

Thomas Hardwick

Non-lawyer manager

593673

[Employee-related decision Date: 26 September 2025](#)

Decision - Employee-related decision

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

Outcome date: 26 September 2025

Published date: 6 October 2025

Firm details

Firm or organisation at time of matters giving rise to outcome

Name: High Street Solicitors Ltd

Address(es): Floor 3, No 1 Tithebarn House, Tithebarn Street, Liverpool, L2 2NZ

Firm ID: 520652

Outcome details

This outcome was reached by SRA decision.

Decision details

Who does this decision relate to?

Thomas Hardwick, who is not a solicitor, was a director, owner and non-lawyer manager of High Street Solicitors, a licensed body (the firm)

Reasons/basis

Summary of decision

The SRA has disqualified Mr Hardwick 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



The facts of the case

The SRA received three reports, in June 2020, March 2022 and August 2022 from separate complainants about the firm's failure to pay a debt and about unpaid adverse costs orders made against its clients.

On 11 January 2023, Mr Hardwick was notified that the SRA had decided to investigate the firm because it was concerned about business management. On 19 January 2023, the SRA commenced a forensic investigation at the firm.

On 27 April 2023, the SRA was notified by a third party that on 7 March 2023, one of the firm's creditors had served a winding up petition on the firm which was due to be heard on 2 May 2023. The firm had not notified the SRA of the winding up petition during the forensic investigation of the firm.

On 28 April 2023, the SRA was provided by Mr Hardwick's legal representative with a copy of Mr Hardwick's witness statement prepared for the winding up hearing. This included details of the debt owed to the third party creditor which issued the winding-up petition and stated that the firm had transferred client files and money to other firms. It said the firm was to be placed into administration. Mr Hardwick had not notified the SRA of these matters during the SRA's forensic investigation.

On 5 June 2023, the firm entered into administration and effected an orderly closure. On 4 July 2023, the firm's liabilities totalled over £12m. Angelus Law Limited, (Angelus Law) authorised as a licensed body since 17 May 2018, and co-owned by Mr Hardwick, became the successor practice to the firm. On 22 April 2024, the SRA intervened into Angelus Law.

It was found that Mr Hardwick:

1. Intentionally failed to disclose all relevant information to the SRA throughout its forensic investigation.

In doing so, Mr Hardwick breached Principles 2 and 5 of the SRA Principles 2019 and Paragraphs 3.2 and 8.1 of the SRA Code of Conduct for Firms.

Mr Hardwick's conduct was serious by reference to the following factors in the SRA Enforcement Strategy: it was deliberate, it lacked integrity, and it posed a risk to public confidence in the solicitors' profession and in legal services provided by authorised persons.

Our decision on sanction

Mr Hardwick's conduct breached relevant duties that applied to him as a manager of the firm, namely Principles 2 and 5 of the SRA Principles and

Paragraphs 3.2 and 8.1 of the Code of Conduct for Firms.

It was found that it would be undesirable for Mr Hardwick 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.

Mr Hardwick was disqualified from holding any of these roles.

Mr Hardwick was also ordered to pay the SRA's costs of £600.

Other information

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.

SRA Code of Conduct for Firms

Paragraph 3.2 You cooperate with the SRA, other regulators, ombudsmen and those bodies with a role overseeing and supervising the delivery of or investigating concerns in relation to, legal services.

Paragraph 8.1 If you are a manager, you are responsible for compliance by your firm with this Code. This responsibility is joint and several if you share management responsibility with other managers of the firm

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