

We recognise that it is important that all complaints are dealt with promptly, courteously and in a manner which addresses the issues raised in accordance with our procedures.

We pride ourselves on aiming to provide an excellent service to clients at all times. However, we recognise that there may be occasions when clients feel that the level of service has fallen short of that which is expected from someone at Blakiston's. If that is the case we would prefer to know straight away, so that we can try to do something to rectify the matter immediately to your satisfaction. If we are not able to resolve matters, we understand that you may feel that you would prefer to make a formal complaint. We therefore take feedback, complaints and the investigation of them seriously so that we may learn and further improve what we do.

If you have a complaint, we encourage you to let us know as soon as possible. We recognise that it is important that all complaints are dealt with promptly, courteously and in a manner which addresses the issues raised in accordance with our procedures and professional obligations. It is not necessary to involve solicitors in order to make your complaint but you are free to do so should you wish.

Our Complaints Procedure deals with service issues. It is not usually appropriate for chambers to deal with allegations of professional negligence or serious misconduct under the Code of Conduct. In so far as a complaint extends beyond service issues into issues of misconduct we may suggest that it be referred to the Bar Standards Board. In so far as your complaint raises issues of professional negligence the Barrister is required to report the same to their professional indemnity insurers who may elect to deal with it themselves.

Formal Complaints made in Writing

Please make your complaint by letter or email to the Head of Chambers who will have the initial responsibility for handling your complaint. It would be helpful if you could include the following information so we can deal with your complaint as effectively as possible:

- Your contact details including name, address and, if applicable, email address;
- Whether you are a client, instructing solicitor or had some other role;
- The name of the Barrister or member of staff you are complaining about;
- The nature of the complaint;
- What the Barrister or member of staff was asked to do and what happened or did not happen;
- What steps you would like to see taken to resolve your complaint.

Once your formal complaint has been received, the Head of Chambers will explain to you how it will be handled. We try to keep this process flexible to take account of different circumstances. In principle, it will work as follows.

We will aim to acknowledge receipt of your complaint within 7 days of receipt, or sooner, and provide you with details of how your complaint will be dealt with. You may be asked to provide further information if it is required. Within 14 days of acknowledging receipt of your complaint, we will write to inform you that the Head of Chambers has been appointed and the date by which we aim to send you their response, after a thorough investigation. This would normally be within 14 days of the Head of Chambers being appointed. If this is likely to be delayed for some reason, we will write to you to explain this and also the new date for their response.

Complain to the Legal Ombudsman

<https://www.legalombudsman.org.uk/raising-standards/data-and-decisions/#ombudsman-decision-data>

The Barristers' Register

<https://www.barstandardsboard.org.uk/barristers-register/32E53CC5622D4CA75F523878F76FC9AA.html>