

EXCELLENCE THROUGH
EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Customer Care Policy

Policy adopted by LOETB Board
26 September 2016



Laois & Offaly Education and Training Board (LOETB) is committed to providing the highest standards of service delivery, whether in the provision of education and training programmes or learning support services. This Customer Care Policy sets out how we intend to provide a quality service and the standards that you can expect from us.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Outline the Customer Care standards that each customer should expect to receive when availing of any part of the LOETB service.
- Ensure that all staff are aware of the principles of Customer Care.
- Ensure that these principles are adopted and practiced.
- Provide guidelines to Management in implementing LOETB's policy on Customer Care.

Scope

This policy is applicable to all employees, irrespective of their employment status.

1. *Role of Management*

Management should ensure that the centre provides an excellent customer care service and that all staff treat customer care as a top priority in the delivery of the services within schools, centres, or offices.

2. *Timeliness and Courtesy*

When you visit any of our schools, colleges or offices, we will ensure that:

- You are treated with courtesy.
- Your privacy is respected.
- Your enquiry is dealt with promptly.

3 *Choice*

We will:

- Provide a wide range of quality education and training services for all members of the community.
- Ensure, where possible, that students have access to a range of relevant learning supports.
- Offer increased flexibility, whenever possible, in order to meet your needs.

4. *Consultation and Evaluation*

We will:

- Consult with staff, students, parents and the general public in the planning and delivery of our services.
- Check regularly with all of our customers to ensure that they are happy with the services we offer.
- welcome your views writing, by phone, by e-mail, or in person

5. *Internal Customer*

We will:

- Recognise our staff as internal customers and support and consult with

them with regard to service delivery issues.

6. *Information*

We will:

- Provide accurate, up-to-date and easy-to-understand information about our programmes, our services and our future plans.
- Provide information about progress and developments within LOETB.

7. *Accessibility*

We will:

- Provide clean, accessible public offices.
- Facilitate access for people with disabilities and others with special needs.
- Continually monitor and improve access to our educational centres, learning programmes and support services.

8. *Equality & Diversity*

We will:

- Operate in accordance with the goals stated in our Employment Equality Policy
- Promote equality and accommodate diversity, in line with equality legislation.
- Ensure that the range and nature of LOETB provision promotes social inclusion.
- Make sure that our actions, or the actions of those who provide services on our behalf, are just and fair.

9. *Official Languages*

We will:

- Facilitate those customers who wish to conduct their business through the Irish Language, in compliance with the Official Languages Act 2003 as set out in our Scéim Teanga.

10. *Complaints & Appeals*

We will:

- Deal with complaints in consistent, fair and transparent manner. If for any reason, you find that the service provided by LOETB falls short of expectations, please tell us first and we will deal with your complaint in an efficient and transparent way.
- Offer an easy-to-use system of appeal/review for any customer who is not happy with decisions regarding his/her complaint about LOETB services.

Review

This policy will be subject to review in 2020 and/or where it is necessary to do so due to changes in Department of Education and Skills regulations, legislation or other such situations.

Appendix 1

Customer Complaints Procedure

Our Commitment to Quality Customer Service

LOETB is committed to providing you the customer with a high quality service. We will endeavour to maintain and improve the standard of our services and to keep errors to a minimum. We, however, recognise that mistakes or delays will occasionally occur. From 1st May 2013, our administration is subject to review by the Office of the Ombudsman, www.ombudsman.ie.

If you are not satisfied with our services, you should let us know so that we can work to improve them. We welcome your feedback and we will deal with our complaints in confidence.

What is covered by our Complaints Procedure?

The Complaints Procedure covers complaints about issues such as delays, mistakes and poor customer service.

What is not covered by our Complaints Procedure?

The Complaints Procedure does not cover

- Matters of Policy
- Matters of which are the subject of litigation.
- Matters which have been referred to the Office of the Ombudsman

How to Make a Complaint

A complaint made in relation with the quality of service provided by LOETB should be made on the Customer Care Complaints Form.

In the first instance, the complaint should be brought to the attention of management in the centre concerned where we will try to resolve your complaint without delay.

What steps will be taken in dealing with your Complaint

LOETB will treat your complaint confidentially, fairly, and efficiently. We will provide a reply having fully considered the nature and extent of the complaint. It is in the interest of the Board that complaints are resolved at the earliest possible stage.

Appeals Process

If your complaint cannot be resolved by our staff or, if you are unhappy with the response you receive, you should contact:

Corporate Services, Laois and Offaly Education and Training Board, Castle Buildings, Tara Street, Tullamore, Co, Offaly.

All complaints received by LOETB will be dealt with as follows:

- Written acknowledgment within 5 working days.
- Response within 20 working days (If it is not possible to meet this target, we will inform you and continue to do so until the matter is resolved).
- The response will provide a contact name, telephone number and email address.

If you are unhappy about the outcome of the review you can further appeal the matter to:

Joe Cunningham, Chief Executive, Laois & Offaly Education and Training Board, Ridge Road, Portlaoise, Co. Laois.

Role of the Ombudsman

If you are dissatisfied with the outcome of the complaints and appeals procedures, you may request an examination of your complaint by the Ombudsman. Please refer to www.ombudsman.ie for further details or alternatively they can be contacted at:

Office of the Ombudsman, 18 Lower Leeson Street, Dublin 2.

Tel: 01 639 5600

Email: ombudsman@ombudsman.gov.ie

You should complain to the Ombudsman as soon as possible but not later than 12 months after the occurrence of the action you want to complain about or you becoming aware of it occurring.