



# Independent Complaints Adjudication Service for Ofsted (ICASO)

## Rules & Procedure

The Independent Complaints Adjudications Service for Ofsted (ICASO) can be accessed once a Complainant has exhausted the Ofsted internal complaints procedure.

ICASO is entirely independent of Ofsted and is available to anyone who has previously made a complaint to Ofsted and is dissatisfied with the response.

An ICASO Adjudicator will be appointed upon receipt of an application to ICASO. The ICASO Adjudicator will investigate the manner in which Ofsted dealt with the complaint in question and provide advice and recommendations to improve Ofsted's systems and practices for dealing with complaints.

The ICASO Adjudicator can investigate complaints into:

- failure to follow procedures;
- failure to respond in a timely manner;
- alleged discrimination;
- alleged discourtesy;
- failure to apologise or accept mistakes; and
- inspector / staff conduct.

The ICASO Adjudicator cannot investigate complaints into:

- issues relating to government policy or legislation; and
- issues where there are clear rights of appeal through a Court or Tribunal.



The ICASO Adjudicator's recommendations may include methods for addressing failings both particular to a complaint or generally to improve inspection and complaint handling procedures.

Any recommendations made by the ICASO Adjudicator will not be binding upon Ofsted. However, if Ofsted refuses to comply with the recommendations, they must state publicly their reasons for doing so.

The ICASO Adjudicator cannot overturn the Ofsted Inspectors' Judgements nor can the ICASO Adjudicator award any financial damages or compensation.

## The Procedure

- Ofsted will write to a Complainant when their complaints process is exhausted and provide the ICASO contact details  
[www.ofstedadjudicationservice.co.uk](http://www.ofstedadjudicationservice.co.uk)
- The Complainant must contact ICASO within three months of receipt of its details from Ofsted at the end of the internal complaints process for an application to be considered
- The Complainant may contact the ICASO administrator with any enquiries on how to make an application as long as the application is in scope
- Applications must be made on the prescribed form with accompanying documents attached  
[http://www.ofstedadjudicationservice.co.uk/assets/pdfs/ICASO\\_Form.pdf](http://www.ofstedadjudicationservice.co.uk/assets/pdfs/ICASO_Form.pdf)
- Upon receipt of the application, the ICASO administrator will contact Ofsted to ensure that the complainant has exhausted the internal Process



- Upon receipt of this confirmation, an ICASO Adjudicator will be appointed by the ICASO administrator within 48 hours and details of the appointment will be confirmed to both Ofsted and the Complainant
- The letter to Ofsted will include a copy of the application and request a summary of the complaint process from Ofsted within 21 working days
- The Ofsted summary will be sent to the ICASO Adjudicator who will send this to the Complainant
- The Complainant will be given five working days to submit any final comments on the Ofsted response. Comments must be limited to observations about the summary and cannot include any new information or re-argument of the case
- In the period where comments are due, the ICASO Adjudicator will review the papers and begin to formulate their recommendations. If the ICASO Adjudicator feels that the complaint is complex or relates to a matter of public interest it will be passed to the Senior ICASO Adjudicator and the parties will be informed by the ICASO Administrator
- Upon receipt of the comments (if any) the ICASO Adjudicator will consider all documentation and in doing so decide if further information is required from the parties
- The ICASO Adjudicator will issue brief written recommendations and these will be sent to the parties within 21 days of the ICASO Adjudicator being in receipt of all information
- Ofsted is not obliged to comply with the recommendations but if they do not do so they must inform the ICASO Adjudicator of their decision and publish their reasons for not complying