

# Checklist: What is a customer complaint?

## Customer complaint

Customer complaint is defined in section 219A(4) of the *Public Service Act 2008* (Qld) as 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.

## Checklist

The definition above can be broken into the following five elements. If all elements are present, the matter is a customer complaint.

|   | Element                                                                                                                                                     | Things to think about                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|---|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | <p><b>Dissatisfaction</b></p> <p><i>The customer must be <b>dissatisfied</b>.</i></p>                                                                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dissatisfaction can be implicit or explicit – for example, the customer does not need to be visibly angry or upset to be dissatisfied.</li> <li>• Examples of a lack of dissatisfaction might be a person bringing something to our attention – for example, someone notices school windows have been left open during school holidays.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                               |
| 2 | <p><b>About the Department of Education</b></p> <p><i>The dissatisfaction must relate to a <b>service or action of the department or its staff</b>.</i></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If the dissatisfaction concerns something that is not the department's responsibility, it will not be a customer complaint – for example, fees set by the Commonwealth.</li> <li>• 'Staff' can include people acting on behalf of the department – for example, a specialist examiner contracted to conduct music exams, or a religious instruction provider the department has authorised to deliver services at a school. The <a href="#">Volunteers and other third party factsheet</a> contains more information.</li> </ul> |



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Strategy and Performance  
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|   | Element                                                                                                                                                            | Things to think about                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|---|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 3 | <p><b>Directly affected</b></p> <p><i>The customer must be <b>directly affected</b> by the service or action they are complaining about.</i></p>                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The department accepts representative complaints – for example, a disability advocate, community elder, or other support person may make a complaint on the complainant's behalf or assist them with the process. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ It is important to confirm that the representative is authorised to act for the complainant.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Sometimes it is unclear if someone is directly affected. The <a href="#">Directly affected factsheet</a> contains an approach to help determine if the complainant has a sufficient connection to the complaint.</li> </ul> |
| 4 | <p><b>Seeking outcome</b></p> <p><i>A customer must want the department to <b>take some action or deliver some outcome</b> in response to their complaint.</i></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The outcome the customer seeks could be implicit or explicit.</li> <li>• Sometimes the outcome may be unrealistic or unreasonable (e.g. sacking a senior person), however this does not mean the issue is not a customer complaint. It may just influence how you manage the complaint.</li> <li>• Examples when a customer may not be seeking an outcome include a customer letting us know about something for our information, or providing feedback.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                        |
| 5 | <p><b>No other process</b></p> <p><i>The complaint must be <b>in scope</b> and must not need to be managed through another process.</i></p>                        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some complaints are outside the scope of the customer complaints management framework and must be managed through different processes – for example, employee complaints, corrupt conduct, public interest disclosures, etc.</li> <li>• The <i>Excluded complaints factsheet</i> provides information about these excluded complaints.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |