



Press Notice 937

19 May 2015
Immediate release

Independent Adjudicator and Chief Executive

The Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA) has begun the recruitment process to appoint a successor to Rob Behrens, who will leave the organisation when his term of office ends in spring 2016.

Rob Behrens has been Independent Adjudicator and Chief Executive since 2008. He has served two terms of office, the second of which was extended exceptionally by the Board. Preliminary work to find a successor is underway, with the formal recruitment process to start in June and short-listing and interviews in September and October. It is hoped that the successful candidate will take up post in April 2016.

Rob Behrens commented:

“The OIA Scheme is now firmly established, well-regarded and authoritative as an independent, outward-facing ombudsman service for students in higher education. We have resolved more than 10,000 student complaints and worked constructively with universities and students’ unions to build good practice. In the coming months I look forward to implementing the provisions of the Consumer Rights Act 2015 which will bring 500 new member institutions and their higher education students into the Scheme and heralds a new, exciting era for the OIA.”

The Chair of the OIA Board, Ram Gidoomal, said:

“Rob is an outstanding leader who has won the respect and trust of his colleagues, students and universities alike. Rob’s departure is many months off, but we need to start work now to make sure that there is a smooth transition. His successor will join an organisation that provides essential and independent redress for students and good practice advice to universities at a time of challenge and change for higher education.”

ENDS

Notes to editors

For further information please contact jane.clarkson@oiahe.org.uk

1. The Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) resolves complaints and academic appeals from students in higher education studying at providers in England and Wales.
2. Under the Consumer Rights Act 2015 higher education providers including further education colleges, alternative providers and School Centred Initial Teacher Training providers (SCITTS) will join the OIA Scheme, giving their students access to the OIA’s service.
3. Rob Behrens has been the Independent Adjudicator and Chief Executive since spring 2008. Under the Articles of Association of the OIA the Independent Adjudicator can serve up to eight years.
4. The position will be advertised in June 2015 and be recruited through open competition.