

TRW-SES 1.0

The Trusted Rw Service Excellence Standard

The requirements a person must meet to be certified as a service excellence practitioner, and the way conformity with those requirements is assessed. Published in full so that a certificate can be checked against it by anyone.

ISE certifications are developed based on ISO 23592:2021, and our certification processes are designed in accordance with ISO/IEC 17024.

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SES 1. Scope and purpose

This standard sets out what a person must be able to do, and how they must behave, in order to be certified by Trusted Rw as a service excellence practitioner. It also sets out how Trusted Rw decides whether a candidate has met it.

It applies to individuals, not to organisations. A certificate says something about the named person who holds it; it says nothing about their employer, and it does not transfer when they change jobs beyond the person themselves.

It is sector-neutral. The requirements in SES 4 are written so they can be met in a bank, a hospital, a hotel, a telecom, a public office or a shop, and are assessed against the candidate's own working context rather than one industry's vocabulary.

The purpose is narrow and deliberate: to turn "good with customers" from a self-declared claim into a checkable one. An employer reading a CV can look up the certificate number, see that it is valid, and read on this page exactly what the holder had to do to obtain it.

SES 2. Status of this standard

What this standard is:

- a) Written, owned and maintained by Trusted Rw as an independent certification body.
- b) Published in full, at a stable address, before any candidate is assessed against it.
- c) Applied identically to every candidate at the same level, in the same version.
- d) Version-controlled, so a holder can identify the exact text they were assessed against.

What this standard is not, stated plainly so that nobody has to infer it:

- a) It is not accredited by any government body, national qualifications authority, or accreditation council, in Rwanda or elsewhere.
- b) It is not a national qualification, an academic degree, or an award placed on any national or regional qualifications framework.
- c) It confers no licence or legal right to practise any regulated profession, and it does not substitute for any permit, registration or licence required by law.
- d) It does not certify an organisation, a product, a workplace or a management system. Only the named individual is certified.
- e) It grants no legal privilege, standing or exemption of any kind.

Relationship to international standards

ISE certifications are developed based on ISO 23592:2021 (*Service excellence: principles and model*), and our certification processes are designed in accordance with ISO/IEC 17024 (*Conformity assessment: general requirements for bodies operating certification of persons*).

What that means:

- a) The requirements in SES 4 are derived from the service excellence model set out in ISO 23592:2021, restated as things an individual must be able to do and evidence, because this standard certifies people and not organisations.
- b) The certification process in SES 6, SES 7, SES 9 and SES 11 follows the structure ISO/IEC 17024 sets out for a body that certifies persons: criteria published before assessment, defined entry routes, decisions made against those criteria and nothing else, evidence verified rather than taken on trust, a fixed validity period with recertification, and an appeal reviewed by someone who was not part of the original decision.

What it does not mean, stated as plainly as the list above:

- a) Trusted Rw is not accredited to ISO/IEC 17024, and is not certified, approved or endorsed by ISO or by any national standards body. Designing a process in accordance with a standard is not the same as being accredited against it, and this document never claims otherwise.
- b) A certificate awarded under this standard does not certify the holder, or the holder's employer, to ISO 23592:2021 or to any other ISO standard. Writing "certified to ISO 23592" on the strength of one is a misrepresentation under SES 10.
- c) ISO 23592:2021 and ISO/IEC 17024 are copyright documents published by ISO and are not reproduced here. Where this standard and either of them differ, this standard is what a candidate is assessed against.

WHAT A TRUSTED RW CERTIFICATE IS EVIDENCE OF

That a named individual was assessed against this published standard, by Trusted Rw, and met it. The credibility of that rests on two things and no others: the standard is public, so anyone can judge whether it is demanding enough, and the certificate is publicly verifiable, so anyone can check that the holder actually has it.

SES 3. Terms used in this standard

Service excellence. The consistent delivery of accurate, respectful and reliable service to a customer, together with the ability to recover well when something goes wrong and, at the higher levels, to measure and improve how service is delivered by others.

Customer. Anyone who receives the service, whether they pay for it directly or not. This includes patients, citizens using a public service, guests, account holders and internal colleagues receiving an internal service.

Candidate. A person who has submitted an application for a certification and has not yet received an outcome.

Certificate holder. A person who has been awarded a certificate that has not expired and has not been withdrawn.

Assessor. A person appointed by Trusted Rw to judge a candidate's work against this standard.

Entry route. One of several alternative ways of qualifying to be assessed at a level. Routes are alternatives: a candidate satisfies eligibility by meeting any single route in full. Everything in SES 7 and SES 6 applies on top of whichever route was used.

Continuing professional development (CPD). Learning, training or structured practice completed after certification that keeps a holder current, measured in hours across a recertification cycle.

SES 4. The requirements of service excellence

These are the substantive requirements of this standard. Every assessment task in SES 6 exists to test one or more of them, and an assessor marking a written answer, a case study or an observed interaction is judging it against the clauses below.

They are developed based on ISO 23592:2021, the international standard for service excellence, and express its model as competence an individual can be assessed on. The relationship between the two documents, and its limits, is stated in SES 2.

Requirements 4.1 to 4.5 apply at every level. Requirement 4.6 applies from practitioner level upwards, and 4.7 applies at manager level only.

4.1 Respect and equal treatment

APPLIES AT ALL LEVELS

The certified person treats every customer with courtesy and gives them the same quality of attention, regardless of who they are, where they are from, what language they speak, what they are able to spend, or how they choose to make contact.

Conformity is demonstrated by:

- a) Greeting, listening to and addressing a customer without visible impatience, dismissal or condescension.
- b) Adapting language and pace to the person in front of them, including customers with limited literacy, limited hearing, or limited familiarity with the service.
- c) Applying the same rules and the same effort to a small customer as to a large one.
- d) Never using a customer's identity, appearance, origin or perceived status as a reason to serve them differently.

4.2 Accurate information

APPLIES AT ALL LEVELS

The certified person gives customers information that is true, current and complete enough for the customer to make a decision, including information that is unwelcome or that costs the organisation a sale.

Conformity is demonstrated by:

- a) Stating prices, timelines, conditions and limitations before a customer commits, not after.
- b) Saying "I do not know, and I will find out by *when*" rather than guessing, and then meeting that commitment.
- c) Correcting a customer's mistaken understanding even when the mistake is in the organisation's favour.
- d) Never obtaining agreement, payment or a review by omission, exaggeration or pressure.

4.3 Responsiveness and reliability

APPLIES AT ALL LEVELS

The certified person responds within the time the customer was led to expect, and does what they said they would do. Where a commitment cannot be met, the customer is told before the deadline passes, not after.

Conformity is demonstrated by:

- a) Acknowledging a request promptly, even when the answer will take longer.
- b) Setting a specific expectation rather than an open-ended one, and tracking it to closure.
- c) Owning a case through to resolution rather than transferring the customer and the problem together.
- d) Proactively notifying a customer of a delay or a change that affects them.

4.4 Complaint handling and service recovery

APPLIES AT ALL LEVELS

The certified person treats a complaint as information rather than an attack. A complaint is heard in full, judged on its merits, resolved or escalated, and never answered with retaliation against the person who raised it.

Conformity is demonstrated by:

- a) Letting the customer finish, and confirming the complaint back to them before answering it.
- b) Separating the question of who is at fault from the question of what will now be done.
- c) Apologising for the customer's experience without inventing blame or admitting what is not true.
- d) Offering a remedy within their authority, or escalating promptly and telling the customer they have done so.
- e) Recording the complaint so the underlying cause can be seen by whoever is responsible for fixing it.

4.5 Confidentiality and handling of customer information

APPLIES AT ALL LEVELS

The certified person protects the personal information a customer gives them and uses it only for the purpose it was given for.

Conformity is demonstrated by:

- a) Verifying identity before discussing an account, and not discussing one customer's affairs in front of another.
- b) Not removing, copying, photographing or forwarding customer records outside the systems and purposes their role permits.
- c) Not using customer contact details for anything the customer did not agree to.
- d) Reporting a suspected loss or exposure of customer information rather than concealing it.

4.6 Measurement and improvement

APPLIES FROM PRACTITIONER LEVEL UPWARDS

The certified person can show that service was measurably better after their intervention than before it, using evidence rather than assertion.

Conformity is demonstrated by:

- a) Defining a service problem in terms that can be counted: waiting time, resolution rate, repeat contact, complaint volume, error rate or an equivalent.
- b) Establishing what the measure was before the change.
- c) Selecting and applying a method deliberately, and being able to explain why that method suited the problem.
- d) Reporting the result honestly, including where it fell short of what was intended.
- e) Distinguishing the effect of the change from unrelated factors that moved at the same time.

4.7 Leadership accountability

APPLIES AT MANAGER LEVEL ONLY

The certified person accepts responsibility for the conditions they set for others. A manager is judged not only on their own conduct toward customers but on the service their team is able to deliver and the way that team is treated.

Conformity is demonstrated by:

- a) Setting a service standard for their area, communicating it, and resourcing it well enough to be achievable.
- b) Not setting targets that can only be met by breaching 4.1 to 4.5.
- c) Acting on the causes of repeated failures rather than on the individuals reporting them.
- d) Being able to evidence a service change they led end to end, including the stakeholders they had to bring with them.
- e) Signing, and being held to, the leadership attestation on the ethical treatment of staff and customers.

SES 5. Levels of certification

The standard is certified at three levels. They are a pathway: each one assumes the requirements of the level below and adds to them. A candidate does not have to start at the first level if they qualify for a higher one by experience.

Level	Certifies	Minimum education	Minimum experience	CPD per cycle
CSEO Officer	Frontline service delivery and customer interaction	Completed secondary school	None	20 hours
CSEP Professional	Service quality, CX improvement and professional practice	Completed secondary school	3 years	30 hours
CSEM Manager	Leadership, strategy and service excellence transformation	Bachelor's degree	5 years	40 hours

CSEO CERTIFIED SERVICE EXCELLENCE OFFICER

The Certified Service Excellence Officer is the entry point to the Trusted Rw service excellence pathway. It certifies that the holder can deliver consistent, professional service in direct contact with customers, and that they have been assessed against a published standard rather than self-declared.

Who it certifies. Frontline staff, contact centre agents, receptionists, tellers and anyone in direct customer contact.

Education. A candidate must have completed secondary school, or a recognised equivalent.

Entry routes. A candidate qualifies as follows.

Open entry. Open to anyone aged 18 or over who works in, or is actively seeking, a role with direct customer contact. No prior certification or experience is required.

Full requirements and fee for CSEO: ise.rw/certifications/certified-service-excellence-officer/

CSEP CERTIFIED SERVICE EXCELLENCE PROFESSIONAL

The Certified Service Excellence Professional certifies practitioners who do not just deliver service but improve it. Candidates must show evidence of measurable service or customer experience improvement, not only time served in a role.

Who it certifies. Service quality officers, CX analysts, team leaders and experienced practitioners improving service.

Education. A candidate must have completed secondary school, or a recognised equivalent.

Entry routes. A candidate qualifies by meeting any *one* of the following in full.

Experience route. At least 3 years of verifiable, full-time experience in a customer service, customer experience, service quality or service delivery role, confirmed in writing by your employer.

Certification route. Hold a valid Certified Service Excellence Officer (CSEO) certificate. No additional years of experience are required, but you must be currently working in a service role.

Full requirements and fee for CSEP: ise.rw/certifications/certified-service-excellence-professional/

CSEM CERTIFIED SERVICE EXCELLENCE MANAGER

The Certified Service Excellence Manager is the senior credential in the pathway. It certifies that the holder can set service strategy, lead teams and drive service transformation across a function or organisation, verified through portfolio and a panel assessment.

Who it certifies. Heads of service, customer experience managers and executives accountable for service performance.

Education. A candidate must have a bachelor's degree from a recognised institution.

Entry routes. A candidate qualifies by meeting any *one* of the following in full.

Experience route. At least 5 years of verifiable experience in customer service, customer experience or service delivery, of which a minimum of 2 years must be in a supervisory or management role.

Certification route. Hold a valid Certified Service Excellence Professional (CSEP) certificate, together with current responsibility for a team, function or service line.

Full requirements and fee for CSEM: ise.rw/certifications/certified-service-excellence-manager/

SES 6. Assessment of conformity

Meeting an entry route makes a candidate eligible to be assessed. It does not certify them. Conformity with SES 4 is established only by the assessment tasks below.

The way assessment is designed, conducted and decided is in accordance with ISO/IEC 17024, the international standard for bodies that certify persons, within the limits stated in SES 2. The principles below are where that shows.

Principles

- a) Every candidate at a level is assessed to the same specification: the same tasks, the same version of this standard, and the same criteria. Two candidates sitting a written examination are given equivalent papers rather than identical ones. Every paper carries the same number of questions on each clause of SES 4 and is marked to the same published pass mark.
- b) Written examinations are marked against a fixed pass mark that is published in advance, not against a quota or a curve. A cohort in which everyone passes is a valid result.
- c) Work submitted for assessment, including any case study or portfolio, must be the candidate's own and is checked for originality. Submitting another person's work is disqualifying.
- d) An assessment records a pass or a fail against stated criteria. A fail is returned with the reason, so a candidate knows what to do differently.
- e) Assessment content is confidential. Seeking it in advance, sitting an assessment on another person's behalf, or having another person sit one on your behalf is disqualifying.

Assessment at each level

CSEO CERTIFIED SERVICE EXCELLENCE OFFICER

- a) Complete all CSEO learning modules.
- b) Pass a 60-question written examination with a minimum score of 70%.
- c) Pass one observed customer-interaction scenario assessed against the published service standard.

CSEP CERTIFIED SERVICE EXCELLENCE PROFESSIONAL

- a) Pass an 80-question written examination with a minimum score of 75%.
- b) Submit a service improvement case study of 2,000 to 3,000 words drawn from your own work.
- c) The case study must state the problem, the method used, and the measured result with before and after data.
- d) Case studies are checked for originality; submitting another person's work is disqualifying.

CSEM CERTIFIED SERVICE EXCELLENCE MANAGER

- a) Pass an 80-question written examination with a minimum score of 75%.
- b) Submit a service transformation portfolio covering a change you led end to end.
- c) The portfolio must evidence strategy, stakeholder engagement, delivery and measured business outcome.
- d) Defend the portfolio in a panel interview with two independent assessors.

SES 7. Evidence and how it is verified

A claim in an application is not accepted because it was made. Identity, education, experience and responsibility must each be evidenced by a document or a person Trusted Rw can check.

- a) Identity is verified against a government-issued document before any certificate is awarded.
- b) Claimed experience must be confirmed in writing by the employer for each role relied on.
- c) Referees named in an application may be contacted, and by applying the candidate consents to that contact.
- d) Evidence found to be false, altered or belonging to another person ends the application, and any certificate already awarded on the strength of it is withdrawn under SES 10.

Evidence required at each level

CSEO CERTIFIED SERVICE EXCELLENCE OFFICER

- a) A valid national ID or passport for identity verification.
- b) Proof of secondary education, or a recognised equivalent.
- c) A letter from your employer confirming your role, if you are currently employed.

CSEP CERTIFIED SERVICE EXCELLENCE PROFESSIONAL

- a) A valid national ID or passport for identity verification.
- b) Proof of secondary education, or a recognised equivalent.
- c) A curriculum vitae covering the full period of experience you are claiming.
- d) Written employer verification for each role used to meet the experience requirement.
- e) Two professional references, at least one from a direct supervisor.

CSEM CERTIFIED SERVICE EXCELLENCE MANAGER

- a) A valid national ID or passport for identity verification.
- b) A certified copy of your bachelor's degree, or a recognised equivalent.
- c) A curriculum vitae covering the full period of experience you are claiming.
- d) Written employer verification of your leadership responsibility, including team size or scope.
- e) Two senior references, at least one from an executive or board-level sponsor.

SES 8. Award, certificate and public verification

A candidate who meets the entry route, provides the evidence, passes every assessment task at their level and signs the conduct undertakings is awarded a certificate in their legal name.

Each certificate carries a unique certificate number. That number is the whole point of the credential: it makes the claim checkable by someone who has no relationship with Trusted Rw and no reason to take a candidate's word for anything.

ANYONE CAN VERIFY A CERTIFICATE

Enter the certificate number at ise.rw/verify/ to see the holder's name, the level held, the date it was awarded, the date it expires, and whether it is currently valid. No account and no permission from the holder is required.

A certificate that has expired, or that has been withdrawn under SES 10, does not silently disappear: verification reports it as expired or withdrawn, so an employer checking an old certificate on a CV gets a straight answer rather than a blank.

SES 9. Maintaining certification

A certificate is valid for 3 years from the date of award. It then expires. It does not lapse quietly into a weaker claim: after the expiry date the holder is no longer certified and must stop presenting themselves as such until they recertify.

Certification is maintained by continuing professional development across the cycle, in the number of hours set for the level. CPD exists because service practice changes: channels, tools and customer expectations in 2029 will not be the ones a candidate was assessed against in 2026.

CSEO CERTIFIED SERVICE EXCELLENCE OFFICER

- a) The certificate is valid for 3 years from the date of award.
- b) Complete 20 hours of continuing professional development per 3-year cycle.
- c) Certificates can be verified publicly by anyone holding the certificate number.

CSEP CERTIFIED SERVICE EXCELLENCE PROFESSIONAL

- a) The certificate is valid for 3 years from the date of award.
- b) Complete 30 hours of continuing professional development per 3-year cycle.
- c) Certificates can be verified publicly by anyone holding the certificate number.

CSEM CERTIFIED SERVICE EXCELLENCE MANAGER

- a) The certificate is valid for 3 years from the date of award.
- b) Complete 40 hours of continuing professional development per 3-year cycle, of which at least 10 must be leadership development.
- c) Certificates can be verified publicly by anyone holding the certificate number.

SES 10. Conduct, suspension and withdrawal

Every candidate signs the Service Professional Code of Conduct when they apply, and remains bound by it for as long as they hold a valid certificate. The undertakings given at each level are:

CSEO CERTIFIED SERVICE EXCELLENCE OFFICER

- a) Sign the Trusted Rw Service Professional Code of Conduct.
- b) Declare any unresolved disciplinary finding relating to customer treatment.

CSEP CERTIFIED SERVICE EXCELLENCE PROFESSIONAL

- a) Sign the Trusted Rw Service Professional Code of Conduct.
- b) Declare any unresolved professional misconduct finding.
- c) Consent to Trusted Rw contacting the referees and employers named in your application.

CSEM CERTIFIED SERVICE EXCELLENCE MANAGER

- a) Sign the Trusted Rw Service Professional Code of Conduct.
- b) Sign the additional leadership attestation on ethical treatment of staff and customers.
- c) Declare any unresolved professional misconduct finding.

Grounds for withdrawal

Trusted Rw may withdraw a certificate where it establishes that:

- a) The certificate was obtained through false, altered or borrowed evidence, or through dishonesty in an assessment.
- b) The holder has seriously or repeatedly breached the Code of Conduct.
- c) The holder has misrepresented the credential, including claiming a level they do not hold, claiming certification for their employer, or describing the certificate as an accredited or government qualification, contrary to SES 2.

A certificate may be suspended while a matter is being examined. A withdrawn certificate stops verifying as valid from the date of withdrawal, and the holder must stop using the designation and remove it from their CV, profiles and signature.

SES 11. Impartiality, appeals and complaints

An assessment decision is made against the published criteria in SES 6 and nothing else. Paying the fee buys an assessment, never an outcome, and no discount, employer relationship or commercial arrangement with Trusted Rw changes what a candidate has to do to pass. Impartiality, appeals and complaints are handled in accordance with ISO/IEC 17024, as described in SES 2.

Appealing an assessment outcome

A candidate who believes their assessment was marked incorrectly or handled unfairly may appeal in writing to support@trusted.rw within 30 days of receiving the outcome, saying what they believe went wrong. An appeal is reviewed by someone who was not part of the original decision. The candidate is told the result of the appeal and the reason for it.

Complaining about a certificate holder

Anyone may report a certificate holder for conduct that breaches SES 4 or the Code of Conduct, using the same address and quoting the certificate number. The holder is told what has been alleged and is given the opportunity to respond before any decision is taken.

Complaining about Trusted Rw

Complaints about the certification process itself, including delays, fees and the conduct of an assessor, go to the same address and are answered directly.

SES 12. Fees

The fee for each level is published on that level's certification page and is payable when the application is submitted. Fees are not printed in this document on purpose: a level may carry a time-limited discount, and a figure written here would eventually contradict what a candidate was actually charged.

- a) The fee covers the assessment of one application at one level.
- b) A failed assessment is not a failed application in the administrative sense: the fee is not refundable on the basis of the outcome.
- c) Where an application cannot proceed because the documents are incomplete or the requirements are not met, the Refund Policy states what is returned.
- d) Full commercial terms are in the Certification Terms.

SES 13. Version control and revision

This document is TRW-SES 1.0, effective 20 August 2026. The version number and effective date appear at the top of every published revision.

- a) A candidate is assessed against the version of this standard in force on the date their application was submitted.
- b) A revision that changes what a candidate must do to pass takes effect from a stated future date, not retrospectively.
- c) Corrections that do not change any requirement, such as clarified wording, may take effect immediately with the version number incremented.
- d) Certificate holders are bound by the conduct requirements in the current version for as long as they hold a valid certificate.

Citing this standard

Cite a clause by its designation, for example *TRW-SES 1.0, SES 4.3*. The stable address of this document is ise.rw/standard/.