



Complaints Procedure

Policy Owner: Compliance Officer for Legal Practice
Date: 18/01/2018
Version: 1.2

Version Control

Version	Action	By Whom	Date
1.0	New Document Created	COLP	04/01/2016
1.1	Content Added	Compliance Officer	21/03/2017
1.2	Reviewed	Compliance Officer	18/01/2018

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1. Background and Purpose

1.1 Background

Horwich Cohen Coghlan is committed to providing you with the highest standards of service, however we recognise that, for example, buying or selling house, or being involved in litigation following a road traffic collision can be a stressful time.

Clients will be made aware of how to complain in the Client Care Information provided at the outset of the matter.

Despite our commitments we know from time to time errors will be made and omissions will occur and when there is a complaint we will thoroughly investigate the matter and provide a response explaining our views and if appropriate issuing an apology and offer compensation.

We will not charge for investigating a complaint or responding to the complainant.

1.2 Purpose

To ensure that complaints are properly and promptly investigated.

2. Scope and Applicability

We define a complaint to be an expression of dissatisfaction, which alleges that the complainant has suffered (or may suffer) financial loss, distress, inconvenience or other detriment.

We will only deal with complaints from our clients unless the client gives their authority for another person to present their complaint.

3. Procedure

All complaints must be referred to the Compliance Officer on the day that the fee earner / employee is aware of the Complaint.

All Complaints will be acknowledged within two working days.

The Compliance Officer will investigate the complaint and provide a response within 28 days. If it is not possible to provide a response in that period then the Compliance Officer will inform the complainant that we response is delayed and when it will be received.

An interim response may be sent, this will invite the complainant to discuss the matter or resolution of their complaint with the Compliance Officer.

When sending the final response the response will signpost the complainant to the Legal Ombudsman and inform them of the timescale within which they must ask the Ombudsman to review the matter.

3.1 Complaints

We will accept complaints orally as well as in writing.

3.2 Investigating a complaint

We will usually advise you as to the nature and extent of our investigations unless there are matters, which require us to maintain confidentiality; for example personnel matters relating to the staff involved.

3.3 Investigation Outcome

We will record and analyse the outcomes of the investigations.

This analysis will be reported to the Board in the Risk Management Group reports.

3.4 Informing the client of the outcome

We will usually respond complaints in writing, providing copy documentation as required; however in some circumstances we recognise that a meeting to discuss the matter and review correspondence and or documents may be appropriate. Regardless as to whether you choose to attend such a meeting or decline we will always provide you with a detailed written response.

3.5 If the client remains dissatisfied

If the Complainant is not satisfied with our handling of the matter we will refer them to The Legal Ombudsman.

4. Responsibilities

4.1 The COLP

The COLP has overall responsibility for ensuring that a regular review of complaints is undertaken.

4.2 Managers and employees

Managers are responsible for ensuring that:

- all employees are briefed on the Procedure and any related Policies.
- all new staff are given training on this Procedure and any related Policies.

Employees have a duty to:

- read the Procedure and any related Policies and consult their Manager if they are in any doubt.
- carry out their role in compliance with this Procedure.

5. Reporting

The Compliance Officer will seek approval from the COLP prior to releasing any complaints data externally. An annual return detailing material complaints will be submitted to the SRA. A summary report will also be made available to the COLP detailing the number of complaints received/resolved, the nature of complaints and any other information considered relevant.