



office of the  
independent  
adjudicator

# OIA Complaint Form – Strike Action

## Introduction

The main purpose of the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA) is to review unresolved complaints to determine whether they are Justified, Partly Justified or Not Justified. Our Scheme is not a further appeal from your higher education provider.

Before you fill in this form, please read our information about [strike complaints](#). Our website also contains information you may find useful about what the OIA can and cannot do.

We suggest that you read our website [www.oiahe.org.uk](http://www.oiahe.org.uk) before completing this form to see if we can deal with your complaint or are likely to be able to offer the outcome you desire.

This form is specifically for complaints about how you have been affected by industrial action ('the strikes') during your studies. If your complaint is about anything else, please use our general complaint form to make your complaint.

## Completing the form



### Using MyOIA

[MyOIA](#) provides an easy way to make a complaint, track the progress of complaints and change your contact details.



### Sending via email

If you are completing the form as a PDF, please download this form, fill it in and send it as an attachment to [enquiries@oiahe.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@oiahe.org.uk).



### Posting your form

If you prefer to send your form by post, please use a "signed for" service to ensure safe delivery.

OIA, Second Floor, Abbey Wharf,  
57-75 Kings Road, Reading,  
RG1 3AB

- Please complete all sections of the form clearly and legibly.
- For ease of reference, we use the term "provider" throughout our Complaint Form to include all providers that are members of our Scheme. A list of all member providers can be found on our website, [www.oiahe.org.uk](http://www.oiahe.org.uk).
- If required, you can use a separate sheet of paper but it is helpful if you explain your complaint as concisely as possible.
- This form must be received in our office within 12 months of the date of the Completion of Procedures Letter issued by your provider.
- **Please ensure that you sign the declaration section of the form.** (If you are completing the form electronically, please type your name in the signature box.) If you don't sign it, the form will be returned to you which will lead to a delay in us dealing with your complaint. If we don't receive the completed and signed complaint form by the 12 month deadline, your complaint will be out of time and we will not accept it.

## Section 1 : Your details



In this section we ask for your information to help us communicate with you about your complaint.

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <p><b>Title</b></p> <p><b>First name(s) / Given name(s)</b></p> <p><b>Surname / Family name</b></p> <p><b>Preferred name(s)</b></p> <p><small>❶ If you prefer to be known by a different name from that which you were given at birth, please enter it here.</small></p> <p><b>Your address</b></p> <p>address line 1</p> <p>address line 2</p> <p>town</p> <p>county</p> <p>country</p> <p>postcode</p> | <p><b>Phone number</b></p> <p><small>❶ If you are providing an international number, please add a country code in the following format: +44</small></p> <p><b>Email</b></p> <p><small>❶ We will need at least one method of contacting you with written communication, either post or email, as we will need to write to you.</small></p> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; background-color: #e0f2f1; padding: 10px; margin: 10px 0;"> <p><b>❶ Please note:</b> You will need to inform us of any changes in your contact details while your case is being reviewed by us. It is helpful to let us know in advance if you are going to be away or unavailable while we are dealing with your complaint, but please bear in mind that this may cause delay in our consideration of your complaint.</p> </div> <p><b>If you are under the age of 18 when submitting this complaint form, please enter your date of birth:</b></p> <p><b>Date of Birth (dd/mm/yyyy)</b></p> |
|--|---|

**Our default method of communication will be via email. If you are unable to access email and require post, please tick this box:**

❶ Please tick the box to indicate that you are unable to use/access email and require correspondence via post. By leaving the box unticked you are agreeing to receiving communications from us via email. We ask you to please check your spam/junk folders regularly throughout the complaints process and allow up to 24 hours for emails to be received.

**If you have a disability which means there are adjustments you would like us to consider making to our process, please indicate these here.**

(If necessary, we will contact you to discuss this in further detail.)



MyOIA provides you with an easy way to track the progress of your complaint. If you would like us to create a MyOIA account for you and, if appropriate, your representative, please tick this box.

## Section 2: Representative details (optional)



It is preferable for students to handle their own complaints. However you may appoint a representative eg a students' union representative by completing this section. You may find it helpful to have a representative if you have difficulty dealing with large amounts of documentation or you have other commitments such as work or exams.

If you appoint a representative you need to ensure that they know all about your complaint, are willing to represent you and will keep you fully informed because we will only deal with your representative once you have appointed them. We will not contact you directly until we close your complaint. Our procedures are informal and you should not need a legal representative. For this reason, we will not normally recommend that a provider contribute to your legal costs even if we decide your complaint is Justified.

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <p><b>Title</b></p> <p><b>First name(s) / Given name(s)</b></p> <p><b>Surname/Family name</b></p> <p><b>Preferred name(s)</b></p> <p><small>❗ If you prefer to be known by a different name from that which you were given at birth, please enter it here.</small></p> | <p><b>Phone number</b></p> <p><small>❗ If you are providing an international number, please add a country code in the following format: +44</small></p> <p><b>Email</b></p> <p><small>❗ We will need at least one method of contacting your representative with written communication, either post or email, as we will need to write to your representative.</small></p> |
| <p><b>Your address</b></p> <p>address line 1</p> <p>address line 2</p> <p>town</p> <p>county</p> <p>country</p> <p>postcode</p>  |   |

**Our default method of communication will be via email. If your representative is unable to access email and requires post, please tick this box:**

❗ Please tick the box to indicate that your representative is unable to use/access email and requires correspondence via post. By leaving the box unticked you are agreeing that your representative will receive communications from us via email. We ask representatives to check spam/junk folders regularly throughout the complaints process and allow up to 24 hours for emails to be received.

**❗ Please note:** You will need to inform us of any changes in your contact details while the case is being reviewed by us. It is helpful to let us know in advance if you are going to be away or unavailable while we are dealing with the complaint, but please bear in mind that this may cause delay in our consideration of the complaint.

## Section 3: Provider and course information



In this section we ask for some information about your provider because we can only look at complaints about current, and in some cases, former Scheme members. We also ask for some information about your course and how you were registered.

Before complaining to us, you should first complete the relevant internal procedures at your provider. If you are studying at one provider for a qualification which is awarded by another provider you may be able to complain to one or both providers, depending on relevant procedures and which provider is responsible for the matters giving rise to your complaint. If the provider you complain to is a member of our Scheme, it should issue you with a Completion of Procedures Letter at the end of those procedures and you will then be able to come to us.

The Consumer Rights Act 2015, the relevant section of which came into force on 1 September 2015, extended our membership to include many Further Education and Sixth-Form Colleges, alternative providers and providers of School-Centred Initial Teacher Training (SCITTs). We can only consider complaints from higher education students (at those providers). Students who are or were studying at a university, may complain about that university regardless of which course they are or were studying.

### 3.1 Name of the provider you are/were studying with:

**i** Please enter the provider you are/were registered with and are complaining about. (This will be the institution that will have issued you with the Completion of Procedures Letter). You can only complain to us about providers which are [members of the OIA Scheme](#).

### 3.2 Course name:

**i** Please enter the name of the course you are studying eg History. If you are studying for a PhD please enter the subject area not the title of your thesis.

### 3.3 Are you registered

Full-time (attending the total number of modules assigned for a year's study)

Part-time (attending a number of the modules assigned for a year's study over more than one year)

Other (if your attendance arrangement with the provider is not full-time or part-time)

### 3.4 When you applied for your course were you

**i** We need this information to comply with the reporting requirements of the EU Alternative Dispute Resolution as the designated ADR entity for higher education. This information will not affect our review of your complaint.

Resident in the UK

Resident outside the UK

Unsure

### 3.5 Please enter the date that you started your course:

**i** This date will be the first day of the first term of your first year. If you do not remember the exact date, select the first day of the month and year. The exact date may be more important if you are studying a short course or if when you started relates to your complaint. Please do not delay submitting your form while you try to obtain this information.

### 3.6 Please enter the date that you ended your course:

**i** This date will be the last day of the last term of your last year of studying. If you are still a student, please enter the date you expect to finish. If you withdrew or were withdrawn, please enter your withdrawal date. If you do not remember the exact date, select the first day of the month and year. The exact date may be relevant if you are studying a short course or when you finished relates to your complaint. Please do not delay submitting your form while you try to obtain this information.

## Section 3: Provider and course information (continued)



**3.7** How many years is the course expected to take?

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**3.8** Which year of study were you doing when the strike took place?

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**3.9** Is your course subject to a professional or accrediting body's maximum registration period?

Yes  
No

ⓘ Some professional courses must be completed within a certain period of time. The time limit is set by the relevant professional or accrediting body not the provider.

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**3.10** How much are the tuition fees that you pay per year for this course?

ⓘ Please enter the amount in pounds. If your fees changed each year at the provider, then please enter the amount for each year in the space provided.

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**3.11** How have you paid your tuition fees?

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**3.12** How are you categorised by your provider for fee purposes?

Home student

ⓘ Home student - You pay tuition fees at the level set by the provider for British citizens

ⓘ EU student - You pay the tuition fees at the level set by the provider for non-British European Union citizens

ⓘ Non-EU student - You pay tuition fees at the level set by the provider for international students from outside the European Union

EU student

Non-EU student

## Section 4: Completion of Procedures Letter



Before you can complain to us, you must complete the provider's internal complaints and appeals procedures. This is so that we can be sure the provider has had an opportunity to deal with your complaint or appeal before look at it. When the provider has made a decision on your complaint it should issue you with a Completion of Procedures Letter. Your completed complaint form must reach us within 12 months of the date of that letter. We will not accept a complaint which is received more than 12 months after the date of the Completion of Procedures Letter.

Have you made a formal complaint to the Provider about the strike action?\*

Yes

No

Have you received a Completion of Procedures Letter from the provider or providers you are complaining about? \*

Yes

No

Please provide the date of the Completion of Procedures Letter(s)

If no, please explain why \*

## Section 5: Your complaint



The OIA is a review body. This means we will consider how the provider dealt with your complaint/appeal and its final decision. The focus of our review will be what happened before the Completion of Procedures Letter was issued.

The OIA Scheme is not a further appeal to your higher education provider. We provide an independent review Scheme and our role is principally to consider whether the provider has correctly applied its regulations and followed its procedures and whether the outcome is reasonable in the circumstances.

Is it a group complaint?

Yes

No

What have you missed out on because of the strike action?

❶ For example, I missed 3 lectures in X module between 25 November and 4 December. I missed 1 meeting with my personal tutor on 28 November. I was unable to use the laboratory on 29 November because it was closed.

## Section 5: Your complaint (continued)



What has happened because of this? How have you been personally affected?

What, if anything, has the provider done to put the situation right?

❶ For example, I have been given more time to submit my coursework. I have been told that I will not be examined on the content that was missed. I have been given more guidance for self-directed learning.

Why are you dissatisfied with the final decision set out in the Completion of Procedures Letter or the process followed?

❶ What is it about the final decision as set out in the Completion of Procedures Letter, or the process the provider followed that you are dissatisfied with? Please set out the reasons why you are not satisfied with the provider's decision.

Potential resolution

❶ If we decide your complaint is Justified or Partly Justified, how could the matter be resolved? Please see the "Putting things right" pages on our website or our Remedies and Redress leaflet for information on the types of remedies we can recommend if your complaint is Justified or Partly Justified. Any suggestions you make about how the matter could be resolved will not affect our decision about whether your complaint is Justified or not. If we consider your complaint may be Justified, we may use the information that you provide here to try to settle your complaint.

## Section 6: Declaration



Please read the declaration below carefully and then tick the relevant boxes. We recommend you also read our Rules and our guidance about personal information before completing this section. You need to complete this part of the form, even if you have appointed a representative.

### I WOULD LIKE THE OFFICE OF THE INDEPENDENT ADJUDICATOR FOR HIGHER EDUCATION TO CONSIDER MY COMPLAINT.

- I believe that the things I have said in support of my complaint are true.
- I will tell the OIA immediately if any part of my complaint is being dealt with in the courts or by another organisation.
- I understand that I can withdraw my complaint at any time and the OIA will stop considering it.
- I understand that the OIA provides an informal service. It is impartial and will not act on my behalf; it will not act on behalf of the Provider. At the end of the OIA's processes, there is no legal obligation on me, or on the Provider, to accept its decision.
- I can ask questions about the OIA's Rules and say if I am unhappy with how they are being used, but I understand that the OIA has the final say on how its Rules are applied.

By ticking this box, I confirm that I have understood and agree with these statements.

- The OIA will handle personal details about me, which could include sensitive information (for example, relating to health matters) in order to deal with my complaint effectively.
- The OIA may obtain this information from me, and from the provider where I was studying, and (if different) from the provider which awards the qualification which I was studying for. In some cases, the OIA may also obtain information from other organisations (for example, organisations concerned with my health; organisations providing student placements).
- The OIA's scheme is transparent. When I submit this Complaint Form, the OIA will send a copy of it and of any accompanying information, to the provider I am complaining about. Where I am/was studying at one provider for a qualification awarded by another provider, the OIA may send a copy of this form and of the information and evidence I supply to one or both providers, as the OIA considers appropriate.
- I understand and agree that the OIA may send any further information I provide about my complaint, to the provider(s) involved. Where my course of study or the complaint involves more than one provider, the OIA may exchange information supplied by one provider about my complaint, with the other(s). If I have any concerns about this, I will contact the OIA for advice before I send the information.
- **This paragraph only applies to students studying for qualifications awarded by Awarding Organisations which are not members of the OIA Scheme, for example Pearson (Edexcel) or City & Guilds.** If the qualification that I am/was studying for is awarded by an Awarding Organisation which is not a member of the OIA Scheme, the OIA may need to exchange information with that Awarding Organisation and/or its regulator. The OIA may determine that my complaint should more appropriately be dealt with by that Awarding Organisation. I understand and agree that if that is the case, the OIA will send a copy of this Complaint Form, and supporting documentation, to the relevant Awarding Organisation and/or its regulator.
- I understand that I can withdraw my consent to the OIA handling my personal data at any time. However, I also understand that this may mean that the OIA can not look at my complaint.

By ticking this box, I am agreeing to the statements above.  
The OIA cannot consider my complaint without my agreement

## Section 6: Declaration (continued)



- From time to time, the OIA seeks feedback from the people who use its services. The OIA may use my contact details to ask me for my views. My participation in these surveys is voluntary and if I choose not to participate, this will not affect how my complaint is considered.
- Sometimes, the OIA will work with an independent third party conducting research into student complaints and satisfaction with the OIA. In these cases, the third party will not use the personal data for any other purpose than to seek feedback; will take appropriate measures to hold the data securely; and will comply with relevant legislation including around my right to access and delete my personal information. Participation in this kind of survey is voluntary and does not affect how my complaint is considered. The OIA will not include me in this kind of research without my agreement.

I agree that a third party may seek feedback from me on behalf of the OIA.

**I confirm that I am the student making the complaint.**

SIGNATURE (Type your name here) \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Even if you have appointed a representative)

## Section 7: Supporting documents



Please send us your **Completion of Procedures Letter**. If the provider issued an accompanying letter or report with the Completion of Procedures Letter please attach that too.

You do not need to send us any other documents related to your complaint. If any documents you do send to us are "password protected", please send a follow up email to [enquiries@oiahe.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@oiahe.org.uk) with the password. We will ask the provider for a copy of all the information that is relevant to your complaint. This will include copies of all the documents that the provider considered and any record of how the provider considered your case before it reached its final decision set out in the Completion of Procedures Letter. This information will include for example, the complaint or appeal that you made to the provider as well as any relevant correspondence and records of how the provider considered your case ie the notes or minutes of any hearings or meetings that took place.

We will share details of our information request with you so that you can see what we have asked for. When the provider has sent us the relevant information, we will send you a copy and give you an opportunity to comment on the information the provider has sent us. If you think any information is missing or there is something else you want us to see, you can send it to us at that stage.

If you have a Completion of Procedures Letter please include it. If you don't it will delay us reviewing your complaint.

Please send us scanned copies of all documents and keep the originals for your records.

If you require an adjustment to the way we communicate with you due to a specific accessibility or disability need, please contact us by emailing [accessibility@oiahe.org.uk](mailto:accessibility@oiahe.org.uk) or calling 0118 959 9813.

## Section 8: Monitoring questionnaire



We believe that any student who wants to complain to us about their experiences at an HE Provider which is a member of our Scheme, should be able to do so. We want our Scheme to be available to all these students, regardless of their age, race, disability, ethnic origin, gender identity, marital or partnership status, nationality, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation.

To help us check whether our Scheme is being used by students who represent the diversity of all students in England and Wales, we ask you to tell us about yourself.

You don't have to complete this form. We will still look at your complaint if you choose not to tell us this information. But, by filling in this form, you will help us to check that we are accessible to everyone who wants to complain.

If you do tell us about yourself on this form, we will not send the information to anyone else. The information you give us on this form will not be given to the case-handlers looking at your complaint. We will only use the information you give us to carry out statistical analysis of who is using our Scheme. This analysis is done on an anonymous basis; you will not be identifiable in any information we produce about who uses our service.

### How do you describe your ethnicity?

Multiple / mixed ethnicity

Single ethnicity

Unable to say

Prefer not to say

Please select any options which you feel are appropriate  
(for multiple/mixed ethnicities, please tick all that apply):

|                       |   |
|-----------------------|---|
| Arab / Arab British   | Arab  |
| Asian / Asian British | Bangladeshi<br>Chinese<br>Indian<br>Pakistani<br>Another Asian / Asian British background   |
| Black / Black British | African<br>Caribbean<br>Another Black / Black British background  |
| White / White British | White British / English / Northern Irish / Scottish / Welsh<br>Gypsy / Irish Traveller / Traveller / Roma<br>Another White / White British background |
| Other                 | Another background  |

If you would like to tell us something about your ethnicity that this form has not included, please tell us here:

### Do you identify as?

Female

Male

Non-Binary

Prefer not to say

Other

## Section 8: Monitoring questionnaire



How old are you?

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Are you considered a disabled person within the meaning of the [Equality Act](#) or do you have a long term health condition or a learning difference that has a substantial and long-term impact on your ability to carry out day to day activities?

Yes

No

Prefer not to say

Blind or have a visual impairment uncorrected by glasses

D/deaf or have a hearing impairment

Learning difference such as dyslexia, dyspraxia or AD(H)D

Long-term illness or health condition such as cancer, HIV, diabetes, chronic heart disease or epilepsy

Mental health condition, challenge or disorder

    anxiety

    depression

    other mental health condition

Physical impairment, mobility or dexterity issues

Social/communication conditions such as a speech & language impairment or an autistic spectrum condition

An impairment, health condition or learning difference not listed above (specify, if you wish)

Other

If you require an adjustment to the way we communicate with you due to a specific accessibility or disability need, please contact us on [accessibility@oiahe.org.uk](mailto:accessibility@oiahe.org.uk) or 0118 959 9813.