

Ex-Barclays CEO fined £1.8m after misleading statements over his links to Jeffrey Epstein

The former CEO of Barclays has been fined £1.8m after misleading regulators and the bank's board about his relationship with Jeffrey Epstein.

Jes Staley has also been banned from holding senior management positions in the financial services industry.

According to the Financial Conduct Authority, he “recklessly approved” a letter sent by Barclays to the FCA in 2019 that included misleading statements about the nature of his relationship with Epstein, and when they last had contact.

While that letter had claimed Mr Staley was not close to the disgraced financier, the former CEO had described him as one of his “deepest” and “most cherished” friends in emails.

It also said the banking executive had ceased contact with the billionaire well before he joined Barclays – but in reality, the pair had been in communication just days before he was appointed CEO in October 2015.

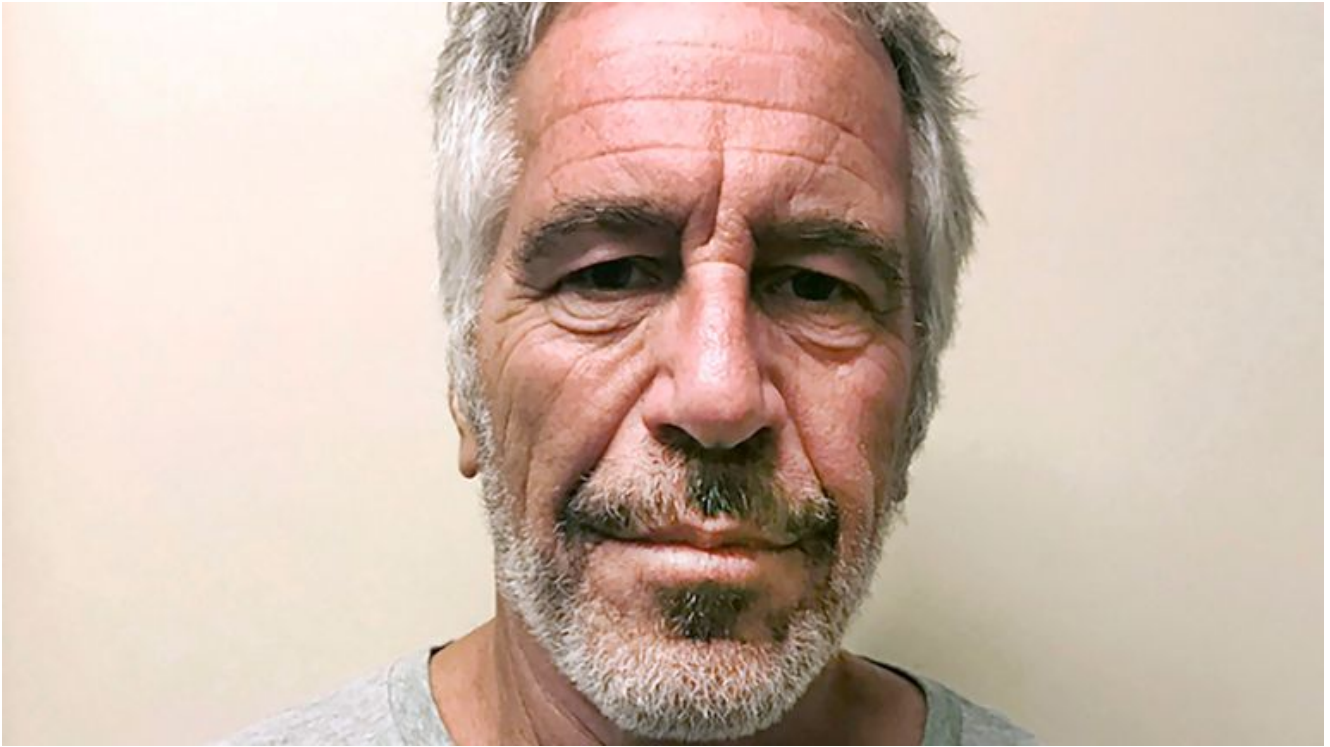


Image:

Jeffrey Epstein took his own life in prison in 2019. Pic: AP

Epstein – a convicted paedophile – killed himself in a New York jail cell while awaiting trial on sex trafficking charges in 2019.

Barclays has now announced Mr Staley is ineligible for – or should forfeit – bonuses and share awards totalling £17.8m.

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Mr Staley has appealed against the FCA's findings to the Upper Tribunal, meaning this decision is a provisional one.

In a statement issued via a law firm, the former executive said he was "very disappointed" by the regulator's decision – and will continue to challenge it.

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FCA joint enforcement director Therese Chambers said: "A CEO needs to exercise sound judgement and set an example to staff at their firm... It is right to prevent him from holding a senior position in the financial services industry if we cannot rely on him to act with integrity by disclosing uncomfortable truths about his close personal relationship with Mr Epstein."

In a statement, the watchdog said: “While Mr Staley did not draft the letter, there was no excuse for his failure to correct the misleading statements when he was the only person at Barclays who knew the full extent of his personal relationship with Mr Epstein and the specific timings of his contact with him.

“The FCA has found that Mr Staley was aware of the risk that his association with Mr Epstein posed to his career.”

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The Bank of England welcomed the decision – and a Prudential Regulation Authority spokesperson said: “It is imperative that senior managers act with integrity and are open and cooperative with the regulators.”

Mr Staley resigned as Barclays chief executive in 2021 following an investigation into his dealings with the disgraced financier and convicted paedophile.

Last month, JPMorgan Chase – America’s largest bank – [announced it had reached a settlement](#) with Mr Staley.

Its case related to his term as head of private banking at JPMorgan when Epstein was a client.

It alleged he covered up or minimised the US financier’s wrongdoing in order to maintain the lucrative account.

The terms of that settlement were kept confidential.