Level 5 Diploma in Administrative Assistant (677) 139 Credits

Unit: Help Desk & Problem Solving Skills	**Guided Learning Hours:** 220
Exam Paper No.: 1	**Number of Credits:** 22
Prerequisites: Basic business organisational knowledge.	**Corequisites:** A pass or higher in Certificate in Business Studies or equivalence.

Aim: This unit is specifically designed to cater for professionals who deal with customers and users. Learners will learn all about customer service, communication, managing customer frustration, increasing customer receptivity to solutions, helping customers explain the real problem, and efficient listening skills. The unit is aimed at both new and experienced helpdesk staff who would like improve their customer service skills in order to raise the helpdesk service to the highest of professional levels. This unit would cut response times and increase the information flow through the helpdesk making services more cost effective and time efficient. Learners will develop the required knowledge and skills to be able to provide technical, client or product support to an organisation enabling learners to pursue a career in private enterprise or government organisations as a helpdesk supervisor or similar occupation.. Learners will learn how to define, diagnose and rectify user needs and problems related to the use of hardware and software. Other career opportunities include sales and marketing specialist, customer support professional, customer liaison worker, help desk specialist, helpdesk analyst, information centre specialist, product support worker, sales support worker, sales and marketing worker, technical writer.

Required Materials: Recommended Learning Resources.	**Supplementary Materials:** Lecture notes and tutor extra reading recommendations.

Special Requirements: The unit requires a combination of lectures, demonstrations and class discussions.

Intended Learning Outcomes:	**Assessment Criteria:**
1. Why technical support is vital for organisations; the critical differences between a Service Desk and a Help Desk.	1.1 Analyse the origins of Help Desk 1.2 Define Help Desk 1.3 Analyse characteristics of Help Desk users 1.4 Identify Help Desk users' problems 1.5 Identify features of successful Help Desk 1.6 Describe how to measure Help Desk performance 1.7 Describe typical functions of help desk 1.8 Explain how desk provides a single point of contact for users.
2. The Help Desk organisational structure, quality of management information, user and support staff skill levels.	2.1 Distinguish centralisation and decentralisation 2.2 Identify Help Desk structure 2.3 Identify advantages and disadvantages of outsourcing 2.4 Describe Help Desk careers 2.5 Describe Help Desk qualification requirements 2.6 Evaluate and examine the different support services and the interactions among them.
3. Incident management considerations, how to record, log and resolve incidents and restoring normal operations as quickly as possible with the least possible impact.	3.1 Analyse the steps in processing a call 3.2 Explain the listening process and challenges involved 3.3 Explain guidelines for effective communication 3.4 Identify barriers to effective communication

		3.5	Outline the impact of an incident and the urgency of an incident aspects determine the priority of an incident.
4.	How to process and receive an incident, gathering information to determine the incident response and service needed.	4.1 4.2 4.3 4.4 4.5 4.6 4.7	Define problem identification process Identify the strategies of determining the problem cause Evaluate and prioritise the options to solving the problem Identify the steps in determining course of action Explain problem solving challenges Describe the importance of incident documentation Develop the essential skills of receiving, logging incidents and the classification process.
5.	How Computer telephony integration (CTI) allows interactions on a telephone and a computer to be integrated or coordinated	5.1 5.2 5.3	Describe the advantages of automation Explain the different technologies available Describe common desktop functions provided by CTI applications
6.	Web-based support tools used for improving customer service, providing multitude of solutions from best practices for acquiring more and better customers to improving process efficiencies and streamlining workflows.	6.1 6.2 6.3 6.4 6.5	Explain the concept of self-service support Describe the different progressive support options Identify advantages and disadvantages of web-based support Describe how web tools reduce costs and optimises delivery Describe Web-based tools for help desk service and customer support
7.	How a good performance management system helps organisations achieve their aims and objectives.	7.1 7.2 7.3 7.4 7.5 7.6 7.7	Define service level agreements Identify methods of measuring performance Explain techniques for measuring customer satisfaction Explain call-monitoring formats Define quality assurance Evaluate and identify performance management framework Outline how performance management links to financial management, communications, consultation and the empowerment of staff.
8.	The advantages and disadvantages of knowledge management systems for managing knowledge.	8.1 8.2 8.3 8.4 8.5	Define knowledge management and its benefits Distinguish proactive and reactive knowledge management Evaluate components of knowledge-base Develop knowledge management measurements Analyse the knowledge management systems issues and challenges.

9. How integrated Asset Management solutions provide accurate inventory of all the hardware and software assets in an organization.	9.1 Define asset management 9.2 Identify benefits of integrating help desk management system with asset management system 9.3 Identify computer security threats 9.4 Describe IT asset management and network inventory tracking functionality 9.5 Describe Software Asset Management functions
10. The importance of Help Desk staff development, professional development resources and supporting framework.	10.1 Identify sources/causes of stress 10.2 Explain actions to be taken to create a positive work environment 10.3 Identify techniques for help desk staff assessment and staff development 10.4 Explain the participation process in the recruitment, training and development of helpdesk staff
11. How Managerial Problem Solving framework tools and techniques provide practitioners with useful ideas to enhance effectiveness in problem solving.	11.1 Identify problem definition, its aim and the primary tools used 11.2 Evaluate solution generation process and the primary tools used 11.3 Evaluate solutions and the primary tools used 11.4 Analyse the implementation and action plan process and the primary tools used.

Methods of Evaluation: A 2½-hour written examination paper with five essay questions, each carrying 20 marks. Candidates are required to answer all questions. Candidates also undertake project/coursework in Help Desk & Problem Solving Skills with a weighting of 100%.

Recommended Learning Resources: Help Desk & Problem Solving Skills

Text Books	• A Guide to Computer User Support for Help Desk and Support Specialists by Fred Beisse. ISBN-10: 1133188605 • How to Manage the IT Help Desk: A Guide for User Support and Call Center by Noel Bruton ISBN-10: 0750649011 • How to Write Policies, Procedures, and Tasks for Help Desks and Customer Support Centers by Ben Brigham ISBN-10: 1571250484
Study Manuals	BCE produced study packs
CD ROM	Power-point slides
Software	Microsoft Office