

**Steptoe International (UK) LLP**  
**Complaints Handling Policy**  
**Effective August 2024**

## **Introduction**

We are committed to providing high-quality legal advice and client care to all of our clients. If you are unhappy with any aspect of our service or any invoice you have received, we want you to tell us about it. This will help us to improve our standards and address your concerns.

This document sets out our procedure for resolving complaints. It does not affect any rights which you may have in law or in contract.

## **How to make a complaint**

If you have a complaint, please contact us with the details by email or letter.

## **What will happen next?**

1. We will send you a letter acknowledging receipt of your complaint within 3 business days of receiving it, enclosing a copy of this procedure.
2. We will then investigate your complaint. This will normally involve passing your complaint to our Compliance Officer for Legal Practice and complaints-handling partner, Matthew Coleman, who will arrange to have your complaint discussed with the lawyer who is responsible for your matter.
3. We may also, if appropriate, invite you to a meeting, video or telephone conference to discuss your complaint. You do not have to attend if you do not wish, or are unable, to do so. Within 3 business days of the meeting or conference, we will write to you to confirm what took place and any solutions we have agreed with you.
4. If you do not want, or are unable, to attend a meeting or conference, or we do not consider that a meeting or conference would be appropriate, we will send you a detailed written decision regarding your complaint, including any suggestions for resolving the matter, within 21 days of sending you the acknowledgement letter.
5. At this stage, if you are still not satisfied, you should contact us again to explain why you remain unhappy with our decision and we will review your comments. Depending on the matter we may at this stage arrange for another partner to review the decision.
6. We will write to you within 14 days of receiving your request for a review, confirming our final position on your complaint and explaining our reasons.
7. If we have to change any of the timescales above, we will let you know and explain why.
8. We will not charge you for handling your complaint. Please note that if we have issued an invoice for sums due to us, and all or some of the invoiced sums are not paid, we may be entitled to charge interest on the amount outstanding, as explained in our Terms of Business.

9. If you are still not satisfied with our final position (or, if sooner, upon the expiry of eight weeks after the date on which you sent us your complaint), you may be entitled to refer the complaint to the Legal Ombudsman ([www.legalombudsman.org.uk](http://www.legalombudsman.org.uk)). The Legal Ombudsman investigates complaints about service issues with lawyers and does not charge for its service, but expects complaints to be made to them within one year of the date of the act or omission about which you are concerned or within one year of you realising there was a concern. You must also refer your concerns to the Legal Ombudsman within six months of our final response to you.
10. There are other approved alternative dispute resolution (ADR) schemes such as Ombudsman Services and ProMediate. We will, in our final response or sooner if you request, let you know whether we agree to use an ADR scheme to resolve your complaint.

### **Complaints to the Solicitors Regulation Authority**

You may also report any concerns regarding our conduct to our regulator, the Solicitors Regulation Authority, whose contact details are at [www.sra.org.uk](http://www.sra.org.uk).