

Sophie Bentham

Employee

542851

Employee-related decision Date: 29 April 2022

Decision - Employee-related decision

Outcome: Control of non-qualified staff (Section 43 / Section 99 order)

Outcome date: 29 April 2022

Published date: 5 May 2022

Firm details

Firm or organisation at time of matters giving rise to outcome

Name: Crocketts Limited

Address(es): 260 Harehills Lane, LEEDS, LS9 7BD

Firm ID: 497255

Outcome details

This outcome was reached by SRA decision.

Reasons/basis

In the matter of:

Ms Bentham of Shipley, West Yorkshire

A person who is or was involved in a legal practice but is not a solicitor

The facts

Between 30 January 2017 and 26 January 2021, Ms Bentham worked at Crockett Co Solicitors whose office is at 60 Harehills Lane, Leeds, West Yorkshire, LS9 7BD.

She was initially employed as a paralegal and later became a trainee solicitor with the firm on 2 May 2017. The firm dismissed her for gross misconduct on 26 January 2021.

It was found that in November 2020 Ms Bentham fabricated letters of administration and amended a copy letter to Lloyds Bank to state that letters of administration had been granted when they had not.

It was found that Ms Bentham's conduct was dishonest.

Ms Bentham was ordered to pay the SRA's costs of £300 in investigating this matter.

Finding

Ms Bentham, who is not a solicitor, is or was involved in a legal practice and has occasioned or been a party to an act or default which involved such conduct on her part that it is undesirable for her to be involved in a legal practice in any of the ways described in the order below.

Order

To make an order pursuant to section 43 that with effect from the date of the letter or email notifying Ms Bentham of this decision:

- i. no solicitor shall employ or remunerate her in connection with his/her 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 a body shall permit her to have an interest in the body except in accordance with the SRA's prior written permission.

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