

Mark Strafford **ACA**

Head of Civil Forensic Accounting



Mark leads the Civil Forensic Accounting team at Sedulo. He is regularly instructed as an expert witness or advisor in relation to a variety of matters, including commercial disputes, investigations, personal injury, matrimonial disputes and business valuations.

Mark is a Member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales and has over twelve years' experience in audit and forensic accounting. He has been involved in a large number of high-value disputes in international arbitrations and the UK High Court, as well as a selection of high profile investigations. A selection of these matters are listed overleaf.

Mark started his career in accountancy working in external audit, before moving into forensic accounting and investigations. Mark's forensic career started at Mazars, a Top 10 firm, before joining the high-end boutique firm Haberman Ilett in 2019 as a Senior Manager. Haberman Ilett was later merged into Kroll (a worldwide advisory firm, previously known as Duff and Phelps).

In the above roles Mark worked on a large number of disputes and investigations under instructions from a variety of clients, including a diverse range of law firms (from magic circle to regional firms), Insolvency Practitioners, UK regulators, the US Department of Justice and major international corporates.

Prior to his forensic experience, Mark has previously been involved in (and led) statutory audit engagements on site for a variety of clients within the manufacturing, hospitality, retail and leisure sectors. Mark also has experience of accounts preparation in relation to SME clients, including preparation of accounts from prime records.

Relevant experience: Kroll (formerly Duff and Phelps) (2020 – 2023)
Haberman Ilett (2019 – 2020)
Mazars UK (2014 – 2019)

Education: ACA, Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales (2014)
University of Leeds, BA German (2009)

Contractual and commercial disputes:

- Instructed as expert advisor in relation to the defence of a high profile allegation of corruption in the Caribbean, regarding the issuance of government contracts.
- Instructed as expert in relation to the quantification of a number of personal injury matters.
- Instructed as expert in relation to a number of business valuation and matrimonial dispute matters.
- Acting for the Claimants in respect of a high profile and significant competition dispute heard in the Competition Appeal Tribunal.
- Acting for the Claimant in respect of an ICSID arbitration matter against a CIS state in relation to a construction project commissioned by the government.
- Acting for the Claimant in respect of a UK High Court matter regarding a property management dispute.
- Acting for the Claimant in a UNCITRAL arbitration in respect of a Bilateral Investment Treaty claim against a major state, quantifying the loss suffered in respect of an investment in the aviation industry.
- Acting for the Respondent, a Middle Eastern state, in respect of a Bilateral Investment Treaty claim in an ICSID arbitration matter brought by a private investor in the aviation industry.
- Acting for the Claimant in an ICSID arbitration matter in respect of a Bilateral Investment Treaty claim against a Central American state, valuing the investment in a financial services business that was expropriated.
- Acting for the Respondent in an arbitration matter in respect of a financial reporting dispute relating to the impairment of loans issued by an African infrastructure fund.
- Acting for the Claimant in respect of an ICC arbitration regarding a warranty dispute in the consumer goods industry in South America, in relation to the internal accounting and financial reporting of the target company.
- Acting for the Claimant in a UK High Court claim brought by a food manufacturer in the Netherlands regarding the breach of contract by a customer.
- Valuation of the loss of value suffered by a business owner in respect of a compensation claim against a major UK bank.

Investigations experience:

Mark also has experience of fraud, regulatory and financial reporting investigations across a diverse range of assignments. Specific experience includes:

- Leading an accounting investigation following the administration of a UK company which left a loss of £300 million across over 50 lenders, uncovering a significant asset-based lending fraud and financial reporting fraud, reported as the largest fraud of this kind in UK history. This included leading a significant funds flow exercise and a full investigation of the accounting records for evidence of fraudulent accounting.
- Instructed in relation to various claims of employee fraud against a former finance director and other former employees.
- Advisory work in respect of professional negligence in relation to the statutory auditor of a high profile failed investment scheme.
- Investigation into alleged accounting fraud in respect of a post-acquisition dispute in South America.
- Regulatory investigation in respect of the statutory audit of a UK High Street bank.
- Assisting the former CEO and CFO of a FTSE 250 company in their co-operation with a regulatory investigation in respect of previous financial reporting.
- Assisted a high profile criminal investigation by US regulators into allegations of improper revenue recognition by a target company prior to a significant transaction.
- Investigation regarding potential professional negligence in respect of the statutory audit of a prominent insurance company in the Caribbean.
- Led investigation in respect of the conduct of the former financial controller at a UK private members club.