

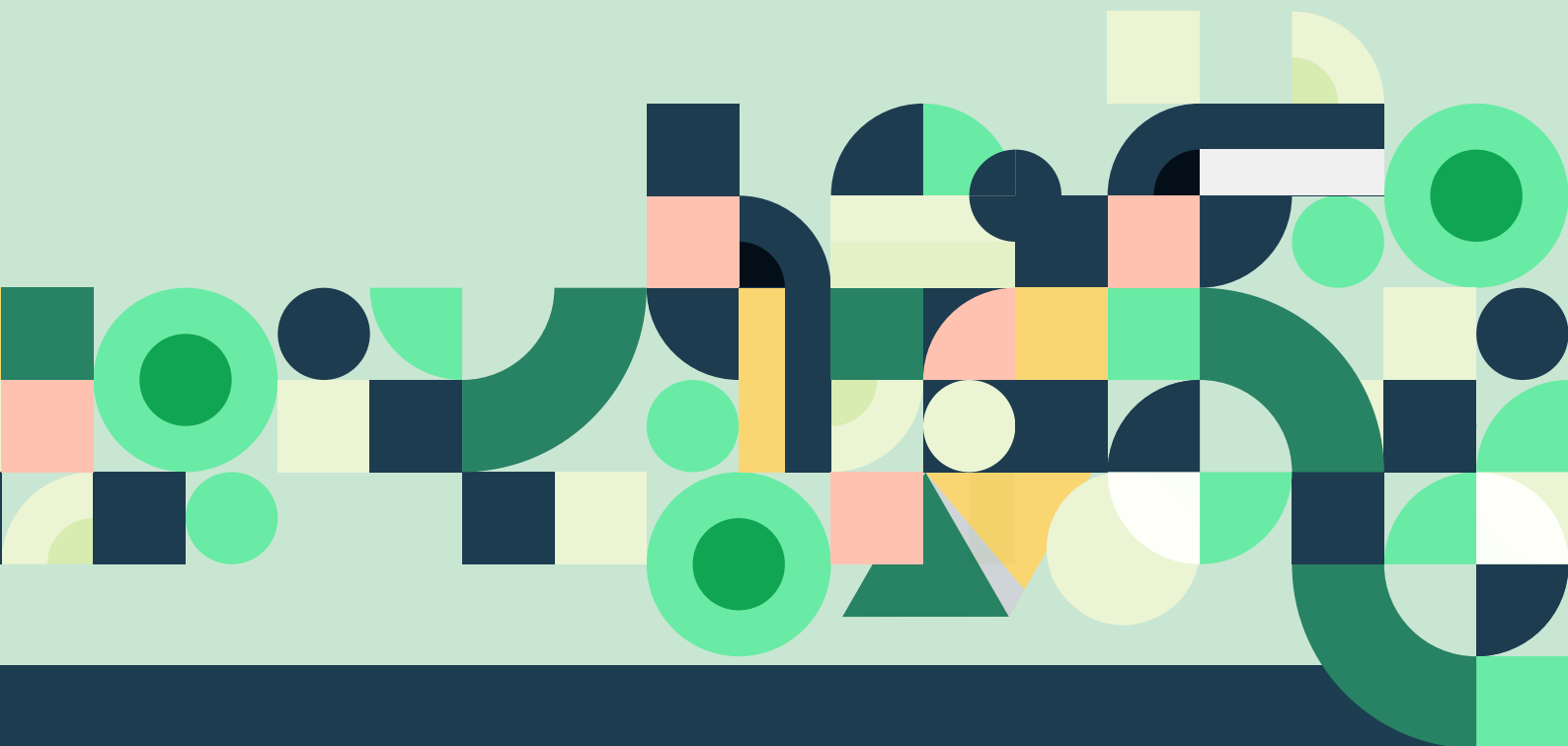


Australian Government
Digital Transformation Agency

dta¹

Digital Experience Policy Checklist for existing services

Audit and uplift existing public facing digital services
to meet Digital Experience Policy requirements.



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Purpose

These checklists are for auditing and uplifting your existing public facing digital services for compliance with the Digital Experience Policy (the policy).

We recommend that agencies complete the checklists for each individual existing service, rather than at an agency level. The checklists will help understand if each service is in scope of the policy requirements.

This document contains 4 sections:

- **Scope and applicability** – determine if the policy applies to the digital service.
- **Digital Service Standard criterion checklist** – check if an in-scope service complies with the Digital Service Standard.
- **Digital Inclusion Standard criterion checklist** – check if an in-scope service complies with the Digital Inclusion Standard.
- **Uplift and exemption checklist** – determine the activities agencies need to complete after finalising the checklist and if the service needs an exemption.

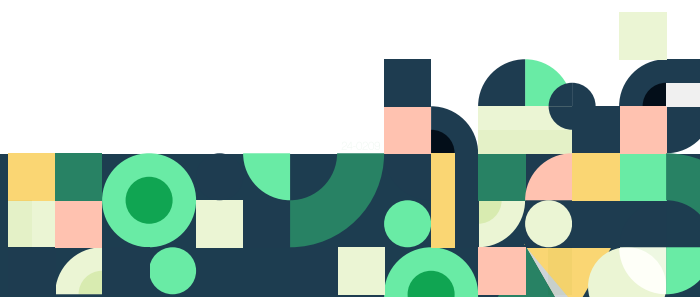
Please note:

- The language in this checklist is tailored to existing public facing digital services. It may differ from content and compliance criteria for other services.
- To meet the criteria requirements, tick each of the checklist items which have been adapted for existing services.
- The checklist includes best practice approaches for meeting the requirements of the Digital Experience Policy. This is guidance only. Agencies may meet the requirements through other activities.
- More detailed guidance on how to meet each of the criteria is available on [Digital Service Standard | digital.gov.au](#) and [Digital Inclusion Standard | digital.gov.au](#).

Existing public-facing services

Existing public-facing services in scope of the policy must comply with the Digital Service Standard and the Digital Inclusion Standard. The Digital Service Standard and Digital Inclusion Standard will come into effect for existing public facing services as of the following dates:

- Digital Service Standard in effect 1 July 2025
- Digital Inclusion Standard in effect 1 January 2026.



Scope and applicability

Use this checklist to determine if the policy applies to a service.

1. Is the service an existing public-facing digital service

Does the service meet **all 3** requirements?

1. It's an **existing service**.
2. It's a **public-facing service**.
3. The service is **digital**.

- If yes, **continue to step 2**.
- If no, no further action is required in this checklist. If it's a new or a replacement digital service, visit digital.gov.au/policy/digital-experience for further information.

2. Is the service informational or transactional

Determine if **any of the following describe your service**:

- **The service is informational and/or transactional service**, it provides information to users, such as reports, fact sheets or videos through government agency websites, smart answers, virtual assistants, e-learning, publications, online libraries, databases and data warehouses*.
- **The service is a transactional service**, it leads to a change in government-held records, typically involving an exchange of information, money, licences or goods such as logging into a portal or platform, submitting a claim, registering a business, updating contact details, lodging a tax return, subscribing to newsletters, grant applications and public consultation submissions*.

- **If yes**, continue to step 3
- **If no**, no further action is required in this checklist.

**These descriptions are a guide only. A service may still be defined as transactional and/or informational if it does not match the examples set out above.*

3. Page visits or transactions per annum

Review analytics to determine if the service has more than **50,000** visits and/or transactions per annum.

- **If yes**, complete all checklists in this document to determine if the service complies.
- **If no**, the policy still applies to all existing services, however reporting on compliance is only for services with more than 50,000 visits and/or transactions per annum.

The exclusion from reporting for services with fewer than 50,000 page visits and/or transactions focuses resources and compliance efforts on high-impact services. This makes sure the most widely used digital services adhere to the policy standards and smaller-scale services can operate with greater flexibility.



Digital Service Standard criterion checklist

The Digital Service Standard is made up of 10 criteria to help agencies design and deliver services that are user-friendly, inclusive, adaptable and measurable. To successfully apply the standard, agencies must meet all the criteria.

The requirements for each criterion are listed below, along with a brief description and best practice guidance to meet the requirements.

Criterion 1 – Have clear intent

Criterion requirements

To successfully meet this criterion, agencies need to:

- **develop a business case for change**
- **survey the policy and service landscape**
- **understand the service's lifecycle**
- **adopt an agile methodology.**

For existing services, this means that agencies should have clearly identified the problem the service is addressing and the whole of government priorities it is contributing towards.

Checklist items

The current problem statement for the service is clear and addressed.

Best practice approaches:

- Consider the problems the service needs to solve and why they are important. Clearly state the risks of action and inaction, who might be impacted by the service, potential barriers to success and any knowledge gaps.

Government priorities the service is contributing towards have been identified.

Best practice approaches:

- Assess how the problems identified play out in the broader policy and government service ecosystems. Use resources such as the [Australian Government Architecture](#) and [Delivering Great Policy Toolkit](#) to understand the landscape and the intentions of different policies.
- Have a clear understanding of how the service will contribute to government priorities, including the achievement of the [Data and Digital Government Strategy](#) 2030 vision.

Optional: Describe how the digital service complies with this criterion, referencing best practice approaches deployed where possible.



Criterion 2 – Know your user

Criterion requirements

To successfully meet this criterion, agencies will need to:

- **understand the service's users**
- **conduct user research**
- **test and validate designs.**

For existing services, this means agencies should know who the service users are, have a deep understanding of user experiences with the service and how to improve those experiences.

Checklist items

The current users of the service and their needs are understood.

Best practice approaches:

- Regularly conduct user research to understand who your current users are and why they are accessing your service.
- Make sure you also understand what devices, platforms, or technologies they use to access the service.

Users' experiences accessing your service and how to improve those experiences are understood.

Best practice approaches:

- Analyse any identified pain points or negative feedback to understand the root cause, make incremental changes based on feedback and test these changes with users to assess their effectiveness.
- Prioritise action on pain points that have the most significant impact on user experience and ensure resources are allocated effectively.

Methods and tools to use

- interviews, surveys, observation or analytics to gather data on your users' needs, goals, expectations, and behaviours
- existing research from other agencies or sources that are relevant to your service
- past research reports, journey maps or project summaries from historical internal documentation, internal databases, project archives or management systems
- relevant studies or research papers, from academic and industry journals
- professional networks and opportunities to engage with experts and practitioners across the APS to share research findings, reports and insights.

Optional: Describe how the digital service complies with this criterion, referencing best practice approaches deployed where possible.



Criterion 3 – Leave no one behind

Criterion requirements

To successfully meet this criterion, agencies will need to:

- **understand the diversity of your users**
- **comply with legislation and standards, including the:**
 - *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*
 - latest version of the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG)
 - Australian Government Style Manual
- **implement a feedback mechanism.**

For existing services, this means that agencies must ensure they understand the diversity of the services' users, actively manage compliance with relevant legislation and standards as part of service development and ongoing operations, and have a feedback mechanism in place.

Checklist items

The different cohorts that may be impacted by or use the service is understood.

Best practice approaches:

- Expand on the learnings from Criterion 2 of the Digital Service Standard, by conducting targeted and ethical user research with the diverse users of the service. Make sure the service captures and responds to unique circumstances and needs.
- Collect and analyse information about different users to understand the different barriers they might experience when using the service. Eliminate these barriers through design and validate the effectiveness of solutions with real-world users.
- Some types of users are under-represented in research, may be difficult to reach or require different or tailored engagement approaches. If this is the case, collaborate with other agencies, community groups or the private and not-for-profit sector to reach them.

The service is compliant with relevant legislation and standards, including the:

- *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*
- latest version of the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG)
- Australian Government Style Manual

A feedback mechanism is in place.

Best practice approaches:

- Provide a user feedback mechanism that supports issue reporting and service improvement suggestions, with timely, transparent responses. Act promptly on feedback and provide timely, transparent responses describing how it's being actioned. Promote the mechanism through an ongoing, multichannel awareness campaign.

Optional: Describe how the digital service complies with this criterion, referencing best practice approaches deployed where possible.



Criterion 4 – Connect services

Criterion requirements

To successfully meet this criterion, agencies will need to:

- **design for interoperability**
- **join up services.**

For existing services, this means that agencies should ensure that the service has the capability to support interoperability with other services where possible.

Checklist items

Where possible, the service integrates with other relevant government systems or platforms (If not possible, also tick this box)

Best practice approaches:

- Review any obligations against privacy policies and the Privacy Act 1988. If external data is used, make the service interoperable and leverage governments' open datasets. Support safe, ethical data-sharing practices by using the government's [DATA Scheme](#).
- Assess the data the agency already collects and whether it can be reused for the service. Where it can be reused, eliminate unnecessary data entry requests and fulfil a 'tell us once' approach.
- Thoroughly document the service's APIs. Where appropriate, open them for other services and third parties to build upon existing government offerings. Align with the [API Design Standard](#) to support cross-jurisdictional data sharing, maintain a consistent, reusable vocabulary and support wider API literacy.
- Where appropriate, endeavour to integrate the Australia Government Digital ID System, accredited by the [Trusted Digital Identity Framework \(TDIF\)](#). This will allow users to access the service with a single set of credentials.

Optional: Describe how the digital service complies with this criterion, referencing best practice approaches deployed where possible



Criterion 5 – Build trust in design

Criterion requirements

To successfully meet this criterion, agencies will need to:

- **adopt transparent data handling**
- **implement security measures**
- **maintain a reliable service**
- **be accountable for the service.**

For existing services this means that agencies should have mechanisms in place to manage the transparency, security, reliability and accountability for the service.

Checklist items

Transparent data handling practices for the service are adopted.

Best practice approaches:

- Safeguard user data by adhering to the Australian Privacy Principles and the Privacy Act 1988. Always get explicit, informed consent before collecting a user's data and provide a means to update or delete it. Allow users to report inaccurate data and respond with how it has been rectified. Notify users about their responsibilities to protect their data, such as not sharing their password with others.
- Tell users what information they need before they start a task and, where appropriate, allow them to pause and resume at their own pace.
- Where appropriate, consider how to embed provenance information to help establish and maintain trust. Resources such as [Content Credentials: Strengthening Multimedia Integrity in the Generative AI Era](#) should be consulted.

There are processes in place to ensure ongoing compliance of the service with up-to-date security measures

Best practice approaches:

- Use the [Information Security Manual](#), [the Essential Eight](#) and other resources from the [Australian Cyber Security Centre](#) to thoroughly assess the service's threats, posture and protections. Plan for the requirements and [system hardening](#) that will support the service throughout design, build, operation and decommissioning.

There are processes in place to manage reliability of the service for availability and consistency

Best practice approaches:

- Make the service available, stable and consistent for users in different places and time zones, at different times, on different days. Schedule maintenance for a predictable period of downtime and give notice to users well ahead of time.



There are accountability measures in place for the service to maintain contestability and periodic auditing:

Best practice approaches:

- Offer clear avenues for users to submit complaints, contest decisions or report issues, including security data and cyber concerns. To increase the likelihood of useful feedback, make avenues anonymous by default and identifying by choice wherever possible. To demonstrate that feedback has been addressed or will inform future action, provide users with timely and transparent responses. Responses should be tailored to the feedback.
- Audit the service, data-handling practices, security incidents and compliance with whole-of-government policies. Use an independent review to test assumptions and identify issues that may be taken for granted. Use these results to improve and keep the service fit for purpose.

Optional: Describe how the digital service complies with this criterion, referencing best practice approaches deployed where possible:

Criterion 6 – Don't reinvent the wheel

Criterion requirements

To successfully meet this criterion, agencies will need to:

- **'build once, use many times'**
- **design for a common, seamless experience**
- **reuse data where possible.**

For existing services, this means that agencies should enable the re-use of designs and data where it is possible to do so.

Checklist items

Where possible, components, solutions and/or data, such as forms, content, workflows, APIs, design components and/or information are able to be reused in other services. (If not possible, also tick this box)

Best practice approaches:

- Share designs with other teams and agencies that are establishing services that could benefit from the work your agency is doing with your service. Similarly, share data, where possible, with other services that require the same data to provide a seamless experience for the users.

Optional: Describe how the digital service complies with this criterion, referencing best practice approaches deployed where possible:



Criterion 7 – Do no harm

Criterion requirements

To successfully meet this criterion, agencies will need to:

- **protect users' digital rights**
- **understand privacy impacts**
- **understand the limits of data.**

For existing services, this means that agencies must have mechanisms in place to protect users' digital rights and understand the privacy impacts of the services and the limits of data.

Checklist items

The digital rights of users are protected.

Best practice approaches:

- Consider how the service might impact the digital rights of users. Identify users facing greater personal risks and make sure they're provided with the means to access, communicate and contest the service transparently or anonymously. If rights are breached, move quickly to implement changes that prevent future harm.
- Consider the implications of the service beyond its immediate impacts. Workshop environmental, economic or social impacts and undertake scenario planning to explore unforeseen issues and opportunities.

The services' privacy impacts are understood and appropriately responded to.

Best practice approaches:

- Undertake regular Privacy Impact Assessments to capture issues. Mitigate unwarranted and unauthorised surveillance, data collection and malicious data breaches and share these actions with users.
- Where required, seek and obtain informed consent from users prior to collecting, storing or disclosing any of their data. Consider opt-out options and ensure the service requires as little user data as possible.
- Communicate how data will be used or may be used in the future at the time of consent. This includes how it may be shared with other people or between services and secondary or less obvious uses.

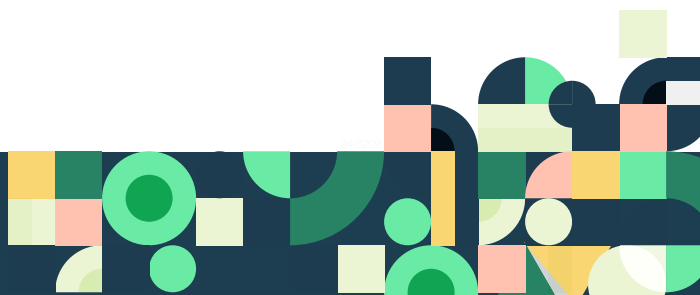


The limits of data that is collected and / or used by the service is understood.

Best practice approaches:

- Data should only be collected and used for the stated purpose that the user agrees to. Account for how data models, datasets and algorithms may produce discriminatory results and provide transparent detail to users on how decisions and calculations are made. Before sharing data, apply the DATA Scheme's Data Sharing Principles to help assess whether it would be safe to do so.
- Quantitative data, which is numeric or measurable, helps us understand what is happening on a service. Qualitative data, which is descriptive or observable, helps us understand why. Use both to fully understand the story and match any correlation with a provable causation. Do this before making important decisions.

Optional: Describe how the digital service complies with this criterion, referencing best practice approaches deployed where possible.



Criterion 8 – Innovate with purpose

Criterion requirements

To successfully meet this criterion, agencies will need to:

- **follow guidance on critical and emerging technologies**
- **maintain interoperability in the face of new technology**
- **track adoption of new technology.**

For existing services, this means that agencies must demonstrate that they have adopted emerging technologies only when there is an inherent benefit, maintain interoperability where relevant, and have implemented measures to monitor for changes relating to critical and emerging technologies that may impact the service.

Checklist items

There are processes in place to monitor and implement guidance for critical and emerging technologies for the service.

Best practice approaches:

- Stay current, technology can advance at a staggering pace. If available, refer to government guidance on risks, opportunities and developments for up-to-date advice on critical or emerging technology that may impact the service.
- Regularly check the Australian Government Architecture. Follow published guidance in the [Australian Government Architecture](#) for the adoption of critical and emerging technologies.

There are processes in place to maintain the interoperability of the service in the face of new technology.

Best practice approaches:

- Consider if new technologies will impact the service's interoperability. Plan for its introduction or implementation in partnership with other affected agencies to prevent further divergence or disconnection.
- Undertake an assessment of the preparedness for new technologies. Consider the resources and training for a new technology that will be required by the agency and team.

There are processes in place to track adoption of new technology.

Best practice approaches:

- Prior to implementing a new technology, determine whether it aligns with the clear intent of the service and whether it risks leaving certain types of users behind. If implemented, monitor how users respond to the new technology and respond to any accessibility or usability concerns.

Optional: Describe how the digital service complies with this criterion, referencing best practice approaches deployed where possible.



Criterion 9 – Monitor your service

Criterion requirements

To successfully meet this criterion, agencies will need to:

- **establish a baseline for the service**
- **identify the right performance indicators**
- **measure, report and improve according to strategies.**

For existing services, this means that agencies must demonstrate that there is continuous monitoring and measurement of services to ensure they operate smoothly, remain secure and cater for users' evolving needs.

Checklist items

There is an established performance baseline for the service

Best practice approaches:

- Determine the current state by identifying and reviewing existing metrics for the service. Use this as a yardstick to measure progress.
- Compare the service to similar services or existing standards to identify areas of improvement. Seek out best practices of similar and well-performing services to consider if they can be adopted.

Appropriate performance indicators have been identified for the service.

Best practice approaches:

- Use metrics that accurately capture the service's ability to deliver the outcomes that users expect. These might include adherence to design standards and privacy legislation, site/app performance, security benchmarks or tasks completed by users.

The service is measured, reported against and improved according to strategies.

Best practice approaches:

- Make sure the service meets the [Data and Digital Government Strategy](#) and consider how information collected and reported could improve the service in line with the Strategy's implementation plan.
- All digital and ICT-enabled investment proposals must define their purpose, outcomes and methods for measuring, monitoring and optimising them. Find out more in the [Benefits Management Policy](#).

Optional: Describe how the digital service complies with this criterion, referencing best practice approaches deployed where possible.



Criterion 10 – Keep it relevant

Criterion requirements

To successfully meet this criterion, agencies will need to:

- **improve the service across its life**
- **schedule regular assessments**
- **communicate service upgrades.**

For existing services, this means that agencies must seek to continuously improve their services, schedule regular assessments and communicate service upgrades.

Checklist items

There are mechanisms in place to make improvements to the service across its life.

Best practice approaches:

- Increase people's use of the service by continuously optimising performance, enhancing security, introducing relevant features, addressing bugs and increasing compatibility. Use metrics identified in Criterion 9 ('Monitor your service') to reveal the biggest opportunities for impact and ground improvements in evidence. Provide ongoing training and materials for staff to support change.

Regular assessments are conducted to review the performance and experience of the service over time.

Best practice approaches:

- Define the goals and scope of the assessment then observe performance and experience over time. Performance metrics might include load times, responsiveness or bottlenecks. Experience metrics might include entry/exit points, dwell time or task abandonment. Ongoing monitoring should be part of business-as-usual processes and a detailed review part of regular service evaluation.

Service upgrades appropriately communicated with users.

Best practice approaches:

- Develop an iterative communication plan for how, when and through what channels updates and findings will be shared with users. When writing content, show how users' feedback informed the actions that have been taken. Highlight key achievements or milestones reached and use real-life stories to demonstrate how users shaped change.

Optional: Describe how the digital service complies with this criterion, referencing best practice approaches deployed where possible.



Digital Inclusion Standard criterion checklist

The Digital Service Standard is made up of 5 criteria for designing and delivering inclusive and accessible digital government services through best practice principles. To successfully apply the standard, agencies must meet all the criteria.

The requirements for each criterion are listed below, along with a brief description and best practice guidance on how to meet the requirements.

Criterion 1 – Embrace diversity

Criterion requirements

To successfully meet this criterion, agencies need to:

- **consider diverse user needs from the outset**
- **co-design the digital service and its accompanying artifacts**
- **apply cohort-specific digital inclusion requirements.**

For existing services, this means that agencies should demonstrate that the service meets the varied needs and perspectives of a wide range of user groups.

Checklist items

The needs of your diverse users and how the experience of the service differs between individuals from diverse backgrounds are understood.

Best practice approaches:

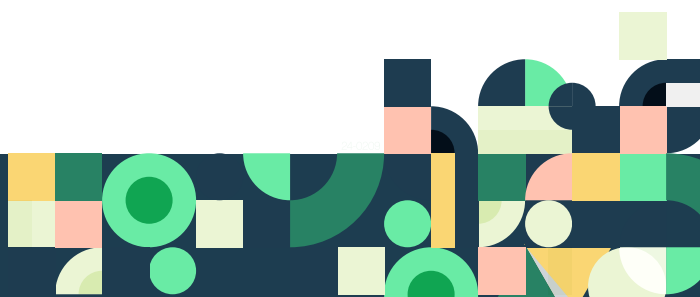
- Continuously involve users in the service delivery process by incorporating their perspectives, needs and feedback. Encourage shared ownership by co-designing accompanying artifacts, such as tutorials and guides, using language that is meaningful to all. Collect analytics and data and conduct interviews, surveys and observation on user needs, goals, expectations and behaviours.

The service meets the needs of all cohorts that access the service.

Best practice approaches:

- Conduct regular usability testing with individuals from diverse backgrounds, including those with different abilities, ages and cultural contexts. Recognise that various aspects of a person's identity, such as race, gender and age, all work together to shape their digital experience. Tailor the digital service to meet specific needs of user groups and promote inclusion to make sure support is provided at the appropriate level.

Optional: Describe how the digital service complies with this criterion, referencing best practice approaches deployed where possible.



Criterion 2 – Motivate digital use

Criterion requirements

To successfully meet this criterion, agencies need to:

- **communicate the benefits of adopting a digital channel**
- **understand the motivations of your audience**
- **make the digital service easy to use.**

For existing services, this means that agencies should communicate the benefits of using a digital service, understand the motivations of their audience and made the digital service easy to use.

Checklist items

The service clearly communicates, or communicated upon release, the benefits of being digital.

Best practice approaches:

- Provide clear and comprehensive information about the purpose and benefits of digital services. Where possible, highlight time savings, convenience and emphasise how these enhance the overall user experience.
- Use inclusive language and imagery, avoiding stereotypes and biases when communicating with your audience. Consider diverse cultural perspectives and make sure content is simple, respectful, and welcoming for all.

The motivations of the service's targeted audience are understood.

Best practice approaches:

- Use research and insights to understand the motivations of users and encourage them to remain engaged. This will help you understand if a service is too complicated or lacks support. To determine your current baseline of engagement, assess what proportion of your target audience engages online and work towards practices that encourage greater inclusion.

The digital service is easy to use.

Best practice approaches:

- Consider demonstrating the service to new users. If possible, allow them to interact with the service and experience it firsthand. Prioritise interfaces that prioritise content that's easy to find and make interactions as straightforward as possible.
- Craft user guides with step-by-step instructions and include visual aids to support deeper levels of understanding. Provide a tiered structure in your support documentation, such as basic content for beginners and advanced topics for more experienced users. Determine where a self-service approach, such as online forums, can help users through their challenges.
- Address challenges and make sure services are accessible so they allow for independence, empowerment and dignified access. Remove barriers that may force users to look to others for help. This is particularly important for services that detail financial or health-related information that users may prefer to keep private.



- Encourage users to take their first digital step by lowering the barriers to getting started. For instance, promote awareness of the service through a variety of channels and offer hybrid service options, where available, that allow users to start a process offline and complete it online, easing them into the digital option.
- Review internal and external data collection methods, and where possible, support users to provide information only once. Minimising duplication helps reduce frustrations for users.

Optional: Describe how the digital service complies with this criterion, referencing best practice approaches deployed where possible.



Criterion 3 – Protect users

Criterion requirements

To successfully meet this criterion, agencies need to:

- **establish and maintain a safe digital environment for users**
- **counter scams and misinformation**
- **provide transparency and feedback loops.**

For existing services, this means that agencies must have mechanisms in place to ensure the service is safe, counters scams and misinformation and provides transparency and feedback loops by users.

Checklist items

There are processes in place to ensure a safe digital environment for users of the service.

Best practice approaches:

- Hate speech and online abuse impacts participation and inclusion. Establish clear community guidelines on acceptable behaviour and proactively moderate digital content. Where appropriate, leverage technology to identifying instances of malicious behaviour and align to best practices outlined by the eSafety Commission.

The service has measures in place to counter scams and misinformation.

Best practice approaches:

- Many digital users have encountered scams, fraud and loss of personal information. These experiences impact attitudes towards digital use. Help to '[build trust in design](#)' by supporting the work of the [National Anti-Scams Centre](#) and mitigate misinformation by supporting the work of the [Australian Communications and Media Authority](#).

Transparency and feedback loops are provided for users of the service.

Best practice approaches:

- Communicate the safety measures that are in place to safeguard users against potential threats. Set up clear communication channels to report safety concerns and commit to resolving issues promptly.

Optional: Describe how the digital service complies with this criterion, referencing best practice approaches deployed where possible:



Criterion 4 – Make it accessible

Criterion requirements

To successfully meet this criterion, agencies need to:

- **make the digital service accessible**
- **comply with legislation and standards, including the:**
 - *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*
 - **latest version of the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG)**
 - **Australian Government Style Manual.**

For existing services, this means that agencies must ensure that the service and content can be engaged with by all individuals and is compliant with applicable legislation and standards.

Checklist items

The service is accessible.

Best practice approaches:

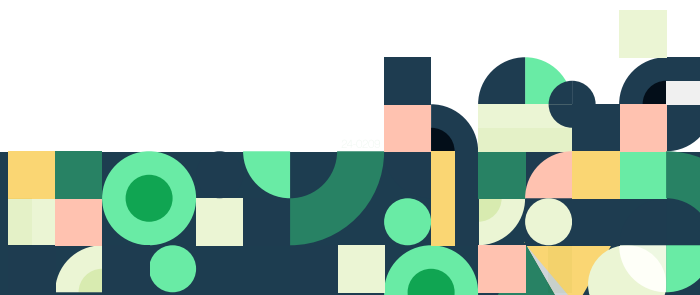
- Simplify language, provide consistent navigation and minimise interface distractions to help users access content. Use proper heading structures, descriptive links and alternative text for images to enhance the user experience. Offer multilingual support to cater to a diverse range of users and use accurate translations that maintain the same level of accessibility.
- Leverage Australian Government technology and anticipate how emerging technologies, such as artificial intelligence, impact accessibility. Use automated accessibility testing, where appropriate, in addition to testing with real people. These tools help identify common issues and streamline the testing process.
- Services can remain inaccessible if they do not work with the tools users rely on. Keep technology compatible with assistive technologies such as keyboard inputs, voice commands and screen readers. Update software, plugins and third-party tools as your service evolves. As new features are deployed, give users time to learn the features and how to use them with assistive technologies.
- When procuring, determine if the proposed solution can be used by everybody. Include accessibility requirements in your procurement processes so vendors adhere to accessibility standards. Where appropriate, refer to established standards.
- Make sure teams are well-versed in accessibility principles and empower them to incorporate best practices throughout the service lifecycle. Engage with accessibility experts during the design and development process and use their insights to overcome potential accessibility challenges.
- Keep accessibility documentation current. This includes guidelines, standards and resources. Provide accessible support resources such as tutorials and contact information that will empower users to find the help they need, when they need it.



The service is compliant with relevant legislation and standards, including the:

- ***Disability Discrimination Act 1992***
- **latest version of the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG)**
- **Australian Government Style Manual.**

Optional: Describe how the digital service complies with this criterion, referencing best practice approaches deployed where possible:



Criterion 5 – Provide flexibility and choice

Criterion requirements

To successfully meet this criterion, you need to:

- **provide flexibility and choice, where available, for how users engage with your digital service**
- **create seamless experiences across service delivery channels.**

For existing services, this means that agencies must ensure that the service provides flexibility and choice for users and support seamless experiences across delivery channels.

Checklist items

The service provides users flexibility and choice in how they engage with it.

Best practice approaches:

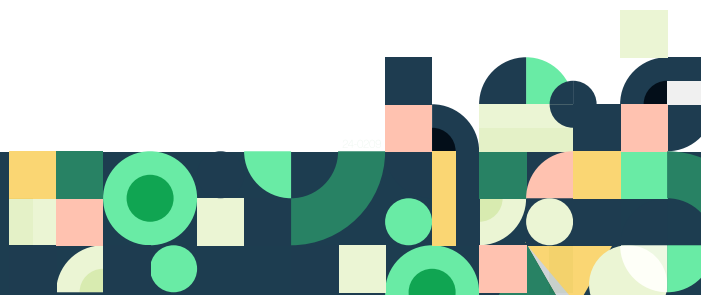
- Make sure your service has a responsive design that allows for compatibility across various devices and screen sizes, accommodating users who access services through different platforms. Responsive designs allow for compatibility across various devices and screen sizes, accommodating users who access services through different platforms.
- Include elements that can be customised and adapted to allow personalised experiences. This may include flexible layouts, themes to support enhanced day and night vision and tailoring the interface to different devices. Include preferences for written, audio and visual information and other settings that enhance user comfort and accessibility.
- Implement save and resume functionality that allows users to complete tasks immediately, or later. This is beneficial for processes that may require multiple steps to complete or information gathering. Disperse information gradually to prevent overwhelm. Be mindful to provide enough time to complete tasks and avoid time constraints that may pose challenges to individuals with cognitive or motor disabilities.

The service supports seamless experiences across delivery channels. (If not applicable, also tick this box)

Best practice approaches:

- Consider the support users need for a complete service experience and maintain non-digital channels for those who need it. Map user experiences to identify pain points and opportunities and ensure a consistent look and feel across all channels, including websites, mobile apps and in-person interactions.
- Where possible, use real-time data synchronising across all service channels. This prevents inconsistencies and lets users to access to the most up-to-date information regardless of where or how they interact with the service.

Optional: Describe how the digital service complies with this criterion, referencing best practice approaches deployed where possible:



Uplift and exemption checklist

1. Determine if further action is required

Check if you have ticked all the boxes across Steps 3 and 4.

- If yes, your service **is compliant**. No further action is required.
- If no, your service **is not currently compliant** with the policy, continue to **step 2**.

2. Determine how to comply with the policy

If you have not been able to tick all the boxes, the service is **not currently compliant** with the policy, you will need to:

- Uplift the service to be compliant with the Digital Service Standard, which is already in effect. In this instance, you will need to apply for an exemption from the DTA while you complete the uplift activities.
- Uplift the service to be compliant with the Digital Inclusion Standard by 1 January 2026.
- Seek an exemption from the DTA for any requirements that are not able to be met.

How to uplift my service to comply with the policy

1. Go back through the checklists.
2. Identify which of the boxes have not been ticked. This is where you will need to focus your efforts to uplift the service. Use the guidance next to the checklist to understand what activities to conduct to meet the requirements.
3. The service will be compliant with the policy once you have ticked all the boxes.

*Please note that this was required before **1 July 2025** for the Digital Service Standard and is required before **1 January 2026** for the Digital Inclusion Standard. If you need more time to uplift your services, particularly for the Digital Service Standard, or are unable to meet one of the requirements due to e.g. legacy challenges, you can apply for an exemption if applicable (information below).*

Decide if your service needs an exemption

If you are unable to meet the requirements set out in the Digital Service Standard and Digital Inclusion Standard by their implementation dates, please seek an exemption.

You may seek exemptions to these standards for:

- legacy technology barriers that cannot be reasonably overcome
- substantial financial burden associated with modifying a service to meet requirements.

Exemptions vary in nature and can be permanent, temporary, partial or full and may apply to one or more criteria or the entire standard. Each exemption application will be assessed on a case-by-case basis and must be applied for through the DTA.

For further guidance on the exemptions process please see [Digital Experience | digital.gov.au](https://digital.gov.au/digital-experience) or contact standard@dtg.gov.au.

