

COMPLAINTS HANDLING POLICY

Our Complaints Policy

We are committed to providing a high-quality legal service to all our clients. When something goes wrong, we need you to tell us about it. This will help us improve our standards.

Our Complaints Procedure

If you have a complaint, please contact us with the details.

What will happen next?

1. We will send you a letter acknowledging receipt of your complaint within seven days of receiving it, enclosing a copy of this procedure.
2. We will then investigate your complaint. This will normally involve passing your complaint to our Complaint Handling Director, David Wilde who will review your matter and speak to the member of staff/fee earner who acted for you. If your complaint is against David Wilde, Margaret Anne Reed will investigate your complaint.
3. Depending on the nature of the complaint you may be invited to a meeting to discuss and hopefully resolve your complaint, if it is considered that such a meeting is in the best interests of both parties, and will facilitate a resolution. If appropriate you will be invited to attend a meeting within 14 days of sending you the acknowledgement letter.
4. Should a meeting take place, then within seven days of the meeting, we will write to you to confirm what took place and any solutions that have been agreed with you.
5. If a meeting is not considered appropriate then we will explain why we do not believe a meeting is necessary. In these circumstances we will send you a detailed written reply to your complaint, including suggestions for resolving the matter, within 21 days of sending you the acknowledgement letter.
6. At this stage, if you are still not satisfied, you should contact us again and we will arrange to review the decision. Someone unconnected with the matter at the Firm will review.
7. 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.
8. If you are still not satisfied, you can then contact the Legal Ombudsman at PO Box 6806, Wolverhampton, WV1 9WJ about your complaint. Any complaint to the Legal Ombudsman must be made within six months of you receiving a final response from us. From 9 July 2015 this time limit is increased to twelve months. From 1 February 2013, the time limits for the Legal Ombudsman accepting a complaint have increased to six years from the date of act/omission, and three years from the date the complainant should reasonably have known that there were grounds for complaint. If you do not follow these timeframes, the Legal Ombudsman may not be able to investigate your complaint. For further information you

should contact The Legal Ombudsman on telephone number, 0300 555 0333 or at www.legalombudsman.org.uk

9. Where any complaint relates to our bill then you may also have a right to object to the bill by making a complaint to the Legal Ombudsman or by applying to the Court for an assessment of the bill under the Solicitors Act 1974 however, the Legal Ombudsman may not consider a complaint about our bill if you have applied to the Court for an assessment.
10. The EU Directive on Consumer Alternative Dispute Resolution (the ADR Directive) allows for certain Approved Bodies to mediate between you and our firm in an attempt to resolve the issues of your complaint, if our own internal process has been unsuccessful.
We agree to use the services of ProMediate (www.promediate.co.uk) if both you and the Firm agree that this is an appropriate course of action to take.

If we have to change any of the timescales above, we will let you know and explain why. You will not incur any fees for any time spent in dealing with your complaint.

11. If we are unable to resolve the complaint and it relates to a contract that the firm has entered into with you online, or by other electronic means, for example client care letter and terms of business were emailed to you, you may also be able to submit their complaint to a certified alternative dispute resolution (ADR) provider in the UK via the EU 'ODR platform'.

The ODR platform, is an interactive website offering a single point of entry for disputes between consumers and traders relating on online contracts. The ODR platform is available to consumer clients only.

The website address for the ODR platform is <http://ec.europa.eu>

12. The firm will not charge for handling the complaint. The Legal Ombudsman service is free of charge to the complainant. The ODR platform itself is free to use, but the ADR entity to which the complaint is transmitted may charge for its services.