

Alexandra Ditcham

Employee

7051581

[Employee-related decision Date: 17 December 2024](#)

Decision - Employee-related decision

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

Outcome date: 17 December 2024

Published date: 10 January 2025

Firm details

Firm or organisation at time of matters giving rise to outcome

Name: O'Neill Patient Solicitors LLP

Address(es): Floors 2 and 32 Stockport Exchange, Railway Road,
STOCKPORT, SK1 3GG

Firm ID: 449172

Outcome details

This outcome was reached by SRA decision.

Decision details

Summary of decision

The SRA has disqualified Ms Ditcham 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

The facts of the case

Ms Ditcham, who is not a solicitor, was employed as a case manager in the conveyancing remortgage department at O'Neill Patient Solicitors LLP of 2 Stockport Exchange, Cheshire, a licensed body.

In April 2021 the police carried out a search of a property in Macclesfield where Ms Ditcham's co-defendant resided. Ms Ditcham was present at the address at the time of the search where items related to the use and sale of illegal drugs were found. The police investigation concluded that Ms Ditcham supplied or arranged to supply drugs for profit.

Ms Ditcham pleaded guilty and was convicted at Crewe Magistrates' Court on 10 March 2023 for the offence of being concerned in the supply of cocaine contrary to s4(3)(b) of the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971. On 5 May 2023, she was sentenced at Chester Crown Court to 28 months imprisonment.

Our decision on sanction

Ms Ditcham's conduct breached relevant duties that applied to her as an employee of a licensed body, namely Principles 2 and 5 of the SRA Principles 2019.

It was found that it would be undesirable for her 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 Ditcham was disqualified from holding any of these roles.

Ms Ditcham was also ordered to pay the SRA's costs of £600.

SRA Principles 2019

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. Principle 5: You act with integrity.

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