

SRA Regulatory Arrangements (Claims Management Fees) Rules 2024

Rules made by the Solicitors Regulation Authority Board on 23 January 2024.

Made under sections 31 of the Solicitors Act 1974, section 9 of the Administration of Justice Act 1985, section 83 of the Legal Services Act 2007 and section 33 of the Financial Guidance and Claims Act 2018.

Rule 1

The SRA Claims Management Fees Rules shall be made as shown in the Schedule to these rules.

Rule 2

The SRA Glossary shall be amended as follows:

(a) in the definition of “**claim**”:

- (i) after “means” insert “: (a) in the SRA Indemnity Fund Rules and SRA Indemnity Insurance Rules,”
- (ii) after “repay money on demand” insert;
“; and

(b) in the SRA Claims Management Fees Rules, any claim for compensation, restitution, repayment or any other remedy or relief in respect of loss or damage or in respect of an obligation, whether pursuant to an order of a competent court or court or tribunal or pursuant to a statutory redress or compensation scheme”;

(b) after the definition of “**FCA**” insert:

“Fee cap

means the maximum amount that may be charged under the *PPI fee restriction* or the *financial products and services fee restriction*”;

(c) after the definition of “**financial benefit**” insert:

“Financial products and services fee restriction

means the restrictions on charges provided for under rule 2.3 of the SRA Claims Management Fees Rules”;

(d) after the definition of “**general insurance contract**” insert:

“Group action

means:

- a. claims pursued under a Collective Proceedings Order made under Part 5 of the Competition Appeal Tribunal Rules 2015;
- b. joint claims made under one claim form in accordance with rule 7.3 of the Civil Procedure Rules 1998;
- c. an action where a competent court has made an order consolidating multiple claims under rule 3.1(2)(g) of the Civil Procedure Rules 1998;
- d. claims made under a Group Litigation Order made pursuant to rule 19.11 of the Civil Court Procedure Rules 1998; or
- e. a Financial Markets Test Case pursued in accordance with CPR Practice Direction 63AA”;

(e) after the definition of “**policy period**” insert:

“PPI fee restriction

means the restrictions on charges provided for under sections 29 and 31 of the Financial Guidance and Claims Act 2018”;

(f) after the definition of “**REL**” insert the following definitions:

“relevant financial services claims management activities

has the meaning given by section 33(11) of the Financial Guidance and Claims Act 2018 for “relevant claims management activities” but only includes activities which concern *claims* in relation to financial products and services

relevant financial services claims management agreement

has the meaning given by section 33(11) of the Financial Guidance and Claims Act 2018 for “relevant claims management agreements” but only includes those agreements which concern *claims* in relation to financial products and services”; and

(g) after the definition of “**remuneration**” insert:

“representative action

means a *claim* brought under Rule 19, Part II of the Civil Procedure Rules 1998”.

Rule 3

These rules shall come into force on the later of 3 June 2024 or [the 42nd day] after the date on which they are approved by the Legal Services Board.

Schedule

SRA Claims Management Fees Rules

Rule 1 - required information

- 1.1 An authorised body, or an individual as permitted under regulation 9.8(b)(ii) of the SRA Authorisation of Individuals Regulations, providing *relevant financial services claims management activities* or activities that would be *regulated financial services claims management activities* but for the exclusion in article 89N of the *Regulated Activities Order*, whether under a *relevant financial services claims management agreement* or otherwise, must provide any *client* with the information set out in rules 1.2 to 1.5 in writing and receipt must be acknowledged by the *client*.
- 1.2 Before entering into a contract with a *client* the following costs information:
- (a) unless the fee is for a fixed sum, the basis upon which fees will be charged and an estimate of all such fees, making clear the circumstances in which fees could exceed the estimate;
 - (b) if either the *PPI fee restriction* or the *financial products and services fee restriction* applies or could apply to any part of the services provided:
 - i. details of the *fee cap* and an illustration of how it will apply by reference, where relevant, to each of the bands in the table in rule 22.3 of these Rules.
 - ii. an explanation and an estimate of any charges that will fall outside the *fee cap* and that the total charges may therefore exceed it.
- 1.3 Before entering into a contract with a *client* the following information:
- (a) where the *claim* is in scope of a statutory ombudsman, a statutory compensation scheme or an alternative dispute resolution scheme, the fact that the *client* can bring the *claim* themselves free of charge and without representation;
 - (b) if the *client* is advised to proceed with a *claim* in a way which means that a *fee cap* would not apply to either the whole or part of a *claim*, in circumstances where it would be possible to proceed with a *claim* in a way which would mean that a *fee cap* would apply, a clear explanation of that fact together with reasons as to why it is in the *client's* best interests to proceed as advised.
- 1.4 If the *claim* was initially commenced and was subject to a *fee cap* and the *client* is advised to pursue the *claim* in a way which means that the *fee cap* ceases to apply the *client* must be informed of this before any action is taken and the additional costs consequences fully explained to the *client* at that stage.

- 1.5 When invoicing the *client*, if the *claim* is subject to a *fee cap* but your charges exceed the maximum amount that may be charged under the *fee cap* because some charges fall outside it, you must specify which charges fall within the *fee cap* and which do not.

Rule 2 - fee restrictions

- 2.1 If you are an *authorised body*, or an individual as permitted under regulation 9.8(b)(ii) of the SRA Authorisation of Individuals Regulations, providing *regulated claims management services* or activities that would be *regulated claims management services* but for the exclusion in article 89N of the *Regulated Activities Order*, you will, subject to rule 2.2, be subject to the fee restrictions set out in rules 2.3 to 2.9
- 2.2 Rule 2.1 will apply to you if you:
- (a) enter into a *relevant financial services claims management agreement* that provides for a person to pay charges either under that agreement or a connected agreement, or
- (b) you impose charges on a person for, or in connection with, *relevant financial services claims management activities*,
- except to the extent to which the *PPI fee restriction* applies.
- 2.3 The fee restriction on charges for any *claim* is the lower of:
- (a) the maximum percentage rate of charge with reference to the redress awarded for a *claim*, or
- (b) the maximum total charge

in the table below applicable to the redress awarded for that *claim*.

Band	Redress awarded for a claim (3)	The maximum percentage rate of charge	The maximum total charge (£)
1	1-1,499	30%	420
2	1,500 - 9,999	28%	2,500
3	10,000 - 24,999	25%	5,000
4	25,000 – 49,999	20%	7,500
5	50,000 or above	15%	10,000

- 2.4 The fee restriction applies to the entire *claim* even where the *claim* is based on various grounds.
- 2.5 The fee restriction includes all expenses and other charges provided for or imposed under the *relevant financial services claims management agreement* or connected agreement, or for, or in connection with, the *relevant financial services claims management activities*, but does not include VAT.
- 2.6 The fee restriction in rule 2.3 does not apply:
- (a) to any charges for *reserved legal activities*;
 - (b) to charges imposed in circumstances where the relevant services were provided, or the agreement to provide them was entered into and instructions to pursue the *claim* were given, before these rules came into force, provided that the charges imposed were not altered after these rules came into force;
 - (c) if no award for monetary redress is made in the *client's* favour in relation to the *claim*;
 - (d) if the *claim* does not fall within the scope of any of the following:
 - i. the complaints resolution rules set out in the FCA Handbook DISP: dispute resolution
 - ii. any statutory ombudsman scheme including but not limited to the Financial Ombudsman Service and the Pensions Ombudsman, or
 - iii. any statutory compensation scheme including but not limited to the Financial Services Compensation Scheme.
 - (e) to any charges for activities carried on in relation to actual or potential court proceedings if:
 - i. there are reasonable grounds to consider that the limitation period for issuing court proceedings may be about to expire and that it is therefore imminently necessary to issue court proceedings to prevent the *claim* from becoming time-barred;
 - ii. the *claim* cannot be pursued or continued through any statutory ombudsman scheme or any statutory compensation scheme because either the *claim* has already been determined under the relevant scheme or the operator of the relevant scheme has determined that the *claim* cannot or should not be considered under the scheme;
 - iii. there are reasonable grounds to consider that the value of the *claim* may exceed the maximum redress which can be awarded by any applicable statutory compensation or statutory ombudsman scheme;
 - iv. the *claim* raises a novel, complex or important point of law which has potential wider ramifications such as to indicate that a *representative action* or a *Group action* before a court is the appropriate course and in the *client's* best interests; or
 - v. any time limit for referring the complaint to the relevant statutory compensation or statutory ombudsman schemes has already elapsed

and there are no reasonable grounds to believe that the *claim* could be brought within such scheme out of time.

- (f) to a *claim* before the Pensions Ombudsman, the Financial Ombudsman Service or Financial Services Compensation Scheme where the *SRA* is satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances such that it is in the best interests of the *client* to receive specialist legal advice with the result that the reasonable costs of bringing the *claim* are likely to exceed the maximum permitted total charge provided in rule 2.3.
- 2.7 If the fee restriction in 2.3 does not apply as a result of rule 2.6 you must not impose charges for or in connection with *relevant financial services claims management activities* or enter into a *relevant financial services claims management agreement* that provides for the payment of one or more charges, that, alone or in combination with any other charge under that agreement or a connected agreement, or otherwise imposed in connection with the relevant services, exceed an amount that is reasonable in the circumstances in light of the services provided.
- 2.8 You must not impose any charges for or in connection with *relevant financial services claims management activities* or enter into a *relevant financial services claims management agreement* that provides for the payment of one or more charges, that, alone or in combination with any other charge under that agreement or a connected agreement, or otherwise imposed in connection with the relevant services, exceed or are capable of exceeding a fee restriction applied pursuant to rule 2.3 or, as the case may be, rule 2.7.
- 2.8 Any charges imposed under a *relevant financial services claims management agreement* or for, or in connection with, *relevant financial services claims management activities* will be unenforceable to the extent they exceed or are capable of exceeding the fee restrictions imposed by these rules, and you must reimburse the amount of any overpayment promptly, together with interest at a rate of 8% per annum simple interest from the date of overpayment, irrespective of whether your *client* has sought reimbursement or not.
- 2.9 In this rule an agreement (agreement A) is a connected agreement in relation to a *relevant financial services claims management agreement* (agreement B) if:
- a) agreement A enables a charge to be imposed on a *client* in connection with a *claim*, and agreement B provides for *regulated claims management activities* in relation to that *claim*; or
 - b) agreement A provides for services in connection with the *regulated claims management activities* provided for in agreement B; or
 - c) agreement A varies, supplements, novates or replaces agreement B (or vice versa); or

- d) agreement A requires the *client* to pay a fee to a lead generator in respect of the activities performed or to be performed under agreement B.

Supplemental notes

Made by the SRA Board on *[insert date of board approval before LSB submission]*.

Made under sections 31 of the Solicitors Act 1974, section 9 of the Administration of Justice Act 1985, section 83 of the Legal Services Act 2007 and section 33 of the Financial Guidance and Claims Act 2018.