

# Australian Service Excellence Standards

Your road map to an  
excellent organisation



South Australia, Department for Communities and Social Inclusion.

Australian Service Excellence Standards: A road map to an organisation

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Produced June 2011 Third Edition

First Edition 2001 "Service Excellence Framework"

Second Edition 2006 "Service Excellence Program"

Third Edition 2011 "Australian Service Excellence Standards"

We are proud of our **Australian Service Excellence Standards**.  
Our passion for excellence is demonstrated through our continuous improvement approach.

Our philosophy and goals come from striving to maintain the highest standards, looking after the smallest detail and going the extra mile. It means doing our very best. In everything. In every way.

And when it comes to **quality standards for community services** we know we make a **difference**.

Australian Service Excellence Standards recognises the unique characteristics of the Community Services Sector. The standards are well proven guides to assess and continuously improve your organisation. Use them as your "road map to excellence".



# Australian Service Excellence Standards

Your road map to an  
excellent organisation

Tailored for  
community  
services

A step by step  
approach to  
improving your  
organisation



You must be  
the change you  
wish to see in  
this world.

Mahatma Gandhi

# The Benefits

## **Improves your service**

Organisations who have used these standards tell us that the program is an excellent quality guide for self assessment and continuous improvement.

## **Get expert feedback**

Our external assessors have extensive experience in health and community services and provide value added, strong customer focus and a developmental approach to their assessments.

## **Improves staff morale**

Service Excellence participants say that attaining the standards has a positive effect on morale and motivation for staff.

## **Consumers gain confidence in the services you provide**

Consumers are confident that the organisation focuses on their needs and enables them to make informed choices.



## Approach to Australian Service Excellence Standards

The **Australian Service Excellence Standards (ASES)** assists organisations to improve and achieve confidence. It does this through:

- Fostering a **partnership approach** of working with organisations to progress through the framework, by providing training, support and mentoring.
- Developing **supportive relationships and collaborative initiatives** between Peak bodies, external assessors, State and Commonwealth governments. It does this with a capacity building and developmental approach.
- Providing a **consistent quality management framework** with internationally accredited standards.
- Bringing prestige and **acknowledgement for the contribution** that agencies make to the community and encourages organisations to pursue excellence by achieving accreditation in ASES.
- **Building a knowledge base** or repository of resources, policies and examples of responses to ASES standards as a resource to share across participating agencies to further build capacity and avoid duplication of effort.

# The Principles

*The principles adopted by the Australian Service Excellence Standards are widely accepted by many quality management frameworks. The principles form the basis of ASES philosophy, standards, assessment, developmental approach and examples of evidence.*

**Customer Focused** – Reflecting our respect and understanding of our consumer's rights to dignity, confidentiality, information, effective communication and choice. Consumer satisfaction with services is measured and complaints and concerns addressed. Appropriate, safe and efficient services are provided ensuring a continuum of care.

**Clear direction with accountability** – Inspirational leadership with a strong governance structure. Desired outcomes are identified in providing the best possible services and their achievement measured.

**Continuous learning and innovation** – Establishing quality systems and ensuring there are mechanisms that integrate continuous improvement can only add value for an organisation.

**Valuing people and diversity** – Tapping into people's commitment and capacity to learn at all levels of the organisation is essential.

To provide a supportive flexible environment allows for people to reach their potential, whether it is staff, customer or partners.

**Collaborative work practices** – Understanding that strengthening and developing our relationships with our staff, customers, partners and other key stakeholders, provides many advantages in loyalty and pride in the organisation, customer satisfaction and assists to build a culture of innovation and trust.

**Evidenced based decision making** – clear rationale, management of risk, analysis of the data and evaluation reports will assist to improve planning processes and services provided.

**Social, environmental and ethical responsibility** – Responding to the expectation of the community and adding value to that community.



## **How long has Australian Service Excellence Standards existed and where did it come from?**

The original Service Excellence standards were established in 2001 by the then South Australian Department of Human Services and now the South Australian Department for Communities and Social Inclusion. The intent of the standards is to assist organisations to provide better services for our customers.

### **The Australian Service Excellence Standards originally mapped against:**

- State Treasury Financial Management Framework
- Quality Improvement Council
- ACHS Equip Standards
- Commonwealth Home and Community Care Standards
- ISO 9001:2000 Standards
- Disability Services Standards
- Aged Care Accreditation Standards
- Mental Health Reform Standards



The Australian Service Excellence Team conducts ongoing mapping against various standards impacting on Community Services. If you wish to streamline this process and are considering conducting a joint review please contact the Australian Service Excellence Team for further details.

Now our **3rd edition** has been developed and built on all current national and international standards.

The Australian Service Excellence Standards are **well researched** from a wide range of best practice models, legislative and industry standards and various reports that impact on Community Services.

Extensive **consultation** has been undertaken from ongoing customer feedback, various consultative forums from the state and commonwealth governments and the non-government sector.

The Australian Service Excellence Standards are a **proven** guide to continuous improvement and evidence based standards for your organisation.

## What difference has the Australian Service Excellence Standards made to organisations?

Research and our regular evaluation demonstrate the process is highly beneficial to organisations and to their customers. You can view feedback and case studies from accredited organisations on our website at [www.dcsi.sa.gov.au/ASES](http://www.dcsi.sa.gov.au/ASES)

“A **good opportunity** to develop a framework for **good working practice** and to ensure that **continuous improvement** of policy and procedures is sustained”

“The Service Excellence Process was a **valuable tool** in assisting the Agency to continue on the path of continuous improvement by **identifying strengths and weaknesses**”



## **Why are Australian Service Excellence Standards so unique?**

Organisations across the nation are able to access the standards. The self assessment process is in bite-size easy to manage incremental steps. The external assessment is an invaluable learning experience where the friendly and supportive external assessors use a value added developmental approach in their assessment process.

## **What services can Australian Service Excellence Standards provide my organisation?**

We support organisations through:

- Information sessions
- Continuous Improvement networks
- Social media forum (eNetwork)
- Self assessment workbooks
- Example of evidence workbooks
- Online resources and additional information about our program are also on our website

**[www.dcsi.sa.gov.au/ASES](http://www.dcsi.sa.gov.au/ASES)**

“The circles represent a meeting place where people come together, with men and women sitting around it. The lines are the different paths people come from. It represents the diversity among all people and the individual steps they take to reach the same point. Lastly the dot pattern represents a sort of “butterfly” effect, where a group of people can make a difference to more than just the people immediately around them.”

***By artist Samantha Snow***

*Developed for Australian Service Excellence  
Standards Aboriginal Support Project*



## Who uses the Australian Service Excellence Standards?

A wide range of organisations in the Community Services sector use the standards, disability, mental health, neighbourhood house, low income support, employment agency, health and community centres. It maybe a small community centre or a large disability organisation providing multiple services in accommodation, day activities and counselling services. The standards can be applied to any size organisation.

## Using our resources

You will find all the workbooks and evidence guides on our website at **[www.dcsi.sa.gov.au/ASES](http://www.dcsi.sa.gov.au/ASES)**  
If you have multiple standards please contact the Service Excellence Team.

The **ASES structure** comprises of two levels – **Certificate level** and **Award level**.

Organisations need to achieve accreditation in the Certificate level before commencing with the Award level.



# Certificate level

Organisations operating confidently and efficiently, actively apply sound **management** principles, manage their risks and meet legislative, industry and government guidelines.

Organisations are confident that they have effective **communication**; their **people** are working in a safe and healthy environment; strong **partnerships** are fostered there is demonstrated consumer confidence in **service provision**.

With effective implementation of the standards **consumers outcomes** are clearly improved. Consumers play an integral role in the development and in the planning of services.

Independence is fostered by providing opportunities for feedback, linked to continual improvement of services and operating systems.



# Award level

Aspiring for organisational excellence requires the capacity to continually **improve** and effectively manage change. It creates a culture that fosters **leadership**, learning, innovation as well as responsiveness and adaptability.

A **results** driven organisation provides a better understanding of outcomes of the service and for the individual clients. Creating opportunities for more effective consumer engagement, outstanding customer service and it requires stronger evidence of measurably improved consumer outcomes. This ensures the organisation's sustainability.



**Where you see this star**  
you can be confident there  
are accredited standards for  
your Community Services.

# Contact details

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For support with ASES outside of South Australia,  
please visit our website: [www.dcsi.sa.gov.au/ASES](http://www.dcsi.sa.gov.au/ASES)



**Government of South Australia**  
Department for Communities  
and Social Inclusion