate's work etc.

A meeting must take place between the Assessor and the Third Party to explain and demonstrate the use of the Third Party Statement.

To complete the Third Party Verification Statement the Assessor must:

- Insert candidate name

- Insert name and contact details of the Third Party

- Tick the box to indicate the relationship of the Third Party to the candidate

- Present the partially completed form to the Third Party for them to finalise

- Collect the completed form from the Third Party

- Transcribe results/details to Competency Recording Sheet for candidate

- Forward/file Third Party Statement.

The Third Party must:

- Record their belief regarding candidate ability/competency as either:
    - Pass Competent = Yes
    - Not Yet Competent = No
    - Unsure about whether candidate is competent or not = Not Sure

- Meet briefly with the assessor to discuss and/or clarify the form.

This source of evidence combines with other forms of assessment to assist in determining the 'Pass Competent' or 'Not Yet Competent' decision for the candidate.

A separate Third Party Statement is required for each Competency Unit undertaken by the candidate.

# Competency Standard

| UNIT TITLE: RECEIVE AND PLACE INCOMING TELEPHONE CALLS | NOMINAL HOURS: 15 |
|---|---|

**UNIT NUMBER:** D1.HFO.CL2.09

**UNIT DESCRIPTOR:** This unit deals with skills and knowledge required to receive incoming calls and to deal effectively with them by transferring and/or re-directing them, as appropriate, or by taking other suitable action within the travel industries workplace context.

| ELEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE CRITERIA | UNIT VARIABLE AND ASSESSMENT GUIDE |
|---|---|
| **Element 1: Identify elements and facilities of the host enterprise telephone system**<br><br>**1.1** Identify the *types of incoming calls* that may be received and their importance to the business<br><br>*1.2* Identify the *components of the telephone system*<br><br>**1.3** Describe the *functions and features available in the telephone system*<br><br>**Element 2: Demonstrate appropriate telephone communication skills**<br><br>**2.1** Interpret the *enterprise policies and procedures for telephone use* in regard to incoming calls<br><br>**2.2** Explain the importance of first impressions in relation to telephone answering and the reputation of the business<br><br>**2.3** Differentiate between face-to-face and over-the-phone communications | **Unit Variables**<br><br>The Unit Variables provide advice to interpret the scope and context of this unit of competence, allowing for differences between enterprises and workplaces. It relates to the unit as a whole and facilitates holistic assessment<br><br>This unit applies to all industry sectors that receive and place incoming telephone calls within the labour divisions of the hotel and travel industries and may include:<br><br>1. Front Office<br><br>*Types of incoming calls* may be related to:<br><br>• Enquire<br><br>• Enquiries<br><br>• Reservations<br><br>• Complaints<br><br>• Messages for management, staff and guests<br><br>• Clarification of orders from suppliers<br><br>• Return calls |

| | |
|---|---|
| **2.4** Use appropriate *telephone communication skills*<br><br>**2.5** Use appropriate *telephone techniques*<br><br>**2.6** Describe acceptable *telephone etiquette*<br><br>**2.7** Identify *common caller complaints* about telephoning a business<br><br>**Element 3: Receive incoming calls**<br><br>**3.1** *Prepare to receive* incoming calls<br><br>**3.2** *Answer calls* promptly in accordance with house standards<br><br>**3.3** Identify long-distance or international calls<br><br>**3.4** *Establish purpose* of incoming calls<br><br>**3.5** *Respond to caller requests*, where appropriate<br><br>**3.6** *Take messages* from callers<br><br>**3.7** *Relay messages* and follow-up as necessary<br><br>**3.8** Facilitate conference calls<br><br>**3.9** Deal with *suspicious or threatening calls*<br><br>**3.10** Manage *difficult callers*<br><br>**3.11** *Prepare voicemail messages* and background music<br><br>**Element 4: Re-direct incoming calls**<br><br>**4.1** *Transfer calls* as appropriate<br><br>**4.2** *Place calls on hold* as appropriate | *Components of the telephone system* may include:<br><br>• Landline telephones, including multiple lines and multiple telephone numbers<br><br>• Mobile/cell phones<br><br>• Paging systems<br><br>• Switchboards<br><br>• Handsets and headsets<br><br>• Caller identification facilities, including VIP caller ID.<br><br>*Functions and features available in the telephone system* may be related to:<br><br>• Call waiting<br><br>• Call forwarding<br><br>• Caller ID display<br><br>• Line blocking<br><br>• Call back busy<br><br>• No answer, and busy-no answer<br><br>• Call return<br><br>• Recorded message service<br><br>• Executive busy override<br><br>• Transfer and transfer recall<br><br>• Placing calls on hold<br><br>• Multiple chat facility<br><br>• Conference call<br><br>• Integration of facilities. |

*Enterprise policies and procedures for telephone use* may include:

- Privacy and confidentiality issues

- Response to threatening or suspicious calls

- Standard greetings

- Authorisation(s) to use the system and nominated elements of it

- Training requirements

- Stated priorities for in-person customers in relation to telephone callers.

Telephone communication skills should relate to:

- Conveying a helpful and positive attitude

- Using the voice effectively and appropriately given the nature of the incoming call

- Applying effective listening and questioning skills

- Demonstrating positive speaking skills, including clarity and the need to be concise

- Responding professionally to all manner of incoming calls

- Choosing appropriate tone, volume and language to use in response to each incoming call

- Screening calls, as required.

Telephone techniques may include:

- Clarifying caller requirements

- Repeating back names, dates and times

- Using the phonetic alphabet when clarifying caller details

- Realising the caller cannot read your facial expressions and understand other pressures that might be applicable at the time of their call.

Telephone etiquette must address:

- Courtesy, civility and respect
- Reduction of background noise
- Correct operation of system functions to prevent caller frustration
- Using the caller's name when known
- Thanking caller
- Asking caller if they would like to hold before placing them on hold
- Advising caller of your intentions in respect to dealing with their call
- Advising caller of the name of the person to whom their call is being directed/transferred
- Apologising for delays, including never leaving a caller on hold for longer than 30 seconds without some form of contact
- Allowing caller to hang up before terminating the call.

Common caller complaints may include:

- Telephone rings too long before being answered
- Being placed on hold for too long
- Inability to get through, such as the line/number is always busy
- Receptionist becomes defensive or abusive when asked for their name
- Failure to determine where the call should be directed
- Failure to listen
- Incompetence with the system; for example, the caller is disconnected when being transferred
- Lack of professionalism, including failure to place call on hold before talking to colleagues, giving an inappropriate greeting, lack of knowledge about the establishment and its staff
- Improper tone of voice used by receptionist.

Prepare to receive calls may relate to:

- Organising the work area
- Obtaining or preparing internal telephone list, including for staff and guests
- Obtaining list of internal extension numbers
- Obtaining telephone system user manual/s
- Eliminating distraction.

*Answer calls* may relate to:

- Answering before house ring limit is reached
- Using host enterprise standard greeting
- Identifying self and enterprise, greeting caller and making an offer of assistance
- Focusing and concentrating on the call
- Taking notes
- Identifying whether caller is calling long-distance or internationally
- Identifying if caller is a designated VIP caller
- Screening calls
- Placing existing calls on hold to answer incoming call.

Establish purpose may include:

- Clarifying caller need
- Asking questions
- Repeating information supplied by caller, including paraphrasing to confirm understanding
- Seeking extra information.

| | Respond to caller requests may involve: |
|---|---|
| | • Answering caller queries |
| | • Seeking more information from caller |
| | • Apologising where an immediate, correct response cannot be given |
| | • Transferring call to the correct/more appropriate extension |
| | • Asking caller if they would like to hold or if they would prefer to be called back |
| | • Following-up. |
| | *Take messages* should include: |
| | • Offering voicemail alternative, if applicable |
| | • Identifying who message is for |
| | • Clarifying spelling of names |
| | • Obtaining and checking relevant dates, times and numbers |
| | • Repeating back all details |
| | • Noting action required and urgency of message. |
| | *Relay messages* may relate to: |
| | • Notifying person verbally |
| | • Lodging message in pigeon-hole or message book |
| | • Activating internal message waiting system |
| | • Using internal paging system |
| | • Returning to the caller to advise of progress of message. |
| | *Suspicious or threatening calls* may relate to: |
| | • Capturing as much detail as possible about the call, caller and nature of the threat |

|   |   |
|---|---|
|   | • Notifying management and other staff |
|   | • Initiating an evacuation or implementation of the Emergency Management Plan (EMP) |
|   | • Notifying relevant authorities |
|   | • Assisting in calling department and room numbers to facilitate the warning of people in accordance with the Emergency Management Plan. |
|   | *Difficult callers* may include: |
|   | • Callers using a different language |
|   | • Aggressive and abusive callers |
|   | • Rude and impatient callers |
|   | • Intoxicated callers. |
|   | *Prepare voicemail messages* may relate to: |
|   | • Determining the content of the message |
|   | • Determining appropriate background music |
|   | • Recording messages for callers who have been placed on hold |
|   | • Recording messages for callers who are being transferred |
|   | • Recording messages for individuals where there is no answer on the extension |
|   | • Recording out of hour messages |
|   | • Recording call waiting messages. |
|   | *Transfer calls* may include: |
|   | • Determining name of caller and purpose of call |
|   | • Thanking caller for the call |
|   | • Advising caller of intention to transfer the call |

- Notifying to whom/where the call is to be transferred

- Announcing call, if applicable.

*Place calls on hold* may include:

- Advising caller of intention to place them on hold
- Asking caller if they would prefer to be called back instead of being placed on hold
- Thanking caller and apologising for delay
- Keeping in regular contact with all on hold calls and enquiring if they are still prepared to wait.

*Place calls on hold* may include:

- Advising caller of intention to place them on hold
- Asking caller if they would prefer to be called back instead of being placed on hold
- Thanking caller and apologising for delay
- Keeping in regular contact with all on hold calls and enquiring if they are still prepared to wait.

**Assessment Guide**

The following skills and knowledge must be assessed as part of this unit:

- Knowledge of the enterprise's policies and procedures in regard to telephone operation and implementation of the Emergency Management Plan
- Knowledge of the principles of telephone communication
- Knowledge of the products, including knowledge about the host enterprise, staff, services offered, rates, contact details
- Ability to use the host enterprise telephone systems and facilities
- Ability to apply verbal communication, customer service, decision making, message taking and conflict resolution skills
- Ability to cope under pressure.

**Linkages To Other Units**

- Communicate on the telephone

- Facilitate out-going phone calls

- Provide information about in-house services

- Provide international (IDD) service information

- Develop and update local knowledge

- Maintain hospitality industry knowledge

- Receive and resolve customer complaints

- Work effectively with colleagues and customers

- Work in a socially diverse environment

- Promote products and services to customers

- Operate a (PABX) switchboard.

**Critical Aspects of Assessment**

Evidence of the following is essential:

- Understanding of the functions and features of the host enterprise telephone system

- Demonstrated ability to implement enterprise policies on telephone use

- Demonstrated ability to answer calls and respond to a range of nominated enquiries

- Demonstrated ability to transfer calls to nominated people/extensions

- Demonstrated ability to place calls on hold

- Demonstrated ability to record telephone voice messages

- Demonstrated ability to take and effectively process telephone messages

- Demonstrated ability to deal with a nominated range of suspicious, threatening and difficult telephone callers

- Demonstrated ability to apply appropriate telephone techniques and etiquette.

**Context of Assessment**

This unit may be assessed on or off the job:

- Assessment should include practical demonstration either in the workplace or through a simulation activity, supported by a range of methods to assess underpinning knowledge

- Assessment must relate to the individual's work area or area of responsibility.

**Resource Implications**

Training and assessment to include access to a real or simulated workplace but must include the use of a real telephone system and real callers; and access to workplace standards, procedures, policies, guidelines, tools and equipment.

**Assessment Methods**

The following methods may be used to assess competency for this unit:

- Case studies

- Observation of practical candidate performance

- Oral and written questions

- Portfolio evidence

- Problem solving

- Role plays

- Third party reports completed by a supervisor

- Project and assignment work.

| Key Competencies in this Unit | | |
|---|---|---|
| *Level 1 = competence to undertake tasks effectively* | | |
| *Level 2 = competence to manage tasks* | | |
| *Level 3 = competence to use concepts for evaluating* | | |
| **Key Competencies** | **Level** | **Examples** |
| Collecting, organising and analysing information | 1 | Develop internal telephone, staff and contact lists; develop product and property knowledge |
| Communicating ideas and information | 2 | Speak with callers, determine needs and respond appropriately |
| Planning and organising activities | 1 | Prepare the area for work |
| Working with others and in teams | 2 | Liaise with others to meet stated caller needs |
| Using mathematical ideas and techniques | - | |
| Solving problems | 1 | Deal with telephone complaints |
| Using technology | 2 | Operate the telephone system and its integrated elements |

# Oral Questions

| Student name | |
|---|---|
| **Assessor name** | |
| **Location/venue** | |
| **Unit of competency** | Receive and place incoming telephone calls<br><br>D1.HFO.CL2.09 |
| **Instructions** | 1. Ask student questions from the attached list to confirm knowledge, as necessary<br><br>2. Place tick in boxes to reflect student achievement (Pass Competent 'PC' or Net Yet Competent 'NYC')<br><br>3. Write short-form student answer in the space provided for each question. |

| Questions | Response | |
|---|---|---|
| | **PC** | **NYC** |
| 1. Describe the variety of calls your workplace may receive and explain the importance of each type of call to the business. | ❑ | ❑ |
| 2. Tell me the components of the telephone system you use in your workplace. | ❑ | ❑ |

| Questions | Response | |
|---|---|---|
| | PC | NYC |
| 3. Tell me about two functions or features of your workplace telephone system. | ❑ | ❑ |
| 4. Explain the workplace policies and procedures that apply to answering the phone to incoming calls. | ❑ | ❑ |
| 5. How important are 'first impressions' in relation to the reputation of the business when answering incoming calls? | ❑ | ❑ |

| Questions | Response | |
|---|---|---|
| | **PC** | **NYC** |
| 6. Face-to-face and telephone communications are different: explain how you accommodate these differences when answering incoming telephone calls. | ❑ | ❑ |
| 7. Tell me what you believe are involved in appropriate 'telephone communication skills'. | ❑ | ❑ |
| 8. Give me an example of two 'telephone techniques' you apply in your day-to-day use of the telephone, and explain when and why you use them. | ❑ | ❑ |

| Questions | Response | |
|---|---|---|
| | PC | NYC |
| 9.  What are the elements of acceptable telephone etiquette? | ❏ | ❏ |
| 10. Identify three common caller complaints about telephoning a business. | ❏ | ❏ |
| 11. What should you do to prepare to receive an incoming telephone call? | ❏ | ❏ |

| Questions | Response | |
|---|---|---|
| | **PC** | **NYC** |
| 12. Why is it important to answer calls promptly? | ❏ | ❏ |
| 13. How can you determine whether an incoming call is a local call or an international or long-distance call and why is it useful to know the difference? | ❏ | ❏ |
| 14. Why is it important to establish the purpose of an incoming call? | ❏ | ❏ |

| Questions | Response | |
|---|---|---|
| | **PC** | **NYC** |
| 15. A caller has asked to speak to the manager: how will you respond to this request? | ❏ | ❏ |
| 16. Give an example of the details needing to be recorded when taking a telephone message for a guest. | ❏ | ❏ |
| 17. You have taken a message for a guest who is away from the venue on a sight-seeing tour: how will you ensure the guest receives this message promptly? | ❏ | ❏ |

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| Questions | Response | |
|---|---|---|
| | PC | NYC |
| 18. What is a 'conference call' and how can you arrange one using your workplace telephone system? | ❏ | ❏ |
| 19. You have just received a telephone call from someone who has threatened to come in and assault the owner/manager because they believe he has made rude remarks about them to others: what will you do when you hang up the telephone? | ❏ | ❏ |
| 20. A caller appears intoxicated and you cannot understand what they want or who they want to speak to; how will you deal with this call? | ❏ | ❏ |

| Questions | Response | |
|---|---|---|
| | **PC** | **NYC** |
| 21. Tell me what you do to record a voicemail message suitable for advising callers the venue is closed. | ❏ | ❏ |
| 22. What information do you need before you can effectively transfer a call? | ❏ | ❏ |
| 23. Why is it not acceptable to place a call on hold before checking if the caller wants to be placed on hold? | ❏ | ❏ |

# Written Questions

## Receive and place incoming telephone calls – D1.HFO.CL2.09

**Student Name:** _____

Answer all the following questions and submit to your Trainer.

1.  What are three types of incoming calls?

    _____

    _____

    _____

2.  List three aspects of a telephone system.

    _____

    _____

    _____

3.  Explain the advantage of Headsets.

    _____

    _____

    _____

4.  What is call waiting?

    _____

    _____

    _____

5.  A hotel or resort will have a range of policies and procedures for using the telephone. List three of these.

    _____

    _____

6.  How should staff answer a call in order to give a good first impression to callers?

    _____

    _____

7.  In addition to speaking well what other skills are needed for successful telephone communication?

    _____

    _____

8.  What do staff need to do when they are screening callers?

    _____

    _____

9.  Name an important skill in answering the telephone.

    _____

    _____

10. What will good telephone techniques display?

    _____

    _____

11. Why should the phonetic alphabet be used?

    _____

    _____

12. Give two examples of good telephone technique.

    _____

    _____

13. How can a telephone system cause caller dissatisfaction?

    _____

    _____

    _____

14. What should staff check while preparing for a new shift?

    _____

    _____

15. Why is it important to smile when you are on the phone?

    _____

    _____

16. What is the essential approach that all staff should adopt when using the telephone to accept incoming calls?

_____

_____

17. Explain the term call waiting and how it works using the VoIP system.

_____

_____

_____

18. What is a 'toll free line'?

_____

_____

_____

19. How would a hotel telephonist get information to answer a guest's enquiries?

_____

_____

_____

20. Why is it important to determine the purpose of a guest's call?

_____

_____

_____

21. How should you react if you know the answer to a guest's question?

_____

_____

_____

22. What are some important things to remember when taking a message?

_____

_____

_____

23. How can guests' messages be delivered?

_____

_____

_____

24. How are messages for incoming guests processed?

_____

_____

_____

25. What is a conference call?

_____

_____

_____

26. What should a telephonist do if they receive a threatening or suspicious call?

_____

_____

_____

27. When a telephonist answers a difficult caller what should they do first?

_____

_____

_____

28. What is voicemail?

_____

_____

_____

29. What is the procedure for answering a call that that needs to be transferred?

_____

_____

_____

30. What does the telephonist need to do from time to time after they have put a caller on hold?

_____

_____

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# Answers to Written Questions

## Receive and place incoming telephone calls – D1.HFO.CL2.09

The following are model answers only – Trainers/Assessors must use discretion when determining whether or not an answer provided by a Student is acceptable or not.

**1.    What are three types of incoming calls?**

This can include enquiries, reservations, messages from guests, messages for guests and from suppliers and external businesses.

**2.    List three aspects of a telephone system.**

An appropriate telephone system must be in place for this to happen, the telephone system must be capable of receiving and making multiple calls at one time and putting calls on hold and transferring calls.

**3.    Explain the advantage of Headsets.**

Headsets fit over the head and enable hands free action which permits the operator to take notes or operate a computer while taking a telephone call.

**4.    What is call waiting?**

Call waiting, sometimes called catch phone in Japan, is the ability to suspend one conversation to answer the phone call of a third person without the first caller overhearing.

**5.    A hotel or resort will have a range of policies and procedures for using the telephone. List three of these.**

These can include policies and procedures relating to privacy, threatening calls, standard greetings, security and training.

**6.    How should staff answer a call in order to give a good first impression to callers?**

Staff should answer with the establishment's name and use a pleasant tone with the guest and use words and phrases that express the tone and standard of the venue.

**7.    In addition to speaking well what other skills are needed for successful telephone communication?**

Skill in listening and interpreting sounds.

**8.    What do staff need to do when they are screening callers?**

Ask detailed questions.

**9.    Name an important skill in answering the telephone?**

Listening and using the voice effectively.

**10.    What will good telephone techniques display?**

Good telephone techniques will display an impression of professionalism and provide excellent service.

**11.    Why should the phonetic alphabet be used?**

Using the phonetic alphabet will help to avoid misunderstandings of letters being heard over the phone.

**12.    Give two examples of good telephone technique.**

- Answer the call within the second or third ring

- Always speak clearly and slowly with courtesy, civility and respect

- Avoid extreme volumes

- Avoid jargon or hotel terminology

- Speak with a smile on your face

- Use an appropriate opening phrase and listen to the response. Reduction of background noise can make hearing more efficient

- If there is caller ID on the telephone system then staff should use the guest's name

- Repeat the details back to the guest

- Always use the caller's name if known; otherwise, sir or madam

- Ask how something is spelt if you can't understand

- Transfer calls promptly

- Never eat, drink or smoke while on the phone

- Use a suitable closing phrase - thank the caller for calling

- Always allow the caller to hang up first before terminating the call.

**13.    How can a telephone system cause caller dissatisfaction?**

All systems can experience system failure. Often the failure is outside the control of management. Occasionally it is due to incompetence with the system. For example, a cause of guest dissatisfaction can be when the caller is disconnected when being transferred.

**14.    What should staff check when preparing for a new shift?**

The system is functioning and all necessary stationary is available such as message pads and pens and paper for printers.

**15.    Why is it important to smile when you are on the phone?**

Start with a smile on your face. This will reflect in your voice when you are talking, improving the tone and pitch.

**16.** **What is the essential approach that all staff should adopt when using the telephone to accept incoming calls?**

Standard etiquette and skills.

**17.** **Explain the term call waiting and how it works using the VoIP system.**

When using an internet linked call waiting feature the technology accepts the call and displays caller ID information, allowing the user to forward the call to another number, to voicemail or to answer and speak to the caller.

**18.** **What is a 'toll free line'?**

A free call line, also referred to as a 'toll free line', is a telephone line whereby the venue pays for the cost of the incoming call. It is usually only available for incoming long distance calls and usually for the reservations department.

**19.** **How would a hotel telephonist get information to answer a guest's enquiries?**

Information can be obtained from the hotel's database or directory as well as via internet research. It is also possible to obtain information from expert sources such as a historical society or animal expert.

**20.** **Why is it important to determine the purpose of a guest's call?**

It's important to determine the purpose of the call so it can directed to the appropriate staff or department. In a large hotel or resort the telephone operator may answer calls on behalf of several different departments and then transmit the information to appropriate staff by pager or text.

**21.** **How should you react if you know the answer to a guest's question?**

- Tell the guest and ask if there is anything else you can help them with
- Finish the conversation with a pleasant greeting, e.g. 'I hope you enjoy your stay'.

**22.** **What are some important things to remember when taking a message?**

It is important to be accurate and to process the message as quickly as is practical.

**23.** **How can guests' messages be delivered?**

Messages in hard copy can be left under guests' doors or a message notification can be activated such as a light on the telephone or electronic notification on the TV or guest's mobile phone. Text messages can be transmitted instantly.

**24.** **How are messages for incoming guests processed?**

Messages left for incoming guests may be delivered verbally at check-in or printed and handed to the arriving guest.

### 25. What is a conference call?

A conference call is a telephone call in which the calling party wishes to have more than one called party listen in to the audio portion of the call.

### 26. What should a telephonist do if they receive a threatening or suspicious call?

A telephonist should notify a supervisor or departmental manager if there is a difficult situation or threat. There may be an alert system to activate which notifies authorities or a recording device to activate.

### 27. When a telephonist answers a difficult caller what should they do first?

The telephonist must determine the cause of the difficulty. For example, the caller may have a complaint, has difficulty communicating or is drunk or incapacitated. Perhaps the guest has just had a bad experience and is venting to the person who answered the phone.

### 28. What is voicemail?

Voicemail is a computer based system that will answer the caller and deliver voice information about organisations, products and services, using an ordinary telephone.

### 29. What is the procedure for answering a call that needs to be transferred?

Thank the caller for their call and let the caller know you are going to transfer them. Give them a chance to object if they want and this will also let them know where they are being transferred to.

### 30. What does the telephonist need to do from time to time after they have put a caller on hold?

Keep checking and let the caller know what is happening.

# Observation Checklist

| Student name | |
|---|---|
| Assessor name | |
| Location/venue | |
| Unit of competency | Receive and place incoming telephone calls<br><br>D1.HFO.CL2.09 |
| Dates of observation | |
| Instructions | 1. Over a period of time observe the student completing each of the following tasks:<br><br>   a) Identify elements and facilities of the host enterprise telephone system<br><br>   b) Demonstrate appropriate telephone communication skills<br><br>   c) Receive incoming calls<br><br>   d) Re-direct incoming calls<br><br>2. Enter the date on which the tasks were undertaken<br><br>3. Place a tick in the box to show they completed each aspect of the task to the standard expected in the enterprise<br><br>4. Complete the feedback sections of the form, if required. |

| Did the candidate | Yes | No |
|---|---|---|
| **Element 1: Identify elements and facilities of the host enterprise telephone system** | | |
| Identify the types of incoming calls that may be received and their importance to the business | ❏ | ❏ |
| Identify the components of the telephone system | ❏ | ❏ |
| Describe the functions and features available in the telephone system | ❏ | ❏ |
| **Element 2: Demonstrate appropriate telephone communication skills** | | |
| Interpret the enterprise policies and procedures for telephone use in regard to incoming calls | ❏ | ❏ |
| Explain the importance of first impressions in relation to telephone answering and the reputation of the business | ❏ | ❏ |
| Differentiate between face-to-face and over-the-phone communications | ❏ | ❏ |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Use appropriate telephone communication skills | ❑ | ❑ |
| Use appropriate telephone techniques | ❑ | ❑ |
| Describe acceptable telephone etiquette | ❑ | ❑ |
| Identify common caller complaints about telephoning a business | ❑ | ❑ |
| **Element 3: Receive incoming calls** | | |
| Prepare to receive incoming calls | ❑ | ❑ |
| Answer calls promptly in accordance with house standards | ❑ | ❑ |
| Identify long-distance or international calls | ❑ | ❑ |
| Establish purpose of incoming calls | ❑ | ❑ |
| Respond to caller requests, where appropriate | ❑ | ❑ |
| Take messages from callers | ❑ | ❑ |
| Relay messages and follow-up as necessary | ❑ | ❑ |
| Facilitate conference calls | ❑ | ❑ |
| Deal with suspicious or threatening calls | ❑ | ❑ |
| Manage difficult callers | ❑ | ❑ |
| Prepare voicemail messages and background music | ❑ | ❑ |
| **Element 4: Re-direct incoming calls** | | |
| Transfer calls as appropriate | ❑ | ❑ |
| Place calls on hold as appropriate | ❑ | ❑ |
| **Did the student's overall performance meet the standard?** | ❑ | ❑ |

| Feedback to student and trainer/assessor | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Strengths:** | | | |
| **Improvements needed:** | | | |
| **General comments:** | | | |
| **Candidate signature** | | **Date** | |
| **Assessor signature** | | **Date** | |

Assessor Manual
Receive and place incoming telephone calls

# Third Party Statement

| Student name: | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Name of third party: | | Contact no | |
| Relationship to student: | ❑ Employer ❑ Supervisor ❑ Colleague ❑ Other *Please specify:_____* *Please do not complete the form if you are a relative, close friend or have a conflict of interest]* | | |
| Unit of competency: | Receive and place incoming telephone calls D1.HFO.CL2.09 | | |

The student is being assessed against industry competency standards and we are seeking your support in the judgement of their competence.

Please answer these questions as a record of their performance while working with you. Thank you for your time.

| Do you believe the trainee has demonstrated the following skills? *(tick the correct response]* | Yes | No | Not sure |
|---|---|---|---|
| Identifies the types of incoming calls that may be received and their importance to the business | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ |
| Identifies components, functions and features of the telephone system | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ |
| Applies policies and procedures regarding telephone use | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ |
| Demonstrates appropriate telephone and communication skills as well as appropriate telephone etiquette | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ |
| Differentiates communication styles for face-to-face and telephone communication | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ |
| Identifies common caller complaints about telephoning a business | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ |
| Answers incoming calls promptly distinguishing between local and other calls | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ |
| Responds to caller requests, takes and relays messages | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ |
| Facilitates conference calls | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ |
| Deal with suspicious or threatening calls and manages difficult callers | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ |
| Prepares voicemail messages | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Transfers calls where required | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ |
| Places calls on hold where, and if, appropriate | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ |

**Comments/feedback from Third Party to Trainer/Assessor:**

| | |
|---|---|
| **Third party signature:** | **Date:** |
| **Send to:** | |

# Competency Recording Sheet

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Name of Student** | | |
| **Name of Assessor/s** | | |
| **Unit of Competency** | Receive and place incoming telephone calls | D1.HFO.CL2.09 |
| **Date assessment commenced** | | |
| **Date assessment finalised** | | |
| **Assessment decision** | Pass Competent / Not Yet Competent (Circle one) | |
| **Follow up action required** <br><br> (Insert additional work and assessment required to achieve competency) | | |
| **Comments/observations by assessor/s** | | |

Place a tick (✓) in the column to reflect evidence obtained to determine Competency of the student for each Performance Criteria.

| Element & Performance Criteria | Observation of skills | 3rd Party Statement | Oral Questions | Written Questions | Work Projects | Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Element 1: Identify elements and facilities of the host enterprise telephone system** | | | | | | |
| Identify the types of incoming calls that may be received and their importance to the business | | | | | | |
| Identify the components of the telephone system | | | | | | |
| Describe the functions and features available in the telephone system | | | | | | |
| **Element 2: Demonstrate appropriate telephone communication skills** | | | | | | |
| Interpret the enterprise policies and procedures for telephone use in regard to incoming calls | | | | | | |
| Explain the importance of first impressions in relation to telephone answering and the reputation of the business | | | | | | |
| Differentiate between face-to-face and over-the-phone communications | | | | | | |
| Use appropriate telephone communication skills | | | | | | |
| Use appropriate telephone techniques | | | | | | |
| Describe acceptable telephone etiquette | | | | | | |
| Identify common caller complaints about telephoning | | | | | | |

Place a tick (✓) in the column to reflect evidence obtained to determine Competency of the student for each Performance Criteria.

| Element & Performance Criteria | Observation of skills | 3rd Party Statement | Oral Questions | Written Questions | Work Projects | Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| a business | | | | | | |
| **Element 3: Receive incoming calls** | | | | | | |
| Prepare to receive incoming calls | | | | | | |
| Answer calls promptly in accordance with house standards | | | | | | |
| Identify long-distance or international calls | | | | | | |
| Establish purpose of incoming calls | | | | | | |
| Respond to caller requests, where appropriate | | | | | | |
| Take messages from callers | | | | | | |
| Relay messages and follow-up as necessary | | | | | | |
| Facilitate conference calls | | | | | | |
| Deal with suspicious or threatening calls | | | | | | |
| Manage difficult callers | | | | | | |
| Prepare voicemail messages and background music | | | | | | |

Place a tick (✓) in the column to reflect evidence obtained to determine Competency of the student for each Performance Criteria.

| Element & Performance Criteria | Observation of skills | 3rd Party Statement | Oral Questions | Written Questions | Work Projects | Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Element 4: Re-direct incoming calls** | | | | | | |
| Transfer calls as appropriate | | | | | | |
| Place calls on hold as appropriate | | | | | | |

| **Candidate signature:** | | **Date:** | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Assessor signature:** | | **Date:** | |