

SERVICE STANDARDS FRAMEWORK

What are service standards?

Service standards are the levels of quality that ISCAS strives to meet at all times in providing services to all of our users. Service standards underpin the way in which ISCAS approaches dispute resolution, guiding our success and giving all users a clear indication of what they can expect.

In delivering this dispute resolution service, ISCAS aims to adhere to, and where possible build upon, the service standards set out in the Ombudsman Association's Service Standards Framework, which sets out what is considered to be good practice in the provision of services to the public.

What is the purpose of this Framework?

This Framework sets out the commitments and service standards that can be expected when using ISCAS' services. It identifies five commitments that ISCAS makes to ensure that the services we provide are fit for purpose. The Framework applies to the services provided by ISCAS to both consumers and subscribing companies.

The Framework sets out five commitments to users of our services:

- a) accessibility;
- b) communication;
- c) professionalism;
- d) fairness; and
- e) transparency.

Service standard 1: ACCESSIBILITY

- ISCAS services are free to complainants.
- Our processes and procedures are designed and implemented in a way that can be understood and used by all members of the public.

- We work with complainants to understand their needs, in order for complainants to easily access our services.
- We make reasonable efforts to support access to our services for any user, including working with representatives and others to support complainants. Reasonable adjustments policy can be found on our website.
- We listen to what complainants want and we ensure that we understand complaints. If a complainant is complaining about an organisation or issue that ISCAS cannot consider complaints about, where possible we will direct the complainant to the relevant dispute resolution body or organisation who may be able to help.

Service standard 2: COMMUNICATION

- ISCAS always treats service users courteously, respectfully and with dignity.
- We communicate with complainants through their own chosen method where possible.
- We always explain our role to service users, letting them know what we can and cannot do. If we are unable to help, we will always explain why.
- ISCAS will clearly explain to service users the processes and procedures that we use for resolving complaints about organisations, as well as the likely timescales.
- We keep service users regularly informed of the progression of their case, and how long things are likely to take.
- We tell service users who they can contact if they have any questions at different stages in the handling of the case, and how they can do so.
- We strive for accuracy, as well as plain and clear language, in all communications with users.

Service standard 3: PROFESSIONALISM

- ISCAS ensures that the ADR Officials who adjudicate disputes have the relevant knowledge, training and skills.
- We deal with complaints in a timely manner, taking into account the complexity of each case.
- We ensure that our ADR officials direct remedies that are appropriate and that take account of the impact any identified faults have had on the complainant.
- ISCAS uses the outcomes of complaints to promote wider learning and improvement to the service and the sector complained about.
- Our record keeping is accurate and all data is stored securely.
- If and when the sharing of information is necessary, it is done appropriately and in line with GDPR requirements.
- ISCAS follows CEDR's published processes when dealing with complaints about

our own service, and we always seek to acknowledge and apologise for any mistakes made.

- We actively seek feedback about our services and use it to improve.

Service standard 4: FAIRNESS

- ISCAS works with service users without discrimination or prejudice.
- ADR Officials make decisions on cases based on their independent and impartial evaluation of the relevant evidence.
- The reasons for decisions are documented and fully explained to the parties.
- ISCAS makes clear to the parties where there are opportunities to provide further submissions during the process, before the final decision is issued.
- We make clear to service users our approach to unacceptable behaviour through CEDR's unacceptable behaviour policy, which is accessed [here](#).

Service standard 5: TRANSPARENCY

- We publish the rules that govern all dispute resolution schemes operated by on our website, as well as information about the ADR Officials who make decisions on cases.
- ISCAS has procedures in place to deal with any conflicts of interest around the handling of complaints. Our conflicts of interest policy can be found on our website.
- We are open and transparent about the dispute resolution process of each case, and both parties can view all of the evidence submitted in each case.
- ISCAS publishes the learning that can be drawn from the complaints we handle in order to drive service improvement across the sector.
- We provide service users with information explaining the approach they take to handling complaints about our own service. We have adopted CEDR's complaints procedure, which is found on our website.
- ISCAS explains what action can be taken if any directed remedies are not implemented by the organisation complained about.