

Temple Court Chambers Complaints Procedure for Lay and Professional Clients

1. Our aim is to give you a good service at all times. However if you have a complaint you are invited to let us know as soon as possible. It is not necessary to involve solicitors in order to make your complaint but you are free to do so should you wish. At all times, we encourage an informal resolution with the individual concerned. However we appreciate that there may be instances when this may not be possible.

2. Please note that Chambers will only consider complaints that are raised within six months of the act or omission complained of.

Stage 1 - Complaints made by telephone

3. You may wish to make a complaint in writing and, if so, please follow the procedure in paragraph 4 and 5 below. In all cases, you may wish to contact the person about whom you wish to make the complaint in order to attempt a resolution. However, if you would rather speak on the telephone about your complaint to a person other than the person you wish to complain about, then please telephone the individual nominated under the Chambers Complaints Procedure to deal with complaints – Mr Charles Mannan. (If the complaint is about Mr Charles Mannan, telephone Head of Chambers Mr H. Kannangara). The person you contact will make a note of the details of your complaint and what you would like done about it. He will discuss your concerns with you and aim to resolve them. If the matter is resolved 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.

4. 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.

- A) Alternative Dispute Resolution: If your complaint cannot be resolved through Chambers' internal complaints procedure, you may wish to consider whether the matter can be resolved by an alternative form of dispute resolution ("ADR"), such as mediation. ADR provides an opportunity for the parties to seek to resolve a complaint without the need for further formal proceedings and may, where appropriate, provide a quicker and less formal means of reaching an agreed outcome. Chambers will consider the use of ADR where it is appropriate in the circumstances and where both parties agree to participate. The use of ADR does not prevent you from referring your complaint to the Legal Ombudsman,

where you are entitled to do so, and does not affect any applicable time limits for making such a referral.

Stage 2 - Complaints made in writing

5. If you wish to make your complaint in writing without going through Stage 1 above, then you may do so. Please give the following details:

- A) Your name and address;
- B) Which member(s) of Chambers you are complaining about;
- C) The detail of the complaint; and
- D) What you would like done about it.

Please address your letter to Charles Mannan. Where the complaint is in respect of Mr Charles Mannan, you may wish to write to him first in order to resolve the matter, alternatively you should write to Mr H. Kannangara. We will, where possible, acknowledge receipt of your complaint within two days and provide you with details of how your complaint will be dealt with.

6. Our Chambers has a panel headed by Mr Charles Mannan and made up of experienced members of Chambers, which considers any written complaint. Within 14 days of your letter being received the head of the panel or his deputy in his absence will appoint a member of the panel to investigate it. If your complaint is against the head of the panel, the next most senior member of the panel will investigate it. In any case, the person appointed will be someone other than the person you are complaining about.

7. The person appointed to investigate will write to you as soon as possible to let you know he has been appointed and that he will reply to your complaint within 14 days. If he finds later that he is not going to be able to reply within 14 days he will set a new date for his reply and inform you. His reply will set out:

- A) The nature and scope of his investigation;
- B) His conclusion on each complaint and the basis for his conclusion; and
- C) If he finds that you are justified in your complaint, his proposals for resolving the complaint.

Confidentiality

8. 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 will be to the head of chambers, members of our management committee and to anyone involved in the complaint and its investigation. Such people will include the barrister member or staff who you have complained about, the head or relevant senior member of the panel and the person who investigates the complaint. The Bar Standards Board is entitled to inspect the documents and seek information about the complaint when discharging its auditing and monitoring functions.

Our policy

9. As part of our commitment to client care we make a written record of any complaint and retain all documents and correspondence generated by the complaint for a period of six years. Our management committee inspects an anonymised record regularly with a view to improving services.

Complaints to Legal Ombudsman

10. If you are a Chambers' lay client and you are unhappy with the outcome of our Complaints Handling Procedure you may take your complaint up with the Legal Ombudsman or the Bar Standards Board. In general terms, the Legal Ombudsman deals with service complaints and the Bar Standards Board deals with professional misconduct and discipline. However, our understanding is that the Legal Ombudsman acts as a single point of contact for our lay clients and will refer any professional misconduct or discipline matters to the Bar Standards Board.

11. The contact details for the Legal Ombudsman are:

Legal Ombudsman
PO Box 6167
Slough SL1 0EH

Tel: 0300 555 0333

Email: enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk

Website: www.legalombudsman.org.uk

12. If you are not a Chambers' lay client and are unhappy with the outcome of our Complaints Handling Procedure then you may wish to contact the Bar Standards Board:

Bar Standards Board
Professional Conduct Department
289-293 High Holborn, London, WC1V 7HZ

DX: 240 LDE

Tel: 020 7611 1444

Email: contactus@barstandardsboard.org.uk