

Irfan Malik

Employee

7175932

[Agreement Date: 29 August 2024](#)

Decision - Agreement

Outcome: Regulatory settlement agreement

Outcome date: 29 August 2024

Published date: 5 September 2024

Firm details

Firm or organisation at time of matters giving rise to outcome

Name: Ashurst LLP

Address(es): 1 Duval Square, London Fruit and Wool Exchange, London, E1 6PW

Firm ID: 468653

Outcome details

This outcome was reached by agreement.

Decision details

1. Agreed outcome

1.1 Mr Irfan Malik ('Mr Malik'), an unadmitted individual who was employed as an IT Service Desk Analyst at Ashurst LLP ('the Firm'), agrees to the following outcome to the investigation of his conduct by the Solicitors Regulation Authority (SRA):

- a. to the SRA making an order under section 43 of the Solicitors Act 1974 (a section 43 order) in relation to Mr Malik that, from the date of this agreement:
 - i. no solicitor shall employ or remunerate him in connection with his practice as a solicitor
 - ii. no employee of a solicitor shall employ or remunerate him in connection with the solicitor's practice
 - iii. no recognised body shall employ or remunerate him
 - iv. no manager or employee of a recognised body shall employ or remunerate him in connection with the business of that body



- v. no recognised body or manager or employee of such a body shall permit him to be a manager of the body
- vi. no recognised body or manager or employee of such body shall permit him to have an interest in the body except in accordance with the SRA's prior permission
- b. to the publication of this agreement
- c. he will pay the costs of the investigation of £300.

2. Summary of facts

2.1 On or around 10 October 2023, Mr Malik removed two laptops from the Firm's IT Storeroom without its knowledge or consent. The next day, he sold the laptops to a local business owner for £500.

2.2 On 18 March 2024, Mr Malik attended an investigation meeting at the Firm after it had identified that the two laptops were missing, and that one of them had been logged onto with the same Wi-fi connection that Mr Malik used for his own Ashurst work computer. Mr Malik denied having any knowledge of the missing laptops. He also could not explain why the laptops had been traced to the address of a local business.

2.3 On 27 March 2024, Mr Malik attended another investigation meeting held at the Firm. During this second meeting, Mr Malik admitted, contrary to what he had said in the previous meeting about having no knowledge of the missing laptops, that the laptops were now at his house after he had paid the local business owner £500 to retrieve the laptops, although he did not know why one of the laptops were used in his house on his own Wi-Fi. Mr Malik also said that that local business owner had previously purchased the laptops from a third-party on Gumtree.

2.4 On 28 March 2024, Mr Malik admitted during a further investigation meeting at the Firm that he had previously taken the laptops without the Firm's knowledge or consent before selling them to the local business owner for £500. He also admitted to having logged onto at least one of the laptops from his home Wi-Fi address, contrary to his previous denials.

3. Admissions

3.1 Mr Malik makes the following admissions which the SRA accepts and which means that it is undesirable for him to be involved in a legal practice:

- a. That in October 2023, he took two laptops from the Firm without its knowledge or consent. He then sold the laptops to a local business owner for £500.
- b. That in March 2024, he gave false and/or misleading statements to the Firm about what had happened to the two laptops and about his related conduct.
- c. That his conduct set out above was dishonest.



4. Why a section 43 order is appropriate

4.1 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.

4.2 When considering whether a section 43 order is appropriate in this matter, the SRA has taken into account the admissions made by Mr Malik.

4.3 The SRA and Mr Malik agree that a section 43 order is appropriate because:

- a. Mr Malik is not a solicitor
- b. his employment or remuneration at the Firm means that he was involved in a legal practice
- c. by selling two laptops which belonged to the Firm to a local business owner for £500 without its knowledge or consent, before providing false and/or misleading statements to the Firm during its investigation into what had happened, Mr Malik has occasioned or been party to an act or default in relation to a legal practice. Mr Malik's conduct in relation to that act or default makes it undesirable for him to be involved in a legal practice.

4.4 Mr Malik's conduct makes it undesirable for him to be involved in a legal practice because he acted dishonestly in taking two laptops from the Firm before selling them to a third party, and then in giving false and/or misleading statements to the Firm during its internal investigation. There is a possibility that Mr Malik could again act dishonestly if he is involved in legal practice without the SRA's prior consent.

5. Publication

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

6. Acting in a way which is inconsistent with this agreement

6.1 Mr Malik agrees that he will not deny the admissions made in this agreement or act in any way which is inconsistent with it.

7. Costs

7.1 Mr Malik agrees to pay the costs of the SRA's investigation in the sum of £300.

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