Our Complaints Procedure

Our aim is to provide our clients with excellent levels of client service. However, we recognise that there may be times when you feel we fall short of that intention and you may wish to raise a complaint. The first port of call for your complaint should be to the relevant fee earner or client partner (or you can contact Director, Simon Howland, directly) who will deal with your complaint in line with our internal complaints procedures.

1. We will acknowledge receipt of your complaint within 3 working days of receiving it, explaining how we will deal with your complaint.

2. The next step will be to investigate your complaint. This will usually involve reviewing your file and speaking to the fee earner/director who acted for you. It may also involve a discussion/meeting with you and if this is considered appropriate, we will advise you accordingly.

3. We will aim to report to you with the outcome of our investigations as soon as possible. This will ordinarily be within 14 days of the date of the acknowledgement letter unless there are exceptional circumstances preventing us from doing so, in which case we will contact you again to explain the proposed timeframe for response.

4. If we need to adjust any of these timescales, we will notify you accordingly.

We hope to be able to resolve all complaints internally as swiftly as possible. Where matters cannot be resolved internally you may be entitled to ask the Legal Ombudsman to consider the complaint.

We believe that the Legal Ombudsman's scheme is the most suitable for legal complaints and they would be our suggestion if we were unable to resolve your complaint.

Complaining to the Legal Ombudsman

If your complaint has not been resolved to your satisfaction within 8 weeks of making the complaint, you may be able to complain to the Legal Ombudsman. However, the Ombudsman's powers are limited in certain respects as they can only accept complaints from individuals and certain small businesses and organisations. Full details of the kinds of complaints which the Ombudsman will accept can be found on their website at www.legalombudsman.org.uk and their address and contact details are:

Legal Ombudsman
PO Box 6167
Slough
SL1 0EH
(Online Contact Us | Legal Ombudsman; telephone 0300 555 0333).

If at any point you become unhappy with the service we provide to you, then please inform us immediately so that we can do our best to resolve the problem for you internally.

If we are unable to resolve your complaint then, as mentioned above, you can have the complaint independently looked at by the Legal Ombudsman. The Legal Ombudsman investigates complaints about service issues with lawyers. The Legal Ombudsman expects complaints to be made to them within one year of the date of the act or omission about which you are concerned or within one year of you realising there was a concern. You must also refer your concerns to the Legal Ombudsman within six months of our final response to you.

Non-client complaints

Non-clients of the firm who wish to complain about the conduct of the firm or its employees should contact the Complaints partner Simon Howland (info@instalaw.co.uk). Mr Howland will then contact you to explain how we will deal with your complaint.

Complaining to the Solicitors Regulation Authority (SRA)

The Solicitors Regulation Authority can help 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.

Visit their website to see how you can raise your concerns with the SRA at https://www.sra.org.uk/consumers/problems/report-solicitor/

NB: if you have any queries regarding the content of this document or if its content is not clear to you , then please contact us by post to Instalaw Solicitors, Office 15, Lymedale Business Centre, Hooters Hall Road, Newcastle-under-Lyme, Staffordshire, ST5 9QF.