

SMITH & PINCHING FINANCIAL SERVICES LIMITED COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE FOR DISTRIBUTION TO CLIENTS

We aim to provide our clients with excellent service, but at times things can go wrong. If you are unhappy with our service or think there is a problem, please let us know immediately – we treat all complaints very seriously.

We will resolve complaints fairly and as quickly as we can. Some complaints require detailed investigation, dialogue with third parties and input from you. They can take considerable time to resolve.

We will provide fair redress where we believe it is appropriate. It will be proportionate to the circumstances and consistent with rules and guidance from the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) and the Financial Ombudsman Service (FOS).

We will provide a copy of this procedure to any client who makes a complaint or to any client who requests it.

We will maintain appropriate records at all times.

What is a complaint?

We regard a complaint as:

Any expression of dissatisfaction from or on behalf of any client or otherwise eligible complainant, if that complaint relates to a regulated activity and the complainant has suffered or may suffer financial loss, material distress or significant inconvenience.

An eligible complainant can be a “retail client”, a “professional client” or an “eligible counterparty”.

If we can resolve your complaint within three working days

Typically, this is a less formal process. We will write to you summarising the complaint and the resolution and we will make you aware of your right to refer to the FOS if you do not agree with our findings and views.

If we cannot resolve your complaint within three working days

Where this is the case, we will enter it into the formal complaints handling process. We would aim to resolve it as soon as possible, with a goal of doing so within eight weeks. Please note that some complaint investigations may exceed this timeframe.

We will acknowledge your complaint in writing within five working days of receipt. This may be by letter or email. We will detail our understanding of and will ask you to confirm if it is accurate. This communication may contain our offer to settle.

The acknowledgement will confirm that:

1. We will investigate the complaint and respond fairly and promptly.
2. We will conduct an investigation into the circumstances, details and any other information that we think relevant.
3. Once the investigation is complete, our Compliance Officer will write a “final response” letter to you with his appraisal of the matter, his final decision and the nature and terms of any settlement (if applicable). If we decide an offer of redress is appropriate, any compensation we offer will be fair and will take all the facts into account.

SMITH & PINCHING FINANCIAL SERVICES LIMITED COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE FOR DISTRIBUTION TO CLIENTS

4. We will make you aware of your right to refer to the FOS if you do not agree with our findings and views.

If you do not respond within eight weeks of our final response, we will treat the matter as closed.

If the investigation is not completed within eight weeks, we will inform you of the reasons for the delay and we will make you aware of your right to refer to the FOS.

If the complaint is in respect to business conducted by our Compliance Officer, another senior employee will investigate and communicate with you as above.

If it is not our responsibility to investigate your complaint

If your complaint relates to a product or service that we arranged for you, but the matter is the responsibility of the product or service provider rather than our firm, we will refer your complaint to the provider within five working days of receipt.

It may sometimes be the case that it is not our responsibility to investigate financial advice given to you. Typically, this will be the case when you received advice from a firm that we bought or sold in the past. Again, we will refer the matter to them within five working days of receipt.

In both cases, we will write to you to confirm this, together with contact details for the provider or firm in question.

FOS referral rights

If we have not issued our final response within eight weeks of receipt of your complaint or if you are dissatisfied with it, you have the right to refer your complaint to the FOS. This is free of charge, but you must do so within six months of the date of our final response letter.

If you do not refer your complaint in time, the FOS will not have our permission to consider your complaint and so will only be able to do so in very limited circumstances. For example, if it believes that the delay was as a result of exceptional circumstances. The FOS can be contacted at:

Financial Ombudsman Service
Exchange Tower
London E14 9SR
Tel: 0800 023 4567 or 0300 123 9 123
www.financial-ombudsman.org.uk