



**Press notice: 940**

**For immediate release: Thursday 15 October 2015**

## **Student complaints 2014**

### ***Consumer Rights Act 2015 extends the reach of the OIA.***

The OIA has today (15 October) published Annual Letters for 2014 setting out the complaints record of all higher education providers within the OIA Scheme. The letters show the number of complaints and appeals closed by each provider, the number that the student then takes to the OIA, and the OIA's findings.

The annual letters are based on the number of Completion of Procedures letters issued and do not take account of complaints and appeals that are resolved before exhausting providers' own proceedings. As each provider manages complaints and appeals differently it is not possible to draw conclusions from the letters about the overall relative number of complaints made by students at different organisations.

Rob Behrens, Independent Adjudicator and Chief Executive commented:

"The vast majority of student complaints are resolved internally. The OIA's annual letters set out how many students go on to take their case to the OIA and the final outcome. This is the fourth year that we have published the letters. They provide a full breakdown of the cases that come to the OIA and are an important factor in improving the transparency of complaints handling."

**ENDS**

Notes to Editors

1. All the Letters to OIA Scheme members are published on the OIA website at <http://oiahe.org.uk/decisions-and-publications/annual-letters.aspx>.
2. The purpose of the Letters is to:
  - Increase public scrutiny of complaints handling records in higher education providers;
  - Increase complainant confidence in complaints handling processes;
  - Allow providers to look at their own record alongside that of other providers of similar size.
3. The OIA cannot accept responsibility for any inferences or conclusions derived from the data by third parties.
4. The OIA is the designated operator of the Scheme for reviewing student complaints in England and Wales, established under the Higher Education Act 2004. Its remit was extended



- on 1 September 2015 to include alternative providers, Further Education Colleges offering higher education courses, and providers of School Centred Initial Teacher Training.
5. The 2014 Annual Letters cover only those providers that belonged to the OIA Scheme during 2014.
  6. The OIA has wide discretion to review student complaints about an 'act or omission' by HEIs in England and Wales. It does not review academic judgment or admissions issues. The Scheme Rules and all details related to OIA operations can be found at [www.oiahe.org.uk](http://www.oiahe.org.uk)
  7. For further information please contact Jane Clarkson, Policy and Communications Manager, by emailing [jane.clarkson@oiahe.org.uk](mailto:jane.clarkson@oiahe.org.uk) or by phone on 0118 959 9813