



CLIENT INFORMATION PAPER – CLIENT CARE:

The Firm’s Quality Assurance Policy: As a firm we are committed to providing high quality legal service to all our clients.

Consequently, it is essential, when something goes wrong or a client believes they have reason to complain, that we have an effective procedure to assist the complete and early resolution of the problem. Only by doing so can we hope to maintain the quality standards we have set and improve them by learning from what may have gone wrong and what our clients tell us.

The Procedure:

Although not essential, in making your complaint it would be helpful to us if you could provide details of your concerns in writing (if you have not already done so). If you would prefer not to have to do this, please arrange to see us and we will be pleased to take details from you.

What will happen next:

1. We will register your complaint on our Register (for monitoring and management information purposes).
Timescale: Within 2 days of receipt of complaint.
2. We will acknowledge receipt of your complaint, set out our understanding of it and request your confirmation or seek any necessary clarification. We will also confirm who will deal with your complaint.
Timescale: Within 3 days of receipt of complaint.
3. We will then commence investigation of your complaint. This may involve one or more of the following steps:
 - a) We will ask the case worker who acted for you to provide us with a response to your complaint within 5 days.
Timescale: Within 1 day
 - b) We will then examine the response and the file as against your complaint and, if necessary, speak to the case worker.
Timescale: Within 3 days of receipt of the response and file
 - c) The firm’s client care partner will consider your complaint in the light of what the file reveals and the case worker’s response.
Timescale: Within 7 days
3. The Firm’s Client Care Partner will then write to you with a detailed response and invite you to meet with us to discuss and hopefully resolve your complaint.
Timescale: Within a further 3 days
4. If a meeting between us takes place, we will write to you to confirm what was discussed and detail any agreed solution that was reached.
Timescale: Within 2 days of the meeting
5. If a meeting is declined or is for some reason impractical, we will write to you again in an endeavour to resolve the complaint to our mutual satisfaction.
Timescale: Within 5 days of the meeting being declined



6. If, at a meeting or from your written reply to our detailed written response, you remain dissatisfied with what we have said and how we propose to resolve your complaint, we will arrange for our decision to be reviewed. This may happen in one of the following ways:

- a) Our own review of our handling of your complaint and why you are dissatisfied with our decision.

Timescale: Within 5 days

- b) By arranging for someone else in the Firm who is entirely unconnected with the complaint to review how it was handled and the decision taken.

Timescale: Within 10 days

- c) By asking our local Law Society or another local firm of solicitors to review our handling of, and the decision on, your complaint (if they are willing to do so). This might take the form of mediation or some other type of alternative dispute resolution.

Timescale: Within 10 days

7. After the review has taken place you will be informed of the outcome.

Timescale: Within 5 days of the conclusion of the review.

8. We have eight weeks to consider your complaint. If you remain dissatisfied at the end of our complaints process, you would then be at liberty to contact the Legal Ombudsman ("LO"), an organisation which investigates complaints about poor service from lawyers. If you wish to refer your complaint to the LO, you must take your complaint to them:

- no more than one year from the date of the act or omission being complained about; or
- no more than one year from the date when you should have realised that there was cause for complaint; and
- within six months of receiving a final response to your complaint from us.

If you would like more information about the LO their contact details are as follows:

www.legalombudsman.org.uk

Call 0300 555 0333 between 10am and 4pm.

Relay UK: 18001 0300 555 0333

Write to: Legal Ombudsman at PO Box 6167, Slough, SL1 0EH or by email on enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk

The LO completes most investigations in 3-6 months, but more complex complaints can take up to 12 months.