

# How to make a complaint about a lawyer

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The Scottish Legal Complaints Commission (SLCC) is the single gateway for all complaints about lawyers in Scotland - this includes Solicitors and Advocates.

We are an independent body and the service we provide is free.

Whether you wish to complain about the quality of the service provided to you, or about the individual conduct of a lawyer, the complaint should be sent to us.

## First steps

Make sure that your complaint is within our time limits (which are on our website).

We will usually expect you to have raised your concerns with the lawyer first - to give them an opportunity to resolve things.

If that does not resolve your complaint, you will need to complete one of our Complaint Forms as soon as possible – either online (or downloaded) at our website, or you can ask us to send you one.

It is important that you provide us with as much information as possible on the Complaint Form. Explain who and what you are complaining about. Provide us with a copy of the complaint you made to the lawyer and any response received.

We will assess the eligibility of each complaint received. This involves:

- Checking that it is something we can deal with; and
- Deciding whether it is about inadequate professional service, or about conduct, or about both.

## Conduct complaints

Conduct relates to the practitioner's behaviour or their fitness to carry out work. If a complaint is about a lawyer's conduct, we will pass this to the relevant professional body (usually the Law Society of Scotland or the Faculty of Advocates) to be investigated.

If you are unhappy with the way in which that body deals with your complaint, you can make a "handling complaint" to us. Information about handling complaints, and the form for making a handling complaint to us, is on our website - or we can send a form to you.

## **Inadequate Professional Service complaints**

Service relates to the quality of work which a practitioner has carried out during the transaction. If your complaint is about the service from a lawyer, the SLCC will deal with the complaint.

We may offer you mediation. This is often a good way to resolve your complaint quickly. More information about how mediation works is on our website.

If we investigate the complaint, we will look at all the information which is available and make a recommendation. If we think your complaint is valid, we can:

- Order the lawyer to re-do or complete work for you;
- Award compensation to you; and/or
- Ask the lawyer to refund fees you have already paid.

If each party accepts the recommendations at this stage, the complaint will be closed.

## **Final Decision**

If you or the lawyer do not accept the recommendation, your complaint will be considered afresh by a Determination Committee. Their decision on your complaint is final and can only be appealed through the Court of Session.

## **What we can't help with:**

- We can't give you legal or procedural advice or intervene in any legal proceedings.
- We can't consider complaints about Judges, Sheriffs or the Courts or consider (or change) any decisions made by them.
- We can't tell you whether the amount of fees you have been charged is reasonable.

## **Further information**

You can find further up-to-date information about what we do on our website.

Alternatively, you can contact us using the details below:

The Scottish Legal Complaints Commission  
10-14 Waterloo Place  
Edinburgh  
EH3 4EG

Tel: 0131 201 2130

Email: [Enquiries@scottishlegalcomplaints.org.uk](mailto:Enquiries@scottishlegalcomplaints.org.uk)