



office of the  
independent  
adjudicator

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**For immediate release**

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## **Trust and the Ombudsman**

The Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) has published an analysis of the role of ombudsmen in building and sustaining confidence in public services.

'Public Trust and the Ombudsman: the case of the OIA', written by the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education, Rob Behrens, draws on evidence from the health service, the media and higher education to explore the reasons why a strong system for complaints and redress may improve public trust. It sets out the history and future development of the OIA in the context of 'collateral damage to trust in higher education from crises in other professions'.

The paper identifies the four most essential factors as independence, competence, the promotion of good practice and maintaining high standards of professional behaviour. Rob Behrens comments:

"The OIA has now been going for ten years and has reviewed 10,000 cases. That decade has coincided with a run of scandals in other sectors that higher education has been able to avoid. I set out in my paper to look at what higher education can learn from the mistakes of others and how we can harness what is an undeniable commitment in universities to making sure that the complaints system for students is rock-solid in its independence, transparency and reliability."

**ENDS**

### **Notes to Editors**

1. 'Public Trust and the Ombudsman: the case of the OIA' can be downloaded from the [OIA website](#).
2. 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.

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INDEPENDENT ADJUDICATOR & CHIEF EXECUTIVE – ROBERT BEHRENS

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