

7 KBW COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

1. Barristers and staff at 7KBW aim to give you a good service at all times. If at any time you have concerns about the service you have received from our barristers or staff, you are invited to let us know as soon as possible. Please note that Chambers will only consider complaints that are raised within six months of the act or omission complained of.
2. In the first instance we would encourage you to discuss any day-to-day concerns about the services of our barristers directly with them. Any such concerns can also be raised with our Senior Clerks, Bernie Hyatt and Greg Leyden.
3. Any concerns about members of staff should also be raised with our Senior Clerks, Bernie Hyatt and Greg Leyden. If the concern is about one of the Senior Clerks, please speak to the Head of Chambers, Gavin Kealey Q.C.
4. We would very much hope that your concern can be resolved at this stage and that you will be content with the outcome.
5. However, if you feel that the matter has not been dealt with to your satisfaction, you may wish to make a complaint. We have set out below our procedure for dealing with such complaints.

Complaints Procedure

6. If you are dissatisfied with any aspect of the service provided by a barrister or by anyone at 7KBW and you wish to make a complaint, you are invited in the first instance to telephone the Head of Chambers, Gavin Kealey Q.C. If the matter can be resolved over the telephone, the outcome will be noted in Chambers' records but we would invite you to make your own note.
7. However, if you prefer or if, having made a complaint over the telephone to the Head of Chambers, you are dissatisfied with the outcome, please send us your complaint in writing, by letter addressed to Gavin Kealey Q.C. at 7 King's Bench Walk, Temple EC4Y 7DS, London. Please make sure that you include the following details: your name and address, which member(s) of Chambers or member(s) of staff you are complaining about, the detail of the complaint, and what you would like done about it.
8. 7KBW has a panel headed by the Head of Chambers and made up of experienced members of Chambers and senior members of staff which considers any written complaint. The panel will acknowledge your complaint in writing if possible within 2 working days (and in any event promptly) and provide you with details of

the person who has been appointed to deal with your complaint, a description of that person's role in chambers, a copy of this complaints procedure and a date by which you can expect to hear from Chambers in relation to your complaint.

9. Within 14 days of this acknowledgement, the Head of Chambers or his deputy (or, if the complaint concerns the Head of Chambers, the next most senior member of the panel) will appoint a member of the panel to investigate your complaint. The person investigating the complaint will be someone other than the person you are complaining about.
10. Within 14 days of that appointment, the person investigating your complaint will reply to your complaint. If that person finds that they are not able to reply within those 14 days, he/she will write to you setting a new date for his/her reply.
11. The reply to your complaint will set out:
 - All the details of your complaint(s) provided by you;
 - The nature and scope of the investigation;
 - The conclusion (on each complaint) of the individual investigating the complaint(s), and the basis for that conclusion;
 - If he/she finds your complaint to be justified, his/her proposals for resolving the complaint.

Confidentiality

12. All conversations and documents relating to the complaint will be treated as confidential and will be disclosed only to the extent that is necessary for the investigation and resolution of the complaint and internal review in order to improve chambers' handling of complaints. Disclosure will be to the Head of Chambers, members of our management committee and to anyone involved in the complaint and its investigation. Such individuals will include the barrister or member of staff you have complained about, and the person who investigates the complaint.
13. The Bar Standards Board is also entitled to inspect the documents and seek information about your complaint when discharging its auditing and monitoring functions.

Our policy

14. As part of our commitment to client care we make a written record of each complaint, and any correspondence or documents generated in the investigation of the complaint. Such documents will be kept for a minimum of 6 years.
15. The Head of Chambers will report at least annually to the management committee on the number of complaints received, the subject areas of the complaints and the outcomes. The complaints will be reviewed for trends and possible training issues, with a view to improving services.

Complaints to the Bar Standards Board (the regulatory body for barristers)

16. We hope that you will use our complaints procedure. However, if you would rather not do so or are unhappy with the outcome, you may take up your complaint with the Bar Standards Board at any time. You can contact the Bar Standards Board at:

Bar Standards Board
Professional Conduct Department
289-293 High Holborn
London
WC1V 7JZ

Telephone: 0207 6111 444

Website: www.barstandardsboard.org.uk.

Complaints to the Legal Ombudsman

17. If you have tried resolving your complaint with us but we are unable to help you then you can have the complaint independently looked at by the Legal Ombudsman.
18. The Legal Ombudsman investigates problems arising from acts or omissions by lawyers in the course of the work they do for consumers (their clients). The Legal Ombudsman's website sets out a list of the specific categories of complaint which it investigates.
19. The Legal Ombudsman has time limits in which a complaint must be raised with it. The time limits are:
 1. Six years from the date of the act or omission complained of; **or**

2. Three years from the date that you should reasonably have known there were grounds for complaint (if the act or omission complained of took place more than six years ago); **or**
 3. Within six months of the complaint receiving a final response from us (if that response included an explanation that the Legal Ombudsman was available if you remained dissatisfied and gave full contact details for the Ombudsman and a warning that the complaint must be referred to it within six months).
20. The act or omission, or when you should have reasonably known there was cause for complaint, must have been after 5 October 2010.
21. The Ombudsman can extend its time limit in exceptional circumstances. Please note that, where you make a complaint to Chambers directly, Chambers will not usually deal with complaints that fall outside of the Legal Ombudsman's time limits.
22. The Legal Ombudsman's contact details are as follows:

Email: enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk.

Call: 0300 555 0333 between 8:30am to 5:30pm.

(Calls to 03 numbers will cost no more than calls to national geographic numbers (starting 01 or 02) from both mobiles and landlines, and will be included as part of any inclusive call minutes or discount schemes in the same way as geographic calls).

Write to: Legal Ombudsman, PO Box 6806, Wolverhampton, WV1 9WJ.

Visit: www.legalombudsman.org.uk.

23. If you are not the client of a barrister at 7KBW and are unhappy with the outcome of our investigation, then please contact the Bar Standards Board using the contact details set out above.

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