



Complaints Policy and Procedure

We want to give you the best possible service. However, if at any point you become unhappy or concerned about the service we have provided then you should inform us immediately, so that we can do our best to resolve the problem.

In the first instance it may be helpful to contact the person who is working on your case to discuss your concerns and we will do our best to resolve any issues at this stage. If you would like to make a formal complaint, then please contact one of our Members Rosemary Meyer or Phillipa Edmunds at this office in writing or by email rosie@sipsolicitors.co.uk or pip@sipsolicitors.co.uk. Making a complaint will not affect how we handle your case but the matter will be placed on hold while the file is reviewed.

In order to comply with Rule 15 of the Solicitors' Practice Rules the Firm has devised a variety of standard letters, known as "Client Care" letters which the different departments use to acquaint new clients with the Firm's internal complaints procedure. These letters specify that people who wish to make a complaint about the way in which their case has been handled should make their complaint in writing usually to Phillipa Edmunds or Rosemary Meyer.

A complaint is defined as and arises whenever a client wishes the matter reviewed by the Complaints Partner referred to in correspondence to them.

On receiving a complaint, the file and the complaint must be referred to Mrs Edmunds or Rosemary Meyer. The person who has received the complaint should send a letter acknowledging receipt of the same within 5 working days and should be given a copy of the Firm's complaints procedure. The acknowledgement should inform the client that the matter has been referred for investigation and the name of the person to whom it has been referred.

The person dealing with the complaint should investigate the file, to identify the problem which caused the complaint and to assess how that problem was created. They should also consider whether it is appropriate to offer redress to the client or whether other remedial action is preferable, e.g amending or refining procedures. If possible complaints should be dealt with within 1 month of receipt. Where this is not possible the client should be informed as to progress of the investigation and the reason for the delay.

The client should be informed of the outcome of the investigation, indicating what remedial action or redress, if any, has been considered appropriate. In either case, where possible, reasons should be given for the decision reached. The client should also be reminded of the other options of redress open to him, if he remains dissatisfied.

The person against whom the complaint is made should also be informed of the results of the

investigation and any necessary action taken. Suggestions should be made to help prevent complaints of a similar nature occurring in the future. If suggestions are made for a change in procedure, these should be notified to all those affected and documented in this Manual.

A record of all complaints, together with related correspondence and details of the outcome must be lodged with Mrs Edmunds to be kept on the Central Complaints Register. The records of complaints is reviewed at least annually by Mrs Edmunds in order to identify causes common to a number of complaints so that appropriate action can be taken to eliminate the causes of those complaints and enhance the service to the Firms clients.

What to do if we cannot resolve your complaint:

The Legal Ombudsman can help if we are unable to resolve your complaint ourselves. They will look at your complaint independently and it will not affect how we handle your case.

Before accepting a complaint for investigation, 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 six months of receiving a final response to your complaint; and
- No more than six years from the date of act/omission; or
- No more than three 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 on:

Visit: www.legalombudsman.org.uk Call: 0300 555 0333 between 9am and 5pm

Email: enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk

Legal Ombudsman PO Box 6167 Slough SL1 0EH

What to do if you are unhappy with our behaviour:

The Solicitors Regulation Authority can help if you are concerned about our behaviour. This could be for things like dishonesty, taking or losing your money or treating you unfairly because of your age, a disability or other characteristic.

Visit their website to see how you can raise your concerns with the [Solicitors Regulation Authority](http://www.sra.org.uk).

Clients Complaints Policy

Our complaints policy

SJP Solicitors is committed to providing a high quality legal service to all our clients. When something goes wrong, we need you to tell us about it. This will help us to improve our standards.

Our complaints procedure

If you have a concern or a complaint, please contact us as soon as you are aware of the problem so this can be addressed.

What will happen next?

1. We will send you a letter acknowledging receipt of your complaint within five days of our receiving the complaint, enclosing a copy of this procedure.
2. We will then investigate your complaint. This will normally involve passing your complaint to our client care partner Phillipa Edmunds or Rosemary Meyer, who will review your matter file and speak to the member of staff who acted for you.
3. Phillipa Edmunds or Rosemary Meyer may then either invite you to a meeting to discuss and or set out in writing (by email or post) their findings following a review of the file and issues raised, it is hoped, resolve your complaint. She will do this within 14 days of sending you the acknowledgement letter.
4. Phillipa Edmunds or Rosemary Meyer will write to you to confirm what took place and any solutions she has agreed with you.
5. Phillipa Edmunds or Rosemary Meyer will in appropriate circumstances send you a detailed written reply to your complaint, including her suggestions for resolving the matter, within 21 days of sending you the acknowledgement letter.
6. At this stage, if you are still not satisfied, you should contact us again to explain why you remain unhappy with our response and we will review your comments. Depending on the matter we may at this stage arrange for another partner to review the decision.
7. If you are still not satisfied, you can then contact the Legal Ombudsman or Solicitors Regulation Authority

If we have to change any of the timescales above, we will let you know and explain why.