

CHRIS WHITELAW

Barrister-at-law

To My Instructing Lawyers: Commitment to Quality Service

1. Communicating promptly and attentively

- I take your calls promptly.
- If I am unavailable, my clerk will tell you how to contact me.
- I will interrupt a meeting take your urgent call.
- During breaks in court, I check my mobile for urgent messages.
- I respond to emails within 24 hours unless marked “non urgent”.
- I give priority to urgent requests for advice or action – your needs and the client’s are paramount.
- I work as a team player and make myself accessible to the rest of the legal team.

2. Fostering an efficient working relationship

Pre-brief

- I apply an Open Door policy with every lawyer I work with. When you call or see me to discuss a new matter, my time is yours – gratis.
- You are welcome to send me papers to preview or discuss before the formal brief.
- I encourage you to raise all matters concerning litigation finance, including my fees, before formally briefing me. Conditional (no win/no fee) fee agreements apply to personal injury actions.
- If you are preparing a formal brief, I will inform you of any special requirements of construction or content.

Post brief

- I master new briefs promptly.
- I send the first letter of advice within 7 days of receiving your brief.
- The first advice identifies key issues and action steps, highlighting any which are urgent eg relating to subpoenas, discovery, injunction applications etc.

- I stay in regular contact by email, phone or face to face.
- If you prefer, we can meet at your office rather than chambers.
- I will warn you of any critical case management steps and/or the need for interlocutory applications.

3. Nurturing the client relationship

- You will receive a pre-meeting agenda to ensure it proceeds smoothly and efficiently.
- I attend scheduled meetings on time, and do not keep you and the client waiting, except in unavoidable circumstances.
- I am “on top of the brief” by the time I meet the client.
- I observe diplomacy and etiquette in the presence of any client, and aim to present a united front.

4. Applying my skills and expertise

- I disclose any relevant lack of experience or knowledge, if not before, then within 7 days of receiving the brief.
- I discuss with you, as early as possible, whether the case requires senior counsel.
- I confirm spoken advice on important matters in writing.

5. Billing and fees

- My fee agreement is sent within 7 days of receiving your brief and reflects any special terms I negotiate with you.
- It fully discloses:
 - The nature of the services I will provide, my charge out rates and my fee estimates for my involvement in the case.
 - The fees payable to me for different litigation outcomes – such as case not reached, adjourned or settled.
 - Non-standard charges, if applicable.
- I render accounts regularly to let you and the client track costs.
- I adjust my payment terms to fit in with your own billing cycle.