

Guidance

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Publishing complaints procedure

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Updated 23 March 2023 (Date first published: 5 November 2018)

Status

This guidance is to help you understand your obligations and how to comply with them. We will have regard to it when exercising our regulatory functions.

Who is this guidance for?

This guidance is for firms and individuals we regulate who are required under Rule 2.1 of the Transparency Rules

[<https://www.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/transparency-rules/>] to provide information about:

- your complaints handling procedure
- details about how and when a complaint can be made to the Legal Ombudsman
- details about how and when a complaint can be made to us.

The rule requires you to publish information on your website or make it available on request if you do not have a website.

Purpose of this guidance

This guidance is designed to help you meet Rule 2.1 by suggesting text you can use to provide information about:

- your complaints handling procedure
- how to report an issue to us and the Legal Ombudsman.

We have developed this guidance with the Legal Ombudsman.

It is not mandatory that you use this specific text. This is a template that you can adapt as you wish so it works for you.



You may also want to look at guidance provided by the Legal Ombudsman [<https://www.legalombudsman.org.uk/information-centre/learning-resources/good-complaints-handling/>] , which provides further help on handling complaints.

If you have your own/existing wording you can continue to use this so long as it meets the requirements outlined above.

Please note that changes were made to the Legal Ombudsman's scheme rules from 1 April 2023. The suggested text below reflects these changes.

Suggested text for providing information about your own complaints process, raising concerns to the Legal Ombudsman and to ourselves

We want to give you the best possible service. However, if at any point you become unhappy or concerned about the service, we/I have [change as appropriate] provided then you should inform us immediately, so that we can do our best to resolve the problem.

In the first instance it may be helpful to contact the person who is working on your case to discuss your concerns and we will do our best to resolve any issues [delete if not required]. If you would like to make a formal complaint, then you can read our full complaints procedure [link to your process]. Making a complaint will not affect how we handle your case.

What to do if we cannot resolve your complaint

The Legal Ombudsman can help you if we are unable to resolve your complaint ourselves. They will look at your complaint independently and it will not affect how we handle your case.

Before accepting a complaint for investigation, the Legal Ombudsman will check that you have tried to resolve your complaint with us first. If you have, then you must take your complaint to the Legal Ombudsman:

- Within six months of receiving our final response to your complaint

and

- No more than one year from the date of the act or omission being complained about; or
- No more than one year from the date when you should reasonably have known that there was cause for complaint.

For more information contact the Legal Ombudsman

[<https://www.legalombudsman.org.uk/contact-us/>] .

What to do if you are unhappy with our behaviour

The Solicitors Regulation Authority can help if you are concerned about our behaviour. This could be for things like dishonesty, taking or losing your money or treating you unfairly because of your age, a disability or other characteristic.

Visit their website to see how you can raise your concerns with the Solicitors Regulation Authority

[<https://www.sra.org.uk/consumers/problems/report-solicitor/>] .

Further help

If you require further assistance please contact the Professional Ethics helpline [<https://www.sra.org.uk/contactus>] .