

## **Annex AB4**

### **Client feedback and complaints policy**

We are committed to providing a quality service to our clients. We value feedback from clients greatly because it helps us to continually improve our service. If you do not feel that you are receiving excellent client service or that something could be improved, please do tell us about it. If we have fallen short of the high standards which we have set for ourselves then we would like the opportunity to put it right.

#### What do I do if I have feedback or a complaint?

At first it would be helpful if you could discuss any feedback or concerns which you have about our service or how it might be improved with the lawyer dealing with your matter. If that lawyer cannot resolve your concern informally, or if the issue is of such a serious nature that you do not feel comfortable raising it with your lawyer, then you may discuss this with Co-Director, Matt Foot as a complaint under this policy.

#### How do I raise a complaint under this policy?

It would help us if you could write to Matt Foot at APPEAL, 6-8 Amwell Street (First Floor) London EC1R 1UQ or email [mail@appeal.org.uk](mailto:mail@appeal.org.uk) with details about:

- why you feel dissatisfied with the service which you have received;
- how you would prefer to be contacted about your complaint;
- if there is anything in particular which you would like us to do to resolve your complaint.

If you would prefer not to write, please call 020 77278 6949 or have a friend or family member call, Matt Foot to discuss the best way to get an understanding of your concerns.

#### What happens after I have made a complaint under this policy?

We will:

- send an acknowledgement of your complaint within 7 days of receiving it;
- log your complaint on our central complaints register;
- investigate the concerns and arrange a discussion with you to try to agree how to resolve the issues within 21 days of receiving your complaint;
- write to you within 28 days of receiving your complaint to confirm the outcome of this.

In exceptional circumstances it may be necessary to extend these timescales but we will try to agree any variations with you first. If you remain unsatisfied after 8 weeks at the latest we will always ensure that you are reminded at that time of how to make a complaint to the Legal Ombudsman if you are eligible to do so.

### What might the outcome of my complaint be?

We very much regret any dissatisfaction which our clients experience and will not hesitate to apologise to you where our service has fallen below our high standards. We may also agree that certain steps will be taken to improve your situation and to ensure that any problems experienced will not reoccur.

### What if I remain unsatisfied?

You can ask for the outcome of your complaint to be reviewed by a member of the Board of Directors of the organisation if you remain unsatisfied. The relevant contact details will be set out in our letter notifying you of the outcome of your complaint. It would again be helpful to know at this stage if there is anything further specifically which we could do to resolve your concerns satisfactorily. A member of our Board of Directors may then uphold the outcome or review it and replace it with alternative suggestions on how your complaint can be resolved. This would be our final decision on how we can resolve your concerns. You will receive the outcome of the Board of Directors member review within 8 weeks of raising your complaint with us at the latest.

If you remain dissatisfied at that stage, you may be entitled to complain to the Legal Ombudsman about our service, including our charges. This service is not available to all clients however such as large businesses. The Ombudsman would generally expect clients to follow a firm's internal complaints procedure first. You can find further information about the Ombudsman on the website [www.legalombudsman.org.uk](http://www.legalombudsman.org.uk). You can write to the Ombudsman at Legal Ombudsman, PO Box 6167, Slough, SL1 0EH or by email on [enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk) or call on 0300 555 0333.

If you wish to raise a complaint with the Ombudsman then you should not delay bringing it to their attention once our own complaints process has concluded as there are some time limits on when this must be done. For example, normally you must raise a complaint with the Ombudsman within six months of the date of our final written response to your complaint. You should also be aware that the Ombudsman 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.

