





NCGE is an agency of the Department of Education and Skills and operates under the aegis of Léargas.

Customer Charter 2019

The purpose of NCGE's Customer Charter is to set out the standard of service our customers can expect to receive from us. NCGE customers can be divided into three types:

1. Guidance Practitioners (e.g. working in primary, post-primary schools, higher education and Further Education & Training)
2. Irish Government Departments and Authorities (e.g. Department of Education & Skills, Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection, SOLAS)
3. Other Agencies and Associations within Ireland (e.g. Léargas, NAPD, AEGAI, ETBI, HEA, IGC), across Europe and internationally (e.g. the EU Commission, Cedefop, IAEVG, ICCDPP)

Our aim

Our aim is to provide all our customers with a quality service in a professional, efficient and timely manner, and to do our best to maintain these standards.

Our commitment to our customers

Customer satisfaction is very important to us and we aim to achieve this by:

- giving our customers the best possible service and advice
- treating customers in a proper, impartial and courteous manner
- aiming to ensure that rights to equal treatment set out by equality legislation are upheld in the delivery of our services
- striving to meet any special need our customers might have

Telephone enquiries

We are available to answer telephone calls during normal office hours, 9:30-17:30 Monday to Friday (excluding public holidays). Our office is closed during lunchtime, 13:00-14:00.

We aim to answer all calls promptly and courteously, identifying ourselves and our area of work. We aim to do our best to provide our customers with clear and correct information. If we cannot give an answer promptly, we will take the customer's details and call them back at a suitable time.

We will only connect callers to voicemail when the customer wishes to leave a voicemail message. The voicemail message will state if the person the customer is calling is away for more than 1 working day and will provide an alternative contact number. We aim to do our best to respond to voicemail messages within 1 working day.

To ensure NCGE provides a comprehensive response, customers might be asked to submit their query in writing.

Written communication

We will acknowledge correspondence received by email on receipt and reply to emails and written correspondence within 10 working days. We will try to respond to enquiries requiring a detailed response within 20 working days and explain this to our customers by an interim reply before the 20-day period is up.

If the correspondence is for another agency or Government department or body, we will pass it on directly to that department, and tell the customer what we have done with it.

Personal callers

We will be available to meet by appointment with our customers during normal office hours. We will greet visitors politely, be fair and helpful and deal with their enquiries as quickly as possible. We will provide suitable facilities for meetings and will make sure that our offices are clean and safe. We will also make sure that our offices are accessible for people with disabilities.

Meetings

We aim to be punctual in our attendance at meetings with our customers and to prepare and/or read in advance of meetings all documents necessary for participation.

When NCGE is hosting the meeting, we aim to ensure customers are provided with the necessary documents for meeting participation 5 working days in advance of the meeting. When NCGE has responsibility for Minute taking, we aim to have a copy of the Minutes sent to participants within 10 working days of the meeting.

Website

We aim to ensure our website is kept up-to-date and contains information relevant to our customers. Whenever possible, we will ensure reports and publications are accessible in electronic format.

Equality/Diversity

We are fully committed to providing a service of which all our customers can avail and that treats all customers equally. We will do our best to make sure that the service we provide takes account of the needs that particular groups of customers might have, and will consult with our customers to make sure their accessibility needs are met. We will accommodate diversity within our workplace and in our dealings with all customers. We will provide suitable staff training to support these commitments.

Service in Irish

We will comply with the Official Languages Act 2003.

Information

We will comply with the Freedom of Information Act 2014 and with the Data Protection Act 2018.

Payments

We aim to make payments within 30 working days of receiving an invoice.

Feedback/making a complaint

NCGE welcomes all feedback from our customers with the aim to improving our customer service. While we strive to provide the best possible service and advice, we are aware that mistakes can occur.

Customers can make a complaint about the service they have received to any member of NCGE staff or by writing to ncgeinfo@ncge.ie. NCGE will handle complaints in an objective, courteous manner using fair, open and transparent procedures. We aim to acknowledge the complaint promptly and to respond within 10 working days.

Customers who are not satisfied with the response to their complaint can make a formal complaint in writing to Léargas at info@leargas.ie. Alternatively, NCGE is subject to review by the Office of the Ombudsman, who can be contacted if customers remain dissatisfied with the outcome.

Abusive complaints

No one is expected to suffer abusive or aggressive behaviour. NCGE will make every effort to protect its staff from malicious complaints.

Help NCGE to help you

NCGE can help you best if you:

- Provide any information you have which is relevant to your inquiry
- Provide any relevant documents, names and reference numbers
- Follow any checklists or guidelines which you have been given
- Treat our staff and other customers with courtesy and respect

Contact points/phone numbers

A list of staff names and phone numbers are available on the [NCGE Team](#) page of our website.

(Note: The publication of a Customer Charter is not intended to create new legal rights for customers.)