

COMPLAINTS HANDLING PROCEDURE

Our complaints policy

We are committed to providing a high quality legal service to all our clients. If something goes wrong, we need you to tell us about it. This will help us to monitor and continually improve our standards. We provide clients with information about our complaints procedure at the start and conclusion of their matter, and at any time on request. If at any point you become dissatisfied with any aspect of our service, our fees, confidentiality, the security of your information, or the way we handle your personal data, please let us know as soon as possible so that we can do our best to resolve the matter.

A complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction about our legal services, our fees or billing arrangements, or the way we collect, use, store, share, retain or otherwise process personal data, including concerns relating to confidentiality, information security or cyber security.

You do not need to refer to your concern as a "complaint" for us to treat it as one.

We will not charge you for handling your complaint and we will deal with it promptly and fairly and in accordance with our regulatory and legal obligations.

Data Protection and Information Security Complaints

If your complaint relates to the way we process your personal data or to information security, confidentiality or cyber security concerns, we will investigate the matter in accordance with our complaints handling procedures and applicable data protection legislation.

We will acknowledge your complaint, investigate it appropriately, keep you informed where our investigation is ongoing, and notify you of the outcome.

If you remain dissatisfied after receiving our response, you may raise your concerns with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO).

Our complaints procedure

If you have been unable to resolve your concerns with the person primarily responsible for dealing with the matter and you have a complaint, we ask you to contact our Managing Director with responsibility for client care whose details are below:

Anissa Hallworth

anissa.hallworth@hayes-storr.com

Hayes + Storr, 31-33 Upper Market Place, Fakenham, Norfolk NR21 9BX

What will happen next?

1. Anissa Hallworth will send you a letter acknowledging receipt of your complaint normally within 3 working days of receipt and enclose a copy of this procedure. The complaints procedure can be requested using the email above or is available on our website www.hayesandstorr.co.uk

2. Anissa Hallworth will then investigate your complaint, review your file and speak with the person who acted for you, together with the Head of the Department concerned. Where the complaint relates to personal data, confidentiality, information security or a suspected data breach, the investigation may also involve another appropriate individual within the firm or, where appropriate, an external adviser, depending on the precise nature of your complaint.
3. Should we require additional information or need to invite you to a meeting to discuss and hopefully to resolve the matter, we will contact you within 14 days of our acknowledgement letter. Following any meeting, we will write to you normally within 3 working days of the meeting date confirming what took place and any solutions agreed with you.
4. Should a meeting, for whatever reason, not have taken place, we will send a detailed reply to your complaint, including any suggestions for resolving the matter, within 21 days of sending you the acknowledgement letter.

If our investigation into a data protection or information security complaint is ongoing, we will keep you informed of progress and explain any revised timescales.

5. At this stage, if you are still not satisfied, you should contact us again and we will arrange for another Director to review the matter.
6. We will write to you within 14 days of receiving your request for a review, confirming our final position on your complaint and explaining our reasons. This letter will represent our final written response to your complaint.
7. If your complaint has not been resolved within eight weeks of receiving your complaint, or if you remain dissatisfied with our final written response, you may refer your complaint to the Legal Ombudsman, which investigates complaints about legal services.

Ordinarily, you must refer your complaint to the Legal Ombudsman:

- within six months of the date of our final written response to your complaint;
- no later than one year from the date of the act or omission being complained about; or
- no later than one year from the date when you should reasonably have known there was cause for complaint.

The contact details for the Legal Ombudsman are:

Website: www.legalombudsman.org.uk
Email: enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk
Telephone: 0300 555 0333
Relay UK: 18001 0300 555 0333
Post: Legal Ombudsman, PO Box 6167, Slough, SL1 0EH

Alternative complaints bodies (such as Ombudsman Services or ProMediate) exist which are competent to deal with complaints about legal services should both you and our firm wish to use such a scheme. The Legal Ombudsman is the ADR body approved for legal services. We do not agree to use an alternative ADR scheme other than the Legal Ombudsman.

8. If your complaint relates to the way we have processed your personal data, our handling of a data protection request, confidentiality, information security or a personal data breach, and you remain dissatisfied after receiving our response, you have the right to raise your concerns with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO).

The ICO is the UK's independent authority responsible for upholding information rights and data protection law.

Website: <https://ico.org.uk>
Telephone: 0303 123 1113
Post: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane,
Wilmslow, Cheshire SK9 5AF.

9. The Solicitors Regulation Authority (SRA) regulates solicitors and law firms. The SRA can help you if you are concerned about our conduct, for example dishonesty, misuse of client money, or discrimination. You can raise your concerns directly with the Solicitors Regulation Authority via its website: www.sra.org.uk/consumers/problems-report-solicitor/.
10. Should we require additional time at any of the above stages to investigate your complaint, we will write to you within the timeframes specified above to explain why there is a delay and to give you an updated timeframe.