

## Who we are

The regulator of solicitors and law firms in England and Wales. We work to protect members of the public and support the rule of law and the administration of justice.  
[www.sra.org.uk/sra/](http://www.sra.org.uk/sra/)

## Who we regulate



192,000  
solicitors



Around 31,000  
solicitors work  
in-house



10,400  
law firms

# ABS

700  
alternative  
business  
structures



# Solicitors Regulation Authority

## Encouraging **high standards** and **growth** in the legal services market



# Use of social media and offensive communications

## Solicitor obligations:



### PRINCIPLE 1

Upholding the rule of law and administration of justice



### PRINCIPLE 2

Acting with integrity



### PRINCIPLE 6

Maintaining public trust



### PRINCIPLE 9

Encouraging equality and diversity

## Resources:

**Warning notice**

[www.sra.org.uk/warningnotices](http://www.sra.org.uk/warningnotices)

**Topic guide**

[www.sra.org.uk/sra/strategy-2017-2020/sub-strategies/enforcement-practice/social-media-offensive-communications](http://www.sra.org.uk/sra/strategy-2017-2020/sub-strategies/enforcement-practice/social-media-offensive-communications)

PRACTICE

## Mind your language, SRA warns solicitors

By Michael Cross | 24 August 2017



51 Comments

A spate of cases involving solicitors being penalised for their use of language in electronic media has prompted the Solicitors Regulation Authority to publish a warning over 'offensive communications'. A 2,300-word guidance note posted on the regulator's website today states: 'We have experienced a significant increase in the number of complaints we receive concerning inappropriate communications, specifically (but not limited to) in relation to emails and the use of social media, both inside and outside of practice.'

Both us and the SDT have made a number of rulings against solicitors for offensive communications in the recent years:

**13**  
referrals to the SDT

**2**  
suspensions

Fines totalling  
**£69,000**

**2**  
rebukes

### Sir Thomas Bingham MR

"A profession's most valuable asset is its collective reputation and the confidence which that inspires"

**Bolton v The Law Society [1994]**  
1 WLR 512

### Rupert Jackson LJ

"...the professions have a privileged and trusted role in society. In return they are required to live up to their own professional standards."

**Wingate and another v SRA [2018]**  
EWCA Civ 366