



Assessment Report

CUSTOMER SERVICE EXCELLENCE





1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Following the assessment, Aberdeenshire Educational Psychology Service were found to have a deep understanding of, and commitment to, Customer Service Excellence. The commitment was displayed from Senior Management levels through to operations and front-line staff.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank those people involved in the overall assessment process. It has been a pleasure meeting with your team and having the opportunity to observe your service in action.

The outcome of the assessment was -

“Renewal of the Customer Service Excellence Standard has been recommended”

Address:	Woodhill House, Westburn Road, Aberdeen, AB16 5GB		
Standard(s):	Customer Service Excellence	Accreditation Body(s)	UKAS
Representative:	Carron Douglas		
Site(s) assessed:	Educational Psychology Service Offices Aberdeen	Date(s) of audit(s):	13-05-2019. 14-05-2019
Lead Assessor:	Robert Sullivan	Additional team member(s):	
Type of Assessment:	Renewal		
Review of Certification Claims	Claims are accurate and in accordance with SGS guidance		



2. CONTEXT

Aberdeenshire Educational Psychology Service provides a psychological service to a 0 – 25 years of age group. The service aims to bring psychology to the heart of learning and teaching, working with others to improve life experiences and outcomes for all children and young people. A key objective is to support the professional development and capacity of staff in educational establishments to build their skills and confidence in meeting learners' needs and raising attainment and achievement.

The service saw Carron Douglas appointed to the post of Principal Educational Psychologist in January 2018 and Ashley McGregor as Depute Principal Psychologist in March 2018.

3. METHOD OF ASSESSMENT

The assessment was undertaken in two stages; the first was a review of your self-assessment submission. This review enabled the assessor to gain an understanding of how the organisation has met the requirements of the Customer Service Excellence standard.

The next stage was to review the actual service delivered on-site. This was conducted through reviewing practice as well as speaking to staff, partners and customers. This included following customer journeys through your processes and how these aligned with customer insight.

During the assessment process, the criteria are scored on a four-band scale:

COMPLIANCE PLUS - Behaviours or practices which exceed the requirements of the standard and are viewed as exceptional or as exemplar to others, either within the applicant's organisation or the wider customer service arena.

COMPLIANT - Your organisation has a variety of good quality evidence which demonstrates that you comply fully with this element. The evidence which reflects compliance is consistent throughout and is embedded in the culture of the organisation.



PARTIAL COMPLIANCE - Your organisation has some evidence but there are significant gaps. The gaps could include:

- Parts of the applicant's organisation which are currently not compliant and/or
- Areas where the quality of the evidence is poor or incomplete and/or
- Areas which have begun to be addressed and are subject to significant further development and/or
- Areas where compliance has only been evident for a very short period of time

NON COMPLIANT - Your organisation has little or no evidence of compliance or what evidence you do have refers solely to a small (minor) part of your organisation.

The current scheme allows applicants a maximum number of partial compliances, equating to a pass mark of 80% for all criteria.

4. OPENING MEETING

The on-site assessment commenced with an opening meeting.

The assessment activity and the partial compliances were discussed. The itinerary had been agreed with Aberdeenshire Educational Psychology Service in advance. The organisation was informed that all information obtained during the assessment would be treated as strictly confidential.

The scope of Assessment was confirmed as: Aberdeenshire Educational Psychology Service

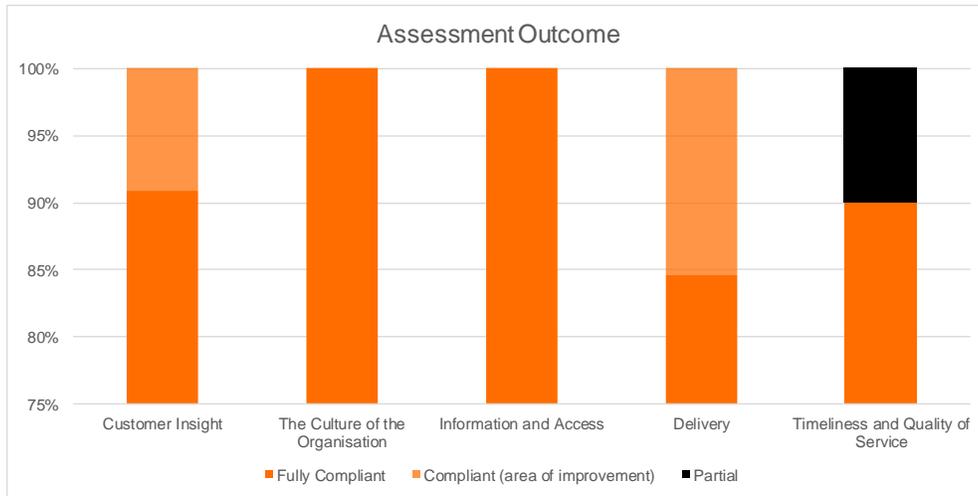


5. ON-SITE ASSESSMENT

The Assessor was accompanied throughout the assessment by Carron Douglas and other personnel within the organisation were involved when assessing activities within their responsibility.

The assessment resulted in the raising of a partial compliance and a number of observations these are listed in Section 6 and 7 of this report.

	Criterion	Maximum number of partial compliances	Actual number of non-compliances	Actual number of partial compliances	Actual number of Areas for Improvement	Fully Compliant
1	Customer Insight	2	0	0	1	10
2	The Culture of the Organisation	2	0	0	0	11
3	Information and Access	2	0	0	0	12
4	Delivery	3	0	0	2	11
5	Timeliness and Quality of Service	2	0	1	0	9





6. AREAS OF PARTIAL COMPLIANCE

CRITERION 1

No Partials Raised

CRITERION 2

No Partials Raised

CRITERION 3

No Partials Raised

CRITERION 4

No Partials Raised

CRITERION 5

5.3.2 At present you do not meet your standard for issuing the formal consultation record within the given timescale

7. OBSERVATIONS

Areas for Improvement cleared from the previous assessment visit

- At the last assessment, the Assessor noted that you should continue to progress the review and further development of your information provision. As part of this process you are including such as minority ethnic group representation to take account of cultural, language and other issues. At this 2019 CSE renewal assessment, the Assessor was able to see good evidence of improved information provision and the involvement of young people in developing information directed at them (3.2.3)

During the site assessment the following general observations were made. These include: positive areas scored as Compliance Plus; areas of good practice; areas for improvement identified throughout the entire assessment process, as listed below.



Areas for Improvement

- You may wish to consider if the timing of your planning and review meetings with schools could be better dovetailed with their work on their School Improvement Plans (1.2.3)
- You may wish to utilise such as a Performance Dashboard or RAG (red, amber, green) system to provide an even greater focus on performance and your achievements (4.1.2)
- You should consider if a review of your standards and key performance indicators would be helpful. You should, of course, involve customers and other stakeholders as part of any such review (4.1.3)

Areas of Good Practice

- Your Customer Service Excellence (CSE) preparation, evidence provision and overall planning was very good. The Assessor would like to thank all staff and stakeholders for their very detailed contributions
- You have again used the CSE Standard as a useful self-evaluation tool. The comprehensiveness of your evidence and the depth and detail in the sessions that you hosted for the assessment, all demonstrated your commitment to the process.
- During the various CSE sessions, your staff were keen to use these to explore ways of continually improving the service and were genuinely interested in the views of stakeholders
- You have continued to review the opportunities for consulting and engaging with customers using methods that are effective and reliable. You increasingly involve customers and other stakeholders in the planning, delivery and evaluation of your work. This was evidenced during this assessment visit and confirmed in discussion with customers and partners. Your customer journeys also evidenced this. At this assessment the Assessor was involved in focus group discussion with your customers and saw other evidence of involvement
- You publicise satisfaction levels for all customer groups and parts of your service delivery. You do this through the publication of survey results and informal consultation feedback on your website

- Your satisfaction levels are very high. The Assessor saw evidence of your parent/ carer survey that showed 100% of customers were either satisfied (70%) or very satisfied (30%) with your service
- You review satisfaction levels over time to identify any trends that require action and to evaluate success. This is done routinely through the Review and Planning process with schools and the parent/ stakeholder survey
- Your service has very high levels of parent/ carer participation at consultation stage
- You have approached the Parent Support Group to involve them in determining the needs of young people with Autism and will take account of findings in developing your service
- You have reviewed the nature and content of your information on a regular basis to ensure it is easily accessible in terms of the complexity of language used and so forth. You have made changes to information on Visible Learning and 'Nurturing' to make these more accessible to many parties. You also took account of feedback from your Cognitive Skills training and simplified information to improve accessibility. These changes were well received by customers. Your work in reviewing your information with young people is commendable
- Your core consultation methods and ethos ensure that your work is founded upon the needs and preferences of customers and these are reviewed on an ongoing basis both in terms of teachers, parents/ carers and young people. The service is customer focused and uses high levels of insight to understand the evolving needs and preferences of a range of customers. The Assessor was able to explore your informal and formal consultation process and discuss these in some detail with stakeholders and customers and this assessment
- You have worked with partners to provide information and support materials. One example of this being the co-creation of an online course on Sensory Needs taking account of input from colleagues in Social Work, the NHS and Education Service. This is currently being evaluated. This demonstrated staff using their insight, the direct insight of customers and partners to directly influence 'product' development
- You have researched how other services in Scotland deliver an Educational Psychology Service to secondary schools and are currently inviting stakeholder comments to inform a review of your delivery to secondary schools. This is a good example of learning from others and

consulting with customers to inform future service developments. You are piloting a more data driven approach around the nature of your services involvement. You will also seek the views of your staff and their insight as part of this exercise

- You have continued to give thought as to how to measure 'added value' resulting from your services in many ways. One example of this being a more longitudinal assessment and evaluation of the effectiveness of your training delivery and other interventions
- There is an embedded, sustained, long-term and clear ethos of continuous improvement and customer focus throughout your service. You have a long-standing commitment to the Customer Service Excellence Standard, and you use this as part of your self-evaluation processes. You adopt a learning organisation approach and culture which assists with ongoing innovation. This is driven by Senior Management
- The Assessor noted throughout the assessment visit that staff are empowered and encouraged to use their professional knowledge and ideas and to participate in the customer focused culture of your organisation. Staff are empowered as both individuals and as groups. You support collegiate development and reflective practice. The use of supervision triads and peer review through such as Video Enhanced Reflective Practice are examples of this. Video Enhanced Reflective Practice is particularly helpful for those currently in training
- At this assessment, you provided evidence of a structured induction process which is informed and refined using feedback from participants. You have further developed this and are making more use of written practice guidance to ensure consistency of approach
- You continue to provide probationer and continuous professional development training in line with the needs of professional bodies and academic institutions where appropriate. Continuous Professional Development (CPD) and involvement in such as active research is encouraged and supported. This is also used to develop good practice and to evaluate the service being delivered. At this assessment, you evidenced staff involvement as a tutor on the MSc course at the University of Dundee, editorial roles in journals and publications in research journals
- You are working effectively with partners both within the Council and externally to evaluate and develop services in a more holistic way to provide a more seamless service and support for customers. Examples included the development of the Sensory Needs training course and e-



learning course with NHS and Social Work colleagues. Your partnership work continues with work around Autism and Nurture. The Assessor was pleased to experience the close working between your staff and those in Children's Services as part of this assessment

- You use various means to Quality Assure and to learn from each other's practice. You have supervision systems in place to support staff development and evaluate customer focus

Areas of Compliance Plus

- 1.1.1 You continue to evidence and demonstrate a very in-depth awareness and understanding of the characterises of current and potential customers. You could articulate the ways in which your work sits alongside National and Local Government strategies as well as meeting the evolving needs of stakeholders as identified through high levels of insight
- 1.1.2 You have a very strong understanding of the needs and preferences of your customers and continually develop and refine this in a systematic way. The assessor confirmed this during this assessment visit when discussing your work with staff, stakeholders and customers. The approaches, inputs and outcomes of each intervention are often different and tailored dependant on the customer involved. The Assessor was able to discuss this with a range of customers, partners and staff when discussing your customer journeys during this assessment. Your consultation process and customer involvement embed the need to understand the customers needs at the heart of your service
- 1.1.3 You continue to align your resources to support communities and individuals with the greatest identified needs whilst taking account of staffing challenges and the need to support customers, Local and Scottish Government objectives. You consider the specific needs of areas and customer groups in distributing your resources
- 1.2.1 You have a well-developed and comprehensive strategy for engaging and involving customers using a range of methods appropriate to the needs of identified customer groups. You do this in several ways through your improvement plan and your self-evaluation framework. Your method of operation is such that you operate in a very planned and evaluative way including customers and others where appropriate. You have regular customer focused meetings with Head Teachers to review their requirements and how this may be best supported. You are review

your operation to ensure your reviews best meet the needs of various customer types

- 1.2.2 Your consultation with customers is integral to continually improving your service and you advise customers of the results and action taken. Throughout this assessment you gave numerous examples of where you have worked with stakeholders and changed your service as a result. This occurs at individual case level as well as at a more general or 'product' and service level. Your staff work at an authority wide, cluster, school and individual customer level
- 1.3.1 You have continued to refine your already reliable and accurate methods to measure customer satisfaction on a regular basis. You are aware of methods that require additional thought to improve response rates and stratification in order that they are fully representative as stand-alone measures. You are continuing to develop, review and improve both qualitative and quantitative measures
- 1.3.5 You have made positive changes to services because of analysing the customer experience, including improved customer journeys. Although working within a consultative framework and within Professional boundaries, through analysis of customer journeys and customer involvement you have continued to fine-tune your interventions still further to better meet the needs of stakeholders generally. There were several examples given during the assessment of this in practice. One example explored at this assessment was the ability of partner agencies and parents/ carers to access your service more directly
- 2.1.1 You continue to have a strong corporate commitment to customers and have advocated for customers to improve the service delivered and the outcomes for that customer
- 2.1.2 In recognising the importance of having a positive impact on achievement and attainment, you work closely with partners and customers to develop service planning and delivery in ways that are more 'joined up' and meaningful to your customers. At this assessment, your work with Children's Services and the enthusiasm of all to work in partnership to meet customer needs was commendable. Your work with stakeholders to develop competence and capacity to support those involved
- 2.1.6 You have a strong self-assessment and continuous improvement ethos that has continued to support team and individual empowerment where the customer is at the heart of service delivery. This is a significant

part of your development plan. Staff have a high level of empowerment and encouragement to promote and participate in the development of the service. Your Self Evaluation Framework and processes have been externally validated by Education Scotland

- 2.2.1 You were able to demonstrate your commitment to training and development of staff and how this contributes to a customer focused service
- 2.2.2 In all survey results and in discussion with staff and stakeholders, the professionalism, politeness and friendliness of your staff is viewed as consistently high
- 2.2.3 You evaluate commitment to customer focus for both individual staff members and the team. You have developed a multi-layered approach to this through a tailored PRD and Supervision system. In addition, you have several opportunities for peers to support personal development
- 2.2.4 The Assessor noted instances of staff fine tuning the ways in which they operate in order to assess its impact. They evaluate impact and share what they are doing with their colleagues. You have a learning organisation where staff are encouraged to learn
- 3.2.3 You have improved the information you provide to customers. Your involvement of young people in reviewing a publication and the extent to which you were accepting of their views was commendable. In taking account of their views in the redesign you have demonstrated very good practice
- 3.4.1 You work with a range of partners to support customers and provide more effective services. Your work with the NHS Mental Health Team leading to joint consultations with customers is one example of this. In addition, current work around Autism, Speech and Language and with Children's Services are examples of this. Your work with Children's Services staff creates a more comprehensive and longitudinal insight that can be beneficial
- 3.4.3 Your work with the wider educational psychology community continues to support the professional enquiry and critical analysis aspects of the service. An example of this being your contribution to a national 'position paper' on Mental Health. Staff involvement in the Higher Education sector and their contributions to conferences and research publications also contributes and adds value more widely. This work

enables you to refine your work to best support customers in an effective way

- 4.2.1 An integral part of your consultation process is agreeing with customers at the outset what they can expect from the services you provide. In detailed discussions with staff and stakeholders, at this assessment visit, it was clear that your work is structured and keeps participants involved. You use your reports and action planning to ensure understanding
- 4.2.4 You have developed and learned from best practice identified within and outside our organisation, and you publish your examples externally where appropriate. Where probationers join your service, you benefit from their previous work experiences and learn from this through such as presentations. All staff are encouraged to take part in the annual Conference of Educational Psychologists and you often share your work and host workshops there. Education Scotland arranged a National Action Enquiry project that you were involved in and your work is now part of an Education Scotland National Improvement Hub

8. ACTION PLANNING & NEXT STEPS

The achievement of Customer Service Excellence is an ongoing activity and it is important that Aberdeenshire Educational Psychology Service continues to meet the elements of the criteria throughout the three years the hallmark is awarded for. Efforts must be made by Customer Service Excellence holders to continually improve their service.

We recommend that you develop an action plan based on the findings of this report. The action plan does not need to be a separate document and is likely to be more effective if the actions are embedded in your normal improvement and service developments plans.

We will undertake an annual review that will look at your continued compliance with the Customer Service Excellence. As part of the review we will also look at progress on any findings of the previous assessments.

In addition to reviewing progress outlined above, we will also review the services delivery, done so by following customer journeys.

For more information on the annual review please refer to our document “Building on your Customer Service Excellence success – Preparing for the annual review”.



Holders must inform SGS of any major changes in the service provision covered by the scope of the certificate. This includes reorganisation or mergers.

In addition, SGS must be informed should the certified service experience a significant increase in customer complaints or critical press coverage.

If you are in doubt at any stage, we strongly recommend contacting the Customer Service Team for advice on the significance of any service or organisational change, or issues surrounding customer complaints.

SGS will visit within the next 12 months for the annual review.

SGS recommends that Aberdeenshire Educational Psychology Service retains a copy of this report to aid continuous improvement, and as a reference document for future assessment reviews.