

# Colin Buckingham

## Employee

### 660380

[Employee-related decision Date: 26 September 2024](#)

### Decision - Employee-related decision

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

Outcome date: 26 September 2024

Published date: 15 May 2025

### Firm details

#### Firm or organisation at time of matters giving rise to outcome

Name: Kingly Solicitors Limited

Address(es): 57 Lansdowne House, Berkeley Square, London, W1J 6ER

Firm ID: 633863

#### Firm or organisation at date of publication

Name: Greystone Solicitors

Address(es): 275 Dunstable Road, Unit 3, Luton, LU4 8BS

Firm ID: 648965

### Outcome details

This outcome was reached by SRA decision.

### Decision details

#### Who does this disciplinary decision relate to?

Colin Buckingham, who is not a solicitor, was the Head of Finance and Administration (HOFA) at Kingly Solicitors Limited (the firm) whose head office was at 57 Lansdowne House, Berkeley Square, London W1J 6ER.

### Summary of decision

Mr Buckingham was made subject to a disqualification order under section 99 of the Legal Services Act 2007.



The SRA has disqualified Mr Buckingham from holding any of the following roles in law firms regulated by the SRA:

- Head of Finance and Administration

### **Facts of the misconduct**

It was found that:

Between 3 September 2019 and 13 July 2020, in his capacity as HOFA at the firm, Mr Buckingham failed to identify and/or prevent the improper withdrawal of client money from the firm's client accounts.

Insofar as the conduct took place prior to 25 November 2019, Mr Buckingham breached:

- Principles 4, 6, 8 and 10 of the SRA Principles 2011
- Outcomes 7.2, 7.3 and 7.4 of the SRA Code of Conduct 2011
- Rules 1.2 (b), 1.2 (e), 14.1 and 20.1 of the SRA Accounts Rules 2011

Insofar as the conduct took place on or after 25 November 2019, Mr Buckingham breached:

- Principles 2 and 7 of the SRA Principles 2019
- Paragraph 9.2(a) of the Code of Conduct for Firms 2019
- Rules 2.4, 5.1 and 5.2 of the SRA Accounts Rules 2019

### **Decision on disqualification**

Mr Buckingham's conduct breached relevant duties that applied to him as HOFA of the firm. Mr Buckingham did not act with a lack of integrity or dishonesty, but the firm had a substantial shortfall on its client account of over £10million at the date the SRA intervened in August 2020.

It was found that it would be undesirable for Mr Buckingham to act as a Head of Finance and Administration of a body licensed in accordance with section 99 of the Legal Services Act 2007.

Mr Buckingham was disqualified from holding this role.

### **SRA Principles and Outcomes**

#### **SRA Principles 2011**

Principle 4 You must act in the best interests of each client

Principle 6 You must behave in a way that maintains the trust the public places in you and in the provision of legal services



Principle 8 You must run your business or carry out your role in the business effectively and in accordance with proper governance and sound financial and risk management principles

Principle 10 You must protect client money and assets

**SRA Code of Conduct 2011**

Outcome 7.2 You have effective systems and controls in place to achieve and comply with all the Principles, rules and outcomes and other requirements of the Handbook, where applicable

Outcome 7.3 You identify, monitor and manage risks to compliance with all the Principles, rules and outcomes and other requirements of the Handbook, if applicable to you, and take steps to address issues identified

Outcome 7.4 You maintain systems and controls for monitoring the financial stability of your firm and risks to money and assets entrusted to you by clients and others, and you take steps to address issues identified

**SRA Accounts Rules 2011**

Rule 1.2 (b) You must keep other people's money safely in a bank or building society account identifiable as a client account

Rule 1.2 (e) You must establish and maintain proper accounting systems and proper internal controls over those systems to ensure compliance with the rules

Rule 14.1 Client money must without delay be paid into a client account, and must be held in a client account, except when the rules provide to the contrary

Rule 20.1 Client money may only be withdrawn from a client account when it is properly required

**SRA Principles 2019**

Principle 2 You act in a way that upholds public trust and confidence in the solicitors' profession and in legal services provided by authorised persons

Principle 7 You act in the best interests of each client

**SRA Code of Conduct for Firms 2019**

Paragraph 9.2 If you are a COFA you must take all reasonable steps to:

- a. ensure that your firm and its managers and employees comply with any obligations imposed upon them under the SRA Accounts Rules

**SRA Accounts Rules 2019**

Rule 2.4 You ensure that client money is available on demand unless you agree an alternative arrangement in writing with the client, or the third party for whom the money is held

Rule 5.1 You only withdraw client money from a client account: (a) for the purpose for which it is being held; (b) following receipt of instructions from the client, or the third party for whom the money is held; or (c) on the SRA's prior written authorisation or in prescribed circumstances

Rule 5.2 You appropriately authorise and supervise all withdrawals made from a client account.

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