

When Citizens Complain

For Ombudsmen, Commissions
and complaint handling
organisations



One-week professional development workshop
16 to 20 June 2025 in London



ACCREDITED
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for Independent Further and Higher Education

About the workshop

"When Citizens Complain" is a high-level one-week workshop. Its main aims are to:

- Improve public services and promote good governance across the world
- Raise awareness of the importance of the Ombudsman, Human Rights Commissioners and complaint handlers dealing with corruption and human rights violations
- Explore a variety of systems and approaches to complaint handling and dispute resolution in different countries, including how to make best use of technology in dealing with complaints remotely
- Improve understanding of the needs of vulnerable complainants and explore ways of meeting those needs.

Who is the workshop for?

The workshop is for Ombudsman offices and Human Rights Commissioners and their senior staff. It will also be relevant for:

- Staff from complaint-handling organisations
- Policy makers from countries which have an Ombudsman system, which are in the process of setting one up or which are thinking of doing so
- Staff from complaint-handling or dispute resolution departments in any public body
- Public servants who wish to get a better understanding of how Ombudsman, Human Rights and complaint-handling offices work to improve services for the public.

How participants will benefit

The workshop will provide a valuable opportunity for you to:

- Broaden your knowledge of the concept and institution of the Ombudsman and variations of the Ombudsman model
- Learn from the experience and expertise of UK Ombudsman offices, human rights defenders, complaint handling organisations, relevant parliamentarians, lawyers, civil servants and leading scholars and practitioners
- Improve your capacity to manage investigations, produce effective reports, communicate with the public and other key stakeholders and deal with the media
- Make international comparisons and identify areas for developing and improving your own Ombudsman, human rights and complaint handling systems
- Develop practical skills in managing the business of your office, especially considering the need to offer alternative ways of registering complaints
- Familiarise you with how Ombudsman, human rights and complaint-handling organisations deal with complaints and redress grievances
- Help you to ensure that all staff members are aware of their human rights responsibilities and meet these responsibilities effectively
- Share with one another individual experiences.

What the workshop will cover

The workshop will cover issues of principle and practice relating to the role of Ombudsman, human rights and complaint handling organisations and will provide a balance between tutorial sessions, discussions and visits. It is designed flexibly so that it can be adjusted in emphasis to meet your specific requirements and those of your organisation.

A key element for sharing experience and best practice will be sessions during which you will be invited to give an informal presentation on your own office and complaints system. You will also be asked to describe your approach to handling a range of cases and will be involved in problem-solving exercises and discussion groups.

The workshop includes seminar-style discussions; exchanges of information and experience from the countries represented; practical casework, action planning and a range of visits or speakers from the offices of the UK Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman, a Local Government Ombudsman, the Independent Office for Police Conduct, the Equality Advisory Support Service, mediators and other relevant complaint handling organisations.

Programme outline:

	AM	PM
Day 1	<p>Welcome and introductions</p> <p>The Ombudsman landscape:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> History and development Global perspectives UK Ombudsman offices in the public and private sectors <p>Participants' informal presentations</p>	<p>Governance and the constitutional context:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Legislation, regulation and jurisdiction <p><i>Face-to-face or virtual visit to the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman (PHSO)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The structure and organisation of the PHSO Leadership Decision-making and reporting Resourcing the service PHSO's interface with other relevant bodies
Day 2	<p>Providing access to complaint handling services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Addressing equality and diversity Reflecting different societal requirements Making your systems and processes fit for purpose <p>Case study and group work:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Access to services Equality and diversity 	<p>The digital dimension:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Face-to-face or virtual visit to the Local Government Ombudsman:</i> Managing different customer preferences Timeliness of decision-making and delivery of service Adopting a communications strategy and engaging with the media, including use of social media <p>Case study and group work:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Managing digital services
Day 3	<p>Building the capacity of your team:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developing skills and training in investigation techniques Ensuring the right spread of experience of handling dispute resolution Providing in-house training and continuous improvement <p>Case study and group work:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigating complaints Redress and remedies 	<p>Effective dispute resolution:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigation and outcomes Timeliness Redress and remedies <p><i>Face-to-face or virtual visit to the Centre for Effective Dispute Resolution (CEDR):</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effective dispute resolution techniques Dispute resolution in practice
Day 4	<p>Human rights and the courts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Human rights legislation in complaint handling – what is its purpose and what does it mean in practice? Establishing a clear policy for delivering the human rights dimension in dispute resolution Equality and diversity considerations 	<p>Human rights (continued):</p> <p><i>Face-to-face or virtual visit to the Independent Office for Police Conduct:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How to determine whether a complaints investigation involves human rights Ensuring that all staff address human rights responsibilities effectively
Day 5	<p>The changing role of the Ombudsman:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delivering outcomes that make a difference Improving the services of bodies in jurisdiction 	<p>Raising the profile of the Ombudsman, human rights defenders and complaint handlers in society</p> <p>Review and evaluation of the workshop</p> <p>Presentation of certificates of attendance</p>

We reserve the right to change the programme as necessary.

Workshop Director

The Workshop Director will be Sir Anthony (Tony) Redmond.

Tony has had a long and successful career in public service, in particular in local government. He was Chairman and Chief Executive of the Commission for Local Administration and Local Government Ombudsman in England for nine years. During this time he also served as Chair of the Association for two years.

Prior to being an Ombudsman he was Chief Executive of the London Borough of Harrow, Deputy Chief Executive and Finance Director of Knowsley (Merseyside) and Treasurer of the Merseyside Police Authority. In his earlier years he was Deputy Finance Director of Wigan (Greater Manchester) and Chief Accountant of Liverpool City Council.

Tony was formerly the Local Government Boundary Commissioner for England, Treasurer of UNICEF UK and Chair of the Consumer Council for Water for London and the South-East. He conducted the Redmond Review of local audit in England. He is currently Chair of the Improvement and Advisory Board of Nottingham City Council, one of England's local authorities.

How to apply

Please complete the PAI application form online via our website: www.public-admin.co.uk/booking-form/

You can also complete our hard copy application form. Please contact us at pai@public-admin.co.uk to obtain a copy. Once completed please return to Amanda Anderson, Programme Manager, at the same email address.

If you would like to discuss this workshop, any of our other international workshops or our consultancy services, please contact Claire Cameron, Director. We also have extensive experience of designing tailor-made training (from one day to two or three weeks) which can be run in your own country or in the UK to meet the specific needs of groups or individuals at all levels within your organisation. Please contact us if you would like further information.

Language

The workshop is conducted in English. You will need to have a good working knowledge of the language.

Location and arrival arrangements

The workshop is based in central London. We can arrange travel to and from one of the London airports into central London if you let us have your flight arrival details in good time. The cost of airport transfers is included in the fee.

Fees

The fee for the workshop will be £2,550 and is payable at least 21 days before the first day of the workshop. It includes tuition, travel to and from the airport in London, travel on scheduled visits which form part of the programme¹, presentation material and other documentation. It also includes an Android tablet for you to use during the workshop and take home with you for future reference and follow up. We provide lunch and refreshments during each working day as part of the fee.

Other costs

Airfares and daily travel to and from the workshop venue are not included. Our workshops are non-residential and you are responsible for your accommodation costs. We can help you with booking hotel accommodation so please let us know if you would like us to advise you or make a reservation. We suggest that you should allow approximately £160 per day for a modest standard of hotel (for example, three-star), local travel in the UK, meals (apart from lunch on working days) and other incidental expenses.

Value Added Tax

We do not have to charge UK Value Added Tax (VAT) if you can provide written confirmation from your government or its accredited representative that you are "employed by the government in furtherance of its sovereign activities". In all other cases, we will have to charge VAT (currently 20%) in addition to the fee.

Ways to pay

You, or your government agency, can pay by bank transfer or by cheque, made payable to Public Administration International. We also accept payment by credit or debit card. Please contact us if you would like to pay by credit or debit card.

Discounts

We offer a 10% reduction on the full tuition fee if we receive payment no later than 28 days before the first day of the workshop. If we receive payment after that, we will charge the full tuition fee.

Cancellations

If you have to cancel your booking, you must let us know in writing and we will acknowledge in writing your cancellation. For cancellations received up to 29 days before the start of the workshop we will refund the tuition fee, minus a charge of £200 to cover our administration costs. For cancellations received within 28 days or fewer of the start of the workshop, we will charge the full tuition fee. If you have paid the tuition fee and have subsequently been refused a visa to enter the UK, we will refund the tuition fee, minus a charge of £200 to cover our administration costs, providing you send us the original letter from the British High Commission/ Embassy confirming refusal of a visa and providing you have not entered the UK.

Substitutions and transfers

If you have booked a place on a workshop and are not able to attend, we will accept an appropriate substitute at any time without penalty but our normal terms and conditions will apply. Also, it is possible to transfer to a future workshop but only one transfer is permitted. Please get in touch with us and we will advise you about transfers.

Please see our website for our full terms and conditions. If you would prefer a hard copy of our full terms and conditions please let us know.

[\(http://www.public-admin.co.uk/terms-and-conditions-for-booking/\)](http://www.public-admin.co.uk/terms-and-conditions-for-booking/)

Insurance

We advise you to arrange travel and health insurance cover before you leave your home country.

¹Travel to and from the airport in London and on scheduled visits during the workshop are provided at cost.

Who we are

PAI (Public Administration International) specialises in management consultancy, training and development services for organisations in, and associated with, the public sector worldwide. We provide advice and support for governments going through political, economic, structural and legislative change. Our extensive network of associates includes practitioners, academics and independent consultants. Our key objectives are promoting good governance and good practice in delivering public services. This workshop is one of our range of specialist UK-based professional development workshops designed to meet the needs of public services worldwide.

We pride ourselves on our:

- High quality, practical advice and support for our clients
- Professionalism and integrity
- Ability to offer excellent value for money
- Sound experience and track record internationally
- Networks and partnerships across the world
- Flexible, collaborative approach
- Friendliness and focus on putting people first.

Where we are



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