

News release

Law firms maintain improvement in complaints handling

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Law firms have maintained their improvement in resolving complaints made to them, a report we have published has shown.

We have produced our second annual report into first-tier complaints - those complaints about service that are made direct to the practice.

In 2019, 80 per cent of complaints were resolved by the firm themselves, which compares to 81 per cent in 2018. This maintains the improvement made since the figure of 71 per cent reported in 2012.

The overall number of complaints made has risen from 28,254 in 2018 to 30,856. The main reason for complaints continues to be delays, followed by failure to advise and perceived excessive costs.

Paul Philip, SRA Chief Executive, said: “People want to be treated fairly and kept well informed at all stages of dealing with a law firm. Nowhere is this more important than when handling with complaints. Our latest report reflects law firms work over the last few years to increase awareness of their complaints processes and to resolve the issues that their clients raise with them.

“Publishing year-on-year industry complaints data was one of the key commitments we made when we introduced our new transparency rules in December 2018. One of the aims of these rules is to make data on the quality of service at law firms available so that potential clients can make informed choices when shopping around.”

[Read the new figures \[https://referral.sra.org.uk/sra/how-we-work/archive/reports/first-tier-complaints-2019/1\]](https://referral.sra.org.uk/sra/how-we-work/archive/reports/first-tier-complaints-2019/1).

The SRA Transparency Rules, introduced in December 2018, include a requirement that all firms must publish details of their complaints procedures on their website.