

Hewitts (Hewitts Solicitors)

207 Newgate Street, Bishop

Auckland , DL14 7EL

Recognised body

051126

Fined Date: 10 August 2022

Decision - Fined

Outcome: Fine

Outcome date: 10 August 2022

Published date: 25 August 2022

Firm details

No detail provided:

Outcome details

This outcome was reached by SRA decision.

Decision details

Hewitts Solicitors is a recognised body whose head office is at 207 Newgate Street, Bishop Auckland, DL14 7EL.

It was found that:

1. Hewitts failed to have in place, contrary to Regulation 18(4) of the Money Laundering, Terrorist Financing and Transfer of Funds (Information on the Payer) Regulations 2017 (MLRs 2017) a documented and compliant firm-wide risk assessment between 26 June 2017 and 28 February 2022 and failed to have sufficient regard for the SRA's warning notice on firm-wide risk assessments dated 7 May 2019 (updated on 25 November 2019). In doing so the firm:
 - i. breached Principles 6, 7 and 8 of the SRA Principles 2011, and
 - ii. failed to achieve Outcome 7.5 of the SRA Code of Conduct 2011 and where the conduct took place after 25 November 2019
 - iii. breached Principle 2 of the SRA Principles, and



- iv. breached Paragraph 2.1(a) of the SRA Code of Conduct for Firms
- 2. From 26 June 2017 onwards, Hewitts, failed to have in place up to date anti-money laundering policies, controls and procedures (PCPs) to mitigate and effectively manage the risks of money laundering and terrorist financing, pursuant to Regulation 19(1)(a) of the MLRs 2017. In doing so the firm:
 - v. breached Principles 6, 7 and 8 of the SRA Principles 2011, and
 - vi. failed to achieve Outcome 7.5 of the SRA Code of Conduct 2011 and where the conduct took place after 25 November 2019
 - vii. breached Principle 2 of the SRA Principles, and
 - viii. breached Paragraph 2.1 of the SRA Code of Conduct for Firms
- 3. Hewitts failed to conduct any adequate source of funds checks for a client in a conveyancing transaction that completed on 16 March 2018. Hewitts also failed to conduct ongoing monitoring of the transaction as it progressed, to enable the firm to assess the risk of money laundering posed, pursuant to Regulation 28(11)(a) of the MLRs 2017. In doing so the firm:
 - vii. breached Principles 6, 7 and 8 of the SRA Principles 2011, and
 - viii. failed to achieve Outcomes 7.3 and 7.5 of the SRA Code of Conduct 2011
- 4. From 10 October 2018 to 12 July 2022, Hewitts failed to nominate a money laundering reporting officer (MLRO), as required by Regulation 21(3) of the MLRs 2017. In doing so the firm:
 - xi. failed to achieve Outcome 7.5 of the SRA Code of Conduct 2011 and where the conduct took place after 25 November 2019
 - xii. breached Paragraph 2.1(a) of the SRA Code of Conduct for Firms

Hewitts was directed to pay a financial penalty of £1,300 and ordered to pay costs of £1,350.

SRA Principles 2011

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 7- You must comply with your legal and regulatory obligations and deal with your regulators and ombudsmen in an open, timely and co-operative manner

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

SRA Code of Conduct 2011

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 7.5 - You comply with legislation applicable to your business, including anti-money laundering and data protection legislation

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.

Code of Conduct for Firms (2019)

Paragraph 2.1(a) - You have effective governance structures, arrangements, systems and controls in place that ensure you comply with all the SRA's regulatory arrangements, as well as with other regulatory and legislative requirements, which apply to you

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