



Our Client Relations Office has a legal responsibility to handle complaints against Scottish solicitors.

More information is available from the Client Relations Office Helpline on 0845 113 0018 between 9am and 5pm, Monday to Friday.



The Law Society of Scotland



Client Relations Office Helpline

0845 113 0018

Textphone: 0131 476 8359

www.lawscot.org.uk



**Complaints against
Scottish solicitors
where you are not
the client**



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Complaints against Scottish solicitors where you are not the client

You may wish to complain about a solicitor's actions that have affected you directly although you are not the client. You might be the 'other party' in a divorce action, for example.

The Society will look into your complaint but the process is slightly different to our normal procedures. The reason for this is that correspondence and discussions between clients and their solicitor are confidential and cannot be given to you although they will be considered by the Society. You will be told of the outcome of the investigation.

The investigation carried out by the Society into a complaint you make against a solicitor meets the same stringent standards as it would if you were his or her client.



The Process

If you have been affected by the actions of, but are not the client of, the solicitor you are complaining about, the Society can still investigate your complaint carefully.

- ▶ Firstly, it will make sure that you have a complaint that the Society has the power to investigate.
- ▶ If the Society feels that you don't have a relevant interest in making a complaint, it can still investigate alleged misconduct you have drawn to its attention.
- ▶ You will be given a full explanation so you understand what is happening.
- ▶ If any of your points can't be investigated by the Society, you'll be told the reasons. You'll also be informed that you can ask the Scottish Legal Services Ombudsman to look into how the Society handled your complaint.
- ▶ The solicitor you've complained about will be sent a copy of your letter and asked for an explanation and to forward his or her file on the case to the Society.
- ▶ An impartial Reporter will be appointed to make a Report. This person is a volunteer and may be a solicitor. The Reporter's identity is not disclosed to either you or the solicitor.
- ▶ This Report is then sent to the solicitor, who is invited to put forward his or her side of the story. You will not see a copy of the Report or reply.
- ▶ A Client Relations Committee then considers the complaint, taking into consideration your complaint, the comments of the solicitor and the recommendation in the Report.
- ▶ Client Relations Committees have an equal membership of solicitors and non-solicitors.
- ▶ A decision is then reached, which might involve further action against the solicitor.
- ▶ Both you and the solicitor are told of the outcome.
- ▶ You are given information on how to contact the Scottish Legal Services Ombudsman if you are not satisfied.