

MILNERS COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Our Complaints Policy

We are committed to providing high quality legal services to all our clients. However, we recognise that occasionally things go wrong, and we need you to tell us about it. This will help us to improve our standards and ensure that client care is at the forefront of our firm.

Our Complaints Procedure

In most cases, an informal chat with the person responsible for your matter will resolve your concerns.

If that does not resolve the issue to your satisfaction, or you would prefer to speak to somebody else, then please contact the supervising partner responsible (details of which you would have been provided to you at the outset). The fee earner or partner will consider your complaint and will contact you within 7 days of receiving your letter to discuss a resolution of the complaint.

If that does not produce a satisfactory solution please refer the matter to Simon Bass, the firm's designated complaints partner and the person responsible for monitoring all complaints received by the firm.

What we need to know

To deal with your complaint correctly, it would be helpful when contacting us if you could provide the following information:

- Your name, contact details and preferred contact method
- File reference number
- Details of your concerns
- How you would like us to put things right.

What will happen next?

- a) Acknowledgement – within 7 days of your request Simon Bass will write and acknowledge your complaint and confirm the details of the person who will be investigating the matter (as this will have to be a person who has no previous dealings with the matter).
- b) We may ask you to confirm or clarify the details set out and we will also set out the timescale within which we expect to complete our investigation, which will not exceed a maximum of eight weeks.
- c) Our investigation - we will record your complaint in our central register and open a separate file for your complaint. The investigation will normally involve the following steps:-
 - Review of the file(s) to which your complaint relates.
 - Full consideration of the allegations made by you in your complaint.
 - Discussion with the Solicitor/Executive who acted for you.
 - If appropriate discussion with their Department Head and/or Partners.
- c) Our findings – we will write to you with a detailed letter setting out our response to your complaint. This will explain whether your complaint has been upheld either in whole or in part and the reasons for the decision based on the evidence available. This could include any suggestions for resolving the matter, including an apology from the firm or an explanation of what went wrong. Alternatively, we will write to you inviting you to attend a meeting to discuss and hopefully resolve your complaint. That meeting will take place on the first mutually convenient date available.

If you are still not satisfied you can contact us again. We will then review our decision in the light of any points you make. We will send you a written response within 10 days.

- d) Legal Ombudsman – for complaints about our service and after a thorough investigation you remain unsatisfied you can contact the Legal Ombudsman (LeO) via one of the methods below:

- Phone: 0300 5550333
- Email: enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk
- Post: Legal Ombudsman, PO Box 6167, Slough, SL1 0EH

The time limits for referring a complaint to the LeO will not be 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 a complaint.

The LeO will not accept complaints where the act, omission or the date of awareness was before 5 October 2010.

We reserve the right to adopt these time limits due to the challenges to investigate and gather evidence, faded recollection of events and changes in personnel.

Note that the LeO service cannot be used by businesses or most other organisations unless they are below certain size limits. Further details are available from the Legal Ombudsman.

If your unresolved complaint relates to an insurance policy covering your case, you may contact the Financial Ombudsman Service:

- Phone: 0800 023 4567
- Online complaint forms available via their website:
- Post: Financial Ombudsman Service, Exchange Tower, Harbour Exchange, London. E14 9SR.

If a complaint cannot be resolved, you may also be able to ask for it to be referred to a process of alternative dispute resolution using a certified provider. We are not required to agree to such a request. In any case this is not available to businesses, only consumers. We will give you more information about that right if it becomes relevant.

- e) If you have concerns about our behaviour whether you are a client or not, the Solicitors Regulation Authority can help you. This might involve issues of 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 whose contact details are:

- Phone: 0370 6062555
- Email: report@sra.org.uk
- Post: The Cube, 199 Wharfside Street, Birmingham, B1 1RN
- Online: <https://www.sra.org.uk/consumers/problems/report-solicitor/>