

Instructing Us

a. Briefing Counsel for Hearing

Instructing Solicitors may book Counsel by telephone, letter or e-mail. Upon receipt of the requested booking, a member of our clerking team will confirm whether or not requested Counsel will be available for the hearing date.

If it is anticipated that the requested Counsel will be unavailable for the hearing date, you will be notified and if appropriate reserve Counsel will be agreed with you.

If the reserve Counsel takes over responsibility for the case he or she will discuss the case with the original Counsel booked, in advance of the hearing.

To assist us in fulfilling our commitment to you, we ask you in return:

- i. To notify us of the hearing date as soon as possible;
- ii. To supply briefs as early as possible and in good time for the hearing;
- iii. In the event of a hearing being unlikely to be effective, to notify us as soon as possible.

d. Instructing Counsel for Paperwork

We seek to ensure that instructions for paperwork are with Counsel on the day of their delivery.

Chambers' general service standard for return of paperwork by Counsel is 28 days. This applies to:

- Defences/Amended Defences - unless an earlier date is stipulated;
- All other Pleadings and Affidavits
- Advices

Exceptions to this may be agreed for specific repeat/long term work.

Should you require paperwork to be dealt with urgently or in a shorter time than indicated above, please mark the papers in red ink on the back sheet "URGENT - PAPERS REQUIRED BY (date)".

Unless marked to the contrary or covered by a unique service agreement, it is assumed that the 28 day timescale is acceptable and the matter will be progressed on that basis.

e. Acknowledging Receipt of Briefs and Instructions

All briefs or instructions received by us are acknowledged by email by return. The barrister to whom they are assigned checks them within 3 working days to ensure all documents listed by you have been received. If any discrepancy is found then you will be informed immediately. If any requirements or instructions cannot be accommodated you will be informed immediately. If the barrister is unable to comply with this initial check timescale, such as when out of town/on holiday, you will be informed.

f. Returning Briefs and Instructions

If for any reason it becomes apparent that a barrister may not be available to fulfil an agreed commitment, you will be warned immediately. As soon as it is known for sure you will be informed and papers will be returned with your agreement to the new counsel. On the conclusion of a matter or piece of work, all papers are returned to the instructing solicitor or confidentially disposed of if required. Exchange Chambers do not hold, file or store any documents relating to cases. We maintain only computer-based records created for our administrative purposes.

g. Conflicts of Interest

Clerks are fully aware of the potential for conflicts of interest arising, and care is taken at the outset before briefs or instructions are accepted or Counsel recommended in order to ensure no such conflicts exist. However, they are not always apparent until Counsel receives the papers and work has begun. Whatever the situation, you will be informed immediately if a conflict becomes apparent and alternative Counsel will be recommended.