



An Chomhairle Náisiúnta  
um Oideachas Speisialta  
National Council  
for Special Education

# **NCSE Customer Charter and Action Plan 2023 – 2025**

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## **Introduction**

The provision of high quality public services to improve the lives of people in Ireland is central to what public organisations do. In the National Council for Special Education (NCSE), providing a quality service to schools, parents and students with special educational needs, the people we work for and with, and striving to continually improve that service, are key priorities.

In Budget 2023, after considerable engagement with the Department of Education, significant additional investment was provided by Government to fund the much needed expansion of the NCSE over 2023 and 2024. An investment of almost €13million will support the expansion and organisational restructuring, which will include the recruitment of over 160 additional staff. Change is well underway and will continue across the term of this Charter and Action Plan to meet the increased need in our education system and provide schools, parents and students with special educational needs with a more responsive, coordinated and integrated range of services.

The purpose of this document is to outline in clear terms, the commitment and actions the NCSE will take over the next three years to ensure that our services are provided to a high level, while striving to continuously reflect on existing processes and practices to improve future delivery.

We state this commitment in the Customer Charter and Customer Action Plan below.

## **About Us**

The NCSE was set up in December 2003 with the aim of improving the delivery of education services to people with special educational needs. We do this in a number of ways and have set out our key goals to achieve our objectives in our Statement of Strategy 2023- 2026.

Goals:

1. Provide students, school communities and parents with professional co-ordinated services and specialist support provision relevant to the best outcomes for students.
2. Develop and provide expert policy advice, practice and professional learning programmes that are evidence-informed and underpinned by the latest national and international research and expert input.
3. Develop a progressive workplace culture in collaboration with staff to embed effective leadership and best practice.
4. Develop a corporate identity grounded in the principles of operational excellence, responsiveness and innovation with best practice in governance.

## **Our Vision and Mission Statement**

The NCSE Statement of Strategy 2023-2026 sets out our vision and mission statement. Our vision is one for a world class inclusive education system for Ireland. Our mission will drive the realisation of an inclusive education with integrated research, policy and practice. Our skilled and committed staff will work with students, schools and communities to provide access to quality learning and opportunities.

## Our Values and Goals

Across the different areas of our work, we uphold the following values:

- 1. Person-centred:** Children and adults with special educational needs and their families are at the centre of what we do.
- 2. Inclusion-focused:** Inclusion guides our beliefs and actions.
- 3. Equity and equality-focused:** We allocate existing and additional resources equitably and fairly to schools in line with the needs of students and within Department of Education policy.
- 4. Evidence-informed:** We base policy advice on research evidence, national and international best practice, consultation with our stakeholders and expert input.
- 5. Expert-led:** We are an expert source of valuable information, guidance and support for parents and schools as well as supporting continuing professional development for education practitioners.
- 6. Consultation-focused:** We engage in regular and meaningful consultation with our stakeholders.

## Our Customers

Schools, students and adults with special educational needs, and their families, are our primary customers. However, we also work with a range of others to achieve our aims. Below is the range of groups which we consider as our customers and with whom we interact with in different ways to achieve our aims:

- Students and adults with special educational needs
- Parents/guardians and families of students with special educational needs
- School management bodies, Boards of Management, teachers, principals and other school staff such as special needs assistants
- Our staff
- Training organisations/providers
- Members of the research community, both in Ireland and internationally
- The Department of Education, its agencies and offices
- Other government departments, offices and agencies
- Suppliers.

## Developing our Customer Charter and Customer Action Plan

In developing our new Customer Charter and Customer Action Plan, we were mindful of the Charter preparation guidelines published by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform.<sup>1</sup> We also reviewed the charters and action plans of a number of other departments and agencies across the civil service. A new public service transformation strategy 'Better Public Services 2030' was also published.<sup>2</sup>

Several factors were relevant in the development of this new Customer Charter and Action Plan. Firstly, the significant additional investment provided for in Budget 2023 to fund a much needed expansion of services. Second, this additional funding providing for over 160 new staff, led the NCSE to a period of organisational review and restructuring, and a revised Statement of Strategy 2023-2026. The NCSE's Vision '26, a statement of intent, is to deliver a world-class inclusive education system for Ireland.

Within preparations for a new organisational design and expansion of services, we have undertaken consultation and sought to engage with our internal and external customers on an ongoing basis. We have consulted with our staff through group sessions. There has also been engagement with stakeholders in relation to the new NCSE and revised design and processes as we expand as an organisation. This has included:

- Engagement with bodies representative of different Boards of Management in education and special education;
- Engagement with principals' and teachers' representative groups;
- Meeting with parents about NCSE services;
- Working with sections within the Department of Education, and other government departments/agencies who also support people with additional needs and disabilities.

We recognise that consultation is an ongoing process rather than a one-off engagement. Over the period of this Charter and Action Plan, we will continue to consult about this document and report on our progress on an annual basis. We will engage with schools, parents and students with special educational needs and the wide range of stakeholders the NCSE engages with about our services. In particular, children and young people are an important group that the NCSE will seek to engage over the course of this Charter, to hear their voices when reviewing the processes and services the NCSE provides.

As an organisation, we strive to embed standards of operational excellence and to ensure responsiveness to the schools, parents and students with special educational needs we support. At the point in time of the publication of this Customer Charter and Action Plan, the NCSE remains in a period of transformation, with the Action Plan identifying areas for growth over the term of the Plan, as we strive for excellence and equity for all our customers. It is expected that this Plan will change in response to annual reviews as we identify new standards in our pursuit of excellence.

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<sup>1</sup> Guidelines published in 2022 - <https://www.ops.gov.ie/app/uploads/2020/01/Customer-Charters-Customer-Action-Plans-2022.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.gov.ie/en/campaigns/1cde2-better-public-services/>

## NCSE Customer Charter

This section of the document sets out the NCSE Customer Charter 2023-2025 and our commitment to providing the highest levels of service to all our customers.

### Principles of Quality Customer Service

Customer satisfaction is very important to us and we are committed to the Government's 12 Guiding Principles for Quality Customer Services.<sup>3</sup> These are

#### 1. Quality Service Standards

Publish a statement that outlines the nature and quality of service which customers can expect, and display it prominently at the point of service delivery.

#### 2. Equality/Diversity

Ensure the rights to equal treatment established by equality legislation, and accommodate diversity, so as to contribute to equality for the groups covered by the equality legislation (under the grounds of gender, marital status, family status, sexual orientation, religious belief, age, disability, race and membership of the Traveller Community). Identify and work to eliminate barriers to access to services for people experiencing poverty and social exclusion, and for those facing geographic barriers to services.

#### 3. Physical Access

Provide clean, accessible public offices that ensure privacy, comply with occupational and safety standards and, as part of this, facilitate access for people with disabilities and others with specific needs.

#### 4. Information

Take a proactive approach in providing information that is clear, timely and accurate, is available at all points of contact, and meets the requirements of people with specific needs. Ensure that the potential offered by Information Technology is fully availed of and that the information available on public service websites follows the guidelines on web publication. Continue the drive for simplification of rules, regulations, forms, information leaflets and procedures.

#### 5. Timeliness and Courtesy

Deliver quality services with courtesy, sensitivity and the minimum delay, fostering a climate of mutual respect between provider and customer.

#### 6. Complaints

Maintain a well-publicised, accessible, transparent and simple-to-use system of dealing with complaints about the quality of service provided.

#### 7. Appeals

Similarly, maintain a formalised, well-publicised, accessible, transparent and simple-to-use system of appeal/review for customers who are dissatisfied with decisions in relation to services.

#### 8. Consultation and Evaluation

Provide a structured approach to meaningful consultation with, and participation by, the customer in relation to the development, delivery and review of services. Ensure meaningful evaluation of service delivery.

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<sup>3</sup> See the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform's publication on preparing your Customer Charter and Action Plan, including the 12 Guiding Principles of Quality Customer Service - <https://www.ops.gov.ie/app/uploads/2020/01/Customer-Charters-Customer-Action-Plans-2022.pdf>.

### **9. Choice**

Provide choice, where feasible, in service delivery including payment methods, location of contact points, opening hours and delivery times. Use available and emerging technologies to ensure maximum access and choice, and quality of delivery.

### **10. Official Languages Equality<sup>4</sup>**

Provide quality services through Irish and/or bilingually and inform customers of their right to choose to be dealt with through one or other of the official languages.

### **11. Better Co-ordination**

Foster a more coordinated and integrated approach to delivery of public services.

### **12. Internal Customer**

Ensure staff are recognised as internal customers and that they are properly supported and consulted with regard to service delivery issues.

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<sup>4</sup> This will also include meeting requirements under the Irish Sign Language Act 2017 when it comes into operation.

## What to expect as a customer of the NCSE

In engaging with our customers, we aim to uphold the 12 principles of quality customer service as outlined above.

We aim to achieve this by:

- Giving our customers the best possible service and advice.
- Treating customers properly, fairly, impartially and with courtesy.
- Aiming to ensure that rights to equal treatment established by equality legislation are upheld in the delivery of our services.
- Aiming to meet any special needs our customers may have.

## Level of service to expect when you contact the NCSE

When you contact the NCSE, we will deal with your enquiry efficiently and promptly and treat you with courtesy and respect. The timelines for contact by telephone and written contact apply to all NCSE general frontline and head office enquiries<sup>5</sup>.

### Contact by Telephone

Our office hours are Monday to Friday, 9am – 12.45 pm and 2pm – 5.45 pm (5.30pm on Fridays).

- If you have a regional specific query, you can refer to the list of staff contact details as available on the NCSE website – [Frontline Local Staff](#). From time to time, the NCSE will refresh these contact details as necessary.
- If your query is more general in nature, please contact our head office on 01 - 6033200, we will answer promptly and refer you to the most appropriate staff.
- Our aim is to provide customers with clear and correct information. If we cannot answer your questions straight away or in full, we will try and put you in contact with someone who can assist you, or take your details and call you back as soon as possible.
- Many of our staff regularly support school staff, students and their families in school and in the case of our Visiting Teacher Service, support students and parents in their home. We may not always be able to take your call immediately and ask you to leave a message. We aim to respond to your message within two working days.
- There are times of the year where responding to your call within two days may not be feasible, we do endeavour to contact you as soon as possible thereafter.
- Where staff are on leave, the timeline of the leave, the contact details and timeline for response of the most suitable staff member will be made available.
- Whether you ring our head office or local teams, when we answer/return your call, we will give our name, the name of the section or area you have called and we will be courteous and helpful.
- If a person is unavailable, or if you are calling outside of our office hours and you are connected to a voicemail, we will aim to ensure that you receive a prompt call back.

### Written Contact

- If you contact us by email or letter, we aim to acknowledge your correspondence within two working days. We will keep you informed of progress and will issue detailed correspondence as soon as possible afterwards, depending on the nature of the query. If we cannot do this promptly, we will write to explain why and tell you when you can expect a full reply.

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<sup>5</sup> There is a different legal framework in respect of the Assessment of Need (AoN) process, timelines will be developed for this as the service progresses. Furthermore, in relation to decisions on appeals for allocation of SET and SNA posts, there are separate timelines in respect of these processes (see further information on [Appeals Processes](#) on the NCSE website).



- All correspondence from us will be in clear and plain language. Our contact details including our name, telephone number and an email address will be included in all written correspondence and replies.
- In the case of emails, an automated email response will issue when our staff are out of the office, indicating a return date and an alternative contact.

### **Personal Contact**

- If you need to meet a member of our local staff in person, for example, our Special Educational Needs Organisers (SENOs), Visiting Teachers or Managers, we will arrange to meet you by appointment at suitable and agreed times in locations that are convenient in public such as schools, education centres and health centres.
- We will provide you with the maximum level of privacy possible.
- We will be friendly, professional, helpful and courteous in our dealings with you.
- We ask that you afford our staff the same consideration.

## **Level of service to expect when you deal with the NCSE**

### **Equality/Diversity**

- We are fully committed to ensuring that customer rights to equal treatment under equality legislation are upheld.
- We provide equality of access to our services and endeavour to accommodate diversity as provided for by equality legislation. We will work with our customers to ensure that their accessibility or other needs are looked after and will assist our customers with specific needs in accessing information or services as required.
- The NCSE Access Officer will arrange extra help if necessary for customers who wish to use the NCSE's information and services. Information on our Access Officer is available [here](#) on our website. The Access Officer can be contacted at [accessofficer@ncse.ie](mailto:accessofficer@ncse.ie)

### **Providing Information**

- We aim to provide clear, accurate, accessible, relevant and up-to-date information to our customers through our staff, our publications and our website- [www.ncse.ie](http://www.ncse.ie). We will maintain our website as a comprehensive source of information on all aspects of our work.
- We will ensure that important public information material is available in a variety of formats.
- We will comply with the Freedom of Information Acts and the Data Protection Acts.
  - Information on FOI in the NCSE can be found [here](#) on our website. The FOI Officer can be contacted at [foi@ncse.ie](mailto:foi@ncse.ie).
  - Information on data protection in the NCSE can be found [here](#) on our website. The Data Protection Officer can be contacted at [dataprotection@ncse.ie](mailto:dataprotection@ncse.ie).

### **Services through Irish**

- We will ensure that people who wish to conduct their business through Irish are facilitated as much as possible, and we will respond in Irish to correspondence received in Irish.
- We will respond in Irish to telephone callers who wish to speak in Irish, immediately where possible. If this is not possible, we will engage in English or offer to have the call returned promptly by a member of staff who can deal with the query in Irish.
- We will, as much as possible, ensure that our staff who work to support students, teachers and other school staff in Irish medium schools both inside and outside the Gaeltacht, can engage through the medium of Irish.

- We will publish our Annual Report, Strategy Statement and other important documents in both Irish and English. We comply with the requirements of the Official Languages Act, 2021.

## How you can help us to improve how we meet the needs of our customers

### Feedback and Consultation

The NCSE has a Consultative Forum, which is representative of a range of our stakeholders and which we use to seek views and feedback on major issues. We will continue to use this Forum and engage with it on key issues and about our services. In addition, work is underway to further to engage with and promote student voice in our work.

We regularly meet with national organisations representing parents, schools, teachers, disability/advocacy bodies and other state agencies to seek their views and provide information on our services. Through our head office and local teams, we communicate and consult with all those who use our services. Through our management processes, we consult and engage with staff about how we provide our services. We will continue to use these channels to consult with our customers to support the continual improvement of our services.

In addition, we welcome your comments and suggestions about our service and how we can improve at any time. Please let us know what you think of our service or this Charter, by submitting feedback, comments or suggestions.

You can email your feedback to [Feedback@ncse.ie](mailto:Feedback@ncse.ie) or send it to:

**NCSE Customer Feedback & Complaints**  
National Council for Special Education  
1-2 Mill Street, Trim  
Co. Meath  
C15 P2KC

### Help us to help you

You, as our customer, also have an important role to play in helping us offer you a quality service. You can help us if you:

- Follow any guidelines or procedures which are relevant to the service you require.
- Use our website [www.ncse.ie](http://www.ncse.ie) to search for information and resources you may need. If you cannot find it, call us and we will guide you to it.
- E-mail, write to or call our staff directly using the direct contact details we have provided on our website.
- Quote any relevant reference number in all communications with us and provide full relevant information or documents on a timely basis as required by your school or our staff.
- If our lines are busy or unanswered, please use our voicemail and leave your name and number so we may call you back.
- Make an appointment to meet our local teams when you need to meet us.
- Contact your local school directly where it would be in a position to deal with your query.
- Treat our staff courteously and with respect, as you would wish to be treated yourself.
- If you wish to make a complaint, consult our Customer Feedback and Complaints Procedures [link], and be as specific as possible about the nature of the complaint. Please see further details below.
- Are aware that we operate within a framework of laws and regulations.

## What to do if you have a complaint or wish to appeal a decision made by the NCSE

### Complaints and Appeals

The NCSE has a [Customer Feedback and Complaints Procedure](#) that sets out how we will engage and deal with concerns or complaints. If you have a complaint about any aspect of our service, please let us know and we will try to rectify the problem.

The NCSE has specific and separate processes to enable a review of decisions on the allocation of Special Education Teacher (SET) supports or Special Needs Assistant (SNA) posts to schools; please use these Review Processes<sup>6</sup> for an appeal regarding SET support or SNA support.

In the first instance, we encourage our customers to raise any issues or complaints with the relevant NCSE staff member involved or with his/her direct supervisor. We would hope that most issues will be efficiently and satisfactorily resolved in this way. Where this is not possible, we have formal procedures for dealing with customer complaints.

Full details of our feedback and complaints procedure and relevant forms are published [here](#) on our website. Formal written complaints using the appropriate forms should be sent to:

#### **NCSE Customer Feedback & Complaints**

National Council for Special Education

1-2 Mill Street, Trim

Co. Meath

C15 P2KC

Or via e-mail: [Feedback@ncse.ie](mailto:Feedback@ncse.ie)

### Complaint to the Ombudsman / Ombudsman for Children

If your complaint remains unsolved, you have the option of pursuing the matter further with the Ombudsman or the Ombudsman for Children (contact details below).

#### **Office of the Ombudsman**

6 Earlsfort Terrace

Dublin 2

D02 W773

+353 1 639 5600

[www.ombudsman.ie](http://www.ombudsman.ie)

#### **Ombudsman for Children's Office**

Millennium House

52-56 Great Strand Street

Dublin 1

1800 20 20 40

[www.oco.ie](http://www.oco.ie)

<sup>6</sup> SET Review information - <https://ncse.ie/application-for-set-review> and Exceptional Review of SNA allocation information - <https://ncse.ie/application-for-sna-exceptional-review>

**Further information and how to contact us**

Further information about the NCSE and our services may be obtained on our website - [www.ncse.ie](http://www.ncse.ie).

**Contact information**

You can also contact us directly. We will endeavour to keep our contact details on our website up to date at all times.

The contact details of our frontline and head office teams are available at:

Frontline local staff: <https://ncse.ie/regional-services-contact-list>

Visiting Teacher: <https://ncse.ie/contact-a-visiting-teacher>

Head Office staff: [https://ncse.ie/head\\_office\\_contacts\\_list](https://ncse.ie/head_office_contacts_list)

## NCSE Customer Action Plan

The purpose of the NCSE Customer Action Plan is to outline to our customers how we will deliver on the detail and commitments set out in the Customer Charter and how we will assess our progress. As such, the Customer Action Plan should be read in conjunction with the Customer Charter and the twelve principles of Quality Customer Service set out above.

### Our Commitment to Quality Service Principles

#### 1. Publish a Quality Service Statement

**Principle:** Publish a statement that outlines the nature and quality of service which customers can expect, and display it prominently at the point of service delivery.

1. We will publish our Customer Charter and Customer Service Action plan on our website in both Irish and English. We will circulate the Charter and Action Plan to all our staff. We will make it available in print on request.  
*Performance indicator: Our Customer Charter and Customer Action Plan are available online, and sent in print to those who request them.*
2. We will report on our customer service achievements and areas for improvement in our annual report.  
*Performance indicator: Our annual report will contain information on our achievements and the areas we would like to improve on.*
3. We will encourage our staff to avail of customer service training via the Civil Service One Learning initiative, or through other channels where applicable.  
*Performance indicator: Staff have availed of customer service training.*

#### 2. Equality & Diversity

**Principle:** Ensure the rights to equal treatment established by equality legislation, and accommodate diversity, so as to contribute to equality for the groups covered by the equality legislation (under the grounds of gender, marital status, family status, sexual orientation, religious belief, age, disability, race and membership of the Traveller Community). Identify and work to eliminate barriers to access to services for people experiencing poverty and social exclusion, and for those facing geographic barriers to services.

1. We are committed to delivering a service which complies with all equality and diversity legislation and will provide equality of access to our services. We are in a process of introducing and embedding A Universal Design for Learning (UDL) approach across the organisation.  
*Performance indicator: The Customer Charter will be reviewed through a UDL Framework over the term of this Action Plan.*
2. We will work with individual customers to ensure that their information needs are met, in whatever format is most appropriate. Where possible, we will provide interpretation and/or translation services as appropriate for customers accessing NCSE's local services. The NCSE Access Officer will arrange additional support as required. Information on our Access Officer is available [here](#) on our website.  
*Performance indicator: Our customers are supported to access NCSE services in the manner most appropriate for them.*

3. We are developing an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy and will provide our staff with the latest civil service guidance and training on equality, diversity, harassment and bullying.  
*Performance indicator: The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy is published and circulated to staff.*  
*Performance indicator: Our staff are made aware of the latest civil service guidance on equality, diversity, harassment and bullying.*  
*Performance indicator: Our staff avail of equality and diversity training.*

### 3. Physical Access

**Principle:** Provide clean, accessible public offices that ensure privacy, comply with occupational and safety standards and, as part of this, facilitate access for people with disabilities and others with specific needs.

1. We will maintain existing buildings for staff to an acceptable standard and will continue to provide, and where necessary improve, access to our buildings for our staff with additional needs.  
*Performance indicator: Any improvements to our offices are identified and reported to NCSE Head Office and Senior Management.*
2. We will ensure Health and Safety procedures are in place in all offices and that standards outlined in our health and safety statement are known by all staff.  
*Performance indicator: Our health and safety policy is implemented and kept up-to-date, and in respect of all offices.*  
*Performance indicator: Provide Health and Safety training to staff and address any Health and Safety issues at regular meetings.*

### 4. Information

**Principle:** Take a proactive approach in providing information that is clear, timely and accurate, is available at all points of contact, and meets the requirements of people with specific needs. Ensure that the potential offered by Information Technology is fully availed of and that the information available on public service websites follows the guidelines on web publication. Continue the drive for simplification of rules, regulations, forms, information leaflets and procedures.

1. We will proactively provide information which is clear, timely, accurate, relevant and fully accessible to our customers. We will do this through our staff, our publications and on our website.  
*Performance indicators: Our communications to our customers contains relevant information and contact details.*  
*Performance indicators: Information is published in a timely manner.*
2. We will ensure that important public information is available through a variety of formats.  
*Performance indicator: Our website is kept up to date, and reviewed to ensure it meets requirements for people with a range of needs, including in plain English or for customers who are blind/visually impaired, deaf/hard of hearing.*

3. We will comply with Freedom of Information and Data Protection legislation. Contact details for our Freedom of Information and Data Protection Officers are on our website.  
*Performance indicator: Our obligations under freedom of information and data protection are met and where possible reported on the NCSE website or in our Annual Report.*

## 5. Timeliness and Courtesy

**Principle:** Deliver quality services with courtesy, sensitivity and the minimum delay, fostering a climate of mutual respect between provider and customer.

1. We will be courteous and helpful when you ring our office, answering as promptly as we can. We will provide you with our names and the sections of the NCSE we work in. If we cannot answer your call, we will ensure that our voicemail messages are accurate and up to date. If you leave a message, we may not be able to return it immediately (e.g., local staff who works directly with students, families and schools). In these cases, we will call you back within 2 working days.  
*Performance indicator: Calls to head office or local staff are answered or responded to as soon as possible or within two working days, and all communications will be held with courtesy and mutual respect.*
2. If you email us, we will acknowledge your email within 2 working days and follow up on your query as soon as possible after that. We will ensure that full contact details are provided on all written or email communications to you.  
*Performance indicator: Email communication is acknowledged within 2 working days, and followed up as soon as possible after that. Relevant contact details are provided in all communications with customers.*
3. We will provide local staff and head office teams with relevant communications and customer service training, either through the One Learning initiative or other channels.  
*Performance indicator: Our staff avail of communications and customer service training, either through the One Learning initiative or other channels.*

## 6. Complaints

**Principle:** Maintain a well-publicised, accessible, transparent and simple-to-use system of dealing with complaints about the quality of service provided.

1. We will publicise information on our complaints procedures on our website.  
*Performance indicator: We will ensure the NCSE's Customer Feedback and Complaints Procedure is available in a prominent location on our website.*
2. We will deal with complaints fairly, transparently and in confidence. Where errors are identified, we will correct them as soon as possible. If you are not satisfied with the outcome of your complaint, we will provide you with information on other options open to you.  
*Performance indicator: We will engage with all complaints in a timely, confidential and transparent manner, in line with the details and timelines outlined in the NCSE's Customer Feedback and Complaint's Procedure.*
3. We will use information from any complaints received to improve our customer service.  
*Performance indicator: We will examine our records to ensure that any complaints received were dealt with efficiently, and where errors were identified that they were addressed as soon as possible.*

4. We will ensure we support our staff, where appropriate, to engage with customer feedback and complaints in an appropriate manner.  
*Performance indicator: Our staff are kept up to date with our feedback and complaints procedure.*  
*Performance indicator: Our staff are supported, with training where appropriate, to handle complaints from customers.*

## 7. Appeals

**Principle:** Similarly, maintain a formalised, well-publicised, accessible, transparent and simple-to-use system of appeal/review for customers who are dissatisfied with decisions in relation to services.

1. We will publicise appeals process information relating to our work in a clear and timely manner.  
*Performance indicator: Information relating to SET and SNA appeals processes are clearly available on our website.*  
*Performance indicator: Publish information in relation to appeals processes in our annual report.*
2. Ensure our staff are aware of appeals processes information and advise customers accordingly.  
*Performance indicator: Staff are aware of the appeals process information.*

## 8. Consultation and Evaluation

**Principle:** Provide a structured approach to meaningful consultation with, and participation by, the customer in relation to the development, delivery and review of services. Ensure meaningful evaluation of service delivery.

1. We will seek the views of and feedback from our Consultative Forum – a body representative of our stakeholders, on our work.  
*Performance indicator: Feedback from our Consultative Forum is communicated to our Council and considered in our work.*
2. We will continue to meet with a range of national organisations representing parents, schools, teachers, disability/advocacy bodies, government bodies and state agencies to seek their views on aspects of our services.  
*Performance indicator: We will continually engage with and seek feedback from range of stakeholders in relation to our services and in relation to any issues, concerns or new processes identified.*  
*Performance indicator: Stakeholder feedback is reviewed and acted upon where appropriate, including through the use of the Total Quality Management (TQM) Framework.*
3. We will use our management processes, performance development management reviews, staff conference, regional meetings, staff working groups and other appropriate methods to seek the views of staff on how we can improve of services for our customers.  
*Performance indicator: Ensure that staff input and feedback is sought on service delivery and internal processes.*  
*Performance indicator: Staff feedback is reviewed and acted upon where appropriate, including through the use of the Total Quality Management (TQM) Framework.*



4. We will review our Customer Charter and Customer Action Plan each year and publish progress in our annual report. We invite our customers to provide feedback on our work at the following email address: [feedback@ncse.ie](mailto:feedback@ncse.ie).

*Performance indicator: Progress on our Customer Charter and Customer Action Plan is published in our annual report.*

## 9. Choice

**Principle:** Provide choice, where feasible, in service delivery including payment methods, location of contact points, opening hours and delivery times. Use available and emerging technologies to ensure maximum access and choice, and quality of delivery.

1. We will provide customers with a range of options to contact us, such as online through our website, via email, phone and by letter.

*Performance indicator: We will provide a range of options for customers to contact us and access our services in a range of different ways.*

2. We will aim to provide as much choice as possible to our schools, parents and students with special educational needs when designing and delivering our services, including using new technologies, where feasible, to provide greater flexibility and ensure a streamlined service.

*Performance indicator: We will continuously review and improve the use of technological solutions to support NCSE processes, to ensure a streamlined service.*

3. We will take guidance and make greater use of our website by continuously improving the user experience, to ensure we can meet the information needs of customers on all aspects of our work and make our website inclusive and accessible to all.

*Performance indicator: We will undertake a redesign of the NCSE website, address accessibility options and monitor through reviewing customer interaction.*

## 10. Official Languages

**Principle:** Provide quality services through Irish and/or bilingually and inform customers of their right to choose to be dealt with through one or other of the official languages.

1. We aim to ensure that people who wish to conduct their business through Irish are facilitated as much as possible, and we will aim to respond in Irish to correspondence received in Irish.

*Performance indicator: Correspondence received in Irish is responded to in Irish.*

2. We will respond in Irish to telephone callers who wish to speak in Irish, where possible. If this is not possible, we will engage in English or offer to have the call returned promptly by a member of staff who can deal with the query in Irish.

*Performance indicator: Where feasible, our services are provided through Irish to those who wish to receive them in such a way.*

3. We will, as much as possible, ensure that our staff who work to support students, teachers and other school staff in Irish medium schools both inside and outside the Gaeltacht, can engage through the medium of Irish.

*Performance indicator: Staff avail of Irish language training, through the One Learning initiative, or other channels as appropriate.*

4. We publish our Annual Report, Strategy Statement and other important documents in both Irish and English. We comply with the requirements of the Official Languages Act, 2021.  
*Performance indicator: Our strategy statement, annual report and other important documents are published in Irish.*  
*Performance indicator: We will publish our compliance on requirements of the Official Languages Act 2021 on an annual basis.*

## 11. Better Coordination

**Principle:** Foster a more coordinated and integrated approach to delivery of public services.

1. We will engage with and implement the vision in the new public service transformation strategy, *Better Public Services 2030*.  
*Performance indicator: We engage in and implement strategic and cross-government initiatives, such as the forthcoming Financial Shared Services process.*
2. We will engage with other bodies across the statutory and voluntary sector, where appropriate, to improve the delivery of our services.  
*Performance indicator: We will continue to engage with a wide range of stakeholders on an ongoing basis.*
3. We will engage in inter-departmental and cross-government fora.  
*Performance indicator: Our staff participate in cross government networks, such as the Project Manager's Network and the Quality Customer Services Network.*  
*Performance indicator: We are represented on interdepartmental committees and groups.*

## 12. Internal Customers

**Principle:** Ensure staff are recognised as internal customers and that they are properly supported and consulted with regard to service delivery issues.

1. We will provide staff with the necessary resources to support them in their role, including through the NCSE's People Plan, and through robust internal information technology structures and improved processes.  
*Performance indicator: NCSE's People plan is developed and rolled out across the organisation.*  
*Performance indicator: Staff are supported in their role through improved internal infrastructure and technology to deliver services to our customers.*
2. We will encourage staff to provide feedback on their work and the work of the organisation, in a range of ways, including line management, performance management development system reviews, staff meetings and consultation processes.  
*Performance indicator: Staff feedback their views to management via a number of different channels.*
3. We will explore new communications processes and mechanisms across the organisation.  
*Performance indicator: New options to enhance communications across the organisation are explored, and where possible, utilised.*