



Revenue Service

Customer Satisfaction Survey Report

April 2019



States of
Guernsey

Contents

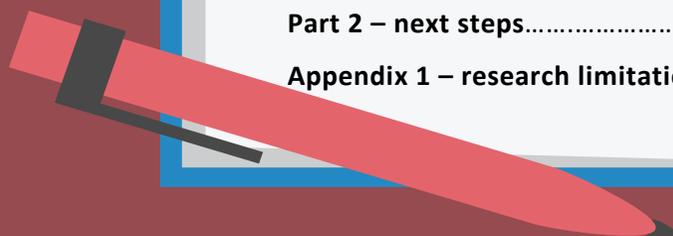
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Introduction

The new Revenue Service which brought together income tax and social security contributions functions was launched on the 22nd October 2018. This was the first step in a longer journey of transformation and change.

On the 26th November 2018 we conducted a six week survey. The purpose of this survey was to baseline customer satisfaction and help us understand how well the Revenue Service currently works for our customers.

This report summarises our findings.



Our Approach

To capture sufficient feedback across all contact points, the survey was conducted in the following ways:



Online

Respondents were asked to provide feedback on their most recent experience with us. This could have been by any method of contact available.

271 Respondents

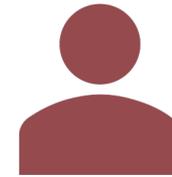


By Phone

Respondents were asked to participate immediately after interacting with us by phone.

The survey was conducted over the phone by someone unrelated to their experience.

103 Respondents



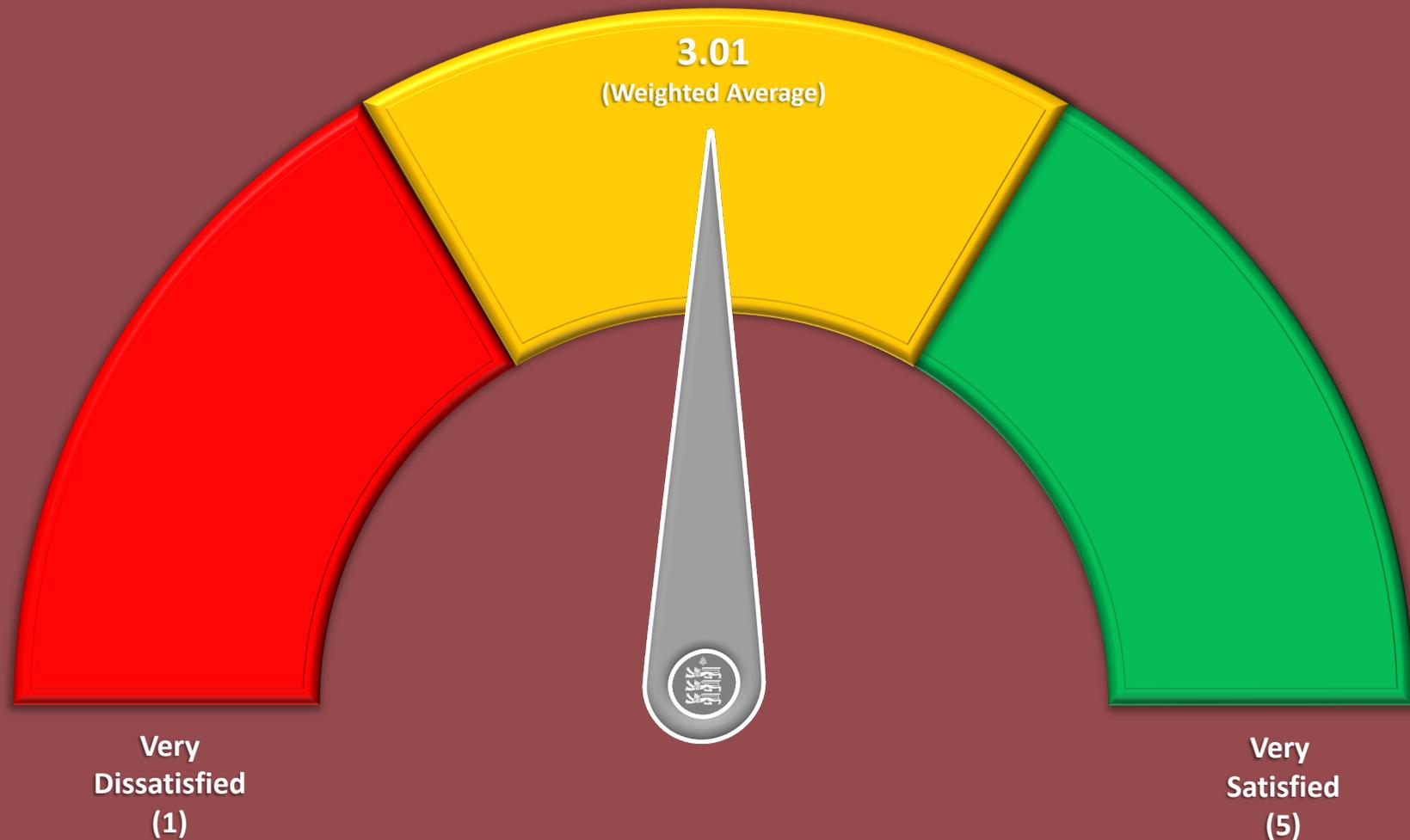
In Person

Respondents were asked to participate immediately after interacting with us at the Corporate Customer Services Counter.

13 Respondents

Satisfaction Baseline

Respondents were asked to rate how satisfied they were with the service they had received with choices ranging from very satisfied to very dissatisfied. The responses provide a baseline for 2018, which future survey results will be compared against to gauge the effectiveness of any improvements made.



Summary of findings

Results show that the majority of respondents contacted the Revenue Service to either query an account, submit their tax return or query their coding notice. Despite frustrations with waiting times, the most common method of contact was by phone with this often being cited as the quickest way to get a response from the Revenue Service.

15% of respondents used the website to resolve their matter. For those who didn't use the website, 41% had initially tried but failed with half of those stating they couldn't find the information or services they required. Whilst this does show respondents were trying to interact with the Revenue Service online, it also emphasises the likelihood for contact to be made by phone or in person.

For those who did not initially try to resolve their matter on the website, 28% said this was because they prefer speaking to someone and responses indicate this was heavily influenced by a number of respondents being unaware they could use the website, being reluctant to use the website following a previously poor experience or knowing they are unable to deal with personal requests online.

Overall 67% of respondents achieved what they intended to do, and results show a clear correlation between successful task completion and higher levels of satisfaction with; 89% of those who completed their task having a positive or neutral satisfaction compared to 42% of those who "somewhat" completed their task and 14% of those who did not complete their task. Higher levels of dissatisfaction largely related to contact by email or letter which is unsurprising as 62% of those who contacted in this way were unable to fully achieve what they intended to do.

272 comments were received in response to the open ended question 'do you have any comments on how we can improve our service to you', the majority of which exposed a particularly high level of dissatisfaction associated with response or waiting times, customer service, external communication and use of the website.



83%

Of comments received were negative.

42%

Of respondents primary reason for contact was to query something.

62%

Of respondents who made contact by email or letter did not fully achieve what they intended to do.

25%

Of negative comments were associated with response or waiting times.

54%

Of all respondents made contact by phone.

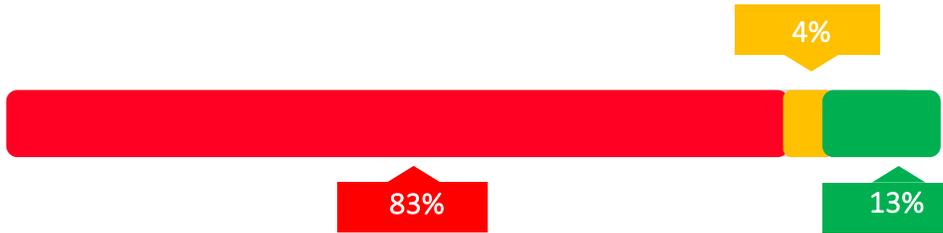
50%

Of issues encountered with the website were caused by not finding information or services.



Do you have any comments on how we can improve our service to you?

All respondents were asked how we could improve our service. 272 comments were received in total with 83% indicating a negative perception of the Revenue Service.



Whilst comments did relate to various aspects of the service we provide, they largely fall into four key areas including, response or waiting times, customer service, external communication and website.

A significant number of respondents referred to a lack of responsiveness by the Revenue Service, with lack of clarity about when issues would be resolved or the need to chase up responses often being cited. Phone waiting times were also frequently highlighted as a bugbear for many respondents.

Of the 64 comments received in relation to our customer service, 59% were negative. This negativity was often directed at a perceived lack of staff knowledge, respondents feeling explanations were unclear or the way in which they were spoken to unsatisfactory. In contrast, positive experiences were also highlighted with some respondents making reference to both the helpfulness and politeness of staff particularly when dealing with bereavement.

98% of the comments received in relation to external communication were negative with a particular focus towards tone of voice and making written communication easier to understand by using plain English in place of technical jargon.

No positive comments were received in connection to the website with many respondents often criticising speed of use, difficulty in locating information or the lack of services available.

Response / waiting times (67 comments, 100%)



"It took 11 months for someone to respond to my query and then it was obvious that whoever dealt with the matter had not even read/understood my query"

Customer Service (64 comments, 41%, 59%)



"Really the most inefficient service that I have had to deal with in many a year. Staff that appear not to care, are condescending, unclear in explanations, and treat enquiries as a waste of their time. Definitely a need for staff training!"

External communication (41 comments, 2%, 98%)



"Stop writing to people in a high handed way. 99% of people are decent and trustworthy. Please write to them as so instead of always assuming the worst in other people."

Website (17 comments, 6%, 94%)



"The website is a typical states website, very poor and very difficult to navigate, search engine is poor and when the search criteria is given it does not work. Pathetic"

Part 1

The responses

1

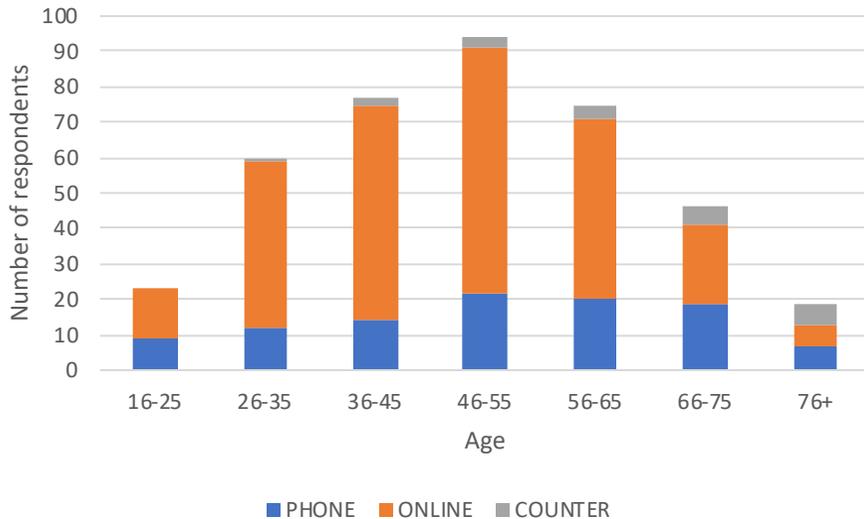


How old are you?

Representation was highest between ages 46-55 and lowest under 25 and over 76.

Approximately 65% of Guernsey's population is of working age (16-64) and given the Revenue Service's customer base, it is unsurprising that 85% of survey respondents fell into this age bracket (16-65).

Respondent ages by channel



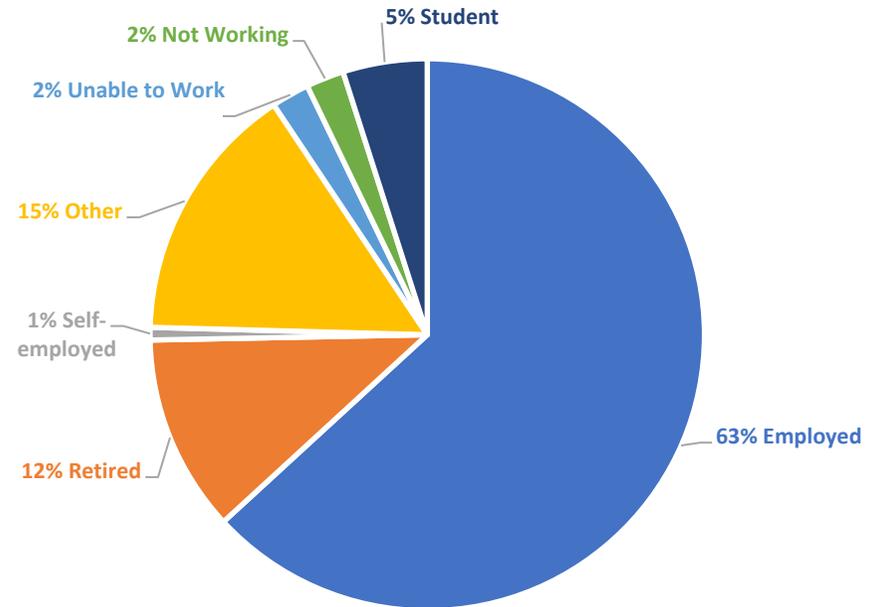
Online 270 Phone 103 Counter 13

2



What is your employment status?

Employment status



Online 269 Phone 103 Counter 13

The vast majority of respondents were in employment (63%), with a reasonable number of responses also received from those who had retired (12%).

Respondents could select more than one option if applicable.

3

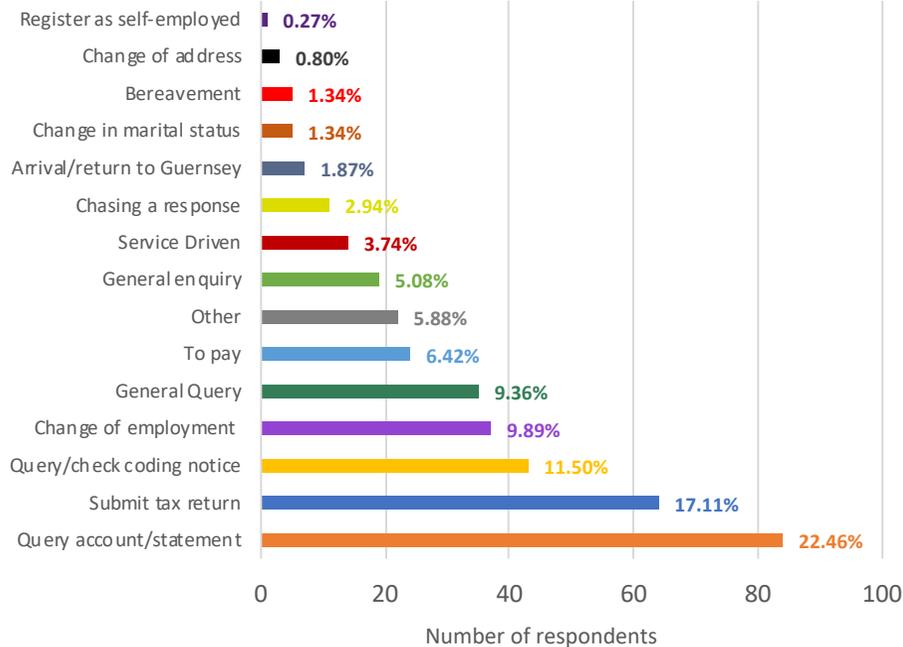


What was your primary purpose of contact?

The majority of customers made contact with the Revenue Service to either query an account or statement (22%), to submit their tax return (17%) or to query or check a coding notice (12%).

Other reasons for contact included notifying the Revenue Service of a change of employment (10%) and making general queries (9%).

Reason for contact



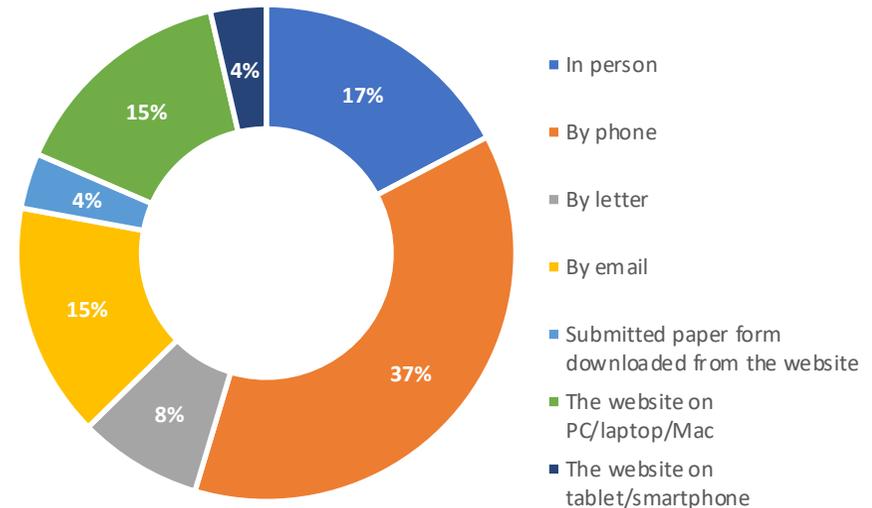
Online 258 Phone 103 Counter 13

4



How did you contact us?

Online survey respondents method of contact



Online 249 Phone 0 Counter 0

Participants of the phone and counter surveys were not required to answer this question as the survey was conducted immediately after their most recent interaction.

For those who responded to the online survey, the most common method of contact was by phone (37%). A significant number of customers also used the website via smartphones, laptops and tablets (23%).

5



Did you visit our website first?

Those who did not use the website to contact the Revenue Service were asked whether they initially visited the website to try and resolve their matter.



Yes

41%



No

59%

Online 198 Phone 103 Counter 13

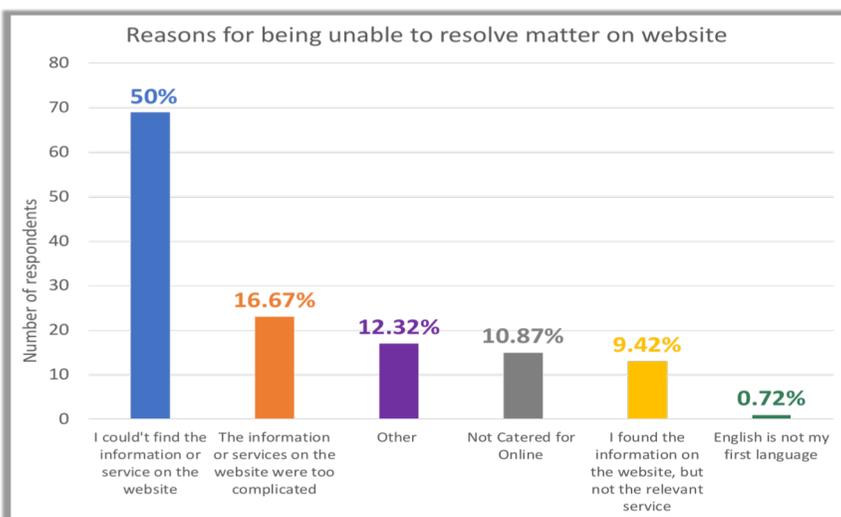
6



Why were you not able to resolve your matter on our website?

For those who did try to resolve their matter on our website first, 50% stated that they were unable to because they could not find the information or service they needed. A further 16% stated that they were unable to resolve their matter on our website because the information or services were too complicated.

Whilst this does show respondents are trying to interact with the Revenue Service online it also emphasises the likelihood for contact to be made by phone or in person.



Online 87 Phone 33 Counter 6

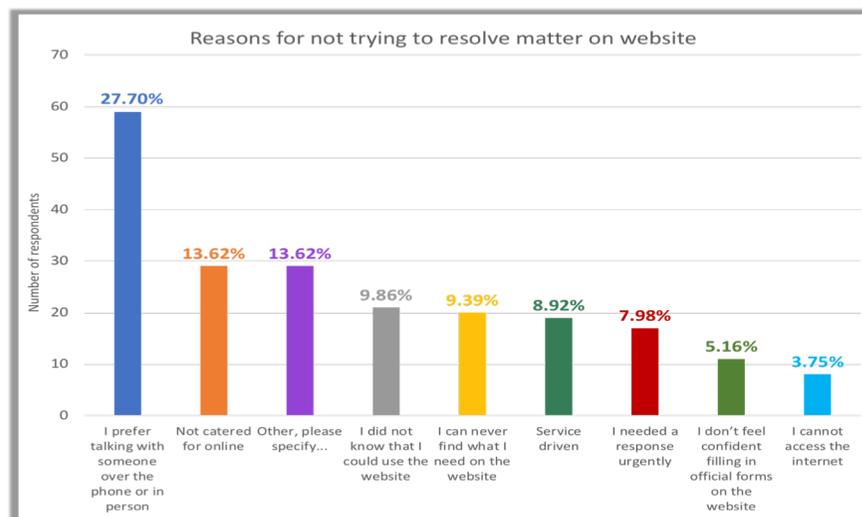
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Why didn't you try to resolve your matter on our website first?

For those who did not try to resolve their matter on our website, 28% said this was because they prefer speaking to someone, with 14% stating they knew it wasn't possible to resolve their matter online.

Other reasons given for not trying to resolve their matter online include respondents not being "good with computers" or stating that it is quicker to speak to someone. Another persistent theme for not going online was how the Revenue Service correspondence encourages customers to phone.

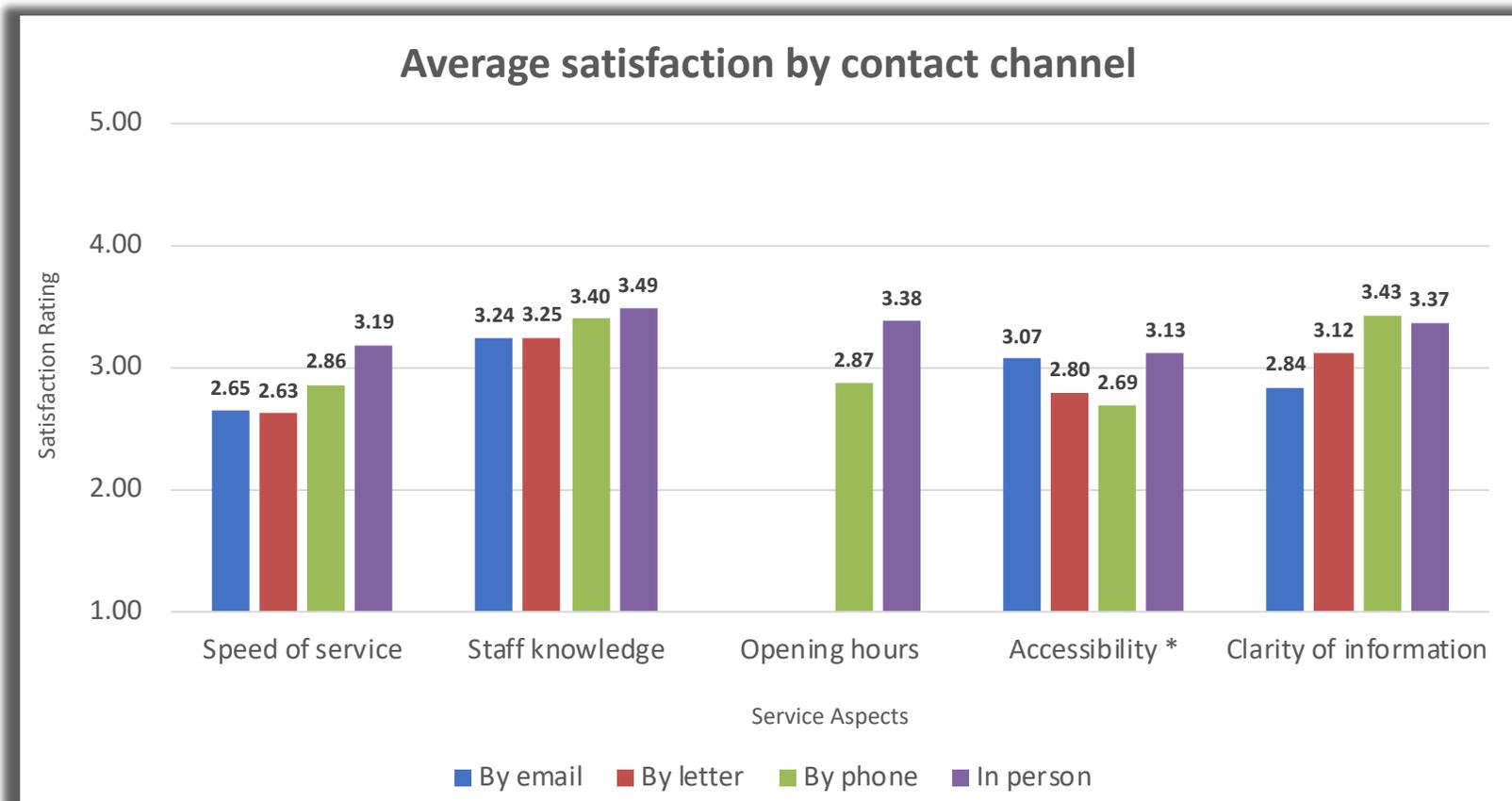


Online 103 Phone 89 Counter 7



How would you rate the following aspects?

Those who contacted the Revenue Service by email, letter, phone or in person were asked to rate their most recent interaction according to five aspects. In each of the five aspects, the ratings for contact by phone or in person were higher than the ratings given for contact by email or letter. Opening hours were not relevant to those who made contact by email or letter.



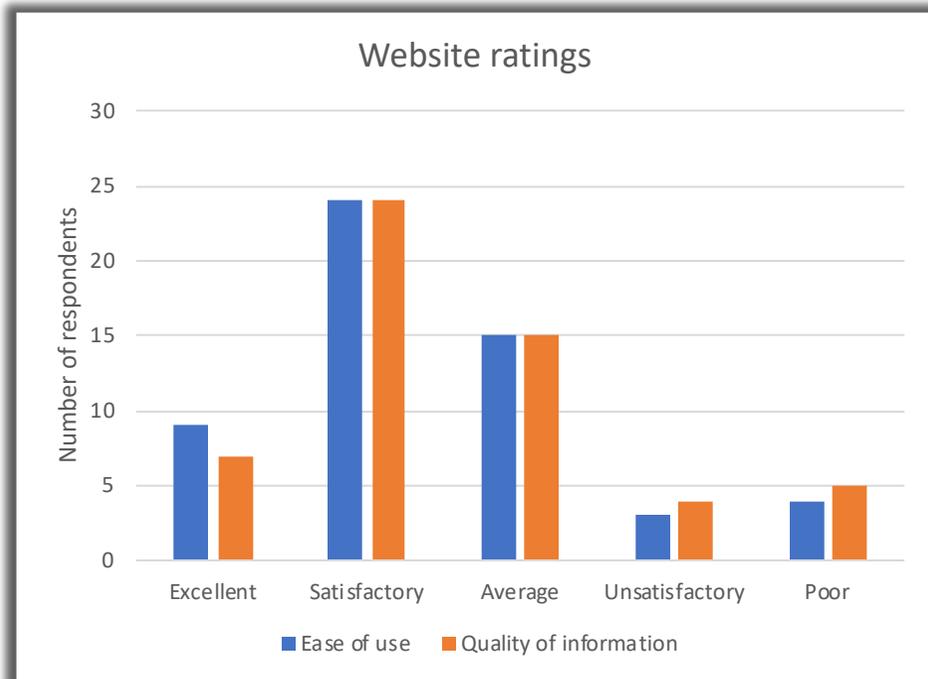
Online 189 Phone 103 Counter 13



How would you rate the following aspects of our website?

Only those who used the website to contact the Revenue Service were asked to rate the ease of use and quality of information of our website, meaning that the data below is based on only 55 respondents.

60% of respondents said that the ease of use of the website was excellent or satisfactory. Similarly, 56% of respondents said that the quality of information on the website was excellent or satisfactory. This contradicts many of the comments discussed earlier in this report.



Did you do what you intended to do?

Overall 67% of customers who contacted the Revenue Service achieved what they intended to do. The vast majority of successful task completion was achieved when contacting by phone or in person but 31% of those still didn't fully achieve their task.

Other respondents were less successful, with 63% of those who contacted by email and 59% of those by letter, unable to fully accomplish what they intended to do. Of the 55 respondents that did make contact using the website, 76% succeeded in completing their task.





How satisfied were you with the service you received?

Respondents were asked to rate how satisfied they were with the service they had received with choices ranging from very satisfied to very dissatisfied. The below graph illustrates respondents levels of satisfaction with each method of contact.

Responses indicated a clear correlation between successful task completion and higher levels of satisfaction with;

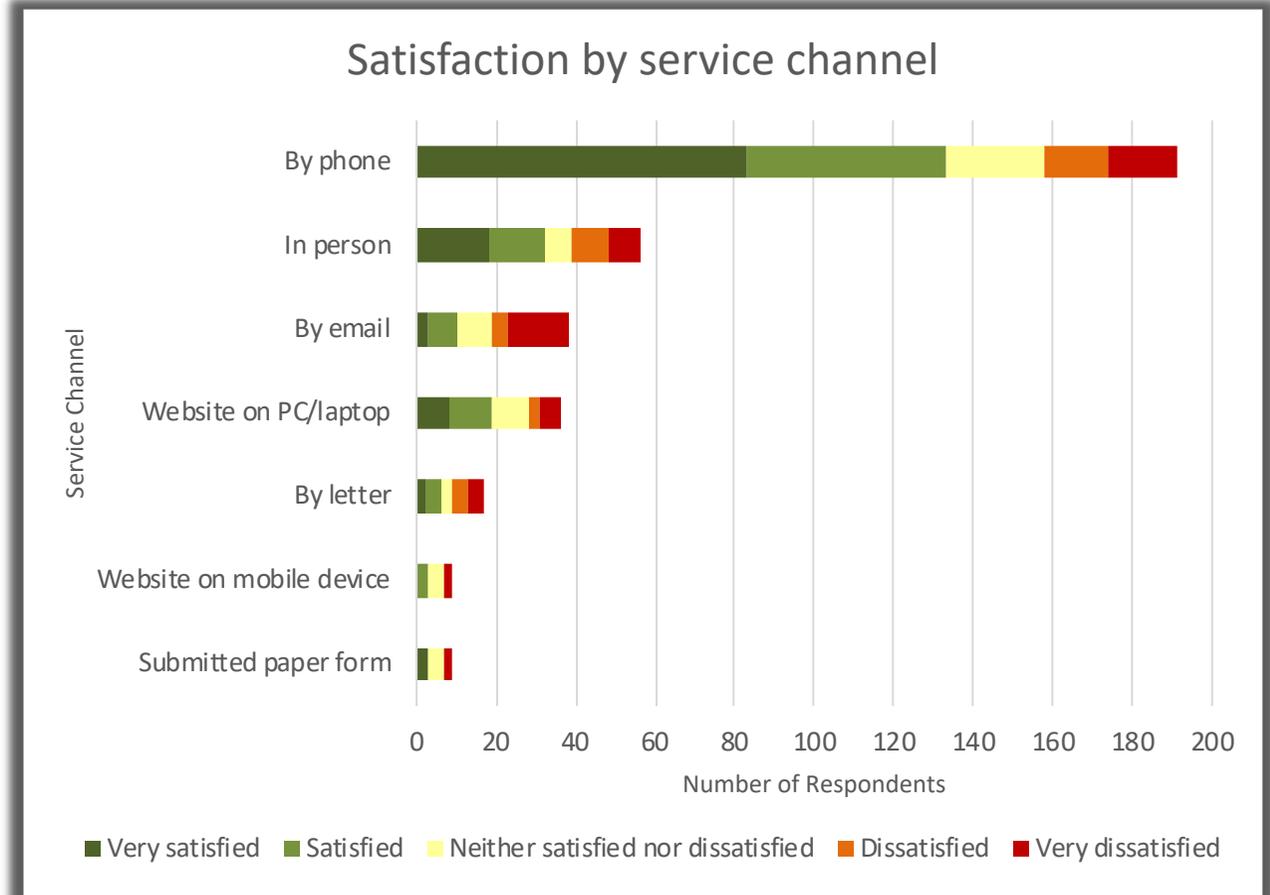
89% of those who completed their task having a positive or neutral satisfaction.

42% of those who “somewhat” completed their task having a positive or neutral satisfaction.

14% of those who did not complete their task having a positive or neutral satisfaction.

The higher levels of dissatisfaction largely related to contact by email or letter which is unsurprising as **62%** of those who contacted in this way were unable to fully achieve what they intended to do.

Respondents often cited difficulty in understanding content, insensitive communication or a lack of response as key reasons for dissatisfaction when communicating by letter or email.



Online 271 Phone 103 Counter 13

Part 2

Next steps

The results from this survey have provided the Revenue Service with a significantly better understanding of how customers feel about interacting with us. In particular, they have helped us to identify key areas that need to be addressed and will prove invaluable as we strive to act on and ultimately improve our customer's experience of the Revenue Service.

Our assumption that the online services provided by the Revenue Service are not necessarily better or more convenient than alternative methods of contact, was further supported by this survey, with results highlighting this as a key driver for respondents choosing to interact with us by phone or in person. To tackle this, the Revenue Service aims to both simplify its website content and launch a number of new and improved services, starting with the introduction of an online change of employment service in April 2019.

These findings have also highlighted a significant level of dissatisfaction towards the way in which the Revenue Service interacts with customers, with speed of resolution, clarity of explanations and difficulty in understanding written communication often mentioned. The Revenue Service aims to improve these aspects by reviewing the way in which we write to our customers and working through the results with operational managers and staff to agree and implement appropriate actions.

We acknowledge that customers' needs evolve over time therefore, a continuous review of how the Revenue Service is working for customers will be captured through regular surveys, feedback forms and follow up research with respondents to capture deeper insights. This approach will help ensure that the Revenue Service experience is always being optimised for the needs of its customers.

Appendix 1

Research Limitations

Overall there were 387 respondents to the survey which provides reasonable confidence that our findings are sufficiently representative of customers (with a confidence level of 95% that the results are within 5 points of the "true" figures). As with all research, there are some limitations that need to be considered when reading the results. In particular, how different modes of survey can affect the way in which people respond.

Surveys conducted in person (in this case at counter) have notable benefits, particularly around response rates and survey completion. They, along with phone surveys are prone to two biases that can effect responses (interviewer effect and yes-saying). Online surveys do not suffer from these biases, although response rates and survey completion tend to be lower.

Our counter and phone surveys were conducted at the point of contact and with people who had a reason to engage with the Revenue Service during the period of the survey. Where as the online survey was promoted more generally so potentially reached a wider variety of people. For these reasons, only the online responses have been used to calculate a baseline of customer satisfaction for the Revenue Service.

Additionally, there are several limitations in surveys, regardless of survey mode:

- Participants of the survey were self-selecting so the sample may not be representative of all customers of the Revenue Service
- Respondents were required to complete all sections of the survey as applicable to them. However, there were instances where no information was filled.
- The survey was presented in English, so people who speak English as an additional language may have chosen not to take the survey.
- The survey was not piloted in advance so there may have been differing understandings of some of the terms used, for example "Accessibility".