



Complaints Handling Procedure

1. If you have a complaint

If you have or wish to continue with a complaint with any aspect of my service, including the charges I have raised, please let me have the full details of your complaint. I would prefer your complaint to be in writing but it does not have to be. Please note that there are special provisions about complaints on charges which are set out in section 5 below headed "Complaints about charges".

2. My approach to complaints

As I practice on my own, I am not able to refer your complaint to another lawyer within my practice. I aim to deal with all complaints promptly, fairly and without discrimination or prejudice. I will do my utmost to meet the timescales for dealing with your complaint set out below. If I am not able to meet the timescales, I will let you have reasons and a revised timescale. I should be happy to correspond by email if you would prefer this to post.

3. What will happen after your complaint is received?

1. I will deal with your complaint in the first instance. I will send you a letter acknowledging your complaint. I may ask you to confirm or explain the details. I aim to send my letter of acknowledgment within three working days of receipt your complaint.
2. I will record your complaint within a day of receiving it.
3. I will then investigate you complaint. I aim to send within 10 days of receipt of your complaint either my detailed reply with any proposal I may have to resolve your complaint or invite you to a meeting to discuss your complaint.
4. If we meet to discuss your complaint and my response to it, I aim within 2 working days of the meeting to write to you to confirm what took place and any solutions I have proposed or we have agreed. If you do not want or cannot attend a meeting, I will send you a detailed reply to your complaint. This will include my suggestion for resolving the matter. I aim to do this within 5 days of receipt of your notification that you do not want or cannot attend a meeting.
5. I will reconsider my response in the light of any further points you raise in reply.

4. What if you are still not satisfied?

If you are still not satisfied with my response to your complaint, you may wish to contact the Legal Ombudsman whose contact details are:

Legal Ombudsman
PO Box 6806,
Wolverhampton,
WV1 9WJ

Tel – 0300 555 0333 (calls charged at a local rate); or +44 121 245 3050 if calling from overseas.

enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk

The Legal Ombudsman has a website – www.legalombudsman.org.uk – with more information about them and what they do. The website has a brochure entitled “What to do if you have a complaint” which you may find helpful.

You should not generally contact the Legal Ombudsman until I have responded to your complaint unless I fail to provide my response within 8 weeks of your first raising the complaint.

Overall, you should complain to me or to the Legal Ombudsman within a year of when you first realised there was a concern. And, if you wish to refer the matter to the Legal Ombudsman after I have responded to your complaint (or if I fail to provide my response within 8 weeks), you should do so within 6 months of your last contact with me.

The Legal Ombudsman’s service is free.

5. Complaints about my behaviour

The Solicitors Regulation Authority (SRA) can help you if you are concerned about my 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 characteristic.

The SRA has published guidance which sets out all the SRA's regulatory requirements. It outlines the ethical standards that the SRA expects of practices and practitioners and the outcomes that the SRA expects them to achieve for their clients. It may be found on-line at <https://www.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/>

If you feel these requirements may have been breached, you may report me or my firm to the SRA. Guidance on how to do so may be found on-line at <https://www.sra.org.uk/consumers/problems/report-solicitor/> and via its contact centre at The Cube, 199 Wharfside Street, Birmingham, B1 1RN; DX 720293 BIRMINGHAM 47; tel: 0370 606 2555 (open weekdays from 08.00 to 17.00 - Except Tuesdays 09.30 to 17.00); contactcentre@sra.org.uk

6. Complaints about charges

If you complain to me about my charges, I will follow the procedures set out above. If you are not satisfied with my response to your complaint, you may wish to take your complaint about my charges to the Legal Ombudsman. Alternatively, you may apply to the court for assessment of my charges under Part III of the Solicitors Act, 1974.

Please note that, if you apply to the court for assessment of my charges, the Legal Ombudsman may not be able to deal with your complaint on my charges. However, if your complaint also raises other matters, the Legal Ombudsman should be able to deal with those other matters.

David Harlock
canal legal

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