

## PRETTYS

### COMPLAINTS HANDLING PROCEDURE

#### **Our complaints policy**

We are committed to providing a high-quality legal service to all our clients. When something goes wrong we need to know about it. In order to help us to improve our standards we have a written complaints procedure which is available if required.

#### **Our complaints procedure**

1. When a complaint is received by the firm, it initially will be handled by the partner in charge of the department/engagement partner involved. The partner in charge will send you a letter acknowledging receipt of your complaint within three days of us receiving the complaint, enclosing a copy of this procedure.
2. The partner in charge will then investigate your complaint, and if appropriate propose a resolution.
3. If they cannot resolve it to your satisfaction then you may contact our Complaints Partner, Georgina Rayment, who will acknowledge receipt within two working days.
4. She will then review your file and speak to the member of staff who is your primary contact. Georgina will send you a written reply to your complaint, including her suggestions for resolving the matter, within 21 days of sending you the acknowledgement letter.
5. If this does not resolve the matter to your satisfaction, Georgina Rayment will then invite you to a meeting to discuss and hopefully resolve your complaint. She will do this within 14 days of receiving your response to her written review.
6. Within three days of the meeting, Georgina Rayment will write to you to confirm what took place and any solutions she has agreed with you.
7. At this stage, if you are still not satisfied, you should contact us again and we will arrange for another partner to review the decision.
8. We will write to you within 14 days of receiving your request for a further review, confirming our final position on your complaint and explaining our reasons.

9. If it is not possible to deal with your complaint in this timeframe we will inform you of the delay and the reasons. However, we will do our best to resolve the matter as soon as practicable.

### **Charges**

10. Please be assured that there are no charges for dealing with your complaint.

### **Other Options**

11. Under our professional regulations we have eight weeks to consider your complaint. If we have not resolved it within this time you can ask the Legal Ombudsman to consider the complaint. The Legal Ombudsman is an independent ombudsman scheme that resolves complaints about lawyers. It can be contacted at P.O Box 6806 Wolverhampton WV1 9WJ or telephone 0300 555 0333 or via [enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk)
12. The Legal Ombudsman accepts complaints from individuals and small businesses, charities or associations. Normally, you will need to bring a complaint to the Legal Ombudsman within six months of receiving a final written response from us about your complaint. It will not normally consider complaints that are more than six years old, or where it is three years since the complainant ought to have been aware of the problem. However, this limit is being introduced gradually, and the matter being complained about must have happened on or after 6 October 2010. If the problem happened earlier than this date, you must not have been aware of it before 6 October 2010.
13. You also have the right to complain about or challenge the bill by applying for an assessment of the bill under Part III of the Solicitors Act 1974 but please note that the Legal Ombudsman may not consider a complaint about the bill if you have applied to the court for assessment of the bill.
14. Alternative complaints bodies, such as Pro Mediate:  
<http://www.promediate.co.uk/professionals-complaints/guidance/>

exist which are competent to deal with complaints about legal services should both you and our firm wish to use such a scheme. We do not agree to use ProMediate.

### **Retention of File**

15. The file relating to your complaint will be retained by us for 7 years from the date of the last correspondence or settlement of the matter, after which it will be destroyed.