

# Complaints procedure

January 2024

If you are dissatisfied with any element of the firm and/or our services, we ask that you notify us so that we may respond and rectify any conduct that falls short of our high standards. You can call or email us, and one of our partners delegated to handle complaints will contact you and advise you of our complaint procedures.

If you are a person to whom we have provided or are providing legal services, and if during the course of a matter you have any queries, concerns or complaints about the services provided by the Firm or any bill sent to you, please raise them with the solicitor or supervising partner assigned to your matter. You will find this information in the Engagement Letter that was sent to you at the beginning of the matter in question. We will then try to resolve your query or complaint quickly and informally.

If this does not resolve the problem to your satisfaction, or if you prefer to raise the issue with somebody else in the Firm, then please speak with the Firm's complaints partner, who will deal with your complaint and advise you of the procedures and time frame for doing so. This will be at no cost to you.

Our objective is to ensure that any complaint is dealt with thoroughly, fairly and in a timely manner, not more than eight weeks after it was referred to our complaints partner.

## Legal Ombudsman

If you feel that our internal complaints procedure has not resolved your concern, you may be eligible to send a complaint to the Legal Ombudsman if you are one of the following:

- an individual;

- a business or enterprise that was a micro-enterprise when you referred the complaint to us. The definition of micro-enterprise is set out in Articles 1, 2(1) and 2(3) of the [Annex to European Commission Recommendation 2003/361/EC](#) being an enterprise which employs fewer than ten (10) persons; and whose annual turnover and/or annual balance sheet does not exceed €2 million;
- a charity that had an annual income net of tax of less than £1 million when you referred the complaint to us;
- a club/association/organisation, managed by its members/a committee/a committee of its members, that had an annual income net of tax of less than £1 million when you referred the complaint to us;
- a trustee of a trust that had an asset value of less than £1 million when you referred the complaint to us; or
- a personal representative or beneficiary of the estate of a person who, before they died, had not referred the complaint to the Legal Ombudsman.

Before you make a complaint to the Legal Ombudsman, it is a requirement that you raise your complaint with us first, and we have eight weeks to deal with your complaint. If you are not satisfied with our handling of your complaint after the eight weeks have expired, you can ask the Legal Ombudsman to consider the complaint.

The time limit to bring a complaint to the Legal Ombudsman is ordinarily within six months of receiving a final written response from us about your complaint.

From April 2023, the time limits for referring a complaint to the Legal Ombudsman are no later than:

- one year from the date of the act or omission being complained about; or
- one year from the date when you should have realised that there was cause for complaint.

The Legal Ombudsman will retain the ability to exercise discretion to extend the one-year time limit for specific cases if, on the evidence, it is fair and reasonable to do so.

Their contact details are:

Legal Ombudsman  
PO Box 6167  
Slough  
SL1 0EH

t: 0300 555 0333 (8.30 am-5.30 pm)  
e: [enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk)

Further details of how to refer a complaint to them and when can be found on their website ([www.legalombudsman.org.uk](http://www.legalombudsman.org.uk)).

## Alternative complaints bodies

Alternative complaints bodies such as Pro Mediate ([www.promediate.co.uk](http://www.promediate.co.uk)) and Small Claims Mediation ([www.gov.uk/guidance/small-claims-mediation-service](http://www.gov.uk/guidance/small-claims-mediation-service)) exist that are competent to deal with complaints about legal services should you and our firm wish to use such a scheme. However, at this time, we consider the Legal Ombudsman the most appropriate complaint body, and we are not obliged to use schemes operated by alternative complaint bodies.

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 characteristics.

Their contact details are:

Solicitors Regulation Authority  
The Cube  
199 Wharfside Street  
Birmingham  
B1 1RN

t: 0370 606 2555  
e: [contactcentre@sra.org.uk](mailto:contactcentre@sra.org.uk)  
w: [www.sra.org.uk](http://www.sra.org.uk)

## Society of Trust and Estate Practitioners (STEP)

Where a STEP practitioner undertakes the work, in addition to the firm's complaints policy, there is a right to complain to STEP. Details of how to contact them can be found on their website ([www.step.org/contact](http://www.step.org/contact)).

