



LONDON

Lincoln's Inn
London WC2A 3UP
DX LDE 307
T +44 (0)20 7691 2424
clerks@xxiv.co.uk
www.xxiv.co.uk

GENEVA

16 rue de Candolle
1205 Geneva
Switzerland
T +41 (0)22 328 1313

XXIV OLD BUILDINGS

CLIENT COMPLAINTS POLICY

1. Our aim is to give you a good service at all times. However, if you have a complaint you are invited to let us know as soon as possible. You may make a complaint directly to Chambers or, if you prefer, make a complaint through solicitors.
2. Please note that Chambers will only normally only consider complaints that are raised within 12 months of the act or omission complained of.
3. Chambers has a panel headed by Elizabeth Weaver and made up of experienced barristers at XXIV Old Buildings ("Barristers") and a senior member of staff (the "Complaints Panel") who are responsible for dealing with complaints against any barrister or member of staff in accordance with this Policy.
4. Complaints may be made informally by telephone using the procedure set out in paragraphs 7 to 9 below, or formally in writing using the procedure set out in paragraphs 11 to 14 below.
5. For the purposes of this Policy, we do not regard normal negotiations between a member of staff and those instructing a barrister relating to the fee charged or to be charged by that barrister as constituting a 'complaint'.
6. Please note that it may not always be possible or appropriate for us to investigate a complaint by someone who is or was not a client of a barrister. That is because the ability of Chambers to investigate and resolve such complaints is limited and because complaints by non-clients are usually better suited to the disciplinary procedures of the Bar Standards Board. Therefore, we will make an initial assessment of the complaint by a non-client and if we feel that the issues raised cannot be dealt with satisfactorily through our own complaints procedure, we will inform you and refer you to the Bar Standards Board.

Informal Complaints by telephone

7. If you would prefer to speak to us initially on the telephone about any concern or complaint then please telephone Paul Horsfield (Head of Clerking) or Elizabeth Weaver. If your complaint is about a member of staff, please contact Paul Horsfield. If your complaint is about either of those individuals or if they are both unavailable, please contact Elspeth Talbot Rice KC, our Head of Chambers.
8. The person you speak to will:
 - (a) make a note of the details of your complaint and what you would like done about it;
 - (b) discuss your concerns with you and make every effort to address all queries and questions you may have
 - (c) if necessary, fix a time to contact you again.

9. If the matter is resolved on the telephone, the person you spoke to will record the outcome, check 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.

10. If your complaint is not resolved on the telephone, you will be invited to write to us about it within the next 14 days so that it can be investigated formally in accordance with paragraphs 11 to 15 below.

Complaints in writing

11. If making a complaint in writing, please give the following details:

- (a) your name and address;
- (b) which barrister(s) or member(s) of staff you are complaining about;
- (c) the detail of the complaint; and
- (d) what you would like done about it.

12. Please address your letter to Paul Horsfield or Elizabeth Weaver, at XXIV Old Buildings, Lincoln's Inn, London, WC2A 3UP or email complaints@xxiv.co.uk. 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.

13. Within 14 days of your letter being received, Elizabeth Weaver, the head of the Complaints Panel, will appoint a member or members of the Complaints Panel to investigate your complaint (if appropriate in conjunction with a senior member of the practice management team). In any case, the person(s) appointed will be people other than the person or persons you are complaining about.

14. The person(s) appointed to investigate ("investigator") will write to you as soon as possible to let you know who is investigating, what will happen next and whether any further information is required.

15. We hope to be able to provide a response to the complaint within 21 days of your written complaint which will set out:

- (a) the nature and scope of the investigation;
- (b) the conclusion reached on each complaint and the basis for those conclusions; and
- (c) if the investigator finds that you are justified in your complaint, the proposals for resolving the complaint.

If for any reason it is not possible to provide a response within 21 days, the investigator will tell you and provide a date for the response. If you have any queries in the meantime, please contact the investigator or Elizabeth Weaver.

Confidentiality

16. 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 Head of Chambers, members of our Management Committee and to anyone involved in the complaint and its investigation. Such people will include the barrister or member of staff who you have complained about and the Head and/or other member(s) of the Complaints Panel who deal with 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.

Additionally, any personal data you provide during the complaints process will be handled in accordance with our Privacy notice, [which can be accessed here](#). This notice explains how we collect, use, and protect your personal data, and your rights in relation to it.

17. We make a record of any written complaint and retain all documents and correspondence generated by the complaint for a period of six years. Our Chambers Management Committee regularly inspects these records, anonymised where necessary, with a view to improving services.

Complaints to the Bar Standards Board or the Legal Ombudsman

18. If you are unhappy with the outcome of our investigation into your complaint you may take up your complaint with the Legal Ombudsman. The Legal Ombudsman will only deal with complaints from consumers i.e. the barrister's client. Also, the Legal Ombudsman will not usually consider your complaint until it has first been investigated by Chambers. **Please note that there is generally a time limit of 6 months from receiving our final response to your complaint** within which to make your complaint to the Legal Ombudsman. Ordinarily the Legal Ombudsman will not consider complaints made more than 1 year after the matter complained arose or 1 year after the date on which you became aware of it.

You can write to the Legal Ombudsman at:

PO Box 6167,
Slough SL1
Tel: 0300 555 0333

Email: enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk
Website: <http://www.legalombudsman.org.uk>

If you are not the barrister's client you may take up your complaint with the Bar Standards Board by writing to:

Bar Standards Board
Professional Conduct Department
289-293 High Holborn
London WC1V 7HZ
Tel: 020 7611 1444
Fax: 020 7831 9217
contactus@barstandardsboard.org.uk
Website: www.barstandardsboard.org.uk