



UIA ADR (Alternative Dispute Resolution) Process – Guide for Complainants

This guide explains what happens if you have a complaint about a UIA-registered Third Party Intermediary (TPI) that cannot be resolved directly.

1. When to Contact UIA

- Try to resolve the complaint directly with the TPI first.
- If unresolved, the TPI must direct you to UIA for ADR.
- You may contact the UIA Board directly or appoint a representative to act on your behalf.

2. Lodging a Complaint

- Submit your complaint to the UIA Board.
- You will receive acknowledgement within 2 working days.
- Both you and the TPI will be asked to provide all relevant information.
- A complaint reference number will be issued and shared with both parties.

3. Providing Information

- The Board will write to both parties to request all relevant information to be sent within 15 working days.
- The Board may extend this deadline for complex cases (up to 31 days).

Definition of a Complex Case:

- A dispute involving more than two parties, for example: cases which involve non-members or cases where a complaint also involves the actions of a supplier/s
- Additional evidence or clarifications may be requested during this period.
- Either party may contact the UIA at any time for updates.
- A case is ready for review once all the evidence is received and no later than 60 days

4. Board Decision

- The Board will make a decision within 15 working days, or within an agreed extension.
- The outcome will be communicated in writing to both parties.
- Either party (Complainant or TPI) may appeal within 21 days of the decision being issued.

5. Decision Outcomes

If the TPI is found in whole or in part at fault, then:

The TPI must correct any harm caused to the complainant within a reasonable timeframe.

Examples of possible remedies include:

- A written apology
- Reimbursement of costs
- Return of fees
- Advice or mandatory training for the TPI

The Board's decision is binding on the TPI unless overturned in appeal.

If the Board finds in favour of the TPI:

- The complainant is not bound by the decision and retains the right to pursue redress through legal remedy.

Either party may appeal to the [Dispute Resolution Ombudsman \(DRO\)](#). Guidance on the appeal process can be found under ***Appealing the Board's Decision*** later in this document.

6. Remedy Monitoring and Case Closure

- All outcomes are logged, and the TPI is required to provide ongoing progress updates.
- The complainant may contact the Board at any time to request updates if the TPI has not provided information or demonstrated progress
- The timeframe for implementing remedies will vary depending on the nature of the remedy. For example, agreed compensation should be completed within 28 days, while reimbursement of fees may extend over the duration of the contract or follow an agreed schedule of staged payments.
- **Closing cases due to inactivity:**
 - Remedies are monitored. If there is no communication from the complainant following the 21-day right to appeal process, the Board will write to the complainant and allow a further 28 days for a response.
 - If there is still no communication after this period, the complaint will be closed.
 - This does not affect the legal rights of the complainant.

7. Appealing the Board's Decision (DRO)

- Either party may appeal the Board's decision within 21 days of the decision being issued.
- Appeals are passed over by the UIA for review by the Dispute Resolution Ombudsman (DRO), who is a registered Ombudsman Scheme with legally qualified adjudicators. an independent and impartial body. Further details are available at: <https://www.disputeresolutionombudsman.org>.
- The cost of this review is £150 excluding VAT, payable by the TPI. (Whether this cost is passed on to the complainant depends on the Client-TPI agreement).

DRO Review Process

- The UIA Board will provide the DRO with all documents and evidence from both parties.
- Copies of the referral are shared with both parties
- The DRO will issue a final written decision, including the reasons for its determination within its own timeframes. This decision is final and binding on both parties.

8. Your Rights

Using the UIA's ADR process or exercising a right of appeal, in no way interferes with your rights to seek legal remedy after the case has concluded but should you do so before a conclusion is reached or any appeal is lodged, the UIA can no longer be involved.

9. Grounds for Refusing to Deal with a Complaint

The UIA may refuse a complaint if:

- The TPI is not a UIA member.
- The matter has already been considered by a court or another ADR body.
- The complaint is deemed frivolous, vexatious, or malicious.
- The complainant has not attempted to resolve the issue directly with the TPI first.
- The complaint is submitted more than 12 months after the TPI confirmed it was unable to resolve the issue (this timeframe may be extended in exceptional circumstances to ensure fair access to the scheme).
- Dealing with the dispute would seriously impair the effective operation of the ADR process.
- The UIA does not have sufficient expertise in the specific area of dispute.
- If a complaint is refused, the UIA will provide written reasons for its decision.

10. Conflict of Interest

In the unlikely event that a member of the UIA Board has involvement or dealings with either party involved in the complaint, both parties will be notified immediately.

- The Board member with the conflict will stop participating in the case.

- The case will be handled by the remaining independent Board members or an appointed independent handler.

This ensures the ADR process is transparent, impartial, and trustworthy.

11. Complaints About Board Members

The UIA Board is committed to courteous and respectful conduct. If you feel a Board member has not acted appropriately, you may submit a complaint naming the member to admin@u-i-a.org or in writing to:

Utilities Intermediaries Association

20 Eversley Road

Bexhill-on-Sea

East Sussex TN40 1HE

Your complaint will be investigated by the remaining Board members and UIA Council.