

Press release: Court throws book at printers who failed to complete contracts

High Quality Books Ltd, formerly known as Printed Books Limited, and We Print Books Ltd, formerly known as Offset Printers Limited, were wound up in the public interest in the Manchester District Registry on 18 October 2018. The Official Receiver has now been appointed as the Liquidator.

The two London-based publishers operated numerous websites offering printing services, specialising in small print runs. One of their key targets were self-publishers, who were attracted to the competitive rates.

However, the Insolvency Service received complaints about the printers and following enquiries, found evidence of wrongdoing.

Investigators found that after an order was placed, the printers demanded advanced payment of at least 50% before the job started. The companies would then claim they completed the jobs in-house but investigators found that no printing facilities were either owned or operated by them.

Instead, the print jobs were sub-contracted and mainly to suppliers in Eastern Europe who were not always paid and often failed to dispatch the work as a result.

When customers did complain to the printers they were referred to the companies' Terms & Conditions. However, some customers claimed they had never seen these before and the T&Cs were heavily biased towards the companies.

Where complaints were accepted, refunds were often sporadic and did not cover the full amount. Investigators only found one example where a full refund was made.

Investigators also found that on many occasions, customers would initially start to contract with one company before receiving responses from the other, confusing customers as to who they were dealing with.

The Insolvency Service was unable at any point to determine the full extent of the printers' trading activities as the companies failed to fully co-operate throughout the investigation. The names of the printers were also changed to High Quality Books Ltd and We Print Books Ltd respectively just two days before the courts shut them down.

District Judge Khan found in his judgement that both companies had traded with a lack of transparency, as well as a lack of commercial probity in that they made misrepresentations to customers, failed to handle customer data appropriately and failed to maintain and/or deliver up accounting records or co-operate with investigators.

Irshard Mohammed, Chief Investigator for the Insolvency Service, said:

Through the courts, thankfully we have been able to put a stop to these rogue printers. They used deceitful tactics to attract customers, demanded up-front payments and when customers complained having failed to receive their orders, the printers either blamed the customer or hid behind their Terms & Conditions.

These winding-up proceedings should serve as a clear warning to dishonest companies that we will use the full weight of our powers and shut down businesses that operate unscrupulously.

High Quality Books Ltd was previously known as Printed Books Limited, Litho Printing Ltd, Paper Press Limited and UK Print Ltd.

We Print Books Ltd was previously known as Offset Printers Limited and Ink Paper Ltd.

All public enquiries concerning the affairs of the company should be made to: The Official Receiver, Public Interest Unit North, PO Box 16663, Birmingham, B2 2JP. Email: piu.north@insolvency.gsi.gov.uk or farouk.vawda@insolvency.gsi.gov.uk.

Notes to Editors

High Quality Books Limited (company registration number 09303495) was incorporated on 10 November 2014, originally under the name UK Print Limited. The company's registered office is at 3 Shortlands, London W6 8DA and previously 71-75 Shelton Street, Covent Garden, London, WC2H 9JQ.

Offset Printers Limited (company registration number 10503706) was incorporated on 30 November 2016, originally under the name Ink Paper Limited. The company's registered office is at 3 Shortlands, London W6 8DA and previously 71-75 Shelton Street, Covent Garden, London, WC2H 9JQ.

The petitions to wind-up both High Quality Books Limited and We Print Books Limited were presented under s124A of the Insolvency Act 1986 on 30 August 2018. The companies were wound up on 18 October 2018 and the Official Receiver has been appointed as liquidator.

Company Investigations, part of the Insolvency Service, uses powers under the Companies Act 1985 to conduct confidential fact-finding investigations into the activities of live limited companies in the UK on behalf of the Secretary of State for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS).

Further information about live company investigations is available [here](#).

The Insolvency Service, an executive agency sponsored by the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS), administers the insolvency

regime, and aims to deliver and promote a range of investigation and enforcement activities both civil and criminal in nature, to support fair and open markets. We do this by effectively enforcing the statutory company and insolvency regimes, maintaining public confidence in those regimes and reducing the harm caused to victims of fraudulent activity and to the business community, including dealing with the disqualification of directors in corporate failures.

Further information about the work of the Insolvency Service, and how to complain about financial misconduct, is [available](#).

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