

Watson Ramsbottom Ltd Solicitors Our Complaints Handling Policy

Complaints policy

We are committed to providing an exceptional legal service to all our clients. When something goes wrong, we need you to tell us about it. This will help us to improve our standards.

Our complaints procedure

If you are dissatisfied with the service received from our practice, or if you are dissatisfied with regards to a charge on a bill received, please contact our Client Care Team. You can write to them at Watson Ramsbottom Ltd Solicitors, 33-39 Railway Road, Darwen, BB3 2RL, or by email to clientcare@watsonramsbottom.com.

We ask that where possible you use the attached Client Complaint Form to set out as clearly as you can the nature of your complaint or concern and how it has arisen. We will also need you to confirm the name of the person who dealt with your matter and your file reference number.

What will happen next?

Within 7 calendar days of receipt of your complaint we will:

- Record your complaint in our central database and open a file for your complaint.
- Send you a letter acknowledging receipt.
- Ask you to confirm or explain any details which are unclear.

If we have asked for further details, we will acknowledge those within 7 calendar days of receipt and will confirm what will happen next.

In most cases Mr Leach will consider your complaint and then allocate it for investigation. Wherever possible this will be the Director in charge of the department involved with your complaint, but it may also be an external agency (see below for further details).

Our investigation

- Within 21 calendar days of receiving your complaint (or the further details requested), we will ask the member of staff who acted for you to comment, and we will review your file.
- Within 56 calendar days of receiving your complaint (or the further details requested), we will write to you with our view of your complaint, and how to resolve it.
- If necessary, we may invite you to a meeting to discuss your complaint. We will write to you within 7 calendar days of the meeting to confirm what took place and any solutions agreed with you.
- We will then write to you confirming our final position on your complaint and will explain our reasons.

Outsourcing Complaints

As mentioned above and a result of our ongoing commitment to ensuring good client care and quality of service, we may, at our discretion, outsource some complaints to an Independent Complaints Handler. We believe that this is in the interests of our clients as it allows us to obtain an independent view and constructive feedback on how our service can be improved.

Both the Law Society in their 'Complaints Management Practice Note' and the Legal Ombudsman in their 'Guide to Good Complaints Handling' suggest that clients may be offered the opportunity for their concern to be investigated by an external independent mediator.

If this is done, then the Independent Complaints Handler will acknowledge your expression of dissatisfaction within 7 calendar days and will aim to provide a detailed assessment of their findings within 56 calendar days of receipt.

If we must change any of the timescales above, we will let you know, and we will explain why.

Please note that there is no charge for our time spent dealing with your complaint.

The Legal Ombudsman

We have eight weeks to consider your complaint. If for any reason we are unable to resolve the problem between us within that time frame, then you may ask the Legal Ombudsman to consider the complaint.

You can contact the Legal Ombudsman by the following methods:

Telephone: 0300 555 0333

Overseas: +44 12 245 3050

Email: enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk

In writing: PO Box 6806, Wolverhampton, WV1 9WJ

Complaints to the Legal Ombudsman must usually be made within one year of the act or omission about which you are complaining occurring; or within one year from when you should have known about or become aware that there were grounds for complaint. For further information you should contact the Legal Ombudsman using the details provided above.

Solicitors Regulation Authority

If someone thinks a solicitor might be dishonest or you have concerns about their ethics or integrity, they have the right to notify our regulator, the Solicitors Regulation Authority (SRA). There are no time limits for making a report but there are limits on what the SRA will consider. Please note that the SRA is not able to deal with issues of poor service (complaints of this nature should instead be referred to the Legal Ombudsman). For further information about the SRA's role, please contact the SRA or visit:

<https://www.sra.org.uk/consumers/problems/report-solicitor.page#report>

**WATSON RAMSBOTTOM LTD SOLICITORS
CLIENT COMPLAINT FORM**

We understand that you have expressed dissatisfaction with the service we have provided, and we are eager to investigate the matter fully to resolve any issues. So that we can understand your complaint, please complete the form below. We aim to respond to your initial complaint within 56 days.

Your details:

Title:	
Name:	
Address:	
Telephone:	
E-Mail:	

Firm details:

Our Reference:	
Advisor name:	

Complaint details:

Details of Complaint:	
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