

GARDEN COURT CHAMBERS
COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE



OUR MISSION

1. Our aim is to give you a good service at all times, both from the barristers and our staff. However, in the event that you are dissatisfied with the treatment you have received by a barrister or our staff, we wish to provide a remedy.

WHEN SHOULD YOU COMPLAIN?

2. Experience tells us that, very often, potential complaints can be resolved informally, because they may have arisen through a misunderstanding or can be remedied without resort to the full complaints procedure. We encourage you to take up a complaint with the responsible person in the first instance. If the matter cannot be resolved to your satisfaction it is open to you to make a formal complaint. We recognise, of course, that there may be grievances which are incapable, in your view, of being resolved in this way, at any stage.
3. A complaint will be entertained if it is made within 6 months of the cause of the complaint or when informal resolution has failed, whichever is the later.
4. In that event the following applies:

WHAT IS A COMPLAINT?

5. Under this procedure a complaint is treated as such if it is in writing and directed to the Heads of Chambers, who are OWEN DAVIES QC and COURTENAY GRIFFITHS QC. They chair a complaints panel, which is responsible for supervising the handling of complaints.
6. We will write to you within three days of receipt of your complaint.
7. It is the job of the Head of Chambers to determine what has gone wrong. If it is possible to do so you should receive within 14 days a written determination of your complaint.
8. However, if the matter raises issues which, in the opinion of the Head of Chambers, requires an investigator to determine the facts, he will appoint a suitable member of chambers to do so. A letter will then be sent to you within 14 days informing you who has been appointed.
9. The investigator will then have access to all the relevant documents, will be able to interview witnesses and may need to contact you for further information.

10. The investigator will then produce a report to the Head of Chambers as soon as possible, ordinarily within 14 days of his or her appointment. If it is not possible to meet this deadline we will write to you and inform you when we expect to conclude our investigation.
11. The Head of Chambers will consider the report and write to you with his conclusions, setting out the nature of the investigation, and will inform you whether he upholds the complaint or rejects it, setting out the reasons in each case. When a complaint is upheld the letter will set out or include a proposal for resolving the complaint.

CONFIDENTIALITY

12. All conversations, records kept and documents relating to the complaint will be treated confidentially. They will only be disclosed as necessary: normally to the panel, the person complained about and the investigator.

SUPERVISION OF COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

13. As part of our commitment to client care, we keep records of all complaints made. Our complaints panel may inspect them regularly to ensure compliance with our procedure and with a view to improving the service we provide.

COMPLAINTS TO THE BAR STANDARDS BOARD

14. If you are dissatisfied with the way that your complaint has been dealt with or the conclusions of our investigation, or you do not wish to make use of our procedure at all, you may make a complaint to the **Bar Standards Board** (www.barstandardsboard.org.uk). They are to be found at **289-293 High Holborn, LONDON WC1V 7HZ, Tel. 020 7242 0082, email via email page on their website**

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