Spire Barristers Complaints Procedure

Spire Barristers aim to give you the highest quality service to our clients, but if you feel this has not reached the level you would expect, you are invited to let us know and you are entitled to make a complaint.

This policy applies to clients of barristers only. Complaints from non-clients are outside the scope of this procedure and you may take up your issue with The Bar Standard's Board Contact and Assessment Team should you so wish.

Please note that, unless there is a good reason, we shall only consider your complaint if it concerns an issue that took place within the last twelve months, or, if the issue took place longer than twelve months ago, then within twelve months from the date you could reasonably have known about the issue.

EARLY RESOLUTION/COMPLAINTS MADE BY TELEPHONE

Before making a formal complaint, we encourage clients to consider whether their concerns can be resolved quickly through a conversation with the person undertaking their work or our Senior Clerk.

This approach is likely to produce a quicker resolution than the more formal route.

Some issues may be better resolved over the telephone and, to do so, please telephone our Senior Clerk, Leigh Royall. If the complaint is about the Senior Clerk, please ask to speak to one of the joint Heads of Chambers.

The person you contact will make a note of the details of your complaint, identify the issue(s) you could like to complain about, and what you would like done about it. They shall discuss your concerns with you and aim to resolve them. If the matter is resolved, they shall record the outcome, check that you are satisfied and record that too.

If your complaint cannot be resolved on the telephone, you shall be invited to write to us within the next 14 days, so your complaint can be investigated formally as per the procedure set out in the next section.

COMPLAINTS MADE IN WRITING

If you wish to make a complaint in writing, please address it to Leigh Royall (lroyall@spirebarristers.co.uk) and give the following information:

- Your name, postal and email address;
- The person about whom you are complaining;
- Details of the complaint; and
- How you would wish it to be resolved.

We shall, where possible, acknowledge receipt of your complaint within four working days and provide you with details of how your complaint shall be dealt with.

Written complaints are considered by a member of a panel which is headed by James Goodwin and is made up of experienced members of chambers and a senior member of staff.

Within 14 days of your letter being received, the panel head shall appoint a member of the panel to investigate making sure, of course, that the person appointed is someone other than the person about whom you are complaining.

The person appointed to investigate shall write to you within 14 working days, either with an outcome, or notification that more time is required to investigate.

A letter at the end of an investigation shall set out a conclusion upon each complaint raised, the basis for that conclusion and, if your complaint is justified, a proposal to resolve it.

When the matter is resolved, the outcome shall be recorded.

REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS

Where individuals require reasonable adjustments to be put in place due to a disability or other needs, for our complaints process or communication in an alternative format, they should set this out at the earliest opportunity.

CONFIDENTIALITY

All conversations and documents relating to the complaint shall be treated as confidential and shall be disclosed only to the extent that is necessary. Disclosure may be to the heads of chambers, members of our management committee, the person about whom you have complained and to anyone involved in the complaint and its investigation.

The Bar Standards Board is entitled to inspect the documents and seek information about the complaint when discharging its auditing and monitoring functions annually.

OUR POLICY

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 anonymised records regularly with a view to improving services.

COMPLAINTS TO THE LEGAL OMBUDSMAN

Whilst you can ask the Legal Ombudsman to investigate complaints against regulated legal services providers, the rules state that you are required to submit your complaint to the service provider in the first instance.

If you are unhappy with the outcome of our investigation, you may raise a complaint with the Legal Ombudsman, the independent complaints body for complaints about lawyers.

Please note that the Legal Ombudsman has time limits within which a complaint must be made. Generally, you must make your complaint to the Legal Ombudsman:

- 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 have realised that there was cause for complaint;

and

- Within six months of receiving a final response to your complaint.

The Legal Ombudsman may extend the time limits if they consider it fair to do so.

You can write to the Legal Ombudsman at:

Legal Ombudsman
PO Box 6167
Slough
SL1 0EH
Telephone number: 0300 555 0333.
Email: enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk.

Please note that there are other rules relating to complaints to the Legal Ombudsman, including other time limits and more information is available on their website: http://www.legalombudsman.org.uk

If you are not a barrister's client, then
please contact the BSB at:

Bar Standards Board Contact and Assessment Team
289-293 High Holborn
WC1V 7JZ
Telephone number: 0207 611 1444
Website: www.barstandardsboard.org.uk

N.B The contents of this page were last reviewed in June 2026