

Julie Goodman
Employee
670937

[Agreement Date: 2 February 2021](#)

Decision - Agreement

Outcome: Regulatory settlement agreement

Outcome date: 2 February 2021

Published date: 10 February 2021

Firm details

Firm or organisation at time of matters giving rise to outcome

Name: Thursfields Legal Limited

Address(es): 14 Church Street, Kidderminster, DY10 2AH

Firm ID: 612944

Outcome details

This outcome was reached by agreement.

Decision details

This outcome was reached by Regulatory Settlement Agreement

Reasons/basis

1. Agreed outcome

1.1 Julie Goodman, a former employee of Thursfields Legal Limited (the Firm), agrees to the following outcome to the investigation of her 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 her 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

b. to the publication of this agreement

c. she will pay the costs of the investigation of £300.00.

2. Summary of facts

2.1 Mrs Goodman was employed as a Legal Executive Property Manager in the Firm's conveyancing department.

2.2 Mrs Goodman acted for two clients on the sale of their property.

2.3 On or around 25 October 2019 the clients provided the Firm with a transfer document in the absence of Mrs Goodman. It was signed by both clients, but their signatures had not been witnessed. The sale of the property completed on 31 October 2019. Mrs Goodman was absent from the office and not present when the matter completed.

2.4 Mrs Goodman subsequently noticed that her clients' signatures had not been witnessed. She signed the transfer document as a witness to her clients' signatures, even though she had not been present at the time they signed it.

2.5 The transfer document was then filed with the Land Registry.

2.6 The witnessing of the transfer document later came to light. Mrs Goodman told the Firm and her clients about her conduct. The Firm reported the matter to the SRA for investigation on 25 November 2019.

2.7 On 25 November 2019 the Firm withdrew its application to the Land Registry.

2.8 Mrs Goodman resigned from her role at the Firm on 24 December 2019

2.9 On 5 March 2020 both clients signed a fresh transfer document. The registration was completed at the Land Registry on 25 June 2020.

3. Admissions

3.1 Mrs Goodman makes the following admissions which the SRA accepts:



- a. she signed a transfer document purporting to have witnessed her clients' signatures when she had not done so
- b. she allowed the Firm to submit the transfer document to the Land Registry knowing it had not been witnessed properly
- c. that her 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 Mrs Goodman and the following mitigation which she has put forward:

- a. this was an isolated incident
- b. she exercised poor judgment for which she has expressed regret and has shown insight into her conduct
- c. she has cooperated with the SRA in its investigation.

4.3 The SRA and Mrs Goodman agree that a section 43 order is appropriate because:

- a. she is not a solicitor
- b. she was undertaking work in the name of or under the direction or supervision of a solicitor
- c. by purporting to witness the signatures of her clients on a transfer document when she had not she has occasioned or been party to an act or default in relation to a legal practice. Her conduct in relation to that act makes it undesirable for her be involved in a legal practice.

4.4 Mrs Goodman's conduct makes it undesirable for her to be involved in a legal practice because it was dishonest and had the potential to mislead others.

5. Publication

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

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

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

7. Costs

7.1 Mrs Goodman agrees to pay the costs of the SRA's investigation in the sum of £300.00. Such costs are due within 28 days of a statement of costs due being issued by the SRA.1. Agreed outcome

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