invite you to apply to study for the following qualification:

**B1068 - PROFESSIONAL AWARD IN OMBUDSMAN AND COMPLAINT HANDLING PRACTICE**
Managing the Complaint Journey

Approved by the Ombudsman Association

The course will be held on **Tuesday 12 and Wednesday 13 May 2015 from 0915 – 1645 in Reading, Berkshire (venue to be advised)**

Contact:
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Introduction

The Consumer Insight Centre at Queen Margaret University (QMU) is delighted to be running the Professional Award in Ombudsman and Complaint Handling Practice, as approved by the Ombudsman Association (OA). This course is aimed primarily at those working in the assessment and investigative functions of ombudsman and other second-tier complaint handling organisations. Its purpose will be to equip assessors and investigators with the practical skills and background knowledge necessary to discharge those functions to a high level of competence.

To ensure maximum effectiveness, places will be limited to 20 delegates.

The Award has been designed to take participants through the journey of a complaint, from receipt to decision. The emphasis is on practice, using a case-study based approach reflecting the nature of Ombudsman and complaint handling work. It is based on two days of training plus pre-course work and a post-course assessment (which together total 100 learning hours). On completion of the assessment, a participant will gain the Professional Award in Ombudsman and Complaint Handling Practice (10 credit points at Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) level 7 (or the first year of a Degree Programme).

The Ombudsman Association standards/competencies for investigative staff have informed the content and learning outcomes for the programmes. These are shown in the next section on course delivery. Web-based platforms will be used to enhance learning. Among other benefits, this may allow for the exchange of views and best practice ideas between participants from different organisations across the UK, Ireland and beyond.

The Award will run as a non-residential course on 12 and 13 May 2015 in Reading (venue to be advised)

The cost per delegate is £800 which includes all course material, registration as a student of QMU, tutor support, course assessment, quality assurance, refreshments and lunch on the course. As a matriculated student of QMU, you will enjoy the usual benefits of access to an extensive range of electronic library resources, many other University resources and, if you apply for a student card, student discounts.

To reserve a place on this course please complete the booking form at the end of this promotional material. The registration deadline is Friday, 1 May 2015, however it would be helpful if you could indicate your interest prior to this date.
PROFESSIONAL AWARD IN OMBUDSMAN AND
COMPLAINT HANDLING PRACTICE

Course Content

This section provides information on course content for the Professional Award in Ombudsman and Complaint Handling Practice, which covers all 12 of the Ombudsman Association competencies. In consultation with its membership, the Ombudsman Association has identified the following 12 complaint-handling standards or competencies for the investigative staff within its member schemes. These are known as Units:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>Description</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Complaint assessment and alternatives to investigating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Effective investigation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Reaching and acting on findings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Providing a high impact service that is responsive, transparent, empathetic, authoritative, standards based and proportionate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Operating within legal and procedural frameworks</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Communicating effectively</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Producing clear, unambiguous written documents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Effectively managing data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Researching, managing and presenting knowledge and information from a variety of sources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Maintaining personal security and safety and being alert to the security of others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Managing your own resources and professional development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Working together and promoting diversity</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Professional Award in Ombudsman and Complaint Handling Practice covers four areas which include the following Ombudsman Association recommended complaint handling standards:

- Complaint diagnosis (Unit 1 and Unit 5) and Investigation (Unit 2 and Unit 5)
- Decision-making and remedy (Unit 3)
- Principles of customer service (Unit 4)
- Effective oral and written communication (Units 6 and 7)

The Ombudsman Association recommended complaint handling standards 8-12 are embedded in the course.
PROFESSIONAL AWARD IN OMBUDSMAN AND COMPLAINT HANDLING PRACTICE

Areas of Study and Learning Outcomes

Complaint diagnosis (Units 1 and 5) and Investigation (Units 2 and 5)

- L1: Understand the importance of having objective criteria for assessment of complaints
- L2: Assess complaints against relevant legal and other criteria
- L3: Make reliable decisions on whether to investigate and, as appropriate, to seek alternative forms of resolution
- L4: Gather and evaluate oral and written evidence

Decision-making and remedy (Unit 3)

- L1: Reach reliable findings
- L2: Understand the principles of remedy and redress
- L3: Make proportionate recommendations for remedy, including, as appropriate, for the remedy of systemic failings
- L4: Achieve ‘closure’

Principles of customer service (Unit 4)

- L1: Establish professional, ethical and empathetic rapport with complainants and other stakeholders
- L2: Structure a sustainable professional and ethical relationship for the course of the investigation
- L3: Manage conflict effectively and ethically
- L4: Make the process accessible and ethical

Effective oral and written communication (Units 6 and 7)

- L1: Understand the principles of effective communication
- L2: Demonstrate effective listening and observational skills
- L3: Conduct an effective interview in person and by telephone
- L4: Write effective reports on investigations
PROFESSIONAL AWARD IN OMBUDSMAN AND COMPLAINT HANDLING PRACTICE

Timetable

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Day One</th>
<th>Day Two</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Start</strong></td>
<td>09.15 Welcome and Introductions</td>
<td>Review of Day One</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Complaint Diagnosis</td>
<td>Decision-making and remedy (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Principles of customer service (1)</td>
<td>Principles of customer service (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>12.30</strong></td>
<td>Lunch</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>13.30</strong></td>
<td>Effective oral and written communication (1)</td>
<td>Decision-making and remedy (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Complaint Investigation</td>
<td>Effective oral and written communication (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>16.30</strong></td>
<td>Award Assignment</td>
<td>Evaluation, Review and Close</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Course Learning Experiences

Course learning experiences include lectures, case studies, narrated Powerpoints, directed study, video clips, practical exercises, role play exercises, group exercises, quizzes and structured discussions.

Professional Award Pre-Course Work

It is anticipated that the course participants will need to spend 5 hours on their pre-course work. This will include:

- Preparation of a 500 word summary on their scheme/their complaint handling, or other relevant, experience to date - to be submitted in advance of the course start date to ombudadmin@qmu.ac.uk
- Reading the Case Study documents
- Gaining familiarity with Study Skills, including those relevant to researching, managing and presenting knowledge and information
- Completing tasks related to the areas of study.
• Selected reading of relevance to the core course content

Details of the pre-course work will be sent to participants approximately two weeks in advance of the course start date.

**Professional Award Post-Course Work**

The Professional Award in Ombudsman and Complaint Handling Practice is assessed by a post-course 2,000 word assignment. Within the framework of the learning outcomes set out for the course, participants will produce a report on a subject relevant to the course. The aim of the assignment is to provide participants with an opportunity to demonstrate their competence in the application of learning from the course. Participants will do this through a combination of the learning experiences from the course, their own experience and guided research support from the course tutors.

Participants have eight weeks after the course end date to produce and submit their assignment. Assignments are to be submitted by noon on Friday 17 April 2015 to ombudadmin@qmu.ac.uk. Tutor support is available during this period. The tutor will assist participants with their selection of appropriate topics on which to write, help them to develop their approach and offer further guidance as they progress their assignments to completion. QMU has an Effective Learning Service to assist colleagues with various study skills such as active reading, critical thinking, making effective notes, planning and writing and structuring assignments. All documents are accessible online.

Assessment of the Professional Award in Ombudsman and Complaint Handling Practice assignments are subject to moderation by QMU academic staff and by an external examiner. Marks are ratified by a Board of Examiners. Quality is overseen by the School Academic Board which requires periodic reports on the effectiveness of the arrangements for learning, teaching and assessment.

On successful completion of the course, participants will receive a Record of Achievement together with an official transcript from QMU sent to their designated contact address.
ABOUT QUEEN MARGARET UNIVERSITY

Queen Margaret University has a proud history of achievement and progress extending for over a century. Founded in 1875, the institution has always been driven by the highest ideals and purposes, focusing on contributing in practical ways to improving the quality of life and serving the community. Colleagues are dedicated to delivering vocational and professional learning and specialising in research which is of value to the community and enhances people’s lives.

QMU is a leader in relation to the application of IT to teaching. Features of the IT provision include remote access which provides web access to email, files and software from anywhere in the world.

The University’s Learning Resource Centre is designed to meet the needs of all students whether they study on or at a distance to the campus. By making full use of e-Learning, we can design courses that support students who have work and other life commitments. The University library holds 111,000 books, 590 print journals and provides access to over 130 electronic databases and 10,300 electronic journals.

QMU has over 100 staff in the School of Arts, Social Sciences and Management and is committed to providing training courses tailored to client needs. QMU has unique expertise in consumer insight developed over 20 years, experience of research, CPD training and consultancy in customer service, complaint investigation, complaint handling, consumer regulation, marketing and consumer policy. During the last three years, the Consumer Insight Centre has provided ombudsman and complaint handling practice training for over 1,600 delegates from a wide range of ombudsman and complaint handling organisations in the UK, Ireland and internationally in Vienna (for the International Ombudsman Institute), in Durban (for the African Ombudsman Research Centre) and Bangkok (for the Asian Ombudsman Association).

Quality Assurance

For all aspects of learning, teaching and research, Queen Margaret University operates its own policies and procedures for the management of academic quality and standards, within a framework of published guidelines and periodic external review conducted by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA). The QAA monitors our adherence to codes of practice for the sector, covering activities such as research and consultancy.
INFORMATION ABOUT THE COURSE TEAM

CAROL BRENNAN is the Director of the Consumer Insight Centre at Queen Margaret University, Edinburgh and is the Module Co-ordinator for the Professional Award in Ombudsman and Complaint Handling Practice. Carol is an experienced academic and has provided leadership for several research and commercial projects, including the Ombudsman Association, the Financial Ombudsman Service, the Legal Ombudsman, the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) and the Police Complaints Commissioner for Scotland, the International Ombudsman Institute, the African Ombudsman Research Centre, Directorate General Health and Consumers, (DG SANCO), National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts (Nesta), Care Inspectorate and Audit Scotland. Her research interests are mainly in the field of consumer policy with particular reference to consumer empowerment, complaint handling and customer service. Carol's recent publications are *Grumbles, Gripes and Grievances; the role of complaints in transforming public services* published by Nesta in April 2013; *The future of ombudsman schemes: drivers for change and strategic responses* published by the Legal Ombudsman in July 2013 and the *Outcome of complaints research for the Care Inspectorate* published in September 2013. Carol is developing the Consumer Insight Centre at QMU as a centre of excellence for training, research, knowledge exchange, and consultancy in Ombudsman and complaint handling practice and consumer affairs.

KERRY BARKER has considerable direct experience of handling public complaints on a wide breadth of subjects both from her current work with the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) and her previous career in the voluntary and private sectors. Kerry is a part-time Lecturer at QMU, where she has provided training for the Financial Ombudsman Service, the Legal Ombudsman and a number of international Ombudsman through our work with the International Ombudsman’s Institute and AOMA in Africa. She established the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman training unit through 2009/10 and delivers courses aimed at various areas and levels of the public sector in Scotland. In 2010/11 she designed and delivered a capacity building ‘train the trainer’ course commissioned by NHS Scotland to all NHS Scotland Health Boards. Kerry is also responsible for the elearning product of the SPSO and has worked with NHS Education Scotland to produce e-learning materials on Valuing Feedback and Investigation Skills for all NHS staff in Scotland. Kerry has previous experience in the financial sector, specifically the Legal and Compliance department of Morgan Stanley International, where she worked for six years immediately after graduating from university in law. She is currently studying for a Masters in Law and Ethics.

CAROLYN HIRST has expertise in dispute prevention, management and resolution. She is a part-time Lecturer at QMU where she provides leadership for the content and delivery of the Professional Award and Certificate in Ombudsman and Complaint Handling Practice. Carolyn also had strong involvement in the development and delivery of the Foundation Award in Ombudsman Practice for the Legal Ombudsman for England and Wales. She also contributed to the development and delivery of the Police Complaints Commissioner for Scotland Certificate in Complaint Handling Practice, Complaint Investigation Training for the Welsh Language Commissioner and the Introduction to Complaint Handling
Practice in Further and Higher Education. Carolyn is a former Deputy Scottish Public Services Ombudsman, a post held from the formation of this Office in September 2002 until 2007. During this period she developed well regarded guidance on Apology and Dealing with Unacceptable Actions. Before that she worked in Social Rented Housing for nearly 20 years, latterly as a Deputy Director of a Housing and Care Organisation. Carolyn is an accredited and practising Mediator. She is a member of the Scottish Legal Complaints Commission Mediation Panel and the Edinburgh Sheriff Court Mediation Panel.
BOOKING INFORMATION
B1068 THE PROFESSIONAL AWARD IN OMBUDSMAN AND COMPLAINT HANDLING PRACTICE 12 and 13 MAY 2015

For course enrolment purposes please provide ALL of the following information by email to: ombudadmin@qmu.ac.uk

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of organisation:</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Last name of delegate:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First name of delegate:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delegate’s job title:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender of delegate:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date of birth of delegate:</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Dietary requirements (e.g. vegan, vegetarian, gluten free etc.):</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Please advise of any specific requirements you need in order to fully participate in the course (e.g. wheelchair access, coloured paper, large font etc.):</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delegate work telephone number:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email address of delegate:</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Payment**

Once you have submitted this form you will be sent information by our Registry Department regarding the online matriculation process which you MUST complete. During this process you will be asked about the course fee. If your organisation is funding the course and you would like us to invoice them directly, then please have their invoicing details to hand when matriculating. The following is a guide to the type of information you will need to supply:

a. Name of person the invoice should be sent to  
b. Their position in the organisation  
c. Their email address  
d. Their organisation postal address  
e. The purchase order number (if applicable)
This is an example of the screen you will see during matriculation. Please select Option 2 (Fee information incorrect), this will then take you to a screen where you can enter your employer’s invoicing details.

**Summary of Fee due and sponsorships**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fee Information Incorrect: My fee information is incorrect Please note: If you select this option you will be taken to a screen to send an email to Records Administration.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sponsorship Information Incorrect: My sponsorship information is incorrect Please note: If you select this option you will be taken to a screen to edit or add new sponsorship details for the current academic year.</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Group Bookings**

QMU’s policy is to issue an invoice for each individual delegate on a course. Therefore if you are one of a group of delegates your organisation is funding for this course, your employer will still receive separate individual invoices.

**Please note that payment must be made prior to the start of the course.**

**Contact**

Our Administrator for the ombudsman courses, Norma Diack, can help with enquiries about payment. She can be contacted on ombudadmin@qmu.ac.uk

**Substitutions**

Named substitutions will be accepted. Requests should be made in writing to ombudadmin@qmu.ac.uk

**Cancellation/Postponement by Queen Margaret University (QMU)**

QMU reserves the right to postpone or cancel any programme due to an insufficient number of delegates. QMU also reserves the right to cancel any programme due to any reason beyond its control. In the event of postponement or cancellation by QMU, delegates will be offered the choice of a full refund or a place on the next available course.

If you have any questions about the course, please do not hesitate to contact Carol Brennan at cbrennan@qmu.ac.uk or phone 0131 474 0000 and, as this is voice activated, ask clearly for Carol Brennan.