

Riaz Ahmad
Registered foreign lawyer
7025100

[Employee-related decision Date: 26 March 2025](#)

Decision - Employee-related decision

Outcome: Control of non-qualified staff (Section 43 / Section 99 order)

Outcome date: 26 March 2025

Published date: 1 April 2025

Firm details

Firm or organisation at time of matters giving rise to outcome

Name: Hepburns Solicitors LLP

Address(es): Unit 1, Blackwater Court, 17-19 Blackwater Street, East Dulwich, SE22 8SD

Firm ID: 508445

Outcome details

This outcome was reached by SRA decision.

Decision details

Mr Riaz Ahmad whose last known address was in East London. A person who is or was involved in a legal practice but is not a solicitor.

Summary of decision

The SRA has put restrictions on where and how Riaz Ahmad can work in an SRA regulated firm. It was found that:

- Mr Ahmad, who is not a solicitor, was involved in a legal practice and has occasioned or been a party to an act or default which involved such conduct on his part that it is undesirable for him to be involved in a legal practice in any of the ways described in the order below.

The facts of the case



Mr Ahmad is registered foreign lawyer. In June 2023 he became the owner and manager of Hepburns Solicitors LLP in East Dulwich (the firm). Between June and September 2023, in his role as the owner and sole day-to-day manager of the firm, Mr Ahmad:

- a. caused or allowed shortages on the firm's client account of £682,045.46 (as at 30 June 2023) and £84,154.56 (as at 13 August 2023) and failed to replace these shortages promptly.
- b. failed to maintain accurate and compliant books of account and failed to provide accounting records to the SRA on request.
- c. failed to safeguard client monies and files when he closed the firm on or about 22 September 2023
- d. submitted an application for a manager to the SRA on behalf of an employee of the firm without their knowledge or consent. His conduct in relation to the manager application was dishonest.

Reasons/basis

An order pursuant to section 43(2) of the Solicitors Act 1974 was imposed as Mr Ahmad's conduct meant that it was undesirable for him to be involved in a legal practice without the SRA's prior approval. The order pursuant to section 43 was made with effect from the date of the letter or email notifying Mr Ahmad of this decision.

Mr Ahmad's conduct was serious because it showed a disregard for the SRA's accounting rules which are there to protect the interests of clients, put the firm's client's funds and client files at risk, and was dishonest.

Mr Ahmad was also ordered to pay a proportion of the SRA's costs of £1,650.00.

What our Section 43 order means

- i. no solicitor shall employ or remunerate him in connection with his practice as a solicitor;
- ii. no employee of a solicitor shall employ or remunerate him in connection with the solicitor's practice;
- iii. no recognised body shall employ or remunerate him;
- iv. no manager or employee of a recognised body shall employ or remunerate him in connection with the business of that body;
- v. no recognised body or manager or employee of such a body shall permit him to be a manager of the body; and
- vi. no recognised body or manager or employee of such a body shall permit him to have an interest in the body except in accordance with the SRA's prior written permission.

Closure Date: 13 November 2023

Decision - Closure

Outcome: Intervention

Outcome date: 13 November 2023

Published date: 14 November 2023

Firm details

Firm or organisation at date of publication and at time of matters giving rise to outcome

Name: Hepburns Solicitors LLP

Address(es): Unit 1, Blackwater Court, 17-19 Blackwater Street, East Dulwich, London, SE22 8SD

Firm ID: 508445

Outcome details

This outcome was reached by SRA decision.

Decision details

To intervene into the practice of Riaz Ahmad at Hepburns Solicitors LLP

Reasons/basis

It is necessary to intervene to protect the interests of clients (or former or potential clients) (paragraph 5(3)(j) of Schedule 14 to the Courts and Legal Services Act 1990 (as amended)).

Other information

Hepburns Solicitors LLP closed on 22 September 2023.

Intervening agents

Chris Evans of Lester Aldridge, Russell House, Oxford Road, Bournemouth, BH8 8EX has been appointed as the intervening agent.

For enquiries please call 01202 786341 or email

Intervention.Enquiries@LA-Law.com [mailto:Intervention.Enquiries@LA-Law.com]

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