

Simon Roderick James

Solicitor

118494

[Sanction Date: 20 August 2024](#)

Decision - Sanction

Outcome: Rebuke

Outcome date: 20 August 2024

Published date: 9 December 2024

Firm details

Firm or organisation at time of matters giving rise to outcome

Name: Ansons Solicitors Limited

Address(es): 5-7 Breadmarket Street, Lichfield, WS13 6LQ

Firm ID: 627635

Outcome details

This outcome was reached by SRA decision.

Decision details

We have issued Mr James with a rebuke for acting in circumstances where there was a significant risk of an own interest conflict.

Reasons/basis

It was found that Mr James drafted a will for a client in which he was left a gift of £22,727. The client did not receive independent legal advice in respect of the gift, nor was she advised to obtain such advice. The gift was not disclosed to the COLP, SRO or the directors of the firm at the time the will was drafted or executed. In doing so, Mr James acted in breach of paragraph 6.1 of the Code of Conduct for Solicitors, RELs and RFLs.

Other information

Decision on sanction

It was decided that a rebuke was an appropriate and proportionate sanction.

This was because Mr James' conduct was serious by reference to the following factors in the SRA Enforcement Strategy:

- Mr James was an experienced solicitor and had direct responsibility for his conduct.
- Some public sanction is required to maintain standards and to acknowledge there has been a breach of regulatory requirements.
- A lower sanction is not appropriate given Mr James' lack of regard to regulatory guidance.

A more serious sanction was not considered to be proportionate by reference to the following factors in the Enforcement Strategy:

- The risk of repetition is low. Mr James has retired from practice.
- There has been no lasting significant harm to clients.
- There has been no financial gain from the misconduct. Mr James has disclaimed the gift.
- There were no allegations of dishonesty or lack of integrity and Mr James had not acted intentionally in breach of his regulatory obligations.

SRA Code of Conduct

Paragraph 6.1: You do not act if there is an own interest conflict or a significant risk of such a conflict.

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