

ONE ESSEX COURT

The Chambers of Lord Grabiner QC

Chambers Complaints Procedure

1. Our aim is to give you a good service at all times. However if you have a complaint you are invited to let us know as soon as possible. It is not necessary for lay clients to involve their solicitors in order to make a complaint, but they are free to do so should they wish. Please note that chambers will only consider complaints that are raised within six months of the act or omission complained of.

2. Complaints made by Telephone

You may wish to make a complaint in writing and, if so, please follow the procedure in paragraph 4 below. However, if you would rather speak on the telephone about your complaint then please telephone the barrister concerned or the senior clerk Darren Burrows. If the complaint is about the senior clerk please telephone the head of chambers, Lord Grabiner QC or the deputy head of chambers Ian Glick QC. The person you contact will make a note of the details of your complaint and what you would like done about it. He or she will discuss your concerns with you and aim to resolve them. If the matter is resolved he or she will record the outcome, check that you are satisfied with the outcome and record that you are satisfied. You may also wish to record the outcome of the telephone discussion in writing.

3. If your complaint is not resolved on the telephone you will be invited to write to us about it within the next 14 days so it can be investigated formally.

4. Complaints made in Writing

Please give the following details:

- your name and address and telephone number
- which member(s) of chambers or chambers' staff you are complaining about
- the detail of the complaint; and
- what you would like done about it.

- Please address your letter to the head of chambers Lord Grabiner QC or the deputy head of chambers Ian Glick QC at 1 Essex Court, Temple, London EC4Y 9AR.
5. Our chambers has a panel headed by Ian Glick QC and made up of experienced members of chambers and a senior member of staff, which considers any written complaint. Within 14 days of your letter being received the head of the panel or his deputy in his absence will appoint a member of the panel to investigate it. If your complaint is against the head of the panel the next most senior member of the panel will investigate it. In any case, the person appointed will be someone other than the person you are complaining about.
 6. The person appointed to investigate will write to you as soon as possible to let you know he or she has been appointed and will reply to your complaint within 14 days. If that person finds later that it is not possible to reply within 14 days he or she will set a new date for the reply and inform you. The reply will set out:
 - The nature and scope of the investigation;
 - The conclusion on each complaint and the basis for such conclusion;
 - and
 - If he or she finds that you are justified in your complaint, the proposals for resolving the complaint.

7. **Confidentiality**

All conversations and documents relating to the complaint will be treated as confidential (subject to what is said below in relation to non-client complaints) and will be disclosed only to the extent that is necessary. Disclosure will be to the head and deputy head of chambers, members of our management committee 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. The Bar Standards Board is entitled to inspect the documents and seek information about the complaint when discharging its auditing and monitoring functions.

8. **Our Policy**

As part of our commitment to client care we make a written record of any complaint and retain all documents and correspondence generated by the complaint for a period of six years. Our management committee inspects the record regularly with a view to improving services.

9. **Non-client complaints**

It may not always be possible to investigate a complaint brought by a non-client. This is because our ability satisfactorily to investigate and resolve such matters is limited, and complaints of this nature are often better suited to the disciplinary processes maintained by the Bar Standards Board. Accordingly, we will make an initial assessment of the complaint and if the issues raised cannot be satisfactorily resolved by means of the chambers complaints procedure we will refer you to the Bar Standards Board.

Please note that information provided to us in the context of non-client complaints may be disclosed to the solicitors instructing the barrister about whom the complaint is made.

10. **Complaints to the Bar Standards Board (the regulatory arm of the Bar Council, the professional body for barristers) and the Legal Ombudsman**

We hope that you will use our procedure. However if you would rather not do so or are unhappy with the outcome you do have the choice of taking up your complaint with the Bar Standards Board at any time. Please note that the Bar Standards Board has a six-month time limit from the date of the act or omission about which you are complaining within which to make your complaint. However, should you raise your complaint with chambers first, there is a three month time limit from the conclusion of the investigation by chambers in which to raise your complaint with the Board.

You can write to them at:

Complaints Team
Bar Standards Board
289-293 High Holborn
London WC1V 7HZ

Tel: 020 7611 1444

Fax: 020 7831 9217

Website: www.barstandardsboard.org.uk

If you are unhappy with the outcome of our investigation and you fall within its jurisdiction you may take up your complaint with the Legal Ombudsman, the independent complaints body for complaints about lawyers, at the conclusion of our consideration of your complaint. The Ombudsman is not able to consider your complaint until it has first been investigated by Chambers. Please note that the Legal Ombudsman has a twelve-month time limit from the date of the act or omission about which you are complaining within which to make your complaint. You can write to them at:

Legal Ombudsman
PO Box 6806,
Wolverhampton
WV1 9WJ

Telephone number: 0300 555 0333

Email: enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk

Please note that the Legal Ombudsman will only deal with complaints from consumers. This means that only complaints from the barrister's client are within his/her jurisdiction. Non-clients who are not satisfied with the outcome of the investigation should contact the Bar Standards Board rather than the Legal Ombudsman.