

# ADVANCED PROFESSIONAL AWARD IN COMPLAINTS HANDLING & INVESTIGATIONS



BOND SOLON

A unique qualification promoting best practice in resolving complaints

"The experience of those attending the training varied from a few weeks to many years, but everyone felt that the training had been of significant benefit. The trainer was very knowledgeable and well-prepared on issues specific to our Office, with an approachable manner that encouraged full participation. I would have no hesitation in using Bond Solon again and would wholeheartedly recommend them for complaints investigation training."

Sarah Lamont, Director of Investigations and Corporate Services,  
Northern Ireland Ombudsman's Office

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## Why do Advanced Professional Training in Complaints Handling & Investigations?

It is essential that the investigation and handling of complaints be carried out professionally.

The training, together with in-course assessments, has been designed to provide the delegates with the knowledge and skills to carry out a complaints investigation to best practice standards and in line with the procedures of their organisation.

Delegates will look at relevant legislation, procedures and rules of evidence that impact on their everyday work. They will learn and apply best practice standards in collecting and recording information, writing reports and other correspondence and if required, presenting

their findings before review panels and in other legal forums.

The training provides personnel who handle and investigate complaints with the necessary competencies to carry out their work effectively.

Advanced Professional Training in Complaints Handling & Investigations consists of a number of 1 day courses that will provide delegates with the essential knowledge and skills to carry out a complaints investigation professionally and secure relevant, reliable and credible information to promote early resolution.

## Advanced Professional Training in Complaints Handling & Investigations will:

- equip delegates with the skills to effectively and fairly investigate complaints
- create best practice in complaints handling and investigations
- promote best practice in resolving and learning from complaints
- provide delegates with a toolkit for determining the cause of the complaint
- reduce costs in complaints handling and investigations
- instil confidence in complaints investigations

## A unique approach:

**Competency based** with specific aims and objectives  
**Equips delegates** with the necessary knowledge, skills and procedures to ensure that those who handle complaints can competently gather information to ensure that a fair and objective investigation is carried out

**Interactive:** the delegates learn by doing and receive

feedback and support from their peers and trainers

**Accredited by Edexcel** at BTEC Level 7 (equivalent of NVQ Level 5)

**Flexible and modular based** in order to meet the audience's exact needs

Delivered by experienced **barristers** and **solicitors**

## Who should attend?

### Personnel:

- Complaints Investigators & Caseworkers
- Managers and other personnel tasked with undertaking complaints investigations as part of their wider role
- Adjudicators
- Personnel working in a complaints handling capacity for ombudsmen schemes and other dedicated complaints handling bodies

## In-house courses

The training is delivered in-house for groups of between 5-16 delegates. We will liaise with key personnel at your organisation to ensure that the key areas of legislation, procedure and powers relevant to your work are incorporated within the training

## Can the training lead to a qualification?

### Advanced Professional Award

Delegates who undertake 3 days of training (modules 1-3) and successfully complete the assessments will be eligible for an Advanced Professional Award in Complaints Handling and Investigation accredited by Edexcel at BTEC Level 7 (equivalent to NVQ Level 5).

**Bond Solon also delivers the following modules:**

- Mediation (1-day)
- Negotiation (1-day)
- Advocacy & Representation (1-2 days)
- Conflict Management (2-days)

## Module 1 - Law, Evidence and Procedure in Complaints Handling and Investigations (1 day)

### Description of the training:

This training is designed to give delegates the knowledge, skills and techniques to carry out a complaints investigation to best practice standards and in line with the organisation's own internal policies and procedures.

The whole process of planning an investigation and collecting, recording, assessing and evaluating evidence will be considered to highlight the pitfalls and shortcomings in complaints investigations.

The training looks at the different types and sources of evidence and how this evidence will be collected and recorded so that it is admissible, reliable and credible. Delegates will learn how to conduct an investigation that provides them with the necessary facts and information to support and justify their subsequent actions. Delegates will analyse and evaluate the available evidence. This training will assist delegates to carry out their role in a fair and proportionate manner and establish the root cause of the complaint and the appropriate way to handle it.

### Key learning points:

- ❑ Understanding and knowledge of relevant legislation, procedures or guidance including correct interpretation and application
- ❑ Planning and conducting a proportionate complaints investigation
- ❑ Recognising different types of evidence, including, oral, documentary, hearsay, circumstantial and real
- ❑ How to research, collect and record evidence from a wide variety of sources in a complaints investigation
- ❑ Distinguishing between facts, inferences and opinions
- ❑ How to analyse and evaluate evidence to determine the root cause of the complaint and/or reach justifiable conclusions or decisions
- ❑ Creating, maintaining and enhancing best practice standards in record keeping and note taking

## Module 2 - Communication, Questioning Techniques and Interviewing Skills in Complaints Handling and Investigations (1 day)

### Description of the training:

Those conducting complaints investigations are often required to carry out questioning and conduct fact finding interviews. The information being obtained during an interview may become vital evidence in dealing effectively with the complaint. Those conducting interviews need to understand and apply appropriate skills for fair and objective fact finding interviews.

This training develops to a high level the skills required to conduct fact finding interviews to best practice standards. Delegates will learn how to conduct interviews by applying the PEACE (planning, preparation engage and explain, account, closure and evaluation) model and considering other interviewing models.

Delegates will learn how to identify the issues in the complaint and effectively plan and structure the interviews. Delegates will consider the different types of questioning and how to handle those who are angry, upset and confused. Delegates will learn through role-play and constructive feedback how to interview to obtain factual accounts from complainants, witnesses and those who are the subject of the complaint.

### Key learning points:

- ❑ Identifying the issues in the complaint and the existing facts or evidence available before conducting the interview
- ❑ How to plan and prepare a fact finding interview
- ❑ Understanding and using different questioning techniques to establish the facts and to obtain all the available evidence
- ❑ How to structure interviews in a manner that is appropriate to the type of interview and interviewee
- ❑ How to conduct an interview with a range of complainants, witnesses and those who are the subject of the complaint.

## Module 3 - Report Writing in Complaints Handling & Investigations (1 day)

### Description of the training:

Many reports written during the course of a complaints investigation fail to identify and deal with the issues and fail to coherently and credibly provide the basis for the investigation's findings or recommendations. A good report will provide a sound basis for recommendations and the response to the complaint and will also provide an invaluable tool for feeding back and implementing improvements to the risk assessment process and working practices of the organisation.

Delegates will consider the content of reports by considering the source and weight of evidence to be included and learning to distinguish between facts, inference and opinion. They will also consider the style and format of reports by reference to a model format for reports. The samples and models can be adapted to suit the field and context that the organisation requires.

Delegates will review reports and use objective assessment criteria to assess their written evidence and receive feedback to improve their written evidence skills.

### Key learning points:

- ❑ How to include documentary, witness, interview and other evidence in reports
- ❑ Identifying issues, facts and the source and weight of those facts and including them in the written evidence
- ❑ Appropriate layout, format and style in reports
- ❑ Setting out the analysis and findings for each point of the complaint in the report
- ❑ How to write with clarity, objectivity and purpose
- ❑ Developing an objective and critical eye in relation to report writing

## About Bond Solon

Bond Solon is the UK's leading legal training consultancy for non-lawyers. We work with a broad range of organisations, training personnel to work to best practice standards. Over the past 12 years over 250,000 delegates have attended our training programmes.

We work with a variety of public and commercial organisations. We help them to ensure that employees with an investigative role work to best practice standards and that they are aware of the framework in which they operate.

....the legal training consultancy

## Client List...

*We work with a broad range of organisations including:*

### **Central Government**

BERR  
Drinking Water Inspectorate  
Environment Agency  
Health Protection Agency  
HM Revenue & Customs  
Home Office  
Information Commissioner's Office  
Insolvency Service  
Ministry of Defence  
Northern Ireland Ombudsman's Office  
OFSTED  
Ombudsman for Estate Agents  
Parliamentary & Health Service Ombudsman  
Pensions Ombudsman  
Pensions Regulator  
Prisoner Ombudsman for Northern Ireland  
Public Service Ombudsman for Wales  
Scottish Information Commissioner  
Scottish Public Services Ombudsman  
Solicitors Regulatory Authority  
Standards Board for England

### **Local Government**

Birmingham City Council  
City & County of Cardiff  
Devon County Council  
Glasgow City Council  
Hartlepool Borough Council  
Lincolnshire City Council  
London Borough of Camden  
London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham  
Medway Council  
Pembrokeshire County Council  
Torfaen County Borough Council  
Westminster City Council  
Wokingham District Council

### **NHS**

5 Boroughs Partnership NHS Trust  
Ashton, Leigh and Wigan Community Healthcare  
Derby Hospitals NHS trust  
Doncaster & Bassetlaw Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust  
Enfield PCT  
Imperial College Healthcare  
Lewisham PCT  
Luton and Dunstable Hospital NHS Trust  
Mayday Healthcare NHS trust  
NHS Bury  
NHS Dumfries and Galloway

## Recognised Supplier of Buying Solutions

Bond Solon is a recognised supplier of Buying Solutions. Buying Solutions is the national procurement partner for UK public services, enabling customers to improve value for money and efficiency. An Executive Agency of the Office of Government Commerce (OGC) in the Treasury, the primary role of Buying Solutions is to maximise the value for money obtained by Government departments and other public bodies through the procurement and supply of goods and services. It facilitates the buying process in a vast and highly complex marketplace, providing access to over 500,000 products and services through more than 600 suppliers.

NHS Grampian  
NHS Hull  
NHS Newcastle and North Tyneside Community Health  
Norfolk and Waveney Mental Health Partnership  
North East Ambulance Service NHS Trust  
North West Wales NHS Trust  
Oldham PCT  
Poole PCT  
Portsmouth PCT  
Royal Bolton Hospital NHS Foundation Trust  
Royal Liverpool Children's NHS Trust  
South East Coast Strategic Health Authority  
Southend Hospital NHS Trust  
Suffolk Mental Health  
West Midlands Strategic Health Authority

### **Companies**

B&Q  
British Gas  
British Telecom  
HSBC  
KPMG  
Microsoft  
Mothercare  
PricewaterhouseCoopers  
Royal Bank of Scotland  
Southern Water  
Virgin Trains

### **Fire & Rescue Services**

Derby  
Greater Manchester  
Hampshire  
Kent  
North Yorkshire  
Northamptonshire  
Nottinghamshire  
South Wales  
West Midlands  
West Yorkshire

### **Police**

Cheshire Constabulary  
Durham Constabulary  
Humberside Police  
Merseyside Police  
Metropolitan Police  
National Crime Squad  
Nottinghamshire Police  
NSLEC  
South Wales Police  
Sussex Police

**Please call Bond Solon on 020 7549 2549 to arrange training or for further information.**

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