

Complaint Procedure

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1 Introduction

- 1.1 A copy of this Complaint Procedure is made available to all clients upon request and to users of our website.
- 1.2 This Procedure explains how Sir Kingsley Wood Limited, trading as Kingsley Wood, will deal with any concern or complaint about the service we have provided, including concerns about delay, communication, charges, conduct of a matter, or the way in which we have handled your instructions.
- 1.3 We are committed to providing a high standard of legal service. If you are unhappy with any aspect of our service, we would like you to tell us as soon as possible so that we can understand the issue and do our best to resolve it.
- 1.4 Making a complaint will not affect how we handle your Matter. We will not treat you differently because you have raised a concern or made a complaint.
- 1.5 This Procedure does not prevent you from exercising any legal rights you may have, including any rights in relation to assessment of a bill or any right to refer an eligible complaint to the Legal Ombudsman.

2 Defined Terms

- 2.1 In this Complaint Procedure:

"Client Care Partner"	the person appointed by Kingsley Wood to oversee client-care issues, complaints and complaint handling within the Company;
"Company"	Sir Kingsley Wood Limited, trading as Kingsley Wood, and any successor practice;
"Complaint"	an expression of dissatisfaction about the service provided by the Company, whether made orally or in writing, where a response or remedy is expected;
"Final Response"	our final written response to your complaint, explaining our position and, where applicable, your right to refer the matter to the Legal Ombudsman;
"Legal Ombudsman"	the independent body that may consider eligible complaints about legal service providers where a complaint has not been resolved by the service provider;
"Matter"	any specific transaction, dispute, advisory instruction or issue in relation to which you ask us to provide Services;
"Services"	the legal and related services we provide to you in relation to the relevant Matter;

"SRA" the Solicitors Regulation Authority, being the regulator of solicitors and authorised law firms in England and Wales;

"we", "us", "our" and "Kingsley Wood" means or refers to the Company;

"you" and "your" the client or person raising the concern or complaint.

3 Scope

- 3.1 Kingsley Wood is a trading name of Sir Kingsley Wood Limited. Sir Kingsley Wood Limited is an independent law firm authorised and regulated by the Solicitors Regulation Authority, SRA No. 812529, and is a company registered in England and Wales, Company No. 12858045. Our registered office is at 69 Carter Lane, London, EC4V 5EQ.
- 3.2 This Procedure applies to complaints about the legal services provided by Kingsley Wood, including complaints about the way in which a Matter has been handled, the standard of service provided, delays, communication, costs information, or any concerns about our conduct.
- 3.3 This Procedure applies to current and former clients. We may also use this Procedure, where appropriate, to consider concerns raised by prospective clients, beneficiaries, third parties or others who have been affected by our work, although not every third party will have a right to complain to the Legal Ombudsman.
- 3.4 This Procedure should be read alongside our Engagement Letter, Terms of Business, Data Privacy Notice and any other client-care documents provided to you at the start of or during your Matter.

4 Policy Statement

- 4.1 Kingsley Wood aims to provide clear, professional, timely and commercially focused legal services. We recognise that, if something has gone wrong or if expectations have not been met, it is important that concerns are dealt with fairly, openly and promptly.
- 4.2 We will handle complaints in a way that is objective, proportionate and focused on resolution. We will consider the issues raised, review the relevant file or correspondence, and provide a reasoned response.
- 4.3 We will not charge you for investigating or responding to a complaint made under this Procedure.
- 4.4 Where a complaint identifies a wider service issue, we will consider whether any internal improvements, training or changes to process are required.

5 Procedure

- 5.1 If you are unhappy or concerned about the service we have provided, please raise the issue as soon as possible. Problems are often capable of being resolved more easily if they are raised early.
- 5.2 In the first instance, it may be helpful to contact the person who is working on your Matter. They may be able to explain the position, clarify any misunderstanding or resolve the issue promptly.
- 5.3 If you would prefer to make a formal complaint, or if your concern has not been resolved informally, you may write to us by post or email and mark your correspondence for the attention of the Client Care Partner.
- 5.4 Complaints may be sent to:
- Client Care Partner, Kingsley Wood, 69 Carter Lane, London, EC4V 5EQ
 - Email: enquiries@kingsley-wood.com
- 5.5 If you make a complaint by telephone or during a meeting, we may ask you to confirm the key points in writing so that we can investigate the complaint accurately. If you need assistance putting your complaint in writing, please let us know.

6 How to make a complaint

- 6.1 To help us investigate your complaint, please provide as much relevant information as you reasonably can, including:
- your full name and contact details;
 - the name of the person or team dealing with your Matter;
 - the Matter reference, if known;
 - a clear summary of what you are unhappy about;
 - copies of any correspondence or documents that you consider relevant;
 - the outcome or remedy you are seeking; and
 - whether you require any reasonable adjustments or communication support.
- 6.2 Please tell us if your complaint is urgent, for example because a court deadline, transaction deadline, limitation date or other time-sensitive issue is involved.
- 6.3 If someone is complaining on your behalf, we may need your written authority before we can discuss your Matter or disclose information to that person.

7 How we will deal with your complaint

- 7.1 We will record your complaint and acknowledge it as soon as reasonably practicable. We will usually acknowledge a formal complaint within five working days of receipt.

7.2 We will identify the issues to be investigated and, if necessary, ask you for clarification or further information. We may also review your file, correspondence, attendance notes, billing information and any relevant internal records.

7.3 Where appropriate, the complaint will be reviewed by someone who was not directly responsible for the issue complained about, or by a senior member of the firm with responsibility for client care.

7.4 We may invite you to a telephone call or meeting if we consider that this may help resolve the complaint. You are not required to attend a meeting if you do not wish to do so, and we can deal with the complaint in writing.

7.5 We aim to provide a substantive written response as soon as reasonably practicable. In any event, we will provide our Final Response within eight weeks of receiving your complaint, unless there are exceptional circumstances. If we require more time, we will explain why and keep you updated.

7.6 Our response may include an explanation, an apology where appropriate, a proposal to put matters right, a fee review, a change in file handler, or another remedy that we consider fair and proportionate in the circumstances.

7.7 If you are not satisfied with our Final Response, or if we have not resolved your complaint within eight weeks, you may be entitled to refer the complaint to the Legal Ombudsman, subject to the Legal Ombudsman's eligibility rules and time limits.

8 Complaints about bills

8.1 If your complaint relates to a bill, you should raise the issue with us as soon as possible. We will review the bill, the work carried out, the basis of charging and any estimate or costs information given to you.

8.2 You may have a right to object to a bill by applying to the court for an assessment under Part III of the Solicitors Act 1974. If you apply to the court for assessment, this may affect whether the Legal Ombudsman can consider a complaint about the bill.

8.3 Where a bill, or part of a bill, remains unpaid, we may be entitled to charge interest in accordance with our Engagement Letter, Terms of Business and applicable law. Raising a complaint does not automatically suspend your obligation to pay sums properly due, although we will consider whether any disputed amount should be reviewed while the complaint is being investigated.

9 If we cannot resolve your complaint

9.1 If we are unable to resolve your complaint ourselves, the Legal Ombudsman may be able to help if you are eligible to use its service.

9.2 The Legal Ombudsman looks at complaints independently. Referring a complaint to the Legal Ombudsman will not affect how we handle your Matter.

9.3 Before accepting a complaint for investigation, the Legal Ombudsman will usually check that you have first tried to resolve the complaint with us.

10 Legal Ombudsman

10.1 The Legal Ombudsman may consider complaints about the service provided by legal service providers, including issues such as delay, poor communication, failure to progress work, failure to follow instructions, or concerns about a bill.

10.2 If you have received our Final Response and remain dissatisfied, or if we have not provided a Final Response within eight weeks of receiving your complaint, you may refer the complaint to the Legal Ombudsman.

10.3 You must usually refer your complaint to the Legal Ombudsman:

- within six months of receiving our Final Response to your complaint; and
- no more than one year from the date of the act or omission being complained about; or
- no more than one year from the date when you should reasonably have known there was cause for complaint.

10.4 The Legal Ombudsman's contact details are:

- Legal Ombudsman, PO Box 6167, Slough, SL1 0EH
- Website: www.legalombudsman.org.uk
- Email: enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk
- Telephone: 0300 555 0333
- Relay UK: 18001 0300 555 0333
- Overseas: +44 121 245 3050

10.5 The Legal Ombudsman's rules, contact details and time limits may change. You should check the Legal Ombudsman's website before making a complaint.

11 Solicitors Regulation Authority

11.1 The Solicitors Regulation Authority deals with concerns about the professional conduct of solicitors and law firms. It does not usually deal with complaints about poor service where the Legal Ombudsman is the appropriate body.

11.2 You may report a concern to the SRA if you are concerned about our behaviour, for example dishonesty, misuse of client money, discrimination, breach of the SRA's rules, or another serious failure to meet professional standards.

11.3 Further information about reporting concerns to the SRA is available at www.sra.org.uk/consumers/problems/report-solicitor/.

11.4 There is no fixed time limit for reporting concerns to the SRA, but it is sensible to raise concerns promptly so that relevant evidence is available.

12 Information Commissioner's Office

12.1 To the extent that your complaint relates to a breach of Personal Data, or it is evident that you are exercising your rights as a Data Subject under data protection and information rights legislation, there may be aspects of the complaint that we need to deal with separately or differently in light of our obligations as a Data Controller.

12.2 Aspects of your complaint may need to be passed to our Data Protection Officer to assess and respond to in accordance with our Data Privacy Notice, which is available on our website or on request. Our standard complaint handling timescales may not be appropriate for those aspects and we will advise you if we need to apply a different timeframe.

12.3 In the event of an allegation of a Personal Data breach, or any concern that we have not handled your personal information properly, we will consider whether a report needs to be made to the Information Commissioner's Office. Not all breaches are reportable and we will advise you of the result of our assessment where appropriate.

12.4 If you are exercising your rights under data protection and information rights legislation, we will handle that aspect of your complaint in accordance with our regulatory obligations. For further information or to contact the Information Commissioner's Office, please visit www.ico.org.uk/concerns or call 0303 123 1113.

12.5 Your rights to refer the complaint to the Legal Ombudsman and SRA may still be available to you in addition to your Personal Data rights.

13 Alternative complaints bodies

13.1 Alternative complaints bodies may be competent to deal with complaints about legal services if both parties agree to use such a scheme.

13.2 We do not agree to use an additional complaints scheme in addition to, or instead of, the redress offered by the Legal Ombudsman.

14 Confidentiality and data protection

14.1 We will handle information provided as part of a complaint in accordance with our duties of confidentiality, legal professional privilege where applicable, and Data Protection Legislation.

14.2 We may need to review your Matter file and related records to investigate the complaint. We may also need to share limited information internally with the person who handled your Matter, the Client Care Partner, the COLP, our insurers, auditors, regulators or advisers where necessary and lawful.

- 14.3 For more information about how we process personal data, please refer to our Data Privacy Notice.

15 Accessibility and reasonable adjustments

- 15.1 If you need this Complaint Procedure in another format, or if you need reasonable adjustments to help you make or participate in a complaint, please contact us and we will consider how best to assist you.
- 15.2 Reasonable adjustments may include communicating with you in a different format, allowing more time for responses, using a representative where authorised, or arranging a telephone or video call where this would assist.

16 Record keeping and learning

- 16.1 We will keep appropriate records of complaints, our investigation, any response provided and any action taken as a result.
- 16.2 Complaints will be reviewed periodically to identify trends, training needs, risk issues or improvements to client service.
- 16.3 Complaint records will be retained and securely destroyed in accordance with our data retention policies and applicable legal and regulatory requirements.

17 Changes

- 17.1 We keep this Complaint Procedure under regular review.
- 17.2 We reserve the right to update and change this Procedure from time to time to reflect changes in our internal processes, regulatory requirements, guidance from the SRA or Legal Ombudsman, and best practice in complaint handling.
- 17.3 Any changes to this Procedure may be posted to our website. Please ensure that you check this for any updates or changes.
- 17.4 Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any queries regarding this Procedure or if you would like this Procedure in another format.