

Chambers Complaints Procedure - (Clients)**1. Aim**

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.

2. Complaints made by Telephone

- a. You may wish to make a complaint in writing and, if so, please follow the procedure in paragraph 3 below. However, if you would rather speak on the telephone about your complaint then please telephone the barrister concerned or, if the complaint is about a member of staff, the Senior Clerk - Clive Petchey. If the complaint is about the Senior Clerk please telephone the Chairman of the Chambers Management Committee – who is currently Rodney Stewart Smith. 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 it and record that you are satisfied. You may also wish to record the outcome of the telephone discussion in writing.
- b. 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.

3. Complaints made in Writing

- a. Please give the following details:
 - (1) Your name and address.
 - (2) Which member(s) of chambers you are complaining about.
 - (3) The detail of the complaint.
 - (4) And what you would like done about it.
- b. Please address your letter to:

Chairman
Chambers Management Committee
New Square Chambers
12 New Square
Lincoln's Inn
London
WC2A 3SW

4. Procedure

- a. Within 14 days of your letter being received, the Head of Chambers or, in his absence, his deputy will appoint a person of suitable experience and seniority, being either a member of Chambers or the Senior Clerk, to investigate it. If your complaint is against the Head of Chambers it will be investigated by the Deputy Head of Chambers unless he considers it appropriate to appoint another member of Chambers. A complaint against a member of staff will ordinarily be investigated by the Senior Clerk. In any case, the person appointed will be someone other than the person you are complaining about.
- b. The person appointed to investigate will write to you as soon as possible to let you know s/he has been appointed and that s/he will endeavour to reply to your complaint within 14 days. If s/he considers at the outset or finds later that s/he is not going to be able to reply within 14 days s/he will set a new date for s/his reply and inform you. Her/His reply will set out:
 - (1) The nature and scope of her/his investigation.
 - (2) Her/His conclusion on each complaint and the basis for it.
 - (3) If s/he finds that you are justified in your complaint, her/his proposals for resolving the matter.

- c. If your complaint includes a request that any outstanding fees should be remitted or reduced all procedures for collecting such fees will be suspended until 14 days after you have received the reply to your complaint.

5. Confidentiality

All conversations and documents relating to the complaint will be treated as confidential and will be disclosed only to the extent that is necessary for the purpose of investigating the complaint or improving the administration of Chambers in the light of the complaint. 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 of whom you have complained, the head and the person who investigates the complaint.

6. Our Policy

As part of our commitment to client care we make a written record of any complaint. The chairman of our management committee inspects the record regularly with a view to proposing to the committee changes designed to improve our services.

7. Complaints to the Bar Council (professional body for barristers)

We hope that you will use our procedure. However, if you would rather not do so or are unhappy with the outcome, you do have the choice of taking up your complaint with the Bar Council. You can write to them at:

Complaints Team
Bar Standards Board
289 – 293 High Holborn
London
WC1V 7HZ
Tel: 020 7611 1444
Fax: 020 7831 9217
Website: www.barstandardsboard.org.uk