

Complaints Procedure

We take client concerns very seriously and endeavour to ensure that clients feel comfortable raising concerns about the service they have received.

We aim to ensure complaints are managed effectively and reasonably.

Making a complaint

You can register the complaint with the person dealing with your matter or the Client Care Partner, Harriet Weller (harriet.weller@wsmsolicitors.com). She is responsible for ensuring that complaints are handled effectively and in accordance with this procedure.

Prospective Clients

This procedure will also apply to prospective clients to whom we have refused to provide a service or persistently or unreasonably offered an unwanted service if you have evidence to show that we did not have reasonable grounds to do so.

Investigating the complaint

- We will acknowledge the complaint within seven days.
- We will conduct a full investigation and an independent review of the matter.
- We aim to respond in full within 28 days. However, if the complaint is more complex we will require more time but we will let you know when you will receive a full response.
- We will reply to you, usually, in writing, informing you of our views on the complaint and how we propose to resolve it, hopefully to your satisfaction, including appropriate redress. This could include a reduction in fees if appropriate or compensation as a gesture of goodwill. You will also be advised in what timescale you will be given an initial/substantive response.
- If you are dissatisfied with the outcome, or the way the complaint has been handled, you may write to the Client Care Partner who will make such further investigations as are necessary.
- The Client Care Partner will inform you of the conclusions and any alternative proposals to resolve the complaint, usually within 28 days of this being referred to them.

- If still unresolved at this stage, you may refer your complaint to the Legal Ombudsman. You will have to bring your complaint to the Legal Ombudsman within 6 months of receiving a final response from us about your complaint and 6 years from the date of the act or omission giving rise to the complaint or alternatively 3 years from the date you should reasonably have known there are grounds for complaint (if the act/omission took place before 6 October 2010 or was more than 6 years ago).
- We will record and report centrally all complaints received from clients.
- We will identify the cause of any problems of which the client has complained offering appropriate redress and correcting any unsatisfactory procedures.

Legal Ombudsman

The Legal Ombudsman is an independent body established by the Legal Services Act 2007 to deal with complaints against Solicitors.

The Legal Ombudsman may:

- Investigate the quality of professional service supplied by a solicitor to a client.
- Investigate allegations that a solicitor has breached rules of professional conduct.
- Investigate allegations that a solicitor has unreasonably refused to supply a professional service to a prospective client.
- Investigate allegations that a solicitor has persistently or unreasonably offered a professional service that the client does not want.

Before it will consider a complaint the Legal Ombudsman generally requires that the firm's internal Complaints Procedure has been exhausted. If the Legal Ombudsman is satisfied that the firm's proposals for resolving a complaint are reasonable, it may decline to investigate further.

The Legal Ombudsman's address is:

PO Box 6806, Wolverhampton, WV1 9WJ; telephone, 0300 555 0333; website, www.legalombudsman.org.uk; or email enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk

The Solicitors Regulation Authority

The Solicitors Regulation Authority can help you if you are concerned about our 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.

You can raise your concerns with the [Solicitors Regulation Authority](#).