

Amy Dawson
Solicitor
456506

[Agreement Date: 5 December 2023](#)

Decision - Agreement

Outcome: Regulatory settlement agreement

Outcome date: 5 December 2023

Published date: 19 December 2023

Firm details

No detail provided:

Outcome details

This outcome was reached by agreement.

Decision details

Regulatory Settlement Agreement

Reasons/basis

1. Agreed outcome

1.1 Amy Dawson, a solicitor, agrees to the following outcome to the investigation of her conduct by the Solicitors Regulation Authority (SRA):

- a. she will pay a financial penalty in the sum of £4,400 under Rule 3.1(b) of the SRA Regulatory and Disciplinary Procedure Rules
- b. to the publication of this agreement, under Rule 9.2 of the SRA Regulatory and Disciplinary Procedure Rules; and
- c. she will pay the costs of the investigation of £600, under Rule 10.1 and Schedule 1 of the SRA Regulatory and Disciplinary Procedure Rules.

2. Summary of Facts

2.1 On 21 August 2021, Ms Dawson was stopped by Lancashire Police after they were called to the scene of a collision between a vehicle and two parked vehicles. Ms Dawson was identified as the driver of the vehicle responsible for the collision and was breathalysed at the scene.



2.2 Ms Dawson was charged with driving a motor vehicle whilst above the prescribed alcohol limit, contrary to S5(1) of the Road Traffic Act 1988 and Schedule 2 to the Road Traffic Offenders Act 1988.

2.3 On 16 September 2021, Ms Dawson pled guilty to the above offence at Lancashire Magistrates Court. The sentence was:

- a. an 18-week prison sentence suspended for 18 months.
- b. Disqualification from driving for 36 months, to be reduced by 36 weeks following completion of a Drink Driver's Awareness course.
- c. 150 hours of unpaid work to be completed over 12 months.
- d. Comply with the Rehabilitation Activity Requirement and attend meetings with a Probation Officer for up to 40 days.
- e. Pay a victim surcharge of £128 and £85 to the Crown Prosecution Service.

2.4 On 11 July 2022 and 19 July 2022, Ms Dawson failed to attend two probation meetings at Preston Probation Office, contrary to the terms of her sentence. Ms Dawson failed to provide any evidence to her Probation Officer to excuse the absences. Consequently, she received a Court Summons on 28 July 2022 asking her to attend a further hearing.

2.5 Ms Dawson attending the hearing at Lancashire Magistrates Court on 11 August 2022 and the following sentence was passed:

- a. Ms Dawson's suspended sentence was increased by six months.
- b. Ms Dawson was required to complete a six-month Alcohol Treatment Requirement.

2.6 Ms Dawson did not disclose this additional sentence to the SRA until 28 February 2023.

3. Admissions

3.1 Ms Dawson admits and the SRA accepts, that by virtue of her conduct summarised above and conviction, she breached the following SRA Principles:

- a. Principle 1 - Which states you uphold the rule of law and the administration of justice.
- b. Principle 2 - which states you act in a way which upholds public trust and confidence in the solicitors' profession and in legal services provided by authorised persons.
- c. Principle 5 - which states you act with integrity

4. Why the agreed outcome is appropriate

4.1 The SRA's Enforcement Strategy sets out its approach to the use of its enforcement powers where there has been a failure to meet its



standards or requirements.

4.2 When considering the appropriate sanctions and controls in this matter, the SRA has taken into account the admissions made by Ms Dawson and the following mitigation which she has put forward:

- a. she has shown remorse for and insight into her actions
- b. she was experiencing difficulties with her health and personal life at the time when the incident took place and when she failed to attend her probation meetings.
- c. Ms Dawson has now completed her sentence requirements and has sought professional help to address her health concerns.

4.3 The SRA considers that a fine is an appropriate outcome because:

- a. Ms Dawson's conduct showed a disregard for statutory and regulatory obligations and had the potential to cause serious harm to others.
- b. Ms Dawson was directly responsible for her conduct which was reckless in nature.
- c. Ms Dawson failed to comply with the sentence requirements handed down by the court.
- d. Ms Dawson has no previous regulatory record.

4.4 A fine is appropriate to uphold public confidence in the solicitors' profession and in legal services provided by authorised persons. This is because the issuing of such a sanction signifies to the public and legal sector that solicitors will be held accountable for failing to comply with legal and professional responsibilities. It will maintain professional standards and uphold public confidence in the profession. A financial penalty therefore meets the requirements of Rule 4.1 of the Regulatory and Disciplinary Procedure Rules.

5. Amount of the fine

5.1 The amount of the fine has been calculated in line with the SRA's published guidance on its approach to setting an appropriate financial penalty (the guidance).

6. Publication

6.1 The SRA considers it appropriate that this agreement is published in the interests of transparency in the regulatory and disciplinary process. Ms Dawson agrees to the publication of this agreement.

7. Acting in a way which is inconsistent with this Agreement

7.1 Ms Dawson agrees that she will not deny the admissions made in this agreement or act in any way which is inconsistent with it.

7.2 If Ms Dawson denies the admissions, or acts in a way which is inconsistent with this agreement, the conduct which is subject to this agreement may be considered further by the SRA. That may result in a disciplinary outcome or a referral to the Solicitors Disciplinary Tribunal on the original facts and allegations.

7.3 Denying the admissions made or acting in a way which is inconsistent with this agreement may also constitute a separate breach of principles 2 and 5 of the Principles and paragraph 7.3 of the Code of Conduct for Solicitors, RELs and RFLs.

8. Costs

8.1 Ms Dawson agrees to pay the costs of the SRA's investigation in the sum of £600. Such costs are due within 28 days of a statement of costs due being issued by the SRA.

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