

# **Laura Sainsbury**

## **Solicitor**

### **338699**

[Fin ed Date: 23 May 2024](#)

## **Decision - Fined**

Outcome: Fine

Outcome date: 23 May 2024

Published date: 24 June 2024

## **Firm details**

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

Name: Prince Evans Solicitors LLP

Address(es): Craven House, 40-44 Uxbridge Road, LONDON, W5 2BS

Firm ID: 560054

## **Outcome details**

This outcome was reached by SRA decision.

### **Decision details**

#### **Who does this disciplinary decision relate to?**

Laura Sainsbury is a solicitor at Prince Evans Solicitors LLP, Craven House, 40-44 Uxbridge Road, London W5 2BS, a licensed body (the firm).

### **Short summary of decision**

We have fined Mrs Sainsbury for amending a deed for the transfer of property without her client's knowledge or consent and for lodging the amended deed at the Land Registry in circumstances where she knew it had not been executed properly by her client.

### **Facts of the misconduct**

It was found that:



### **Allegation One**

1. On or around 2 May 2018, Mrs Sainsbury removed the signature page from a Form TR1 which had been executed by the transferor client and attached it to her client's knowledge and consent. In doing so, she breached Principles 2 and 6 of the SRA Principles 2011.

### **Allegation Two**

2. On or around 2 May 2018, Mrs Sainsbury facilitated the submission of an Amended Form TR1 to HM Land Registry purporting to have been signed as an executed deed, in circumstances where she knew that it had not been executed by the transferor client. In doing so, she breached Principles 2 and 6 of the SRA Principles 2011.

### **Allegation Three**

2. On or around 8 May 2018, Mrs Sainsbury failed to obtain instructions from the transferor client in respect of the value of the property which caused the incorrect value to be entered on the title register. In doing so, she breached Principles 2 and 4 of the SRA Principles 2011.

### **Allegation Four**

4. Mrs Sainsbury failed to report the misconduct, as identified at allegations one, two and three above, to the SRA promptly, or at all when she became aware of the client's concerns on or around 21 August 2019. In doing so, she breached Outcome 10.4 of the SRA Code of Conduct 2011.

### **Allegation Five**

5. In respect of allegations one and two, Mrs Sainsbury acted recklessly.

### **Decision on sanction**

Mrs Sainsbury was directed to pay a financial penalty of £10,146 and ordered to pay costs of £1,350.

It was decided that a financial penalty was an appropriate and proportionate sanction.

This was because her conduct was serious by reference to the following factors in the SRA Enforcement Strategy:

- She had acted recklessly



- Although no actual harm had been suffered by the client, there had been the potential for more than minimal loss

In view of the above, Mrs Sainsbury's conduct was placed in conduct band C which has a financial penalty bracket of between 16% and 49% of her gross annual income. Her conduct was placed in the middle of this bracket at C3 given:

a) Aggravating factors

- Mrs Sainsbury admitted that she had acted with a lack of integrity.
- She was an experienced solicitor with direct responsibility for her own conduct
- She had failed to report her conduct to the SRA
- This was more than a 'simple error' and Mrs Sainsbury had made a serious error in judgment.

b) Mitigating factors

- Mrs Sainsbury had made admissions as to her misconduct
- She had shown genuine insight and remorse
- This was an isolated incident
- Mrs Sainsbury did make efforts to remedy the situation
- She had not acted dishonestly, or deliberately set out to circumvent her regulatory obligations
- There was no suggestion that Mrs Sainsbury had acted for her own benefit

The financial penalty was reduced by 15% in recognition of the fact that Mrs Sainsbury had admitted most of the allegations when they were put to her, had attempted to rectify the issues, and had co-operated with the investigation.

**SRA Principles breached**

**SRA Principles 2011**

Principle 2 - You must act with integrity.

Principle 4 - You must act in the best interests of each client.

Principle 6 - You must behave in a way that maintains the trust the public places in you and in the provision of legal services.

**SRA Code of Conduct 2011**

Outcome 10.4 - You report to the SRA promptly, serious misconduct by any person or firm authorised by the SRA, or an employee, manager or

owner of any such firm (taking into account, where necessary, your duty of confidentiality to your client).

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