

Accrington man handed 12 months suspended jail sentence for fraud

On Tuesday 14 September, Bernard Holmes of Blackburn was sentenced at Preston Crown Court to 12 months' jail, suspended for two years. The court also ordered 120 hours of unpaid work and a 30-day rehabilitation requirement. The sentence follows his guilty plea to three counts of fraud on 19 July.

Holmes has a history of offending and served a jail sentence for assault between July 2019 and October 2020. Prior to that offence, Holmes fraudulently used his uncle's identity to gain an SIA licence. He did this as he knew that his criminal record would prevent him from being allowed a licence in his own name. He completed the required training in August 2018 and was awarded a SIA door supervisor's licence on 10 January 2019.

On 21 September 2018 SIA investigators were carrying out routine checks at the Rail and the Nag's Head public houses in Accrington. Security staff confirmed that they had been deployed by RR Ryan Response Ltd, and that their employer was Bernard Holmes. This was later confirmed by management. SIA investigators could not find any evidence that Holmes had an SIA licence. They invited him for an interview which he failed to attend.

During the investigation the SIA found that Holmes was an associate of Jason Grogan whom he trained with. Holmes put Grogan under pressure to form a company, RR Ryan Response Ltd. Holmes formed the company without Grogan's knowledge in August 2018. Grogan, who was refused an SIA licence in 2019, told SIA investigators that he was unaware that he was the director of the company.

During the autumn SIA investigators approached witnesses, including the training provider, who identified the person claiming to be Jason Nicholson as Bernard Holmes.

In August 2020 SIA investigators approached Jason Nicholson for a formal interview, which he refused. They later interviewed Nicholson in conjunction with Lancashire Constabulary, when he confirmed that he was Holmes' uncle. Nicholson told investigators that he had never trained or applied for an SIA licence. He also stated that he had no knowledge that his identity had been used to fraudulently gain qualifications and an SIA licence.

On Tuesday, His Honour Judge Simon Medland QC, said of Holmes:

You have a long history of periodic outbursts of violence and serious conduct. These have resulted in not insignificant periods in custody. You knew when you were undertaking the process (of getting a licence) you were not going to go through the usual channels. This is because you know you would not have been granted a SIA licence. The SIA works well in making sure people are fit and

proper and you are not that. You went about matters in a devious way. You were cunning in your approach to circumvent this regime and it worked for a period of time. These offences took place in August 2018 and we are now in September 2021 and within that time you have since been to prison for violence.

Jen Hart, the SIA's criminal investigation manager, said:

This is a complicated and a devious fraud. This case demonstrates that the SIA will always seek to identify those who are abusing the licensing system designed to protect the public. The severity of the sentence demonstrates that the court thought so too.

Notes to editors:

Further information:

- The Security Industry Authority is the organisation responsible for regulating the private security industry in the United Kingdom, reporting to the Home Secretary under the terms of the Private Security Industry Act 2001. Our main duties are: the compulsory licensing of individuals undertaking designated activities; and managing the voluntary Approved Contractor Scheme.
- For further information about the Security Industry Authority visit www.gov.uk/sia. The SIA is also on [Facebook](#) (Security Industry Authority) and [Twitter](#) (SIAuk).