

Our Complaints Policy

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

In the first instance, please contact the staff member dealing with your matter. If your complaint is not resolved to your satisfaction, please write to their Head of Department whose details can be found in the Letter of Engagement sent to you at the start of the matter or which may be found on our website www.downslaw.co.uk.

What will Happen Next?

1. We will send you a letter acknowledging receipt of your complaint within three working days of receiving it, enclosing a copy of this Policy.
2. We will then investigate your complaint. This will normally involve the appropriate Head of Department reviewing your matter file and speaking to the member of staff who acted for you.
3. The Head of Department will respond in detail to your complaint within 10 working days of the acknowledgement letter. If this timescale is not achievable, the Head of Department will inform you of the reasons why this is not possible and advise you of the anticipated reply date.
4. The Head of Department will seek to provide proposals for resolving your complaint. You may be invited to a meeting to discuss the complaint and in any event you may request such a meeting. Our decision on your complaint will be given at the meeting or otherwise in writing.
5. At this stage, if you are still not satisfied, you should contact us again in writing and we will arrange for the Senior Partner to review the decision.
6. We will write to you within 10 working days of receiving your request for a further review confirming our final position on your complaint and explaining our reasons.
7. If you are still not satisfied, or if we have not resolved your complaint within 8 weeks of receiving it, you can contact the Legal Ombudsman, PO Box 6167, Slough, SL1 0EH, telephone 0300 555 0333, email enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk or via the website: www.legalombudsman.org.uk.

Any complaint to the Legal Ombudsman must usually be made within six months of the date of our final written response to your complaint or within one year of the problem happening or one year from the date when you should have realised that there was cause to complain, subject to the discretion of the Legal Ombudsman to extend such period.

The Legal Ombudsman has the discretion to dismiss or discontinue all or part of a complaint if:

- it does not have any reasonable prospects of success.
- You have not suffered (and are unlikely to suffer) significant financial loss, distress, inconvenience or detriment.
- It is frivolous, vexatious, lacks merit or where there is a compelling reason not to accept it.
- the likely impact, size, complexity, scope, volume of evidence or your conduct render it disproportionate/unreasonable/impossible for the complaint to be investigated.
- You have previously complained about the same issue to them, unless you provide material evidence that is likely to affect the outcome which only became available to you after you submitted the original complaint.
- There has been undue delay in the complaint being raised.

This service is only available to members of the public, very small businesses, charities, clubs and trusts.

Alternative Dispute Resolution

Alternative complaints bodies, such as ProMediate and Small Claims Mediation, are competent to deal with complaints about legal services should both you and us agree to use such a scheme.

This firm is authorised and regulated by the Solicitors Regulation Authority, The Cube, 199 Wharfside Street, Birmingham, B1 1RN, telephone 0870 606 2555, www.sra.org.uk. Our SRA No. is 446286.

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