



Oriel Chambers Client Care Statement

Policy

Oriel Chambers are committed to and aim to provide a high quality advocacy and specialist advisory service to our clients. To complement this, our staff and Members provide an approachable, efficient and professional service.

Further, believing as we do that a positive relationship with our clients is vital to the smooth and effective handling of cases, we aim to provide this service by working on the basis of co-operation and trust.

We have put in place separately a Quality Assurance Statement, a copy of which is available upon request at Chambers' website at www.orielchambers.co.uk or telephone Chambers who will provide a written copy.

Briefing Counsel

You may book Counsel by telephone, letter, fax or e-mail.

When booking Counsel we will identify whether Counsel of your choice is available for the hearing date.

If requested Counsel is not available for the hearing date, we will discuss the possibility of alternative/reserve Counsel.

To assist us in fulfilling our commitment to you please:-

- Notify us of the hearing date as soon as possible;
- Supply briefs as early as possible, and in good time for the hearing;
- Notify us as early as possible when a case has settled.

Instructing Counsel – Paperwork

We will endeavour to ensure that instructions for paperwork are with Counsel on the day of its delivery. Where this is not possible Counsel will be furnished with instructions at the earliest possible opportunity.

The following time frames will apply for the return by Counsel of paperwork, unless you are notified to the contrary or alternative arrangements have been agreed:-

Defences/Amended Defences 5 working days from delivery to Chambers

All other Pleadings 21 days from delivery to Chambers

Advices 21 days from delivery to Chambers

The above applies unless otherwise agreed with the Instructing Solicitor.

Should you require paperwork to be dealt with urgently and in advance of the time frames indicated above, please mark the instructions in red ink on the backsheet:

“URGENT – PAPERS REQUIRED BY [insert date]”

Acknowledging Receipt of Briefs

All briefs/instructions received by Chambers will be acknowledged in writing by return. Acknowledgments should be checked and Chambers notified immediately of any amendments.

All briefs/instructions are kept in specifically designated areas for each Barrister.

Briefs/instructions will only leave these premises when the Barrister instructed is working on them from another location. The papers will be kept in a secure and confidential place at all times.

Fees

Standard fees apply where applicable.

In non-standard cases fees will be agreed with you after delivery of the brief/instructions and prior to any hearing based upon the following criteria:-

- Seniority/expertise of Counsel Instructed
- Value of claim
- Preparation time
- Length of hearing including conference on hearing date
- Any expenses (hotel, travel, etc.).

Fee Notes

A fee note will be attached to briefs/instructions upon their return.

In the event of a fee not being agreed prior to a hearing, the clerk will contact you with a suggested fee.

In the event of a Barrister attending a hearing where there is no attendance by a representative of the Instructing Solicitor, the Instructed Barrister will contact the

Instructing Solicitor at the first available opportunity following the hearing to report on the outcome of the case. A note of this conversation will be documented or endorsed on the back of the brief.

Where any factor liable to cause delay in a case, or return of instructions, the Barrister Instructed will contact their Instructing Solicitor immediately. A detailed note of such communication will be kept by the Barrister and where possible, an endorsement on the back of the brief.

Payment of Fees

Unless we have otherwise agreed, the payment of fees will be pursuant to the Bar Council's Guidelines and the Legal Services Commission Guidelines for the time being.

Conflicts of Interest

In the event that the Counsel instructed having a conflict of interest this will be brought to your attention as soon as possible.

Feedback

We invite feedback generally from the professional/lay clients who use our services as to the quality of the service provided by us. It will be noted by the Chambers Director and passed on as may be appropriate.

Complaints

Our aim is to provide a good service at all times. However if you or your client(s) have a complaint you are invited to let us know as soon as possible. Please direct your complaint to our Chambers Director, Sarah Cavanagh, either in writing by post, email, fax or by telephone, who will investigate the matter in accordance with Chambers Complaints Procedure. For a copy of Oriel Chambers Complaints Procedure, please download a pdf copy from our website at www.orielchambers.co.uk or telephone Chambers who will provide a written copy.

Client Confidentiality

Members of Chambers, Clerks and Staff recognise the need for Client Confidentiality at all times and make proper provision for the security of briefs/instructions and any additional paperwork.

Data Protection Act

Members are registered under the Data Protection Act 1998.

Equality & Diversity

Chambers are committed and complies with the mandatory requirements of the Bar Council; the Bar Code of Conduct; and The Equality and Diversity Code. To obtain a copy of our Equality & Diversity Policy, please download a pdf copy from our website at www.orielchambers.co.uk or telephone Chambers who will provide a written copy.

Service Provision to Disabled Clients

Oriel Chambers (Liverpool) is a Grade I listed building. Therefore wheelchair access is limited. However, conferences with wheelchair users will, if necessary, take place either at the offices of the Instructing Solicitor or at the home of the disabled person or an alternatively agreed location. There will be no added cost to the client for providing this service. Oriel Chambers (Preston) has full wheelchair access and facilities.

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October 2011**