

Complaints procedure

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 to improve our standards.

If you have a complaint, write to us with the details. Address your letter to our Client Care Officer, who is responsible for client care. Our Client Care Officer is David Evans. Where David Evans is the solicitor dealing with your matter your complaint will be referred to Sian Mills.

What will happen next?

Acknowledgment

1. We will send you a letter acknowledging your complaint and asking you to confirm or explain the details set out. You can expect to receive our letter within two days of us receiving your complaint. That letter will also set out a proposed timescale for responding to your complaint which will depend on the nature and extent of the issues involved. In most cases we aim to provide a full response within 14 days.
2. We will record your complaint in our central register and open a file for your complaint.

Investigation and Assessment

3. Upon receiving any further information we may have requested of you, we will then start to investigate your complaint. If we have sufficient information in your letter of complaint we will confirm this to you. This may involve one or more of the following steps by the Client Care Officer:
 - review your file.
 - ask the person who acted for you to respond to the points made in your complaint within 5 working days;
 - seek further clarification from you in light of the information that has been obtained from the preliminary investigation.
4. At this stage, the Client Care Officer may provide a preliminary view on the information available with a proposal to resolve your complaint.
5. If you are not satisfied with the preliminary view, we will need you to clarify those issues you do not believe have been resolved to your satisfaction.
6. On receipt of your response indicating you are not satisfied with the preliminary response, we will either:
 - set out what further investigations or consideration we intend to give to the points you have raised, also setting out an appropriate timescale for attending to the same and/or
 - invite you to meet our Client Care Officer to discuss and, if possible, resolve your complaint.

We will respond as above within 3 days of receiving your reply.

Resolution

7. Where a meeting has taken place, within 2 days of the meeting we will write to you to confirm what took place and any suggestions we have agreed with you.
8. If a meeting has not taken place, we will send you a detailed reply to your complaint. This will include our suggestions for resolving the matter. This will happen within 5 working days of us completing the investigation.

Review

9. At this stage, if you are still not satisfied you can write to us again. We will then arrange to review our decision. This will happen in one of the following ways:
 - Another solicitor of the firm will review our Client Care Officer's decision within ten days;

- We will ask our local Law Society or another local firm of solicitors to review your complaint within five days. We will let you know how long this process will take;
 - We will invite you to agree to independent mediation. We will let you know how long this process will take.
10. We will let you know the result of the review within five days of the end of the review. At this time we will write to you confirming our final position on your complaint and explaining our reasons.

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

Legal Ombudsman

If, at the end of our procedure you are still not satisfied, you may ask the Legal Ombudsman (LO) to become involved. The time limit is generally 12 months from the date of the act or omission being complained about (or from the date when the complainant should have realised that there was cause for complaint) but you can check this by visiting the LO website at www.legalombudsman.org.uk. The LO can be contacted via their website or by letter to: Legal Ombudsman, Edward House, Quay Place, Birmingham B1 2RA.

Solicitors Regulation Authority (SRA)

If your complaint is not so much in relation to standards of service but more in relation to legal compliance then you may complain to the SRA using one of the following options:

- By telephone to: 0370 606 2555
- By post to: Solicitors Regulation Authority, The Cube, 199 Wharfside Street, Birmingham, B1 1RN
- Online through their website at: <https://www.sra.org.uk/>