



Royal Association for Deaf people

Customer Service Standards

Version number	Date	Author	Purpose
001	July 2020	Joint CEO	Policy review
002	February 2023	Joint CEO	Policy review

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Full policy

Policy Statement

The Royal Association for Deaf people (RAD) is committed to providing exceptional levels of service to all its customers.

We will always try our best to provide an ethical, sustainable and best value service that is committed to excellence.

Our commitment to total customer satisfaction is the responsibility of every colleague. We demonstrate this commitment in our quality management system, ongoing management and trustee review of RAD's strategic direction and a commitment to continual improvement based on customer feedback and service evaluation.

This document explains our code of practice and customer service standards (what you can expect from us).

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Definition

We consider everyone we do business with to be our customers, whether internal or external, including (but not limited to):

- Colleagues; staff, managers, directors, trustees and volunteers
- External organisations
- Freelance Language Service Professionals (LSPs)
- Funders and partners
- Members of the public
- Service users/clients, and their families
- Potential staff (candidates for jobs)

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Standards in general

As part of our commitment to providing the best service possible, we will:

- Be welcoming, friendly and respectful
- Provide a confidential and professional service
- Use appropriately trained and qualified staff (e.g., interpreters registered with NRCPD/ RBSLI and trained/qualified advocates)
- Take time to understand the needs of others
- Ensure that all communications are accessible in both BSL and English

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- Ensure efficient administration of our services, providing customers with regular progress updates
- Provide and abide by service level agreements
- Confirm terms of business (e.g., cancellation/ notice periods)
- Ensure customers know what to expect
- Provide effective information and signposting
- Ensure information provided is accurate and up to date by using recognised, established and current resources
- Take time to find and check information is accurate
- Be responsive
- Be honest with our customers - if we do not know the answer; signpost effectively or take additional time to source reliable information
- Be transparent with our fees

For internal customers we will:

- Respect and support our colleagues; adopting a supportive culture
- Take time to understand colleagues' roles/responsibilities
- Communicate promptly with colleagues, through MS Teams, Outlook and Zoom
- Ensure offices are tidy and organised and that information displayed is up to date and accurate
- Be aware of and understand RAD's policies and procedures
- Understand the principle of the internal customer
- Provide prompt responses/updates to colleagues
- Adopt a no blame culture and take ownership of tasks, behaviours and responsibilities

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Methods of communicating and responding to customers

We will ensure that all of our communications are accessible. We will use plain English and provide BSL translations, where required.

Letters

When we receive a letter, we will:

- Reply within three working days, even if just to acknowledge receipt of the letter and to say that a fuller response will follow
- Respond more fully within five working days. If considerable evidence or information gathering is required in order to provide a detailed response, a maximum of ten working days might be acceptable in exceptional circumstances - this must be communicated to manage expectations

When we write a letter, we will:

- Use RAD's standard corporate stationery and templates¹
- Ensure that all letters are logged in the outgoing post log to ensure effective tracking
- File a copy of the letter on the relevant file/ e-file for future reference

¹ For any reference to RAD's standard corporate stationery and templates please read RAD's Brand Guidelines

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Emails

When we receive an email, we will:

- Reply within three working days. If it is not possible to reply with a full response, a brief holding email will be sent acknowledging receipt and confirming that a fuller response will follow
- Respond more fully within five working days. If considerable evidence or information gathering is required in order to provide a detailed ~~and accurate~~ response, a maximum of ten working days might be acceptable in exceptional circumstances – this should be communicated to manage expectations
- File the email in an appropriate folder for ease of future reference
- Ensure up to date and informative out of office responses are set up during absences

When we send an email, we will:

- Use RAD's standard corporate template
- Be precise and concise and consider necessary cc's carefully

Faxes

Whilst fax communications are becoming less commonplace, they are still received in some areas of our business. When we receive a fax, we will:

- Reply within three working days even if just to acknowledge receipt of the fax and to say that a fuller response will follow
- Respond more fully within five working days. If considerable evidence or information gathering is required in order to provide a detailed response, a maximum of ten working days might be acceptable in exceptional circumstances – this must be communicated to manage expectations

When we send a fax, we will:

- Use RAD's standard corporate stationery and templates
- File in an appropriate file for ease of future reference

Voice phone, text phone etc.

When we receive a call, we will:

- Answer with a RAD greeting, giving the individual's name
- Answer within four rings (in person or by answer phone)
- Be professional, polite and courteous
- Ensure an effective voicemail system is active through absences and non-office opening hours (landline)
- Ensure key, publicised phone numbers are diverted during absences
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When we receive telephone messages, we will:

- Return calls as soon as possible the same day or the next day if we are otherwise engaged in meetings etc.

SMS (text message)

When we receive an SMS (text message), we will:

- Reply as soon as possible the same day or the next working day (latest)

- Forward the SMS message to the relevant person upon receipt (the same day) if it is for the attention of a colleague (the sender will be informed of this action)

If we are not at work, we will:

- Ensure our emails are redirected and that our out of office messages give clear instructions about who to contact in our absence
- Leave a clear voicemail greeting that ensures callers know who to contact in our absence
- Contact key people, including those who use our services to let them know who to contact in our absence
- Handover our phone to a colleague for monitoring, where appropriate

Meetings

- When we have meetings arranged, we will follow Team Meeting Guidelines.

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How we will measure our performance against these standards

We will:

- Proactively seek feedback from our customers
- Give feedback to each other where appropriate or via line manager if appropriate
- Monitor and discuss feedback and our performance through supervision