

Our Complaints Procedure



We are committed to providing a high-quality legal service.

We acknowledge that we may not always get it right, so if something has gone wrong, including in relation to our charges, we need you to tell us. This will help us to improve our standards of service.

How do I make a complaint?

You can tell us about your complaint in writing (by letter or email), by telephone, social media or on a face-to-face basis during a meeting.

If you have not done so already, it may be helpful to contact the person who is working on your case to discuss your concerns who will do their best to resolve any issues. If you do not feel able to discuss your concerns with them, please contact the person responsible for the overall supervision of your matter, who will be named in the client care letter we sent you at the beginning of your matter.

If you do not feel able to raise your concerns with either of these people, or have done so and you are unsatisfied with their response, please contact our Head of Risk and Compliance whose contact details are: Mr Jem Quemper, Ramsbury House, 30 The Market Place, Devizes SN10 1JG email: jemquemper@goughs.co.uk telephone: 01380 736655.

The person with overall responsibility for complaints is our Risk Partner, Andrew Given whose contact details are Mr Andrew Given, Unit 5, Greenways Business Park, Bellinger Close, Chippenham SN15 1BN email: andrewgiven@goughs.co.uk telephone: 01249 717871.

To help us to understand your complaint, and in order that we do not miss anything, please tell us:

- your full name and contact details;
- what you think we have got wrong;
- how you would like your complaint to be resolved; and
- your matter reference number (if you have it)
- If you require any help in making your complaint, we will try to help you.

How will you deal with my complaint?

We will write to you within two working days acknowledging your complaint, enclosing a copy of this policy if requested.

We will investigate your complaint. This will usually involve:

- reviewing your complaint;
- reviewing your file(s) and other relevant documents; and
- liaising with the person who dealt with your matter.
- We may also need to ask you for further information or documents. If so, we will ask you to provide the information within a specific period.
- We will update you on the progress of your complaint at appropriate times.
- We may also, if appropriate, invite you to a meeting to discuss your complaint. You do not have to attend if you do not wish to or if you are unable to. We will be happy to discuss the matter with you by telephone or video conference.

We will write to you at the end of our investigation to tell you what we have done and what we propose to do to resolve your complaint. We will aim to do this within 28 days of the date of our letter of acknowledgement. If, for any reason we are unable to write to you within the 28-day period, we will let you know.

What to do if we cannot resolve your complaint

We have eight weeks to consider your complaint. If we have not resolved it within this time, you may be able to escalate your complaint to the Legal Ombudsman. This applies if you are an individual, a business with fewer than 10 employees and turnover or assets not exceeding a certain threshold, a charity or trust with a net income of less than £1m, or if you fall within certain other categories (you can find out more from the Legal Ombudsman: www.legalombudsman.org.uk). The Legal Ombudsman will look at your complaint independently and it will not affect how we handle your matter.

Before accepting a complaint for investigation, the Legal Ombudsman will check that you have tried to resolve your complaint with us first. If you have, then you must take your complaint to the Legal Ombudsman:

- within six months of receiving a final response to your complaint;
- and
- no more than one year from the date of the act or omission being complained about; or
 - no more than one year from the date when you should reasonably have known there was cause for complaint.
 - If you would like more information about the Legal Ombudsman, please contact them.

Contact details

Visit: www.legalombudsman.org.uk

Call: 0300 555 0333 between 10.00 to 16.00

Email: enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk

Legal Ombudsman PO Box 6167 Slough SL1 0EH

Alternative dispute resolution (ADR) bodies exist which are competent to deal with complaints about legal services should both you and our firm wish to use such a scheme, eg ProMediate. We have, however, chosen not to adopt an ADR process. If, therefore, you wish to complain further, you should contact the Legal Ombudsman.

What to do if you are unhappy with our behaviour

- The Solicitors Regulation Authority can help 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.
- Visit its website to see how you can raise your concerns with the Solicitors Regulation Authority: <https://www.sra.org.uk/>
- If you do not have on-line access, please contact us and we will provide you with alternative contact details.

What will it cost?

We will not charge you for handling your complaint.

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. This is explained in our Terms of Business.

The Legal Ombudsman service is free of charge.