



Report of Finding and Sanction

Respondent	Arbab KHALIL
Case reference	2024/2258/D5
Inn of Court	Lincoln's Inn (March 2024)
Status at hearing	Unregistered
Hearing date/s	9 January 2026
Tribunal Type	5 Person Tribunal

Tribunal members

Chair	HHJ Richard Clews
Barrister member	Kane Simons
Barrister member	Alexander Horne
Lay member	Ian Arundale
Lay member	Vince Cullen

Representatives

Bar Standards Board	Winston Jacob
Respondent	Present

Outcome

Findings	All charges proved
Sanction	Disbarred BSB not to issue practising certificate pending any appeal
Costs	£2,670 to the Bar Standards Board

1. In accordance with an appointment made by the President of the Council of the Inns of Court contained in a Convening Order dated 10 December 2025 The Tribunal sat on 9 January 2026 to hear and determine 1 charge of professional misconduct contrary to the Code of Conduct of the Bar of England and Wales against Arbab Khalil, barrister of the Honourable Society of Lincoln's Inn.

Charges

2. The following charge was proved

Charge 1

Statement of Offence

Professional misconduct, contrary to rQ6A of the Bar Standards Board Handbook (version 4.7).

Particulars of Offence

Mr. Arbab Khalil, an unregistered barrister, engaged before call in conduct which was dishonest or otherwise discreditable to a barrister and which was not, before his call by Lincoln's Inn on 21 March 2024, fairly disclosed in writing to the Inn, in that:

- (a) On 8 January 2024, he submitted a call declaration to Lincoln's Inn in which he stated that he had never been subject to any investigations or proceedings by a higher education institution, that there were no other matters which might reasonably be thought to call into question his fitness to become a practising barrister, and that, should any information within the declaration change prior to his being called to the Bar, he would notify his Inn; and
- (b) On 24 January 2024, he submitted someone else's work, either in whole or in part, which he presented as his own, in respect of his dissertation for his BTC-LLM Research Project to Cardiff University; and
- (c) On 2 February 2024, Cardiff University commenced an investigation into his academic misconduct. Mr Khalil was aware of the investigation, among other matters, by his attendance at a meeting with representatives of Cardiff University on 26 February 2024; and
- (d) Mr Khalil failed to inform Lincoln's Inn of any of the matters set out in paragraphs (b) and (c) above before his call to the bar on 21 March 2024, which was a requirement in accordance with the ongoing duty at paragraph 5 of

the call declaration form he signed dated 8 January 2024 and he was therefore called to the bar on the basis of a false call declaration.

Parties Present and Representation

3. The Respondent was present and not represented. The Bar Standards Board ("BSB") was represented by Winston Jacob.

Pleas

4. Mr Khalil denied the charge.

Evidence

5. The Tribunal heard submissions from Mr Jacob. Mr Khalil gave live evidence, taking questions from the Tribunal and was cross examined by Mr Jacob.

Findings

6. The Tribunal set out their findings as below:
7. Arbab Kahlil was called to the bar on the 21 March 2024 by the Honourable Society of Lincoln's Inn.
8. This hearing has concentrated on his conduct leading up to that date and a few months before.
9. He was charged by the Bar Standards Board with an offence contrary to Rule RQ6A, which I'll read, where it is alleged that the call declaration made by a barrister on call was false in any material respect, or that the barrister has engaged before call in conduct which is dishonest or otherwise discreditable to a barrister which was not before call, fairly disclosed in writing to the Inn, calling them, or where any undertaking given by a barrister on call to the bar is breached in any material respect, that shall be treated as an allegation of a breach of this handbook.

10. The respondent, Mr Kahlil, faces a charge under that rule, which has four strands to it.
11. In chronological order, on the 8 January 2024, he submitted a Call declaration to Lincoln's Inn, which stated he'd never been subject to, and wasn't at that time subject to, any investigations or proceedings by a higher education institution.
12. That at the time was true, but he signed the declaration stated that should that position change, he would inform his Inn prior to being called.
13. On the 24 January 2024, he submitted some written work, which was an LLM research project, to Cardiff University.
14. On the 2 February 2024, Cardiff University commenced an investigation into him as they had become aware that there was a 99% match with that piece of work submitted by him to one already submitted to a different university in Thailand.
15. And from no later than the 9 February 2024, when an e-mail was sent by him acknowledging the position of Cardiff, he was aware that the investigation into his academic conduct was in train.
16. He did not thereafter bring that matter to the attention of Lincoln's Inn prior to his call to the bar on the 21 March 2024.
17. The day after his call to the bar on the 22 March 2024 the decision of Cardiff University was communicated to him. We are not bound by that decision and it is probably fair to say that the university fought shy of coming to firm conclusions about him, but they did conclude that he was guilty of academic misconduct.
18. This whole situation is predicated on how it came to be that he submitted to Cardiff University a piece of written work that already had a 99% match.
19. His account to us is, and in fairness to him always has been, that that work was his own and was carried out by him but due to circumstances in which he found himself

at the time, he sold it to a website and therefore it was his work that was copied, not the other way round.

20. The allegations by the Bar Standards Board involve an allegation that in submitting that piece of written work to the university, he acted dishonestly because he knew it was not his work and that he had copied it.
21. The test of dishonesty is that set out in the case of *Ivey & Genting Casinos*. The prosecution by the Bar Standards Board does not go on to allege that in failing to update his core declaration he was necessarily acting dishonestly, but the Bar Standards Board assert that he knew that he ought to have rectified the position by telling them he was under investigation.
22. Having brought this charge against him, the Bar Standards Board assume the burden of proving it, which has to be on the balance of probabilities. We remind ourselves that Mr Khalil does not have to prove anything and we wish to observe that there is no situation here, nor would we allow there to be, that the burden of proof has been reversed.
23. Understandably, there has been a degree of discourse during the course of the hearing about the extent to which Mr Khalil is either able or is not able to substantiate the account he puts forward but he is not obliged to do that and he does not have any burden of proof, as I say.
24. Nevertheless, it is a fact that there is no supporting evidence for his account whatsoever. He has told us the piece of work submitted was his and his alone, and that therefore he prepared it alone.
25. If that was true, the Bar Standards Board suggests, not unreasonably in our view, that there would be some further evidence of that which would be obtainable and which could have been deployed in his favour.

26. The point they make is that it is telling that there is no such evidence and their case is that simply strengthens what they submit is the obvious inference, namely that Mr Kahlil's account is untrue, that he did not sell this work to someone else that was then used by them, rather he obtained it from someone else and used it as his own and passed it off as his own.
27. We have considered all of the evidence presented to us and the explanations given to us.
28. We conclude, and this decision is unanimous, that Mr Khalil has deliberately misled us and has not told us the truth.
29. We do not accept that this work was prepared by him, sold by him to a website, nor, of course, that he then got a £99.99 voucher to spend on Amazon in return.
30. We find the entirety of that account to be false.
31. We are satisfied on the balance of probabilities, and indeed, if we were called upon to go further than that, there is a very strong possibility we would have, but we do not need to, that he acted in the way that I have said we have found. He therefore knew when he submitted this work that it was not his. He pretended that it was. And on the test in *Ivey & Genting Casinos*, it seems to us that test of dishonesty is amply satisfied.
32. That conduct by him was dishonest and would be regarded as dishonest by right-thinking members of the public.
33. Thereafter, of course, Mr Khalil should have brought the investigation that he was then under, and which he knew he was under, to the attention of his Inn before being called to the Bar. He did not; as the Bar Standards Board have made clear, they do not allege that piece of conduct in itself was dishonest, but it is still relevant.

34. The Call declaration says, you must be honest in this declaration and disclose the information requested. The questions are being asked to ensure that you can uphold the core duties which underpin the behaviours expected of barristers. In deciding that someone can uphold the core duties, consideration is given to whether they are fit and proper. Disclosures will not automatically result in an application being refused.
35. We find, as the Bar Standards Board invites us to, that his conduct in failing to disclose the investigation to his Inn before the call was discreditable, and therefore all aspects of the charge that has been laid against Mr Khalil, we find proved to the relevant standard, and we therefore find Professional misconduct, contrary to RQ6A of the Bar Standards Board, has been established against him.

Sanction and Reasons

36. The Tribunal announced their reasons for sanction as below:
37. We have discussed and considered the guidance on the appropriate sanction. And again, this is a decision that is unanimous.
38. Paragraph 5.1 of the guidance says, '*A finding of dishonesty will almost invariably lead to disbarment in all but the most exceptional circumstances.*' Dishonesty is incompatible with the duties placed on barristers.
39. We have considered the necessary steps as have been brought to our attention and as we know also exist in the written guidance.
40. Plainly, we find that this is dishonest conduct, that is Step 1.
41. Step 2 - we find it is in the middle range. It was calculated, it was planned, but there was no adverse effect on anyone else. It did not involve the representation of a client or any disadvantage to a client.
42. Step 3 - nevertheless, the indicated penalty is disbarment.

43. Step 4 - we have to consider aggravating and mitigating features in terms of Annex 2 that sets out a non-exhaustive list of such features. The conduct was undoubtedly intentional. It was not committed inadvertently or through misunderstanding and there was a failure to self-report to the Inn, which is part of the charge, although not the principal allegation.
44. We have to say that in the light of the evidence given to us, there is a lack of insight by Mr Khalil into the seriousness of his conduct.
45. However, in terms of mitigating features, he is at the entry of the profession with no real professional experience. It may be less likely that such conduct would be repeated.
46. And it follows that there are no previous findings of any kind against him, and we take all of those things into account.
47. Nevertheless, we feel that the only appropriate sanction in this case is disbarment, and we ordered Arbab Khalil to be disbarred.
48. That order will take effect either at the time that he indicates he does not seek to appeal against it or at the conclusion of any appeal proceedings, assuming of course that decision is on any appeal upheld.
49. Additionally, we order payment of £2,670 costs to the Bar Standards Board but we leave it entirely up to them as to whether they, within the circumstances, seek to enforce it.
50. Our reasons for this decision are, firstly, that it is a case of dishonesty and it is calculated dishonesty. There is the additional discreditable conduct of not reporting the matter to the Inn and the explanation given for that merely compounds the dishonesty in our view.

51. We think, as Mr Jacobs suggested in cross-examination, Mr Khalil kept this situation 'under wraps' in the hope that he could flannel his way out of it and that it would all go away and he was singularly misguided in that thought or expectation.

Immediate order

52. The Tribunal also made an order that the BSB not issue a practising certificate pending any appeal under rE227.

Dated: 26 January 2026

**HH Richard Clews
Chairman of the Tribunal**