

Quality Customer Service Initiative

Description of the Policy

The objective of this policy is to improve the quality of the interaction between the citizen / business customer and the Public Service. It is intended that this will, in turn:

- Make the customer's interaction with the Public Service simpler, faster and more satisfying
- Make information more easily accessible and easily understood
- Facilitate service improvements at organizational and sectorial levels.

Further Information

Further information on the Quality Customer Service Initiative is available at the following links:

<http://www.per.gov.ie/en/quality-customer-service/>

<http://qcs.per.gov.ie/>

The "Action Plan for Public Service Reform 2014 – 2016" (available at [Action Plan 2014-2016](#)) details specific actions over the period of the plan. The Reform and Delivery Office has responsibility for the following actions:

1.3.1 Identify customer improvements to be implemented at organisational level, as this is where most customer interaction takes place.

ii. Organise an annual Quality Customer Service conference to share best practice and provide networking opportunities for customer service officers across the Public Service.

1.3.2 Strengthen the effectiveness and quality of Customer Charters.

i. Assess quality of customer charters in the Civil Service.

ii. Promote the further roll-out of Customer Charter Initiative to Bodies / Agencies.

iii. Ensure that Departments / Offices develop ambitious customer charters and accompanying customer service improvement action plans.

1.3.3 Improve the accessibility of information for the citizen.

i. Continue to centrally promote the benefits of the use of plain language including through guidelines, training and other supports.

ii. All Public Bodies should commit, including in their Customer Charters, to making

information more accessible to the citizen and particularly to maximising the use of plain language in letters, applications forms, information leaflets etc.

1.3.4 Improve levels of engagement with citizens.

i. Commission, deliver and disseminate the results of a 2014 Civil Service customer satisfaction survey.

Guidelines

[Guidelines for the Preparation of Customer Charters and Customer Action Plans](#) were revised in 2011 to help organisations prepare / update their Customer Charters and Customer Action Plans.

In 2014, in response to a commitment set out in the Public Service Reform Plan 2014-2016, the Reform and Delivery Office met with representatives from 33 Government Departments and Offices to review their approach to and experience of Customer Charters and Customer Action Plans.. The results of this review are set out in the [Report on Review of Customer Charters 2014](#)

The greater use of plain language is an important part of the Government’s Public Service Reform agenda. Using plain language makes communications more effective, makes services more accessible to users and increases efficiency. We have developed, in conjunction with the National Adult Literacy Association, a Plain English guide to assist public servants in how they present information to colleagues and the general public.

- [Download Using Plain English to Improve Effectiveness in the Public Service](#) (PDF file)

Background Information

The Quality Customer Service Initiative followed a recommendation from “Delivering Better Government” (you can download a copy with this [link](#)) which was published in 1996 and which led to a requirement for government departments to have Customer Action Plans in 1997 and then, Customer Charters in 2002.

Consultation

Consultation Process

Template Guidance Notes: Provide information on any consultation process that was engaged in prior to the adoption of the policy, guidelines or legislation.

Consultation Documents

Template Guidance Notes: Provide links to any documents that were published for consultation, or list or describe them and give details on how to obtain them.

Submissions Received

Template Guidance Notes: Provide links to any submissions received, or list or describe submissions and give details on how to obtain them.

Consultation Report or Analysis / Synopsis of Submissions Received

Template Guidance Notes: Provide links to any analysis or synopsis of submissions, or details on how to obtain them.