

# Helen Erotokritou

## Employee

### 805296

*Agreement Date: 2 November 2020*

#### *Decision - Agreement*

Outcome: Regulatory settlement agreement

Outcome date: 2 November 2020

Published date: 30 November 2020

#### *Firm details*

##### **Firm or organisation at time of matters giving rise to outcome**

Name: Kingsley Napley LLP

Address(es): Knights Quarter, 14 St. John's Lane, London, EC1M 4AJ.

Firm ID: 500046

#### *Outcome details*

This outcome was reached by agreement.

#### *Decision details*

##### *Agreed outcome*

Helen Erotokritou, a former employee of Kingsley Napley LLP (the Firm), agrees to the following outcome to the investigation of her conduct by the Solicitors Regulation Authority (SRA):

to the SRA making an order under section 43 of the Solicitors Act 1974 (a section 43 order) in relation to Ms Erotokritou 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

to the publication of this agreement

she will pay the costs of the investigation of £300.

*Reasons/basis*

*Summary of facts*

Between 1 August 2016 and her dismissal on 11 February 2020, Ms Erotokritou worked at the Firm. She was initially employed as a personal assistant and later as a document production specialist in the Firm's secretarial services department.

*Loans for annual season ticket passes*

On 16 October 2018 and 9 October 2019 Ms Erotokritou completed claim forms to obtain interest-free season ticket loans from the Firm, to fund her purchase of annual season ticket passes for travel to and from work.

Ms Erotokritou was required to produce original VAT receipts for her purchase of the season ticket passes.

On signing the application forms, Ms Erotokritou accepted the following statement: "I apply to [the Firm] for an interest free loan of twelve months duration to fund the purchase of an annual travel season ticket for my journey to and from work..."

In 2018 the Firm paid Ms Erotokritou loan monies totalling £2,492 and in 2019 the Firm paid her loan monies totalling £2,556. After receiving these funds, Ms Erotokritou used them for purposes other than the purchase of season ticket passes.

The Firm is unable to confirm whether it asked Ms Erotokritou to produce a receipt for the purchase of a season ticket pass, in 2018. When she was asked to produce a receipt in 2019 and was unable to provide one, a disciplinary investigation commenced.

During the disciplinary hearing, Ms Erotokritou stated that she has used the loan monies she had received in 2018 to purchase a season ticket pass. Later in the hearing she accepted that this was untrue.

Ms Erotokritou repaid the loan monies she received in 2018 from her monthly salary in full. The loan monies she received in 2019 were fully

repaid after she was dismissed from her employment.

#### *Annual screening questionnaire*

On 9 August 2019 Ms Erotokritou completed the Firm's annual screening questionnaire. Question 4 of that questionnaire asked her:

"Has a Court, Tribunal or ombudsman made an order or delivered a Judgement directed at you which required you to do or refrain from doing something, including pay a sum of money, which was not complied with or otherwise satisfied in full within the timescale stipulated in the order or judgement or otherwise within 14 days of the date of the judgement or order, including one which remains outstanding'.

She answered "No" to this question, failing to disclose that she was subject to a county court judgement for a debt which remained outstanding.

On 12 February 2020 the Firm reported Ms Erotokritou's conduct to the SRA.

#### *Admissions*

Ms Erotokritou makes the following admissions which the SRA accepts:

that her conduct outlined above involved conduct which means that it is undesirable for her to be involved in a legal practice

that her conduct set out above was dishonest.

#### *Why a section 43 order is appropriate*

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.

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

She admitted her conduct to the SRA and cooperated with its investigation.

She repaid all the loan monies in full.

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

She is not a solicitor

Her employment or remuneration at the Firm means that she was involved in a legal practice

By obtaining interest-free season ticket loans from the Firm and using the funds for other purposes, by making statements that were untrue during a

disciplinary hearing and by failing to disclose that she was subject to a CCJ when completing the Firm's annual screening questionnaire, Ms Erotokritou has occasioned or been party to an act or default in relation to a legal practice. Ms Erotokritou's conduct in relation to that act or default makes it undesirable for her to be involved in a legal practice.

Ms Erotokritou's conduct makes it undesirable for her to be involved in a legal practice because it demonstrates a propensity to obtain monies from her employer for a specific purpose, then use them for a different purpose and a propensity to mislead her employer about whether she purchased an annual season ticket pass and about whether she was subject to a CCJ. She accepts that her behaviour was dishonest.

#### *Publication*

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

Acting in a way which is inconsistent with this agreement

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

#### *Costs*

Ms Erotokritou 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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