Complaints Procedure

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. It is not necessary to involve solicitors in order to make your complaint but you are free to do so should you wish.

2. Please note that the Legal Ombudsman, the independent complaints body for service complaints about lawyers, has time limits in which a complaint must be raised with them. The time limits are:

   One year from the date of the act/omission.

   One year 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 that the complaint must be referred to them within six months.

3. The Ombudsman can extend the time limit in exceptional circumstances. Chambers must therefore have regard to that timeframe when deciding whether they are able to investigate your complaint. Chambers will not therefore usually deal with complaints that fall outside of the Legal Ombudsman's time limits.

4. The Ombudsman will also only deal with complaints from consumers. This means that only complaints from the barrister's client are within their jurisdiction. Non-clients who are not satisfied with the outcome of the Chambers' investigation should contact the Bar Standards Board rather than the Legal Ombudsman.

5. It should be noted that it may not always be possible to investigate a complaint brought by a non-client. This is because the ability of Chambers to satisfactorily investigate and resolve such matters is limited and complaints of this nature are

often better suited to the disciplinary processes maintained by the Bar Standards Board. Therefore, Chambers will make an initial assessment of the complaint and if they feel that the issues raised cannot be satisfactorily resolved through the Chambers complaints process, they will refer you to the Bar Standards Board.

Complaints Made by Telephone

6. You may wish to make a complaint in writing and, if so, please follow the procedure in paragraph 8 below. However, if you would rather speak on the telephone about your complaint then please telephone the individual nominated under the Chambers Complaints Procedure to deal with complaints – Bridget Williamson or (if the complaint is about a member of staff) the senior clerk – Mr Michael Ireland. The telephone number is 020 7405 9471. If the complaint is about Bridget Williamson or the senior clerk, telephone the Head of Chambers – Mr James Pickering KC. The person you contact will make a note of the details of your complaint and what you would like to have done about it. He will discuss your concerns with you and aim to resolve them. If the matter is resolved 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.

7. If your complaint is not resolved on the telephone, you will be invited to write to us about it so that it can be investigated formally.

Complaints Made in Writing

8. Please give the following details:

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

9. Please address your letter to Mr James Pickering KC, Enterprise Chambers, 9 Old Square, Lincoln's Inn, London WC2A 3SR. 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.

9. If you wish to send your letter via email then in the first instance please send it to the Senior Clerk – Michael Ireland (michaelireland@enterprisechambers.com), if the complaint is in regards to Michael Ireland, then please send it to the Head of Chambers – James Pickering KC (jamespickering@enterprisechabers.com)

10. Our Chambers has a panel headed by Mr James Pickering KC and made up of experienced members of Chambers and a senior member of staff, which considers any written complaint. Within 14 days of your letter being received, the head of the panel or their deputy in their absence will appoint a member of the panel to investigate it. Usually, this person will be Bridget Williamson. 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.

11. 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 reply to your complaint within 14 days. If they find later that a response within 14 days will not be possible, they will set a new date for a reply and inform you. The reply will set out:
    - The nature and scope of his investigation;
    - Conclusion on each complaint and the basis for that conclusion; and
    - If they find that you are justified in your complaint, a proposal for resolving the complaint.

Confidentiality

12. 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 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 member or staff 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.

Enterprise CHAMBERS

Our Policy

13. As part of our commitment to client care we make a written record of any complaint and retain all documents and correspondence generated by the complaint for a period of six years. Our management committee inspects an anonymised record regularly with a view to improving services.

Complaints to the Legal Ombudsman

14. If you are unhappy with the outcome of our investigation and you fall within their jurisdiction you may take up your complaint with the Legal Ombudsman, the independent complaints body for complaints about lawyers, at the conclusion of our consideration of your complaint. The Ombudsman is not able to consider your complaint until it has first been investigated by Chambers. Please note the timeframe for referral of complaints to the Ombudsman as set out at paragraph 2 above.

    You can write to them at:

    Legal Ombudsman
    PO Box 6806
    Wolverhampton
    WV1 9WJ

    Telephone number: 0300 555 0333
    E-Mail: enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk

15. If you are not the barrister's client and are unhappy with the outcome of our investigation then please contact the Bar Standards Board at:

    Bar Standards Board
    Professional Conduct Department
    289-293 High Holborn
    London
    WC1V 7JZ

    Telephone number: 020 7611 1444
    Website: www.barstandardsboard.org.uk