

## COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

In addition to proactively gathering and analysing client feedback, Chambers also operates the following complaints procedure. A complaint is defined as an expression of dissatisfaction, orally or in writing, made to a member of Chambers or a member of staff. The relative seriousness of a complaint can be difficult to assess, however we assume that all complaints are potentially serious and therefore all complaints should be recorded and analysed.

Any concerns about members of Chambers or clerks should be raised in the first instance with Clare Bello.

If you feel that the concern or matter you have raised has not been dealt with to your satisfaction, then you may wish to make a formal complaint. We set out the steps to do so in our formal complaints procedure below. We reserve the right not to deal with any complaint made later than twelve months from the date of the conduct about which complaint is made.

### Making a formal complaint

Please address your formal letter of complaint to:

Clare Bello  
Littleton Chambers  
3 King's Bench Walk North  
Temple  
London  
EC4Y 7HR

And provide the following details:

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

Within 21 days of your letter being received Clare Bello will investigate the complaint. If your complaint is against Clare Bello it will be investigated by a member of Chambers appointed to do so by the Chambers Management Committee. In any case, the persons investigating the complaint will be someone other than the person you are complaining about.

The person handling the investigation will write to you as soon as possible to let you know that they have been appointed and that they will reply to your complaint within 21 days. If they find later that they are not going to be able to reply within 21 days, they will set a new date for their reply and inform you. Their reply will set out:

- The nature and scope of their investigation;
- The conclusion on each complaint and the basis for their conclusion;
- If they find that you are justified in your complaint;
- Their proposals for resolving the complaint.

A written record of the formal complaint and all other related papers, replies, etc. will be kept on file for a period of six years.

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 Clare Bello (or other appointed person, where the complaint is against Clare Bello) and will include anyone else we consider necessary to involve in the complaint and its investigation. Such people will include the barrister member or staff member about whom you have complained. If such a complaint is made, we will assume that you are authorising those investigating the complaint to view all the papers or other correspondence relevant to the matter.

We hope that you will use our procedure and that this will resolve any outstanding issues. However, if you are unhappy with the outcome, you do have the right to take up your complaint with the Legal Ombudsman. They have the responsibility for dealing with all service complaints against legal professionals and normally can only consider complaints once the Chambers' complaints procedure has been exhausted.

The Legal Ombudsman has time limits in which a complaint must be raised with them, details can be found in section 4 of the Ombudsman's rules. In summary, you must take your complaint to the Legal Ombudsman:

- No more than one year from the date from the act or omission being complained about; or
- No more than one year from the date when you should have realised that there was cause for complaint; and
- Within six months of receiving the final response from us to your complaint.

The Legal Ombudsman can extend the time limit in exceptional circumstances. If you would like more information about the Legal Ombudsman you can contact them:

Legal Ombudsman  
PO Box 6167  
Slough  
SL1 0EH  
[enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk)  
Tel: 0300 555 0333  
Relay UK: 18001 0300 555 0333

The Bar Standards Board (BSB) investigates complaints of professional misconduct. Complaints of this nature should be directed to them at:

Complaints Department  
Bar Standards Board  
289-293 High Holborn  
London  
WC1V 7HZ  
[contactus@barstandardsboard.org.uk](mailto:contactus@barstandardsboard.org.uk)  
Tel: 020 7611 1444

## Non-Client Complaints

Complaints by non-clients are not ordinarily suitable to be dealt with in accordance with this procedure, unless they relate directly to a service complaint. The Legal Ombudsman will only deal with complaints from consumers of lawyer's services, namely barrister's clients. Chambers' ability to resolve many kinds of non-client complaints is limited and it is likely that we will need to refer these to the Bar Standards Board, if they cannot be resolved through our own complaints process.