

Laura Mason
Employee
7266469

[Agreement Date: 7 January 2025](#)

Decision - Agreement

Outcome: Regulatory settlement agreement

Outcome date: 7 January 2025

Published date: 4 February 2025

Firm details

Firm or organisation at time of matters giving rise to outcome

Name: Cohen & Gresser (UK) LLP

Address(es): 2-4 King Street, St James's, London, SW1Y 6QP

Firm ID: 647311

Outcome details

This outcome was reached by agreement.

Decision details

1. Agreed outcome

1.1 Ms Laura Mason ('Ms Mason'), an unadmitted individual who was employed as an Office Manager at Cohen & Gresser (UK) LLP ('the Firm'), agrees to the following outcome to the investigation of her conduct by the Solicitors Regulation Authority (SRA):

- a. to the SRA making an order under section 43 of the Solicitors Act 1974 (a section 43 order) in relation to Ms Mason that, from the date of this agreement:
 - i. no solicitor shall employ or remunerate her in connection with his practice as a solicitor
 - ii. no employee of a solicitor shall employ or remunerate her in connection with the solicitor's practice
 - iii. no recognised body shall employ or remunerate her
 - iv. no manager or employee of a recognised body shall employ or remunerate her in connection with the business of that body



- v. no recognised body or manager or employee of such a body shall permit her to be a manager of the body
- vi. no recognised body or manager or employee of such body shall permit her to have an interest in the body

except in accordance with the SRA's prior permission

- b. to the publication of this agreement
- c. she will pay the costs of the investigation of £300.

2. Summary of facts

2.1 Whilst employed at the Firm as an Office Manager, Ms Mason's role required her to have access to the Firm's credit card to place orders for wine for business purposes.

2.2 In October 2023, the Firm's auditors identified unusual charges to the Firm's credit card for the financial period of May 2022 to April 2023. After reviewing the associated invoices, the Firm found that between those dates, Ms Mason had ordered bottles of wine and champagne to her home address for purposes unrelated to the Firm's business.

2.3 When asked for an explanation by the Firm, Ms Mason admitted to incurring these personal charges using the Firm's credit card.

2.4 Ms Mason resigned from the Firm on 8 January 2024, offering to repay the Firm in full.

3. Admissions

3.1 Ms Mason makes the following admissions which the SRA accepts, and which means that it is undesirable for her to be involved in a legal practice:

- a. That between May 2022 and April 2023, she used the Firm's credit card for personal use to order wine and champagne to her home address, incurring significant expenses to the Firm.
- b. That her conduct set out above was dishonest and lacked integrity.

4. Why a section 43 order is appropriate

4.1 The SRA's Enforcement Strategy and its guidance on how it regulates non-authorised persons, sets out its approach to using section 43 orders to control where a non-authorised person can work.

4.2 When considering whether a section 43 order is appropriate in this matter, the SRA has taken into account the admissions made by Ms Mason and the following mitigation which she has put forward:



- a. She admitted the misconduct and offered to pay the Firm back in full.
- b. She has informed us of significant personal circumstances that were occurring at the material time.

4.3 The SRA and Ms Mason agree that a section 43 order is appropriate because:

- a. Ms Mason is not a solicitor
- b. By undertaking work in the name of, or under the direction and supervision of Jeffrey Bronheim, a solicitor, she was involved in a legal practice.
- c. By misusing the Firm's credit card Ms Mason has occasioned or been party to an act or default in relation to a legal practice. Ms Mason's conduct in relation to that act or default makes it undesirable for her to be involved in a legal practice.

4.4 Ms Mason's conduct makes it undesirable for her to be involved in a legal practice because:

- a. She was in a position of trust within the Firm which relied on her to act with honesty and integrity.
- b. She has used the Firm's funds for personal gain.
- c. These actions were repeated and took place over an eleven-month period.
- d. Her behaviour demonstrated a serious lack of judgement given her role.
- e. There is a possibility that she may act in a similar way in the future if she is involved in legal practice without the SRA's prior consent.

5. Publication

5.1 The SRA will publish this decision. This is a requirement of the Legal Services Board's rules. We must publish information on enforcement action or sanctions imposed against a licensed body or manager or employee of a licensed body. There is no discretion in the rules for us not to do this.

5.2 The SRA considers it appropriate that this agreement is published in the interests of transparency in the regulatory process. Ms Mason agrees to the publication of this agreement.

6. Acting in a way which is inconsistent with this agreement

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

7. Costs

7.1 Ms Mason agrees to pay the costs of the SRA's investigation in the sum of £300. Such costs are due within 28 days of a statement of costs due being issued by the SRA.

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