

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

In addition to proactively gathering and analysing client feedback, Chambers also operates the following complaints procedure. A complaint is defined as an expression of dissatisfaction, orally or in writing, made to a member of Chambers or a member of staff. The relative seriousness of a complaint can be difficult to assess, however we assume that all complaints are potentially serious and therefore all complaints should be recorded and analysed.

Any concerns about members of Chambers or clerks should be raised in the first instance with Nigel McEwen our Commercial Director. If the complaint is about either the Commercial Director or Administration Director, please discuss the matter with the Head(s) of Chambers.

If you feel that the concern or matter you have raised has not been dealt with to your satisfaction, then you may wish to make a formal complaint. We set out the steps to do so in our formal complaints procedure below. You should be aware that the Legal Ombudsman, the independent complaints body for service complaints about lawyers, has a twelve month limit from the date of the act of omission about which you are complaining within which to take your complaint. We will take that timeframe into account when deciding whether we are able to investigate any complaint and we reserve the right not to deal with complaint falling outside the twelve month time limit.

Making a formal complaint

Please address your formal letter of complaint to:

Nigel McEwen, Commercial Director
Littleton Chambers
3 King's Bench Walk North
Temple, London
EC4Y 7HR

And provide the following details:

- Your name and address;
- Which member(s) of Chambers (or staff) you are complaining about ;
- The detail of the complaint; and
- How you would like it resolved.

Within 21 days of your letter being received the Head(s) of Chambers (or their deputy in their absence) will investigate the complaint themselves in conjunction with the Commercial Director. If your complaint is against the Head(s) of Chambers it will be investigated by a member of Chambers appointed to do so by the Chambers Management Committee. In any case, the persons investigating the complaint will be someone other than the person you are complaining about.

The person handling the investigation will write to you as soon as possible to let you know that they have been appointed and that they will reply to your complaint within 21 days. If they find later that they are not going to be able to reply within 21 days they will set a new date for their reply and inform you. Their reply will set out:

- The nature and scope of their investigation;
- The conclusion on each complaint and the basis for their conclusion;
- If they find that you are justified in your complaint;
- Their proposals for resolving the complaint.

A written record of the formal complaint and all other related papers, replies, etc. will be kept on file for a period of six years.

All conversations and documents relating to the complaint will be treated as confidential and will be disclosed only to the extent that is necessary. Disclosure will be to the Head(s) of Chambers and Commercial Director and will include anyone else we consider necessary to involve in the complaint and its investigation. Such people will include the barrister member or staff member about whom you have complained. If such a complaint is made, we will assume that you are authorising those investigating the complaint to view all the papers or other correspondence relevant to the matter.

We hope that you will use our procedure and that this will resolve any outstanding issues. However, if you are unhappy with the outcome, you do have the choice of taking up your complaint with the Legal Ombudsman. They have the responsibility for dealing with all service complaints against legal professionals and normally can only consider complaints once the Chambers' complaints procedure has been exhausted. Please note that the Legal Ombudsman has a 12 month time limit from the date of the act of omission about which you are complaining within which to take your complaint.

Contact details for the Legal Ombudsman are as follows:

Legal Ombudsman
PO Box 15870
Birmingham
B30 9EB
enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk
Tel: 0300 555 0333

The Bar Standards Board investigates complaints of professional misconduct or professional disciplinary issues. Complaints of this nature should be directed to them at:

Complaints Department
Bar Standards Board
289 – 293 High Holborn
London WC1V 7HZ
contactus@barstandardsboard.org.uk
Tel: 020 7611 1444