

Information for Lay Clients

Introduction

Hardwicke is a legal services organisation. There are over 80 barristers of varying experience and expertise including QCs (otherwise known as Silks). We have about 30 members of staff. At any time in the year there are also at least two pupils (trainee barristers). Our offices (or chambers, as they are called) are located in New Square, Lincoln's Inn, just off Chancery Lane. We are very close to the Royal Courts of Justice in the Strand.

What we do and why

At Hardwicke, we have expertise across a wide range of commercial and insurance work. We do not practise in criminal or family law or immigration. We deal with everything from advice over the telephone to representation in the most complex disputes in Courts and tribunals. You have either come to us directly, or your solicitor has "instructed" a barrister at Hardwicke to work on your case. That work might be to give a second opinion, or to give advice about your legal dispute, or to assist with drafting legal documents, or to represent you in Court.

Hardwicke aims to deliver legal services of the highest quality and to be approachable, client focused, innovative and commercial about fees.

How we will work with you

Once your barrister has been instructed by your solicitor, their main goal is to advise you on how best to proceed with your case, within the law. Your solicitor might suggest that it would be a good idea to have a meeting face-to-face to discuss the details of your case. If you have a meeting, it is possible that it will take place at Hardwicke's offices in Lincoln's Inn. All of our rooms are fully accessible and our receptionists are friendly and helpful. If you have any special requests before the meeting, please do not hesitate to contact our staff team who will help you.

If your case progresses to Court or tribunal, then your barrister will be instructed to represent you. Court hearings can be a worrying experience, so if you have any questions your barrister will try to answer them as thoroughly as possible. You might see your barrister talking to the legal team for the opposing party before or after your hearing. Try not to be alarmed by this - this is a normal part of the process and a professional barrister should always be civil with the other barrister.

Your barrister will do all they can to assist you, within the law. They will keep the details of your case confidential; however, they cannot tell a Court (or anyone else) anything that they know is not true or mislead them in any way. Your case might need another hearing. Your barrister will do their utmost to be available for it, but sometimes it will not be possible due to prior commitments to another client. If your barrister is not available your solicitor will talk to our Practice Team about finding a solution. It might result in another barrister taking instructions on your case.

Contacting us

Your solicitor's initial point of contact will be a member of our Practice Team, most likely a Practice Manager. The role of a Practice Manager is to support the barristers in their everyday tasks; they will be able to assist with booking meetings, agreeing fees and fixing dates for hearings in Court. They can also advise on which barrister would be a good choice for a piece of work based on their experience, expertise and availability, if your solicitor doesn't have a particular person in mind.

Barristers are not normally allowed to communicate directly with their clients unless they have instructed through the direct access scheme. So, if you would like to contact us and are not a direct access client, please go through your solicitor.

Feedback and complaints

We hope that your experience of coming to Hardwicke is a good one, but we recognise that very occasionally, things do not go to plan, or, sometimes, you have a very good experience that you want to share with us.

If you have any feedback - good or bad, we would be very keen to hear from you. We are striving constantly to improve the service we provide to our clients.

If you have a problem during your case, please do not hesitate to contact us and we will try our utmost to assist and try to resolve it at the time. Our Practice Team are committed to giving you the best service and client experience. Sometimes, things do not go the way we would like them to, and you may decide that you want to make a complaint. If this happens, please speak to your solicitor or Amanda Illing, our CEO on amanda.illing@hardwicke.co.uk

If you consider that you prefer to make a more formal complaint, go to the Legal Ombudsman Service on 0300 555 0333 or via the website www.legalombudsman.org.uk. Our full complaints procedure can be found on our website.

Further information

For further information about Hardwicke, please visit www.hardwicke.co.uk, find us on LinkedIn or follow @hardwickelaw on Twitter.

Barristers are regulated by the Bar Standards Board. The Barristers' Register is an online database which displays details of all barristers authorised to practise in England and Wales and can be found [here](#). For general information on barristers, please contact the Bar Standards Board on 020 7611 1444 or www.barstandardsboard.org.uk, where you can also find the Barristers' Code of Conduct.

Amanda Illing, Chief Executive

