

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

The ‘exemplary’ practice managers are ‘among the best’, and ‘go the extra mile to make everything run smoothly’.

Legal 500

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

INTRODUCTION

At Matrix, we pride ourselves on the high quality of service that we provide to our clients. For that reason, we welcome all feedback in order to help us to improve. If you do feel that you have not received the level of service that you would expect, please contact us as soon as possible, and we will aim to resolve the issue.

Please note that we will only consider your complaint:

- If it concerns an issue that took place within the last 12 months, or
- If the issue took place more than 12 months ago, within 12 months from the date you could reasonably have known about the issue.

Where your complaint does not concern Matrix's client service, it may be more suited to consideration under the disciplinary processes of the Bar Standards Board (BSB).

COMPLAINTS MADE BY TELEPHONE

Many complaints are best resolved informally over the telephone, so if you would like to contact us in that way, please call +44 (0)20 7404 3447 and ask to speak to Rachel Holmes (CEO), who is the person nominated by Matrix to handle complaints. If the complaint is about the CEO, please ask to speak to Anthony Hudson QC.

The person you speak to will take a note of the details of your complaint and what you would like done about it. If the matter is resolved s/he will record the outcome, check that you are satisfied with the outcome and record that you are satisfied. You may also wish to record the outcome of the telephone discussion in writing. If your complaint is not resolved on the telephone, you will be invited to write to us about it within 14 days so it can be formally investigated under this procedure.

COMPLAINTS MADE IN WRITING

Matrix has a complaints panel headed by Rachel Holmes (CEO) and made up of experienced members of Matrix, which considers any written complaint.

If you choose to make a complaint in writing, we ask you to include the following details, in order to help us investigate and resolve the complaint:

- Your name and address
- Which member(s) of Matrix staff and or/ member(s) you are complaining about
- The detail of the complaint
- What you would like done about it

You can write to us by post at Matrix, Griffin Building, Gray's Inn, London WC1R 5LN, or by email. Please direct your complaint to Rachel Holmes (CEO), or alternatively, if your complaint is about the CEO, Anthony Hudson QC. We will, where possible, acknowledge receipt of your complaint within two days and provide you with details of how your complaint will be dealt with.

Within 14 days of your letter being received the head of the panel (or her deputy in her absence) or Anthony Hudson QC (if the complaint is about the CEO) will appoint a member of the panel to investigate it. If your complaint is against

the head of the panel, the next most senior member of the panel will investigate it. In any case, the person appointed will be someone other than the person you are complaining about.

The person appointed to investigate will write to you as soon as possible to let you know they have been appointed and that they will respond to your complaint within 14 days, If they find that they are not going to be able to do so, they will set a new date and inform you. Their reply will set out:

- The nature and scope of the investigation;
- Their conclusion on each complaint and the basis for their conclusion; and
- If they find that you are justified in your complaint, their proposals for resolving the complaint.

CONFIDENTIALITY

All conversations and documents relating to the complaint will be treated as confidential and will be disclosed only to the extent that is necessary. Disclosure may be to the Chair of Matrix's Management Committee, members of the Management Committee and to anyone involved in the complaint and its investigation. Such people will include the barrister or staff member who you have complained about, the head or relevant senior member of the panel and the person who investigates the complaint. The Bar Standards Board is entitled to inspect the documents and seek information about the complaint when discharging its auditing and monitoring functions.

OUR RECORDS AND DATA RETENTION POLICY

We will make a written record of any complaint and its investigation and Matrix's Compliance Officer will retain all documents and correspondence generated by the complaint for a period of six years. Matrix's Management Committee inspects an anonymised record regularly with a view to improving services. For more information on the data we process, seeh Matrix's privacy policy (<https://www.matrixlaw.co.uk/privacy-policy/>).

ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION

If you are unhappy with the outcome of our investigation, alternative complaints bodies also exist that are competent to deal with complaints about legal services should you and the barrister wish to use such a scheme. One such body is ProMediate <https://www.promediate.co.uk/>. If you wish to use ProMediate, then please contact us to discuss this. Please also note that: (1) the time limit for contacting ProMediate is within 14 days of the response to the complaint being communicated to you, and (2) if mediation is used, neither you nor the barrister is required to accept the proposed resolution. If mediation does not resolve the complaint, you may still make a complaint to the Legal Ombudsman (providing you fall within their jurisdiction and you do so within the time limit).

COMPLAINTS TO THE LEGAL OMBUDSMAN AND BSB

If you are unhappy with the outcome you may take up your complaint with the Legal Ombudsman. The Ombudsman will only deal with complaints from consumers, and therefore only complaints from a barrister's client are within their jurisdiction. Non-clients who are not satisfied with the outcome of this complaints process should contact the BSB instead.

Please note that the Legal Ombudsman has time limits in which a complaint must be raised with them. In particular, there is a six month time limit from the conclusion of the investigation by Matrix in which to raise your complaint with the Legal Ombudsman. The time limits are below:

- Six years from the date of the act/omission

- Three years from the date that the complainant should reasonably have known there were grounds for complaint (if the act/omission took place before the 6 October 2010 or was more than six years ago)
- Within six months of the complaint receiving a final response from their lawyer, if that response complies with the requirements in rule 4.4 of the Scheme Rules (which requires the response to include prominently an explanation that the Legal Ombudsman was available if the complainant remained dissatisfied and the provision of full contact details for the Ombudsman and a warning complaint must be referred to them within six months)

You can write to them at:

Complaints Team

Legal Ombudsman

PO Box 6806

Wolverhampton

WV1 9WJ

Tel: +44 (0)300 555 0333

Email: enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk

Website: www.legalombudsman.org.uk

If you are not a barrister's client and are unhappy with the outcome of our investigation, then please contact the BSB at:

Bar Standards Board

Contact and Assessment Team

289-293 High Holborn

WC1V 7JZ

Tel: +44 (0)207 611 1444

Website: www.barstandardsboard.org.uk