



Falcon Chambers

FALCON CHAMBERS COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Introduction

1. At Falcon Chambers our aim is to give a good service at all times. However if you have a complaint you are invited to contact Chambers as soon as possible. It is not necessary to involve your solicitor or professional access intermediary in order to make your complaint but you are free to do so if you wish.
2. Please note that Chambers will only consider complaints that are raised within 12 months of the act or omission complained of. We apply this timescale on the basis of our experience. We find that it is easier and fairer to investigate complaints within as prompt a timescale as possible. As time passes from the event giving rise to the complaint a full and comprehensive investigation becomes more difficult. However we reserve the right to extend this timescale in the case of extenuating circumstances. Complainants should also be aware that the Legal Ombudsman's timescale for complaining is six years from the date of the act or omission, or three years from when the complainant should have reasonably known there were grounds for complaint.
3. This procedure can only be used those who are clients of chambers. It cannot be used by those who were on the other side of a case, i.e. were not clients of chambers. If you fall into this category and wish to make a complaint you should contact the Bar Standards Board who will be able to deal with your complaint.

Complaints made by telephone

4. You may wish to make your complaint in writing and, if so, please follow the procedure in paragraph 6 and 7 below. However, if you would rather speak on the telephone about your complaint then please telephone Edith Robertson, Chambers Director on 020 7353 2484. If the complaint is about the Chambers Director then please telephone either of the Joint Heads of Chambers, Jonathan Gaunt QC or Guy Fetherstonhaugh QC on 020 7353 2484. The person you contact will make a note of the details of your complaint and what you would like done about it. He or she will discuss your concerns with you and aim to resolve them. If the matter is resolved he or she will record that you are satisfied. You may also wish to record the outcome of the telephone discussion in writing.
5. If your complaint is not resolved on the telephone you will be invited to write to Chambers about it within the next 14 days so that it can be investigated formally.

Complaints made in Writing

6. Please give the following details:
 - a. Your name and address.
 - b. Which members(s) of chambers or staff you are complaining about.
 - c. The details of your complaint.
 - d. What you would like done about it.

Please address your letter to Edith Robertson or Jonathan Gaunt QC or Guy Fetherstonhaugh QC, Falcon Chambers, Falcon Court, 30-32 Fleet Street, London EC4Y 1AA. We will, where possible, acknowledge receipt of your complaint within 2 days and provide you with details of how your complaint will be dealt with.

7. Edith Robertson, the Chambers Director will normally deal with written complaints. If the complaint is about her, one of the Joint Heads of Chambers will deal with the complaint.
8. If the complaint deals with issues of professional negligence it will be passed to the barrister's insurers to deal with the matter.
9. The person investigating your complaint will write to you as soon as possible to let you know that s/he will be dealing with your complaint and that s/he will reply to your complaint within 14 days. If the person investigating the complaint finds later that s/he is not going to be able to reply within 14 days s/he will set a new date for the reply and inform you. We will attempt to deal with your complaint within 8 weeks of receiving it.
10. The reply will set out:
 - a. The nature and scope of the investigation.
 - b. His or her conclusion on each complaint and the basis for such conclusion and
 - c. If he or she finds that you are justified in your complaint, his or her proposals for resolving the complaint.

Confidentiality

11. All conversations and documents relating to the complaint will be treated as confidential and will be disclosed only to the extent that it is necessary. Disclosure will be to the Joint Heads of Chambers and to anyone involved in the complaint and its investigation. Such people will include the barrister or staff member(s) about whom you have complained, The Legal Ombudsman (if the complaint is subsequently referred to him) and The Bar Standards Board who is entitled to inspect documents and seek information relating to complaints when discharging its auditing and monitoring functions.

Our Policy

12. 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. The Chambers Director reports on a six monthly basis to the Management Board on an anonymised basis on the number of complaints received, the nature of the complaints and any improvements that need to be made to systems as a result of the complaints.

Complaints to the Legal Ombudsman

13. We hope that you will use our procedure and be satisfied with the outcome and how your complaint was dealt with. However, if you are unhappy with the outcome or the way in which your complaint was dealt with you may take your complaint to the Legal Ombudsman at any time. You should be aware that in general the Ombudsman will normally ask that you allow chambers in the first instance to try to resolve your complaint before he gets involved. Please note that the Legal Ombudsman will generally only entertain a complaint made within 6 months from the conclusion of the investigation by Chambers.

You can contact the Ombudsman at:-

The Legal Ombudsman
PO Box 6806
Wolverhampton WV1 9WJ
Telephone – 0300 555 0333

www.legalombudsman.org.uk