

External Complaints Policy

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

How do I make a complaint?

3. You can contact us in writing or by speaking with our complaints partner, Simon Cullingworth, whose contact details are: Simon Cullingworth, 11 Strand, London WC2N 5HR or at simon.cullingworth@puntersouthall.law
4. To help us understand your complaint and in order that we do not miss anything, 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).
5. If you require any help in making your complaint, we will try to help you.

How will you deal with my complaint?

6. We will record your complaint centrally.
7. We will write to you within two working days acknowledging your complaint and enclosing a copy of this policy.
8. We will investigate your complaint. 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.
9. 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.
10. We will update you on the progress of your complaint at appropriate times.
11. We may also, if appropriate, invite you to a meeting to discuss your complaint. You do not have to attend if you do not wish to or if you are unable to. We will be happy to discuss the matter with you on the telephone.
12. We will write to you at the end of our investigation to tell you what we have done and what we proposed 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.

What if I am not satisfied with the outcome?

13. If you are unhappy with the outcome of our complaints handling procedure, please first let us know and we will review the matter.
14. If you are still unhappy, you can ask the Legal Ombudsman to look into your complaint. You can contact the Legal Ombudsman in the following ways:
 - (a) by post at PO Box 6806, Wolverhampton, WV1 9WJ;
 - (b) by telephone: 0300 555 0333;
 - (c) by email: enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk
15. You must usually refer your complaint to the Legal Ombudsman within 6 months of our final written response to your complaint and within 6 years of the act or omission about which you are complaining occurring (or within 3 years of you becoming aware of it). Further details are available on the website: www.legalombudsman.org.uk
16. There is no dedicated Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) entity for the legal sector and no professional or statutory obligation to use an ADR entity. We do not have a formal ADR process therefore but may be prepared to consider ADR in certain circumstances. This does not affect your right to make a complaint to the Legal Ombudsman in accordance with the requirements of paragraph 15 above.

What will it cost?

17. We will not charge you for handling your complaint.

18. Please note that if we have issued a bill for work done on the matter, and all or some of the bill is not paid, we may be entitled to charge you interest on the amount outstanding.

19. The Legal Ombudsman service is free of charge.