

I'm Not Represented — I Just Used an App": Grapple Law, AI Claim Generators, and What Respondent Solicitors Need to Know

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A new breed of platform is quietly reshaping employment tribunal practice. Grapple Law, marketed as an AI-powered legal platform for individuals and small businesses, allows users to generate ET1 claims, draft legal letters, and respond to disputes without instructing a solicitor. It is slick, it is accessible, and it is entirely unregulated.

For respondent solicitors, it raises an immediate and practical question: how do you deal with a claimant using Grapple Law?

Not Represented - But Not Straightforward

The first and most important point is this: a claimant using Grapple Law is a **litigant in person**. Grapple is not a law firm. It is not SRA-regulated. It holds no practising certificate, carries no professional indemnity insurance as a regulated entity, and is not authorised to conduct reserved legal activities under the Legal Services Act 2007. It has no conduct of the claim and no standing as a legal representative.

The consequence? You may contact the claimant directly. The professional conduct rules restricting direct communication with represented parties are not engaged.

The Problem in Practice

The difficulty is that corresponding with the claimant often generates a polished, AI-produced response — consistent in tone and format with AI drafting — rather than a genuine personal reply. On paper, it looks sophisticated. In substance, it may not engage with the issues at all.

Respondent solicitors should:

- Correspond directly with the claimant at their personal address
- Include a standard paragraph requiring the claimant to confirm *personally*, in their own words, that they have read and understood the correspondence

- Note formally in any response where a reply appears AI-generated and does not engage substantively with the points raised

The Confidentiality Risk

There is a further concern that practitioners are not yet routinely flagging. If a claimant has uploaded documents relating to your client, payroll information, HR correspondence, disciplinary records, into Grapple Law's platform or any other public AI tool, that may constitute a data protection breach. Personal data relating to third parties may have been processed by an unregulated platform without authorisation. That is relevant both to the proceedings and potentially to a regulatory complaint.

Red Flags in the Documents

Grapple Law-generated documents tend to display the same hallmarks as AI-drafted material more generally: em dashes used mid-sentence; American English spellings; fluent prose that reads well but is hollow on substance; scatter-gun claims advanced without any assessment of prospects; and authorities that, on closer inspection, do not exist or do not say what is claimed.

Every cited authority should be independently verified. Where fabricated or hallucinated authorities appear, the WRC in Ireland, dealing with a strikingly similar case in *Olivera v Ryanair DAC* (October 2025), described the conduct as an "abuse of process." The Employment Tribunal's Presidential Guidance of 22 June 2026 makes equally clear that hallucinated or fabricated authorities will be treated seriously.

What Respondent Solicitors Should Do

- Treat the claimant as a litigant in person — but hold them to their obligations under rule 3 of the Employment Tribunal Rules equally
- Issue costs warnings under r.74(2)(a) (unreasonable conduct) or r.74(2)(b) (no reasonable prospects) where AI-generated correspondence is disproportionate or the claims are clearly unarguable
- Apply at a Preliminary Hearing for directions requiring the claimant to confirm AI use in writing, to verify cited authorities from a recognised legal database, and to particularise claims within a defined timeframe
- Consider a disclosure application for the prompts used and documents uploaded to the platform — the basis being relevance to veracity and authorship of the material filed
- Reserve costs expressly and on the record from the earliest opportunity

The Broader Picture

Grapple Law is not going away. As AI improves and these platforms become more sophisticated, the red flags that currently make AI-generated material identifiable will diminish. Employment law is the primary target market — but platforms of this kind are already expanding into subject access requests, small claims, and landlord and tenant disputes.

Regulation is coming. The Civil Justice Council's consultation on AI in court documents closed in April 2026, and both the Law Society and Bar Council have called for urgent SRA guidance, HMCTS principles, and potential CPR amendment. Until that framework arrives, the existing professional conduct rules and a sharp eye for the red flags above are your principal tools.

The bottom line: a claimant using Grapple Law is still a claimant. They wrote what they submitted. They are accountable for it. And so, ultimately, are we for what we put back.

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