

Employability and Career Development Portfolio

LCLM4005

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Employability Portfolio

Task 1: Comparison of Two Job Advertisements

The field I chose is the **management of customer service in UK retail banking**. **Customer Service Advisor at HSBC in Birmingham** and **Customer Service Advisor (part-time) at NatWest Group in Edinburgh** are among those occupations that I am going to consider (Group, 2026; HSBC, 2026).

The skills such as **customer orientation, listening, communication, problem solving, digital and professionalism** are required for these jobs. They are interrelated because the adviser should be able to comprehend customers' needs, clarify the problem to the customer and resolve it in the most optimal way considering all influencing aspects from the perspective of the company. Furthermore, it is extremely crucial for the adviser to have **product knowledge and awareness of data protection laws**, as any error will cause huge losses for both parties.

Firstly, **part-time employment with NatWest allows combining studies and work** and the position at **HSBC Birmingham implies working for a multinational company**. As HSBC is a multinational organization, the importance of such issues as **consistency, risk awareness and diversity of customers' demands** may be higher than in NatWest where the **importance of customer support** is emphasised. However, the lack of procedural correctness due to empathy may be a danger for the company and its customers. Moreover, there are also certain differences concerning the **nature of employment and development** in the particular job offer. For example, accepting the job position at NatWest will give me an opportunity to become a part-time worker, which will allow me to study and work at the same time. On the other hand, choosing the job position in HSBC located in Birmingham will give me an opportunity to obtain practical experience while working with different clients in an international bank. However, just because the second option is the bank of bigger size, it does not mean that it is better than the first one.

The communication skills are important for performing the described positions. In case there is a **complaint from the customer related to the transaction**, I will ask him/her to explain the situation and repeat what has been said to make sure that I understood everything correctly perform the needed checks and provide information about the rights

of the client. Furthermore, I will **document the whole communication process** and let him/her know about the future steps. **Eight minutes of presentation and 70 percent of the score** show my adaptation skills to the audience. However, my **academic presentation did not show my abilities in dealing with angry clients**.

Task 2: Self-Assessment and Employability Readiness

Speaking about **evidence-based self-assessment**, I will use **SWOT analysis**, which is based on my experience in teamwork, presentations and workshops, comments of my tutors and requirements of the employer in Task 1. Applying SWOT analysis, I will be able to identify my **internal strengths and weaknesses, opportunities and threats** and develop career strategy (Drew, 2023).

Personal SWOT Analysis

Strengths: The strength that I used previously is the structure of communication. For instance, when I was preparing my **eight-minute presentation**, I was able to demonstrate my research results in slides and structure my arguments to answer the questions and get **70% marks**. My structured and clear arguments were **mentioned by my tutor** as one of my personal strengths. Nevertheless, it is always easier to prepare an academic presentation than to answer the questions of my clients directly.

Another strength is my organization and ability to work in a team. As a **research coordinator and editor of the team of five people**, I had to **assign tasks** to each member of the team depending on his/her skills, **set the deadline** and **integrate all contributions** into one project. Less implications exist for academic cooperation than for banking cooperation as there are negative implications for customers' welfare and organizational compliance.

Weaknesses: The first one is a **lack of practical experience in the bank**. Academic research assists in getting the necessary knowledge, but the process of authentication, escalation and vulnerability of customers has never been implemented in practice. Another weakness is a **difficulty answering unexpected question**. It appeared that my answers to the expected questions were clear but the answers to the unexpected questions needed additional proof. My **skills in spreadsheets are limited** and therefore, I cannot analyze such criteria as satisfaction, reaction time and first contact resolution rate to develop in management.

Opportunities: There are **positions for beginners, volunteering in customer service, career guidance in the university, mock interview and professional training in customer service**. Prospects (2025) sees the experience as an adviser as a way into team-leader and managerial positions. Nevertheless, participating in the course is poor evidence of my skills because the effectiveness of training depends on practice, feedback and behavior changing.

Threats: **Labor market and automation** are the two main external threats. Sivasubramaniam, (2024) states that only **28%** of employers hiring young people aged 16-24 consider them to be well-prepared for the job and **34%** of employers have raised concerns about workplace communication. Automation of routine operations reduces the value of advisers with routine information. On the other hand, technological development increases the value of **empathy, ethical judgment and problem solving skills**.

Evaluation of Development through the Module

Thus, with the help of my knowledge, skills and behavior, I found the evidence. For example, at first, I used my communication and teamwork skills but I did not pay attention to my position and my role in accomplishing the project. With the help of the **mockinterview workshop based on the STAR method**, I understood that it is necessary to mention evidence as a part of the **situation, task, action and result**. Consequently, I have changed the previous vague statement on my coordinating function, number of **five team members**, early submission of task **two days before the deadline** and the **score of 72%**

Having understood from my tutor that I have answered all the questions but could not provide measures of my accomplishments, I understood that it was necessary for me to provide my **actions, numbers and results** to prove my experience. **All the evidence I provide is academic**. According to Connolly, Dickinson and Hellewell (2023), authentic assessment gives students practical skills and increases their employment opportunities. Therefore, it is a great development but it is not enough because I need to have some **practical experience of working under pressure** and in procedural and time pressure with the client.

The workshop in which I had to deal with the **complaint of the client** helped me improve my behavior. It taught me how to listen to the client without interrupting, understand his

anger and help him to see his problem and provide a solution. My tutor was happy with my **calmness and empathy** but he criticized my **hesitance while explaining procedural limitations**. **Evidence of Employability Readiness**

There are three pieces of evidence of my readiness to take the job. First of all, my work in the group of five people is the evidence of my readiness for **teamwork and responsibility**. Secondly, the assessed presentation serves as the evidence of my **oral communication skills, digital skills** and the fact that I am able to cope with the task within the deadline. Finally, the complaint handling simulation serves as the evidence of my **listening skills, empathy and problem-solving**. However, there are **several limitations** since my classmate cannot be viewed as a vulnerable customer, the presentation can be prepared beforehand and there is no real accountability of the simulation in the banking.

In conclusion, I possess the communication, teamwork, organizational and responsibility skills as well as digital skills necessary for performing the **supervised entry-level employment**. The lack of the experience in the banking and the spontaneity in problem-solving and data analysis skills **prevent me from working independently**.

Task 3: Employment Goals and Personal Development Plan

My **short-term goal** is to gain the position of a **UK banking Customer Service Advisor by August 2027** by developing the skill of handling complaints, interview and technology skills. It is relevant to the goals set by **employers in Task 1 and weaknesses described in SWOT analysis** (McDermott, 2018).

Final career Goal is to become a **team leader or a junior manager of the customer service department by August 2031**. It appeals to me because it includes all aspects of problem solving, professional growth and improvement of the services. Caldere (2025) indicates that experience as an adviser is a way into customer-service management. However, the experience and the salary are not the only things that should be considered when discussing the ways to become a good leader since the latter is supposed to have the skills of **coaching, analyzing and decision-making**.

Personal Development Plan

Development need	SMART action and resources	Target	Success evidence and contingency
Limited customer experience	Complete 30 hours of customer-facing work or volunteering with careers-team support.	31 December 2026	Supervisor confirms effective performance in three observed interactions , otherwise complete a structured virtual placement.
Weak spontaneous responses	Undertake four recorded STAR interviews and obtain careers-adviser feedback.	30 November 2026	Achieve “competent” for clarity, relevance and evidence, otherwise arrange individual coaching.
Complainthandling knowledge	Complete a recognised course and practise three complaint scenarios .	31 January 2027	Pass the course and all scenarios, repeat unsuccessful scenarios after feedback.
Data-analysis capability	Complete intermediate Excel training and produce a serviceperformance dashboard .	31 March 2027	Accurately analyse response time, resolution and satisfaction , verified by a tutor or mentor.

The career development plan meets the **SMART criteria** since it implies the **concrete actions**, their **measurability**, the availability of the **necessary resources**, **relevance to the position** and the **specific period of time** when the plan should be implemented (Cramer, 2025).

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