

## Complaints procedure

### 1. **Our commitment**

Forsters is committed to providing a first-class service to each and every client. However, we recognise that there may be occasions when we fail to achieve the very high standards we set for ourselves and which our clients expect from us. Mistakes may occur, things may go wrong or we may fail to explain something sufficiently clearly. When something like this arises, we need you to tell us about it straightaway so that we can put matters right as soon as possible. Addressing your complaint or dealing with your concern as quickly as we can is important to delivering the first-class service we strive to provide.

### 2. **How to make a complaint**

Please raise your complaint with the partner responsible for the matter to which the complaint relates.

In some cases you may prefer to communicate with someone else, in which case please contact another partner in the firm who is known to you, or alternatively, please address your complaint to our client care partner, Stuart Hatcher, by email to [complaints@forsters.co.uk](mailto:complaints@forsters.co.uk).

### 3. **How we will handle your complaint**

When we receive an oral complaint we will respond to you initially setting out what we understand to be your complaint so that we can confirm that we have understood your concerns.

Alternatively, you may want to write to us by email or by post setting out your complaint. In every case we aim to acknowledge your complaint within two working days.

We find that many complaints result from a simple misunderstanding and in those cases, we expect to be able to resolve the issue to your satisfaction without undue delay. In almost every case we would hope to be able to provide you with a further oral and/or written response within 10 working days of your original complaint. In simple cases this will be our suggested resolution but in other cases, where a more detailed investigation is needed, we will let you know what we are doing and when you can expect to receive a substantive reply from us.

Depending on the nature of your complaint, we may consider it appropriate to cease working on your matter whilst we investigate your complaint. If this is the case, we will advise you in writing as soon as possible. We will aim to deal with all matters within 20 working days but wherever possible, we hope to have dealt with your complaint, to your satisfaction, much sooner.

As part of our substantive response, we will outline the investigation we carried out and explain our conclusions and how we reached them. If we find we have not met expectations, we may also explain what went wrong and propose one or more remedies to you.

Any information received from you during the complaints management process will be treated confidentially. We will only make personally identifiable information about you available where needed, for the purposes of addressing the complaint.

#### 4. **What you should do if you are unhappy with our response**

If we are unable to resolve your complaint, then you can have the complaint independently looked at by the Legal Ombudsman. The Legal Ombudsman investigates complaints about service issues with lawyers. The Legal Ombudsman expects complaints to be made to them within a year of the date of the act or omission about which you are concerned or within a year of you realising there was a concern. You are required to refer your concerns to the Legal Ombudsman within six months of our final response to you.

You can contact the Legal Ombudsman at:

PO Box 6167  
Slough SL1 0EH

or by calling on 0300 555 0333 (or if you are calling from overseas +44 121 245 3050) or emailing [enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk).

If you are not satisfied with the outcome of your complaint in relation to our invoice, you may also apply to the court for an assessment of the invoice in accordance with Part III of the Solicitors Act 1974, within one month of our delivering the relevant invoice to you, but you may be responsible for the costs of such assessment if the invoice is not reduced. We also have the right to charge interest on any unpaid invoice amounts after 30 days at a rate equivalent to the interest on judgment debts.

Alternative complaints resolution bodies also exist and they are competent to deal with complaints about legal services. They provide alternative dispute resolution services. Information about these alternatives can be found at:

<https://www.tradingstandards.uk/consumer-help/adr-approved-bodies/>

Should you wish to use one of these alternative dispute service organisations at the end of our internal complaints process, please notify us in writing and within seven working days we will confirm in writing whether we are prepared to submit the matter to your chosen alternative complaints resolution body.

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