



HENDERSON
CHAMBERS

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Chambers' aim is to provide a good service at all times, and is pleased when positive feedback is received from clients. However, it is also recognised that there might be an occasion when someone feels that they may have grounds for complaint, and in those circumstances clients are invited to let Chambers know as soon as possible. It is not necessary to involve solicitors in order to make your complaint, but you are free to do so should you wish.

Please note that Chambers will only consider complaints from our clients, and provided that they are raised within six years of the relevant act or omission.

It should be noted that it may not always be possible to investigate a complaint brought by a non-client. This is because the ability of chambers to satisfactorily investigate and resolve such matters is limited and complaints of this nature are often better suited to the disciplinary processes maintained by the Bar Standards Board (BSB). Therefore, chambers will make an initial assessment of the complaint and if they feel that the issues raised cannot be satisfactorily resolved through the chambers complaints process they will refer you to the BSB.

Complaints made by telephone

You may wish to make a complaint in writing and, if so, please follow the procedure indicated below. However, if you would rather speak on the telephone about your complaint, please telephone Jason Housden, Chambers Director on 0207 583 9020. If the complaint concerns the Chambers Director, in the first instance, please contact Charles Gibson QC, the Head of Chambers, who may make appropriate arrangements (which may include the appointment of a senior Member of Chambers) to consider the matter.

Mr Housden (or, in the case of a complaint regarding the Chambers Director, the Head of Chambers or whomsoever he appoints) 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 the outcome and record that you are satisfied. You may also wish to record the outcome of the telephone discussion in writing.

If we feel that your complaint cannot be resolved on the telephone you will be invited to write to Chambers about it within the next 10 working days so that it can be investigated formally.

Complaints made in writing

Please give the following details:

- Your name and address;
- Which Member(s) of Chambers or staff you are complaining about;
- The detail of the complaint; and
- What you would like done about it.

Please address your letter, marked “Confidential”, to Jason Housden at Henderson Chambers, 2 Harcourt Buildings, Temple, London EC4Y 9DB. Where possible, receipt of your complaint will be acknowledged within five working days and details will be provided as to how your complaint will be considered.

Any written complaint will be considered by a panel consisting of up to two experienced Members of Chambers and if appropriate the Chambers Director. Within 10 working days of your letter being acknowledged, a member(s) of the panel will be appointed to investigate. If your complaint is against a member(s) of the panel, the person appointed will be someone other than the person you are complaining about.

The person(s) appointed to investigate will write to you as soon as possible to let you know he or she or they have been appointed and that he or she or they will reply to your complaint within 15 working days. If he or she or they consider that they will not be able to reply within 15 working days, he or she or they will set a new date for his reply and inform you. The reply will set out:

- The nature and scope of the investigation;
- The conclusion on each complaint and the basis for his conclusion; and
- If he or she or they find that you are justified in your complaint, recommendations for resolving the complaint.

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. Disclosure will be made to the Head of Chambers, members of the complaints panel and to anyone involved in the complaint and its investigation. The Bar Standards Board is entitled to inspect the documents and seek information about the complaint when discharging its auditing and monitoring functions.

Our Policy

As part of our commitment to client care, Chambers will make a written record of any complaint and retain all documents and correspondence generated by the complaint for a period of six years. The Complaints Panel will inspect an anonymised record regularly with a view to improving services.

Complaints to the Legal Services Ombudsman

From 6th October 2010, if you have a complaint about your barrister which you believe has not been resolved satisfactorily using Chambers complaint procedure you should contact the Legal Ombudsman. The Legal Ombudsman is a new organisation which is independent of the Bar Standards Board (the body which regulates barristers) and has been set up to deal with service complaints about all types of lawyer practising in England and Wales. The Legal Ombudsman can consider whether the service you received from your barrister was unsatisfactory and is able to award compensation for poor service by your barrister.

Clients who have a right to complain to Legal Ombudsman are individuals and, broadly speaking, small businesses and charities. You can find out more about who can complain to the Legal Ombudsman on their website at www.legalombudsman.org.uk.

You can write to the Legal Ombudsman at:

Legal Ombudsman
PO Box 6806
Wolverhampton
WV1 9WJ
Telephone number: 0300 555 0333.
Email: enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk.

You must complain to the Legal Ombudsman either within six years of your barrister's actions/failure to act, or no later than three years after you should reasonably have known there were grounds to complain. You must also complain to the Legal Ombudsman within six months of receiving our final

response to your complaint. You may also complain if your complaint has not been dealt within eight weeks of submitting it to us.

Once a complaint about your barrister has been assessed by the Legal Ombudsman, it may be passed to the Bar Standards Board to deal with. This will happen if your complaint involves examples of professional misconduct; the Legal Ombudsman will make this decision. The Legal Ombudsman will inform you whether it has referred any issues of possible professional misconduct to us and the Bar Standards Board will also contact you to confirm this.

The contact details of the Bar Standards Board are:

The Bar Standards Board
289-293 High Holborn
London
WC1V 7HZ
Telephone: 0207 611 1444
Fax: 0207 831 9217
Website: www.barstandardsboard.org.uk

Dated October 2010
Updated May 2018
Updated May 2020
Updated March 2021