

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Introduction

The definition of a complaint includes any complaint that alleges any expression of dissatisfaction from a client or potential client in respect of any product or service offered by the Continental Financial Services or about any member of staff of Continental whether verbally or in writing. In essence a complaint could be any instance or any instances where the client feels they may not have been treated fairly.

Complaints may consist of: -

- A breach of the Rules;
- Negligence, a breach of a term of any customer agreement or of any enactment or other rule of law which may be applicable to the Company's business;
- Misrepresentation, bad faith, malpractice or impropriety;
- Any expression of dissatisfaction is likely to be a complaint, but the fact a particular investment has performed badly will not, in itself, normally be regarded as a complaint. Where there is doubt as to whether or not it is a complaint, please refer it immediately to the Compliance Department.

Complaints Process

It is the responsibility of all staff to be aware of the Continental complaints procedure. Immediately, when a complaint has been received and/or established the matter must be reported to the Compliance Department and the complaint letter and the original client file should be provided. Under no circumstances should you accept any liability for the complaint. If the client makes the complaint orally then the Client Adviser or member of staff must make an attendant note of this and send it together with the client file to Continental Complaints department. A written acknowledgement must be sent to the client by Continental within seven days of receipt of the complaint so it is imperative that the details are forwarded immediately.

If a Client Adviser, or other member of staff, have any doubts whether the telephone call or the letter received should be treated as a complaint, please contact the Compliance Department immediately and make them aware of the full details.

Following the reporting of a client complaint to Continental, it becomes the responsibility of Continental to carry out an investigation of the complaint on behalf of the Client Adviser. To demonstrate that complaints are considered when determining the ongoing fitness and propriety of Client Advisers, following completion of a complaint investigation, irrespective of whether Continental finds in favor of or against the Client Adviser, the Client Advisers Personnel file will have attached a report to indicate whether the substance of the complaint has a bearing on the Client Adviser's fitness and propriety. Remedial training or corrective action may be considered beneficial.

Complaints Handling

Complaint Receipt

When a complaint is received it should be logged onto the complaints register. If a complaint is received verbally, details of the complaint should be taken over the phone and confirmation of our understanding of the complaint should go in the acknowledgement letter. An acknowledgement letter enclosing our leaflet on complaints standards should be issued to the complainant within five business days of receipt.

Four Week Letter

If a complaint is not resolved within four weeks a holding letter should be sent to the complainant.

Eight Week Letter

If a complaint is not resolved within eight weeks a letter must be sent to the complainant explaining why we haven't been able to issue our final response and giving them an indication of when we will be in the position to respond.

Complaint Investigation

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In this section you should explain who would investigate complaints and their authority to settle complaints. You should detail how you intend to conduct investigations into complaints i.e. the documentation you will look at and information you may request from third parties.

Final Response

In constructing a final response to the complainant, we will confirm our understanding of their complaint and answer each of the points the complainant has raised. In conclusion we will confirm if we are upholding or rejecting their complaint with our reasons. Where we offer a settlement, we will explain to the complainant the basis of our calculation. Details of the complainant's right to refer the matter to the local regulator if available and timescale for referral will be included in our final response.