

First EDI achiever of new type of vocational qualification

Homebase, Weir Training and EDI celebrate as they make history in new vocational training initiative

The Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF) is a new way of recognising skills and qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, improving upon the current qualifications system by making it more flexible, easier to understand and more responsive to learner and employer needs. The QCF comprises individual units as well as whole qualifications. Individual units will have a credit value and a level. The credit value represents how long the unit should take the average learner to achieve; the level represents how difficult it is to achieve. Learners will be able to “pick and mix” units, achieving them as and when they want rather than having to take all the units within one qualification at the same time.

The new system has been tested through various projects involving employers, sector skills councils, training providers and awarding bodies. Once such project in the Retail sector has involved Homebase, Weir Training Ltd and awarding body EDI.

Pippa Cohen, Customer Orders Advisor of Homebase, Bracknell, Berkshire was identified as an ideal candidate by Weir Training’s Business Development Advisor, Angela Charlton and Store Manager, Mark Benham.

Through discussions, Pippa expressed an interest in gaining accreditation for her existing retail skills and also developing new ones. This project provided her with a fantastic opportunity to experience at first hand the assessment process and learn how to present real evidence to demonstrate her competence in the workplace. Pippa was supported throughout by both her Manager, Nick Walde and her Assessor, Dan Coombes. Internally the programme was monitored by Tamsie Carter, Store Personnel Advisor. Tamsie worked closely with Pippa and Dan to ensure the assessments ran smoothly and complemented the needs of their busy retail environment.

This approach worked very well and Pippa completed her chosen units in just four assessment visits. Pippa’s portfolio of evidence passed with flying colours and she went on to become the first ever learner to be awarded the EDI Level 2 Award in Retail Skills.

Pippa really enjoyed working towards this qualification and has now taken the decision to embark on a full Adult Apprenticeship! This is fantastic news as it shows the project has met its objectives.



Nick Walde, Homebase Manager, congratulating Pippa Cohen