



<b>Topic:</b>	External Assessment: Planning and Undertaking an External Assessment (Site Visit)
<b>Document type:</b>	Communication Tool for the External Assessment Site Visits

*This tool has been developed to help organisations inform and engage clients with the external assessment site visit. Below are sample texts that can be used to develop letters, brochures, posters or handouts. These are a guide only and can be changed and adapted to suit the circumstances of your service and operational context. As part of this Module, a number of examples of communication tools developed by a Specialist Homelessness Service for their clients are provided, which may also give you some practical ideas for developing your communication strategies.*

## 1. Sample Text: Background about ASES

[Service Name] is undertaking accreditation under the Australian Service Excellence Standards (ASES). All Specialist Homelessness Services are required to be accredited under ASES in the next few years. Accreditation is the formal recognition of achievement against a set of formally approved standards.

The ASES are a set of standards under which agencies are assessed to make sure that they have systems and practices that meet the highest possible standards and that they are on a path of continuous quality improvement. The ASES have been specially developed for community services with a focus on excellence in service provision. As [Service Name] has always been about quality, we welcome the opportunity to participate in ASES accreditation.

When we achieve our accreditation, we will receive an official Certificate of Accreditation.

## 2. Sample Text: External assessment site visit

To become accredited, organisations receive an external assessment to show they have implemented all of the requirements of the ASES through a site visit. The assessments are done by independent agencies, approved by the ASES administrator, the South Australian Department of Human Services.

[Service Name] has an external assessment site visit booked for [insert date], which will be taking place at [insert venue/s].

One of the most important parts of this site visit is for the external assessor to learn about how we provided services to our clients and how our clients have experienced those services.

## 3. Sample Text: Ways to participate

We would love it if you joined us on our ASES journey. There are a number of ways you can participate at several points in the process. You can:

- ✚ Provide us with general feedback about our service, which we encourage from all our clients anytime through [insert your organisation's details for seeking and receiving feedback and complaints].
- ✚ Be interviewed about your experience about our service by the external assessor during the site visit. There are a number of ways you can be interviewed – in a group or by yourself; in person or by phone etc. No staff member will be present at your interview.
- ✚ Provide written consent to have your file looked at by the external assessor – note that your privacy and confidentiality will be observed at all times.
- ✚ Express your interest to be present at the opening or closing meetings at the site visit. We will do our best to include you in these meetings if you are interested, but it depends on the number of people who put their hand up for this.
- ✚ [Add any opportunities for participation that you can offer, e.g., being involved in quality audits, asking clients to help develop communication materials about ASES etc.]

## 4. Sample Text: client rights

If you would like to participate in being interviewed, you have client rights which will be respected at all times. These are:

1. You have a right to be involved or not – the choice is yours. While we welcome your participation, we respect your decision, and we will not involve you in the external assessment without your explicit consent.
2. You have a right to change your mind about being involved. For example, if you consented to be involved in an interview, you can change your mind at any stage, even in the middle of the interview. It is no problem if you change your mind.
3. You have a right to receive the support you need to participate – you can bring an advocate, friend, family member or another support person to your interview, if you choose to be interviewed.
4. You have a right to be informed about the external assessment in the communication style that is best for you and to be given enough time to participate. For example, we can talk to you about the external assessment at a yarnning circle before the site visit so that you have time to consider your involvement, or we can arrange for an interpreter to be present at your interview, if needed.
5. You have a right to other supports to enable your participation – for example, we could arrange transport to get you to the site visit.
6. You have the right to privacy and confidentiality – the external assessor will not share information about you with anyone outside the organisation, unless they are required to do so by law.

If you would like to be involved or would like to know more about ASES, please call [insert name, position title and contact number].



## 5. Sample Text: looking ahead

Our commitment to quality does not end with our site visit and ASES accreditation. We are also interested to hear from you if you would like to be involved in our ongoing quality journey, such as through our [insert processes for client involvement in continuous quality improvement, e.g. a client quality reference group etc.].