

Complaints Policy UK v4.0

November 2024

This Firm is committed to providing a high quality legal service to all our Clients and others we interact with. However, when something goes wrong we need to know about it as this will help us to put it right and will improve our standards for the future.

Our Complaints Procedure

If you are unhappy with any aspect of our service, the matter should be raised in the first instance with the Matter Partner. You will have been given the name of this Partner in our Terms of Business or the retainer letter provided to you at the start of the matter.

What happens next?

1. The Matter Partner will acknowledge your complaint in writing within 14 days and ask you to clarify any aspects that may be unclear.
2. We will record your complaint in our central register and open a file for your complaint. We will also investigate your complaint by examining the relevant file(s).
3. If appropriate, we will then invite you to meet with the Matter Partner to discuss, and hopefully resolve, your complaint. We would hope to be in a position to meet with you no longer than 14 days after first receiving your complaint. If you would prefer not to meet, or if we cannot arrange a meeting within an agreeable timescale, the Matter Partner will write to you setting out their view on your complaint with details of any redress that we feel is appropriate.
4. Within 2 days of any meeting we will write to you to confirm what took place and any actions that we have agreed with you. In appropriate cases we could offer an apology, a reduction of any bill or a repayment in relation to any payment received.
5. At this stage, if you are still not satisfied, please contact our Complaints Partner who will then arrange to investigate the matter and review the decision made by the Matter Partner.

Joe Bryant is the Firm's Complaints Partner and he will aim to respond to you within 14 days. However, if Joe Bryant is the Matter Partner, your complaint will be reviewed by Antony Marsh (the Firm's CEO) within the same time frame. Joe can be contacted via email at j.bryant@beale-law.com or by post at our office at 40 Queen Square, Bristol, BS1 4QP. Antony can be contacted at a.marsh@beale-law.com.

6. The matter may require more extensive investigation than is possible to complete within 14 days in which case our response to you will indicate what further time period we require. We may wish to meet with you to discuss the matter face to face. Following that investigation we will confirm to you in writing our final position on your complaint.
7. If your matter is an **England and Wales matter** and if you are still not satisfied you can contact the Legal Ombudsman at: PO Box 6167, Slough, SL1 0EH or by calling 0300 555 0333 or by e-mailing enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk

Complaints policy UK v4.0, November 2024

about your complaint. Your complaint can be dealt with by the Legal Ombudsman if you are an individual, or you are a business, charity or club with an annual turnover of less than £2 million. Before you make a complaint to the Legal Ombudsman, it is a requirement that you have raised your complaint with us first and we have had 8 weeks to deal with your complaint. If you are not satisfied with our reply after the 8 weeks has expired you can complain to the Legal Ombudsman. Prior to 1 April 2023 the time limit for taking your complaint to the Legal Ombudsman was 6 months from the date when you received your final written response from us and within 6 years from when the problem occurred or 3 years from when you should have become aware of the problem. However, please note that from 1 April 2023 these time limits have changed. From 1 April 2023 the Legal Ombudsman expects complaints to be made to them within a year of the date of the act or omission about which you are concerned or within a year of you realising there was a concern. The requirement to refer your concerns to the Legal Ombudsman within six months of our final response to you remains the same. If you complain to the Legal Ombudsman after these periods it is possible they may refuse to look at your complaint. For further information you should contact the Legal Ombudsman or refer to the Legal Ombudsman's website at www.legalombudsman.org.uk.

8. If your matter is a **Scottish matter** and if you are still not satisfied, you can submit a formal complaint to the Scottish Legal Complaints Commission (SLCC). The SLCC's contact details are: [Start your complaint | Scottish Legal Complaints Commission](#). Normally, you will need to bring a complaint to the SLCC within three years of the service or event being complained about. We can provide further details of our complaints procedure to you on request.
9. The law requires us to inform you that alternative complaints bodies (such as Ombudsman Services www.ombudsman-services.org) exist which are competent to deal with complaints about legal services should both you and our Firm wish to use such a scheme. However, we do not wish to use such a scheme.
10. The Solicitors Regulatory Authority (SRA) (for England and Wales matters), and the SLCC (for Scottish matters) can help you 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. You can contact the SRA by phone on 0370 606 2555 or on the SRA's website at <https://www.sra.org.uk/home/contact-us/> You can contact the SLCC on their website here [Start your complaint | Scottish Legal Complaints Commission](#). You do not need to tell us if you contact the SRA or the SLCC, and we are working hard in the hope that you never feel the need to do so.

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| Up to 1.0 | Head of Compliance | Various versions | To March 2023 |

Complaints policy UK v4.0, November 2024

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| 1.0 | Head of Compliance | Updated for changes to LeO scheme rules | 5/3/23 |
| 2.0 | Head of Compliance | Updated for timing of changes to LeO scheme rules | 7/6/23 |
| 3.0 | Compliance Assistant (JT) | Updated for change to LeO's postal address | 19/1/24 |
| 4.0 | Head of Risk and Compliance | Updated for Scotland complaints regime | 15/11/24 |