

HEARING HEARD IN PUBLIC
AZEEZ, Fausat Olanike Motunrola
Registration No: 276967
PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT COMMITTEE
FEBRUARY 2023
Outcome: Erased with Immediate Suspension

AZEEZ, Fausat Olanike Motunrola, a dental nurse, National Diploma in Dental Nursing NEBDN 2018, was summoned to appear before the Professional Conduct Committee on 13 February 2023 for an inquiry into the following charge:

Charge

“That being a registered dental care professional:

1. On 11 November 2020, you were convicted at Norfolk Magistrates Court of bringing, throwing or otherwise conveying a List C article, namely 24.32g of tobacco, into a prison, namely HMP Wayland, on 9 March 2020, intending it to come into a prisoner’s possession, contrary to section 40C(2)(a) of the Prison Act 1952.
2. On 9 December 2020, you were convicted at Norwich Crown Court of bringing, throwing, or otherwise conveying a List A article, namely 13.18g of cannabis, into or out of a prison, namely HMP Wayland, on 9 March 2020, contrary to section 40B(1)(a) of the Prison Act 1952.
3. Prior to 25 May 2021, you failed to inform the GDC that you were subject to criminal proceedings.
4. On 25 May 2021, when first informing the GDC that you were subject to criminal proceedings:
 - a. You failed to mention that, in addition to a List C article, you were also convicted of conveying a List A article into prison.
 - b. You failed to mention that, in addition to tobacco, you were also convicted of conveying cannabis into prison.
 - c. You failed to mention that you had been sentenced to a suspended sentence of custody, as opposed to a mere community service order.
5. Your conduct in relation to Charges 3 and 4 was:
 - a. Misleading; and
 - b. Dishonest.

And that by reason of the above your fitness to practice is impaired by your conviction and/or misconduct.”

Ms Azeez was not present and was not represented. On 13 February 2023 the Chairman announced a statement on proof of service. The Chairman then announced the findings of fact to the Counsel for the GDC:

“This is a hearing of the Professional Conduct Committee (PCC). The hearing is being conducted remotely using Microsoft Teams in line with current practice.

Miss Azeez is not present at the hearing and is not represented in her absence. Ms Natalie Bird of counsel, instructed by Ms Tamara Krupski-David of the GDC’s In-House Legal Presentation Service, appears for the GDC.

Preliminary matters

SERVICE OF NOTICE OF HEARING

On behalf of the GDC Ms Bird submitted that service of notice of this hearing has been properly effected in accordance with Rules 13 and 65 of the General Dental Council (Fitness to Practise) Rules 2006 (‘the Rules’). On 5 January 2023 a notice of hearing was sent to the address that Miss Azeez has registered with the GDC, setting out the date, time and remote nature of this hearing. The notice was sent using the Royal Mail’s Special Delivery postal service. Copies of the notice were also sent to Miss Azeez by first class post and email. The Royal Mail’s track and trace service records that the notice was delivered on the morning of 6 January 2023.

The Committee accepted the advice of the Legal Adviser. The Committee was satisfied that service has been properly effected in accordance with the Rules.

PROCEEDING IN ABSENCE

The Committee then went on to consider whether to exercise its discretion to proceed in the absence of Miss Azeez in accordance with Rule 54 of the Rules. In so doing the Committee was mindful that its discretion to proceed in the absence of a registrant must be exercised with the utmost care and caution. Ms Bird invited the Committee to proceed in the absence of Miss Azeez on the basis that all reasonable efforts have been made to inform Miss Azeez of these proceedings and that she has voluntarily absented herself.

The Committee notes that in emails sent to the Dental Professionals Hearings Service on 15 November 2022, prior to the notice of hearing referred to above, Miss Azeez stated, ‘*I do not wish to participate in [sic] any longer*’, that she is no longer a dental nurse and that she has ‘*no interest in practicing [sic] dentistry*’.

The Committee determined that it would be fair and appropriate to proceed in the absence of Miss Azeez. The Committee considers that the GDC has made every effort to inform Miss Azeez of the fact of the hearing and that she has decided not to

attend. The Committee therefore considers that no unfairness would be caused to Miss Azeez by the Committee proceeding in her absence. The Committee was also mindful of the public interest in the expeditious consideration of these matters.

FINDINGS OF FACT – 13 February 2023

Background to the case and summary of allegations

The allegations giving rise to this case relate to Miss Azeez’s criminal convictions.

On 11 November 2020 Miss Azeez was convicted at Norfolk Magistrates’ Court of bringing, throwing or otherwise conveying a List ‘C’ article, namely 24.32g of tobacco, into a prison with the intention that it come into a prisoner’s possession. Subsequently on 9 December 2020 Miss Azeez was convicted at Norwich Crown Court of bringing, throwing or otherwise conveying a List ‘A’ article, namely 13.18g of cannabis, into a prison. Both offences took place on 9 March 2020.

It is alleged that Miss Azeez failed to inform the GDC that she was subject to criminal proceedings until she notified them on 25 May 2021. It is further contended that, in first informing the GDC on that date, Miss Azeez failed to mention that, in addition to a List ‘C’ article, she was also convicted in relation to a List ‘A’ article; that she was also convicted of conveying cannabis into prison as well as the tobacco that she disclosed; and that she had been sentenced to a suspended custodial sentence instead of a community service order.

The GDC alleges that Miss Azeez’s declaration failures as referred to in the previous paragraph amount to conduct that was misleading and dishonest.

Evidence

The Committee has been provided with documentary material in relation to the allegations that Miss Azeez faces, including the witness statement and documentary exhibits of a trainee solicitor in the GDC’s In-House Legal Presentation Service with knowledge of this case.

The Committee heard no oral evidence at this stage of the proceedings.

Committee’s findings of fact

The Committee has taken into account all the evidence presented to it. The Committee has considered the submissions made by Ms Bird on behalf of the GDC.

The Committee has accepted the advice of the Legal Adviser. 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 of charge separately, although some of its findings will be given together.

I will now announce the Committee’s findings in relation to each head of charge:

1.	<i>On 11 November 2020, you were convicted at Norfolk Magistrates Court</i>
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	<p><i>of bringing, throwing or otherwise conveying a List C article, namely 24.32g of tobacco, into a prison, namely HMP Wayland, on 9 March 2020, intending it to come into a prisoner's possession, contrary to section 40C(2)(a) of the Prison Act 1952.</i></p> <p>Proved</p>
	<p>The Committee finds the facts alleged at head of charge 1 proved.</p> <p>The Committee had regard to Rule 57 (5) of the Rules and determined that the certified copy of the Memorandum of Conviction placed before it provides proof of both the fact of conviction, and also proves the facts of the offence giving rise to that conviction. The Committee notes that the facts upon which the conviction was based have been found proven beyond reasonable doubt, which is an evidential standard that is higher than that employed by this Committee. The Committee accepted that it cannot go behind the facts on which that conviction was made. The Committee is therefore satisfied that the facts alleged at this head of charge have been properly made out to the required standard, and accordingly it finds those facts proved.</p> <p>The Committee therefore finds the facts alleged at head of charge 1 proved.</p>
2.	<p><i>On 9 December 2020, you were convicted at Norwich Crown Court of bringing, throwing, or otherwise conveying a List A article, namely 13.18g of cannabis, into or out of a prison, namely HMP Wayland, on 9 March 2020, contrary to section 40B(1)(a) of the Prison Act 1952.</i></p> <p>Proved</p>
	<p>The Committee finds the facts alleged at head of charge 2 proved.</p> <p>The Committee again had regard to Rule 57 (5) of the Rules and determined that the certified copy of the Certificate of Conviction placed before it provides proof of both the fact of conviction, and also proves the facts of the offence giving rise to that conviction. The Committee notes that the facts upon which the conviction was based have been found proven beyond reasonable doubt, which is an evidential standard that is higher than that employed by this Committee. The Committee accepted that it cannot go behind the facts on which that conviction was made. The Committee is therefore satisfied that the facts alleged at this head of charge have been properly made out to the required standard, and accordingly it finds those facts proved.</p> <p>The Committee therefore finds the facts alleged at head of charge 2 proved.</p>
3.	<p><i>Prior to 25 May 2021, you failed to inform the GDC that you were subject</i></p>



	<p><i>to criminal proceedings.</i></p> <p>Proved</p>
	<p>The Committee finds the facts alleged at head of charge 3 proved.</p> <p>The Committee notes that on 25 May 2021 Miss Azeez sent an email to the GDC in which she states that she [...] <i>called last year to report being charged with a new conviction that wasn't on my file. I would just like to formally state that I was indeed convicted of the offence "Conveying a prohibited item – List C (Tobacco) into a prison".</i> Miss Azeez stated that she was given a community service order of 50 hours' duration.</p> <p>The Committee is mindful that the GDC's <i>Standards for the Dental Team</i> (September 2013) states at standard 9.3.1 that, <i>'you must inform the GDC immediately if you are subject to any criminal proceedings anywhere in the world [...]</i>'. The Committee is also mindful of the GDC's <i>Guidance on reporting criminal proceedings</i> (September 2013) which further sets out this duty.</p> <p>The Committee notes from Miss Azeez's email that she suggests that she telephoned the GDC the previous year, namely 2020, to inform the GDC that she had been charged. The Committee finds that, on the balance of probabilities, Miss Azeez did not do so, as the Committee would fully expect the GDC to have made and produced a record of such a declaration. Such handling may well have led to proceedings such as these in respect of those convictions. The Committee notes the written evidence of the GDC's trainee solicitor as referred to above about Miss Azeez's informing the GDC of the criminal proceedings resulting in her convictions.</p> <p>Although the witness statement provided to the Committee does not refer to any checks that were made of the GDC's records about any such declaration, the Committee infers from the evidence presented to it that Miss Azeez first informed the GDC of these matters in her email of 25 May 2021. Although the Committee does not accept that Miss Azeez had previously disclosed the criminal proceedings in relation to her conveying of a List 'C' item, namely tobacco prior to her email of 25 May 2021, even if she had, the omission of any reference in that email to her being charged with, and subsequently convicted of, conveying a 'List 'A' item, namely cannabis, suggests that she would not have referred to that matter in an earlier telephone call had such a call taken place. This omission is dealt with more directly at heads of charge 4 (a), 4 (b) and 4 (c). In addition, Miss Azeez's omission of the fact that she was sentenced to a suspended period of custody, and her referring to being sentenced to a community order of 50 hours' duration rather than its true duration of 80 hours, means that the Committee is not inclined to rely on Miss</p>



	<p>Azeez's evidence. It therefore does not accept Miss Azeez's assertion in her email that she had previously informed the GDC of her criminal proceedings.</p> <p>Therefore, the Committee finds the facts alleged at head of charge 3 proved.</p>
4.	<p><i>On 25 May 2021, when first informing the GDC that you were subject to criminal proceedings:</i></p>
4. (a)	<p><i>You failed to mention that, in addition to a List C article, you were also convicted of conveying a List A article into prison.</i></p> <p>Proved</p>
4. (b)	<p><i>You failed to mention that, in addition to tobacco, you were also convicted of conveying cannabis into prison.</i></p> <p>Proved</p>
4. (c)	<p><i>You failed to mention that you had been sentenced to a suspended sentence of custody, as opposed to a mere community service order.</i></p> <p>Proved</p>
	<p>The Committee finds the facts at heads of charge 4 (a), 4 (b) and 4 (c) proved.</p> <p>In approaching these heads of charge the Committee recognised the potentially duplicitous charging at heads of charge 4 (a) and 4 (b), as those heads of charge refer to the same item as, respectively, a List 'A' article and cannabis.</p> <p>The Committee has again had regard to Miss Azeez's email of 25 May 2021 as referred to at head of charge 3 above. The Committee notes that in that email Miss Azeez did not mention her conviction for conveying a List 'A' article, namely cannabis, and further that she did not mention that she was sentenced to a suspended custodial sentence in addition to a community service order.</p> <p>The Committee finds that, including by reference to the <i>Standards</i> referred to at head of charge 3 above, Miss Azeez was under a duty to not only inform the GDC promptly of the fact of her being subject to criminal proceedings, but also to fully inform the GDC of the details of those matters. As she failed to do so in the ways alleged, the Committee finds the facts at heads of charge 4 (a), 4 (b) and 4 (c) proved.</p>
5.	<p><i>Your conduct in relation to Charges 3 and 4 was:</i></p>
5. (a)	<p><i>Misleading; and</i></p>



	<p>Proved</p>
	<p>The Committee finds the facts alleged at head of charge 5 (a) proved in its entirety, that is to say in respect of the proven facts at heads of charge 3, 4 (a), 4 (b) and 4 (c).</p> <p>In relation to head of charge 3, the Committee considers that the GDC would have formed a false understanding of Miss Azeez’s criminal record, as it would have been of the false understanding until 25 May 2021 that she was not subject to criminal proceedings and had not been convicted, whereas in fact Miss Azeez had been charged with, and had then been convicted of, two offences.</p> <p>In relation to head of charge 4 and its sub-heads, the Committee similarly considers that the GDC would have formed a false understanding of the matters of which Miss Azeez was convicted in two respects. First, the GDC would have understood that she had only been convicted of conveying a List ‘C’ item, namely tobacco, whereas she had in fact also been convicted of conveying a List ‘A’ item, namely cannabis. Second, the GDC would have understood that Miss Azeez was sentenced to only a community service order, whereas in fact she had also been sentenced to a three-month period of imprisonment, suspended for 18 months.</p> <p>The Committee therefore finds the facts alleged at head of charge 5 (a) proved.</p>
5. (b)	<p><i>Dishonest.</i></p> <p>Proved</p>
	<p>The Committee finds the facts alleged at head of charge 5 (b) proved in its entirety, that is to say in respect of the proven facts at heads of charge 3, 4 (a), 4 (b) and 4 (c).</p> <p>In approaching this head of charge 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 Miss Azeez’s conduct was dishonest by those standards.</p> <p>The Committee therefore first considered Miss Azeez’s actual state of knowledge and belief as to the facts at the time.</p> <p>With regard to her proven failure at head of charge 3 to inform the GDC at the appropriate time, the Committee considers that Miss Azeez would have been aware prior to 25 May 2021 of her obligation to inform the GDC of her criminal proceedings. The Committee considers that Miss Azeez would have been in no doubt as to her obligations, given, for</p>

instance, the GDC's provision of the *Standards* and the *Guidance on reporting criminal proceedings* document referred to above setting out that duty. The Committee also notes that at her sentencing hearing on 9 December 2020 the presiding judge raised the same issue of a professional duty of disclosure.

With regard to Miss Azeez's misleading declarations at heads of charge 4 (a), 4 (b) and 4 (c), the Committee considers that Miss Azeez would have been fully aware of the nature of her convictions, having been through the criminal justice proceedings relating to these charges. The Committee considers that with regard to head of charge 3 and head of charge 4 Miss Azeez was attempting to, respectively, conceal and downplay her criminal record.

Having decided subjectively the actual state of Miss Azeez's knowledge or belief as to the facts, the Committee then applied the objective standards of ordinary and decent people to determine whether her conduct was dishonest by those standards. The Committee considers that her conduct at heads of charge 3 and 4 would be viewed as being dishonest by reference to those standards. The Committee finds that an ordinary and decent observer would consider that Miss Azeez had deliberately misled the GDC into believing, prior to 25 May 2021, that she had not been charged with and convicted of the two offences in question, and thereafter had deliberately misled the GDC as to the specific nature of those matters.

The Committee therefore finds the facts alleged at head of charge 5 (b) proved.

We move to stage two."

On 14 February 2023 the Chairman announced the determination as follows:

"The Committee has considered all the evidence presented to it. It has taken into account the oral submissions made by Ms Bird on behalf of the GDC. The Committee has also had regard to the brief written representations that Miss Azeez provided at an earlier stage of the GDC's proceedings, namely her emails to the GDC of 15 November 2022.

In its deliberations the Committee has had regard to the GDC's *Guidance for the Practice Committees, including Indicative Sanctions Guidance* (October 2016, updated December 2020). The Committee has accepted the advice of the Legal Adviser.

Fitness to practise history

Ms Bird addressed the Committee in accordance with Rule 20 (1) (a) of the General Dental Council (Fitness to Practise) Rules 2006 ('the Rules'). She confirmed that Miss Azeez has no fitness to practise history with the GDC.

Submissions

Miss Bird invited the Committee to conclude that the facts that the Committee has found proved at heads of charge 3, 4 (a), 4 (b), 4 (c), 5 (a) and 5 (b) amount to misconduct, Ms Bird submitted that Miss Azeez's fitness to practise is currently impaired by reason of that misconduct as well as the criminal convictions to which the remaining heads of charge, namely heads of charge 1 and 2, relate. Miss Bird submitted that the appropriate sanction to impose is that of erasure from the register.

Misconduct

The Committee first considered whether the facts that it has found proved at heads of charge 3, 4 (a), 4 (b), 4 (c), 5 (a) and 5 (b) constitute misconduct. In considering this matter, the Committee has exercised its own independent judgement.

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 facts referred to above. These paragraphs state that as a dental care professional:

- 1.3 [You must] be honest and act with integrity.
- 1.3.2 You must make sure you do not bring the profession into disrepute.
- 9.1 [You must] 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.
- 9.3 [You must] inform the GDC if you are subject to criminal proceedings or a regulatory finding is made against you anywhere in the world.
- 9.3.1 You must inform the GDC immediately if you are subject to any criminal proceedings.

The Committee's findings arise out of Miss Azeez's convictions for two criminal offences. These offences were conveying a List 'A' article, namely cannabis, and a List 'C' article, namely tobacco, into a prison. The Committee found that Miss Azeez failed to inform the GDC of the fact of her being charged, and subsequently being convicted, until some months had passed, and further that when she did so she failed to disclose the full extent of those matters. The Committee has found that such conduct was both misleading and dishonest.

The Committee considers that Miss Azeez's conduct at heads of charge 3, 4 (a), 4 (b), 4 (c), 5 (a) and 5 (b) amount to misconduct. The Committee finds that this serious conduct would be considered by Miss Azeez's fellow practitioners to be deplorable. Miss Azeez's conduct was a serious departure from the standards reasonably to be expected of a dental care professional. Miss Azeez has brought the

standing and reputation of the profession into considerable disrepute and has undermined public trust and confidence in the profession. The Committee therefore finds that the facts that it has found proved at heads of charge 3, 4 (a), 4 (b), 4 (c), 5 (a) and 5 (b) amount to misconduct.

Impairment

The Committee then went on to consider whether Miss Azeez's fitness to practise is currently impaired by reason of the misconduct and convictions that it has found. In doing so, the Committee has again exercised its independent judgement. Throughout its deliberations, it has borne in mind that its primary duty is to address the public interest, which includes the protection of patients, the maintenance of public confidence in the profession and in the regulator, and the declaring and upholding of proper standards of conduct and behaviour.

BY REASON OF CONVICTION

The Committee considers that the convictions that it has found proved at heads of charge 1 and 2 mean that Miss Azeez's fitness to practise is impaired. Although Miss Azeez pleaded guilty at court, the Committee has been provided with no evidence to suggest that Miss Azeez has developed any insight into, or has taken steps to remedy, her criminal convictions and the offending behaviour underlying those convictions.

The Committee considers that the offences of which Miss Azeez was convicted were serious, relating as they do to bringing prohibited items into a prison in a surreptitious manner. The seriousness of these criminal offences is evident in the sentencing of Miss Azeez to a custodial sentence, albeit suspended. The Committee is of the view that the convictions that it has found proved are of a nature and seriousness to amount to impairment of Miss Azeez's fitness to practise. As a result, the Committee finds that a finding of impairment is required in order to declare and uphold proper standards of conduct and behaviour and to maintain trust and confidence in the profession and in the regulator. Miss Azeez's criminal convictions have brought the reputation of the profession into disrepute. In the Committee's judgment public trust and confidence in the profession, and in the regulator, would be seriously undermined if a finding of impairment were not made in the particular circumstances of this case.

BY REASON OF MISCONDUCT

The Committee finds that Miss Azeez's fitness to practise is currently impaired by reason of the misconduct that it has found at the remaining heads of charge. The Committee considers that Miss Azeez has again provided no evidence to demonstrate that she has developed insight into, or has taken steps to remedy, her misconduct. Miss Azeez's failure to declare at the appropriate times the criminal proceedings being taken against her, and her resulting convictions, was sustained and repeated over a considerable number of months. The Committee has found that Miss Azeez's belated declaration that she had been charged and convicted was

partial, limited and misleading. In light of the lack of evidence of insight and remediation, the Committee finds that there is a real risk of Miss Azeez repeating her misconduct. The Committee considers that the public is at considerable risk of harm as a result of Miss Azeez's unremediated misconduct, and particularly her dishonest conduct.

The Committee considers that Miss Azeez's failure to declare, and declare fully, the criminal proceedings to which she was subject at the appropriate times has had the effect of inhibiting the ability of the GDC to properly regulate the profession, and with it ensure the safety and wellbeing of the public. This is the case as the GDC was deprived of proper knowledge of Miss Azeez being charged and convicted because of her failure to provide such information to the GDC. Her regulator was therefore unable to assess whether action needed to be taken, and it was therefore unable to discharge its primary statutory objective to protect the public. This blatant disregard for the regulatory process requires a finding of impairment.

The Committee also finds that a finding of impairment is required in order to declare and uphold proper standards of conduct and behaviour and to maintain trust and confidence in the profession and in the regulatory process. The Committee finds that Miss Azeez's dishonest conduct has breached a fundamental tenet of the profession, namely the need to act with honesty and integrity. Miss Azeez's dishonest conduct has brought the reputation of the profession into disrepute. In the Committee's judgement public trust and confidence in the profession, and in the regulator, would be seriously undermined if a finding of impairment were not made in the particular circumstances of this case.

Sanction

Having determined that Miss Azeez's fitness to practise is currently impaired by reason of her convictions and her misconduct, the Committee then went on to determine what sanction, if any, would be appropriate. The Committee recognises that the purpose of a sanction is not to be punitive, although it may have that effect, but is instead imposed in order to protect patients and safeguard the wider public interest referred to above.

In reaching its decision the Committee has again taken into account the GDC's *Guidance for the Practice Committees, including Indicative Sanctions Guidance* (October 2016, updated December 2020). The Committee has applied the principle of proportionality, balancing the public interest with Miss Azeez's own interests.

The Committee has considered the aggravating and mitigating factors present in this case. In relation to mitigating factors, the Committee notes that Miss Azeez has no previous fitness to practise history. The Committee noted that Miss Azeez's advocate at the court proceedings suggested a lack of awareness on the part of Miss Azeez about her knowingly conveying cannabis as well as a suggestion of an element of coercion, but the Committee has not been provided with any further information to develop these possible issues and was therefore not able to apportion weight to

them in considering and identifying mitigating factors. In relation to aggravating factors, the Committee has found that Miss Azeez has acted in a dishonest manner, and it considers that both Miss Azeez's criminal conduct and belated and limited declarations to the GDC amounted to premediated conduct. Miss Azeez's misconduct was sustained, and as noted above was a blatant and wilful disregard of the GDC's regulatory functions. Miss Azeez also lacks insight into her actions.

The Committee has considered the range of sanctions available to it, starting with the least restrictive. In the light of the findings made against Miss Azeez, the Committee has determined that it would not be appropriate to conclude this case with no action or with a reprimand. The nature of the Committee's findings, which relate to dishonest conduct and criminal convictions, means that taking no action, or issuing a reprimand, would be wholly insufficient to maintain public confidence and trust in the profession and in the regulatory process, and to declare and uphold proper standards of conduct and behaviour.

The Committee next considered whether a period of conditional registration would be appropriate. The nature of Miss Azeez's misconduct does not readily lend itself to the formulation of conditions, and in particular Miss Azeez's dishonest conduct could not in the Committee's view be properly addressed with conditions. Miss Azeez has also not engaged in a substantive way with these proceedings and is also not present to assist with the formulation of conditions, if indeed any could be identified. The Committee seriously doubts that Miss Azeez would comply with conditions given its findings of dishonest conduct in her dealings with the GDC. In any event, the Committee considers that a period of conditional registration would be entirely insufficient to declare and uphold proper professional standards of conduct and behaviour, and would not maintain trust and confidence in the profession.

The Committee therefore went on to consider whether to suspend Miss Azeez's registration. Having given the matter careful consideration, the Committee concluded that a period of suspension would not be sufficient to address the serious issues in this case. The Committee considers that Miss Azeez's dishonest conduct suggests a harmful and deep-seated professional attitudinal deficiency. Miss Azeez's criminal convictions and dishonest conduct are highly damaging to her fitness to practise. Miss Azeez has not demonstrated any meaningful insight into, or remediation of, her convictions and misconduct. She has also not indicated any intention or willingness to do so in the future. The Committee considers that a period of suspended registration would not be sufficient to protect the public, and in particular would not adequately declare and uphold proper professional standards of conduct and behaviour. Such a sanction would also not be sufficient to maintain trust and confidence in the profession or in the regulatory process in the particular circumstances of this case.

The Committee has therefore determined that erasure from the register is the only appropriate and proportionate sanction to impose in the particular circumstances of this serious case. The misconduct that the Committee has identified relates to

serious departures from professional standards and a breach of a fundamental tenet of the profession relating to probity and honesty. Miss Azeez's actions have compromised the integrity of the GDC's register and have seriously undermined the public's trust and confidence in the profession and the regulatory process. Miss Azeez has also not demonstrated any insight into or remediation of her conduct, and has not engaged with these proceedings in any substantive way. Miss Azeez's conduct is fundamentally incompatible with registration. The Committee therefore finds that any lesser sanction than erasure would be insufficient to declare and uphold proper professional standards and maintain public trust in confidence in the profession and in the regulatory process.

The Committee hereby directs that Miss Azeez's name be erased from the register."

Determination on immediate order

"Having directed that Miss Azeez's entry in the Register be erased, the Committee has considered whether to impose an order for her immediate suspension in accordance with Section 36 (U) (1) of the Dentists Act 1984 (as amended).

The Committee has heard from Ms Bird on behalf of the GDC that an immediate order is otherwise in the public interest.

The Committee has accepted the advice of the Legal Adviser.

In all the circumstances, the Committee considers that an immediate order of suspension is necessary to protect the public and is otherwise in the public interest given the risks that it has set out in its foregoing determination. The Committee considers that an immediate order for suspension on these grounds is proportionate.

The effect of the foregoing determination and this immediate order is that Miss Azeez's registration will be suspended from the date on which notice of this decision is deemed served upon her. Unless she 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 she so decide to exercise her right of appeal, this immediate order of suspension will remain in place until the resolution of any appeal.

That concludes this case."