

**MAASSEN LAW COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE**

(version 22 March 2017 - as stated in Section 6.28 of the Netherlands Bar Association Legal Profession Regulation “Verordening op de advocatuur”)

**Article 1 - Definitions**

In this complaints procedure the following terms have the following meaning:

*lawyer*: a Dutch regulated lawyer (“advocaat”) and for the purpose of this complaints procedure a solicitor of England and Wales at Maassen Law;

*complaint*: any written expression of dissatisfaction from or on behalf of a client directed at a lawyer or the person working under the responsibility of a lawyer regarding the acceptance or performance of an engagement, the quality of the services or the amount of the invoice, except for a complaint as referred to in Section 4 of the Dutch Regulated Lawyers Act (“Advocatenwet”);

*complainant*: the client or his representative expressing a complaint; and

*complaints officer*: the lawyer designated to handle complaints.

**Article 2 - Scope of application**

2.1. This complaints procedure applies to any engagement between Maassen Law and the client.

2.2. Any person employed at Maassen Law shall ensure that complaints are handled in accordance with this complaints procedure.

**Article 3 - Purpose**

The purpose of this complaints procedure is:

- a. to establish a procedure to deal with a complaint within a reasonable period of time and in a constructive manner;
- b. to establish a procedure for determining the causes of complaints;
- c. to maintain and improve existing relationships by dealing with complaints properly;
- d. to train persons employed at Maassen Law to be client focused when responding to complaints; and
- e. to improve the quality of services through complaint handling and analysis.

**Article 4 - Publication**

4.1. This complaints procedure has been published on Maassen Law’s website.

4.2. The lawyer shall inform the client before or at the time of entering into the engagement that Maassen law has established a complaints procedure, which shall apply to its services.

4.3. Maassen Law has included in its general terms and conditions at which independent party or institution a complaint, that has not been resolved after it was handled, can be submitted in order to obtain a binding decision.

4.4. Complaints, as defined in article 1 of this complaints procedure, that cannot be resolved after being handled can be submitted to the Dutch Legal Complaints Board (“Geschillencommissie Advocatuur”) (Geschillencommissie Advocatuur, Postbus 90600, 2509 LP Den Haag, telephone 00 31 70 310 53 10, [www.geschillencommissie.nl](http://www.geschillencommissie.nl)).

**Article 5 – Internal complaints procedure**

5.1. If a client contacts the firm with a complaint, the complaint will be directed to the complaints officer.

5.2. Joost Maassen is Maassen Law’s designated complaints officer.

5.3. The complaints officer notifies the person against whom the complaint is made of the filing of the complaint and enables the complainant and the person against whom the complaint is made to express his or her view regarding the complaint.

5.4. The person against whom the complaint is made will try to resolve the issue together with the client, if needed after intervention of the complaints officer.

5.5. The complaints officer will handle the complaint within four weeks of its receipt or will inform the complainant that there will be a deviation of this term, stating the reasons and specifying the timescale to issue an opinion with respect to the complaint.

5.6. The complaints officer will notify the complainant and the person against whom the complaint is made in writing of his opinion regarding the validity of the complaint; this may or may not include recommendations.

#### **Article 6 – Confidentiality and free complaints handling**

6.1. The complaints officer and the person against whom the complaint is made will observe confidentiality in handling the complaint.

6.2. The complainant will not be charged for the costs of handling the complaint.

#### **Article 7 – Responsibilities**

7.1. The complaints officer is responsible for handling the complaint in a timely manner.

7.2. The person against whom the complaint is made is responsible for keeping the complaints officer up to date of any communications and of a possible solution with the complainant.

7.3. The complaints officer will keep the complainant up to date regarding the progress of the complaint.

7.4. The complaints officer is responsible for keeping a file with respect to the complaint.

#### **Article 8 - Complaint registration**

8.1. The complaints officer registers the complaint, specifying the subject matter.

8.2. A complaint can be split up into several subjects.

8.3. The complaints officer periodically reports on the handling of any complaints and issues, recommendations to prevent new complaints, as well as to improve procedures.

8.4. At least once a year, the reports and recommendations are discussed and submitted for approval within the firm.

This is an English translation of the original Dutch text. In the case of a discrepancy between the English and Dutch texts, the Dutch text shall prevail.