

COLLEGE CHAMBERS

VEXATIOUS ABUSIVE OR PERSISTENT COMPLAINANTS POLICY

We take all genuine complaints and queries very seriously however minor. We recognise that some of our clients are distressed, vulnerable or needy and may therefore appear to be challenging or confrontational. We will always make due allowances for this. However we will not tolerate vexatious, abusive or aggressive language or behaviour. It is not fair to our staff or members of our chambers. They have the right to be treated with courtesy and respect. Accordingly, they have been instructed to politely terminate any conversation which descends into this type of conduct and immediately report the matter to our Head of Professional Standards.

A decision will then be taken by him in consultation with the Senior Clerk to deem the client to be a Vexatious Abusive or Persistent Complainant. The sort of behaviour that will lead to this decision being taken is repeated complaints over the same or similar issues, outrageous disgraceful or fanciful allegations of misconduct and verbal abuse or threats or aggressive behaviour directed at staff or members, although these are examples and not a comprehensive list. A written warning will usually be given before this decision is taken save in an extreme case.

If a client is deemed to be a Vexatious Abusive or Persistent Complainant then our staff and/or the member of chambers concerned will refuse to engage further with that person. A reference will be made to the Legal Ombudsman who will take over all further communications and no-one at College Chambers will have any further direct contact. In an extreme case we will also refer the matter to the Police with a view to an investigation into the offence of harassment and/or we will commence legal proceedings against the person concerned.