

## Complaints Procedure

We are committed to providing a high-quality legal service to our clients. When something goes wrong, we need you to tell us about it. This will help us to sort out any mistakes or misunderstandings, and to improve our standards.

If the client has a complaint, the complainant should be encouraged to raise the problem with the person responsible for their matter, or if the client prefers the Client Care Partner, Andrew Wong. He is responsible for ensuring that complaints are handled effectively and in accordance with this procedure. This procedure will also apply to prospective clients for whom we have refused to provide a service or persistently or unreasonably offered an unwanted service but only if the complainant has evidence to show that we did not have reasonable grounds to do so.

The Client Care Partner keeps a file/register of all complaints. The register/file includes all the required details and the register is signed off when the complaint has been finalised. The Client Care Partner reviews the complaints data and it also forms part of the Annual Risk Review. The complaints are reviewed to determine if there are any training requirements, or changes in systems and processes which are required. This forms part of the Annual Risk Review.

### **What will happen next?**

We will acknowledge receipt of your complaint in writing within seven days of receiving it.

We will then conduct a full investigation and an independent review of your complaint and case/matter. This will normally involve our Client Care Partner reviewing your file and speaking to the member of staff who acted for you.

Within 14 days of sending you the acknowledgement letter, our Client Care Partner will invite you to a meeting to discuss and resolve your complaint. If you do not want a meeting or it is not possible, our Client Care Partner may instead offer you a chance to discuss the matter by telephone. If the complaint is more complex we may require more time but we will let you know when you will expect a full response.

Within three days of the meeting, or any telephone conversation we have with you instead of a meeting, our Client Care Partner will write to you to confirm what took place and any solutions we have agreed with you.

In any case, he or she will send you a detailed written reply to your complaint, including his or her suggestions for resolving the matter, within 21 days of sending you the written acknowledgement of your complaint referred to in paragraph 1 above, hopefully to your satisfaction, including appropriate redress. This could also include a reduction of fees and, if appropriate, compensation of a gesture of goodwill.

At this stage, if you are still not satisfied with the outcome, or the way the complaint has been handled, you should contact us again and we will arrange for another partner to review his/her own decision or if appropriate another alternative such as review by another local solicitor or mediation to review the decision.

We will write to you within 14 days of receiving your request for a review, confirming our final position on your complaint and explaining our reasons.

If we have to change any of these timescales we will let you know and explain why.

If you are still not satisfied or if the matter is still unresolved, you can contact the Legal Ombudsman. You will need to bring your complaint to the Legal Ombudsman within six months of receiving a final response about your complaint from us AND no later than one year from the date of the act or omission being complained about; or one year from the date on which you should have realised that there was cause for complaint. The Legal Ombudsman can choose to extend this time limit where it is fair and reasonable to do so.

We will record centrally all complaints received from clients and potential clients.

We will identify the cause of any problems which you have complained offering appropriate redress and correcting any unsatisfactory procedures.

### **Legal Ombudsman:**

The Legal Ombudsman is an independent body established by the Legal Services Act 2007 to deal with complaints against Solicitors.

The Legal Ombudsman may:

- Investigate the quality of professional service supplied by a solicitor to a client.

- Investigate allegations that a solicitor has breached rules of professional conduct.
- Investigate allegations that a solicitor has unreasonably refused to supply a professional service to a prospective client.
- Investigate allegations that a solicitor has persistently or unreasonably offered a professional service that the client does not want.

Before it will consider a complaint the Legal Ombudsman generally requires that the firm's internal Complaints Procedure has been exhausted. If the Legal Ombudsman is satisfied that the firm's proposals for resolving a complaint are reasonable, it may decline to investigate further.

The Legal Ombudsman's address is:

PO Box 6167, Slough, SL1 0EH; telephone, 0300 555 0333; website, [www.legalombudsman.org.uk](http://www.legalombudsman.org.uk); or email [enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk)

### **The Solicitors Regulation Authority**

The Solicitors Regulation Authority can help you if you are concerned about our behaviour. This could be for things like dishonesty, taking or losing your money or treating you unfairly because of your age, a disability or other characteristics.

You can raise your concerns with the [Solicitors Regulation Authority](#)