



office of the
independent
adjudicator

PN 923

PRESS NOTICE: OIA PUBLISHES FIRST ANNUAL LETTERS TO UNIVERSITIES SETTING OUT COMPLAINTS RECORD

The OIA has today published Annual Letters to all universities within the OIA Scheme, setting out the complaints handling performance record of each university, benchmarked against universities of a similar size. This follows two rounds of consultation with the sector, and change in the OIA Scheme Rules in December 2011.

The purpose of the Letters is to:

1. Increase public scrutiny of complaints handling records in universities;
2. Increase complainant confidence in university complaints handling processes;
3. Encourage universities to review their performance in a comparative context.

Rob Behrens, Independent Adjudicator and Chief Executive commented:

“This is an important step in increasing the transparency of the Scheme enabling students’ unions, universities, students and the wider public to review the record of universities in complaints handling. The data shows that, broadly speaking, the number of complaints the OIA receives increases with the size of the institution, although there are exceptions to this trend. We hope it will encourage universities to extend good practice and work towards early resolution in complaints handling, a subject we will be returning to with the publication of the **Pathway 3** Report on 1 October 2012.”

All the Letters to OIA Scheme members are published on the OIA website at www.oiahe.org.uk. In this first year, in line with policy set out in evidence to the BIS Select Committee in May 2011, the OIA will not be publishing the data in tabular form.

Notes to editors

1. To arrange an interview with the OIA, please contact Charlotte Corrish, Policy and Communications Manager, by emailing charlotte.corrish@oiahe.org.uk or by phone on 0118 959 2733
2. Copies of the Annual Letters can be downloaded from www.oiahe.org.uk

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. All universities in England and Wales belong to the Scheme.
5. The OIA has a wide remit 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

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