

Irfan Khan Akram

Non-lawyer manager

629417

Fined Date: 20 March 2020

Decision - Fined

Outcome: Fine

Outcome date: 20 March 2020

Published date: 22 April 2020

Firm details

Firm or organisation at time of matters giving rise to outcome

Name: Coops Law Limited

Address(es): 2nd Floor, 40 Churchgate, BOLTON, LANCASHIRE BL1 1HL

Firm ID: 629416

Outcome details

This outcome was reached by SRA decision.

Decision details

Irfan Khan Akram who is not a solicitor, was the sole owner, manager and head of finance and administration for Coops Law Limited whose head office was at 40 Churchgate Bolton BL1 1HL.

Coops Law Limited was an authorised and regulated alternative business structure between 1 August 2016 until its intervention on 22 June 2017.

Mr Akram was found to have breached Principles 2, 4, 6, 7 and 10 of the SRA Principles 2011, breached Rules 14.2 and 19.4 of the SRA Accounts Rules 2011 and failed to achieve Outcomes 4.5, 7.5 and 9.8 of the SRA Code of Conduct 2011.

Mr Akram was made subject to a disqualification order pursuant to section 99 of the Legal Services Act 2007. This order prevents him from holding any of the following roles in a licensed body:

- Head of Legal Practice.
- Head of Finance and Administration.
- A manager.
- An employee.

He was also given a written rebuke, directed to pay a financial penalty of £20,000 and ordered to pay costs of £1,350.

Reasons/basis

It was found that Mr Akram:

1. Used Coops' purchase of Asons Solicitors Limited to undermine and frustrate steps taken by the SRA to protect Asons' clients' interests and the public interest.
2. Played an instrumental role in securing the transfer "en masse" of client files from Asons to Coops when he knew or ought to have known that he did not have client authority to do so.
3. Provided insufficient information to Asons' clients following the closure of Asons which did not allow them to make an informed decision about Coops taking over conduct of their matter.
4. Transferred client funds belonging to Asons' clients from Asons' client account to Coops' client account and then transferred some of that money to Coops' office bank account, as costs and disbursements, without client authority.
5. Allowed under his supervision a Coops' employee to send a generic email to over 100 Asons' clients which disclosed the email addresses of all those clients to each other.
6. Paid "lead" fees to a car hire company, in potential breach of the Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act 2012.

Other information

Mr Akram is currently not working in a legal practice.

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