

External Complaints Policy & Procedure (from 2 January 2024)

1. We are committed to providing high quality legal advice. However, we acknowledge that we may not always get it right so if something has gone wrong, including in relation to an invoice, we need you to tell us.

How do I make a complaint?

2. You can contact us in writing or by speaking with our complaints partner, Simon Cullingworth, whose contact details are:

Simon.cullingworth@puntersouthall.law

11, Strand, London WC2N 5HR

3. To help us understand and address your complaint, please tell us:
 - (a) Your full name and contact details;
 - (b) What you think we got wrong;
 - (c) What you hope to achieve as a result of your complaint; and
 - (d) Your file reference number (if you have it).
4. If you require any help in making your complaint, we will try to help you.

How will you deal with my complaint?

5. We will record your complaint centrally and then write to you within 2 working days acknowledging your complaint and enclosing a copy of this policy.
6. We will then investigate your complaint and this will usually involve:
 - (a) Reviewing your complaint;
 - (b) Reviewing your file(s) and other relevant documents; and
 - (c) Speaking with the person who dealt with your matter.
7. We may also need to ask you for further information or documents. If so, we will ask you to provide the information within a specific period of time – usually two weeks.

8. We will update you on the progress of your complaint at appropriate times.
9. We may also, if appropriate, invite you to a meeting (which may be online) to discuss your complaint. You do not have to attend if you do not wish to or if you are unable to.
10. At the end of our investigation, we will write to you to tell you what we have done and what we propose to do to resolve your complaint. Where possible, we will aim to do this within 21 days of the date of our letter of acknowledgement (or after receipt of additional documentation from you).

What if I am not satisfied with the outcome?

11. If you are unhappy with the outcome of our complaints handling procedure (and investigation), please first let us know and we will review the matter.
12. If, after this, we are unable to resolve your complaint, you can have your complaint independently looked at by the Legal Ombudsman. The Legal Ombudsman investigates complaints about services issues with lawyers (www.legalombudsman.org.uk).
13. The Legal Ombudsman expects complaints to be made to them within **one year of the date of the act or omission about which you are concerned or within one year of you realising that there was a concern.**
14. You must also refer your concerns to the Legal Ombudsman **within six months of our final response to you.**
15. The Legal Ombudsman's contact details are:

Legal Ombudsman, PO Box 6806, Wolverhampton, WV1 9WJ
0300 555 0333

16. From **22 January 2024**, the Legal Ombudsman's contact details will be:

Legal Ombudsman, PO Box 6167, Slough, SL1 0EH