



St Philips Chambers
Complaints Handling Procedure

ST PHILIPS CHAMBERS COMPLAINTS POLICY

1. Complaints Policy

St Philips Chambers is committed to providing a high-quality legal service to all our clients. In the event that you have a complaint regarding our service, please tell us about it. This will help us to ensure that we meet the highest standards and enable us to identify any areas we need to improve.

We aim to resolve complaints on an informal basis in the first instance. If this is not possible, then we will investigate any complaints with regard to the [Bar Standards Board Code of Conduct](#) and any guidance regarding complaint handling that may be issued from time to time by the Bar Standards Board or the Legal Ombudsman. Any such guidance may be available to download from the [Bar Standards Board's](#) and the [Legal Ombudsman's](#) websites.

Should you elect to proceed on an informal basis, your concerns will be discussed with the relevant Clerking Team, the contact details for whom may be found at the end of this policy. If the matter is resolved, they will record any outcome and check and record that you are satisfied with the outcome.

2. Definition of a complaint

St Philips Chambers' Complaints Policy deals with service issues. In most circumstances, it is not appropriate for us to deal with allegations of professional negligence or of serious misconduct under the Code of Conduct. In situations where a complaint extends beyond service issues into those of misconduct, we suggest that the complaint be referred to the Bar Standards Board.

In the event that a complaint relates to issues of professional negligence, barristers are required to report the same to their professional indemnity insurers, who may decide to deal with the

complaint themselves. A link to the Barristers' Register held by the Bar Standards Board may be found [here](#).

3. Time Limits

St Philips Chambers will usually only consider complaints that are raised within 12 months of the act or omission occurring, or that are raised within 12 months of the date on which you should have reasonably known that there was cause for complaint.

Once a complaint has been received, St Philips Chambers has 8 weeks within which to investigate and respond, failing which your complaint may be referred to the Legal Ombudsman. The Legal Ombudsman's details are provided below.

4. Complaints Procedure

If you are dissatisfied with the service received or with regard to a charge on a bill received, you should in the first instance contact the Barrister's Clerk responsible for dealing with your matter. St Philips Chambers will seek to resolve complaints informally at this stage. If you are still dissatisfied, you may **make** a formal complaint to the Chambers Administrator either by email at hr@st-philips.com, by telephone on 0121 246 7000, or by post to St Philips Chambers, 55 Temple Row, Birmingham, B2 5LS.

Please set out as clearly as you can the nature of your complaint or concern, how it has arisen and the outcome you seek. Please also ensure that your letter states the identity of the person who dealt with your matter and your file reference number (if any). Alternatively, you can use the attached Complaint Form to detail your concerns.

There is no charge for dealing with and investigating a complaint.

5. What will happen next?

Within 5 working days of receipt of your complaint we will:

- Record your complaint in our central database and open a file for your complaint.
- Send you a letter acknowledging receipt.
- Ask you to confirm or explain any details which are unclear.

If we have asked for further details, we will acknowledge those within 5 working days of receipt and will confirm what will happen next.

6. Our investigation

St Philips Chambers has a Complaints Panel of which there is a Head and Deputy Head made up of experienced members of Chambers and senior members of staff, which considers any written complaint. Where possible, the Head of the relevant Practice Group will appoint a member of the Panel within 7 working days of your complaint being received to investigate it. Occasionally, a senior person who is not a member of the Panel but has appropriate experience may be appointed to conduct the investigation. The person appointed will be someone other than the person who is subject to the complaint.

The Chambers Administrator will write to you as soon as possible to let you know who has been appointed. The person appointed will reply to your complaint ideally within 21 working days. Their reply will set out:

- The nature and scope of the investigation;
- The conclusion on each complaint and the basis for the conclusions reached; and
- If it is found that you are justified in your complaints, the proposal for resolving the complaint.

The person appointed may also invite you to a meeting. They will write to you within 5 working days of the meeting to confirm what took place and any solutions agreed with you.

If you are still not satisfied, you can refer your complaint to the Legal Ombudsman, contact details for whom are provided below.

If we have to change any of the timescales above, we will let you know and explain our reasons why.

7. Confidentiality

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 made to the Head of Chambers, the Head and Deputy Head of the Complaints Panel, members of the Chambers Administration Committee, and to anyone involved in the complaint and its investigation. Such people will include the barrister or staff member who you have complained about, the Head of or relevant senior member of the panel, and the person who investigates the complaint. The Bar Standards Board is entitled to inspect documents and seek information about the complaint when discharging its auditing and monitoring functions.

8. Our document retention policy

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.

9. Complaints to the Legal Ombudsman

If you are still not satisfied, the next step is for you to contact the Legal Ombudsman by the following methods:

- Telephone : 0300 555 0333
- Overseas: +44 12 245 3050
- Email: enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk
- In writing: PO Box 6806, Wolverhampton, WV1 9WJ
- Website: www.legalombudsman.org.uk

You must contact the Legal Ombudsman within six months of our last written response.

10. Contact Details

Person	Team	Contact Information
Justin Luckman	Business & Property	0121 246 7050 jluckman@st-philips.com
Andrew Rourke	Criminal	0121 246 2163 arourke@st-philips.com
Mark Mansell	Family	0121 246 2148 mmansell@st-philips.com
Oliver Edwards	Personal Injury & Employment	0121 246 2178 oedwards@st-philips.com
James Withers	Regulatory	0121 246 2065 jwithers@st-philips.com

CLIENT COMPLAINT FORM

We understand that you have expressed dissatisfaction with the service we have provided and we are eager to investigate the matter fully to resolve any issues. So that we can understand your complaint, please complete the form below. We aim to respond to your initial complaint within 21 working days.

Your details:

Title:	
Name:	
Address:	
Telephone:	
E-Mail:	

Firm details:

Our Reference:	
Barrister:	

Complaint details

Details of Complaint: Please use a separate sheet if required	
How would you like us to deal with your complaint?	In writing A meeting Other (please state)