

## HEARING PART-HELD IN PRIVATE

### Professional Conduct Committee Initial Hearing

23, 24, 26 and 27 February and 2 to 5 March 2026

**Name:** SHIELDS, Katie Louise

**Registration number:** 243965

**Case number:** CAS-209801

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**General Dental Council:** Sam Thomas, counsel  
Instructed by Rashidah Conroy, IHLPS

**Registrant:** Not present  
Not represented

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**Fitness to practise:** Impaired by reason of misconduct

**Outcome:** Erased with Immediate Suspension

**Duration:** N/A

**Immediate order:** Immediate suspension order

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**Committee members:** Marnie Haywood (Dental Care Professional) (Chair)  
Hemash Shah (Dentist)  
Lynne Vernon (Lay)

**Legal adviser:** Tanveer Rakhim

**Committee Secretary:** Gareth Llewellyn

At this hearing the Committee made a determination that includes some private information. That information has been omitted from this public version of the determination and the document marked to show where private material has been removed.

### Determination on preliminary matters – 23 February 2026

**Name:** SHIELDS, Katie Louise

**Registration number:** 243965

1. This is a hearing before the Professional Conduct Committee (PCC). The hearing is being held remotely using Microsoft Teams in line with the Dental Professionals Hearings Service's current practice.
2. Mrs Shields is not present and is not represented in her absence. Sam Thomas of counsel, instructed by Rashidah Conroy of the General Dental Council's (GDC's) In-House Legal Presentation Service (IHLPS), appears for the GDC.

#### **The charge**

3. The charge that Mrs Shields faces at this hearing, as amended, reads as follows:

*'That being a registered dental care professional:*

1. *While employed as a Dental Nurse at The Practice you:*
  - (a) *Received payment of £2,885.61 in cash rather than through the Practice payroll system; and/or*
  - (b) *Facilitated payments by the Practice of £275, £216 and/or £255 to Person 1.*
2. *Your conduct in relation to 1(a) above was:*
  - (a) *Misleading; and/or*
  - (b) *Dishonest in that you knew that you were not permitted to receive payment in cash.*
3. *Your conduct in relation to 1(b) above was:*
  - (a) *Misleading; and/or*
  - (b) *Dishonest in that you knew that the payments to Person 1 were contrary to the Practice's Conflict of Interest policy.*

*AND THAT, in consequence of the matters set out above, your fitness to practise is impaired by reason of your misconduct.'*

#### **Format of hearing**

4. At a preliminary meeting held on 15 October 2025 a differently-constituted panel of the PCC acceded to an application from the GDC to join Mrs Shields's case with that of another registrant, namely [REDACTED BY HEARINGS], in accordance with Rule 25 (1) of the General Dental Council (Fitness to Practise) Rules 2006 ('the Rules'). Accordingly, the hearing of Mrs Shields's case has taken place on a joint basis alongside the case relating to [R1]. Nonetheless, separate consideration has been given to each case. This determination deals with the case as it relates to Mrs Shields.

#### **Service of notice of hearing**

5. On behalf of the GDC Mr Thomas submitted that service of notice of this hearing has been properly effected in accordance with Rules 13 and 65 of the Rules. On 19 January 2026 a notice of hearing was sent to the address that Mrs Shields has registered with the GDC,

setting out the date and time of this hearing, as well as the fact that the hearing would be conducted remotely. The notice was sent using the Royal Mail's Special Delivery service. The Royal Mail's Track and Trace service records that the notice was delivered on the afternoon of 21 January 2026. Copies of the notice were also sent to Mrs Shields by first class post and email.

6. The Committee accepted the advice of the Legal Adviser. The Committee determined that service of the notice of this hearing has been properly effected in accordance with the Rules.

### **Proceeding in absence**

7. The Committee then went on to consider whether to exercise its discretion to proceed in the absence of Mrs Shields in accordance with Rule 54 of the Rules. Mr Thomas invited the Committee to do so.
8. The Committee accepted the advice provided by the Legal Adviser. The Committee was mindful that its discretion to conduct a hearing in the absence of a registrant should be exercised with the utmost care and caution.
9. The Committee had regard to an email from Mrs Shields of 21 January 2026 in which she stated that she would like to attend, but as she cannot attend for the duration of the hearing she has asked whether she would be able to attend on one of the hearing days. The Committee also had regard to an email from Mrs Shields of 23 February 2026. In her email Mrs Shields stated as follows:

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[text omitted].

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10. After careful consideration the Committee determined to proceed with the hearing in Mrs Shields's absence. The Committee considers that an adjournment, which has not been requested, would be unlikely to secure Mrs Shields's attendance. The Committee noted that Mrs Shields has confirmed that everything that she wishes to say has already been documented. The Committee considers that the GDC has made every effort to facilitate her attendance, and that no undue unfairness would be caused to Mrs Shields by the Committee proceeding in her absence. The Committee was also mindful of the public interest in the expeditious consideration of this case.

### **Amendment to charge**

11. Mr Thomas then applied to amend the charge pursuant to Rule 18 of the Rules. Mr Thomas sought to amend certain heads of charge by removing references to the name of the practice relevant to these proceedings, as well as references to a third party. The Committee, having accepted the advice of the Legal Adviser, determined to accede to the application on the basis that it was fair and appropriate for the amendments to be made, and that no injustice would be caused to Mrs Shields. The schedule of charge was duly amended.

### **Hearing to be part-held in private**

12. Mr Thomas invited the Committee to hold part of the hearing in private in accordance with Rule 53 of the Rules where reference is made to an aspect of Mrs Shields's private life. The Committee, having accepted the advice of the Legal Adviser, determined to accede to the application for the purposes of protecting Mrs Shields's private life. The hearing therefore proceeded partly in private.

### **Adjournment of hearing on 24 February 2026**

13. During the course of Witness A's oral evidence on 24 February 2026, the Committee determined to adjourn the hearing in light of Witness A's lack of availability to continue and conclude her evidence. The hearing was adjourned until the morning of 26 February 2026, at which time Witness A continued with the giving of her oral evidence.

### **Findings of fact – 3 March 2026**

#### **Background to the case and summary of allegations**

14. The allegations giving rise to this hearing relate to Mrs Shields's employment as a dental nurse at which she and another registrant, namely [R1], who was the practice manager, worked. The incidents are understood to have taken place in 2022. The matters are said to concern the manipulation of the practice's payment systems. The GDC brings two allegations in respect of Mrs Shields's handling of financial transactions. These may be summarised in the following terms.
15. The GDC specifically alleges that Mrs Shields received a cash payment in the amount of £2,885.61, rather than receiving that amount through the practice's payroll system. It is understood that this related to overtime. The GDC alleges that such conduct was misleading, and was also dishonest, in that Mrs Shields knew that she was not entitled to receive payment in cash.
16. It is also alleged that Mrs Shields facilitated three payments made by the practice to a third party in respect of non-clinical work undertaken for the practice by that third party. These payments are said to be in the respective amounts of £275.00, £216.00 and £255.00.

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17. [text omitted].

IN PUBLIC

18. The GDC alleges that such conduct was misleading, and was also dishonest, in that Mrs Shields knew that the payments were contrary to the practice's policy governing conflicts of interest.

#### **Evidence**

19. The Committee has been provided with documentary material in relation to the heads of charge that Mrs Shields faces, including the witness statement and documentary exhibits of an operational audit manager and financial crime network officer at the company which owns the practice relevant to this case, and who is referred to for the purpose of these proceedings as Witness A.
20. Evidence relating to [R1] was also served on Mrs Shields. This evidence consists of a separate witness statement and documentary exhibits of Witness A, and the witness statement and documentary exhibits of a casework manager in the GDC's Fitness to Practise department with knowledge of the case, namely Natalie Shaw.
21. The Committee heard oral evidence from Witness A.

#### **Committee's findings of fact**

22. The Committee has taken into account all the evidence presented to it, both written and oral. It has considered the submissions made by Mr Thomas on behalf of the GDC. The Committee

has had regard to the GDC's *Fitness to Practise: Guidance for the practice committees* (January 2026).

23. The Committee has accepted the advice of the Legal Adviser concerning its powers and the principles to which it should have regard. The Committee is mindful that the burden of proof lies with the GDC, and has considered the heads of charge against the civil standard of proof, that is to say, the balance of probabilities. The Committee has considered each head and sub-head of charge separately.

24. I will now announce the Committee's findings in relation to each head and sub-head of charge:

1.	<i>While employed as a Dental Nurse at The Practice you:</i>
1. (a)	<p><i>Received payment of £2,885.61 in cash rather than through the Practice payroll system; and/or</i></p> <p><b>Proved</b></p>
	<p>The Committee finds the facts alleged at sub-head of charge 1 (a) proved.</p> <p>The Committee had regard to the documentary evidence of Witness A. The Committee noted from Witness A's evidence in relation to [R1] that [R1] attended an investigation meeting with Witness A on 18 October 2022. At that meeting it is recorded that [R1] stated that she paid Katie Shields in cash for the overtime that Mrs Shields had worked. [R1] also stated that these amounts were paid using the cash that patients had paid the practice for treatment. The Committee also had regard to exchanges of text messages sent using the WhatsApp messaging platform between [R1] and Mrs Shields, beginning in April 2022. In one such message sent on 11 May 2022 [R1] stated to Mrs Shields, '<i>Do you want the over time (sic) in cash again yes?</i>'. The Committee also noted that in the notes of the investigation meeting that Mrs Shields attended with Witness A on 18 October 2022 that Mrs Shields stated that [R1] paid her in cash for the overtime that she worked. The Committee also notes from the email that [R1] sent to Witness A on 24 October 2022, which was after the investigation meeting that [R1] attended with Witness A on 18 October 2022, that [R1] further stated that she had paid Mrs Shields in cash.</p> <p>The Committee concludes from the evidence summarised above that [R1] paid Mrs Shields in cash for the overtime work that Mrs Shields had undertaken.</p> <p>In relation to the specific sum of money paid in cash to Mrs Shields, the Committee accepts the oral, written and documentary evidence of Witness A. The Committee notes that Witness A arrived at the alleged cash sum, namely £2,885.61, by reviewing the WhatsApp text message exchanges between [R1] and Mrs Shields. The Committee notes that, elsewhere, Mrs Shields suggested different, and lower, sums, but the Committee found that it accepted the unchallenged evidence of Witness A on this point.</p> <p>Accordingly, the Committee finds the facts alleged at sub-head of charge 1 (a) proved.</p>
1. (b)	<p><i>Facilitated payments by the Practice of £275, £216 and/or £255 to Person 1.</i></p> <p><b>Proved in relation to the amount of £275.00 only</b></p>

	<p>The Committee finds the facts alleged at sub-head of charge 1 (b) proved in relation to the amount of £275.00 only. It finds the facts alleged at this sub-head of charge not proved in relation to the other two alleged sums, namely £216.00 and £255.00.</p> <p>The Committee had regard to exchanges of text messages sent using the WhatsApp messaging platform between [R1] and Mrs Shields. In one such message on 26 August 2022 Mrs Shields stated that Person 1 had received, and was now proposing to fit, a tap for a surgery room at the practice, and had previously undertaken similar work for the practice. Mrs Shields stated to [R1] that the cost would be £275.00. [R1] replied affirmatively and stated that she would leave some cash aside for Person 1. The Committee also had regard to the invoice with which it has been provided in the same amount. The Committee considers that this evidence demonstrates that Mrs Shields facilitated the payment made by [R1] on behalf of the practice in the amount of £275.00 to Person 1 by acting as an intermediary in that transaction.</p> <p>The Committee finds that the GDC has not, however, demonstrated to the standard required that Mrs Shields facilitated the payment of the two other amounts alleged at this sub-head of charge, namely the amounts of £216.00 and £255.00. The Committee does not consider that the GDC has proved that Person 1 undertook, and was paid for, the work to which those payments relate. Consequently, the issue of Mrs Shields facilitating a payment to Person 1 that has not been demonstrated to have been made does not arise.</p> <p>For these reasons, the Committee finds the facts alleged at sub-head of charge 1 (b) proved in relation to the amount of £275.00 only.</p>
2.	<i>Your conduct in relation to 1(a) above was:</i>
2. (a)	<p><i>Misleading; and/or</i></p> <p><b>Proved</b></p>
	<p>In approaching this sub-head of charge, as well as sub-head of charge 3 (a), the Committee considered whether Mrs Shields's conduct created a false impression, or led someone to believe, or led them to be entitled to believe, something that is not in fact true.</p> <p>The Committee finds that Mrs Shields's proven conduct in receiving payment for the work that she did in the form of cash, rather than receiving that sum through the conventional and proper method of remunerating staff via the practice's payroll system, was misleading. Mrs Shields's employers would have been entitled to believe that she had not worked on certain occasions, given the absence of any records of her having done so on the practice payroll system, when the reality was that Mrs Shields had in fact worked on those occasions. Mrs Shields's employers would not have had the proper and accurate understanding of work undertaken by staff that they required for the purposes of making, for instance, appropriate and correct calculations and declarations for tax, national insurance (NI) and pension contribution purposes.</p> <p>Accordingly, the Committee finds the facts alleged at sub-head of charge 2 (a) proved.</p>

2. (b)	<p><i>Dishonest in that you knew that you were not permitted to receive payment in cash.</i></p> <p><b>Proved</b></p>
	<p>In approaching this sub-head of charge, as well as head of charge 3 (b) the Committee applied the test set out in <i>Ivey v Genting Casinos (UK) Ltd. t/a Crockfords</i> [2017] UKSC 67. The test is that the Committee must decide subjectively the actual state of an individual's knowledge or belief as to the facts, and must then apply the objective standards of ordinary and decent people to determine whether the individual's conduct was dishonest by those standards.</p> <p>The Committee first had regard to Mrs Shields's actual knowledge and belief as to the fact of her receiving payment in the form of cash for the overtime work that she undertook. The Committee took account of the notes of the investigation meeting that Mrs Shields attended with Witness A on 18 October 2022. It is recorded that Mrs Shields stated that she was paid in cash so that, '<i>I can put it straight in our savings</i>'.</p> <p>IN PRIVATE</p> <p>[text omitted]</p> <p>IN PUBLIC</p> <p>The Committee considers that this evidence reveals that Mrs Shields knew that she should not receive payment in cash form, and that she deliberately sought to be paid in this way for personal reasons relating to her circumstances.</p> <p>The Committee also finds that Mrs Shields's conduct was dishonest by reference to the standards of ordinary and decent people. The Committee considered that Mrs Shields's actions would be viewed as a deception for her own personal and financial benefit.</p> <p>For these reasons, the Committee finds the facts alleged at sub-head of charge 2 (b) proved.</p>
3.	<p><i>Your conduct in relation to 1(b) above was:</i></p>
3. (a)	<p><i>Misleading; and/or</i></p> <p><b>Proved in relation to the amount of £275.00 only</b></p>
	<p>The Committee finds the facts alleged at sub-head of charge 3 (a) proved in relation to the amount of £275.00.</p> <p>The Committee finds that Mrs Shields's proven conduct in facilitating a payment by the practice to Person 1 in the amount of £275.00 was misleading. Mrs Shields's employers would have been entitled to assume that there was no conflict of interest in her doing so, when in fact Mrs Shields had not made the declaration that is required for such an understanding to be valid. The Committee notes from the evidence presented to it that [R1] was fully aware of who Person 1 was in relation to Mrs Shields, but the Committee considers that Mrs Shields's conduct was nonetheless objectively misleading.</p>

	The Committee therefore finds the facts alleged at sub-head of charge 3 (a) proved in relation to the amount of £275.00.
3. (b)	<p><i>Dishonest in that you knew that the payments to Person 1 were contrary to the Practice's Conflict of Interest policy.</i></p> <p><b>Not proved</b></p>
	<p>The Committee finds the facts alleged at sub-head of charge 3 (b) not proved.</p> <p>The Committee considers that the GDC has not demonstrated to the standard required that Mrs Shields was aware of the practice's policy regarding conflicts of interest. The Committee noted that the evidence of Witness A is not that the payment made to Person 1 was contrary to that policy, and that instead the payment was made without the proper <i>declaration</i> of a potential conflict of interest as required by that policy. The Committee finds that the GDC has not adduced sufficient evidence to demonstrate that Mrs Shields was aware of that policy.</p> <p>The Committee considers that Mrs Shields's conduct was not, in the circumstances, dishonest, both by reference to her actual knowledge and belief and by reference to the standards of ordinary and decent people.</p> <p>For these reasons, the Committee finds the facts alleged at sub-head of charge 3 (b) not proved.</p>

25. We move to stage two.

**Determination on misconduct, impairment and sanction – 5 March 2026**

26. Following the handing down of the Committee's findings of fact on 3 March 2026, the hearing proceeded to stage two; that is to say, misconduct, impairment and sanction.

**Proceedings at stage two**

27. The Committee has considered all the evidence presented to it, both oral and written. It has taken into account the submissions made by Mr Thomas on behalf of the GDC. In its deliberations the Committee has had regard to the GDC's *Fitness to Practise: Guidance for the practice committees* (January 2026). The Committee has accepted the advice of the Legal Adviser concerning its powers and the principles to which it should have regard.

**Evidence at stage two**

28. The Committee received no further evidence at this stage of the hearing.

**Summary of submissions**

29. Mr Thomas on behalf of the GDC invited the Committee to determine that the facts that the Committee has found proved amount to misconduct, and that Mrs Shields's fitness to practise is currently impaired with regard to public protection and public interest considerations. Mr Thomas invited the Committee to direct that Mrs Shields's name be erased from the register.

**Fitness to practise history**

30. Mr Thomas addressed the Committee in accordance with Rule 20 (1) (a) of the General Dental Council (Fitness to Practise) Rules 2006 ('the Rules'). Mr Thomas stated that Mrs Shields has no fitness to practise history with the GDC.

### **Misconduct**

31. The Committee first considered whether the facts that it has found proved constitute misconduct. In considering this and all other matters, the Committee has exercised its own independent judgement.
32. In its deliberations the Committee has had regard to the following paragraphs of the GDC's *Standards for the Dental Team* (September 2013) in place at the time of the incidents giving rise to the facts that the Committee has found proved. These paragraphs state that as a dental care professional you must:
- 1 *Put patients' interests first.*
  - 1.3 *Be honest and act with integrity.*
    - 1.3.1 *You must justify the trust that patients, the public and your colleagues place in you by always acting honestly and fairly in your dealings with them. This applies to any business or education activities in which you are involved as well as to your professional dealings.*
    - 1.3.2 *You must make sure you do not bring the profession into disrepute.*
  - 9.1 *Ensure that your conduct, both at work and in your personal life, justifies patients' trust in you and the public's trust in the dental profession.*
33. The Committee's findings of fact relate to Mrs Shields's employment as a dental nurse at which she and another registrant, namely [R1], who was the practice manager, worked.
34. The Committee found that Mrs Shields received payment for overtime in cash amounting to £2,885.61, rather than receiving that amount through the practice's payroll system. The Committee determined that such conduct was misleading, and was also dishonest, in that Mrs Shields knew that she was not entitled to receive payment in cash.
35. The Committee also found that Mrs Shields facilitated a payment in the amount of £275.00 made by the practice to a third party in respect of non-clinical work undertaken for the practice by that third party. The Committee determined that such conduct was misleading.
36. In light of the findings of fact that it has made, the Committee has determined that the proven facts in respect of Mrs Shields's dishonest conduct in receiving payment in the form of cash amounts to misconduct. The Committee finds that Mrs Shields's dishonest conduct is serious, relating as it does to a fundamental tenet of the profession, namely the need to act with honesty and integrity. Mrs Shields's dishonest and financially-motivated conduct in a professional capacity represents a serious departure from proper professional standards of conduct and behaviour. The Committee finds that Mrs Shield's dishonest conduct would be viewed as deplorable by her fellow practitioners.
37. The Committee does not consider that the other facts that it has found proved, namely those relating to Mrs Shields's facilitation of a payment made by the practice to a third party, constitutes misconduct. The Committee considers that this proven conduct, whilst misleading, was not of such seriousness as to amount to misconduct, and was not conduct that fell far short of the standards reasonably to be expected of a dental professional.

38. The Committee has therefore determined that the facts that it has found proved in respect of Mrs Shields's dishonest conduct in receiving payment in the form of cash amount to misconduct.

### **Impairment**

39. The Committee next considered whether Mrs Shields's fitness to practise is currently impaired by reason of the misconduct that it has found. In doing so, the Committee again exercised its own independent judgement. Throughout its deliberations, the Committee has borne in mind that its overarching objective is to protect the public, which includes the protection of patients and the wider public, the maintenance of public confidence in the profession and in the regulatory process, and the declaring and upholding of proper standards of conduct and behaviour.
40. The Committee has been provided with little, if any, evidence to suggest that Mrs Shields has any significant insight into her misconduct, or that she has taken steps to address and remedy her wrongdoing. The Committee took account of Mrs Shields's email to Witness A of 21 October 2022, in which Mrs Shields expresses some remorse for and understanding of her conduct, but the Committee considers that this does not amount to any significant reflection or insight. The Committee therefore considers that it cannot be said that Mrs Shields is highly unlikely to repeat her misconduct.
41. Mrs Shields's dishonesty is highly damaging to her fitness to practise. Mrs Shields has in the past brought the profession into disrepute, has breached a fundamental tenet of the profession, and has acted dishonestly. She is liable to do so again on account of the shortcomings in her insight and remediation. The consequences for the safety of the public are that Mrs Shields may again undermine the trust and confidence that patients and the wider public are entitled to place in the profession. Mrs Shields's dishonesty, which was motivated by her desire to be in a more favourable financial position, meant that she put her own interests first, and before those of others, including patients and the wider public. Therefore, in the Committee's judgement, a repeat of Mrs Shields's failure to put the interests of patients before all other interests may put patients at unwarranted risk of harm. Mrs Shields's fitness to practise is therefore impaired with regard to public protection considerations.
42. The Committee considers that a finding of impairment is also, and undoubtedly, required to maintain public confidence in the profession and to declare and uphold proper professional standards of conduct and behaviour. In the Committee's judgement the public's trust and confidence in the profession, and in the regulatory process, would be significantly undermined if a finding of impairment was not made given the serious nature of Mrs Shields's conduct.
43. Accordingly, the Committee finds that Mrs Shields's fitness to practise is currently impaired by reason of her misconduct with regard to both public protection and public interest considerations.

### **Sanction**

44. The Committee then determined what sanction, if any, is appropriate in light of the findings of facts, misconduct and impairment that it has made. The Committee recognises that the purpose of a sanction is not to be punitive, although it may have such an effect, but is instead imposed to protect patients and safeguard the wider public interests mentioned above. In reaching its decision the Committee has again taken into account the GDC's *Fitness to Practise: Guidance for the practice committees* (January 2026). The Committee has applied the principle of proportionality, balancing the public interest with Mrs Shields's own interests. The Committee has once more exercised its own independent judgement.

45. The Committee has paid careful regard to the mitigating and aggravating factors present in this case.
46. In respect of the mitigating factors that are present, the Committee notes that Mrs Shields is of previous good character with no fitness to practise history. Mrs Shields has also expressed some remorse for her conduct. The Committee does not consider Mrs Shields's personal circumstances at the relevant times, as referred to in its determination on facts, to be a mitigating factor in the particular circumstances of this case.
47. In terms of aggravating factors, the Committee notes that Mrs Shields's conduct was premeditated, that her dishonest conduct was motivated by, and resulted in, a financial gain for her, that her underlying conduct related to a number of instances of being paid in the form of cash for overtime work undertaken over a period of some months, that it amounted to an abuse of her trusted position as an employee, and that Mrs Shields lacks insight into her actions.
48. The Committee has considered the range of sanctions available to it, starting with the least restrictive. In the light of its findings, the Committee considers that taking no action or issuing a reprimand would not be sufficient in the particular circumstances of this case. In the Committee's judgement the safety of the public, and public trust and confidence in the profession and in the regulatory process, would be significantly undermined if no action were taken or if a reprimand were issued. In the Committee's judgement a more restrictive sanction is required to declare and uphold proper professional standards of conduct and behaviour.
49. The Committee next considered whether it would be appropriate to conclude the case with a direction of conditional registration. The Committee considers that conditions cannot be formulated to adequately manage the risks to the public that arise from Mrs Shields's dishonest conduct. The Committee was also mindful that Mrs Shields is not present at this hearing, which means that it is even more difficult for the Committee to identify workable conditions with which she would comply. The Committee further considers that a direction of conditional registration would not be sufficient to declare and uphold proper professional standards of conduct and behaviour or maintain public trust and confidence in the profession.
50. The Committee next considered whether to direct a period of suspended registration. After careful consideration, the Committee has determined that a direction of suspended registration is not sufficient to meet the serious issues that it has identified in this particular case. The Committee again notes Mrs Shields's lack of insight into her dishonest conduct, that her actions represent a serious departure from proper standards of conduct and behaviour, that her dishonest conduct was serious and sustained, and that there remains a continuing risk of serious harm to the public and the wider public interest. The Committee considers that Mrs Shields's dishonest conduct connotes a deep-seated and harmful personality or professional attitudinal problem, and that her serious misconduct is fundamentally incompatible with continued registration. Any sanction less than that of erasure would not be sufficient to meet the public protection and broader public interest considerations engaged in this case.
51. Accordingly, the Committee directs that Mrs Shields's name be erased from the register.

#### **Immediate order**

52. The Committee now invites submissions as to whether Mrs Shields's registration should be made subject to an immediate order of suspension, pending its substantive direction of erasure taking effect.

53. The Committee has again had regard to the GDC's *Fitness to Practise: Guidance for the practice committees* (January 2026). The Committee accepted the advice of the Legal Adviser concerning its powers and the principles to which it should have regard.
54. Mr Thomas on behalf of the GDC submitted that an immediate order of suspension is necessary to protect the public and is otherwise in the public interest.
55. In all the circumstances, the Committee has determined to impose an immediate order of suspension. The Committee considers that an immediate order of suspension is necessary to protect the public and is otherwise in the public interest. The Committee finds that, given the risks to the public and the public interest that it has identified, it would not be appropriate to permit Mrs Shields to practise before the substantive direction of erasure takes effect. The Committee considers that an immediate order for suspension is proportionate, and is consistent with the findings that it has set out in its foregoing determination.
56. The effect of the foregoing determination and this immediate order is that Mrs Shields's registration will be suspended from the date on which notice of this decision is deemed to have been served upon her. Unless Mrs Shields exercises her right of appeal, the substantive direction of erasure will be recorded in the register 28 days from the date of deemed service. Should Mrs Shields decide to exercise her right of appeal, this immediate order of suspension will remain in place until the resolution of any appeal.
57. That concludes this case