

ADR Internal Statement of Compliance Annual and Quarterly Reporting

Reporting period – 1 October 2023 to 30 September 2024

Name of ADR Provider – Centre for Effective Dispute Resolution (CEDR)

Background:

Type of ADR offered (e.g. mediation, adjudication, etc).	Adjudication
Number of employees as ADR officials.	3
How are dispute outcomes reached (e.g. panel decision, individual mediator, etc)?	Individual adjudicator assesses documentary evidence submitted by the parties
If outcome is reached by panel decision, please explain who makes up the panel?	N/A
How is the ADR funded?	Case fees paid by traders, irrespective of outcome. Free of charge to consumers.

As a competent authority for the gambling sector, we approve alternative dispute resolution (ADR) providers that wish to offer services to gambling consumers. Our role as competent authority includes making sure that ADR providers continue to meet the requirements of the ADR Regulations, alongside our role as gambling regulator to make sure that gambling is fair and open. The Gambling Commission expect ADR providers in the gambling industry to meet the requirements of the [ADR Regulations](#) and our [additional standards](#).

Internal statement of compliance

Please demonstrate how your organisation and your ADR process complies with the requirements of the ADR Regulations and the Commission's standards for ADRs in the following areas:

Statement	Response
ADR Services offered by the body Please demonstrate how you meet the requirements of the ADR Regulations Schedule 3, section 1. As part of your answer, explain how you ensure that stakeholders know why the scheme exists, what it does and what to expect from it (Ombudsman Association six principles of good governance, Clarity of Purpose).	<p>CEDR offers ADR services in relation to disputes brought by consumers against traders. It is not formed for the purpose of dealing only with one particular dispute, nor are ADR officials employed or remunerated directly by a trader who is a party to the dispute.</p> <p>CEDR's website and accompanying documents and literature make clear why the scheme exists, how it functions and what users can expect from it.</p>

<p>Access to the ADR body Please demonstrate how you meet the requirements of the ADR Regulations Schedule 3, section 2. As part of your answer please explain how you consider the needs of vulnerable consumers (Commission standards, p24), and comply with other legislation such as GDPR.</p>	<p>CEDR maintains an up-to-date website providing useful information to all users of the scheme, including an outline of the process, expected timescales and possible outcomes, as well as the powers of the ADR officials. This information can be provided to users on a durable medium upon request.</p> <p>Consumers are able to file an initial complaint submission on the website and to upload any supporting documentation. Consumers can also do this by post if they wish. Both parties to a dispute can then exchange information via electronic means or, if they wish, by post.</p> <p>CEDR takes a proactive approach to identifying and assisting vulnerable consumers, especially in the gaming and gambling sector where gambling-related harms can lead to particular vulnerabilities. CEDR is always prepared to make reasonable adjustments to our processes, including amending deadlines, in order to ensure vulnerable consumers have access to ADR. Full details of CEDR's approach are set out in the following document: https://www.cedr.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/Vulnerable-consumers-policy-gambling.pdf</p> <p>CEDR complies with all relevant legislation, including the UK GDPR, with consumers giving their consent for their personal data to be shared with traders in connection with a dispute.</p>
<p>Expertise Please demonstrate how you meet the requirements of the ADR Regulations Schedule 3, section 3(a). As part of your answer, please document any training or qualifications that your ADR officials undertake, the frequency of this, and whether there are refresher sessions for officials, and any experience in dispute resolution that officials have.</p>	<p>CEDR ensures that all ADR officials possess a general understanding of the law and the necessary knowledge and skills relating to resolution of consumer disputes. All ADR officials must have as a minimum a law degree (LLB or equivalent) and must carry out a training session on the law and practice relevant to the industry in which they are resolving disputes. They must then complete a rigorous period of mentoring by a more experienced ADR official, who only approves them to resolve disputes in their own right if they meet CEDR's exacting standards of quality and expertise.</p> <p>ADR officials are given <i>ad hoc</i> additional training when new legal or industry developments take place which may impact on the resolution of consumer disputes.</p>

<p>Independence</p> <p>Please demonstrate how you meet the requirements of the ADR Regulations Schedule 3, section 3(b), (d), (e), (g) – (h). As part of your answer, please explain how you ensure and evidence the freedom of the office holder from interference in decision making (Ombudsman Association six principles of good governance, Independence), and how you are transparent about the way you are funded (Commission standards, p18).</p>	<p>CEDR appoints each ADR official for an indefinite term of office and they can only be relieved of their duties with just cause, ensuring their independence. ADR officials are remunerated regardless of the outcome they reach in a particular dispute, and they are contractually required to adhere to a strict conflict of interest policy. Further, ADR officials have no direct contact with either party to a dispute, and each dispute is decided on its own merits without a system of precedent. CEDR has a ring-fenced budget at its disposal that is sufficient to enable it to carry out its functions as an ADR entity. ADR officials are free from interference in decision making as their contracts state that they are empowered to reach their own decisions on the merits of each case. CEDR's funding arrangements are transparently stated in Scheme Rule 6.1: "The use of the Scheme is free of charge to customers. The company is therefore responsible for paying CEDR its fees."</p>
<p>Impartiality</p> <p>Please demonstrate how you meet the requirements of the ADR Regulations Schedule 3, section 3(c), (e), (f), and section 4. As part of your answer, please explain how you ensure straightforward dealing and completeness, based on honesty, selflessness and objectivity and ensuring high standards of probity and propriety (Ombudsman Association six principles of good governance, Integrity). Please also explain how your conflicts of interest procedure meets the requirements of the ADR Regulations, Schedule 3, section 4. This should include how you ensure that parties to a dispute fully understand the process where a conflict arises, and how you ensure that any ADR officials who work part-time in another capacity are not conflicted by their non-ADR duties (Commission standards p19).</p>	<p>CEDR ensures that no ADR official discharges his or her duties in a way that is biased. ADR officials are contractually required, as an ongoing obligation, to adhere to a strict conflict of interest policy, set out in their contracts with CEDR. Users of the scheme are aware from the Scheme Rules (Rule 8.1) that an alternative ADR official will replace any that has been recused due to a conflict of interest, and they are notified by CEDR if this takes place. Their role as ADR official can be terminated if this process is not adhered to, and this applies to all ADR officials, including those who work part-time in another capacity. CEDR follows the conflict of interests procedure set out in the ADR Regulations, Schedule 3, section 4, and in the event that no ADR official is able to conduct the process, then CEDR will suggest alternative ADR entities or services which can assist in resolving the dispute.</p>

<p>Transparency</p> <p>The ADR Regulations require you to publish information on your website (ADR Regulations Schedule 3, section 5), and we will check your website for this information. We also expect you to publish performance data and specific information on your methods and timescales as part of our standards. Explain how in general you ensure openness and transparency in your scheme in order that stakeholders can have confidence in the decision making and management processes of the scheme (Ombudsman Association six principles of good governance, Openness and transparency), and how all members of the scheme are seen to be accountable and responsible for their decisions and actions (Ombudsman Association six principles of good governance, Accountability).</p>	<p>The information set out in Schedule 3, section 5 of the ADR Regulations is published on CEDR's website.</p> <p>Performance data in the form of annual and biennial reports and information regarding the scheme's methods and timescales are set out on CEDR's website.</p> <p>All of the scheme's processes are open and transparent. The scheme rules and ADR officials' identities are made public on the Scheme's website. All evidence and submissions are shared with both parties to a case, to ensure full transparency. Furthermore, ADR officials produce fully-reasoned written decisions which are sent to both parties simultaneously.</p>
<p>Effectiveness</p> <p>Please demonstrate how you meet the requirements of the ADR Regulations Schedule 3, section 6. As part of your answer, please explain how you ensure that the scheme achieves its outcomes efficiently and represents good value for money (Ombudsman Association six principles of good governance, Effectiveness). You should also demonstrate how you meet the decision/outcome quality standards (Commission standards, p19), and the process you have put in place for an audit/review of dispute outcomes, service standards and service quality (Commission standards, p18).</p>	<p>CEDR ensures that its services are available and accessible to both parties irrespective of where they are located. CEDR does not require parties to obtain independent legal advice or be represented by a third party, although they may choose to do so. The service is available at no cost to consumers. CEDR notifies the parties once it has received a complete complaint file, and we then proceed to reach an outcome on the case within 90 days.</p> <p>All complaints referred to the Scheme are dealt with swiftly, by experienced and legally qualified ADR officials, at a significantly lower cost than litigation, representing excellent value for money.</p> <p>A number of measures are in place to ensure that the quality of decisions remains high, including a review process by which every decision is assessed against the Ombudsman Association's case competency framework. Outcomes are complied with in all cases in which the consumer accepts the ADR official's decision. Furthermore, an audit/review of the functioning and suitability of the Scheme is carried out annually to ensure that it provides an effective and efficient means of handling complaints and resolving disputes.</p>

<p>Fairness</p> <p>Please demonstrate how you meet the requirements of the ADR Regulations Schedule 3, sections 7-10. As part of your answer, explain how you ensure that your dispute process takes account of the balance of power within a dispute, particularly around sharing evidence with parties to a dispute (Commission standards p18).</p>	<p>CEDR demonstrates fairness by clearly explaining the role of the Scheme and the process that is used to resolve disputes, and admitting to the panel of ADR officials only those who are legally qualified and who have been trained in the nature of disputes referred to the Scheme. All parties to a dispute are provided with comprehensive opportunities to put forward their arguments, evidence and documents as they see fit, and CEDR operates a 360-degree evidence process, which ensures that all information and evidence provided by one party is visible to the other party, and can be commented upon by both. ADR officials are also empowered to request further evidence or information from either party, or to extend the time periods that the parties have for submitting evidence, where doing so is in the interests of fairness and justice.</p> <p>ADR officials examine and weigh up all of the evidence and information provided by the parties in an unbiased and impartial way, in line with the relevant law and good industry practice. ADR officials apply a balance of probabilities standard of proof, and they are trained to take into account any imbalance in power between the parties, and to seek further evidence where appropriate in order to remedy this.</p> <p>ADR officials produce a written decision with full reasons in each case, which is transmitted to both parties simultaneously. These decisions are only binding on the parties if the customer chooses to accept the decision, and either party is permitted to request clarification from the ADR official if they do not understand any point in the written decision.</p> <p>The parties are both made aware at the start of the process that they are able to withdraw from the ADR procedure at any stage prior to the publication of the ADR official's decision if they wish to do so. They are advised that it is at the consumer's discretion as to whether or not to accept the decision, that the decision may contain a different outcome to what a court might produce, and consumers are advised of their right to take their dispute to another forum (such as the courts) at any stage if they are dissatisfied with the process or an ADR official's decision.</p>
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Legality Please demonstrate how your process meets the requirements of the ADR Regulations, Schedule 3, section 11.	The ADR procedure operated by CEDR does not impose a solution on the consumer, so the requirements of the ADR Regulations, Schedule 3, section 11 are not engaged.
General Please tell us about any changes you have made to the delivery of your dispute resolution process since your last report. What has been the impact of the changes? If you would like to share any additional information or comments (beyond that required by your ADR Regulations-specified annual report) then please comment below.	No changes have been made to the delivery of CEDR's dispute resolution process since the last report.

Quarterly/Annual reports

Quarterly reporting periods end 31 December, 31 March, 30 June, and 30 September.

Annual reporting periods end 30 September.

Please submit your reports to ComplianceAction@gamblingcommission.gov.uk by the end of the calendar month which follows the end of the reporting period.

Annual report information must be displayed on your website by 1 November each year, as per the ADR Regulations.

ADR provider quarterly/ annual reporting

ADR provider	Centre for Effective Dispute Resolution (CEDR)
Reporting Period	1 October 2023 – 30 September 2024
Quarterly return only*	

*if Nil Return, then please submit your quarterly return now.

a) No. of domestic & cross border disputes received		Domestic	17
		Cross Border	0
b) No. of each type of complaint <i>Please list the actual number of each type of complaint you received.</i>		Of the 10 disputes that fell within the scope of what CEDR could deal with, the complaints related to: • Financial entitlement / game outcome: 10 • Payment / transactional error: 0 • Terms and conditions / contract terms: 0	
c) Total number of disputes the provider refused to deal with <i>% share of the grounds set out in para 13 Schedule 3 of the ADR Regulations</i>	7	Consumer not contacted trader first	0%
		Dispute is frivolous/vexatious	0%
		Dispute is being/has been considered by another ADR provider/court	0%

		Value is outside the provider's monetary thresholds	0%
		complaint not submitted within time period	0%
		dealing with the dispute would impair the effective operation of the body	0%
		not the relevant gambling sector	0%
		GC regulatory matter only (not a dispute)	100%
		Discontinued for non-operational reasons (e.g., party withdrew)	0%
d) % of ADR procedures discontinued for operations reasons	0%	reasons for discontinuation if known	N/A
e) Average time taken to resolve disputes in days		Domestic	53
		Cross Border	N/A
f) No. of disputes completed in period			10
g) % completed disputes ruled in operator's favour			100%
h) % completed disputes ruled in favour of the consumer			0%
i) % completed disputes settled by the operator during the ADR process			0%
j) average length of time taken to receive complaint file from operator (days)			12

Items (f) to (j) are part of the Commission's additional standards and not a requirement of the ADR Regulations.

For annual report only - note that all fields relating to the annual report must be displayed on your website by 1 November each year.

k) a description of any systematic or significant problems that occur frequently and lead to disputes between consumers and traders of which the ADR entity has become aware due to its operations as an ADR entity.	A lack of awareness of consumer vulnerability and taking appropriate measures to provide meaningful assistance and support continues to drive disputes where more bespoke responsiveness could help to avoid conflict. Where customers who are vulnerable (including those who are temporarily vulnerable) are not offered support that is tailored to their particular needs at that time, the likelihood is higher that relatively minor problems will escalate into disputes that are referred to ADR.
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<p>l) any recommendations the ADR entity may have as to how the problems referred to in paragraph (c) could be avoided or resolved in future, in order to raise traders' standards and to facilitate the exchange of information and best practices</p>	<p>Providing real and meaningful outreach to vulnerable consumers at all levels of the customer contact and complaint journeys is key to ensuring consumers feel heard and valued, which avoids disputes. Providing specialised services for vulnerable customers (including those who are temporarily vulnerable) can help those customers who are in acute need of support, avoiding the escalation of problems into disputes.</p>
<p>m) the rate of compliance, if known, with the outcomes of the alternative dispute resolution procedures.</p>	<p>100%</p> <p>CEDR has received no reports of non-compliance by a trader within this reporting period.</p> <p>CEDR has a process in place whereby a trader that fails to comply with an ADR official's decision that has been accepted by the consumer has their membership of CEDR suspended. If non-compliance persists, CEDR will no longer provide ADR services to that trader.</p>
<p>n) the co-operation, if any, of the ADR entity within any network of ADR entities which facilitates the resolution of cross-border disputes.</p>	<p>N/A</p>

<p>o) please list all operators where you currently provide dispute resolution services.</p>	<p>A&G Amusements Ltd Boscombe Palace Caesars Palace Weston-super-Mare Camelot / The National Lottery Casino Slots City Slots Crystal Palace Amusements Dover Palace Game Nation Gaming Fun Gold Gaming Hijingo Hilo Bet Hobart's AGC Las Vegas (Soho) Lucky Slots Mega Amusements Nobles Seaton Carew Opera House Casino Scarborough Palace Amusements Parseq Play 2 Win Playnation Reel Time Regors Bingo and Social Club Royal Casino Shaun McGann t/a The Zone Silvertime Amusements Silvertime Bingo The Raging Ball True Amusements Vegas Gold</p>
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