

## Alerts

### **Warning: Documents have been sent misusing the name of Matthew Hardcastle**

6 February 2025

Documents have been sent misusing the name of 'Matthew Hardcastle' in relation to a supposed payment agreement.

#### **What is the scam?**

The SRA has been advised that documents have been sent to a member of the public which misuse the name of a genuine solicitor (see below).

One of the documents seen by the SRA is titled 'Confirmation of Guarantor Agreement' and refers to a payment agreement.

The document refers to the individual as "an attorney licensed in criminal defence".

#### **Is there a genuine firm or person?**

The SRA authorises and regulates a genuine solicitor called Matthew Hardcastle who is a Partner at Kingsley Napley LLP.

The genuine firm has confirmed that neither it nor its Matthew Hardcastle have any connection to the documents referred to in the above alert.

#### **What should I do?**

When a firm's or individual's identity has been copied exactly (or cloned), due diligence is necessary. If you receive correspondence claiming to be from the above firm(s) or individual(s), or information of a similar nature to that described, you should conduct your own due diligence by checking the authenticity of the correspondence by contacting the law firm directly by reliable and established means. You can contact the SRA to find out if individuals or firms are regulated and authorised by the SRA and verify an individual's or firm's practising details. Other verification methods, such as checking public records (e.g. telephone directories and company records) may be required in other circumstances.