



COMPLAINTS HANDLING PROCEDURE

Our complaints policy

We are committed to providing a high-quality service to all our clients. But if something goes wrong, we need you to tell us about it. This will help us to improve our standards.

If you have a complaint, you should raise the matter at first instance with the lawyer responsible for your matter who will endeavour to resolve your concerns quickly. If you remain dissatisfied please contact the head of the department. It will help us at this stage if you set out your concerns in writing.

The person with overall responsibility for dealing with complaints is Adam Entwistle, Head of Compliance at JMW.

What will happen next?

1. Within five working days of receiving your written complaint addressed to the relevant head of department we will send you a written acknowledgment.
2. We will then investigate your complaint. This will normally involve the head of the relevant department reviewing your matter and discussing your concerns with the lawyer who acted for you.
3. Our aim is to respond fully in writing to the concerns you have raised within 14 working days of receipt of your written complaint. The response will usually be prepared by the relevant head of department.
4. If you are not satisfied with the response from the relevant head of department you may then refer the matter to our Head of Compliance. When you do this you should set out in writing why you are not happy with the response from the relevant head of department. We will then endeavour to provide a detailed final response within 14 days.
5. We will always try our best to resolve any outstanding issues with you and if it is thought appropriate we will suggest a meeting with this in mind.
6. If, following your receipt of the response from our Head of Compliance you are still not satisfied, you will be able to make a complaint to the Legal Ombudsman provided you do so within six months of the end of our internal complaints procedure.
7. Any complaint to the Legal Ombudsman must usually be made within 6 years from the date of the problem which brought about your complaint, or within 3 years of the date you should reasonably have known there was cause for complaint. In addition, only individuals and certain small companies, trusts and charities are eligible to make complaints to that office. For further information, please contact the Legal Ombudsman using the details below.
8. Ordinarily, the Legal Ombudsman will not accept a complaint unless the complainant has first used the firm's internal complaints procedure. But a complainant can use the Legal Ombudsman if:
 - a. The complaint has not been resolved to the complainant's satisfaction within 8 weeks of first making the complaint to the firm; or
 - b. an Ombudsman considers that there are exceptional reasons to consider the complaint sooner, or, without it having been made to the firm first; or
 - c. where an Ombudsman considers that in house resolution is not possible due to irretrievable breakdown in the relationship between the firm and the complainant.

9. You should also be aware that, when your complaint relates to a bill, the Legal Ombudsman will not consider your complaint while your bill is being assessed by a court.
10. Legal Ombudsman Contact Details:
 - a. Address: PO Box 6806, Wolverhampton, WV1 9WJ
 - b. Telephone: 0300 555 0333
 - c. Email: enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk
 - d. Website: www.legalombudsman.org.uk
11. If we have to change any of the timescales set out above, we will let you know and explain why.
12. Alternative complaints bodies exist which are competent to deal with complaints about legal services in circumstances where both you and JMW agree to use such a scheme. Details of these bodies can be found at the European Commission's online dispute resolution website: <http://ec.europa.eu/odr>. However, in our experience the Legal Ombudsman's scheme is the most suitable body to deal with any concerns of yours which we are unable to resolve.

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