



Terms of Business & Service Standards

In 2012 the Legal Services Board approved the Bar Standards Board's application to amend its Code of Conduct to substitute new standard contractual terms for the existing Bar's Standard Non-Contractual Terms, which incorporated the withdrawal of credit scheme. These changes came in to force on 31st January 2013.

Equity Barristers undertake their work under the Standard Contractual Terms published by the Bar Standard's Board 2012, save only where the individual barrister concerned has accepted the instructions pursuant to other terms which have been expressly agreed in writing.

A copy of the Standard Contractual Terms for the Supply of Legal Services by Barrister to Authorised Persons 2012 can be downloaded by [clicking here](#).

Any variation of these terms must be done by express written agreement. For further queries or questions please [contact](#) one of the Clerks who will be happy to assist further.

The Members and Staff at Equity Chambers are committed to providing excellence of service in all areas.

Equity Chambers is also committed to Equality & Diversity and to the elimination of discrimination.

Equity Chambers seeks to provide an accessible service to all clients and visitors, and we are more than happy to make reasonable adjustments to standard practices to facilitate this.

If you are a client/visitor with a disability or specific need and would like to discuss reasonable adjustments please contact our Clerks, Claire or Ashley ([clerks @ equitychambers.org.uk](mailto:clerks@equitychambers.org.uk)), alternatively you may contact our Equality and Diversity Officer, Akaal Sidhu (as@e-c.org.uk). You can download a copy of Equity Chambers Equality & Diversity Policy [here](#).



Complaints Procedure

Chambers aims to give you the best service possible at all times whether a professional or lay client, however if for any reason you have the need to complain, you are invited to let us know of the issues surrounding your complaint as early as possible so that the matter can be resolved effectively.

More information can be found in our complaints procedure – (Annexe 1) which can be downloaded [here](#).

Please note that any queries or complaints about the outcome of a particular case will generally not form the basis for a complaint. Your barrister and Instructing Solicitor where applicable, will be able to advise you as to whether there may be grounds to appeal.

If you have a complaint about the conduct of your Barrister or the way in which your case has been conducted, then you should follow the procedure as outlined within Chambers Complaint Procedure Annexe 1 (paragraph 1) and address your complaint to the Head of Chambers.

If you are not satisfied with the way in which Chambers considered your complaint, you may contact the Legal Services Ombudsman to investigate how it was handled. If the Ombudsman considered that the complaint was not investigated properly, they can recommend that the complaint be reconsidered and investigate further. You may also contact the Bar Standards Board. Please see useful links for more information.



Useful Links:-

clerks@equitychambers.org.uk

(to contact chambers Clerks)

www.barcouncil.org.uk/about-the-bar

(for general information about Barristers)

www.barstandardsboard.org.uk

(for the Code of Conduct, and Contractual Terms for the Supply of Legal Services by Barristers)

www.barmutual.co.uk

(for information about Bar professional insurance)

www.legalombudsman.co.uk

(for complaints about Legal Professionals)

**COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE –
[Annexe 1]**

1. All complaints received in Chambers, whether by a Barrister, Clerk or any other person and from whatever source, if in relation to the professional conduct of a Member of Chambers, negligence, incompetence or shortfall of service or breach of code of conduct, should be notified to the Head of Chambers. If the complaint involves the Head of Chambers, then it will be handled throughout by the Deputy Head of Chambers, in consultation with other Senior Members of the Management Committee. A substantive complaint may be received in writing or by telephone and any correspondence or telephone notes in respect of that complaint will be made available to the Head of Chambers or other person as mentioned above, at the time they are notified of the complaint. Complaints in writing should be addressed to The Head of Chambers, Equity Chambers, First Floor, McLaren Building, B4 6LR.
2. All complaints received will be acknowledged, preferably in writing by Chambers, within 3 working days of receipt and should also have attached to it a copy of this procedure and advice of the timescale in which a full response should be received. This should, where possible be within 1 calendar month, however if further time is required then this will be notified to the person whom has made the complaint, who will be kept informed at all stages.
3. The complaint will be investigated as to the cause and nature of the complaint, where required requesting for and considering any relevant documentation.
4. The first point of contact for the Complaints Handling process for general complaints will be the Senior Clerk who will investigate and endeavour to resolve matters where possible. If that is not possible or sufficient then the Senior Clerk will liaise with the Head of Chambers to try and reach a resolution. The Head of Chambers will investigate the matter further and take any appropriate action required.
5. All complaints will be reviewed to assess the need for;
 - No Action (where the complaint is withdrawn or is unjustified).
 - Redress (compensation/goodwill gesture where appropriate),
 - Remedial action (where the cause of the complaint needs to be looked into further to implement changes to prevent the problem from re-occurring in the future).
 - Further Action Required (where a member of chambers is required to receive advice about his/her conduct or where a reprimand may be required or an apology made).
 - Outside Contact Required (where the matter cannot be resolved within Chambers – see further below).
6. If a complainant is received and investigated by the Head of Chambers or relevant person or persons as outlined above and there is no resolution reached then the person from whom the complaint has been received will be advised that it is their right to approach the Legal Ombudsman at www.legalombudsman.org.uk. This should be done within 6 months of the final contact with Chambers regarding said complaint.
7. All complaints received will be reviewed annually by the Senior Clerk and Head of Chambers. The findings will then be reported back to the Management Committee with suggestions of any changes in procedures/policies which have been identified.

Please note that the existence of this procedure does not prohibit Chambers from overturning unjustified complaints.