

The Board of Deputies of British Jews
1 Torriano Mews
Kentish Town
London NW5 2RZ

10th December 2018

For the attention of Marie van der Zyl, Deputies President

Dear Marie,

The report in the Jewish Chronicle (7 December) regarding the possible readmission of Roslyn Pine to the Board, raises two interlinked issues.

The first:

She is being pressured to apologise for her alleged 'Islamophobic' tweets for which she was suspended for six years in July, even though the Board had no power to do so. I received letters from your late father Barry Kaye which were gentile-phobic and threatened me with violence. He cannot have been ignorant about the tragic pre-war past of my wife's family. You were made aware of the letters at the time they were sent but I received no apology or statement of regret. For someone who is regularly quoted as standing up against antisemitism and other forms of hatred, the time for you to distance yourself from your father's racist views, by way of expressing remorse for his sending offensive letters to me, is long overdue.

The second:

It is stated that Mrs Pine had breached the Board's code of conduct. I cannot comment on that specifically whilst it is under review, but codes of conduct exist to set out the rules outlining the responsibilities of, and/or proper practices for, an individual member of a group or organization. My understanding is that the Board itself failed to act properly with regard to her suspension.

The Ethics & Compliance Initiative (ECI) sums it up thus:

A well-written code of conduct clarifies an organization's mission, values and principles, linking them with standards of professional conduct. The code articulates the values the organization wishes to foster in leaders and employees and, in doing so, defines desired behaviour. As a result, written codes of conduct or ethics can become benchmarks against which individual and organizational performance can be measured.

The Solicitors Regulation Authority's Code of Conduct embodies its ten Principles which are mandatory for all members. They define the fundamental ethical and professional standards that are expected of all firms and individuals.

You will remember that the Solicitors Disciplinary Tribunal fined and suspended two of your fellow partners at Davenport Lyons because of breaches related to their conduct between 2006 and 2009.

For several years you have persisted with the claim, in public online documents, that you obtained your law degree in 1988 from Liverpool John Moores University (LJMU). That, to put it mildly, is improbable, as that institution did not exist at that time. Indeed it was not established until four years later in 1992 and by then you had been employed by Courts and Co where you qualified in 1991. Any confusion about dates and places can be cleared up by reference to the original degree certificate, which is an official legal document. Degrees obtained by study at a polytechnic were conferred by the Council for National Academic Awards, and the paper document will state the educational institute attended by the graduate. (The CNAA was dissolved in 1993.)

The SRA regularly deals with complaints where individuals have falsified their educational history and these are considered to be serious breaches of the principles 2 and 6 and invariably incur a disciplinary penalty.

Dr Jared Piazza is a lecturer in Moral Psychology at Lancaster University and says research in psychology has consistently shown that we often demand higher moral standards of others than we do of ourselves. You frequently like to sit in judgement on others, but do you not understand how your double-standards will eventually undermine anything worthwhile you want to achieve?

Yours sincerely,

George Rooker,
Historian