

CLYDE&Co

# Managing Client Complaints

September 2024

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## 1 **Managing client complaints**

- 1.1 We always aim to provide the highest quality service to our clients. We are also committed to resolving any complaints or grievances in an effective and constructive manner. We will try to address any problem quickly and operate an internal complaint handling system to help us resolve matters between ourselves.
- 1.2 Our Complaints Procedure, summarised below, explains what happens if a client wishes to make a complaint.

## 2 **England and Wales**

- 2.1 If you have any queries or concerns, at any time, on any aspect of a matter (including a bill) then please take this up with the person handling your case in the first instance.
- 2.2 If you remain dissatisfied, then matters should be raised with the Partner responsible for supervising your matter.
- 2.3 If your complaint remains unresolved it can be escalated to the firm's Client Care Officer in England and Wales.

### **2.4 Our complaints procedure is as follows:**

- 2.4.1 We will acknowledge receipt of your complaint, by letter or email within 3 working days of receiving the complaint, setting out this procedure.
- 2.4.2 We will then investigate your complaint. This will normally involve a review of your matter file and a discussion with the member/s of staff who acted for you. If necessary, we will also write to you to request further information to enable us to conduct a proper review of the matter.
- 2.4.3 If a meeting is appropriate, this will be arranged and held prior to our complaint response being issued.
- 2.4.4 We will send you our complaint response to inform you what we have done and what we propose to do to resolve your complaint. We aim to do this as quickly as possible and in any event within 28 days of our letter acknowledging your complaint. In the unlikely event further time is required, we will write to you informing you of this well before the deadline.
- 2.4.5 At this stage, if you are not satisfied, we ask that you contact us again so that our Client Care Officer can review the decision.
- 2.4.6 We will write to you within 14 days of receiving your request for a review, confirming our final position on your complaint, and explaining our reasons. If we have to change any of the timescales, we will communicate this to you and explain why.
- 2.4.7 We ensure that lessons learned are reviewed by our Risk Team and that changes are implemented swiftly.
- 2.4.8 If we are unable to resolve your complaint, then you may be able to have the complaint independently looked at by the Legal Ombudsman. The Legal Ombudsman investigates complaints about service issues with lawyers and can be contacted as follows: (PO Box 6167, Slough, SL1 0EH, telephone 0300 555 0333 / from abroad 00 44 1212 453050, or by email to [enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk)). The Legal Ombudsman expects complaints to be made to them within one year of the

date of the act or omission about which you are concerned or within one year of you realising there was a concern. You must also refer your concerns to the Legal Ombudsman within six months of our final response to you.

- 2.4.9 Further information can be obtained about the role and procedures of the Legal Ombudsman by visiting [www.legalombudsman.org.uk](http://www.legalombudsman.org.uk).

### **3 Scotland**

- 3.1 If you are unhappy in the first instance, please take this up with the person handling your case.
- 3.2 If you remain dissatisfied, then matters should then be raised with the Partner supervising your matter.
- 3.3 Thereafter you have the opportunity to raise the matter in writing with our Client Relations Manager for Scotland. This will be handled in terms of our complaints protocol which has been submitted to the Law Society of Scotland and a copy of which is available upon request.
- 3.4 If you continue to remain dissatisfied then you may also take matters up with the Scottish Legal Complaints Commission (**SLCC**), The Stamp Office, 10-14 Waterloo Place, Edinburgh, EH1 3EH.
- 3.5 The SLCC operates within strict time limits. At any time, the SLCC will be able to provide information regarding the procedures for complaints against solicitors. We would refer you to <http://www.scottishlegalcomplaints.org.uk>.

### **4 Northern Ireland**

- 4.1 Any complaint made to us must be within six months of completion of your case or transaction or within 6 months of discovering a cause for concern, whichever is later.
- 4.2 If we have not been able to resolve your complaint with our internal procedure then you can refer your complaint to The Law Society of Northern Ireland, you must do this within 6 months of our final response.
- 4.3 All complaints should be submitted to the Law Society using their Complaints Form either in hard copy format or via an online submission. The form can be obtained at <https://www.lawsoc-ni.org/3--submitting-a-complaint>.
- 4.4 You can also request an information pack as follows:
- (a) by post at The Law Society of Northern Ireland, 96 Victoria Street, Belfast, BT1 3GN;
  - (b) by telephone: 0208 9023 1614; or
  - (c) by emailing [complaints@lawsoc-ni.org](mailto:complaints@lawsoc-ni.org) or [enquiry@lawsoc-ni.org](mailto:enquiry@lawsoc-ni.org).

### **5 Republic of Ireland**

- 5.1 If we have not been able to resolve your complaint internally. The Legal Services Regulatory Authority (LSRA) is the organisation established to accept and investigate complaints which relate to the provision of services by legal practitioners.
- 5.2 The LSRA is independent in the performance of its functions.

- 5.3 You can complete and submit a complaint form online via the LSRA's website at [How to Make a Complaint – Legal Services Regulatory Authority \(lsra.ie\)](https://lsra.ie/How-to-Make-a-Complaint).
- 5.4 You can email at [complaints@lsra.ie](mailto:complaints@lsra.ie).
- 5.5 You can fill in a complaint form or write a letter and send it to: Complaints and Resolutions, Legal Services Regulation Authority, P.O Box 12906, Dublin 2.
- 5.6 You can also contact the LSRA by telephone and request a complaint form on 01-859291.
- 5.7 The LSRA must provide a copy of your complaint and any supporting documentation/submissions to the legal practitioner and other relevant parties to achieve resolution and/or investigate the complaint.

## **6 What to do if you are unhappy with our behaviour**

- 6.1 In England and Wales, the Solicitor's Regulation Authority can help if you are concerned about our conduct or behaviour.
- 6.2 In Scotland, the SLCC can help if you are concerned about our behaviour. If a conduct complaint is accepted by the SLCC as eligible for investigation, it will be referred to the Law Society of Scotland by the SLCC.
- 6.3 In Northern Ireland Conduct issues are dealt with by the Law Society of Northern Ireland.
- 6.4 In the Republic of Ireland complaints about alleged misconduct against a solicitor are dealt with by the Legal Services Regulation Authority.
- 6.5 Concerns about conduct or behaviour could be for things like:
  - (a) dishonesty;
  - (b) taking or losing your money;
  - (c) treating you unfairly because of your age, a disability, or other characteristics; and
  - (d) acting in the same case for you and for others where your interests conflict with theirs.
- 6.6 You can visit the appropriate website to see how you can raise your concerns as follows: Solicitors Regulation Authority at: [SRA | Reporting a solicitor or firm to us | Solicitors Regulation Authority](https://sra.org.uk/Reporting-a-solicitor-or-firm-to-us).
- 6.7 Law Society of Scotland at: [Complaints against solicitors | Law Society of Scotland \(lawscot.org.uk\)](https://lawscot.org.uk/Complaints-against-solicitors).
- 6.8 Law Society of Northern Ireland at: [Making a Complaint \(lawsoc-ni.org\)](https://lawsoc-ni.org/Making-a-Complaint).
- 6.9 Legal Services Regulation Authority at: [How to Make a Complaint – Legal Services Regulatory Authority \(lsra.ie\)](https://lsra.ie/How-to-Make-a-Complaint).

## **7 What will it cost?**

- 7.1 We will not charge you for addressing your complaint.
- 7.2 If we have issued a bill for work done on the matter, and all or some of the bill is not paid, we may be entitled to charge interest on the amount outstanding.

- 7.3 The Legal Ombudsman, Scottish Legal Complaints Commission, Law Society of Northern Ireland, and the Legal Services Regulatory Authority services are free of charge.

## 8 Document Control

Document Ownership	
Document Owner	Next Review Date
Risk Team	September 2025
Review and Approval	
Name	Date
Risk Team	September 2024

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490

Partners

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2,400

Lawyers

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5,500

Total staff

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3,200

Legal professionals

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60+

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\*includes associated offices

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