Complaints procedure

Contact Information

Name: Seneca Partners Limited
Telephone: 01942 271746
Address: 9 The Parks, Haydock, Newton-le-Willows, WA12 0JQ
E-mail: Compliance@senecapartners.co.uk

Compliance Officer: Mark Hopton

Seneca Partners Limited ("Firm") is Authorised and Regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority (FRN)583361

Our Procedures

Any complaint verbal or written will be referred to our Compliance Officer at the earliest opportunity or to a member of the senior management if the Compliance Officer is unavailable. We will also

- Acknowledge the complaint in writing promptly
- Give details in our acknowledgement letter of the Financial Ombudsman Service
- Make contact to seek clarification on any points where necessary
- Fully investigate the complaint
- If appropriate, contact you to discuss our interim findings and proposed response

We will let you have our final response as soon as possible and not later than eight weeks. If there is any unforeseen reason, why we believe that we cannot respond within eight weeks then we will contact you with our proposed timeline and make you aware of your options.

All complaints are logged in the Firm's Complaints Register, which records the nature of the complaint, the complainant, the date received, actions taken, and the outcome

How to complain

To complain simply contact us either by phone, post or email using the above contact information. We regret that the Compliance Officer or other Managers may not always be available to speak to you directly if you wish to complain by phone. However, calls to the above number are recorded so the Compliance Officer will be able to listen to any complaint you make.

Customers with accessibility or communication needs may request alternative formats or assistance to ensure they can make a complaint easily. Please contact us on any of the methods given above and we can discuss how best to assist you.

Definition of a complaint

The Financial Conduct Authority ("FCA") defines a complaint as any oral or written expression of dissatisfaction from or on behalf of a client, whether **justified or not,** which includes an actual or potential financial loss, material distress or material inconvenience.

A customer and/or any other third party who makes a complaint will be known as a "complainant" for the purposes of this procedure.

The Financial Conduct Authority complaints rules apply to complaints:

- Made by, or on behalf of an *eligible complainant*;
- Relating to regulated activity;
- Involving an allegation that the complainant has suffered, or may suffer, financial loss, material distress or material inconvenience.

The Firm treats all complaints seriously and seeks to resolve all expressions of dissatisfaction fairly, even where they fall outside the formal FCA definition.

Data Protection and Privacy Complaints

Complaints relating to how we collect, store, handle, or process your personal information, or concerns regarding your data privacy rights, are managed under our Data Protection Framework. While you can submit these concerns using the contact details above, they will be investigated by our Compliance Team in accordance with UK data protection legislation. Data protection complaints fall under the jurisdiction of the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) rather than the Financial Ombudsman Service. For full details on how data privacy complaints are handled and escalated, please refer to our Privacy Notice.

Eligible Complainants

It is the Firm's policy to treat all complainants the same, however, *eligible complainants* are legally defined and have additional rights in law that we must acknowledge and adhere to. This includes the right to escalate their complaint to the Financial Ombudsman Service if the complainant is not satisfied with our decision.

Eligible complainants generally include private individuals, certain small businesses, and charitable organisations meeting FCA criteria.

Complaints about Third Parties

Investors occasionally express dissatisfaction to the Firm about third parties. When you complain to us, we will need to establish whether or not your complaint relates to action that the Firm has taken or whether it relates to the conduct of a Third Party such as your financial adviser.

If the complaint relates to a third party, then we may need to send your complaint to them and request that they seek to resolve your complaint. If we take this action, then we will make you aware of why we believe that the third party is responsible and to what extent (if any) we will also consider your complaint.

When we refer your complaint to another Firm, we will do so promptly and confirm in writing that this has been done, including the other Firm's contact details.

Complaints in respect of poor investment performance

Many of the products that the Firm offer are considered to be high risk investments. These are products which by their very nature carry inherent risk that you may not receive some or all of your money back. At the point of investing in a product offered by the Firm you would have received appropriate documentation outlining some of the risks. By investing in such products, you are deemed to have accepted such risk.

There are certain FCA rules that the Firm must follow prior to accepting your investment. However, such rules do not require that the Firm conduct an extensive fact find into all of your circumstances and are not a substitute for you seeking independent financial advice. Furthermore, neither the Financial Ombudsman Service nor the Financial Services Compensation Scheme can consider complaints which relate purely to poor investment performance.

Should your complaint relate to poor investment performance then we will review whether all relevant FCA rules had been followed correctly such as the management of your investment and whether it was suitable or appropriate for you at the time of the investment (to the extent that the Firm was responsible for assessing this).

If our investigation concludes that relevant rules have been followed, then we will notify you that we are unable to accept your complaint and explain why we believe that it relates purely to poor investment performance. You will still have the right to challenge our conclusion by referring the matter to the Financial Ombudsman Service.

Investigation

Should your complaint be one which we can review, then the Compliance Officer or another employee under the supervision of the Compliance Office will establish the nature and scope of your complaint.

During this process, the Firm may contact you in the event that we require further information. As appropriate, we will make you aware of the progress of the investigation, although the exact nature of such communication may vary depending on the nature and scope of the complaint.

In any event, in most circumstances we will provide you with our final response within 8 weeks of receiving your complaint.

Complaints Settled within 3 business days

Complaints that can be settled to your satisfaction within 3 business days after the date of receipt can be recorded and communicated differently.

Where we consider a complaint to be resolved to your satisfaction under this section, we will promptly send you a ***'Summary Resolution Communication'***, being a written communication from us, usually by email, which:

(1) Refers to the fact that you have made a complaint and informs you that we now consider the complaint to have been resolved;

(2) We will tell you that if you subsequently decide that you are dissatisfied with the resolution of the complaint you may be able to refer the complaint back to us for further consideration or alternatively refer the complaint to the Financial Ombudsman Service;

(3) Indicates whether or not we consent to waive the relevant time limits, (where we have discretion in such matters)

(4) Provide the website address of the Financial Ombudsman Service; and

(5) Refer to the availability of further information on the website of the Financial Ombudsman Service.

In addition to sending you a ***Summary Resolution Communication***, we may also use other methods to communicate the information where:

(1) We consider that doing so may better meet your needs; or

(2) We have already been using another method to communicate about the complaint.

Final response

This will set out clearly the Firm's decision and the reasons for it. If we uphold a complaint either in full or in part, then we will set out our proposed resolution.

Such resolution may include an apology and/or an offer of redress. In proposing a resolution, we will have due regard to all current FCA and Financial Ombudsman Service rules and guidance.

We must include details of the Financial Ombudsman Service in the final response if dealing with an *eligible complainant* and a regulated activity, we will:

- Explain that the complainant must refer the matter to the ombudsman within six months of the date of this letter or the right to use this service is lost
- Indicate whether or not we consent to waive the relevant time limits.

Closing a complaint

We will consider a complaint closed when we have made our final response to you. This does not prevent you from exercising any rights you may have to refer the matter to the Financial Ombudsman Service.

The complaint file and related correspondence will be retained for a minimum of three years from the date of closure, in accordance with FCA DISP record-keeping rules.

Financial Ombudsman Service

We will co-operate fully with the Financial Ombudsman Service in resolving any complaints made against us and agree to be bound by any awards made by the Ombudsman. The Firm undertakes to pay promptly any fees levied by the Ombudsman.

Contact:

The Financial Ombudsman Service, Exchange Tower, London E14 9SR

Tel: 0800 023 4567 (free for most people ringing from a fixed line) or 0300 123 9123 (cheaper for those calling using a mobile) or 020 7964 0500 (if calling from abroad)

Email: complaint.info@financial-ombudsman.org.uk

Website: www.financial-ombudsman.org.uk

Further information is available on the Financial Ombudsman Service website including eligibility criteria and procedures.