



# Professional Fees

The Independent Case Examiner (ICE) is sometimes asked to consider reimbursement of fees charged by solicitors, accountants or other consultants for their professional services in assisting individuals to progress complaints.

The ICE takes the view that complainants should not need to engage professional help in order to pursue a complaint, and he expects those who choose to do so to accept responsibility for the costs. However, in an exceptional case, where an individual is able to clearly demonstrate that he or she has been unable either to progress a complaint unaided or to access free sources of help and advice, the ICE might recommend that professional fees be reimbursed by the Agency or Business involved, if his investigation finds that Agency or Business to have been maladministrative.

To inform his considerations, the ICE will require the following information:

- Why you needed to use a fee-charging professional – what did you need help with and how did they help? Why were you unable to progress your complaint yourself?
- Whether you attempted to secure a non fee-paying alternative such as the Citizens Advice Bureau and, if so, why you then decided to use a fee-charging service.
- What costs you have incurred - you will need to provide an itemised invoice, detailing all charges levied and, if you have paid the bill, we will need to see a copy of the receipt.

This list is not exhaustive, and you may be asked to provide more detailed information as necessary. Only when the ICE has received all the information he requires will he consider the question of fee reimbursement.

