



# Customer Service Standards: our commitments to you

We are committed to offering you a high-quality service. Our Customer Service Standards describe how you can expect us to act.

**Commitment:** We will communicate effectively with you

## Standards

## Indicators

### Respect and Dignity

We will treat you with courtesy, respect and dignity.  
We will work with you without discrimination or prejudice.

### Keeping you informed

We will explain our investigation process to you.  
We will keep you informed of progress and tell you what needs to happen at each stage.  
We will always tell you who to contact if you have any questions.

### Timeliness

We will deal with your complaint in a timely manner, taking into account the complexity of the case.

### Clarity

We will be as accurate, plain and clear as we can in our communications.

### Accessibility

Our service will be easily available and accessible to you.  
We will work with you to meet your individual needs, including working with representatives to support you through our service.

### Understanding

We will listen to what you want from us and ensure we understand your complaint. If we cannot help you, we will direct you to an organisation who can.

# Customer Service Standards

## Commitment: We will work in an open and fair way

### Standards

### Indicators

#### Transparency

We will publicise information about the Ombudsman, who is in charge of decisions on complaints.  
We will give you information about how we handle complaints.

#### Fairness

We will consider all information provided to us before we reach a decision.  
Our decisions will be based on all of the relevant evidence.

#### Impartiality and independence

We will make decisions on cases on the independent evaluation provided to us by all relevant parties alone.

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## Commitment: We will carry out our duties competently and responsibly

### Standards

### Indicators

#### Expertise

We guarantee that the Ombudsman (or the most senior officeholder in charge of your case) has the relevant skills and knowledge to make the decision on your complaint.

#### Explaining our scope

We will clearly explain what we can look at, any restrictions that apply and what we can and cannot achieve.

#### Reaching sound outcomes

We will clearly explain our reasons for our decisions.  
We will ensure remedies are proportionate, appropriate and fair.  
We will make sure remedies are put in place, as far as we can.

#### Ensuring impact

We will use the outcomes of complaints and the learning from them to promote improvement and learning in the service and sector you complained about.

#### Handling information

We will ensure our record-keeping is accurate, that we hold data securely and share it appropriately.

#### Putting things right

We will acknowledge and apologise for any mistakes we make, put them right quickly and ensure lessons are learned to improve our service.

**You can get a full version of our Customer Service Standards Framework from our website or by contacting us.**

## What we expect from you

We are committed to dealing with you in line with our Customer Service Standards. We also expect you to treat our staff and our service with respect. Our 'Unacceptable Actions Policy' explains how we deal with unacceptable actions against our staff and our process. This can be found on our website at [www.spsso.org.uk/unacceptable-actions-policy](http://www.spsso.org.uk/unacceptable-actions-policy)

## Are you happy with the service you received from us?

If something goes wrong or you are not satisfied with our service, please tell us. You have the right to complain if you feel we are not meeting our Customer Service Standards. We take complaints about our service very seriously and have a special procedure for dealing with them. You can get more information about how to complain from our website or by contacting us. Please ask for a copy of our customer service complaints procedure and service complaints form.

[www.spsso.org.uk/customer-service-standards](http://www.spsso.org.uk/customer-service-standards)

If you are happy with the service you received from us, please let us know. And we are always interested to hear suggestions on how we can improve our service.

[www.spsso.org.uk/feedback](http://www.spsso.org.uk/feedback)

## Your information

We are committed to protecting your privacy. We use information given to us about you and your complaint for its intended purpose and in line with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the SPSO Act 2002. We may need to collect and share information with a number of sources to carry out our investigation and we may do this orally, in hard copy or by email. We may report on the outcome of the investigation. When we do so we do not name individuals. We may also use information we collect to compile statistics and undertake research and analysis. There may be public interest benefits in reusing information for these purposes. Information is completely anonymised.

Your views are valuable to us, and we may contact you again to invite you to take part in our surveys for research purposes.

To find out more about how we handle your information and your rights, see our website. If you have any concerns about what we do, please let us know straight away.

## How to contact the SPSO



### Freepost SPSO

(this is all you need to write on the envelope, and you don't need to use a stamp)



### SPSO

**Bridgeside House**  
**99 McDonald Road**  
**Edinburgh EH7 4NS**

Opening hours:

Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday 9am–5pm,  
Tuesday 10am–5pm



SPSO freephone **0800 377 7330**



Website **[www.spsso.org.uk](http://www.spsso.org.uk)**



Online contact form **[www.spsso.org.uk/contact-form](http://www.spsso.org.uk/contact-form)**

You can fill in our complaints form online at  
**[www.spsso.org.uk/complain/form](http://www.spsso.org.uk/complain/form)**



Fax **0800 377 7331**



Please contact us if you would like this leaflet in another language or format (such as large print, audio, BSL or Braille).