

TEMPLE HEELIS D.R. LIMITED COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

1. 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 improve our standards.

2. Our complaints procedure

If you have a complaint, please contact us with the details. First of all, if you have a complaint over the progress of a matter then please address this in the first instance to the Fee Earner acting for you. In our experience, most issues are resolved at this stage, once the problem has been discussed and a solution found. Only if this is not achieved should the formal complaints procedure come into effect.

3. What will happen next?

- (i) Please put your complaint in writing addressed either to the Complaints Manager, John Sim, or to the Compliance Officer for Legal Practice, Peter Dodd.
- (ii) We will send you a letter acknowledging your complaint within five working days of us receiving the same. When we provide you with the acknowledgement, if we need information from you or a further explanation from you to understand your complaint then this will be set out in the acknowledgement.

The following steps will take place upon receipt of the further information (if any) that we have requested: -

We will record your complaint in our central register and open a separate file for your complaint.

- (iii) We will then start to investigate your complaint as follows: -
 - a) Within 5 working days we will notify the member of staff or their head of department of the complaint and provide them with a copy and request sight of the file and a written report from the Fee Earner/Department Head;
 - b) Within a further 10 working days the investigator will receive and review the written report. (The report itself shall remain confidential to Temple Heelis) although we may, in our discretion, supply a copy to the client;
 - c) Within a further 7 days the investigator will write to you either to invite you to a meeting to discuss your complaint or write to you with the outcome of his investigation and our proposed course of action;

4. Review

- (i) If after the completion of the above process you remain unsatisfied you will be entitled to write to the Managing Partner, Jamie Hamilton, requesting that the investigator's decision be reviewed by another partner so far not involved in the complaint;
- (ii) In those circumstances, you will be informed of the identity of the individual carrying out the review whose review shall take no longer than the original investigation;

- (iii) If the complaint is upheld you will be advised of a proposed course of action to resolve the complaint. If the complaint is not upheld you will be advised as to what further action can be taken.
- (iv) If you remain dissatisfied at the end of our complaints procedure, you would then be at liberty to contact the Legal Ombudsman, provided you are an individual, a personal representative of a deceased person, a “micro-enterprise” (having fewer than 10 employees and an annual turnover or assets not exceeding 2 million Euros), a charity or club/association with an annual income of less than £1 million or a trustee of a trust with assets of less than £1 million. The Legal Ombudsman can investigate complaints up to six years from the date of the problem happening or within three years of when someone should have found out about the problem. However, if we send a final written response to your complaint within eight weeks of receiving it, the time limit for you to refer the matter to the Legal Ombudsman would be six months from the date of that final response.

If you would like more information about the Legal Ombudsman, their contact details are as follows:

- Website – www.legalombudsman.org.uk
- Telephone – 0300 555 0333 between 8.30am and 5.30pm (calls from 03 numbers will cost no more than national geographic numbers, starting 01 or 02 from both mobiles and landlines). Calls are recorded and may be used for training and monitoring purposes.
- Email – enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk
- Postal address – Legal Ombudsman, PO Box 6806, Wolverhampton, WV1 9WJ.

Alternative complaints resolution bodies also exist and are competent to deal with complaints about legal services, should both you and our firm wish to use such a scheme at the end of our complaints procedure. They provide Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) services. Small Claims Mediation is one such body and they can be contacted as follows:

Website – details can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/small-claims-mediation-service-ex730>

Telephone: 0300 123 4593

Email: scmreferrals@hmcts.gsi.gov.uk

Small Claims Mediation, HMCTS, PO Box 8793, Leicester, LE1 8BN

Under the provisions of the EU Directive on Consumer Alternative Dispute Resolution, to pursue this process you would have to be a “consumer”, namely an individual acting for purposes which are wholly or mainly outside your trade, business, craft or profession.