

## **RADCLIFFE CHAMBERS**

### **COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE**

1. At Radcliffe Chambers our aim is to provide an excellent service at all times. However, if you have a complaint, you are invited to inform us as soon as possible. It is not necessary to involve solicitors to make a complaint, but you are free to do so if you wish.
2. Please note that Chambers will only consider complaints that are made within twelve months of the act or omission of which complaint is made.

#### **Complaints Made by Telephone**

3. You may wish to make a complaint in writing. If that is the case, please follow the procedure in paragraph 6 onwards below.
4. If you would prefer to make your complaint by telephone, please telephone one of our senior clerks, Keith Nagle or John Clark. One of our senior clerks will make a note of the details of your complaint and the redress that you seek. He will discuss your concerns with you, and will attempt to resolve them. If the matter is resolved, he will record the outcome, and record that you are satisfied. You may also wish to record the outcome of the telephone discussion in writing. In certain circumstances the chief executive will work with the senior clerks to resolve the complaint.
5. If your complaint is not resolved by telephone, you will be invited to write to us about it within 14 days of the failure to resolve it, so that it can be investigated formally.

#### **Complaints Made in Writing**

6. If you choose to make a complaint in writing, you are asked to provide the following information:
  - (i) your name and address;
  - (ii) the name of the person against whom the complaint is made;
  - (iii) the details of the complaint; and
  - (iv) what you believe should be done about the complaint.
7. Please address your complaint to the Head of the Complaints Panel, Radcliffe Chambers, 11 New Square, Lincoln's Inn, London WC2A 3QB.
8. We will, where possible, acknowledge receipt of your complaint within two days and provide you with details of how we will deal with your complaint.
9. Radcliffe Chambers has a Complaints Panel headed by a senior member of Chambers and made up of other experienced members of Chambers. A member or members of that panel will consider any written complaint. Within 14 days of receipt of your letter, the head of the panel, or, in his or her absence, his or her deputy, will appoint a member of the panel (or, if more appropriate, another experienced member of

chambers) to investigate it. In any case, the person appointed will be someone other than the person about whom you are complaining.

10. The person appointed to investigate will aim to write to you with an initial response to your complaint within 14 days of being appointed. In this initial response to your complaint, you will be informed of the name of the person appointed to investigate it. At this stage, you may be informed that your complaint raises matters that our Chambers Complaints Procedure is not intended to deal with, and that, therefore, your complaint cannot be investigated in that way. This may be the case if your complaint contains allegations of professional misconduct, which ought to be dealt with by the Bar Standards Board, or includes allegations of professional negligence, in respect of which you should seek independent legal advice.
11. If the person appointed to investigate decides that he or she can proceed, he or she will in the initial response summarise the nature and scope of the investigation to be carried out, may request further information from you, and will set out the timetable for the investigation and intended production of a report on your complaint.
12. The person appointed to investigate will endeavour to produce his or her report within six weeks of receipt of your complaint in writing. If he or she discovers that it will not be possible to produce the report within that time, you will be informed as soon as possible. The report on your complaint will set out: (1) the nature and scope of the investigation that has been carried out; (2) the conclusion reached on each complaint and the reasons for each conclusion; (3) if the complaint is justified, proposals for resolution of the complaint.

### **Confidentiality**

13. All conversations and documents relating to the complaint will be treated as confidential, and will be disclosed only to the extent that is necessary. Disclosure may be to the Head of Chambers, members of our Executive Committee and to anyone else involved in the complaint and its investigation. Such people may include the barrister or member of staff about whom you have complained, members of the Complaints Panel, and the person who investigates the complaint. The Bar Standards Board is entitled to inspect the documents and seek information about the complaint when discharging its auditing and monitoring functions.

### **Our Policy**

14. As part of our commitment to client care, we make a written record of any complaint and retain all documents and correspondence generated by the complaint for a period of six years. Our chief executive reviews all complaints on a six monthly basis and our Executive Committee inspects an anonymised record periodically, with a view to improving services.

## **Complaint to the Legal Ombudsman**

15. If you are unhappy with the outcome of our investigation, you may take up your complaint with the Legal Ombudsman, the independent complaints body for complaints about lawyers, at the conclusion of our investigation of your complaint. The Ombudsman is not able to consider your complaint until after Chambers has investigated it. Please note that a complaint must ordinarily be referred to the Legal Ombudsman within twelve months of the act or omission complained of and within six months of Chambers' final response to your complaint. Full details of the Legal Ombudsman procedures can be found at [www.legalombudsman.org.uk](http://www.legalombudsman.org.uk). You can contact the Legal Ombudsman at:

Legal Ombudsman  
Po Box 6806  
Wolverhampton  
Wv1 9W

Tel: 0300 555 0333

Email: [enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk)

## **Complaint to the Civil Mediation Council**

16. If you are unhappy about the outcome of our investigation into a complaint about the services of a barrister in chambers while acting as a mediator and if that barrister is a member of the Civil Mediation Council ("CMC"), you may refer the matter to the CMC on certain grounds. Full details of the grounds and process can be found on the CMC's website at <https://civilmediation.org>. Complaints must be in writing and addressed to the CMC Secretariat at [secretariat@civilmediation.org](mailto:secretariat@civilmediation.org)