

CASE NO 12752-2005

BEFORE THE SOLCITORS DISCIPLINARY TRIBUNAL

IN THE MATTER OF THE SOLCITORS ACT 1974 (as amended)

AND IN THE MATTER OF:

SOLICITORS REGULATION AUTHORITY

Applicant

and

CLARE ELIZABETH FORSTER

Respondent

ANSWER TO THE RULE 12(2) STATEMENT SOLICITORS (DISCIPLINARY PRECEEDINGS) RULES 2019

The Allegation

1. The Allegation is admitted.
2. The Respondent will aver mitigation of the said Allegation because of the following.
 - 2.1. [REDACTED]
 - 2.2. The Respondent will rely on medical evidence to be presented to the Tribunal.
 - 2.3. The unreasonable and oppressive costs expectations by the Respondent’s employer leading in January 2023 to the requirement on her and colleagues to log their activities throughout the working day
 - 2.4. The imposition on her and colleagues of an “informal” Performance Improvement Plan (“the PIP”), which given the Respondent’s mental state

and her lack of support in her home environment led to an incising feeling of low esteem and lack of self-worth.

- 2.5. As a result of the PIP and to satisfy the time recording requirements, the Respondent started to work at home out of normal office hours and there are records showing time being recorded late at night and at the weekend.
- 2.6. In May 2023 there was a change in the Head of Department and the “informal” PIP was made “formal” by the employer. The requirement of the employer was to log over 6.5 hours per day billable time the equivalent of 130 hours per month. The Law Society recommends a yearly target of 1,100 hours (taking into account leave and possible sickness) or approximately 91.6 hours per month. The Respondent as required to record 130 hours per month.
- 2.7. No allowance was made by the employer for the Respondent’s mental state of which they were aware or ought to have been aware as responsible employers. The Tribunal is referred to the document SRA Guidance “*Workplace environment: risks of failing to protect and support colleagues*” 4th May 2023.
- 2.8. The Respondent admitted her wrong-doing at an early stage and there was no attempt to obfuscate and although the Respondent is fully aware of her wrong doing it is pointed out that no client was harmed financially by the false recording of time.

Hanne & Co
31st May 2025