

The RICS Rules of Conduct for firms, Rule 7 states:

'A Firm shall operate a complaint's handling procedure and maintain a complaints log. The complaints handling procedure must include an Alternative Dispute resolution (ADR) mechanism that is approved by the Regulatory Board.'

HS Consultancy take all forms of complaint or grievance very seriously and would encourage any person or client that has engaged our services to contact us immediately once a problem has been identified.

The company has a dedicated customer services representative or complaints handler who will be the first port of call to record the complaint, log the specific problem and then following a full investigation, will offer to rectify the problem.

Direct communication with the company either by telephone or in writing, is always encouraged.

We promise to:

- 1 - Listen to the complaint and thank you as our customer for bringing the matter to our attention.
- 2 - Record in full details of the complaint.
- 3 - Get all the facts and ensure a full investigation is carried out.
- 4 - Discuss options for fixing the problem.
- 5 - Act quickly.
- 6 - Keep our promises and contractual obligations and of course follow the rules and regulations of the RICS.
- 7 - Follow up. If necessary, refer the matter to our Alternative independent dispute resolution or property ombudsman.

Whatever the needs of your business are, we will work with you to ensure you get the advice you need and a complete professional service.

In-house CHP Sheet

1. **Listen to the complaint.** Accept ownership of the problem. Apologise. Do not blame others. Thank the customer for bringing the problem to your attention.
2. **Be understanding.** Remember, the person is complaining about your business, not about you personally. Be calm, cheerful, and helpful. Where possible, let the customer know that you will take responsibility for resolving the problem.
3. **Record the complaint.** Detail the complaint so that you and other staff know exactly what the problem is. Have one place to record complaints and the actions taken to resolve them. This lets you see any patterns emerge over time. Complaints about a particular process or product might indicate that changes need to be made. Staff can also see what was done to resolve complaints in the past.
4. **Make sure you have all the facts.** Check that you understand the details while the person is making the complaint and ask questions if necessary. This will also let them know that you are taking their complaint seriously.

5. **Discuss options for fixing the problem.** At the very least, a sincere apology costs nothing. But think about what this complaint could cost you in lost business or a complaint to the RICS. Maybe you can provide a free product or discount a future service.
6. **Keep your promises.** Do not promise things that you cannot deliver. In handling complaint's it is better to under-promise and over-deliver.
7. **Be quick.** If complaints take several days to resolve or are forgotten, they can escalate.
8. **Follow up.** Record the customer's contact details and follow up to see if they were happy with how their complaint was handled. Let them know what you are doing to avoid the problem in the future.
9. **Should it be impossible to resolve the problem in-house, ensure the problem is reported to Anchorman PII and the Alternative Dispute resolution service as chosen which is usually the RICS Property ombudsman.**

Declaration by ratepayers in England and Wales

This document contains important information. It must be provided to a ratepayer as part of the written confirmation of the terms of engagement for rating consultancy advice and signed by both client and agent. It should be incorporated into the contractual agreement or appended to it.

I confirm that I have been made aware of the following important matters in respect of business rates advice:

- 1 There can be no guarantee of a reduction in my rating assessment or my business rates liability because of any proposal or appeal submitted on my behalf.
- 2 Rating assessments can be increased by the Valuation Office Agency. In certain circumstances rating assessments can also be increased by the Valuation Tribunal when determining an appeal.
- 3 Business rates liabilities can be affected by transitional adjustments as well as by rateable value. A reduction in rateable value may not immediately lead to a proportionate reduction in business rates liability.
- 4 There is a code of practice regulating business rates consultancy work and I have been made aware of this and of where I can find a copy of the code.
- 5 There are civil penalties applicable if incorrect information is supplied knowingly, recklessly, or carelessly by me, or on my behalf, to the Valuation Office Agency. I have been made aware of these penalties and that I will be liable for penalties in respect of incorrect information supplied on my behalf.
- 6 Where instructions are being sought for more than one revaluation I have been made aware of this and of any fees contingent upon cancellation of such instructions.

I confirm that I have been made aware of these matters as part of the terms of engagement in respect of business rates consultancy.

Signed (Client)

Print name (Authorised to sign on behalf of Client)

Date

I confirm that I have made the client aware of these matters as part of my terms of engagement in respect of business rates consultancy.

Signed (Agent)

Print name (Authorised to sign on behalf of Agent)

Date

The provision of this declaration complies with the requirements of the RICS/IRRV/RSA *Rating consultancy code of practice*. A copy of the code will be provided by your rating consultant on request.

The Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) represents over 100,000 individually qualified professional members worldwide who provide expert advice on all land, property, and construction issues. The Institute of Revenues Rating and Valuation (IRRV) represents practitioners in the valuation, administration and adjudication of local property tax and business rate matters. Rating consultancy is a specialist service provided by some

members of RICS, IRRV and RSA. Membership of the Rating Surveyors' Association (RSA) is restricted to members of RICS or IRRV with a minimum of five years' specialist experience.