

BEFORE THE SOLICITORS DISCIPLINARY TRIBUNAL

Case No:

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

AND IN THE MATTER OF:

SOLICITORS REGULATION AUTHORITY LIMITED

Applicant

and

TIMOTHY JOHN LUCKHURST-MATTHEWS

Respondent

**STATEMENT PURSUANT TO RULE 12 (2) OF THE SOLICITORS (DISCIPLINARY
PROCEEDINGS RULES) 2019**

I, Anjana Madhar, am a Solicitor employed by the Solicitors Regulation Authority Limited of The Cube, 199 Wharfside Street, Birmingham, B1 1RN. I make this Statement on behalf of the Applicant, the Solicitors Regulation Authority Limited ("SRA").

The allegation

1. The allegation against the Respondent, Timothy Luckhurst-Matthews, made by the SRA is that while in practice as a solicitor at the Thompson Group ("the Firm"):
 - 1.1 On 9 December 2022 he committed sexual assault contrary to section 3 of the Sexual Offences Act 2003 and in doing so, breached any or all of Principles 2 and 5 of the SRA Principles ("the Principles").
2. The facts and matters relied upon in support of this allegation are set out in paragraphs 10 to 15 inclusive below.

3. The Applicant relies on the Respondent's Conviction at Newcastle Crown Court on 26 March 2025, [AM1 pages 44 to 45] for the offence of sexual assault contrary to section 3 of the Sexual Offences Act 2003 as evidence that the Respondent was guilty of that offence and relies upon the findings of fact upon which that conviction was based as proof of those facts. The Certificate of Conviction stands as conclusive proof of the underlying facts upon which the conviction was based (Rule 32 of the Solicitors (Disciplinary Proceedings) Rules 2019).

Appendices and Documents

4. I attach to this Statement the following appendix:

Appendix 1: Relevant Rules and Regulations

5. I also attach to this statement a bundle of documents, marked "AM1" to which I refer in this statement. Unless otherwise stated, the page references ("AM1 []") in this statement relate to documents contained in that bundle.

6. The bundle is divided into the following sections:

Section A: Notice and Appendices¹

Section B: Relevant correspondence between the SRA and Respondent

Section C: Decision on referral to the SDT

Section D: Section 3 Sexual Offences Act 2003

Professional Details

The Respondent

7. The Respondent, who was born on [REDACTED], is a solicitor having been admitted to the Roll on 15 January 1986.
8. At the material time, he was an in-house solicitor at The Thompson Group whose Head office is at 5 Wincomblee Road, Walker Riverside, Newcastle Upon Tyne NE6 3PF. The Respondent left the Thompson Group on 9 May 2025.

¹ Sections C, D and E of the Notice have not been included as they relate to SRA Standards and Regulations, relevant case law and the SRA Decision Making Framework

9. The Respondent remains on the Roll of Solicitors but does not have a current practising certificate. His last practising certificate was for the period 2024 to 2025 which was free from conditions.

The facts and matters relied upon in support of the allegations

Background

10. The conduct took place on 9 December 2022.
11. The conduct in this matter came to the attention of the SRA on or around 27 March 2025 from a third-party reporting that the Respondent had been found guilty on a charge of sexual assault at Newcastle upon Tyne Crown Court. The SRA also received a self-report from the Respondent by email on 1 April 2025 following the conviction. In summary, the Respondent explained that he had been convicted of the criminal offence of sexual assault by touching at a contested Trial which had taken place on 26 March 2025. The Respondent confirmed that sentencing had been deferred until 6 June 2025. The Respondent also confirmed that he intended to appeal the conviction. **[AM1 page 9]**.
12. Sections 3 of the Sexual Offences Act 2003 states: **[AM1 page 43]**:
- Sexual assault**
- (1) *A person (A) commits an offence if—*
- (a) *he intentionally touches another person (B),*
- (b) *the touching is sexual,*
- (c) *B does not consent to the touching, and*
- (d) *A does not reasonably believe that B consents.*
- (2) *Whether a belief is reasonable is to be determined having regard to all the circumstances, including any steps A has taken to ascertain whether B consents.*
- (4) *A person guilty of an offence under this section is liable—*
- (a) *on summary conviction, to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 6 months or a fine not exceeding the statutory maximum or both;*
- (b) *on conviction on indictment, to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 10 years.*
13. The Respondent pleaded not guilty to the offence.

14. The contested trial took place on 26 March 2025 at Newcastle Crown Court. The Respondent was convicted on indictment² of sexual assault on a female.
15. On 9 June 2025, the Respondent was committed to prison for 10 months suspended for 24 Months and subject to rehabilitation activity of 40 days. The Respondent is required to register with the police for 10 years from the date of the conviction to keep the police informed at all material times of his personal particulars, the address at which he was living and any alteration to his name he is using. A Restraining Order lasting until 8 June 2030 was made against the Respondent preventing him from contacting the victim directly or indirectly by any means whatsoever or attempting to do so³. The Respondent was also ordered to make a contribution of £1,200 towards Prosecution costs at rate of £100 a month. The Applicant also relies upon the sentencing remarks (“the Sentencing Remarks”) of Her Honour Judge Scott.⁴

Allegation 1.1 – Committed sexual assault on a female contrary to section 3 of the Sexual Offences Act 2003 and this conduct led to his conviction.

16. Paragraphs 10 to 15 above are repeated, and the SRA relies upon those facts to support the allegation. Additionally, the SRA relies upon the following facts and matters.

Breach of SRA Principles –

Principle 2 (act in a way that upholds public trust and confidence in the solicitors’ and in legal services provided by authorised persons)

16. The Respondent’s actions as described above at paragraphs 10 to 15 amount to a failure to act in a way that maintains the public’s trust and confidence in the solicitors’ profession and in the provision of legal services. The trust that the public places in solicitors, and in the provision of legal services, depends upon the reputation of the solicitors’ profession as one in which every member

² See Indictment certificate at **page 46**. The indictment certificate has been redacted to preserve the victim’s anonymity.

³ See Certificate of Conviction at **pages 44 to 45**.

⁴ See Sentencing Remarks of Her Honour Judge Scott at pages **47 to 52**. The sentencing remarks have been redacted to preserve the victim’s anonymity and avoid identification of the victim by way of jigsaw identification.

may be trusted to the ends of the earth. The effective operation of legal services depends on the public being able to place its trust in legal services and the people who work in the legal sector. The public would expect a solicitor, who is an officer of the court, to abstain from criminality.

17. The public would not expect a solicitor, who is an officer of the court, to act in the manner as described at paragraphs 10 to 15 above and to thereafter be convicted of a serious criminal offence. The Respondent's conviction also attracted adverse publicity in the national press⁵ undermining not just the public's trust in the Respondent but in all solicitors and in the provision of legal services, impacting the ability of the legal profession as a whole to serve society.
18. In committing sexual assault on a female and being convicted of an offence, the Respondent failed to act in a way that upheld public trust and confidence in the solicitors' profession and in legal services provided by authorised persons and therefore breached Principle 2 of the Principles.

Principle 5 (act with integrity)

19. The Respondent's actions as described above at paragraphs 10 to 15 amount to a failure to act with integrity in breach of Principle 5 of the SRA Principles 2019. In *Wingate v Solicitors Regulation Authority and Solicitors Regulation Authority v Malins* [2018] EWCA Civ 366 [AM1 pages 79 to 115], it was said that:

"In professional codes of conduct, the term 'integrity' is a useful shorthand to express the higher standards which society expects from professional persons and which the profession expect from their own members. Integrity connotes adherence to the ethical standards of one's own profession. It involves more than mere honesty ... The duty to act with integrity applies not only to what professional persons say, but also to what they do" [AM1 page 106 paragraphs 97 to 101].

⁵ <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c93y40pgvwvo>
<https://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/2066702/72-year-old-lawyer-sexually-assaulting-woman>
 At pages 53 to 78.

20. For the avoidance of doubt, it is the SRA's case that adherence to the ethical standards of the solicitors' profession must and does include adherence to the wider law of the land, especially the criminal law, not least because solicitors are officers of the court.
21. The conduct in this case involves an offence of sexual assault, specifically, by touching a female without their consent. A solicitor acting with integrity would not act in the way that the Respondent did especially when that conduct constituted a serious criminal offence which resulted in a suspended term of imprisonment.
22. By acting as described above at paragraphs 10 to 15 and being convicted of an offence of sexual assault on a female, the Respondent failed to act with integrity in breach of Principle 5 of the Principles.

The SRA's investigation

23. The SRA has taken the following steps to investigate the allegation which it makes against the Respondent.
24. On 1 October 2025, an Investigation Officer sent a Notice recommending Referral to the Tribunal (the Notice) by email to the Respondent. The Investigation Officer invited the Respondent to provide his representations to the Notice by 16 October 2025 **[AM1 pages 10 to 13]**. Further to a request from the Respondent, a hard copy of the letter and the attachments referred to therein were printed and sent to the Respondent by recorded delivery on 20 October 2025 and the deadline for the Respondent to provide his representations was extended to 27 October 2025 **[AM1 pages 14]**. The letter was delivered to the Respondent's address on 21 October 2025 **[AM1 page 15]**.
25. On 22 October 2025, the Investigation Officer sent a further email to the Respondent to confirm the extended deadline of 27 October 2025 for the Respondent's representations **[AM1 page 16]**.
26. On 27 October 2025, the Respondent sent Representations and accompanying Annexes in response to the Notice. **[AM1 pages 17 to 25]**.
27. In his response, the Respondent referred to his appeal of the conviction and denied the allegations. **[AM1 page 19]**.

28. On 8 November 2025, the Respondent confirmed that he had been granted permission to appeal **[AM1 page 26]**.
29. The Investigation Officer sent a letter to the Respondent on 17 November 2025, acknowledging the Respondent's Representations and explained that there would be no change in the recommendations set out in the Notice. **[AM1 pages 28 to 29]**.
30. On 10 December 2025, an Authorised Decision Maker of the SRA decided to refer the conduct of the Respondent to the Tribunal⁶, **[AM1 pages 39 to 42]** and the Respondent was notified of this on 15 December 2025. **[AM1 pages 30 to 31]**.
31. The SRA prompted the Respondent by email dated 13 January 2026 to provide an update in respect of the appeal which was understood to have been listed to take place on 16 January 2026.
32. The Respondent's appeal took place on 16 January 2026 at the Court of Appeal Criminal Division. The Respondent was not successful on his appeal. The Respondent notified the SRA of the outcome by email on 19 January 2026. **[AM1 pages 32 to 35]**.
33. On 12 February 2026, the Respondent informed the SRA that he was seeking leave to appeal to the Supreme Court. **[AM1 pages 36 to 38]**.

I believe that the facts and matters stated in this statement are true.

Signed: *Anj Madhar*

Name: Anjana Madhar (Solicitor)

Dated: 27 March 2026

⁶ See Decision on Referral at **pages 39 to 42**. The Decision has been redacted to preserve the victim's anonymity and avoid identification of the victim by way of jigsaw identification.

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**APPENDIX 1 TO STATEMENT PURSUANT TO RULE 12 (2) SOLICITORS
(DISCIPLINARY PROCEEDINGS RULES) 2019**

Relevant Rules and Regulations

SRA Principles 2019

Principle 2 You must 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 must act with integrity.
