

## Complaints Procedure 2016

### **Our Aim**

We are committed to providing high quality legal advice and client care. We realise that we may not always get it right so if you are unhappy about any aspect of our service, or about the bill, please tell us. This will help us to improve our standards. We will deal with your concerns promptly, fairly, openly and effectively.

### **Our procedure for dealing with any concerns**

All our employees know how to deal with client concerns. Initially, please raise your concerns with the person responsible for the day to day conduct of your matter, providing them with full details of your concerns on the telephone, in writing or at a meeting. We will take a careful note of the matters you are unhappy about, look into them and do all we can to informally resolve your complaint.

If we fail to do so you may make a formal complaint to our Client Care Solicitor, Felicity Kay, who has overall responsibility for complaints at this firm. Please provide her with all the relevant details either by writing to her at 20 Arundel Gate, Sheffield S1 2PP, emailing her at [felicity.kay@tayloremmet.co.uk](mailto:felicity.kay@tayloremmet.co.uk) or telephoning her on 0114 218 4182. If Felicity Kay is not available, please contact Anthony Long (Chief Executive) either by writing to him at the above address, emailing him at [anthony.long@tayloremmet.co.uk](mailto:anthony.long@tayloremmet.co.uk) or telephoning him on 0114 218 4031, he will deal with your complaint until Felicity Kay returns.

### **What will happen next?**

1. We will acknowledge your complaint, in writing, within 3 working days and it will be recorded in our central register. A complaint file will be opened and we will send you a copy of this procedure, which explains how your complaint will be handled.
2. We will then fully investigate your complaint. This will involve examining your file and discussing the matter with the person who acted for you. This will be done within 14 working days where practicable but as soon as possible thereafter if not – for example, if the person who handled your matter is on holiday. If further information is needed, we will tell you how long it is likely to take us to complete our investigation and keep you informed of developments.
3. Within two days of the conclusion of our investigations we will send you a detailed written reply to your complaint setting out our views and any remedy we propose. We will also invite you to discuss the matter with us if it appears that this may resolve your concerns.
4. Within 3 days of a meeting, where one is held, we will write to you to confirm what took place and any solutions we have agreed with you.

5. Upon completion of the above steps, if you remain dissatisfied, you may ask for your complaint to be referred to a Partner for a review of the decision. 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.

If we have to change any of the timescales above, we will let you know and explain why. Your complaint will, in any event, be resolved within 8 weeks of the date it was received by us. We will not charge you for handling your complaint but 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 interest on the amount outstanding.

#### **If you are dissatisfied with the outcome**

If you remain unhappy, you can complain to the Legal Ombudsman, which is an independent complaints body and the statutory complaints scheme for solicitors. The contact details for the Legal Ombudsman are: – telephone number 0300 555 0333, by post to: Legal Ombudsman, PO Box 6806, Wolverhampton, WV1 9WJ or email at [enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk) .

#### **Who can complain to the Legal Ombudsman?**

The Legal Ombudsman will accept complaints from individuals and small businesses, charities, clubs, societies, associations and trusts. Further details of the Legal Ombudsman Scheme are available on the website: [www.legalombudsman.org.uk](http://www.legalombudsman.org.uk).

The Legal Ombudsman will normally only consider a complaint if, following completion of our complaints procedure, the matter has not been resolved to your satisfaction.

#### **Timeframe for making a complaint to the Legal Ombudsman**

Ordinarily you can ask the Legal Ombudsman to look at your complaint if:-

- the problem, or when you found out about it, happened after 5 October 2010, **and**
- you refer your complaint to the Legal Ombudsman within either 6 years of the problem happening or three years from when you found out about it **and**
- you refer the complaint to the Legal Ombudsman within 6 months of our final response to your complaint.

There are alternative complaints bodies, such as Small Claims Mediation, which are able to deal with complaints about legal services **should both parties wish to use the scheme**. The website address for Small Claims Mediation is [www.small-claims-mediation.co.uk](http://www.small-claims-mediation.co.uk). **We do not agree to use Small Claims Mediation** because we consider that the service offered by the Legal Ombudsman is the most appropriate means of resolving the issues between us. However, if you would like to use Small Claims Mediation, or any other Alternative Dispute Resolution entity, please tell us, saying why you consider it appropriate to do so, and we will consider your request. We will not consider using Small Claims Mediation if the matter has already been dealt with by the Legal Ombudsman.