



Complaints Procedure

What does the Field Court Chambers complaints procedure do?

Taking legal advice or becoming a party to litigation almost always involves uncertainty, stress and difficulty. We understand this and naturally hope that you or your client will be completely satisfied with the professional services received from our barristers and staff here at Field Court Chambers.

However, there may be occasions when this is not so, and therefore in accordance with the Barristers' Code of Conduct we operate a chambers complaints procedure which we hope will lead to an agreed resolution of any outstanding issues to everyone's satisfaction.

Does it affect my right to complain direct to the Bar Standards Board?

No. Our complaints procedure operates completely separately from the Bar Standards Board (BSB) complaints procedure.

Making a complaint under our complaints procedure does not in any way restrict your right to use the BSB procedure as long as you make your BSB complaint within 6 months of the problem complained of, or, if later, within 3 months of the end of our procedure.

What triggers the Field Court Chambers complaints procedure?

Broadly, our complaints procedure deals with complaints about serious poor service or incompetence by your barrister or by a member of our staff.

How do I start a complaint?

A complaint can be made informally and doesn't have to be begun in writing – although it certainly can be [see below].

If you wish to, you can make a complaint by phoning our clerks on 020 7405 6114

and telling them what your grievance is.

It may be that your complaint is resolved over the phone straightaway or after a short interval (of up to 5 days) after it has been communicated to the barrister or member of staff involved. We will need your contact details to get back to you.

If your complaint can't be sorted out in that way, we may ask you to complete a written complaint form (Form B) and set out your complaint in writing.

Alternatively, if you would prefer to make your complaint in writing and to skip the informal approach, you can write to us at:

Field Court Chambers, 5 Field Court, Gray's Inn London WC1R 5EF

Please mark your letter 'Field Court Chambers complaints procedure'.

Or you can email your complaint to complaints@fieldcourt.co.uk. We may then send you a Form B and ask you to complete it.

Who can make a complaint?

Any client making use of the professional services of barristers provided by Field Court Chambers can make a complaint. If you are a friend or family member of a client you can make a complaint on their behalf if you are authorised by them to do so.

Barristers serve both lay clients and professional clients (usually solicitors) and both types of client can use our complaints procedure. If you are a lay client, you don't need to make your complaint to us through a solicitor.

What will happen to my complaint?

If we haven't been able to resolve it informally within 5 days, we shall treat your complaint under the more formal procedure.

The formal procedure begins when we send you the complaints pack which includes a Form B for you to fill in.

Form B is designed to help you set out the nature of your grievance as concisely and succinctly as possible.

You must complete the Form B and send it back to us within 10 working days (starting the day after the day you received it).

Once we've received it by letter, email or in Form B, we will assign your complaint to a senior member of chambers for investigation.

We'll send you an acknowledgement that we've received your complaint, and telling you who is investigating it and the date by when you can expect to hear from him or her.

The investigator has the authority of chambers under our complaints procedure to enquire into and try to resolve your complaint with the person concerned. To do this fairly and within a reasonable time, the investigator may require you to provide such further information or evidence as (s)he thinks fit.

You must co-operate fully with the investigator and if you fail to do so, it may lead to your complaint being dismissed.

When the investigator has concluded the investigation of your complaint (s)he will send you a report. This will describe to you:

- the steps that the investigator has taken
- the evidence and documents reviewed
- the investigator's conclusions and the reasons for them, and
- (if appropriate) a proposal for resolution.

What happens then?

The investigator may dismiss or uphold your complaint in whole or in part.

A dismissal brings the procedure to an end.

If the investigator upholds your complaint (or part of it) (s)he will propose terms

for resolution.

If you and the barrister or other person you are complaining about accept the proposed resolution, then the complaint can be resolved in that way.

If either you or the person about whom you are complaining do not accept the proposed terms of resolution, then the procedure will have failed, and our complaints procedure comes to an end.

Can I refer the complaint and resolution to the Legal Ombudsman?

Yes. Our procedure operates completely separately from the Legal Ombudsman complaints procedure and making a complaint under our procedure does not in any way restrict your right to use the Legal Ombudsman procedure.

We remind clients of this right when the investigator provides their report into the complaint.

Further information can be found at: <https://www.legalombudsman.org.uk/>

Or by emailing: enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk

In its processing of complaints against barristers or staff members, Field Court Chambers is committed to ensuring all users of the complaints procedure are treated fairly, impartially and without discrimination based on race, colour, ethnic or national origin, nationality, citizenship, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, disability, age, religion or political persuasion.

Field Court Chambers will look into assisting disabled people to use the complaints procedure and will, where necessary, make 'reasonable adjustments' to its operating procedures and practices.

If you are disabled and require assistance, please contact our complaints manager who will be able to advise you.

Field Court Chambers will monitor regularly the effectiveness of its equal opportunities policy.