

Making a customer complaint

Information for parents and carers

What is a customer complaint?

As a parent or carer, you can express dissatisfaction with the service or action of the Department of Education (the department) or its staff, including decisions made or actions taken in a school and/or by the local regional office.

How does the department manage my customer complaint?

The department is committed to responding to customer complaints in an accountable, transparent, timely and fair way that is compatible with human rights. For information about how the department manages customer complaints you should refer to the [Customer complaints management framework, policy](#) and [procedure](#) and the [Internal review procedure](#) online.

For customer complaints about school matters, you are encouraged to use the following three step approach:

1. **Early resolution:** the best place to raise any concerns is at the point where the problem or issue arose. You can make an appointment at the school to discuss your complaint with your child's teacher or the principal. You are also welcome to lodge your complaint in writing or over the phone. You can also make a complaint through [QGov](#).

Check the school's website to find your school's complaints management process. The [schools directory](#) contains contact information for all schools.

The [regional office](#) may be able to assist you through this process, or provide you with advice.

2. **Internal review:** if, after taking the early resolution step, you are dissatisfied with the outcome of your complaint or how the complaint was handled, you can ask the local [regional office](#) to conduct a review. You need to submit a [Request for internal review form](#) within 28 days of receiving the complaint outcome.
3. **External review:** if you are dissatisfied after the internal review, you may wish to contact a review authority, such as the [Queensland Ombudsman](#) or [Queensland Human Rights Commission](#), and request an independent, external review.

Some matters need to be handled in a different way to school matters and will be referred to other areas in the department. These include:

- issues about harm, or risk of harm, to a student attending a state school, which must be managed in accordance with the [Student protection procedure](#).
- complaints about corrupt conduct, public interest disclosures; or certain decisions made under legislation, which will be dealt with as outlined in the [Excluded complaints factsheet](#).

You can make an anonymous complaint; however, please understand that if you do not identify the school, or if you advise that you do not wish the school to be contacted, it may limit how your complaint can be assessed and resolved. If no contact information is provided, the department cannot reply back to you.

What are my responsibilities when lodging a customer complaint?

You have a right to make a complaint to the department, however, you also have responsibilities as a complainant to:

- be respectful and understand that unreasonable conduct will not be tolerated by school, regional or departmental staff
- clearly outline what the problem is, what you are unhappy about and your desired outcome
- provide all relevant information when making a customer complaint and inform the department of any changes impacting on your complaint
- understand that if the complaint is complex, it can take time to assess, manage and resolve.

What happens after I make my complaint?

If your complaint is not resolved during your initial contact, we will aim to resolve your complaint as quickly as possible, taking into consideration the complexity and timing of your complaint. As a general guide, complaints requiring inquiry or some investigation may take longer to resolve. School holidays may also impact the time it will take to resolve a complaint. Refer to the [Customer complaints management framework](#) for response times.

Once your customer complaint has been resolved, you will be contacted and informed of the outcome of your complaint, any recommendations, and any review options available to you.

For information privacy reasons, the department is unable to provide you with information about other people involved in your complaint.

