
COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

1. Our "Information for clients" document informs clients that if there is any problem with the service they receive which they cannot resolve with the partner overseeing or handling the matter then they should write to the senior partner (the complaints partner) and that the firm will provide a client with a copy of this procedure upon request.
2. It is the duty of the partner with conduct of the matter to look into any complaint and to ensure that the client receives a prompt response whether orally or in writing, as appropriate to the circumstances. The partner will attempt to discuss the issue with the client and resolve it, if necessary with an appropriate apology and follow-up action. An attendance note is to be kept of any telephone conversation or meeting with the client. The firm aims to conclude this action within 14 days. The complaint is notified by the partner in question to the complaints partner and the partnership secretary, who records it.
3. If the partner with conduct of the matter is not able to resolve the complaint to the client's satisfaction, the client should be requested to set out his concerns in writing to the complaints partner. The partnership secretary will maintain a record of any complaint received, and will refer the letter received immediately to the complaints partner. If he is not available, or is involved in the matter, the letter will be referred to the next partner in order of seniority. If the client is unwilling to put his concerns in writing, or if no letter is received from the client within 14 days of the request being made, the partner with conduct of the matter is to notify the partnership secretary of the complaint and to provide the partnership secretary with copies of the relevant correspondence and attendance notes, to be referred to the complaints partner.
4. It is the duty of the complaints partner to investigate the complaint and to notify the client of the outcome. Where appropriate, the complaints partner should speak to the client as part of the investigation process to ensure that the client's complaint is fully understood and that the response to the complaint deals fully with its substance. The complaints partner will endeavour to resolve the complaint, if necessary with an appropriate apology and follow-up action (this may include some appropriate redress for the client and/or advice to the partner/fee-earner concerned). The firm aims to conclude this action within a further 14 days.
5. When the client is informed of the outcome of the investigation by the complaints partner, they must also be told that, if they are not satisfied with our handling of their complaint, they may be able to ask the Legal Ombudsman to consider the complaint. This service is available to members of the public, very small businesses, charities, clubs and trusts. Further information about these categories and about the Legal Ombudsman generally (including details as to how complaints may be lodged) is available at: www.legalombudsman.org.uk. Normally, a complaint to the Legal Ombudsman should be brought within six months of receiving a final written response from us about a complaint.