

# Complaints Procedure

## Introduction

The Practice is committed to providing services of the highest quality to all its clients. However, we recognise that in order to maintain the quality of our services we must address client dissatisfaction as and when it arises.

It is important that if you are in any way dissatisfied with any aspect of our service that you let us know. Not only can we then take all reasonable steps to address and, where possible, resolve your concern, but your comments can help us improve our services as a whole.

## What is a complaint?

This Practice defines a complaint as:

**An expression of dissatisfaction with a service provided by us that requires a response.**

A complaint may relate to a problem that has not been resolved, dissatisfaction with present or proposed services, delays or non-delivery of a service or disagreement over a decision, dissatisfaction with a bill rendered to you by the firm, etc.

## How do I make a complaint?

**Step 1.** Speak to the fee earner who is providing the service. Often we are able to resolve your problems on the spot. Complaints resolved at this stage will be recorded on a complaints form and the information used to improve the quality of the service we provide.

**Step 2.** If the fee earner with whom you have been dealing is unable to satisfy your concerns, then you should contact one of the Directors (Helen Scott or Rebecca Humphreys as set out in the Client Care Policy), either in writing or phone.

- The complaint will be recorded in the central client complaint file.
- You may be contacted in order to gather further information.
- Within 28 days you will receive a detailed reply (or you will be invited to a meeting to further clarify the issues), and then receive a detailed reply.

The practice will do its best to identify the cause of any problems which you have complained about and will offer appropriate redress where necessary and correct any unsatisfactory procedures.

**Step 3.** If it proves impossible for the Practice to resolve a complaint to your satisfaction then the matter should be referred to the Legal Ombudsman. If requested, the Practice will set out the basis of the complaint in writing. A copy of all relevant correspondence will be provided to you. Alternately, if you

prefer to deal with matters yourself then the Practice will provide appropriate details of the Legal Ombudsman (contact details were provided in the initial client care letter sent when you first instructed us). Details of such action will be recorded in the complaints file. Normally you will need to bring a complaint to the Legal Ombudsman within 6 months of receiving a final written response from us about your complaint.

**It is very much hoped that resolution can be achieved using step 1 or 2 of this procedure.**

**Review**

This procedure will be reviewed annually to verify it is up to date and in effective operation across the practice.