

COMPLAINTS HANDLING POLICY AND PROCEDURE



CONVEYANCING

Complaints Handling Policy and Procedure

CONTENTS

VERSION CONTROL.....	3
INTRODUCTION	4
1. Commitment.....	4
2. Purpose.....	4
3. Scope	4
4. Who is Responsible for this Policy	4
COMPLAINTS.....	5
5. What is a Complaint?	5
SRA CODE OF CONDUCT	5
6. Our Obligations	5
COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE.....	5
7. Firm's Procedure	5
8. Prospective and Former Clients.....	6
9. Data Protection Complaints.....	6
STAFF OBLIGATIONS AND PROTECTION	7
10. Your General Duty to Report	7
11. Whistleblower Protection: Our Promise to You	7
PRACTICAL TIPS	7
12. Practical Tips for Raising a Concern	7
SCHEDULE 1	9
13. Kings – Solicitors Limited trading as Clutton Cox Complaints Procedure.....	9

Complaints Handling Policy and Procedure

VERSION CONTROL

Version No.	Changes	Date	Initials
1.0	New Policy and Procedure created.	July 2026	HiveRisk

Complaints Handling Policy and Procedure

INTRODUCTION

1. Commitment

- 1.1 We are fully committed to providing an excellent service to our clients and it is therefore important that those in positions of responsibility within Kings – Solicitors Limited trading as Clutton Cox are aware of anything which may have gone wrong. Being frank about such matters helps us to build the firm, by learning from mistakes or misunderstandings, improving our standards and retaining our reputation and the goodwill of our clients. This Policy explains your obligations in these areas.

2. Purpose

- 2.1 The aims of this Complaints Handling Policy (**'this Policy'**) are:
- (a) to encourage staff to report errors and client dissatisfaction as soon as possible, in the knowledge that concerns will be taken seriously and investigated as appropriate; and
 - (b) to provide staff with guidance as to how to report and deal with complaints.
- 2.2 Our Complaints Procedure, which we provide to clients, is set out at Schedule 1.

3. Scope

- 3.1 This Policy applies to all partners, employees, officers, consultants, contractors, volunteers, interns, casual workers and agency workers (**'staff'**).
- 3.2 This Policy does not form part of any staff's contract or working agreement and we may amend it at any time.

4. Who is Responsible for this Policy

- 4.1 Peter Redmond has overall responsibility for the effective operation of this Policy and for ensuring compliance with the relevant statutory framework. Day-to-day responsibility for operating this Policy and ensuring its maintenance and annual review is Peter's responsibility.
- 4.2 Peter Redmond ensures that all staff who may deal with concerns or investigations under this Policy receive regular and appropriate training.
- 4.3 We have a specific responsibility to ensure the fair application of this Policy and all staff are responsible for supporting colleagues and ensuring its success.
- 4.4 Staff are invited to comment on this Policy and suggest ways in which it might be improved. Comments, suggestions and queries should be addressed to Peter Redmond.

Complaints Handling Policy and Procedure

COMPLAINTS

5. What is a Complaint?

- 5.1 Our definition of 'complaint' in the SRA code of Conduct is *"an oral or written expression of dissatisfaction which alleges that the complainant has suffered or may suffer financial loss, distress, inconvenience or other detriment."*
- 5.2 If you are not sure if a comment from a client amounts to a complaint, ask if they wish the matter to be handled under our complaint's procedure.

SRA CODE OF CONDUCT

6. Our Obligations

- 6.1 Our obligations with regards complaints handling are set out in 8.2 to 8.5 of the Code of Conduct for Solicitors: <https://www.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/code-conduct-solicitors/>.
- 6.2 8.2 provides that we *"ensure that, as appropriate in the circumstances, [we] either establish and maintain, or participate in, a procedure for handling complaints in relation to the legal services [we] provide"*.
- 6.3 8.3 provides that upon being instructed by a client, we inform them in writing of:
- (a) their right to complain;
 - (b) how to complain;
 - (c) any right they have to make a complaint to the Legal Ombudsman and the timeframes within which they can escalate such a complaint.
- 6.4 8.5 provides that we must *"ensure that complaints are dealt with promptly, fairly, and free of charge"*.
- 6.5 We are also required to:
- (a) inform clients if we discover any act or omission which could give rise to a claim by them against us;
 - (b) identify, monitor and manage risks and taking steps to address issues identified; and
 - (c) report certain information to the SRA, including serious misconduct by any person or firm authorised by the SRA.

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

7. Firm's Procedure

- 7.1 Our 'Complaints Procedure' is set out at Schedule 1 and is also a 'stand-alone' document for sending to clients. It explains to clients how we will handle their concerns if they feel something has gone wrong. Whenever a client complains about our service, or about the bill, we must send out and follow our Complaints Procedure. Even if a complaint is malicious or misconceived, we must respond courteously and handle it effectively.

Complaints Handling Policy and Procedure

7.2 Accordingly, if a client asks about our complaints procedure or if a complaint is made by or on behalf of a client, notify our complaints partner, Peter Redmond. Peter will then handle the matter, starting with sending the client a copy of our Complaints Procedure.

7.3 Peter will also take action to ensure that we learn from the complaint, including keeping a record, analysing complaints data and correcting any unsatisfactory procedures.

8. Prospective and Former Clients

8.1 We should not ignore or dismiss a complaint merely because it is from a prospective or former client. Former clients are entitled to complain about our service.

8.2 Complaints from prospective clients are likely to be rare, however they can arise, e.g. if someone is disappointed by our refusal to act for them. Prospective clients may complain to the Legal Ombudsman if they are not satisfied with the way we handle their complaint. Under the SRA Code of Conduct the word 'clients' *"means the person for whom you act and, where the context permits, includes prospective and former clients"*. Hence, we should, with appropriate allowance for the circumstances, apply our complaints procedure if we receive a complaint from a prospective client.

9. Data Protection Complaints

9.1 The Firm is committed to handling personal data fairly, lawfully and transparently.

9.2 Individuals may raise concerns regarding the Firm's processing of personal data by contacting:
Email: pfr@kingsols.co.uk
Telephone: 01752 895252
Post: 24 Fore Street, Ivybridge, Devon, PL21 9AB

9.3 The Firm will acknowledge receipt of a data protection complaint as soon as reasonably practicable and, in any event, within 30 days of receipt.

9.4 The Firm will keep complainants informed of progress where appropriate and where additional time is required to complete its investigation.

9.5 Where appropriate, the Firm may request further information to understand the nature of the complaint and conduct a proper investigation.

9.6 The Firm will consider the facts of the complaint, review relevant records and determine whether any action is required.

9.7 Where appropriate, the Firm will provide a written response setting out the outcome of its investigation.

9.8 If you remain dissatisfied following the Firm's response, you may raise your concerns with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO). Further information is available at www.ico.org.uk.

Complaints Handling Policy and Procedure

STAFF OBLIGATIONS AND PROTECTION

10. Your General Duty to Report

- 10.1 Even if there has not been a complaint, you must promptly report possible mistakes and misconduct of which you are aware to your supervisor or to Peter Redmond, as appropriate. Do not yourself admit liability to clients or third parties since this might prejudice our insurance cover.
- 10.2 Your obligation to report extends to an allegation by a client or third party that there has been a mistake or misconduct, even if you believe that allegation is malicious or misconceived.
- 10.3 A failure to make a report may be treated as a serious disciplinary matter.

11. Whistleblower Protection: Our Promise to You

- 11.1 If you report a mistake or misconduct for which you are responsible the firm will strive to take a constructive and supportive approach to resolving the issue.
- 11.2 If you report a possible mistake or misconduct for which someone else is responsible you will not be subject to any retaliation or retribution for making that report, even if your concerns turn out to be unjustified. Anyone who retaliates against someone who has made such a report will be subject to disciplinary action.
- 11.3 In accordance with the general law on this subject, the provisions of the preceding paragraph apply to disclosures which, in the reasonable belief of the person making the disclosure, are made in the public interest. They may not apply to other allegations, for example allegations made insincerely or maliciously.
- 11.4 We are committed to protecting our staff and we have a Whistleblowing Policy in place so that an individual making a report of a mistake or misconduct may be reassured there will be no come-back. We are of the view that our staff should feel that they can report concerns without fear of adverse consequences to themselves, and the Whistleblowing Policy is evidence of our commitment to this.

PRACTICAL TIPS

12. Practical Tips for Raising a Concern

- 12.1 The organisation “Public Concern at Work” offers these suggestions for those reporting suspicions of wrongdoing:
 - (a) **Let the Facts Speak for Themselves:** Concentrate on the facts of a situation and focus on what you know for sure. Relying on hearsay and rumour may upset or anger your colleagues and/or employer and may damage personal reputations and work relationships. Remember there may be an innocent or good explanation for what has occurred;
 - (b) **Separate Our Personal Grievances:** A public concern and a personal grievance are not the same thing. If you are aggrieved about your personal position, you should use your employer’s internal grievance procedure to make this known;

Complaints Handling Policy and Procedure

- (c) **Be a Witness Not a Complainant:** Communicate the concern in a professional, calm and factual manner. If you know how to resolve the problem, suggest a solution. As a witness you do not have to prove your concern, and it is important you do not delay raising the concern by acting as a private detective.”

12.2 In any event, contact Peter Redmond in the first instance if you have any queries.

Complaints Handling Policy and Procedure

SCHEDULE 1

13. Kings – Solicitors Limited trading as Clutton Cox Complaints Procedure

We are committed to providing a high-quality legal service to our clients. When something goes wrong, we need you to tell us about it. This will help us to resolve any mistakes or misunderstandings and improve our standards.

If you have a complaint, please raise the problem with the person responsible for your matter in the first instance to enable them to try and resolve the matter. Very often any concerns you have can be resolved by speaking to the person who is working on your case, or their supervisor, and they will be only too happy to explain what they are doing or resolve any issue you have.

If for any reason your concerns have not been resolved having raised it with the person responsible for your matter or their supervisor, please follow our complaints procedure as set out below.

Contact

Please contact our Complaints Partner, Peter Redmond, by one of the following methods:

Email: pfr@kingsols.co.uk

Telephone: 01752 895252

Post: 24 Fore Street, Ivybridge, Devon, PL21 9AB

When contacting us, please ensure that you provide us with your file reference number(s).

Acknowledging and Logging

We will acknowledge receipt of your complaint in writing within three days of receiving it.

We will record your complaint on our central register.

Investigating and Responding

Once we have acknowledged and recorded your complaint, we will then start our investigations. This will normally involve our Complaints Partner reviewing your file and speaking to the member of staff who acted for you.

Within 14 days of sending you the acknowledgement letter, our Complaints Partner will invite you to a meeting to discuss and resolve your complaint. If you do not want a meeting or it is not possible, our Complaints Partner may instead offer you a chance to discuss the matter by telephone.

Within three days of the meeting, or any telephone conversation we have with you instead of a meeting, our Complaints Partner will write to you to confirm what took place and any solutions we have agreed with you.

Complaints Handling Policy and Procedure

In any event, our Complaints Partner will send you a detailed written reply to your complaint, including suggestions for resolving the matter, within 21 days of sending you the written acknowledgement of your complaint.

Opportunity to Respond

If, after receiving our initial response, you are still not satisfied, you should contact us again and we will arrange for another partner or someone unconnected with the matter at the firm to review the decision.

We will then write to you within 14 days of receiving your request for a review, confirming our final position on your complaint and explaining our reasons.

If we have to change any of these timescales, we will let you know and explain why.

Independent Mediation / Alternative Dispute Resolution

If a complaint cannot be resolved, you may also be able to ask for it to be referred to a process of alternative dispute resolution using a certified provider. There are three providers available:

- (a) Ombudsman Services;
- (b) ProMediate; or
- (c) Small Claims Mediation.

We are not required to agree to such a request. We must also advise that this option is not available to businesses, only consumers.

We will provide more information about this option if it becomes relevant.

Legal Ombudsman

If you are still not satisfied, you can contact the Legal Ombudsman:

Legal Ombudsman
Po Box 6167
Slough
SL1 0EH

Tel: 0300 555 0333

E-mail: enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk

Website: www.legalombudsman.org.uk

Any complaint to the Legal Ombudsman must usually be made within six months of the date of our final written response or within six months of the act or omission about which you are complaining (or if outside this period) within 1 year of when you should reasonably have become aware of it.

Complaints Handling Policy and Procedure

Please Note: The Legal Ombudsman service cannot be used by businesses or most other organisations unless they are below certain size limits. Further details are available from the Legal Ombudsman.

Data Protection Complaints

The Firm is committed to handling personal data fairly, lawfully and transparently.

Individuals may raise concerns regarding the Firm's processing of personal data by contacting:

Email: pfr@kingsols.co.uk

Telephone: 01752 895252

Post: 24 Fore Street, Ivybridge, Devon, PL21 9AB

The Firm will acknowledge receipt of a data protection complaint as soon as reasonably practicable and, in any event, within 30 days of receipt.

The Firm will keep complainants informed of progress where appropriate and where additional time is required to complete its investigation.

Where appropriate, the Firm may request further information to understand the nature of the complaint and conduct a proper investigation.

The Firm will consider the facts of the complaint, review relevant records and determine whether any action is required.

Where appropriate, the Firm will provide a written response setting out the outcome of its investigation.

If you remain dissatisfied following the Firm's response, you may raise your concerns with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO). Further information is available at www.ico.org.uk.

Solicitors Regulation Authority ('SRA')

We are regulated by the SRA. If you believe Kings – Solicitors Limited trading as Clutton Cox or any individual within the firm has breached any of the [SRA Principles](#) then you may report the issue directly to our regulator and you can find more details on how and when to report an issue to them on their website www.sra.org.uk.

Please Note: The SRA does not have the power to award compensation for poor service, or to reduce or refund your legal fees. If your report relates to these issues, you will be signposted back to the Legal Ombudsman.

Peter Redmond
Managing Partner