

Complaints Management

How do I make a customer complaint?

As a parent or carer, from time to time you may be unhappy with the services or actions or 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.

Visit the department's [website](#) for information about making a customer complaint or raise your issue with the school or education centre, region or division.

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. Information about how the department manages customer complaints is available on our website, including links to relevant policies and procedures.

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, or make your complaint in writing or over the phone. You can also make a complaint through [QGov](#).

- In the first instance make an appointment to meet with your child's **Teacher** to discuss the issue or problem.
- If you still have concerns after meeting with the teacher, contact the school office to make an appointment to meet with the **Deputy Principal**.
- If the issue relates to school operations, phone or email the office to make an appointment to discuss the matter with the **Principal**.

For privacy reasons, the school is unable to provide you with information about other people involved in your complaint, such as staff, other school community members, or students who are not under your care.

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 way your complaint was handled or if you believe the outcome to be unreasonable, you can ask the local [regional office](#) to conduct a review. You need to submit a [Request for internal review form](#) within 20 days of receiving the complaint outcome.
3. **External review:** if you are dissatisfied after the internal review, you can contact a review authority, such as the [Queensland Ombudsman](#) or [Queensland Human Rights Commission](#), and request an 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 [Complaints and grievances management policy](#).

You can make an anonymous complaint; however, 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 complaint will still be addressed but the department cannot reply back to you.

What are my responsibilities if I make a customer complaint?

You have a right to make a complaint, 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 as outlined in the [Managing unreasonable complainant conduct procedure](#)
- 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 soon as we can and within 30 days, wherever possible. Please be aware that school holidays may impact timeframes for resolving a complaint.

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.

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