

Amanda Bell
Employee
7267607

[Employee-related decision Date: 27 January 2025](#)

Decision - Employee-related decision

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

Outcome date: 27 January 2025

Published date: 17 February 2025

Firm details

Firm or organisation at time of matters giving rise to outcome

Name: CMS Cameron McKenna Nabarro Olswang LLP

Address(es): Cannon Place 78 Cannon Street LONDON EC4N 6AF

Firm ID: 423370

Outcome details

This outcome was reached by SRA decision.

Decision details

To make a section 43 order that with effect from the date of the letter or email notifying Amanda Bell of this decision:

- 1.1.1 no solicitor shall employ or remunerate her in connection with her practice as a solicitor;
- 1.1.2 no employee of a solicitor shall employ or remunerate her in connection with the solicitor's practice;
- 1.1.3 no recognised body shall employ or remunerate her;
- 1.1.4 no manager or employee of a recognised body shall employ or remunerate her in connection with the business of that body;
- 1.1.5 no recognised body or manager or employee of such a body shall permit her to be a manager of the body; and
- 1.1.6 no recognised body or manager or employee of such a body shall permit her to have an interest in the body



1.1.7 except in accordance with the SRA's prior written permission.

1.2 The section 43 order in respect of Amanda Bell shall be published.

1.3 Amanda Bell is ordered to pay the sum of £1350 in relation to the SRA's costs of investigating this matter.

Reasons/basis

Ms Bell stole a large amount of money from her employer over a long period of time. On the 124 occasions when she transferred funds to her own account from her firm's office account, she took steps to conceal and disguise the payments as genuine financial transfers.

The SRA commissioned a Forensic Investigation report to identify and detail all the payments made, the individual amounts, dates and beneficiary account numbers which were personal accounts held by Amanda Bell. The report also looked into the methodology adopted by Ms Bell in order to execute the payments which was contrary to the firm's policy.

On 5 March 2024 Ms Bell admitted in writing that she transferred several amounts of funds to her own personal accounts.

By the very nature of Amanda Bell's action of stealing funds from the firm her actions were dishonest. In addition, it appears that she knew that the action was dishonest as she sought to disguise the payments made in the firm accounts by covering the payments up by using generic terms such as 'interest' or 'charges'.

Ms Bell admitted to the theft and as such the firm notified the police. The purpose of a section 43 order is to prevent non-solicitors from being employed or remunerated by solicitors and their firms without permission. A section 43 order relates only to individuals who are not solicitors. I am satisfied that Amanda Bell is not a solicitor. In order to impose a section 43 order Amanda Bell must be, or have been, involved in a legal practice in one or more of the ways set out in section 43 (1A) (a) to (d) of the Solicitors Act 1974. In this case, I am satisfied that Amanda Bell was employed or remunerated by a solicitor in connection with the solicitor's practice (section 43(1A)(a)).

Amanda Bell's conduct was serious. The thefts occurred over a long duration of time. Ms Bell sought to disguise the thefts and there was a considerable amount of money involved over the course of the multiple thefts. Ms Bell was also in a position of trust as the firm's head cashier.

6.12 I have found that Amanda Bell's actions were dishonest. This is a serious matter for a member of a profession whose reputation depends on trust. Honesty is required from all those involved in the provision of

legal services and Amanda Bell has proved that she can act without this on multiple occasions and over a significant period of time.

The order imposed will ensure the public are protected by preventing solicitors and firms regulated by the SRA from employing or remunerating Amanda Bell without prior approval. It will also prevent such firms from allowing her to be a manager or from having an interest in them without prior approval. This will enable the SRA to consider Amanda Bell's proposed working environment and whether this provides sufficient support and supervision to ensure that clients and the public are adequately protected. The restriction imposed on her ability to work and to be involved in a legal practice will also maintain public confidence in the legal profession.

For the above reasons, I am satisfied that the decision to make a section 43 order is an effective regulatory outcome which will protect and promote the public interest.

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