

Complaints Procedure

We are committed to providing a high-quality legal service to all our clients. 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 improve our standards of service.

How to complain

You can contact us in writing (by letter or email) or by telephone.

If you require additional support or a different format of communication, please inform us as soon as possible so we can try to assist.

In the first instance, it may be useful to contact the person who is working on your case to discuss your concerns, and we will do our 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 Details of Engagement we sent you at the beginning of your matter.

Our Compliance Manager, Amanda Barrett, is the firm's complaint handler and can be contacted using the details below:

Amanda Barrett
Hughes Paddison Solicitors
10 Royal Crescent
Cheltenham
Glos
GL50 3DA

Tel: 01242 574244

Email: aba@hughes-paddison.co.uk

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

- Your name and contact details
- The details of your complaint
- How you would like your complaint to be resolved

If you require further assistance in making your complaint, we will try to help you.

Does your complaint relate to UK data protection rules?

Under the Data (Use and Access) Act 2025, an individual has the right to complain to the data controller (i.e., Hughes Paddison) if they consider that the controller is not complying with UK data protection rules.

A complaint should be raised in the same way as detailed above and will be addressed in the same way as any other complaint.

The Information Commissioner can be contacted as follows:

Information Commissioner, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF.

Telephone: 0303 123 1113

Website: <https://www.ico.org.uk/make-a-complaint>

How will your complaint be dealt with?

We will write to you, using your preferred method of communication, within three working days acknowledging your complaint.

The person with overall supervision of your matter will be responsible for reviewing your complaint in the first instance unless it is inappropriate for them to do so.

We will investigate your complaint. This will usually involve:

- Reviewing your complaint
- Reviewing your file(s) and other relevant documents where appropriate
- Liaising with the person who dealt with your matter

We may need to ask you for further information or documents. If so, we will ask you to provide the information within a reasonable period.

We aim to provide you with an initial response to your complaint within 21 days of sending you the acknowledgement. Where we are unable to respond within 21 days, we will notify you and agree on a future date with you.

If your complaint is related to a matter where the file has been closed, we may need to obtain your file from our archive storage facility, which may take a few days.

If you are not satisfied with the response you have received, you should contact us again outlining the outstanding issues that you have and request a second review. We will then write to you within 14 days of receiving your request, confirming our final position on your complaint and explaining the reason.

We may also, if appropriate, invite you to a meeting to discuss your complaint. You do not need to attend if you do not wish or are unable to do so. Any meeting can be in person, by telephone or by video call.

What will it cost?

We will not charge you for the handling of your complaint.

Please note that if we have issued a bill for work completed 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 and Conditions.

The Legal Ombudsman service is free of charge.

Issue with a bill

In addition to our complaint procedure and the Legal Ombudsman service, you may also have the right to object to our bill by applying to the court for an assessment of the bill under Part III of the Solicitors Act 1974.

What if we cannot resolve your complaint?

We have 8 weeks to consider and respond to your complaint. If we have not resolved it within this time, or to your satisfaction, you may be able to complain to the Legal Ombudsman.

The Legal Ombudsman will review 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.

The Legal Ombudsman asks that you contact their office within **six months** of receipt of our final response or within **one year** of the act or omission being complained about or within **one year** from the date you should reasonably have known there was cause for complaint.

Contact details

Visit: www.legalombudsman.org.uk

Call: 0300 555 0333 (09:00 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. 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 about our behaviour

The Solicitors Regulation Authority (SRA) 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 the SRA website to see how to raise your concerns - www.sra.org.uk

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