

Chambers Complaints Procedure

Definition of a complaint:

A complaint is defined as an expression of dissatisfaction, orally or in writing, made to the person(s) nominated as being responsible for client care by Chambers. This will be Chambers' Director and the Head of Chambers.

Any Barrister or member of staff receiving a complaint should forward the letter, or a written note of an oral complaint to Chambers' Director and inform the complainant that this has been done.

- 1.** Chambers' Director will keep a record of each complaint by completing the Complaints Register and Complaints Form.
- 2.** Chambers' Director will open a file for each complaint received. The file will contain the Complaints Form and any correspondence/information relating to it.
- 3.** Chambers' Director will notify the complainant within seven days that the complaint is under investigation and also give the complainant a date by which the next contact will take place.
- 4.** Chambers' Director will refer the complaint to the Head of Chambers who will commence an investigation. This will include giving all relevant people the opportunity to make an input on the circumstances of the complaint.
- 5.** The Head of Chambers will then take one of the following steps: -
 - (a)** inform the complainant that the complaint has been investigated and found not to be justified, explaining why.

(b) inform the complainant that the complaint has been investigated and found to be justified and either explain the remedial action and any form of compensation offered.

Or,

(c) refer the matter to a suitable member of chambers for resolution with the complainant and explain to the complainant their right to bring the matter to the attention of the Bar Council's Complaints Commissioner.

6. Any complaint, which involves negligence or a potential claim against professional indemnity insurance, will be brought to the attention of the insurers as soon as possible.
7. The Head of Chambers and Chambers' Director will decide upon and implement any necessary changes in procedures or take other appropriate steps to reduce the possibility of a similar complaint arising again.
8. The complaint file will be retained for a period of three years from the date of closure in the event that the complainant refers the complaint to the Bar Council.
9. Chambers' reviews its client care and complaints procedures annually. This includes looking at actual complaints received, deciding if action taken as an outcome was effective, and also identifying any trends.