

KINGS CHAMBERS COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Our aim is to provide you with a good services at all times. However, should you have a complaint about the quality of the services you have received you are invited to let us know as soon as possible in order for us to investigate your complaint.

It is not necessary to involve solicitors in order to make a complaint, however you are free to do so should you wish.

Please note that it may not always be possible to investigate a complaint brought by a non-client of Kings Chambers; this is because the ability of the Chambers to satisfactorily investigate and resolve such matters is limited and complaints of this nature, brought by non-clients, are often better suited to the disciplinary process which is maintained by the Bar Standards Board.

The Chambers will make an initial assessment of the complaint upon receipt and if it deems that the issues raised cannot be satisfactorily resolved through the Chambers complaints procedure you will be referred to the Bar Standards Board.

COMPLAINTS MADE BY TELEPHONE

In line with our ethos of openness and transparency we would encourage you to discuss any day to day concerns about the services of our barrister members directly with them in the first instance; should they be unavailable you can also contact one of our Senior Clerks, the Chambers Director or the Chambers Compliance Officer.

If the complaint is about a member of Chambers staff, please contact the Chambers Director or the Chambers Compliance Officer.

Should the complaint be about the Chambers Director you should refer the matter to David Casement QC.

Kings Chambers

T: 0345 034 3444
E: clerks@kingschambers.com

Manchester

36 Young Street,
Manchester, M3 3FT
DX: 718188 MCH 3

Leeds

5 Park Square,
Leeds, LS1 2NE
DX: 713113 LEEDS PARK SQ

Birmingham

Embassy House, 60 Church Street,
Birmingham, B3 2DJ
DX: 13023 BIRMINGHAM

Contact details for the Chambers Director, the Chambers Compliance Officer, our clerks and our barristers can be found on the website <https://kingschambers.com>

The person you contact initially will make a note of the details of your complaint and what you feel should be done to address it. They will discuss your concerns with you so it is important that you provide as much detail as possible to allow them to understand your complaint fully and aim to provide a resolution. Should the matter be resolved at this stage and having ensured that you are satisfied with the resolution, the outcome will be recorded. You may also wish to record the outcome of the telephone discussion in writing.

If your complaint is not resolved at this stage you will be invited to write to us within 14 days to allow the Chambers to investigate it formally.

COMPLAINTS MADE IN WRITING

When making a complaint in writing you should ensure that you provide the following details:

- Your name and address;
- Which member(s) of the Chambers or staff the complaint is regarding;
- Full details of the complaint; and
- What you believe should be done to address it

All complaints made in writing should be addressed to:

Lewis Martin
Chambers Compliance Officer
36 Young Street
Manchester
M3 3FT
DX: 718188 (MCH 3)
Email: compliance@kingschambers.com

Where possible, we will acknowledge receipt of your complaint within 3 working days and provide you with details of who has been appointed to deal with your complaint and the process for how it will be dealt with.

The Chambers has a panel headed by our member David Casement QC together with experienced members of Chambers and three senior staff. One of the panel will consider written complaints and a list of the panel members assigned is available upon request. Upon receipt of your complaint in writing and within 10 working days of receipt the head of the panel or, in their absence, the deputy will appoint an appropriate member of the panel to investigate the complaint. Should your complaint be about the head of the panel, the next most senior member of the panel will be appointed to investigate the matter. In all cases, the person appointed will be someone other than the person you have made a complaint about.

The person appointed to investigate your complaint will write to you as soon as reasonably practicable to let you know that they have been appointed and that a reply to your complaint will be made within 21 working days from receipt of your complaint. If it is later found that this will not be possible, for any reason, you will be notified within 21 working days of the new date for a reply to your complaint.

The reply will set out the following:

- The nature and scope of the investigation;
- The conclusion on each complaint and the basis for the conclusion; and
- If it is found that you are justified in your complaint, proposals for resolving the matter

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 to the Head of Chambers, and to anyone involved in the complaint and its investigation. Such people will include the barrister or member of staff who you have complained about, the head or relevant senior member of the panel and the person who investigates the complaint.

When making a complaint, we will assume that you are authorising those investigating the complaint to view all the relevant papers and/or other correspondence relating to that complaint.

OUR POLICY

As part of our commitment to client care we will make a written record of any complaints received. Such records, including details of the complaint, the steps taken in response to it, the outcome of the complaint and copies of all correspondence (including email and other documentation) will be kept securely for 6 years from the date of resolution of the complaint at which point the records will be confidentially destroyed.

Anonymised records may be kept for longer or as appropriate to allow the Chambers management committee to review the complaints during designated meetings throughout the year with a view to improving the overall services we provide.

COMPLAINTS TO THE EXTERNAL ADJUDICATORS

In the event you are not satisfied with the outcome of the investigation by the Chambers, there are alternative bodies available who are competent and able to deal with complaints about legal services should both you and the barrister concerned wish to use the scheme. One such body is the Small Claims Mediation, further details of which can be found here: <http://www.small-claims-mediation.co.uk/>

You may also take up your complaint with the Legal Ombudsman, the legal independent complaints body which deals with complaints about lawyers, established under the Legal Services Act 2007. Please note the Ombudsman is not able to consider your complaint until it has been fully investigated by the Chambers; you have 6 months from the date of our final letter in which to refer a complaint to the Ombudsman.

Should the matter not be resolved between the complainant and the Chambers within 8 weeks of the initial enquiry, the complainant has the right to take the matter directly to the Ombudsman. The Ombudsman can extend the time limits noted above in exceptional circumstances and therefore the Chambers will have regard to that timeframe when deciding whether they are able to investigate your complaint. The Chambers will not usually deal with complaints that fall outside of the Legal Ombudsman's time limits.

You can write to the Legal Ombudsman at:

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

Please note that the Ombudsman is only able to deal with complaints from consumers i.e. complaints from a barrister's clients are within their jurisdiction. Non-clients who are not satisfied with the Chambers' investigation should therefore contact the Bar Standards Board to refer their complaint.

You can write to the Bar Standards Board at:

Bar Standards Board
289-293 High Holborn
London
WC1V 7HZ
DX: 240 LDE
Telephone: 020 7611 1444
Website: www.barstandardsboard.org.uk

FURTHER INFORMATION

- The Legal Ombudsman decision data can be accessed via:
<http://www.legalombudsman.org.uk/raising-standards/data-and-decisions/#ombudsman-decision-data>
- The Bar Standards Board's Barristers' Register can be accessed via:
<https://www.barstandardsboard.org.uk/for-the-public/search-a-barristers-record/the-barristers-register.html>