



Complaints Procedure

It is the objective of Civitas to provide legal representation and mediation services of the highest standard with the utmost integrity to all its clients, and to ensure that our services are supported by an administrative function of an identical standard.

Chambers accepts that matters sometimes arise that give cause for complaint, and so it aims to resolve any such issues promptly, courteously and in a manner that directly addresses the concerns of the complainant. This complaints procedure shall be accessible to all members including members who are mediators, staff and clients of chambers; it also applies to mediation services. It has been structured in a simple and clear format.

Chambers shall endeavour to give prompt replies to complaints, with time limits laid down, kept and made known to the complainant. It shall provide for effective investigation of the issues raised, and all parties shall offer fair and effective redress at all times.

Overall Chambers shall maintain client confidentiality at all stages of the complaint, including the investigative stages and beyond.

Should you feel that you have not been provided with a service of satisfactory standard, or you have reason to make a complaint on the grounds of harassment, discrimination or victimisation, you are invited to report your concerns to chambers at the earliest opportunity using one of the following procedures:

Complaints by Telephone

In the first instance you are asked to telephone the barrister or mediator concerned or, where your complaint is about a member of the administration staff, a senior member of staff. The senior members of staff for Chambers are as follows:

David Jones Chambers Director

Andrea McLean Senior Clerk

Should you have a complaint about a senior member of staff your complaint should be reported to the Chair of the Chambers Management Board.

Please contact Chambers on 0845 0713 007 and request the name of the person you wish to speak to.

The person you contact will take your name and details, as well as the nature of your complaint, so please ensure you have all relevant information to hand.

He/she will discuss your concerns with you, and they will ask you what you feel should be the necessary course of action in resolving the complaint. He/she will aim to resolve the issue for you at this time and, should a satisfactory outcome be reached, he/she shall record the outcome accordingly.

However, if you are not able to reach a satisfactory outcome over the telephone then you will be invited to make a further written complaint within 14 days of the telephone call.

Complaints in Writing

When making a complaint in writing you should address the letter to the relevant person as shown in the procedure for **Telephone Complaints** above – marking the envelope ‘Complaints Procedure’. All written complaints received by Chambers shall be dealt with within 14 days from the date of receipt of the letter.

Please ensure that you include details of your full name and address, which member(s) of Chambers, Mediators or staff you are making a complaint about, the full details of the complaint, and what you would like done about it.

The person appointed by chambers to investigate your complaint will send you an acknowledgement to confirm receipt of your complaint, and that he/she will reply within the 14 day time frame.

Should he/she later find that they are unable to respond within the 14 days, they shall write and inform you of this and provide you with a new date by which they aim to reply.

On completion of an investigation into your complaint the respondent shall write to you providing the following details:

The nature and scope of his/her investigation

His/her conclusion to each complaint and the basis for his/her conclusion

Where your complaint is justified by the findings of the investigation, his/her proposals for resolving the complaint

****Should you wish to make a complaint via email or fax, you should follow the same procedure as that for complaints in writing.**

Confidentiality

All conversations and documentation relating to your complaint shall be treated with the utmost confidence at all times and shall be disclosed only to those persons involved in the matter i.e. the relevant barrister/mediator or member of staff against which you have raised the complaint, the Chambers management committee, and the individual responsible for the investigation.

Policy

As part of our commitment to client care we make a written record of any complaint. Our management committee inspects the record in accordance with Chambers programme of quality assurance and the Barmark standard.

Time Limits

Under Civitas Law’s complaints procedure Chambers will investigate any complaint received within three months of the date of the act complained about. Any complaint received later than such date will not, under any circumstances, be investigated internally.

Complaints to the Bar Council

We hope that you will use this procedure. However, if you would rather not do so or are unhappy with the outcome you do have the choice of taking up your complaint with the Bar Council. You can write to them at the:

Legal Ombudsman
PO Box 15870,
Birmingham
B30 9EB

T: 0300 555 0333

E: enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk