

SOLICITORS DISCIPLINARY TRIBUNAL

IN THE MATTER OF THE SOLICITORS ACT 1974

Case No. 12627-2024

BETWEEN:

SOLICITORS REGULATION AUTHORITY LTD

Applicant

and

MICHAEL PETER ALEXANDER

Respondent

Before:

Ms T Cullen (in the chair)

Mrs L Boyce

Mr P Hurley

Date of Hearing: 6 July 2026

Appearances

Lydia Barnfather, counsel of QEB Hollis Whiteman, 1-2 Laurence Pountney Hill, London EC4R 0EU for the Applicant.

Paul Douglas, counsel of 3 Temple Gardens, Bridge House, 181 Queen Victoria St, London EC4V 4EG for the Respondent.

JUDGMENT

Allegations

1. The allegations made against Mr Alexander by the Solicitors Regulation Authority Limited ("SRA") were that while in practice as a Solicitor at Harwood Solicitors ("the Firm"):
 - 1.1 Between April to May 2022 Mr Alexander sent messages on WhatsApp to Person A, a barrister who was instructed by the Firm, which were inappropriate and/or unwanted and/or sexually motivated. In doing so, he breached one or both of Principles 2 and 5 of the SRA Principles 2019 ("the Principles").
 - 1.2 Between 19 and 28 August 2023, Mr Alexander sent messages on Facebook messenger and WhatsApp, and left two voicemail messages, to Person B, an individual he initiated contact with on Facebook messenger and to whom he had indicated his interest in employing her as his personal assistant or similar, which were inappropriate and/or unwanted and/or sexually motivated. And in doing so, he breached one or all of Principles 2 and 5 of the Principles and Paragraph 1.2 of the Solicitors Code of Conduct 2019 for Solicitors, RELs and RFLs ("the Code").
 - 1.3 Between 28 February 2024 and 2 March 2024, Mr Alexander sent messages to Person C on LinkedIn which were inappropriate and/or unwanted. In doing so, he breached one or all of Principles 2 and 5 of the Principles and Paragraph 1.2 of the Code.

Executive Summary

2. Mr Alexander admitted all the allegations. The Tribunal found the allegations proved on the facts, determining that the admissions were properly made. The Tribunal determined that given the serious nature of the misconduct, the only appropriate and proportionate sanction was to strike Mr Alexander off the Roll. The Tribunal's reasoning on sanction can be accessed [\[here\]](#).

Documents

3. The Tribunal reviewed all the documents submitted by the parties, which were contained in the electronic bundle.

Professional Details

4. Mr Alexander, who was born in 1963, was a solicitor having been admitted to the Roll in October 1988. He was employed by the Firm from 2 January 2020 to 2 August 2022. At the time of the conduct alleged at allegations 1.2 and 1.3 he was a consultant for RH Law Ltd, Russell & Russell Solicitors LLP, Keith Dyson Solicitors Ltd, Abbey Solicitors Ltd, Khattak Solicitors Ltd and Bakers Solicitors Ltd.
5. Mr Alexander held an unconditional practising certificate.

Findings of Fact and Law

6. The Applicant was required to prove the allegations on the balance of probabilities. The Tribunal had due regard to its statutory duty, under section 6 of the Human Rights Act

1998, to act in a manner which was compatible with Mr Alexander's rights to a fair trial and to respect for his private and family life under Articles 6 and 8 of the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms.

Integrity

7. The test for integrity was that set out in Wingate and Evans v SRA and SRA v Malins [2018] EWCA Civ 366, as per Jackson LJ:

“Integrity is a useful shorthand to express the higher standards which society expects from professional persons and which the professions expect from their own members ... [Professionals] are required to live up to their own professional standards ... Integrity connotes adherence to the ethical standards of one's own profession.”

8. **Allegation 1.1 - Between April to May 2022 Mr Alexander sent messages on Whatsapp to Person A, a barrister who was instructed by the Firm, which were inappropriate and/or unwanted and/or sexually motivated. In doing so, he breached one or both of Principles 2 and 5 of the Principles.**

Agreed Facts

- 8.1 The Statement of Agreed Facts is appended to this Judgment. In summary, the parties agreed:

- Person A knew Mr Alexander professionally through work undertaken for the Firm. Their communications began in a work-related context and initially included occasional professional “*banter*.” Mr Alexander began sending personal and sexualised messages.
- Mr Alexander sent messages commenting on Person A's appearance and figure, asked what she was wearing, and sent other sexually charged messages. Person A repeatedly told him that the messages were inappropriate, asked him to keep communications professional, and asked him to stop.
- Despite those requests, Mr Alexander continued messaging her, including late at night and early in the morning. Person A became sufficiently uncomfortable that she avoided attending court where she knew he would be present, asked the Firm not to send him to court on a case in which she was instructed, and ultimately blocked him.
- Person A informed her senior clerk and the Firm, provided messages as evidence that Mr Alexander had ignored her requests to stop, and decided she would no longer accept work from the Firm because of the discomfort caused by Mr Alexander's conduct.
- Person A regarded Mr Alexander's characterisation of the messages as “*banter*” as alarming because the messages were sexually charged, not reciprocated, and continued after she had made clear that she did not want to receive them.

WhatsApp messages

8.2 Undated (but before 7 April)

Mr Alexander: *How's [Person A]?*

8.3 7 April

Person A: *Good thanks Hope you are well (10:24)*

Mr Alexander: *Where's that big bad ass?*

Person A: *Let's stick to the rules please.*

8.4 Undated (but before 28 April)

Mr Alexander: *Is your thong on?*

Person A: *Stop please.*

8.5 28 April 2022

Mr Alexander: *Taking instructions for your trial this month x.*

Person A: *Morning. Which trial*

Mr Alexander: *[Name indicated] x.*

Person A: *Thanks*

Mr Alexander: *What you wearing?*

8.6 29 April 2022

Mr Alexander: *Where's that big ass?*

8.7 2 May 2022

Mr Alexander: *How's [Person A]?*

8.8 (undated)

Person A: *I can't engage in that kind of talk. Just keep it professional please*

Mr Alexander: *What happened to our lunch*

Person A: *...your expectations of what lunch would entail concern me.*

Mr Alexander: *I've no expectations*

8.9 11 May 2022

Mr Alexander: *I've been bigging you up here x.*

Person A: *Thanks, been busy today.*

Mr Alexander: *You're tops xx*

Person A: *Thank you.*

8.10 12 May 2022

Mr Alexander: *Where's the big butt? X*
 Person A: *Working and please let's not go back to those kind of messages. I really respect you and hopefully we can work well together.*
 Mr Alexander: *Only the odd one! Xx*
I like you x.

8.11 Person A blocked the contact at 12:47 on 13 May 2022 and then unblocked it at 15:07 and then blocked it again 13 seconds later.

8.12 Currently undated but assumed to be before contact was blocked.

Mr Alexander: *You in bed? Xx*
 Mr Alexander: *How's pussy? Xx*
 Person A: *Stressed and late for work*
 Mr Alexander: *Been wanking bout you xx*
 Person A: *You need to get a physical friend. X*
 Mr Alexander: *Are you commando? Xx*
 Mr Alexander: *Love your eloquence xx.*
 Person A: *I like to be clear.*
 Person A: *Let's not muddy the waters of our friendship please.*
 Mr Alexander: *Need you to bend over xx*
 Person A: *No more today, Mike*
 Mr Alexander: *I love the banter x.*
 Person A: *I'm sorry Mike. It's not banter. Your messages are always sexually charged.*
 Person A: *And it's made me very uncomfortable. I'm clear I don't want those messages.*
 Mr Alexander: *What you wearing today? X*
 Person A: *Mike. I'm not going to answer that question anymore. Please stop.*

The Applicant's Case

8.13 Ms Barnfather submitted that when the matter was investigated by the Firm, Mr Alexander maintained that there had been consensual sexual banter, that Person A was happy with the messages, and that she had agreed to have lunch with him. When it was put to Mr Alexander that Person A had asked him to stop, Mr Alexander stated that Person A had contradicted herself and queried why she had not blocked him.

8.14 Mr Alexander asserted that the communications were wholly unrelated to his professional life, had no impact on his work and that the Firm's investigation contravened his right to a private life.

8.15 Following the complaint, Mr Alexander made a counter-complaint to Person A's chambers regarding what he called her lack of professionalism. Following the Firm's investigation, Mr Alexander raised a grievance against the Firm.

- 8.16 In his communication with the Applicant, Mr Alexander asserted that the allegation contained gross exaggeration and inaccuracies of fact and law.
- 8.17 Ms Barnfather submitted that public trust was likely to be undermined by the sending of inappropriate and sexual messages to another legal professional and one instructed by the Firm for which he worked, particularly in circumstances when the individual asked for such messages not to be sent. In sending inappropriate and unwanted messages, Mr Alexander breached Principle 2 of the Principles.
- 8.18 Such conduct also contravened the higher standard of professionalism expected of a solicitor in breach of Principle 5.

The Respondent's Case

- 8.19 Mr Alexander admitted that his WhatsApp messages to Person A were inappropriate, unwanted, and sexually motivated, particularly in light of Person A's repeated requests that he stop sending them. He further admitted that, by that conduct, he breached Principles 2 and 5 of the Principles.

The Tribunal's Findings

- 8.20 The Tribunal found allegation 1.1 proved on the facts. The Tribunal determined that Mr Alexander's admissions were properly made.
9. **Allegation 1.2 - Between 19 and 28 August 2023, Mr Alexander sent messages on Facebook messenger and WhatsApp, and left two voicemail messages, to Person B, an individual he initiated contact with on Facebook messenger and to whom he had indicated his interest in employing her as his personal assistant or similar, which were inappropriate and/or unwanted and/or sexually motivated. And in doing so, he breached one or all of Principles 2 and 5 of the Principles and Paragraph 1.2 of the Code.**

Agreed Facts

- 9.1 The SRA received a report from Person B on 13 September 2023. Person B had first been contacted by Mr Alexander via Facebook on 19 August 2023. His profile identified him as a lawyer and showed mutual connections. Person B, who had recently updated her LinkedIn profile and CV and wished to return to work, accepted his message and friendship request because she considered that a professional connection with a lawyer might be useful and because he had raised the possibility of temporary PA work.
- 9.2 On 19 August 2023, from 06:48, Mr Alexander asked Person B about her work and experience but quickly made the conversation personal. He asked about her weekend plans, when she was free for a drink, and said he wanted to take her to a restaurant despite her saying, *"I live with someone not sure how that would go down."* He asked whether she was naked in bed, said he would *"keep chasing [her] butt,"* asked whether it was *"pert or peachy,"* described himself as *"a bit of a horny bastard,"* and ended messages with, *"gonna enjoy chasing your pert butt you're fab xxx," "you sexy babe xxxx"* and *"wish I was in bed with you xx."*

- 9.3 Mr Alexander sent several sexualised GIFs. Person B stated that she was busy with her boyfriend, was not free to chat, and that they were *"keeping this professional."* Mr Alexander replied, *"Why not? xx"* and later called her a *"cheeky bitch xxx."*
- 9.4 Mr Alexander left voicemail messages on 19 and 20 August 2023. In the first, he said he hoped their communications were *"the start of something quite exciting"* and that he would *"enjoy chasing [her] butt."* In the second, he said he looked forward to Person B being his PA and added: *"Will you let me squeeze your arse while you are my PA, and er let me flirt with you, that'll be fun."*
- 9.5 Mr Alexander sent WhatsApp messages on 19 August 2023. At 08:56, Mr Alexander wrote, *"Think I may use your secretarial services if you're any good,"* and at 09:59 asked, *"You still in bed? Xx."* Person B said she was with her boyfriend and asked him not to call, but at 10:26 she received a missed call from him. He later wrote, *"You can be my pa xxx," "staring at your pie xxxx," "Is that blow dry or blow job? Xx,"* and *"How was the blow job I mean blow dry? Xxx."* When Person B reminded him, she was in a relationship, he replied, *"Good riposte! I'm enjoying chasing your butt xxx."*
- 9.6 On 20 August 2023, Mr Alexander began messaging at 06:13, asking *"You naked in bed? Xxx"* and later *"Where's my addiction? Xxx."* Although Person B said she was busy all day and that any work would be *"purely on a professional basis,"* he continued messaging, sent an image of a restaurant, and referred to Person B making him *"horny."* At 20:18 he asked, *"Have you got a good butt? Important if you're gonna be my Pa ! Xxx."* At 21:54 he asked, *"Strip poker later? Xxxx,"* and at 23:15, after Person B said she was going to bed, he asked, *"Will you text me while you're in bed, I like that xxx"* and said, *"Gonna wank about you now xxx"*.
- 9.7 On 21 August 2023, Mr Alexander began messaging at 05:51, saying, *"Just woke up with a stiffy xxx"*. Person B responded at 08:19, *"Pls stop."* Mr Alexander asked: *"Stop what xx.... You naked in bed? Xxx."* Person B again asked him to stop, said she had given him no indication that he should pursue her, explained that she was in a loyal relationship, and asked him not to send inappropriate messages because her children used her phone. He continued with personal and sexualised messages, repeated that he was *"chasing"* her, referred to his professional reputation and high-profile friends and family, asked if she could meet for an interview, and at 23:56 asked: *"You in bed darling? Xxx."*
- 9.8 On 22 August 2023, Mr Alexander began messaging at 02:53, saying that he had woken thinking of Person B. He later said, *"You've got a great figure [Person B]xxx"* and at 05:31, *"I'd love to lick every inch of you I should be so lucky xxxx"*. Person B replied, *"Pls stop this I said keep it professional."* Mr Alexander continued messaging, apparently from a different number, and Person B warned that she would block him if he made another inappropriate comment.
- 9.9 On 23 August 2023, Mr Alexander began messaging at 06:32 with an explicit sexual question, asking: *"Did you suck your fella off? Jealous if you did babe xxx."* When Person B asked him to stop calling because she was busy, he replied, *"You better be available when I want to discuss work with you xxx."* At 13:11, he said: *"Coz I'm obsessed with you xxx."* Person B replied: *"Well pls don't be. I've given you no reason whatsoever to feel that way."*

- 9.10 That evening, Mr Alexander sent further explicit messages, including: *“Wish you were sucking me off tonight! Looking forward to seeing you tmoz babe xxx.”* Person B responded, *“I’m ignoring that comment you filthy pervert.”* Mr Alexander replied: *“Love talking dirty to you you understand me xxx ... We’re gonna work well together xxx.”* At 23:48, he messaged, *“Good night, Randy bitch see you tomorrow don’t forget to wear your ski pants and see through top night gorgeous xxxx.”*
- 9.11 In the early hours of 24 August 2023, Mr Alexander sent explicit sexual messages, including *“Just wanked about you xxx... Are you shaven? Xxx ... Tell me I’m a Randy dirty bastard xxx”* and, at 04:05, *“Wanna lick you while squeezing your butt and hear you cum darling xxxx”*.
- 9.12 Person B said there was no point meeting because he would not treat her professionally, although they met at around 11:10. Later that day he sent further sexualised comments and said she would have to tolerate him being *“a horny bastard”*. When he later said he had masturbated while thinking about her, Person B replied, *“Omg pls stop.”*
- 9.13 On 25 August 2023, Mr Alexander began at 06:50 by asking: *“How’s sexy? Xxx.”* When Person B missed a call and asked what it was about, he said he wanted to chat. Person B said she could not just sit and chat, asked him to stop calling constantly, and said: *“not sure this is gonna work. I’m happy to work for you but I want to keep it purely professional which I’m not sure you wants [sic].”*
- 9.14 Between 26 and 27 August 2023, Person B again indicated that she was not free to talk and that matters were to remain professional. Mr Alexander called her a *“cheeky bitch.”* On 27 August 2023, he sent an explicit message: *“Wanna stick my finger up your ass xxx”*. Person B replied: *“This isn’t gonna work sorry,”* said his messages were *“freaking [her] out a bit,”* that she did not like being spoken to in that way, and that it was annoying her. Mr Alexander dismissed this and continued asking what she was doing and when he could call.
- 9.15 On 28 August 2023, Person B told Mr Alexander that she no longer wished to work for him, would seek work elsewhere, and did not like the way he had spoken to her, describing it as degrading and unprofessional. Less than a minute later, he replied: *“But I wanted you to suck my cock xxx.”* When Person B indicated that she was blocking him, he responded: *“I’m the best xx”* and said she was ungrateful. Person B blocked him on WhatsApp; he subsequently called and left messages. Person B texted asking him to stop, but he persisted until she sent a message stating that it was her boyfriend and that he needed to leave her alone, after which Mr Alexander became threatening and insulting.

The Applicant’s Case

- 9.16 Ms Barnfather submitted that notwithstanding his referral to the SRA in relation to allegation 1.1, Mr Alexander repeated the conduct in an even more offensive and egregious manner with Person B.
- 9.17 During the investigation into his conduct, Mr Alexander asserted that Person B’s statement was *“full of lies, inconsistencies, discrepancies and downright slander.”* He

also failed to see how the communications could form the basis of any complaint. He considered that the voicemail messages were complimentary.

- 9.18 For the reasons detailed at allegation 1.1 above, it was submitted that such conduct was in breach of Principles 2 and 5. In addition, Mr Alexander had taken unfair advantage of Person B in abuse of his position, in breach of paragraph 1.2 of the Code.

The Respondent's Case

- 9.19 Mr Alexander admitted that his messages and voicemails to Person B were inappropriate and unwanted, particularly in light of Person B's repeated requests that he stop, and that they were sexually motivated. He admitted that his conduct breached Principles 2 and 5 of the Principles and Paragraph 1.2 of the Code.

The Tribunal's Findings

- 9.20 The Tribunal found allegation 1.2 proved on the facts. The Tribunal determined that Mr Alexander's admissions were properly made.
- 10. Allegation 1.3 - Between 28 February 2024 and 2 March 2024, Mr Alexander sent messages to Person C on LinkedIn which were inappropriate and/or unwanted. In doing so, he breached one or all of Principles 2 and 5 of the Principles and Paragraph 1.2 of the Code.**

Agreed Facts

- 10.1 The SRA received a complaint from Person C on 28 February 2024. On that date, at 3:46pm, Mr Alexander, who she did not know, contacted her out of the blue, asking in a message on LinkedIn "*How's Person C*" [her profile name on LinkedIn].
- 10.2 Mr Alexander's profile identified him as "*Michael Alexander, a Solicitor at Selfemployed*".
- 10.3 LinkedIn, it was agreed, was a work and employment-focused professional networking platform used for career development, professional networking, recruitment, and related activity. According to its websites, LinkedIn was "*the world's largest professional network on a mission to connect the world's professionals to make them more productive and successful.*"

"Professional Community Policies" asks users to "Be Safe, Be trustworthy, Be professional."

- 10.4 It stated:

"Being professional includes:

Do not engage in sexual innuendos or unwanted advances. We don't allow unwanted expressions of attraction, desire, requests for romantic relationship, marriage proposals, sexual advances or innuendo, or lewd remarks. LinkedIn is a professional networking platform, not a dating site. Do not use LinkedIn to

pursue romantic connections, ask for romantic dates, or provide sexual commentary on someone's appearance or perceived attractiveness. Do not send unwanted advances in messages, posts, or comments or send sexually explicit images to anyone on the platform."

- 10.5 Person C considered Mr Alexander's opening message strange, over-familiar and condescending because it referred to her in the third person. At 16:19, she replied: *"I'll ask her and let you know"*. Mr Alexander immediately asked, *"when you free for lunch?"*
- 10.6 Person C asked whether she knew him. Mr Alexander replied: *"No but I'm a top lawyer from Manchester."* Person C responded that she was happy for him, intending to end the conversation. Mr Alexander later asked what she was doing that evening. Person C regarded this as an over-familiar and inappropriate communication from a stranger on a professional platform. She replied *"sleeping"* and indicated that she was heavily pregnant.
- 10.7 Mr Alexander persisted, saying that Person C sounded nice and was *"feisty"*. Person C replied: *"You realise there are more appropriate ways to meet women than on LinkedIn. Have you heard of Match.com? Might be more your thing."* Mr Alexander nevertheless continued, asking about her *"fella"* and sending further general questions. When she did not respond, he asked, *"Where's [Person C] gone?"*
- 10.8 Despite receiving no response, Mr Alexander messaged again the following day asking: *"What you doing today?"*. Two days later, he sent a further message asking, *"How's [Person C]?"* Person C then blocked him.
- 10.9 On 23 October 2024, the SRA notified Mr Alexander of a report from Person C about the alleged misconduct. At this time, Mr Alexander had already been referred to the Tribunal in respect of the complaint relating to Person A and was being investigated in respect of the complaint made by Person B.

The Applicant's Case

- 10.10 It was the Applicant's submission that Mr Alexander's interaction with, and messages to, Person C, (given his interactions with Persons A and B) could be seen as the precursor to what he hoped, or expected, would lead to further communications in the same vein.
- 10.11 Whilst there was nothing sexually explicit in the messages to Person C, Mr Alexander's opening gambit of asking whether Person C was free for lunch, then asking what she was doing that evening, describing her as feisty and then asking her what her *'fella'* was like, and the persistence in his messages despite the tone of her responses to seek to shut him down, was indicative of his seeking to become personal very quickly.
- 10.12 Such communications were not about establishing a business relationship and were not maintaining any degree of professionalism or appropriateness. Such conduct was not behaving in a way which maintained the trust placed by the public in solicitors in breach of Principle 2. By acting as he did, particularly in the context of the experience of Persons A and B, Mr Alexander had failed to act with integrity in breach of Principle 5.

- 10.13 Further, his conduct was inappropriate and unwanted; he was thus abusing his position by taking unfair advantage of Person C in breach of paragraph 1.2 of the Code.

The Respondent's Case

- 10.14 Mr Alexander admitted that his messages to Person C were inappropriate and unwanted and that his conduct therefore breached Principles 2 and 5 of the Principles and Paragraph 1.2 of the Code.

The Tribunal's Findings

- 10.15 The Tribunal found allegation 1.3 proved on the facts. The Tribunal determined that Mr Alexander's admissions were properly made.

Previous Disciplinary Matters

11. None
12. **Submissions to be heard on Sanction**

The Applicant's Application

- 12.1 Ms Barnfather applied to be heard on sanction. The SRA, it was submitted, was the custodian of public interest. As such, it was right that its views as to the seriousness of the misconduct and the proportionate sanction be heard. The Tribunal would be assisted by an understanding of the Applicant's view as to the appropriate penalty and its reasoning, and proportionality. Assisted by understanding SRA view as to appropriate penalty and reasoning.
- 12.2 Mr Douglass submitted that it was a matter for the Tribunal as to whether assistance was required from the Applicant.
- 12.3 The Tribunal determined that in the circumstances of this case, it would be assisted by hearing submissions from the Applicant as to sanction. Accordingly, the application to make submissions was granted.

The Applicant's Submissions on Sanction

- 12.4 Ms Barnfather submitted that Mr Alexander's conduct was sexually motivated and self-serving. His messages to Persons A and B contained extreme and explicit sexual comments, which violated their dignity, were offensive and degrading. His conduct persisted over several days and could not be classed as careless or spontaneous. It became cumulatively more serious, particularly when he was on notice of the investigation into his conduct relating to Person A. He had abused his position as a solicitor (as regards Persons B and C). Person B was hoping to obtain employment; Mr Alexander referenced that in a number of his communications with her. There was, it was submitted, a clear imbalance of power.
- 12.5 Mr Alexander continued with his misconduct notwithstanding the numerous requests for him to stop. It was for the Tribunal to determine whether Mr Alexander was unable

to perceive the impact of his conduct or whether he simply disregarded it. His responses to each of the complaints, including during the proceedings, demonstrated his lack of compliance with his obligations and a lack of insight. When challenged on his conduct, he became accusatory, seeking to blame the victims. The Tribunal, it was submitted, might consider that there was a thematic response from Mr Alexander evidencing an underlying attitudinal issue. His lack of insight might raise concern about a risk of repetition.

- 12.6 He had caused harm to each of Persons A, B and C as detailed in their impact statements.
- 12.7 Ms Barnfather submitted that Mr Alexander's widespread and repeated misconduct, directed towards women and of a sexist and degrading nature was fundamentally incompatible with the tenets of the profession. The reputation of the profession was paramount; upholding the reputation and the protection of the public required the consideration of striking Mr Alexander off the Roll.

Mitigation

13. Mr Douglas submitted that it was accepted that the misconduct was serious; Mr Alexander did not seek to minimise it. When considering seriousness, the Tribunal should take into account that neither Persons A nor B could be considered new to the profession or naïve; it could not be said that Mr Alexander had taken advantage of vulnerable young women who were inexperienced or impressionable. Further, none of Persons A, B or C were employees, so there was no employer/employee power imbalance. Nor were they clients.
14. Mr Douglas submitted that whilst the language used was highly inappropriate and offensive, it did not escalate beyond the messages. There were no sexual advances made to either Persons A or B when Mr Alexander met them in person, and no suggestion that he intended to act in accordance with the language used in the messages.
15. It had been the Applicant's submission that the misconduct was as the highest level such that striking Mr Alexander off the Roll was justifiable. Mr Douglas submitted that whilst the communications were unpleasant and offensive, they fell way short of the worst sexual impropriety. Accordingly, the misconduct was not properly characterised by the Applicant.
16. The misconduct had taken place during a small proportion of Mr Alexander's long career, lasting a few months in relation to Person A, 9 days in relation to Person B and a few days in relation to Person C. There had been no further complaints since that time. Mr Douglas acknowledged that Mr Alexander's conduct was a very serious fall from grace. Mr Alexander, it was submitted, had provided invaluable service to his profession. Whilst he had not assisted his cause given his conduct during the proceedings, he had accepted his guilt and had spared Persons A, B and C the ordeal of giving evidence.
17. Mr Alexander was 63 years old and considered that he had approximately five years of practice remaining. He had been qualified for 38 years and should, by then, have developed sound professional judgment. Although he fell short of that standard over a

two-year period, it was submitted that, across his 38-year career, no other complaints had been made against him. For 22 years, from 1993 to 2015, he ran his own firm, which at its height employed around 15 people. There had been no complaints from employees or clients during that period.

18. Mr Douglas referred to the passing of Mr Alexander's father in March 2023, during the Applicant's investigation into his conduct regarding Person A. Mr Alexander considered that the loss and grief affected his judgment. His judgment was likewise affected by the loss of his business, marriage, and house in 2015.
19. Mr Alexander offered his unreserved apology to Persons A, B and C for the distress that he caused. Further, he recognised that his conduct undermined public trust in him and in the profession, and that the standards expected of him applied when his professional status had been invoked. He was ashamed to have acted as he did. Mr Alexander had reflected on his conduct and had gained insight into the necessity to preserve professional boundaries in professional and private communications. He also now understood the requirement to disengage when told to do so.
20. The Tribunal had heard the evidence relating to the misconduct. It also had evidence from Mr Alexander's referees, who had observed his character over many years of practice. Those referees included both male and female professionals and attested to his honesty, integrity, professionalism, trustworthiness, diligence, thoroughness, loyalty, courtesy, and approachability. It was submitted that this was the impression he had given to members of the profession who, despite being aware of the allegations, considered it appropriate to provide their professional support and endorsement.
21. Mr Douglas submitted that, in the circumstances, striking Mr Alexander off the Roll would be disproportionate. The proceedings had been a salutary experience for him; he did not wish to repeat it or to cause others the distress he had caused Persons A, B and C. It was submitted that he still had much to offer the profession and that a strike off would bring his career to an end, which he was keen to avoid.
22. Mr Douglas submitted that a period of suspension, whether immediate or suspended, would fairly reflect the seriousness of the breaches. Such a sanction would demonstrate to the public that the conduct was being treated seriously and that the profession was regulating its members appropriately. It would also punish Mr Alexander and mark the unacceptability of the behaviour. The likelihood of repetition was said to be minimal, given his admissions and the deterrent effect of a suspension.

Sanction

23. The Tribunal had regard to the Guidance Note on Sanctions (11th Edition – February 2025). The Tribunal's overriding objective, when considering sanction, was the need to maintain public confidence in the integrity of the profession. In determining sanction, it was the Tribunal's role to assess the seriousness of the proven misconduct and to impose a sanction that was fair and proportionate in all the circumstances.
24. The Tribunal found, as Mr Alexander admitted, that his conduct was sexually motivated. The misconduct involved repeated and persistent communications of a sexual, degrading, and inappropriate nature to three women in circumstances where

Mr Alexander's professional status had either been invoked or formed part of the context in which the communications arose.

25. The Tribunal found that Mr Alexander's misconduct caused direct harm to each of Persons A, B and C. Person A described being affected both personally and professionally. She became hesitant before giving her number to work colleagues, did not actively use social media, returned all her work to the Firm, and stopped accepting cases from it, with consequent financial impact. Person B described Mr Alexander's "ongoing harassment" and "unprofessional conduct" as having a significant emotional impact. She felt shaken, disillusioned, and more guarded in professional settings, and stated that her trust in men in professional roles had diminished. Person C described the incident as having a significant emotional impact and found Mr Alexander's persistence particularly distressing. She deactivated her LinkedIn account entirely because of her concern that Mr Alexander might monitor her through another account.
26. The Tribunal determined that the harm caused was plainly foreseeable. It was also foreseeable that such conduct would damage public confidence in the profession. Mr Alexander's behaviour represented a serious departure from the standards of integrity, probity and trustworthiness expected of a solicitor. The Tribunal therefore found that the misconduct caused considerable harm both to Persons A, B and C and to the reputation of the profession.
27. The misconduct was aggravated by its deliberate, repeated, and persistent nature. Person A asked Mr Alexander to stop sending sexually charged messages. He ignored those requests. When he became aware of the complaint made against him, he complained to her chambers and telephoned her because he was "annoyed." He did not accept the Firm's findings following its investigation into his conduct and instead raised grievances against the Firm. Mr Alexander also sought to blame Person A, asserting that she had sent sexually explicit messages.
28. Mr Alexander was fully aware of the SRA investigation into his conduct towards Person A when he began communicating with Person B. Person B asked him to stop sending unprofessional messages. He ignored those requests and sent messages that were even more explicit. Throughout, Mr Alexander referred to the prospect of employment for Person B. The Tribunal inferred that he did so as to ensure the continued engagement of Person B with his messages. When Person B told him that his conduct was disgusting and that she wanted nothing further to do with him, Mr Alexander replied, "*I like you.*" Person B responded that she did not like him at all and told him to stop messaging and calling her, describing his conduct as "*really gross and creepy.*" Mr Alexander replied, "*What did I do?! X.*" When Person B later pretended to be her partner and told Mr Alexander to leave her alone, his responses were rude and insulting.
29. During the Applicant's investigation, Mr Alexander described Person B's complaint as "*nothing short of a character assassination upon myself and I will not let my professional reputation be impugned in any way.*" He accused Person B of "*throwing anything and everything she can at me to criticise and discredit me.*" He maintained that the voicemails he had left were complimentary and were not threatening, insulting or sexually explicit. The Tribunal rejected that characterisation. The voicemails included references to him chasing Person B's butt and asking whether she would allow him to squeeze her arse and flirt with her. Mr Alexander also asserted that Person B

was “*more than happy*” to engage in sexual banter, notwithstanding the clear evidence to the contrary.

30. Mr Alexander’s conduct towards Person C took place when he was aware both of his referral to the Tribunal in respect of Person A and of the investigation into his conduct towards Person B. The Tribunal found his inability or unwillingness to desist from inappropriate communications to be extremely concerning. Having persisted in a wholly inappropriate course of conduct with Person B despite knowing of Person A’s complaint, he then commenced an inappropriate course of conduct with Person C despite knowing of complaints by both Persons A and B. The Tribunal noted the submission that there had been no further incidents but did not accept that Mr Alexander presented no future risk of similar misconduct.
31. The Tribunal took account of the mitigation advanced on Mr Alexander’s behalf. It accepted that he had admitted the allegations, thereby avoiding the need for Persons A, B and C to give evidence; that he had apologised; that he had no previous disciplinary findings; that he had practised for many years; and that he had provided professional references, albeit not all the referees made specific reference to these proceedings. The Tribunal also noted the submissions that none of the complainants was a client or employee, that the communications did not escalate into physical sexual misconduct, and that Mr Alexander had suffered personal difficulties, including bereavement and earlier losses in his personal and professional life.
32. The Tribunal gave proper weight to those matters. However, they did not materially reduce the seriousness of the misconduct. Mr Alexander was an experienced solicitor who should have understood the need to maintain professional boundaries and to desist immediately when asked to do so. The absence of physical sexual misconduct meant that the misconduct did not become more serious still; it did not render the proven conduct anything other than very serious. The positive references demonstrated that Mr Alexander had previously been regarded highly by professional colleagues, but they could not displace the Tribunal’s assessment of the seriousness of the admitted misconduct, its impact on the complainants, and the risk arising from his repeated conduct over time.
33. The Tribunal considered the submission that a period of suspension, whether immediate or suspended, would be sufficient to mark the seriousness of the misconduct, punish Mr Alexander, and protect the public. The Tribunal rejected that submission. The misconduct was not isolated. It involved three separate women, repeated disregard of clear requests to stop, the continuation of misconduct while regulatory investigations were ongoing, victim-blaming responses, and a lack of genuine insight demonstrated over a sustained period. In those circumstances, the Tribunal did not consider that a suspension would be sufficient to protect the public, maintain confidence in the profession or uphold proper professional standards.
34. The Tribunal considered and rejected the lesser sanctions available to it. Making no order, imposing a reprimand, or imposing a fine would be wholly inadequate given the seriousness, persistence, and impact of the misconduct. A restriction order would not adequately address the attitudinal concerns identified. A suspension would not sufficiently mark the gravity of the conduct or reassure the public that conduct of this nature by a solicitor is incompatible with continued membership of the profession.

35. The Tribunal determined that Mr Alexander's departure from the standards of integrity, probity and trustworthiness expected of a solicitor was so serious that the protection of the public and the maintenance of public confidence in the profession required that he be struck off the Roll. Members of the public, properly informed of the facts, would consider it unacceptable for a solicitor who had behaved as Mr Alexander had behaved to be permitted to continue to practise. The only appropriate and proportionate sanction was therefore that Mr Alexander be struck off the Roll.

Costs

36. Ms Barnfather applied for costs in the sum of £100,149.44, which included a reduction for the significantly shortened hearing time (the original time estimate, prior to Mr Alexander's admissions, being 10 days).
37. Mr Douglas submitted that liability for costs was accepted. As to quantum, the Tribunal was referred to Mr Alexander's financial statement showing that he had a limited monthly income surplus.
38. The Tribunal was satisfied that the costs claimed were reasonable and proportionate. The Tribunal then considered whether there should be any reduction in costs in light of Mr Alexander's means. The Tribunal's direction in relation to means required that if Mr Alexander wished his means to be taken into consideration by the Tribunal, he was required to file a statement of means supported by documentary evidence. Whilst Mr Alexander had filed a statement of means, he had not provided any documentary evidence in support. The Tribunal thus applied limited weight to his means information when considering any reduction. The Tribunal determined that a reduction of approximately 25% of the costs claimed was reasonable, taking into account Mr Alexander's means and his inability to continue to practise in the profession. Accordingly, the Tribunal ordered that he pay costs in the sum of £75,000.00.

Statement of Full Order

39. The Tribunal ORDERED that the Respondent, MICHAEL PETER ALEXANDER solicitor, be STRUCK OFF the Roll of Solicitors and it further Ordered that he do pay the costs of and incidental to this application and enquiry fixed in the sum of £75,000.00.

This 24th day of July 2026
On behalf of the Tribunal

T Cullen

T Cullen
Chair