

News story: Trainee lawyer convicted of providing illegal immigration advice and services

Mr Babar Khan, of Mylis Close, Sydenham, London was convicted on 24 August 2017 at Southwark Crown Court of providing unregulated immigration advice and services. On 25 August 2017, Mr Khan was sentenced to 18 months imprisonment suspended for two years. He was ordered to perform 200 hours of unpaid work and was disqualified from holding any company directorship for eight years. He was also ordered to pay prosecution costs of £500.

Mr Khan was employed as a trainee solicitor. However, at the time of these offences he was not suitably qualified or regulated as required by law. He introduced himself as a solicitor to three clients and submitted immigration applications on their behalf. He charged fees for his services without disclosing that he was not qualified to do so. His misconduct came to light when a complaint was lodged with the Office of the Immigration Services Commissioner (OISC).

Sentencing Mr Khan, Her Honour Judge Korner QC said:

“Evidence heard in this case shows that you had no qualification whatsoever during the period of your activities, which goes back to 2012. The fact that your company was named Prime Legal Solicitors demonstrates that you intended to deceive people as you deliberately held yourself out to be a solicitor. For vulnerable applicants the right to remain in the UK is extremely important to them and their families. It is therefore equally important that they are represented by suitably qualified people. Immigration Tribunals in the UK are struggling to cope with the number of unmeritorious appeals because of illegal advisers like you. You took advantage of the desperation and vulnerability of these applicants. This is a seriously dishonest offence that crosses the custody threshold. There are no mitigating factors other than your hitherto good character.”

Speaking about the decision, the Immigration Services Deputy Commissioner Commissioner, Dr Ian Leigh said:

“The OISC is here to ensure that people seeking immigration advice are treated fairly by qualified people they can trust. Babar Khan chose to operate outside the law, and without regard for the protection of his clients. I am delighted with the outcome of this case, and I hope it sends a clear message to anyone considering providing unregulated immigration advice and services.”