

Ian Groome

Employee

524217

[Employee-related decision Date: 7 April 2025](#)

Decision - Employee-related decision

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

Outcome date: 7 April 2025

Published date: 22 April 2025

Firm details

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

Name: Bowser Ollard & Bentley Limited

Address(es): 15 South Brink, Wisbech, PE13 1JL

Firm ID: 571570

Outcome details

This outcome was reached by SRA decision.

Decision details

1. Agreed outcome

1.1 Mr Ian Groome (Mr Groome), a consultant at Bowser Ollard & Bentley Limited (the Firm), agrees to the following outcome to the investigation of his 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 Mr Groome that, from the date of this agreement:
 - i. no solicitor shall employ or remunerate him in connection with his practice as a solicitor
 - ii. no employee of a solicitor shall employ or remunerate him in connection with the solicitor's practice
 - iii. no recognised body shall employ or remunerate him
 - iv. no manager or employee of a recognised body shall employ or remunerate him in connection with the business of that body



- v. no recognised body or manager or employee of such a body shall permit him to be a manager of the body
- vi. no recognised body or manager or employee of such body shall permit him to have an interest in the body except in accordance with the SRA's prior permission
- b. to the publication of this agreement
- c. he will pay the costs of the investigation of £300.

2. Summary of Facts

2.1 Mr Groome has been a consultant at the Firm since 1 October 2022.

2.2 In December 2023 he was instructed by Client A, the son, and the executor, of his late mother's estate, Mrs X. Client A asked Mr Groome to deal with the estate administration.

2.3 Client A was concerned that his stepfather, Mr Y, would try to transfer his late mother's share of a property into his sole name.

2.4 In response to this, Mr Groome completed an electronic application to register a restriction against the title of the property. Mr Groome submitted this application to the Land Registry. Mr Groome submitted the application in the name of the late Mrs X, rather than in the name of the executor. He failed to disclose to the Land Registry that Mrs X was deceased.

3. Admissions

3.1 Mr Groome makes the following admissions which the SRA accepts:

- a. He submitted an application to the Land Registry in the name of Mrs X without disclosing that she had passed away.
- b. The correct approach would have been to submit the application in the name of the executor, Client A.
- c. His actions were a tactical decision to prevent the transfer of the property to Mr Y.
- d. He misled the Land Registry and his conduct was wrong.
- e. He has been dishonest.
- f. He has been involved in conduct which makes it undesirable for him to be involved in legal practice and without the SRA's prior approval.

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 Mr



Groome and the mitigation which he has put forward:

- a. His conduct was out of character.
- b. His intention was to ensure his client's interest would be protected.
- c. He was under pressure from his client to get the application completed and sent to the Land Registry without delay and failed to double check the application before it was submitted.
- d. He has expressed remorse for his actions and has apologised. (e) He has co-operated with the SRA investigation.

4.3 The SRA and Mr Groome agree that a section 43 order is appropriate because:

- a. Mr Groome is not a solicitor.
- b. By undertaking work in the name of, or under the direction and supervision of a solicitor, he was involved in a legal practice.
- c. By virtue of the misconduct admitted in paragraph 3 above, Mr Groome has occasioned or been party to an act or default in relation to a legal practice. Mr Groome 's conduct in relation to that act or default makes it undesirable for him to be involved in a legal practice.

4.4 Mr Groome's conduct makes it undesirable for him to be involved in a legal practice because by failing to inform the Land Registry that the application he submitted for a restriction on a property was made in the name of a deceased person he misled the Land Registry. His conduct demonstrates that when under pressure he is prepared to act in a way which is dishonest.

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. Mr Groome agrees to the publication of this agreement.

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

6.1 Mr Groome agrees that he will not deny the admissions made in this agreement or act in any way which is inconsistent with it.

7. Costs

7.1 Mr Groome 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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