

Claire Sadler
Employee
7022267

[Employee-related decision Date: 3 April 2025](#)

Decision - Employee-related decision

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

Outcome date: 3 April 2025

Published date: 3 April 2025

Firm details

Firm or organisation at time of matters giving rise to outcome

Name: Hodge Jones and Allen LLP

Address(es): 180 North Gower Street, London NW1 2NB

Firm ID: 821023

Outcome details

This outcome was reached by SRA decision.

Decision details

Ms Sadler, who is not a solicitor, was employed by Hodge, Jones & Allen LLP ("the Firm"), whose head office is at 180 North Gower Street, London NW1 2NB between December 2011 and February 2023.

Summary of decision

A finding of dishonesty was made against Ms Sadler, and she was made subject to a disqualification order under section 99 of the Legal Services Act 2007.

The SRA has disqualified Ms Sadler from holding any of the following roles in law firms regulated by the SRA:

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

Reasons/basis

On 13 February 2023, the SRA received a report from the Firm regarding Ms Sadler, a qualified legal executive working in the personal injury team at the Firm.

The report highlighted concerns the Firm had after reviewing Ms Sadler's files whilst she was on annual leave. The Firm suspected dishonesty on the part of Ms Sadler in connection with the matters raised – in her dealings with her clients and in apparent interactions with third parties. This included that it appeared that certain documents including court pleadings, expert reports and communications apparently to/ from third parties (such as opponents and experts) were not genuine. The Firm also raised issues regarding the legitimacy of entries onto its Case Management System ("CMS").

The Firm provided two further reports on 23 February and April 2023, again highlighting similar concerns across 32 matters Ms Sadler worked on.

Ms Sadler was initially suspended by the Firm following a review of her files on 3 February 2023. She then resigned with immediate effect on 6 February 2023.

The Investigation Officer highlighted four cases based on the information supplied by the Firm. From these cases, it was found that Ms Sadler:

In respect of client matter Q:

Fabricated a letter and medical report purportedly from a medico-legal company dated December 2022/ January 2023, and falsely recorded on the CMS that the letter and report were received when they were not.

In respect of client matter Z:

Fabricated a letter dated September 2022 purportedly from the Defendant admitting liability in the claim, where the letter was not genuine, and no admission had been made and uploaded the letter onto the CMS. She also informed the client via letter of the same.

She also put an entry on the CMS referencing a letter dated 21 October 2022 in apparent follow up to a prior letter (said to be dated 20 September 2022) to Z's GP surgery in request for medical records, in circumstances where there were no records of her sending any letters to the surgery prior to 21 October 2022.

In respect of client matter K:

Fabricated an email purportedly sent by the Defendant's insurers to her in July 2022 and saved it on the CMS.

She also recorded false information in an attendance note saved onto the CMS, by recording that a defence had been received from the Respondent's purported solicitors in September 2022, in circumstances where this firm had not been instructed on the matter and no such defence had been received. She also recorded false information on the CMS to show that Court proceedings were posted to the firm in July 2022, when the firm was not instructed.

In respect of client matter W:

Falsely recorded on the CMS that she had sent a letter to a witness in March 2022 (in which she referred to having previously sent a witness statement to them not yet signed or reviewed), in circumstances where there is no record of such correspondence having been sent. And fabricated a witness statement purportedly signed by the witness on in April 2022, in circumstances where the statement had not been approved and/or signed by the witness – the statement then being disclosed to the Defendant in June 2022.

Ms Sadler's conduct was found to be dishonest.

Our decision on sanction

Ms Sadler conduct breached relevant duties that applied to her as an employee of the firm, namely, SRA Principles 1, 2, 4, 5 and 7.

It was found that it would be undesirable for Ms Sadler to act as a Head of Legal Practice, Head of Finance and Administration, a manager or an employee of a body licensed in accordance with section 99 of the Legal Services Act 2007.

Ms Sadler was disqualified from holding any of these roles.

She was also directed to pay costs of £3,375.

SRA Principles

- SRA Principle 1: You act in a way that upholds the constitutional principle of the rule of law, and the proper administration of justice.
- SRA 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.
- SRA Principle 4: You act with honesty.
- SRA Principle 5: You act with integrity.
- SRA Principle 7: You act in the best interests of each client.

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