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## Customer service is fundamental to everything we do

We know that using legal services can be daunting. We therefore strive to make the process as straightforward and personable as we can. We aim to deliver a first class service every time and want your experience with Slater and Gordon to be positive.

Sometimes things don't go as expected though, and we welcome complaints as an opportunity to review and improve our service. If something is wrong, we're committed to fairly and transparently investigating it in order to resolve matters to your satisfaction. Please raise any customer issues or service complaints, and we'll endeavour to resolve them for you as swiftly as possible.

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## How to raise a complaint

If you have any concerns, or if an aspect of our service is less than you'd expect, we'd like to hear from you immediately. In most cases, an informal chat can put matters back on track. Please contact the Client Care team by phone, email or in writing. The team can record everything you're unhappy about and recommend the best solution for you.

You can contact the Client Care team by:

+ Phone: 0800 740 8596

+ Email: [clientcare@slatergordon.co.uk](mailto:clientcare@slatergordon.co.uk)

+ Post: Client Care, Slater and Gordon, Dempster Building, Atlantic Way, Liverpool, L3 4UU

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## What we need to know

To direct your complaint correctly, it would be helpful when contacting us if you could provide the following:

- + Your name and contact details
- + Reference number
- + Your concerns
- + Your preferred contact method
- + How you'd like us to put things right

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## How we aim to resolve things

1. If you telephone us, we'll attempt to resolve the issue in that call.
2. If you email or write to us, or if your complaint can't be resolved in a call, we'll acknowledge receipt of your complaint, confirm who'll review it and when they'll reply to you.
3. We'll investigate and then contact you again to discuss how we aim to resolve matters. We may contact you during the investigation to discuss the complaint and/ or to suggest a resolution before providing our final written response. Although the Legal Ombudsman Guidelines allow us eight weeks to resolve your complaint, you should hear from us within 21 calendar days. We'll always advise you if we need more time than this.
4. It's important that we address all your concerns. If you remain unhappy after hearing from us again, please discuss any further issues with the Client Care team, who can provide guidance about whether you can refer your complaint to an Ombudsman scheme.

## Ombudsman schemes

If, after exhausting our complaint process, your complaint is not resolved to your satisfaction, or the eight-week period has expired without our final response, you may be entitled to refer your complaint to an Ombudsman Scheme or for Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR). We'll always be happy to discuss your concerns further prior to you taking this step, so please do contact us to discuss it.

For complaints about our service, including billing issues, you may contact the Legal Ombudsman:

- + Phone: 0300 555 0333
- + Email: [enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk)
- + Post: Legal Ombudsman, PO Box 6806, Wolverhampton WV1 9WJ

If your unresolved complaint relates to an insurance policy covering your case, you may contact the Financial Ombudsman Service:

- + Phone: 0800 023 4567
- + Email: [complaint.info@financial-ombudsman.org.uk](mailto:complaint.info@financial-ombudsman.org.uk)
- + Post: Financial Ombudsman Service, Exchange Tower, London E14 9SR

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## Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR)

We're required to tell you about alternative dispute resolution. This is a form of mediation similar, but separate to, the Legal Ombudsman. Complaints bodies known as alternative dispute resolution providers do exist, such as Small Claims Mediation ([www.small-claims-mediation.co.uk](http://www.small-claims-mediation.co.uk)), which are competent to deal with complaints about legal services, but you need to obtain our express prior permission to use such a before ADR can start. This doesn't apply to contacting the Legal Ombudsman, which you can do at any time.

We don't agree to use any companies within the ADR scheme, but will fully co-operate with the Legal Ombudsman should you choose to contact them instead. You can find out more about ADR online.

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## Time limits

The Legal Ombudsman aims to resolve complaints and assist clients and their solicitors to reach a mutual agreement. There are, however, time limits for submitting complaints to them. These time limits also apply for referrals to the Financial Ombudsman Service:

- + Within six months of receiving our final response
- + Eight weeks after lodging your complaint with us, if you haven't received our final response
- + Within six years of the date of the act/ omission if you haven't previously complained, or
- + Three years from the date that you should've known you had a complaint to pursue and hadn't complained previously (if the act/ omission occurred more than six years ago).

The Legal Ombudsman won't accept complaints where the act/ omission or date of awareness was before 6 October 2010 though.

If your complaint is about your bill, you may have a right to apply to the court for an assessment under Part III of the Solicitors Act 1974. There are strict time limits applicable and you may wish to seek independent legal advice:

- + Within one month from the date of invoice you have an unconditional right to a detailed assessment
- + After one month the Court may impose restrictions
- + After one year from the invoice date, you will lose the right to a detailed assessment, except in special circumstances.

The Legal Ombudsman may not consider a complaint about a bill if you have applied to the court for such an assessment.