

SOUTH SQUARE COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

1. Our aim is to give you the highest quality service at all times. However, if you have a complaint, you are invited to let us know as soon as possible.

Complaints Made by Telephone

2. You may wish to make a complaint in writing and, if so, please follow the procedure in paragraph 4 below. However, if you would rather speak on the telephone about your complaint, then please telephone the barrister concerned or, if the complaint is about a member of staff, the Chambers Director.

The person you contact will make a note of the details of your complaint and what you would like done about it. S/he will discuss your concerns with you and aim to resolve them. If the matter is resolved s/he will record the outcome, check that you are satisfied with the outcome and record that you are satisfied. You may also wish to record the outcome of the telephone discussion in writing.

3. If your complaint is not resolved on the telephone, you will be invited to write to us about it within the next 14 days so it can be investigated formally.

Complaints Made in Writing

4. Please give the following details: your name and address; which member of chambers you are complaining about; the detail of the complaint; and what you would like done about it.

Please address your letter to:

Chambers Director
South Square
3-4 South Square
Gray's Inn
London WC1R 5HP

In the first instance your letter will be read and considered by the Chairman of our Executive Committee. Within 7 days of your letter being received s/he will appoint an appropriate member of chambers to investigate it. If your complaint is against the Chairman, the appointment will be made by another senior member of chambers. In any case, the person appointed will be someone other than the person you are complaining about.

5. The person appointed to investigate will write to you as soon as possible to let you know s/he has been appointed and that s/he will reply to your complaint within 7 days. If s/he finds later that he is not going to be able to reply within 7 days, s/he will set a new date for the reply and inform you. The reply will set out:

- The nature and scope of the investigation;
- The conclusion on each complaint and the basis for that conclusion; and
- If s/he finds that you are justified in your complaint, proposals for resolving it.

Confidentiality

6. 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 may be to the Chairman or members of our Executive Committee, and to anyone involved in the complaint and its investigation. Such people will include the barrister or staff member who you have complained about and the person who investigates the complaint.

Our Policy

7. As part of our commitment to client care we make a written record of any complaint. A member of our Executive Committee inspects the record regularly with a view to improving services.

Complaints to the Legal Ombudsman

8. Once you have made a complaint to your service provider, they have up to eight weeks to respond. If you aren't happy with their final response, or they haven't responded within the eight weeks, you can take up your complaint with the Legal Ombudsmen, the independent complaints body for complaints about lawyers.

Please note that the Legal Ombudsmen can only consider your complaint if it meets all three of the following steps.

The problem, or when you found out about it, happened after 5 October 2010; **and** you are referring your complaint to the Legal Ombudsman within either of the following: six years of the problem happening **or** three years from when you found out about it; **and** you are referring your complaint within six months of your service provider's final response.

You can write to them at:

Legal Ombudsman
PO Box 6806
Wolverhampton
WV1 9WJ

enquiries@legalombudsmen.org.uk