

NEWMAN & BOND – COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Our complaints policy

We are committed to providing a high-quality legal service to all our clients. When something goes wrong we need you to tell us about it. This will help us to resolve any mistakes or misunderstandings and to improve our standards. We will take your complaint seriously and endeavour to deal with it promptly, fairly, openly and effectively.

Our complaints procedure

If you have a complaint you are unable to resolve with the lawyer responsible for your matter, write to us with the details. Please address your correspondence to Mrs Jill Leece, the designated Complaints Officer named in the Letter of Engagement you will have received at the outset of the transaction. You may wish to complete and return the Complaint Notification Form which will have been provided to you together with this Complaints Procedure, although this is optional. Dependent upon Mrs Leece's commitments, a complaint may also be dealt with by Mr Jack Leece who will deputise as Complaints Officer.

Alternatively should your complaint concern Mrs Jill Leece or Mr Jack Leece, please address your correspondence to Miss Jane Munden who will then assume the Complaints Officer role. In addition, if you are in any doubt as to the identity of the Partner to whom your complaint should be addressed or if you feel that your complaint requires urgent attention please feel free to first telephone Mrs Jill Leece.

What will happen next?

1. We will send you a letter acknowledging your complaint, asking you to clarify any aspects of your complaint which are unclear and enclosing a copy of this procedure and a Complaint Notification Form, the completion and return of which is optional. We will also confirm the name of the person who will be dealing with your complaint. Other than in exceptional circumstances, you can expect us to acknowledge receipt of your complaint in this manner within 2 working days of receipt of the complaint. Within this period we will also record your complaint in our central register and open a separate file for the complaint.

2. If you write to provide further details in reply to our request, we will write to you to acknowledge receipt of your latest correspondence. This will normally occur within a further 5 working days.
3. In the meantime we will start to investigate your complaint. This will normally involve the following steps:-
 - Your complaint will be referred to Mrs Jill Leece or Mr Jack Leece immediately. However, if the complaint concerns either Mr Jack Leece or Mrs Jill Leece, the complaint will instead be referred to Miss Jane Munden who will then assume the role of Complaints Officer.
 - The Complaints Officer or Deputy will ask the partner or fee earner who acted for you to comment fully upon the details of your complaint and will also consider any relevant correspondence or documents.
 - The Complaints Officer or Deputy will then consider the complaint and the information provided by the partner or fee earner concerned. In addition the person dealing with the complaint may also speak to the fee earner concerned. The Complaints Officer or Deputy will then reply to you fully with the firm's detailed response to your complaint.
 - Alternatively, (and sometimes after writing to you with a detailed response), the Complaints Officer, Mrs Jill Leece or Mr Jack Leece as Deputy Complaints Officer, may invite you to a meeting to discuss and hopefully resolve your complaint. Following the meeting we will write to you to confirm what took place and any solutions agreed with you.
 - In circumstances where a meeting is not appropriate or possible, the written response to your complaint will confirm the firm's suggestions for resolving the matter.
4. Our objective is to acknowledge your complaint within **2 working days** and then to respond to your complaint fully by letter or by a meeting within a further **15 working days** of receipt of your complaint or of any details requested from you by the Complaints Officer or the Partner dealing with the complaint to explain the nature of

the complaint further. However, the period of 15 working days may be extended by up to 8 weeks in exceptional circumstances or if a complaint is complex and involves numerous documents or where the person dealing with the complaint is absent through ill-health or on holiday during the relevant period.

What if you are still not satisfied?

5. At this stage, if you are still not satisfied you can write to us again. A **review** of your complaint will then be carried out by another Partner. In particular, if a complaint has been dealt with by Mr Leece, another Partner will review Mr Leece's decision. We will then write to you with our findings and any solutions offered within a further 10 working days.
6. If your complaint still remains unresolved at the end of our complaints process, you can then contact the Legal Ombudsman at PO Box 6806 Wolverhampton WV1 9WJ or by calling 0300 555 0333 about your complaint. Any complaint to the Legal Ombudsman must usually be made within 6 months of your receiving a final written response from us regarding your complaint. In addition, other time limits may apply. Full details are available from the Legal Ombudsman's website at www.legalombudsman.org.uk.
7. The timescales outlined above will normally allow for a complaint to be acknowledged within 2 working days and for the complaint to be considered and, we hope, resolved within a further period of 15 working days. However, the Complaints Officer or Deputy may choose to shorten, vary or abbreviate any of the timescales and procedures outlined above when an ongoing transaction is involved or where an urgent response is a priority.

In particular, if your complaint seems capable of speedy resolution, the Complaints Officer or Deputy may simply give you a call to explore whether this is possible by way of an informal complaint resolution in place of the more formal procedures outlined above.

8. If we have to lengthen the time scales above (should all relevant documentation not be available or should the fee earner or the Complaints Officer or Deputy not be available

for the whole of the relevant period) we will let you know the manner in which the timescale is to be changed and the reason why this is necessary.

9. The Complaints Officer will review this Policy annually to assess its effective operation across the firm.
10. You should note that the Legal Ombudsman service cannot be used by businesses or most other organisations unless they are below a certain size limit. Further details are available from the Legal Ombudsman at www.legalombudsman.org.uk.