

Katie Holland

Solicitor

374649

[Sanction Date: 6 June 2024](#)

Decision - Sanction

Outcome: Rebuke

Outcome date: 6 June 2024

Published date: 7 June 2024

Firm details

Firm or organisation at date of publication and at time of matters giving rise to outcome

Name: Association of Optometrists

Address(es): 2 Woodbridge Street, London, EC1R 0DG

Firm ID: 525473

Outcome details

This outcome was reached by SRA decision.

Decision details

1. Agreed outcome

1.1 Ms Katie Holland (Ms Holland), a solicitor, agrees to the following outcome to the investigation of her conduct by the Solicitors Regulation Authority (SRA):

- a. she is rebuked
- b. to the publication of this agreement
- c. she will pay the costs of the investigation of £300.

2. Summary of Facts

2.1 On 7 December 2023, the police investigated a report that Ms Holland had collided into another vehicle on the A26, Eridge, East Sussex.

2.2 The police breathalysed Ms Holland and she was found to be over the legal limit.

2.3 On 17 January 2024, at Hastings Magistrates Court, Ms Holland pleaded guilty to and was convicted of driving a car while under the influence of alcohol contrary to section 5(1)(a) of the Road Traffic Act 1988 and Schedule 2 to the Road Traffic Offenders Act 1988.

2.4 The sentence was:

- a. a 24-month driving ban to be reduced by 24 weeks on satisfactory completion of a drink drivers awareness course and
- b. a fine of £692

2.5 She was also ordered to pay:

- c. a victim surcharge payment of £277
- d. costs of £85

2.6 Ms Holland promptly notified the SRA.

3. Admissions

3.1 Ms Holland makes the following admissions which the SRA accepts that by virtue of her conduct and conviction, she failed to act in a way that upholds the public trust and confidence in the solicitors' profession and in legal services provided by authorised persons, in breach of Principle 2 of the SRA Principles.

Reasons/basis

The SRA's Enforcement Strategy sets out its approach to the use of its enforcement powers where there has been a failure to meet its standards or requirements.

4. Why a written rebuke is an appropriate outcome

4.1 The SRA's Enforcement Strategy sets out its approach to the use of its enforcement powers where there has been a failure to meet its standards or requirements.

4.2 When considering the appropriate sanctions and controls in this matter, the SRA has taken into account the SRA | Topic guide: Driving with excess alcohol convictions | Solicitors Regulation Authority, admissions made by Ms Holland and the following mitigation which she has put forward:

- a. she promptly reported her conviction to the SRA and co-operated fully with its investigation, including the timely provision of all necessary information



- b. she has shown insight and remorse for her actions at the time of the incident and subsequently
- c. this is an isolated incident and she has no previous convictions

4.3 The SRA considers that a written rebuke is the appropriate outcome because:

- a. Ms Holland was directly responsible for her conduct and
- b. by driving after she had consumed alcohol that exceeded the prescribed legal limit, Ms Holland disregarded the potential risk of harm that this might cause.

4.4 A rebuke is appropriate to maintain professional standards and uphold public confidence in the solicitors' profession and in legal services provided by authorised persons.

4.5 A rebuke is also intended to deter the individual and others from similar behaviour in the future. Any lesser sanction would not provide a credible deterrent to Ms Holland and others. A rebuke therefore meets the requirements of rule 3.1 of the Regulatory and Disciplinary Procedure Rules.

Other information

5. Publication

5.1 The SRA considers it appropriate that this agreement is published in the interests of transparency in the regulatory and disciplinary process. Ms Holland agrees to the publication of this agreement.

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

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

6.2 If Ms Holland denies the admissions or acts in a way which is inconsistent with this agreement, the conduct which is subject to this agreement may be considered further by the SRA. That may result in a disciplinary outcome or a referral to the Solicitors Disciplinary Tribunal on the original facts and allegations.

6.3 Denying the admissions made or acting in a way which is inconsistent with this agreement may also constitute a separate breach of principles 2 and 5 of the Principles and paragraph 7.3 of the Code of Conduct for Solicitors, RELs and RFLs.

7. Costs

7.1 Ms Holland agrees to pay the costs of the SRA's investigation in the sum of £300. Such costs are due within 28 days of a statement of costs due being issued by the SRA.

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