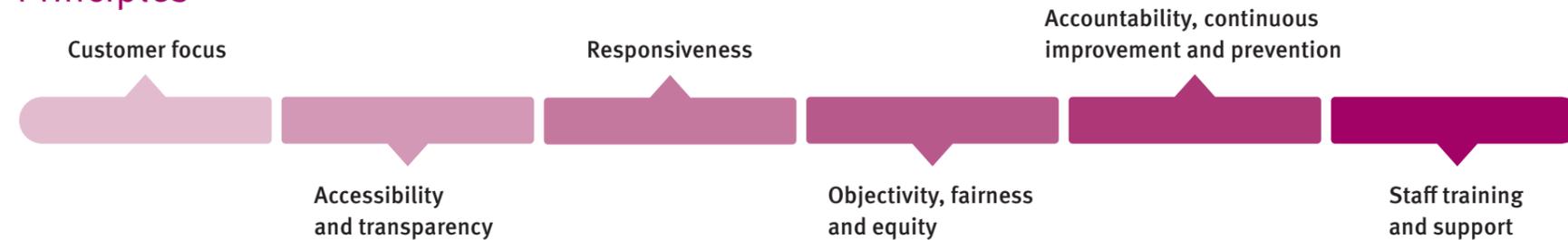


Customer complaints management framework

Principles



What is a customer complaint?

An expression of dissatisfaction about the service or action of the department, or its staff, by a person who is directly affected by the service or action, and includes complaints related to:

- a decision made, or a failure to make a decision, by a public service employee of the department
- an act, or failure to act, by the department
- the formulation of a proposal or intention by the department
- the making of a recommendation by the department
- the customer service provided by a public service employee of the department.

Source: section 264 *Public Sector Act 2022* (Qld)



What is not a customer complaint?

Our customers contact us for many reasons and most of the time our customers do not have a complaint. It is not a complaint when our customers:

- request more information
- request a change in services or request a new service
- make a suggestion for improving our services
- provide feedback on the department's performance
- are not directly affected by the decision or action of the department
- provide information (e.g. reporting an incident).



Accessibility

Customer complaints can be made by:

- telephone
- email
- in person
- Smart Service Queensland
- QGov website
- departmental social media
- letter.

When making a customer complaint, complainants:

- can be supported by a friend, an advocate, an interpreter or a community Elder
- can request other reasonable assistance, such as translation services or text telephone services
- will be provided information about how to make a customer complaint and how complaints will be managed, including any review options available
- can remain anonymous, although this may limit how we can address the complaint.



Complaint response times

The time it takes to resolve a customer complaint depends on a number of factors, including when the complaint was made and the complexity of the complaint. As a guide:

- customer complaints may take up to 30 working days to resolve
- complaints involving human rights issues will take up to 45 business days
- an internal review should take 20 working days, subject to complexity.

* For school-related complaints, working days refers to school days during the school term.

Our approach



The Department of Education welcomes feedback from its customers.



We use customer complaints data to inform improvements and to meet our complaints reporting obligations under the [Public Sector Act 2022 \(Qld\)](#) and [Human Rights Act 2019 \(Qld\)](#).

Customer complaints management framework

How we handle customer complaints

We try to resolve customer complaints as quickly as possible at the point where the complaint is received or after it is re-directed to the appropriate business area. If a complainant is dissatisfied, they may be able to ask for a review.

Our approach to handling complaints is based on the Australian/New Zealand Standard on complaints management (AS/NZS 10002:2022).



Early resolution

Frontline handling and resolution of customer complaints

Resolving at point of receipt

- We always try to resolve customer complaints quickly at the frontline or the point where the complaint is received so we can fix issues locally.



Internal review

Dissatisfied customer seeks internal review

Requesting an internal review

- Complainants can request an internal review if dissatisfied with the way the department handled the complaint or if the outcome is unreasonable.



External review

Dissatisfied customer seeks external review

Requesting an external review

- Complainants can ask an external agency, such as the Queensland Ombudsman, to review the department's handling of their customer complaint if they are dissatisfied.



Complaint categories

The department uses set categories to record customer complaints at the organisational level. This helps us analyse customer complaints to identify trends and issues to improve our services. The categories are:

- Health and safety
- Services
- Staff and volunteers
- Policy and procedure
- Third parties
- Assets, infrastructure and information technology
- Procurement, fees and charges
- Privacy
- Other.



Out of scope complaints

Some complaints are outside the scope of this framework and will be managed through different processes:

- complaints under the *Education and Care Services Act 2013* (Qld) and the Education and Care Services National Law
- complaints about certain decisions made under legislation
- complaints about decisions made under a contract
- individual employee grievances under the *Public Sector Act 2022* (Qld) and Public Sector Commission Directives
- complaints involving corrupt conduct under the *Crime and Corruption Act 2001* (Qld)
- public interest disclosures under the *Public Interest Disclosure Act 2010* (Qld).



Complainant responsibilities

Customers making a complaint are responsible for:

- cooperating respectfully and understanding that unreasonable conduct will not be tolerated, including abusive, aggressive or disrespectful behaviour
- providing a clear idea of the problem and the desired solution
- providing all relevant information when the complaint is made
- understanding that some decisions cannot be overturned or changed under the framework approach
- informing the department of changes affecting the complaint including if help is no longer required.



Resources

- Complaints policy and customer complaint management procedure
- Internal review procedure
- Compliments and customer complaints website
- Information for parents and carers factsheet
- Queensland Public Service Customer Complaint Management Framework and Guideline