



Complaints about the CLC

Policy Statement

The purpose of the CLC is to set entry standards and regulate the profession of Licensed Conveyancers and probate practitioners effectively in order to:

- secure adequate consumer protection;
- promote effective competition in the legal services market; and
- provide choice for consumers.

The CLC aims to get things right the first time and to provide all our customers with a good service. However, we accept that there may be times when our standard of service may fall below the reasonable expectations of our customers.

We define a complaint as any expression of dissatisfaction about the way that the CLC has carried out, or failed to carry out, its activities. Where the service received from the CLC is below your expectations you can make a formal complaint to us, in writing, by letter, email, or fax, outlining your complaint; we aim to handle your complaint courteously, objectively, sensitively and in a timely manner. Where genuine grievances have arisen we will seek to rectify the situation to the satisfaction of the complainant. Your complaint gives us the opportunity to learn from our errors and to improve the quality of our services so the opportunities for a reoccurrence of the grievance are minimised.

Complaints relating to individual CLC regulated practices or practitioners are covered by the CLC's Conduct Complaints Policy. If you wish to complain about a CLC regulated matter, further information is available [here](#).

1. Policy Aims

It is intended that this policy generates the following outcomes for users of CLC services:

- Consumers are aware of how they can make a complaint from the outset and are confident that should things go wrong we will be responsive to their concerns and act swiftly and informally where possible to sort matters out;
- Consumers are confident that they will be treated fairly and in accordance with our complaints policy;
- The consumer is properly informed of the progress being made on their complaint and is aware that they can make an appeal if they are not ultimately satisfied with the handling of the complaint or its outcome;
- To ensure that where weaknesses with our service provision have been found are addressed;
- Our standards of consumer care are regularly reviewed.

It is intended that this policy generates the following outcomes for CLC:

- We have in place an appropriate written complaints policy which is adhered to;
- Staff are aware of what constitutes a complaint and at what stage correspondence with a customer needs to be referred to the complaints policy;
- We are able to learn from the complaint information captured and of its impact upon the consumer, identifying complaints trends to help prevent the cause of the complaint from recurring, reducing the number of complaints received and increasing customer satisfaction;

- We secure the confidence of customers who have complained and who have been dealt with fairly and promptly; and
- Identified weaknesses within our service provision are addressed
- Our processes are transparent, efficient, timely and fair.

2. Statutory, Regulatory & Corporate Responsibilities

The CLC has a number of regulatory objectives, several of which are central to the purpose of this policy and its accompanying procedure:

- Protecting and promoting the public interest;
- Protecting and promoting the interests of consumers;
- Increasing public understanding of the citizen's legal rights and duties;
- Promoting and maintaining adherence to the professional principles.

The Legal Services Act 2007 requires us to ensure that the legal service providers we regulate have in place an effective complaints policy. It is only fitting that we should lead by example.

3. Policy Details

3.1 How / when can I make a complaint about the CLC?

You should make your complaint to us in writing, either by emailing us at: clc@clc-uk.org

Or by writing to: The Head of Executive Office,
CLC, WeWork, 131 Finsbury Pavement, London, EC2A 1NT

It would assist the investigation of your complaint, if you clearly indicate:

- the specific complaint(s) that you wish to raise
- what action you are seeking
- and provide us with any supporting papers or information relevant to your complaint.

We will not usually accept complaints that are lodged more than six months after the event being complained about unless the complainant can show reasonable grounds for the delay.

3.2 How will we deal with your complaint?

The line manager of the department that is relevant to your grievance will generally investigate your complaint. If he or she was directly involved in the matter, a member of the senior management team who has not had direct involvement with the matter, which gave rise to the complaint will investigate it.

We will write to you within two working days of receiving your complaint to acknowledge receipt.

In order to investigate fully your complaint, we may ask for further information and/or clarification in writing. We may not be able to progress our investigation of the complaint until we receive this information.

We aim to resolve all complaints within 20 working days of receipt. We will write to you to advise you of the outcome of our investigation and clearly explain the reasons for the outcome. In

addition, we will provide details of any other steps we will take to your concerns. If we are unable to resolve your complaint within this period, we will also write to you, explaining why, and when you are likely to receive a full response.

3.3 What are the possible outcomes I can expect?

Our response will set out the findings of our investigation and how we came to the response considered appropriate. We hope that you will be satisfied with the outcome of our investigation, which may be one or more of the following steps:

- Make an apology on behalf of the CLC;
- Provide a full explanation of what happened and why;
- Rectify any error;
- Reject your complaint.

3.4 Appeals - what if I am unhappy with the outcome?

If you are unhappy with the outcome of the investigation, then you can refer your complaint to the Chief Executive of the Council for Licensed Conveyancers for review. Further details about this will be included in the formal reply to your complaint.

3.5 Complaints Procedure

The process we follow on receipt of a complaint is provided in full in the CLC Internal Complaints Procedure (Annex A).

3.6 What does this Policy not cover?

This policy does not cover:

- Complaints about individual CLC regulated practices or licensed practitioners, which are reviewed under our Conduct Complaints Procedure, which is available [here](#).
- Decisions about licensing applications
- Applications for Grants out of the Compensation Fund

4. Equalities Considerations

In our regulatory work and in processing complaints about the service we provide we are committed to ensuring that all users of the complaints service are treated fairly, impartially and without discrimination based on race, colour, ethnic or national origin, nationality, citizenship, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, disability, age, religion, philosophical beliefs or political persuasion.

The CLC will take reasonable steps to ensure that the contents of this document are provided in a format, which suits your particular needs. Should you be unable to complete the form/set out your grievance in writing due to literacy issues or other disability we will provide you with support to complete the form.

5. Policy Promotion, Evaluation & Review

The CLC's complaints procedures are available on the CLC website.

All complaints about the CLC will be reviewed the Senior Management Team and included within the quarterly management report to the Council.

This policy and procedure will be reviewed and updated as necessary.

6. Privacy Policy

The Council for Licensed Conveyancers (CLC) complies with the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR). For the purposes of GDPR, if you provide any personal information to us, we will be the data controller. To understand how we collect and handle your personal data and for what purposes, a copy of our Privacy Policy can be found on the CLC website at: <https://www.clc-uk.org/privacy-policy/>

Annex A

We define a complaint as any expression of dissatisfaction about the way that the CLC has carried out, or failed to carry out, its activities. Where the service received from the CLC is below your expectations you can make a complaint to us, on the CLC Complaints Form, or in a letter outlining your complaint. For obvious reasons there will be no response to complaints made anonymously.

Below are the procedures we follow on receipt of your complaint:

Procedures		Timescale for response
1	The complaint is received by the Head of Executive Office	Within 1 working day of receipt.
2	The complaint will be allocated to a senior member of staff for review.	Within 1 working day of receipt.
3	We acknowledge to you that we have received the complaint.	Within 2 working days of receipt.
Investigation of Complaint		
Stage 1 – Investigation		
4	In order to investigate fully your complaint, we may ask for further information and/or clarification in writing. We may not be able to progress our investigation of the complaint until we receive this information.	
5	The member of staff investigating the complaint will write to you to advise you of the outcome of our investigation and clearly explain the reasons for the outcome. In addition, we will provide details of any other steps we will take to meet your concerns. If we are unable to resolve your complaint within this period, we will also write to you, explaining why, and when you are likely to receive a full response.	Within 20 working days of receipt of initial complaint.
Decision		
6	The Director of the department that is relevant to your complaint will generally investigate your complaint. If he or she was directly involved in the matter, a member of the senior management team who has not had direct involvement with that matter, which gave rise to the complaint would investigate it. Complaints about the Chief Executive will be referred to the Chair.	
Stage 2 – Appeals		
7	If you are not satisfied with the handling of your complaint, its findings or outcome, you can refer it to the Chief Executive of the CLC for a further review. Details about this will be included in the formal reply to your complaint. If we do not hear from you we will treat the complaint as resolved.	Within 20 working days of receipt of the full response.

Recording and Monitoring		
9	The decision made and actions taken in response will be recorded on the Central Complaints Record.	Within 5 working days
10	The Senior Management Team and the Council will be provided with a Complaints Analysis report.	Quarterly