

We, at Apex Solicitors want to give you the best possible service. However, if at any point you become unhappy or concerned about the service, we have provided then you should inform us immediately, so that we can do our best to resolve the problem.

In the first instance it may be helpful to contact the person who is working on your case to discuss your concerns and we will do our best to resolve any issues. If you would like to make a formal complaint, then you can read our full complaints procedure (**set out below**). Making a complaint will not affect how we handle your case.

What to do if we cannot resolve your complaint

The Legal Ombudsman can help you if we are unable to resolve your complaint ourselves. They will look at your complaint independently and it will not affect how we handle your case.

Before accepting a complaint for investigation, the Legal Ombudsman will check that you have tried to resolve your complaint with us first. If you have, then you must take your complaint to the Legal Ombudsman:

- Within six months of receiving a final response to your complaint

and

- No more than six years from the date of act/omission; or
- No more than three years from when you should reasonably have known there was cause for complaint.

If you would like more information about the Legal Ombudsman, please contact them.

Contact details

Visit: www.legalombudsman.org.uk

Call: 0300 555 0333 between 9.00 to 17.00.

Email: enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk

Legal Ombudsman PO Box 6806, Wolverhampton, WV1 9WJ

What to do if you are unhappy with our behaviour

The Solicitors Regulation Authority can help if you are concerned about our behaviour. This could be for things like dishonesty, taking or losing your money or treating you unfairly because of your age, a disability or other characteristic. Visit their website to see how you can raise your concerns with the [Solicitors Regulation Authority](http://www.sra.org.uk).

COMPLAINT PROCEDURE APEX SOLICITORS

Preamble

1.1 As a general principle, every reasonable effort will be made to resolve the complaints at the first available opportunity as soon as possible.

The practice recognises that most complaints will be resolved satisfactorily in this way.

1.2 Unless indicated to the contrary all clients are provided with or sent a letter at the outset of their matter which give details of the complaint procedure. This ensures that they should approach in the first instance and let them know that complaints are treated seriously.

1.3 The practice recognises that misunderstanding can occur at anytime. Therefore, a distinction has to be drawn between formal and informal complaints.

1.4 An informal complaint is one which can be satisfactorily resolved between the client and the caseworker. For example, a client complaint that telephone call was not returned on the same day when the client is contacted, the reason is explained and the client is satisfied.

1.5 A formal complaint is where the client is not satisfied with the explanation and wants the complaint to be dealt with by a third party or where the initial procedure has not or will not produce a satisfactory resolution of the complaint

Complaint principle

No person bringing a complaint under this procedure whether successful or otherwise shall be treated less favourably than would have been the case had a complaint not been brought. An allegation that this principle has been broken may itself be a cause for complaint under this procedure.

Initial Procedure (Informal Complaints)

2.1 Where the client makes a complaint the caseworker should record the matter and put it in the file, such informal resolution could be made orally, in writing or it could be through a third party e.g. an **MP**

2.2 Where the matter is resolved informally the caseworker should record the matter and put it in the file, such informal resolution by way of apology, corrective action and clarification.

2.3 Any corrective action will need to be taken within 24 hours.

Formal Procedure (Complaints)

Where the procedure here does not produce a satisfactory resolution of the matter giving rise to the concern, the complaint may be formalised and then dealt with under the procedure below.

If you are not satisfied with our response, you may refer your complaint to our Complaints Officer/Compliance Officer for Legal Practice, Adeyemi Bello, who will look at the matter afresh and will carry out any further investigations as may be necessary. Usually within 28 days of the complaint being referred to him, he will inform you of his conclusions and any proposals to resolve the complaint. If it remains unresolved, you may refer your complaint to the Legal Ombudsman. The Solicitors Regulation Authority can assist if you are concerned about our behaviour and you can raise concerns at the www.sra.org.uk/consumers/problems/report-solicitor.page website address

The Legal Ombudsman is an independent and impartial lay body for members of the public who wish to make a complaint about a solicitor who has acted for them. It operates within a regulatory and disciplinary framework set, monitored and enforced by the regulatory body for solicitors, the Solicitors Regulation Authority ("SRA"). The Legal Ombudsman also works closely with the Law Society, the body that represents solicitors in England and Wales.

Nothing here will affect their statutory right/s

If you are not satisfied with the outcome of your complaint in relation to our invoice you may also apply to the Court for an assessment of the invoice under Part III of the Solicitors Act 1974 but you will be responsible for the costs of such assessment if the invoice is not reduced.

Monitoring

The practice will monitor the effectiveness of the complaint procedure at regular intervals to ensure whether there is the need for amendment and training to avoid the incident giving rise to the complaint.