

Bates & Mountain – Our Commitment

We want to give you the best possible service. However, if at any point you become unhappy or concerned about the service we have 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 at this stage. If you would like to make a formal complaint, then you can read our Complaints Policy below. Making a complaint will not affect how we handle your case.

The Solicitors Regulation Authority can help you 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. You can raise your concerns with the Solicitors Regulation Authority, <https://www.sra.org.uk/consumers/problems/report-solicitor.page>.

What do to 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 a final response to your complaint;
- AND
- No more than one year from the date of act/omission; or
 - No more than one year from when you should reasonably have become aware of it

If you would like more information about the Legal Ombudsman, please contact them

Bates & Mountain – Complaints Policy

We are committed to providing a high-quality legal service to all of our clients. When something goes wrong we need you to tell us about it. This will help us to improve our standards. If you have a complaint, please contact us with the details. Your letter should be addressed to either of the persons referred to in the introductory letter you received at the outset of this matter. We will record your complaint in our central register. We are required to respond to your complaint within 8 weeks.

What will happen next?

1. We will send you a letter acknowledging your complaint and will also let you know the name of the person who will be dealing with this in the firm. We may ask you to confirm or clarify details of your complaint otherwise we will confirm what action we are taking. This letter will be sent to you within four days of us receiving your complaint.
2. If we have requested clarification of any of the issues, from you we will acknowledge your reply and confirm what will happen next. We will respond to you within four days of your receiving your reply.
3. We will then start to investigate your complaint which may involve one or more of the following steps:

- a. We may ask the member of the firm who acted for you to reply to your complaint in which case that person will respond to you within five days. We will continue to monitor this matter.
 - b. In appropriate cases we may ask the member of the firm who acted for you to meet with you to discuss and hopefully resolve your complaint. We will write to you within five days suggesting arrangements for the meeting.
 - c. In other cases, we will invite you to meet the Head of the Department or another partner in the firm to discuss the issue and hopefully resolve your complaint. We will write to you within five days of receiving all the details we need from the member of the firm who acted for you.
4. Within four days of the meeting, we will write to you to confirm what took place and any solution we have agreed with you.
5. If you do not want a meeting or if it is not possible to make appropriate arrangements for this, we will send you a detailed reply to your complaint. This will include our suggestions for resolving the matter. We will write to you within five days of us completing our investigations.
6. At this stage, if you are still not satisfied you can write to us again. We will then arrange to review our decision. This will happen in either of the following ways:
 - a. The head of department or partner involved will review his own decision within five days or
 - b. We will arrange for another partner in the firm who has not been involved in your complaint to review it. This will be done within fourteen days.
 - c. We will let you know the result of the review within five days of the end of the review. At this time we will write to you confirming our final position on your complaint and explaining our reasons. If you are not satisfied with our handling of your complaint, or we do not respond to the complaint within eight weeks, you can ask the Office of the Legal Ombudsman (LEO), at Legal Ombudsman, PO Box 6167, Slough, SL1 0EH, telephone number 0300 555 0333, fax number 0121 603 5322, email: enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk to consider the complaint. Normally, you will need to bring a complaint within six months of receiving a final written response from us about your complaint or within the year of the act or omission about which you are complaining occurring, or of when you become aware of it.
 - d. Instead of contacting the LEO, you can use alternative complaints bodies [such as Small Claims Mediation (UK) Ltd of 33 Leicester Road, Blaby, LE8 4GR, telephone number 0800 167 0700, email admin@small-claims-mediation.co.uk], which are competent to deal with complaints about legal services should both you and our firm wish to use such a scheme.
 - e. We do not agree to use Small Claims Mediation (UK) Ltd.
7. If we have to change any of the timescales above, we will let you know and explain why.