



Client Complaint Procedure

Client Complaint Process & Information

1. Policy

We take very seriously all expressions of dissatisfaction from our clients as we dedicated to providing the very highest standards of service. If you are not entire satisfied with the service we have provided this leaflet explains our procedures for handling complaints to ensure that each complaint is dealt with swiftly in an attempt to reach an amicable and satisfactory solution.

2. Reporting & Investigation Responsibilities

Informal verbal complaints should be addressed to Bradley Theobald, Principal of Theobald Associates, in the first instance. If you are not satisfied with the proposals arising from such, then it would assist investigations if you were to fully detail your concerns in writing (using either the template form set out in the Appendix hereto or in correspondence) so there is less room for misunderstanding your concerns and requirements.

Following completion of the Appendix, we should be very grateful if you could please send the document to Bradley Theobald, Principal, by post at Theobald Associates, 63 St Mary's Axe, London, EC3A 8AA or by email btheobald@theobaldassociates.com.

3. Response Times

Written complaints will be acknowledged within seven days of receipt whereby the procedure for handling the complaint will be confirmed. A full reply will be sent as soon as the matter has been investigated and our proposals for dealing with your concerns have been agreed upon.

In any case, we will always endeavour to provide a full response within 21 days of our acknowledgement. If that is not possible, an interim response will be given explaining why it is not possible to meet this deadline, when we expect our investigations to be completed and a response finalised. We shall always provide a response to any complaint within eight weeks.

4. Unresolved Issues

If, in the unusual event we are unable to resolve the matter to your satisfaction and/or we have not resolved it to your satisfaction within the timescales referred to above, we are keen to provide mechanisms for you to seek a satisfactory outcome. Accordingly, this may be through pursuing any outstanding issues through one of two separate mechanisms, depending upon whether the complaint is relating to an instruction given in your own capacity or on behalf of an organisation, together with consideration of the relevant size of such organisation.

4.1. Legal Ombudsman Service

If the matter in question was being conducted on behalf of either an individual, a charitable organisation, trust or a corporate vehicle falling within the definition of micro-enterprise, you may be able to take the matter up with the Legal Ombudsman.

At the same time as providing our full response and/or at the conclusion of all steps taken to deal with your concerns, we will remind you of this right. Please note that you must make a formal complaint against us before you can take it to the Legal Ombudsman.

You can obtain more information about complaints, and what the Legal Ombudsman service can do, on their website at: <http://www.legalombudsman.org.uk>, under the tab 'Information for Consumers'. The website also sets out contact details for the Legal Ombudsman.

Before accepting a complaint for investigation, the Legal Ombudsman will check that you have tried to resolve your complaint with us first. If you have, then you may (should you believe the outcome of our investigation to be flawed or incorrect) take your complaint to the Legal Ombudsman.

Please note, in order for the Ombudsman to consider your situation, your application to them must be made in accordance with the following parameters

- Within six months of receiving our final response to your complaint; and
- No more than six years from the date of act/omission about which you are raising the complaint; or
- No more than three years from when you should reasonably have known there was cause for complaint.

If your complaint relates to our bill, then you may have the right to have the bill assessed under the Solicitors Act 1974 (Part III).

4.2. The Solicitors Regulation Authority

The Solicitors Regulation Authority can help 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 characteristic.

Visit their website to see how you can raise your concerns with the Solicitors Regulation Authority at <https://www.sra.org.uk/>

4.3. Review by independent third party practitioner

In the event that you do not, as a client, fall within the purview of the Legal Ombudsman Service with regard to the conduct of any review, Theobald Associates have in place arrangements with an experienced and independent practice to conduct a review of the issue in question and provide certain (non-binding) independent recommendations and conclusions toward a successful resolution for the parties.

This review would, subject to the availability of such and absence of any conflict of interest in relation to the specific matter, be conducted by a relevantly qualified senior partner at Spencer West LLP. The cost and expenses of Spencer West in conducting such review would be borne by Theobald Associates, although the initial letter of instruction and background information (in which the parties will attempt to set out the agreed factual position in relation to the matter, together with a description of any areas of dispute and the differing interpretations surrounding such) relating to the matter would be prepared and agreed between Theobald Associates and the complainant jointly.

This process is offered in order to ensure that the maximum opportunities are afforded to clients in seeking a successful and equitable outcome to any complaints. Spencer West LLP would not, however, be entering into any direct fiduciary relationship with the complainant and would bear no liability to such accordingly.

The findings of this third-party review would be offered in order to assist in reaching an amicable conclusion to the matter at hand but would not be binding upon the parties or limit or otherwise effect the ability of the client to pursue any other recourse open to it.

Management

All complaints (written or verbal) are recorded and logged centrally to enable us to detect recurring problems and trends. In recording such information we will comply with our obligations under the applicable and appropriate Data Protection legislation.

As necessary, we will implement corrective action in response to individual complaints and improvement measures to prevent adverse trends and correct recurring problems. In this manner, we aim to constantly improve the service we provide.

Appendix

Client Complaint Form



Client Complaint Form

We understand that you have expressed dissatisfaction with the service we have provided and are eager to investigate the matter fully to resolve any issues. So that we can understand your complaint, please complete to form below. We aim to respond to your initial complaint within 8 weeks.

Your Details

| | |
|--------------------|---|
| Title: | Mr / Miss / Ms / Ms / Other (please state): |
| Name: | |
| Your Address: | |
| Evening Telephone: | |
| Daytime Telephone: | |
| Mobile Telephone: | |
| E-mail: | |

Firm Details

| | |
|-------------------|--|
| Our Reference: | |
| Solicitors' Name: | |

Complaint Details

| | |
|--|--|
| Details of Complaint: | |
| How would you like us to deal with your complaint: | In writing / a meeting / Other (please state): |

If, in the unusual event that we are unable to resolve the matter to your satisfaction and you are still unhappy, you may in certain circumstances be able to take the matter up with the Legal Ombudsman.

Before accepting a complaint for investigation, the Legal Ombudsman will check that you have tried to resolve your complaint with us first. If you have, then you must take your complaint to the Legal Ombudsman:

- Within six months of receiving a final response to your complaint; and
- No more than six years from the date of act/omission; or
- No more than three years from when you should reasonably have known there was cause for complaint.

The contact details for the Legal Ombudsman are as follows:

- E-mail: enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk
- Telephone: 0300 555 0333

You can obtain more information about complaints and what the Legal Ombudsman can do, on the website at: www.legalombudsman.org.uk.

If you wish to involve the Legal Ombudsman, you should do so no later than six months after the date of our final response.

Thank you for taking the time to complete this form.

| | |
|-----------------|--|
| Your Signature: | |
| Date: | |