

Complaints procedure

Our Complaints Policy

Ward Hadaway LLP is committed to providing a high-quality legal service to all our Clients. When, however, something goes wrong we need you to tell us about it. This will assist us in resolving the situation and help us to raise our own standards.

Our Complaints Procedure

If you have a complaint you should contact the person dealing with your matter or our Senior Partner. If you are not a client you should contact our Senior Partner. Contact methods are detailed below.

Your complaint is likely to be passed to the person in charge of the Department or Unit that is involved in progressing the matter to which your complaint relates. Where we have to change any of the timescales, set out below, in dealing with your complaint we will let you know and explain why.

What will happen next?

1. We will send you a letter acknowledging your complaint and asking you to confirm or explain any details, within 3 Working Days of the receipt of your complaint. If it seems appropriate to us we will suggest a meeting at this stage. We will also let you know the name and contact details of the appointed person who will investigate your complaint.
2. We will record your complaint in our complaints system and open a file for your complaint.
3. If appropriate, we will then invite you to discuss the matter with us and hope to resolve your complaint. We would hope to be in a position to respond to you or arrange for a discussion with you within 15 Working Days following receipt of your complaint. If we propose a discussion but you prefer not to have a discussion, or if we cannot arrange this within a suitable timescale, we will write fully to you setting out our views on the situation and, if relevant offering any redress we consider appropriate.

4. Within 5 Working Days of any discussion with you we will write to you to confirm what took place and any suggestions or any resolution that we agreed with you.
5. At this stage, if you are not satisfied with the outcome you can write to us again and we will then arrange a review of our decision. We would generally aim to do this within 10 Working Days of your response. This will happen in one of the following ways:
 - We will review our position.
 - We will arrange for someone else within the firm, who has not been involved in your complaint, to review it.
6. We will let you know the result of the review within 5 Working Days of the end of the review. At this time we will write to you confirming our final position on your complaint and explaining our reasons. We will also give you details of the Legal Ombudsman where this is appropriate. If you are still not satisfied, you may contact them about your complaint.

Before accepting your complaint 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 6 months of receiving a formal response to your complaint and;
- No more than 6 years from the date of act / omission; or
- No more than 3 years from when you should reasonably have known there was cause for complaint.

If you would like more information about the Legal Ombudsman, please contact them. Visit:

www.legalombudsman.org.uk, Call: 0300 555 0333, Email: enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk or write to Legal Ombudsman, PO Box 6806, Wolverhampton, WV1 9WJ

7. We are authorised and regulated by the Solicitors Regulation Authority (www.sra.org.uk) and the rules and regulations governing how we should act and carry out our business are contained in the SRA Standards and Regulations 2019. These can be accessed and downloaded at <https://www.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/> or by asking us to provide a copy.
8. If your concern relates to our conduct or behaviour the Solicitors Regulation Authority can help you. This could be for things such as dishonesty, taking or losing money or treating you unfairly because of your age, a disability or other characteristic. You can contact the Solicitors Regulatory Authority by telephone: 0300 606 2555 or via the website www.sra.org.uk
9. In respect of any disputed invoice, you may apply to the court for an assessment of the invoice under Part III of the Solicitors Act 1974.
10. Alternative complaints bodies exist, which are competent to deal with complaints about legal services should both you and we wish to use such a scheme. An example is Independent Mediators whose website is www.independentmediators.co.uk. We do not wish to use such an alternative complaints body as we consider that the Legal Ombudsman has the most experience in dealing with such complaints.
11. How to contact us: Ward Hadaway LLP, Sandgate House, 102 Quayside, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 3DX, Telephone: 0330 137 3000 or e-mail: complaints@wardhadaway.com

