



Australian Government

# Australian Public Service Experience Design Principles Handbook

JUNE 2025

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# Acknowledgement of Country

We recognise the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the first peoples of this land and their ongoing connection to the lands, seas and waterways.

We pay respect to all Elders, past and present, of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Nations.

We recognise the enduring strength and resilience of the world's oldest continuous living cultures and value the rich diversity Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural heritages contribute.

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# Australian Public Service Experience Design Principles

The Australian Public Service (APS) Experience Design Principles (the principles) were developed by Services Australia, in response to the APS Reform agenda Pillar 2 - '*An APS that puts people and business at the centre of policy and services*'. They are endorsed by the Partnership Priorities Committee, a [Secretaries Board subcommittee](#).

Aiming to deliver better outcomes for the community and contribute to a fairer, more inclusive Australia, Services Australia partnered with the Australian Public Service Commission in engaging across whole of government to enhance the customer and staff experience.

Designed to build on the [APS Vision for User-Centred Service Excellence](#) - '*Reliable and accessible services, when and how you need them*', the Principles and handbook provide a practical guide to assist in the design and delivery of customer-centric policies, services and products.

The 7 principles:

- Set a **vision** for an ideal state of what customer experience looks like in government services.
- Provide **guidance** for embedding human-centred design approaches and elevating the experience in every aspect of your work.
- Are **evidence-based**, developed through extensive review and application of user research and **best practice** approaches both domestically and internationally.
- Have been **co-designed** and validated with over 250 stakeholders across government, including key advocacy groups and industry design experts.
- **Apply across all sectors of government**, encompassing their policies, channels, services and products. Whether you are creating policies or serving people online, over the phone, or in person, these principles shape every interaction people have with government.
- Are **outcomes-based** and therefore can be measured.



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# The APS Experience Design Principles

<b>Simple</b>	<p>People find information and communication <b>clear</b>, <b>easy to understand</b> and <b>actionable</b>.</p> <p>Services and support are <b>easy to access</b>.</p> <p>Tasks and processes are <b>intuitive</b> and <b>easy to complete</b>.</p>
<b>Inclusive</b>	<p>People have <b>equitable</b> access to all parts of our services in ways that meet their needs based on their circumstances.</p> <p>People understand their options and feel <b>empowered</b> to make decisions based on their needs.</p>
<b>Tailored</b>	<p>People are provided <b>relevant</b> information and/or support at the right time in a way they prefer.</p> <p>People have <b>choice</b> in their interactions based on their preferences.</p> <p>Needs are <b>pre-empted</b> and <b>proactively</b> met.</p>
<b>Connected</b>	<p>People have a <b>connected</b> and <b>consistent</b> experience across channels and government services.</p> <p>People have a <b>coordinated</b> and <b>clear</b> pathway to achieve their goals.</p>
<b>Transparent</b>	<p>People understand <b>how</b> and <b>why</b> decisions are reached.</p> <p>The whole experience is <b>predictable</b> and <b>clear</b>, so people know what to expect, why and how.</p> <p>Information about how data is used and collected is <b>clear</b>.</p>
<b>Safe</b>	<p>People need to feel and be safe. Steps are taken to <b>prevent</b> or <b>reduce the risk of harm</b> to people. This includes reducing risks to their <b>physical</b>, <b>psychological</b>, <b>cultural</b> and <b>cyber</b> safety.</p>
<b>Trustworthy</b>	<p>People are confident that they can <b>rely</b> on our services and that their needs will be responded to in a <b>timely manner</b>.</p> <p>People trust that processes and decisions are <b>lawful</b>, <b>fair</b> and <b>equitable</b>.</p>

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# The customer experience

## Who are our customers?

For this document, a customer is defined as any person interacting with a government product or service. Throughout this document, the terms 'people', 'customers' or 'users' may be used interchangeably, reflecting the diverse range of users served by the APS.

Everyone can be a customer of the APS at some point. It is important to understand the various user groups to better meet their needs. These groups may include:

- **Individuals** – such as taxpayers, tourists and voters.
- **Staff** – Australian public servants or people employed by the government.
- **Third parties** – such as service providers, peak bodies and support people.
- **Businesses** – including importers, exporters, employers and small businesses.
- **Professionals** – such as healthcare providers, tax practitioners and the pharmaceutical sector.
- **Communities** – including First Nations peoples, Pacific Nations workers, veterans and their families, and community leaders.



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# What is customer experience?

Customer experience is the sum of all interactions, both positive and negative, that someone has with an organisation. Every interaction, including how a person feels when engaging with a product or service, contributes to the experience.

Considering customer experience is vital for government, as it directly impacts engagement with services, satisfaction and public trust. By prioritising customer experience, we can ensure services are accessible, efficient, and responsive to the needs of people.

This focus helps to build stronger relationships between government and the community, fosters trust, and enhances the overall effectiveness of public services.

Ultimately, good customer experience is key to creating a more connected, sustainable and mature government service, leading to better outcomes for everyone.

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# Applying the principles

## The principles are part of an ecosystem.

At the forefront of the customer experience design methodology is a focus on human-centred design, genuine co-design, promoting dignity, trauma-informed practices, cultural strengths-based and strengths-based approaches.

The principles are designed to be applied alongside current best practice methodologies and frameworks including the [Digital Service Standard](#) and [Digital Experience Policy](#).

## The principles and outcomes set the bar for desired experiences.

Customer experience is one part of design.

There are many considerations that may impact customer experience, including legislation, technology and funding.

The principles balance desirability, with feasibility and viability for an elevated customer experience.

## Who are the principles for?

Everyone plays an important role in delivering good customer experiences.

Applying the principles in full will only happen with support and commitment across the APS.

The principles are designed to be used by government to enhance both customer and staff experiences. This includes:

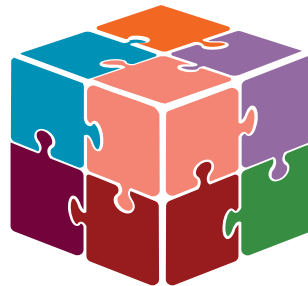
- Teams designing and delivering services and products.
- Assurance Officers conducting assessment and assurance activities.
- Policy Officers developing or transforming policies.
- Decision makers ensuring investment and decisions are made with customer and staff experiences in mind.

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# How to use the principles

This handbook provides practical tips to improve customer experience and can apply when designing new policies and services or improving on existing ones.

The principles are interconnected and non-hierarchical - think of them as puzzle pieces that fit together to provide the desired experience.



**Each principle is supported by design criteria and considerations:**

- 1. Start with the APS Experience Design Principles.**  
Familiarise yourself with the outcomes under each of the 7 principles.
- 2. Understand what each principle looks like,**  
and how it may impact different people.
- 3. Dive into the criteria and considerations.**  
These are the goals to achieve in order to meet the principles, along with specific actions to support them.
- 4. Read about the principles in action.**  
This section provides examples and detail about why each principle is important.



# Simple

- People find information and communication **clear, easy to understand** and **actionable**.
- Services and support are **easy to access**.
- Tasks and processes are **intuitive** and **easy to complete**.

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# Simple

When things are made easier, we reduce the time and effort it takes for people to get things done.

By making sure information and services are easy to understand and access, we reduce the chance of errors without causing unnecessary confusion or frustration. Simple services create better outcomes for everyone.

**Make it simple so people can get on with their lives.**



**Individual customer**

**Getting support is easy**

*I understand what you are telling me. I know where to get help and I can make updates quickly.*



**Third party provider**

**Finding help is straightforward**

*I can easily access the tools I need to do my job and assist customers. I can get accurate and timely support when needed.*



**Business**

**Things are streamlined and intuitive**

*Fulfilling my obligations is straightforward, effortless and does not put strain on my business.*



**Service delivery staff**

**It's easy for me to do my work**

*I have access to the systems, resources and tools I need to do my job with easy-to-follow instructions.*

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# How we make it Simple

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## DESIGN CRITERIA:

## THINGS TO CONSIDER:

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### 1 Easy to use

We ensure people can easily access and use services when they need to.

- Make sure the service is easy to access and use across all available channels.
- Make it easy for people to identify and authenticate themselves.
- Test the usability of the service with people who will access it.

### 2 Clear

We design content and communication that is easy to find, understand and action.

- Use plain English to communicate information and avoid jargon.
- Develop content in line with government guidelines and patterns.
- Display critical information clearly to draw attention.
- Ensure content is up to date and accurate.
- Test content with people to ensure ease of understanding.

### 3 Efficient

We ensure people can complete tasks with minimum effort or intervention.

- Make it easy for people to complete all tasks in one channel.
- Reduce the steps it takes for people to complete tasks with minimal help.
- Consider how you can use technology to streamline both front and back-end processes.



**Remember to** conduct usability testing of the service to make sure people get results as intended.



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# Designing for Simple

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## How the Australian Taxation Office (ATO) uses automation to simplify the **tax return process for individuals**.

The ATO has developed myTax, an online tool that enables people to self-prepare and lodge tax returns via myGov.

### myTax:

- helps people complete their tax return right the first time, resulting in **faster outcomes** and less corrective action.
- saves time upfront by **prepopulating** personal information from prior year returns.
- provides **clear instructions** and **communication** through information on screen, linked help files, video guides and some virtual chat functionality.
- increases **availability** and **access**, providing people with options for when and how they lodge their tax return through **different digital platforms** (desktop, tablet and mobile phone).
- **reduces effort** by automatically pre-filling data from employers, banks, government agencies and health funds.
- **increases accuracy** by providing integrated tools, calculators and functions which support tax calculations for correct returns.

These design features simplify the process of lodging a tax return by guiding people, removing re-work and creating efficiencies in both customer and staff effort.

### Benefits to replicate:

- ✓ **Ease of use and accessibility;** straightforward and intuitive navigation helps ensure that everyone can use the services effectively.
- ✓ **Reduced errors through connected systems;** minimise complexity reduces the likelihood of user errors.
- ✓ **Enhanced user satisfaction;** more likely to have a positive experience, increasing trust and improving engagement.
- ✓ **Cost savings;** allow staff to focus on more complex cases.



## Inclusive

People have **equitable** access to all parts of our services in ways that meet their needs based on their circumstances.

People understand their options and feel **empowered** to make decisions based on their needs.

# Inclusive

Inclusion happens when everyone feels valued and respected and people have equitable access to the support they need.

People have different lived experiences, abilities and needs. By recognising and appreciating diversity and designing with empathy, we can ensure policies and services meet the needs of our customers.

**Inclusive design improves outcomes for everyone.**



**Individual  
customer**

**I feel valued,  
respected and  
empowered**

*My culture, individuality, history and circumstances are respected. I am treated with dignity and my personal needs are considered when receiving support.*



**Third party  
provider**

**I have the access I  
need to holistically  
support customers**

*My customers and I have the right support. Barriers are reduced and I feel empowered to help people make informed decisions based on their needs.*



**Business**

**No matter my  
circumstances I  
have everything I  
need**

*I can run my business efficiently and am not disadvantaged by my circumstances, for example, business size, location, staff, lack of access to or ability to use different products and services.*



**Service delivery  
staff**

**I am valued for my  
strengths,  
differences and  
contributions**

*I feel supported and have the same opportunities as others. My workplace considers my individuality and circumstances when making decisions about my job.*

# How we make it **Inclusive**

## DESIGN CRITERIA:

## THINGS TO CONSIDER:

### 1 **Accessibility**

We design services that are accessible to people with diverse needs and circumstances.

- Provide people the option to access the service in the channel that suits them.
- Apply accessibility requirements across all channels.
- Make content available and accessible in different languages and mediums.
- Consider the broader support network when designing a service, for example, people helping others or using a service differently.

### 2 **Diversity**

We listen, empathise and adapt to the needs of the diverse range of people that interact with us.

- Identify all possible users of the service and conduct research to understand their needs.
- Consider using specialised design and engagement methods with diverse cohorts.
- Use strengths-based approaches in the design of your service.
- Make sure you use inclusive language and communication methods.

### 3 **Equity**

We design to ensure everyone has the same opportunity for success.

- Provide clear information to empower people to make informed decisions.
- Make sure you acknowledge and address potential biases, stigma or incidental exclusion in the design of your service or policy.
- Make sure the policy or service is addressing the needs of diverse cohorts.



#### **Remember to:**

- think about inclusive design at every stage, from the design of a policy to the delivery of a service.
- include the perspective of a diverse range of people to ensure you are being truly inclusive.

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# Designing for Inclusive

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People from all walks of life rely on and use government services and come with their own stories, strengths and challenges.

Diverse backgrounds, experiences, identities, abilities and beliefs are equally valuable. By respecting differences and considering diversity in decision making, inclusive services that people can access when and how they need them are created. Government services must work for everyone who needs to use them.

**Design with strengths-based and cultural strengths-based approaches and empathy to create confidence and empower people to access help with dignity.**

Anyone can experience vulnerability at any moment in their lives. For some it can be temporary, due to a disaster or losing a job. For others it could be lifelong or ongoing.

When engaging with people experiencing vulnerability, it is important we provide a safe, respectful and judgement-free environment that is trauma-informed and culturally sensitive.

**Consider inclusion every time.**

**Think about, for example:**

- ✓ The single parent living in a remote community with limited access to services and the internet.
- ✓ The refugee family who has faced war and trauma and who are adjusting to an entirely new life in Australia.
- ✓ The recently widowed elderly person who relied on their spouse for life admin and social connection.
- ✓ The parents caring for their child with lifelong health issues, navigating complex healthcare systems.

These are not just hypothetical scenarios; they represent real people who depend on us.



## Tailored

People are provided **relevant** information and support at the right time in a way they prefer.

People have **choice** in their interactions based on their preferences.

Needs are **pre-empted** and **proactively** met.

# Tailored

A tailored experience is about connecting people to what they need, when they need it. We empower people to personalise their interactions based on their needs and preferences. We aim to anticipate people's needs before they reach out to us, providing them with relevant information and support.

By tailoring our services and approaches we can cater to everyone - from the most tech-savvy and light-touch users to those needing a more supported experience. This principle shifts government service delivery to become more proactive.

**One size does not fit all.**



**Individual customer**

**I'm given timely and relevant support when and how I need it**

*I get the right information, reminders and personalised support based on my circumstances.*



**Third party provider**

**I have what I need to help others**

*I'm provided with personalised information and support that is relevant to my role.*

*I partner with government to provide people with tailored support.*



**Business**

**I can get on with running my business**

*I am informed of services available for my business. Services adapt to changing business needs.*



**Service delivery staff**

**My needs are met so I can support customers**

*My preferences are considered at work. I am empowered to effectively assist customers and to link them to relevant support that meets their needs.*

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# How we make it **Tailored**

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## DESIGN CRITERIA:

## THINGS TO CONSIDER:

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### **1 Personalised**

We provide people options to personalise their interactions with us based on their preferences.

- Use what is already known about a person to tailor content and information for them.
- Give people flexibility and control in how and when they interact with government.
- Allow people to opt-in, opt-out or edit their preferences and customisation options such as notifications and reminders.
- Make sure digital solutions are available on a range of devices and operating systems.

### **2 Proactive**

We proactively offer relevant information and support.

- Set up processes to anticipate upcoming events and send timely notifications.
- Use what we know about a person to proactively find relevant services based on anticipated events.
- Use proactive messaging to provide targeted information to people based on current events.
- Enable our staff to help others, by keeping training and information up to date and relevant.



**Remember to** respect people's choice and provide them with control.



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# Designing for Tailored

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**Community Partnerships Programme** uses a community-based approach to tailor services.

The Services Australia Community Partnerships Programme collaborates with community organisations to provide connected and wrap-around support.

Community Partnership Specialist Officers are located within community organisations and work with people to understand their situation and to provide **intensive support**.

They:

- give personalised assistance to people who have the most trouble accessing government payments and services, with a focus on people experiencing homelessness.
- work in partnership with community organisation staff to strengthen relationships between community and government services.
- connect people to payments, services and support based on their individual circumstances.

Community Partnership Specialist Officers give people **choice** and **control** in how and when they interact with government during times of uncertainty. This empowers staff and customers by providing known and reliable places and people to talk about their needs and circumstances.

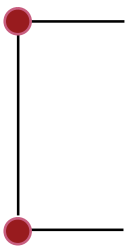
This approach increases inclusion, ensuring people who experience multiple barriers or might otherwise miss out on accessing help, receive the support they need from a trusted and knowledgeable person.

## **Benefits to replicate:**

- ✓ **Accessible and trustworthy;** meet user needs and ensures accessibility, leading to greater participation and engagement.
- ✓ **Effective resourcing;** allow staff to holistically and proactively support people with complex circumstances, helping government allocate resources more effectively to ensure support is available for those who need it.
- ✓ **Efficiency;** enable specialist staff to focus on more complex cases, leaving service centres for more straightforward support.
- ✓ **Continuous improvement;** help ensure services remain relevant and effective over time.



# Connected



People have a **connected** and **consistent** experience across channels and government services.

People have a **coordinated** and **clear** pathway to achieve their goals.

# Connected

We can create a connected experience by giving holistic advice and support, sharing data and integrating different services, increasing efficiency and reducing effort and red tape, so customers only need to tell their story once.

Services that work effortlessly across channels and governments lead to increased satisfaction.

**Seamless and linked at every step.**



**Individual customer**

**I don't have to retell my story**

*I am provided with holistic support. My experience with government is consistent and I can complete my tasks in one place.*



**Third party provider**

**We partner to deliver better outcomes for our customers**

*Government systems integrate with the systems I use, sharing relevant information. There is a strong culture of collaboration that allows us to work together efficiently.*



**Business**

**My interactions with government are seamless**

*I do not need to use multiple channels or systems to meet my obligations. Processes are consistent across government, making them familiar and easy to use.*



**Service delivery staff**

**The systems I use work together, reducing duplication**

*I use connected systems and processes to swiftly and effectively do my job. I have the tools needed to provide holistic support to customers.*

# How we make it **Connected**

## DESIGN CRITERIA:

## THINGS TO CONSIDER:

### 1 **Consistent**

We ensure consistency in the way we design and deliver services across government.

- Use standardised approaches and patterns to design content and interfaces.
- Consider re-using whole of government platforms and capabilities.
- Include information about the service on relevant platforms.
- Ensure the experience is consistent across all channels.

### 2 **Interoperable**

We take a holistic approach and connect government services and channels to make it easier for people to access the support they need.

- Map out the whole ecosystem to connect related services and remove duplication.
- Where possible, use open Application Programming Interfaces to support integration with other systems.
- With consent, use data you already hold to pre-populate workflows and forms.
- Design processes that prompt people about next steps.
- Use agreed standards and consistent data structures to enable data sharing.

### 3 **Partnerships**

We partner with relevant stakeholders to co-design services.

- Genuinely co-design policy and services with people including staff, non-government organisations and user groups.
- Provide information on and referrals to specialist or third-party organisations where appropriate.
- Train staff to identify services and referrals based on customer needs.



#### **Remember to:**

- enable for a seamless transition if people move between channels.
- respond to people's feedback. True partnership is a two-way street.

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# Designing for **Connected**

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How the **City of San Francisco** uses connected design to improve public services for its residents.

The city created a team of specialist staff to work out how to digitally connect different government departments. The aim was to link the city's nearly 1,000 services online for a connected, consistent and reliable service.

**Working with the community these staff identified opportunities to:**

- Share databases, automate systems and process changes, and cross-train staff across multiple functions.
- Incorporate a wide range of lived experiences to shape services during redesign.

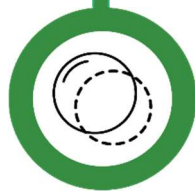
**These opportunities highlight the need to use:**

- Human-centred design, including community workshops and feedback mechanisms to capture and implement improvements.
- Digital services to increase accessibility to deliver faster and more connected services, including one central location for residents to report problems and request government services online like paying bills, renewing permits, and applying for jobs.

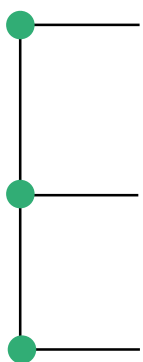
The City of San Francisco has created a more connected government through automation, data sharing, collaboration and shared experiences going towards better serving their residents.

**Benefits to replicate:**

- ✓ **Integrated and user-friendly;** services and platforms ease navigation.
- ✓ **Enhanced data sharing;** facilitates a holistic understanding of circumstances, leading to more informed decision-making.
- ✓ **Efficiency and cost savings;** utilising comprehensive customer data to improve outcomes, increase usability and reduce duplication.



# Transparent



People understand **how** and **why** decisions are reached.

The whole experience is **predictable** and **clear**, so people know what to expect, why and how.

Information about how data is used and collected is **clear**.

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# Transparent

Transparency in government is crucial. It creates certainty, reduces confusion and ambiguity, and builds trust. Tell people how and why information and data has been collected, used and shared. Ensure people are clear on how why decisions have been made and help them make sense of how it all works.

**Be honest and open.**



**Individual customer**

**You help me see the bigger picture**

*I know what I need to do, when and why, and what to expect from you. I am kept updated of any changes that may impact me.*



**Third party provider**

**I understand what is required of me and my customers**

*I have visibility of when and how decisions are reached so that customers receive the best outcome.*



**Business**

**I understand what I need to do to meet my obligations**

*I understand what is required of me and am kept informed of things that impact my business. I receive clear guidance and know how to ask questions and raise concerns.*



**Service delivery staff**

**I understand, and can explain decisions and next steps**

*I feel confident to make decisions and I'm empowered in my communication with customers.*  
*I'm consulted on issues that affect me and my job.*

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# How we make it **Transparent**

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## DESIGN CRITERIA:

## THINGS TO CONSIDER:

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### 1 **Use of data**

We clearly communicate how data is collected and used. We provide people with visibility and control over their data.

- Make it clear to people what data is collected, why and how it will be used and or shared.
- Only collect data that is required, be clear on how it is stored and protected.
- Give people control over their data and the ability to opt-in and out of collection and use.
- Design escalation channels for enquiries and disagreements about data use.

### 2 **Decision making**

We explain how and why outcomes and decisions are reached, and ensure people understand their options and next steps.

- Develop processes to communicate outcomes and have review options.
- Provide visibility of the end-to-end process, and when automation is used.
- Communicate and consult with staff ahead of changes and decisions taking effect.
- Clearly communicate next steps.

### 3 **Clear expectations**

We are clear about reciprocal obligations and expectations. We give people accurate, up to date information about processes and timeframes.

- Remove ambiguity. Help people understand how everything relates to them, from eligibility requirements to obligations.
- Make it clear at the start of a process the average time it will take, and the information or evidence needed to complete tasks.
- Communicate well, accurately and often. For example, timeframes and regular status updates.
- Clearly explain the value of the service and what people should expect from us.



#### **Remember to:**

- set clear expectations.
- keep people updated when things change.



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# Designing for Transparent

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## How **Australia Post** used customer feedback and innovation to increase transparency

The Australia Post app was developed upon customer feedback based about missed notifications and deliveries. The app makes it straightforward for people to manage their needs in one convenient, quick and secure place by:

- **Providing clear expectations for delivery through timely automated tracking notifications.** The app gives real-time information about the delivery journey, allowing people to see every step and receive immediate updates if there are changes. This enables people to plan their lives accordingly or redirect the delivery if needed.
- **Displaying privacy and security information in an obvious way.** Providing clear navigation to the privacy statement and scam alerts.
- **Providing options to complete multiple tasks within the one place,** connecting to other services like paying bills, calculating postage, or authorising others to act on their behalf.

Australia Post app has high customer satisfaction due to these features.

### Benefits to replicate:

- ✓ **Building trust;** clear processes and decisions build customer confidence.
- ✓ **Accountability;** when actions and decisions are known, it reduces the risk of error or misconduct.
- ✓ **Informed decision making;** letting people know what to expect and how to access support.
- ✓ **Feedback and improvement;** adapting to changing ecosystems through iteration.



## Safe

People need to feel safe and be safe. Steps are taken to **prevent** or **reduce the risk of harm** to people.

This includes reducing risks to their **physical**, **psychological**, **cultural** and **cyber** safety.

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# Safe

We're committed to creating an environment where people feel protected, respected and secure. We instil confidence that people's information is secure.

**Safety is a priority.**



**Individual customer**

**I feel safe and comfortable to tell you my story**

*I know that I can trust you with my information. I can talk to you about my circumstances without feeling judged or stigmatised.*



**Third party provider**

**I am supported to raise issues**

*We collaborate to identify and mitigate risks. The tools I use enable proper management of my customers' and my own data.*



**Business**

**I know my data is safe**

*I know that secure processes and systems are used to protect my business data. We both adhere to cybersecurity standards and use tools to minimise threats.*



**Service delivery staff**

**I feel safe in my workplace, physically and psychologically**

*I am equipped to handle workplace challenges, having the tools and support for my safety.*

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# How we make it Safe

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## DESIGN CRITERIA:

## THINGS TO CONSIDER:

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### 1 Information privacy

We take all reasonable steps to protect people's personal information and ensure it remains confidential.

- Have in place systems to protect and safeguard personal information and data.
- Make sure privacy policies, terms and conditions and guidelines are accessible, up to date, easy to understand and use safe language.
- Identify and address potential concerns or risks of data breaches.
- Educate customers and staff of potential security risks and how to avoid them.

### 2 Do no harm

We are committed to providing people an environment in which they feel safe. We prevent or reduce threats to their safety.

- Research and understand unintended risks of implementing a policy, service or change.
- Understand and use trauma-informed approaches.
- Design physical and digital spaces in a way that promotes dignity and reduces stigma.
- Consider pro-active measures to ensure the safety of our customers and staff.
- Have in place avenues for people to raise and escalate safety concerns.
- Use restorative language that affirms dignity.
- Provide a range of tools for staff to support themselves and others safely.



**Remember to** think about safety and security from all angles; digital, physical, identity, cultural and psychological.

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# Designing for Safe

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**Safety by design focuses on eliminating risks and empowering customers.**

**Safety in all spaces.**

## **Physical**

Remove or reduce the chance of physical harm, ensure accessibility, and provide safe environments for people. Design and architectural choices should reduce risks and prioritise accessibility.

## **Cultural**

Allow culturally diverse people the space and opportunity to have equitable access. Empower people to engage with services in ways that respect their background and unique needs.

## **Psychological**

Understand people's emotional, social and mental well-being may impact their capacity to engage with services. Help identify, manage and prevent burnout. Design experiences that are empowering, respectful and promote dignity.

## **Cyber**

Safeguarding user data is vital. Protect information from breaches and misuse. Ensure ethical collection and use of personal information. Make sure people know how their data is used and give them control over it.

## **Think about, for example:**

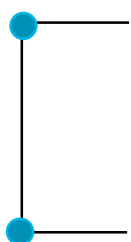
Stigma associated with accessing government services can impact individuals. Reduce stigma and promote customer dignity by starting with:

- ✓ A customer focus – keeping the customer's needs and outcomes as a priority of policy, service design and service delivery.
- ✓ Empathy – promoting compassion and wellbeing of people.
- ✓ Partnership – working with and for customers to achieve positive outcomes in a way that minimises power differentials between government and customers.

This proactive approach focuses on embedding safety into the culture of government services. It considers the impact that changes to services and processes can have on different people.



# Trustworthy



People are confident that they can **rely** on our services and that their needs will be responded to in a **timely manner**.

People trust that processes and decisions are **lawful, fair** and **equitable**.

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# Trustworthy

We strive to be reliable and responsive to people's needs, giving them confidence in our services. We act with integrity and are committed to making processes and decisions lawful, fair and equitable for everyone. Applying all principles plays a big role in building public trust.

**Trust is hard to gain, but easy to lose.**



**Individual customer**

**I trust that you are there when I need help**

*I can rely on government and know that I will get the support I need in a timely manner. Staff are knowledgeable, well-trained, and empathetic.*



**Third party provider**

**I have visibility of when and how a decision is reached**

*I understand what's required from me and my customers and know what to expect from you. My input and feedback is acknowledged and considered.*



**Business**

**We are both accountable to do the right thing**

*I receive reliable information, clear expectations, fair assessments, and efficient solutions for my business needs.*



**Service delivery staff**

**I have confidence in my workplace and in the systems I use**

*I am confident that the systems and tools I use are accurate. I know using them helps me deliver fair and respectful outcomes.*

# How we make it Trustworthy

## DESIGN CRITERIA:

## THINGS TO CONSIDER:

### 1 Reliable

We provide timely and accurate support to people when they need it.

- Test the service to make sure it does what it is intended to do and understand the potential impacts it may have.
- Make sure the information and timeframes given to people are accurate. Inform of any delays or changes.
- Build feedback channels and processes to gather, address and respond to feedback. Close the feedback loops.

### 2 Capable staff

We ensure our staff have the necessary skills and tools to effectively deliver quality services.

- Co-design the service with the staff that will be delivering it. They can provide insight not only on this service, but also on related interactions.
- Develop resources and training to upskill staff ahead of the service going live.
- Don't forget about the staff experience. Make sure you develop reliable behind-the-scenes processes and tools to support them to deliver effectively.

### 3 Accountable

We deliver services promised, while adhering to commonly accepted ethical standards and values.

- Comply with relevant legislation and guidelines. Conduct necessary assessments.
- Co-design activities with community partners can assist to the understand broader community impacts.
- Sometimes people need to be given unexpected news. Think about how to support them through this.
- Develop mechanisms to measure the service and implement changes based on what is learned.



#### Remember to:

- be responsible and ethical.
- close feedback loops with customers, staff and partners.



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# Designing for Trustworthy

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## Trust is the foundation of relationships.

Designing with honesty and integrity in mind promotes trust, reduces uncertainty and facilitates cooperation.

### Singapore Government's response to COVID-19

During crises, such as natural disasters or pandemics, trust in government is vital. It ensures people follow guidelines, remain safe and cooperate with emergency measures, which can save lives and mitigate damage.

Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Singapore government's response has been generally well-regarded by its citizens. They focused on delivering clear and consistent information. Daily press conferences explained the evolving situation and government decisions.

By using non-traditional communication services like WhatsApp, they were able to reach wider audiences, talk through misinformation and explain reasons behind public health policies. This helped people trust in the government's commitment to helping them.

We can see in this example the Singapore government demonstrating reliability, clear communication and accountability.

### Benefits to replicate:

- ✓ **Increased engagement;** wider reach leads to higher participation in programs and services.
- ✓ **Improved satisfaction;** overall satisfaction increases when people feel respected and confident, and their needs are being met fairly and transparently.
- ✓ **Resilience in crisis;** people are more likely to trust information, follow guidelines and engage if they trust government.

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# Conclusion

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## Thank you

The APS Experience Design Principles were developed in partnership with hundreds of people across government, industry and advocacy groups. Their dedication, expertise and support has been critical to the development of the principles and our commitment to designing people-centric policies and services. A huge thank you to all who contributed.

## Contacts

To improve this resource, please share ideas, feedback, comments and requests to [CXSTANDARD@servicesaustralia.gov.au](mailto:CXSTANDARD@servicesaustralia.gov.au).

## Disclaimer

Generative AI tools were used to assist with the development of the narrative within this document. It was **not** used in the development of principles, outcomes, criteria, considerations or case studies.