

Reference: 02301839

Information Requests
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27 October 2026

Freedom of Information request: Right to know request

Thank you for your request for information about General Condition C4 - Adequacy of Complaint-Outcome Explanations.

We received this request on 14 October 2026 and we have considered your request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 ("the FOI Act").

Your request

Please disclose recorded information held by Ofcom falling within the following three categories.

1. Category 1 — Interpretation of the obligation to communicate complaint outcomes

Any existing policy guidance, interpretative documents, regulatory analysis or recorded statements addressing what is required to satisfy paragraph 8 of the Approved Complaints Code when a provider communicates the outcome of an investigation.

In particular, I seek any recorded material addressing whether communicating the outcome requires the provider to explain the basis of its decision, rather than merely identifying the decision reached.

2. Category 2 — Adequacy and intelligibility of complaint explanations

Any recorded guidance, policy analysis or regulatory interpretation addressing the sufficiency, adequacy or intelligibility of explanations provided to consumers when communications providers communicate complaint outcomes.

This includes any recorded material considering whether the nature, complexity or circumstances of a complaint affect the explanation expected from the provider.

3. Category 3 — Distinction between communicating an outcome and explaining its basis

Any recorded policy or regulatory consideration of the distinction between:

- (a) communicating a complaint outcome, together with a principal reason or conclusion; and*
- (b) providing sufficient explanation for the complainant to understand the material basis upon which the outcome was reached.*

The terminology above is descriptive. Please do not limit searches to documents containing those precise expressions where other terminology addresses the same underlying regulatory issue.

To assist Ofcom in identifying responsive material and keeping this request proportionate:

- 1. Please limit the request to recorded information created or held between 1 January 2016 and the date of this request.*

- 2. The request concerns the interpretation and intended application of the relevant complaint-outcome communication obligations, including any directly relevant material originating under the predecessor General Condition 14 regime.*
- 3. I do not seek copies of the published text of GC C4, the Approved Complaints Code or the September 2017 Statement themselves. However, where other responsive material is already publicly available, please identify the specific document and relevant sections or paragraphs.*
- 4. I do not seek individual consumers' personal data, complete complaint case files or legally privileged advice.*
- 5. I am not asking Ofcom to formulate a new interpretation of GC C4, provide bespoke legal advice or determine whether any particular communications provider has breached its regulatory obligations.*
- 6. This request concerns only existing recorded information held by Ofcom.*

For clarity, the purpose of this request is to establish whether Ofcom already holds recorded information addressing the distinction between communicating the outcome of a complaint investigation and providing an explanation sufficient for a consumer to understand the basis of that outcome

Our response

While we may hold some information falling within the scope of this request, we consider that given the nature of the request and its context, including your previous correspondence with the Information Requests Team, the Corporation Secretary's Office and the Consumer Contact Team (CCT), we are not obliged to comply with the request under section 14(1) of the FOI Act as it is vexatious.

You first contacted Ofcom on 5 January 2026 regarding complaint outcomes by regulated organisations. This resulted in three responses to your questions on this topic, including a stage one escalated response from the CCT manager confirming all relevant information on this topic was provided.

On 9 February 2026 you submitted a Freedom of Information request (FOI) which asked for guidance held regarding whether telecoms providers are required to investigate complaints regarding employees and whether they are required to provide the outcomes of these investigations. Where the information was held, this was provided to you. Specifically, an explanation of General Condition C4 (GCC4) was provided.

On 26 July 2026 you wrote to the CCT again (following two emails incorrectly addressed to an invalid policy team email address), with further questions on the interpretation of GCC4. The CCT response affirmed there was nothing further Ofcom could provide.

On 21 August 2026 you asked for a Subject Access Request (SAR) regarding how your questions on GCC4 had been considered internally. All information that was in scope of your request, where held, was provided. You asked follow up questions to this on 23 September 2026 and again on 1 October 2026, on the same topics to which you received further answers and explanations, the latest of which was 14 October 2026.

At the same time you had a Corporation Secretary Complaint, submitted on 27 August 2026, regarding the handling of your questions and questioned whether more information could be provided. This was answered in full and again confirmed there was nothing further Ofcom could

usefully provide. You asked further follow up and clarification questions which were responded to on 14 October 2026.

Turning to this current request it is noted that it is motivated by the same concerns as those underpinning your previous contact with us and is a means of continuing that course of action. The scope of your request would require our teams to consider internal information within a 10 year time period. In order to conduct searches of this manner it would take the relevant team a significant amount of time to consider documents and records which would be likely only to affirm what is already in the public domain and has been communicated to you directly on multiple occasions. Anything beyond this would not be held or likely be considered exempt under the FOI Act. We therefore consider that complying with this request would place an unreasonable and disproportionate burden on Ofcom's resources.

We consider that this request has now tipped into a situation where you are campaigning via FOI, which is relevant to our consideration of the application of the exemption under s14. The purpose of the request appears designed to target and drain Ofcom's resources in an unreasonable manner in order to pursue your personal grievance, with no apparent public interest benefit.

In case helpful, we refer you back to our published information [regarding GCC4](#) and its associated guidance.

Yours sincerely,

Information Requests

Request an internal review

If you are unhappy with the response you have received to your request for information, or think that your request was refused without a reason valid under the law, you may ask for an internal review. If you do, it will be subject to an independent review within Ofcom. We will either uphold the original decision, or reverse or modify it.

If you would like to ask us to carry out an internal review, you should get in touch within two months of the date of this letter. There is no statutory deadline for us to complete our internal review, and the time it takes will depend on the complexity of the request. But we will try to complete the review within 20 working days (or no more than 40 working days in exceptional cases) and keep you informed of our progress. Please email the Information Requests team (information.requests@ofcom.org.uk) to request an internal review.

Taking it further

If you are unhappy with the outcome of our internal review, then you have the right to [complain to the Information Commission](#).