



Procedure for internal reviews under the Freedom of Information Act 2000

1. Overview

As an office holder within the public sector, the Compliance Officer for IPSA is subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA).

The Freedom of Information Act gives a general right of access to information held by Public Authorities and we embrace our obligations under the Act.

The Code of Practice, issued under section 45 of the FOIA states that each public authority should have in place a procedure for dealing with complaints in relation to its handling of requests for information.

All requestors have the right to complain if they are unhappy with the handling of a request for information, made under the FOIA. This could be because:

- an exemption was applied, meaning the request (or a part of it) was denied;
- the 20 working day deadline was not met;
- a full response was not provided; or
- the request was otherwise not handled correctly.

2. Requesting an internal review

If you are unhappy with a response you have received under the FOIA, you should contact the Compliance Officer for IPSA within two months of the date of the response, at the following address:

4th Floor
30 Millbank
London
SW1P 4DU

or by email to: compliance@parliamentarystandards.org.uk.

In the first instance, an attempt will be made to respond to your complaint(s) swiftly and informally. If this is not possible, a full internal review will be carried out. You need not state your reasons for requesting an internal review, but it can help us to ensure your concerns are fully addressed if you do.

3. Timeframe

Unlike FOI requests, there is no statutory time frame for carrying out internal reviews, but we aim to provide a full response within 20 working days. In acknowledging any request for an internal review, we will inform you of the date you should expect a response by. If it is not possible for us to reach a decision within 20 working days, we will write to you again to keep you informed of our progress.

4. Procedure

The Code of Practice states that the review should be undertaken by someone senior to the person who took the original decision, where this is reasonably practicable. As the Compliance Officer for IPSA is an independent office-holder in his own right, he/she is the most senior individual capable of undertaking the review. The Compliance Officer will undertake a full re-evaluation of the case, taking into account the matters raised by the investigation of the complaint.

As part of the review, the Compliance Officer will consider whether:

- the response provided was handled correctly under the terms of the FOIA;
- there have been any developments since the original response;
- the information contained within the response was correct and true, as of the date of responding;
- any further information should be provided;
- there are any lessons for handling requests in the future.

Once the review has been carried out, you will be notified in writing whether the original decision has been upheld (or otherwise), alongside the conclusions informing the decision.

5. Complaining to the Information Commissioner

If you remain dissatisfied after an internal review decision, you have the right to apply to the Information Commissioner's Office under Section 50 of the FOIA. You may contact the Information Commissioner's Office at the following address:

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

Or you may wish to visit the [ICO's website](#).