

## Complaints procedure

### This Complaints Procedure

- 1 We hope that you will never need to refer to this document. However, it is important to us that, if you do have any complaint or concerns about the services we provide, you feel free to raise them with us. We will respond in a clear and professional manner. The purpose of this note is to explain the process for this to occur.

### Your Complaint

- 2 If you wish to make a complaint or raise a concern, including about fees, you should contact your client partner who is named in the letter of engagement with you. A prospective client should contact the partner with whom they corresponded. Please feel free to raise your concerns either over the telephone or in writing.
- 3 We will write to you to acknowledge receipt of your complaint within three working days of receiving it, enclosing a copy of this procedure.
- 4 The responsible partner will investigate and endeavour to resolve the complaint informally to your satisfaction.
- 5 If your complaint cannot be resolved informally, it will be investigated by a partner, who was not concerned with your matter. (S)he is responsible for ensuring that complaints are handled effectively and in accordance with this procedure.

### Investigating the complaint

- 6 We will inform you of identity of the independent partner appointed to investigate the complaint within seven days.
- 7 The independent partner will conduct a full investigation of the matter.

### Our Response

- 8 We aim to respond in full within 3 weeks. However, in some circumstances, particularly if the complaint is of a complex nature, we may require more time but we will let you know when you will receive a full response.
- 9 We will reply to you, usually in writing, to explain the steps taken to investigate your complaint and any remedial action taken or proposed to be taken. If it appears to us that the complaint was justified, then an apology and suitable recompense will be offered to you. We will also ask you to reply to our response to your complaint to let us know if you are satisfied with it.
- 10 However, if you are dissatisfied with the outcome, or the way in which the complaint has been handled, you may contact our Senior Partner, Ian Pittaway, who will give your complaint his full consideration

and make such further investigations as are necessary. He can be contacted either in writing or by telephone on 020 7329 6699. He will inform you of the conclusions and any alternative proposals to resolve the complaint, usually within 28 days of the complaint being referred to him.

## Legal Ombudsman

- 11 If still unresolved at this stage, you may be able to take your complaint to the Legal Ombudsman.
- 12 The Legal Ombudsman is an independent body established by the Office for Legal Complaints under the Legal Services Act 2007 to deal with complaints against Solicitors in a fair and independent way.
- 13 However, certain parties do not have the right to bring a complaint to the Legal Ombudsman, for example:
  - most businesses (unless they are defined as micro enterprises);
  - charities or clubs with an annual income of more than £1 million; or
  - trustees of trusts with an asset value of more than £1 million.
- 14 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.
- 15 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.
- 16 The Legal Ombudsman's contact details are set out below  
  
Address: PO Box 6806, Wolverhampton, WV1 9WJ  
Telephone: 0300 555 0333  
Website: [www.legalombudsman.org.uk](http://www.legalombudsman.org.uk)  
Email: [enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk)
- 17 The Legal Ombudsman will accept a complaint provided it is made within six years from the date of act/omission and three years from the date the complainant should reasonably have known there were grounds for complaint.
- 18 You should contact the Ombudsman as soon as possible and, at the latest, within 6 months of your last contact with us. (Please note that the Ombudsman's guidance on resolving complaints, suggests that you should usually allow us at least 8 weeks to resolve your complaint).
- 19 In some cases, you may prefer to contact an ADR entity certified under the EU Consumer ADR Directive rather than the Legal Ombudsman. We are aware of the following two EU certified ADR entities - promediate ([www.promediate.co.uk](http://www.promediate.co.uk)) and Small Claims Mediation (UK) Limited ([Effective Date: 1.10.15](http://www.small-</a></li></ol></div><div data-bbox=)

claims-mediation.co.uk). We are not obliged to use an EU ADR scheme, but we will be happy to discuss your options with you at the conclusion of the complaints process if your complaint remains unresolved.