

**PARTLY PRIVATE HEARING
Professional Conduct Committee
Initial Hearing**

3 – 5 August 2026

Name: MAWJI, Fatemazehra Naushad

Registration number: 281069

Case number: CAS-211946-X1P5T6

General Dental Council: Victoria Shehadeh, Counsel
Instructed by Clarice Tagoe Reinhold, IHLPS

Registrant: Present
Represented by Julia Furley, Counsel

Fitness to practise: Impaired by reason of misconduct and conviction

Outcome: Suspension

Duration: 1 Month

Committee members: Helen Wagner (Chair and Lay Member)
Gezala Umar (Dentist Member)
Emma Duke (Dental Care Professional Member)

Legal adviser: Nicola Bircher

Committee Secretary: Kate Anderson (3 and 4 August)
Paul Carson (5 August)

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

Ms Mawji,

1. This was a Professional Conduct Committee (PCC) inquiry into the facts which formed the basis of the allegation against you that your fitness to practise is impaired by reason of your conviction and misconduct.
2. You were present at the hearing and represented by Ms Julia Furley, Counsel. Ms Victoria Shehadeh, Counsel, appeared on behalf of the General Dental Council (GDC).
3. The hearing was held at the General Dental Council in Wimpole Street

The Charge

4. The Charge, as set out in the Notice of Hearing, is as follows:

‘That being registered as a dental care professional:

1. *On 30 July 2021 you were convicted at the North East London Magistrates Court of committing the following offences on 16 July 2021:*
 - a) *An offence of driving a motor vehicle on a road after consuming an amount of alcohol which exceeded the legal limit contrary to section 5(1)(a) Road Traffic Act 1988 and the Road Traffic Offenders Act 1988;*
 - b) *An offence of driving a motor vehicle on a public road without third party insurance contrary to section 143 Road Traffic Act 1988 and Schedule 2 of the Road Traffic Offenders Act 1988.*
2. *On 21 April 2022 you were convicted at the Portsmouth Magistrates Court of committing the following offences on 25 March 2022:*
 - a) *An offence of driving a motor vehicle on a road after consuming an amount of alcohol which exceeded the legal limit contrary to section 5(1)(a) Road Traffic Act 1988 and the Road Traffic Offenders Act 1988; and*
 - b) *An offence of driving a motor vehicle on a public road without third party insurance contrary to section 143 Road Traffic Act 1988 and Schedule 2 of the Road Traffic Offenders Act 1988; and*
 - c) *An offence of driving a motor vehicle while disqualified from holding or obtaining a licence contrary to section 103(1)(b) Road Traffic Act 1988.*
3. *You failed to immediately inform the General Dental Council when you were*

convicted of the offences set out in 1 a), 1b), 2a), 2b) and 2c) above.

4. *You failed to immediately inform the General Dental Council that you were charged on 7 April 2020 with an offence of, between 1 July 2019-6 September 2019, committing acts with the intent to pervert the course of justice.*
5. *You failed to immediately inform the General Dental Council that you were charged with an offence of conspiring to commit fraud by false representation contrary to section 1(1) Fraud Act 2006 and section 1(1) Criminal Law Act 1977 on a date prior to 19 August 2020 or conspiracy to steal contrary to section 1(1) Theft Act 1968 and section 1(1) Criminal Law Act 1977.*
6. *In the course of making an application for the additional title of Dental Therapist on the General Dental Council register on or around 16 August 2023 you failed to declare the conviction set out a 1 above.*
7. *Your conduct in relation to 3 and/or 4 and/or 5 and/or 6 above was:*
 - a) *Misleading, and/or*
 - b) *Lacking integrity, and/or*
 - c) *Dishonest.*

AND by reason of the matters alleged at 1 and 2 above your fitness to practise is impaired by reason of conviction;

AND by reason of the matters alleged at 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7 your fitness to practise is impaired by reason of misconduct.'

Preliminary matters

Application for the Hearing to take place in Private

5. At the beginning of the hearing, Ms Furley made an application for the hearing to take place partly in private pursuant to Rule 53(1) and (2) of the GDC (Fitness to Practise) Rules 2006 (the Rules). Ms Furley submitted that some of matters at this hearing concerned your private life, which should be held in private. **[PRIVATE]**. Ms Shehadeh made no comments in respect of this application. The Committee heard and accepted the advice of the Legal Adviser as to the provisions of the Rules and the approach it should take to its decision.
6. The Committee bore in mind that, as a starting point, hearings should be conducted in public session. However, having regard to the particular circumstances of your case, the Committee determined that part of the hearing should be held in private to protect your private and family life. The Committee was satisfied that this outweighed the public interest in open hearings. It therefore acceded to the application.

Rule 18 Amendment to the Charge

7. At the outset of the hearing, Ms Shehadeh made an application under Rule 18 of the Rules to amend the charges at this hearing.
8. Ms Shehadeh applied to withdraw the dates at allegation 4 of the charges. She submitted that the date range currently in place at allegation 4 is incorrect and applies to the offence at charge 5, not charge 4. She submitted that despite efforts by the GDC to obtain a charge sheet from the police, it had not received any such document and therefore was unable to provide a specific date within the charge. She therefore applied for the incorrect dates be removed and the charge be left as is, without specific details as to the dates for this allegation to ensure accuracy.
9. In relation to charge 5, Ms Shehadeh applied for the charge to be amended to remove the line *'prior to August 2020'* and add the specific date of *'7 August 2020'*. She submitted that this was based on the fact that the Counsel had since received a letter that provided the specific date of the conviction.
10. Ms Shehadeh lastly applied to amend charge 6, by amending the stem of the charge from *'you failed to declare the conviction set out at a 1 above'* to *'you failed to declare the conviction set out at 1a above'*. She submitted that this was a straightforward clerical amendment, that could be done for complete accuracy and clarity.
11. Ms Shehadeh submitted that all of these amendments could be made to accurately reflect the evidence. She submitted that this was not a case where the amendments would cause any injustice, and that no prejudice would be caused by allowing the amendments. She submitted that the amendments do not heighten the seriousness of any matters and that the application to amend was simply to ensure accuracy.
12. Ms Furley did not oppose the amendments.

Committee's decision on amending the charge

13. The Committee heard and accepted the legal advice in relation to amending the charges.
14. The Committee was satisfied that the proposed changes were sensible in that they clarified the charges and made them more accurate. It considered that the amendments would also aid you to have a clear understanding of the exact allegations. The Committee was satisfied that the amendments reflect the reality and that there would be no prejudice caused by allowing the proposed amendments to be made.
15. The Committee therefore acceded to the application.

The Amended Charges

16. The amended charges 4,5, and 6 are as follows:

4. You failed to immediately inform the General Dental Council that you were charged on 7 April 2020 with an offence of, between 1 July 2019-6 September 2019, with committing acts with the intent to pervert the course of justice.

5. You failed to immediately inform the General Dental Council that you were charged with an offence of conspiring to commit fraud by false representation contrary to section 1(1) Fraud Act 2006 and section 1(1) Criminal Law Act 1977 on 7 April 2020 and later faced a charge of conspiracy to steal contrary to section 1(1) Theft Act 1968 and section 1(1) Criminal Law Act 1977.

6. In the course of making an application for the additional title of Dental Therapist on the General Dental Council register on or around 16 August 2023 you failed to declare the conviction set out at 1a above.

Your Admissions

17. The Committee heard your admissions to the charges.

18. You admitted charges 1- 6 in their entirety.

19. You admitted charge 7a that your conduct was misleading, but denied charges 7b and 7c that the conduct lacked integrity and was dishonest.

20. Having heard your admissions, the Committee accepted them, and in accordance with Rules 17(4) and 17(5) of the GDC (Fitness to Practise) Rules 2006, the Chair of the Committee announced the factual allegations that you had admitted as 'found proved' on the basis of your admissions.

Background to the case and summary of the allegation

21. In opening the case for the GDC, Ms Shehadeh provided the Committee with oral submissions of the background of this case and a summary of the allegation.

22. Ms Shehadeh informed the Committee that you first registered as a dental nurse in 2018, whilst you were a student.

23. Ms Shehadeh took the Committee through the criminal matters of your case. Ms Shehadeh told the Committee that on 7 April 2020 you received a postal requisition for conspiracy to defraud. She informed the Committee that you were later found not guilty. On 30 July 2021, you were convicted of '*driving a motor vehicle on a road after consuming an amount of alcohol which exceeded the legal limit contrary to section 5(1)(a) Road Traffic Act 1988 and the Road Traffic Offenders Act 1988*' and '*driving a*

motor vehicle on a public road without third party insurance contrary to section 143 Road Traffic Act 1988 and Schedule 2 of the Road Traffic Offenders Act 1988'. You received a disqualification from driving. On 21 April 2022, you were convicted of 'driving a motor vehicle on a road after consuming an amount of alcohol which exceeded the legal limit contrary to section 5(1)(a) Road Traffic Act 1988 and the Road Traffic Offenders Act 1988;', 'driving a motor vehicle on a public road without third party insurance contrary to section 143 Road Traffic Act 1988 and Schedule 2 of the Road Traffic Offenders Act 1988; and 'driving a motor vehicle while disqualified from holding or obtaining a licence contrary to section 103(1)(b) Road Traffic Act 1988'. You were also investigated by the police for perverting the course of justice, however by way of the crown offering no evidence, you were found not guilty. Ms Shehadeh informed the Committee that you failed to inform the GDC of these convictions and investigations, for which you had a duty to do as a GDC registered dental professional.

24. Ms Shehadeh informed the Committee that you applied for the additional title of Dental Therapist on 22 August 2023, and attached to this you included a letter detailing your conviction for driving offences from 2022 including that you had a 'DR10' and 'BA10' and stated that you were under an ongoing investigation for a criminal offence of perverting the course of justice. You did not however inform the GDC that you had another conviction for driving offences dated 2021. Ms Shehadeh informed the Committee that it had been provided with the memoranda of conviction for both convictions, and that the factual context of your convictions is in the police summary documents.
25. Ms Shehadeh next referred to the allegations not related to convictions. She informed the Committee that whilst you were not convicted of fraud or theft, an investigation took place and you were charged. She submitted that you had a duty to inform the GDC of any ongoing police investigation. She submitted that your conduct in failing to immediately inform the GDC of the issues was misleading. She also submitted that the GDC's case is that your conduct lacked integrity and was dishonest in that you failed to self-report, and would have known you had a duty to do so and have been familiar with the ethical standards. Ms Shehadeh informed the Committee that standard 9.3 of the Standards for Dental Professionals details that you must *'inform the GDC if you are subject to criminal proceedings or a regulatory finding is made against you, anywhere in the world'*. She therefore submitted that your conduct lacked integrity and was dishonest in that you did not follow this standard by initially avoiding telling the GDC about your convictions and police investigations in relation to you.

Evidence

26. The evidence provided to the Committee by the GDC was both documentary and oral. The documentary evidence comprised of:
 - signed witness statement and associated exhibits of Chelsea Norton, GDC Registrations Manager

- signed witness statements and associated exhibits of Umay Kalsoom, GDC IHLPS Paralegal

27. The documentary evidence received by the Committee on your behalf in response to the allegations were:

- Your signed witness statement
- Witness 1's signed witness statement
- 10 references
- A Personal Development Plan
- Various CPD Certificates
- Google Reviews

28. Furthermore, you gave oral evidence at the hearing, including details about your personal circumstances at the time, which were extremely challenging. [PRIVATE]

The Committee's findings of fact

29. The Committee considered all the evidence presented to it, both documentary and oral. It took account of the closing submissions made by Ms Shehadeh on behalf of the GDC and those made by Ms Furley, on your behalf.

30. The Committee accepted the advice of the Legal Adviser, including in relation to the burden and standard of proof, the need to consider the alleged matters separately, the need to have regard to the specific wording of each allegation and how to approach the evidence. The Committee also noted the Legal Adviser's comments regarding the admissions made by you in this case and your previous good character.

31. In making its findings on the facts, the Committee bore in mind that the burden of proof rests with the GDC. There was no requirement for you to prove anything. Also, that the standard of proof is the civil standard, that is, whether the alleged facts are proved on the balance of probabilities. The Committee has had to decide whether it is more likely than not that the alleged matters are proved.

32. The Committee considered each head of charge separately and made the following findings:

That being registered as a dental care professional:	
1	On 30 July 2021 you were convicted at the North East London Magistrates Court of committing the following offences on 16 July 2021:

1a	An offence of driving a motor vehicle on a road after consuming an amount of alcohol which exceeded the legal limit contrary to section 5(1)(a) Road Traffic Act 1988 and the Road Traffic Offenders Act 1988; Proved by reason of admission
1b	An offence of driving a motor vehicle on a public road without third party insurance contrary to section 143 Road Traffic Act 1988 and Schedule 2 of the Road Traffic Offenders Act 1988. Proved by reason of admission
2	On 21 April 2022 you were convicted at the Portsmouth Magistrates Court of committing the following offences on 25 March 2022:
2a	An offence of driving a motor vehicle on a road after consuming an amount of alcohol which exceeded the legal limited contrary to section 5(1)(a) Road Traffic Act 1988 and the Road Traffic Offenders Act 1988; and Proved by reason of admission
2b	An offence of driving a motor vehicle on a public road without third party insurance contrary to section 143 Road Traffic Act 1988 and Schedule 2 of the Road Traffic Offenders Act 1988; and Proved by reason of admission
2c	An offence of driving a motor vehicle while disqualified from holding or obtaining a licence contrary to section 103(1)(b) Road Traffic Act 1988. Proved by reason of admission
3	You failed to immediately inform the General Dental Council when you were convicted of the offences set out in 1 a), 1b), 2a), 2b) and 2c) above. Proved by reason of admission
4	You failed to immediately inform the General Dental Council that you were charged with committing acts with the intent to pervert the course of justice. Proved by reason of admission
5	You failed to immediately inform the General Dental Council that you were charged with an offence of conspiring to commit fraud by false representation contrary to section 1(1) Fraud Act 2006 and section 1(1) Criminal Law Act 1977 on 7 April 2020 and later faced a charge of conspiracy to steal contrary to section 1(1) Theft Act 1968 and section 1(1) Criminal Law Act 1977.

	Proved by reason of admission
6	In the course of making an application for the additional title of Dental Therapist on the General Dental Council register on or around 16 August 2023 you failed to declare the conviction set out at 1a above. Proved by reason of admission
7	Your conduct in relation to 3 and/or 4 and/or 5 and/or 6 above was:
7a	Misleading, and/or Proved by reason of admission
7b	Lacking integrity, and/or Found not proved The Committee considered that a registrant has a duty to adhere to the professional and ethical standards expected of a registrant, and that these include practising with integrity. The Committee considered each of the charges separately, and concluded that your conduct at charges 3, 4, 5, and, 6 all suggested an ignorance of the standards expected of a registered dental professional in that you did not inform the GDC immediately of your convictions and police investigations, and omitted to explicitly include the conviction at charge 1a when applying to registered as a Dental Therapist. However, the Committee considered from the evidence that you were not practising as a Dental Nurse at the time of these allegations as you were a student studying to become a Dental Therapist. Whilst the Committee concluded that not practising as a Dental Nurse should not negate the awareness of the standards, it accepted your oral evidence that because of your [PRIVATE] and your personal circumstances notifying the GDC was not at the forefront of your mind. The Committee noted from your oral evidence that you informed the University where you were studying Dental Therapy immediately about your convictions and police investigations, which suggested that you were aware of your wrongdoing, but that it was an oversight on your part in not telling the GDC. It considered that you were not aware of your duty to inform the GDC. The Committee determined that the GDC had not discharged the burden on it to demonstrate that your actions lacked integrity by not informing the GDC immediately of your convictions and police investigations, and not informing the GDC of your conviction set out at 1a when applying to be

	registered as a Dental Therapist. Accordingly, it finds this charge not proved.
7c	Dishonest. Found not proved When considering this charge, the Committee referred to the test set out in the case of <i>Ivey v Genting Casinos (UK) Ltd. t/a Crockfords</i> [2017] UKSC 67. It first considered the actual state of your knowledge or belief as to the facts at the time. The Committee then considered whether your conduct would be viewed as dishonest by the objective standards of ordinary and decent people. The Committee considered your conduct in relation to charge 3, 4, 5, and 6 and whether this could be judged as dishonest. It considered the evidence before it for each of these charges individually in making its decision. In considering whether your conduct at charge 3 was dishonest, the Committee noted your oral evidence in which you stated that you were not practising as a Dental Nurse at the time of the allegations despite having kept up your registration. You informed the Committee that you did not know that you were meant to tell the GDC about the convictions. The Committee noted your evidence that you were a student studying to become a Dental Therapist during this period, and that you informed Portsmouth University of your convictions immediately. The Committee considered that on the balance of probabilities it was unlikely that you would deliberately conceal your convictions from the GDC given your honesty with your university and the potential repercussions from doing so. The Committee also considered the information you provided in your oral evidence that you were facing extremely difficult personal circumstances during this period [PRIVATE] and therefore it was unlikely that contacting the GDC would have been at the forefront of your mind. Looking at all of the evidence, the Committee therefore considered it unlikely that you were aware of a duty to inform the GDC and chose deliberately not to do so. The Committee was satisfied that on the balance of probabilities you did not know that you were meant to inform the GDC of your convictions immediately. The Committee noted that once you informed your university, your oral evidence was that you were not advised that you needed to inform the GDC. The Committee therefore determined that an objective member of the public who was aware of your state of mind at the time and having had sight of all of the evidence, would not assess that you were dishonest, as you appeared genuinely unaware of your

duty to inform the GDC and made no attempt to hide your convictions from the university.

In relation to charges 4 and 5, the Committee noted that neither of these charges amounted to a conviction. Having concluded that your conduct at charge 3 was not dishonest, and that it was not at the forefront of your mind to inform the GDC that you had a conviction, the Committee considered on the balance of probabilities that you would have been even less likely to be aware that you needed to inform it of any police investigations. For the same reasons as its consideration as to whether the conduct at charge 3 was dishonest, the Committee considered that you had a chaotic personal life during the period in which you did not inform the GDC of the police investigation.

The Committee was satisfied that on the balance of probabilities you were not aware that you had a duty to inform the GDC of any police investigation immediately, and that you were not deliberately dishonest in not doing so. The Committee therefore once again determined that an ordinary member of the public who was aware of your state of mind and all of the evidence, would not assess that you were dishonest in not informing the GDC of ongoing police investigations.

The Committee lastly considered whether your conduct at charge 6 was dishonest. The Committee noted that you declared your convictions from 2022 on your Dental Therapist application form in 2023, but did not include all of those from 2021. The Committee considered that on the balance of probabilities, it was unlikely that you would have forgotten about the initial conviction given that this led to the revocation of your licence, and one of your convictions from 2022 was for driving without a valid licence.

However, the Committee accepted your oral evidence that you did not receive any help with filling in the form and that you did not fully understand how this was meant to be done. In particular, the Committee had regard to the letter you included with your application, in which you discussed some of the convictions and the ongoing police investigation. The Committee noted that you referred to the convictions in a manner that was difficult to understand by using the codes on a driving licence such as 'BA10' and 'DA10' instead of the convictions by name. The Committee also took into account the closing submissions made on your behalf where it was confirmed that you received extra time to complete exams whilst at university, which indicated a recognised need for additional support. The Committee found your letter with the application to be generally confusing and incomplete. This was in contrast to the letter with your later application in 2024, where you had been assisted by a charity to make the application and there was a clear and complete chronology of events. The Committee did not consider therefore that the GDC had discharged its burden of proof that you intentionally omitted the first conviction. Rather, it was a failure on your part to clearly set out the

	chronology of your convictions or express matters succinctly. It therefore considered that this was a matter of oversight and confusion rather than intentional dishonesty. As above, the Committee was satisfied that an ordinary decent person would not consider your conduct to be dishonest if it were to be presented with the full evidence as has been before the Committee. Having considered your knowledge at the time of the facts and concluded that you were not intentionally dishonest in relation to charges 3, 4, 5, and 6, and that the conduct would not be viewed as dishonest by the objective standards of ordinary and decent people, the Committee found this charge not proved in its entirety.
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33. We move to stage two.

Stage 2 Determination

34. Following its announcement of its decision on the facts, the hearing moved to Stage 2. At Stage 2, the Committee considered whether the facts found proved amounted to misconduct and, if so, whether your fitness to practise is currently impaired by reason of your misconduct and by reason of your conviction. If it found that your fitness to practise is impaired, it would consider what sanction, if any, should be imposed.

Submissions

35. Ms Shehadeh first addressed the Committee in respect of misconduct and current impairment by reason of misconduct and/or your conviction. Ms Shehadeh submitted that the matters in considering whether your fitness to practise is impaired could be split into two categories- the convictions and misconduct.
36. Ms Shehadeh first dealt with the convictions. Ms Shehadeh referred the Committee to the Guidance and the Rules, and submitted that impairment could immediately be found on the statutory ground that the convictions had been proved by the Certificate of Conviction. She submitted that the matters were sufficiently serious that you are currently impaired on the grounds of both public interest and public confidence. She submitted that the seriousness of the convictions was indicated by the inherent nature of the convictions, the fact that the convictions occurred twice, that your first offence was serious enough to disqualify you from driving, by the high number of alcohol units within your blood sample, and the description of your manner of driving within the police documents.
37. With regard to misconduct for the proved charges 3-7a, Ms Shehadeh referred the Committee to the relevant case law, the *'Fitness to Practise: Guidance for the practice committees'* (6 January 2026), and the GDC's *Standards for the Dental Team* (2013). Ms Shehadeh submitted that these facts found proved amount to misconduct. She submitted that standard 9.3.1 of the Standards states that *'You must inform the GDC immediately if you are subject to any criminal proceedings anywhere in the world.'* Ms Shehadeh submitted that failing to immediately inform the GDC is a serious departure

from the acceptable standards, as also referenced in the code of conduct. Ms Shehadeh therefore submitted that your conduct can be properly judged as misconduct.

38. In relation to current impairment, Ms Shehadeh submitted that in not informing the GDC of your convictions and police investigations, the GDC were deprived of the ability to investigate these matters. She submitted that whilst it was noted that you had provided significant mitigation and that the GDC were not looking for a way to punish you, it must be noted that the public confidence is important and not telling ones regulator about charges relating to perverting the course of justice, fraud, and later theft is serious. She submitted that these were serious matters that need to be marked by a finding of current impairment, and therefore submitted that you are currently impaired on public interest grounds.
39. Ms Shehadeh lastly addressed the Committee on the matter of sanction. She submitted that the Committee must consider proportionality and consider the range of sanctions available to it.
40. Ms Shehadeh submitted that there were mitigating factors that the Committee must consider such as that you have no previous fitness to practise history and relevant, contemporary testimonials have been provided. Ms Shehadeh however submitted to the Committee that it should urge caution in viewing the matters as an isolated incident.
41. Ms Shehadeh also submitted that there were aggravating factors to be considered, these being that your conduct posed a risk of harm to members of the public, and that the misconduct was sustained over a period of time.
42. Ms Shehadeh submitted that the least restrictive sanction of a reprimand is not sufficient to mark your conduct due to the fact that you were misleading, even if not deliberately, and that the matters were not a single incident or one failure to report information to the GDC. Ms Shehadeh submitted that conditions were also not appropriate as the matters in this case are not clinical, and that they would not be workable or measurable, nor engage with the real heart of the matter.
43. Ms Shehadeh submitted that a suspension for no less than 6 months is the appropriate and proportionate sanction for the matters proved at this hearing. This would meet the overarching objective. Ms Shehadeh submitted that more reflections needed to be carried out. She submitted that a 12 month suspension is unnecessary. Ms Shehadeh submitted that a sanction of erasure would be disproportionate.
44. You gave oral evidence and answered questions from the Committee regarding how you may deal with any potential similar issues in the future and in relation to your support within the workplace.
45. Ms Furley submitted that a finding of misconduct was accepted and that there was no dispute between parties in relation to this. She submitted however that the matter of whether you are currently impaired is the issue to be considered. Ms Furley submitted that a conviction does not mean that you are automatically impaired.

46. Ms Furley submitted that you disclosed details of your personal life at this hearing, some of which you have never shared with your family, which was understandably hard. She submitted that you have been entirely honest throughout. Ms Furley submitted that there has been significant development in your character since 2022 (the date of your last conviction) and 2023 (when you disclosed matters to the GDC). Ms Furley submitted that you were young (only between 22-24) at the time of the incidents, but that you have matured since. Your experiences have shaped you to become a mature young woman, and Ms Furley submitted that it is heartening to see that your probation rehabilitation requirements have helped you turn your life around.

47. [PRIVATE]

48. Ms Furley submitted that all of the circumstances of your case should be considered, and that it was not just a matter of mitigation. Ms Furley submitted that you fully accept that not informing the GDC of convictions and police investigations was a failure on your part. She also submitted that you are already incredibly insightful, and not only showing the beginnings of insight as suggested by the GDC. She referred to the testimonials, including one by your brother who details the changes in your approach to life [PRIVATE]. She submitted that you have provided good evidence of remediation. You embraced the structure of unpaid work from your rehabilitation order and continued community work afterwards, you have embraced your religion, and helped Muslim Aid and Dentaaid. Ms Furley also submitted that in order to re-gain your driving licence you had to go through psychological testing and medical testing which was embarrassing and stringent. You now however have a driving licence, car insurance, and your own car which may seem basic, however this shows that you are sensible and responsible and it provides an insight into your future conduct.

49. Ms Furley submitted that it was not in the public interest for it to be found that you are currently impaired. She submitted that you have done so much since the matters. Ms Furley took the Committee to the Guidance which includes a list of factors for when impairment can be found on the grounds of public interest. She submitted that your offences do not constitute serious criminal convictions. Ms Furley submitted that if someone knew of all of your circumstances and all of your work done since, then they would not believe that a finding of impairment was required on the grounds of public interest.

50. Ms Furley submitted that the Committee should impose the least severe sanction possible, to allow you to continue your fruitful journey of professional development. Ms Furley submitted that whilst you have not been under any interim order, you have been restricted in that you have not been able to complete registration as a Dental Therapist due to these fitness to practise proceedings which has had a significant impact on your professional development.

51. Ms Furley submitted that conditions are not appropriate in this case as there are none that could be imposed that would reflect the circumstances of your case. Ms Furley asked the Committee to consider imposing a reprimand, and took them to the Guidance where she referred to the factors that make a reprimand appropriate and have been met within your case. She submitted that a reprimand was sufficient to meet the seriousness of the matters.

52. Ms Furley submitted that a sanction of suspension should be considered very carefully for a registrant such as yourself. She submitted that you had very strong mitigation to be considered. To impose a suspension would lead you to de-skill which would be inappropriate when you are trying so hard. Ms Furley submitted that it was unclear why the GDC were asking for a 6 month suspension, and that this is a long time to take away your livelihood. She submitted that if the Committee decided that a suspension was necessary, then it should consider the shortest possible period of time, for example weeks rather than months.
53. Ms Furley finally submitted that you are not impaired, but that if the Committee wish to find that you are and impose a sanction, a reprimand is sufficient.

Committee's Decision

54. The Committee has borne in mind that its decisions on misconduct, impairment and sanction are matters for its own independent judgment. There is no burden or standard of proof at this stage of the proceedings. The Committee had regard to the GDC's Guidance document, *'Fitness to Practise: Guidance for the practice committees'* (6 January 2026) (the GDC's Guidance) and the relevant case law. The Committee also received advice from the Legal Adviser which it accepted.
55. The Committee was satisfied that it had sight of the Certificates of Conviction for the convictions at charges 1 and 2, and therefore the statutory ground for a conviction was met. The Committee next considered whether the remaining charges that were found proved met the grounds for misconduct.

Misconduct

56. The Committee considered whether the facts found proved in relation to charges 3- 7a amounted to misconduct. In doing so, the Committee had regard to the GDC's publication, *Standards for the dental team* (September 2013).
57. The Committee determined that you had breached standard 9.3 which details that *'You must inform the GDC if you are subject to criminal proceedings or a regulatory finding is made against you, anywhere in the world'*.
58. The Committee considered that you had breached this fundamental standard of dentistry, by not immediately informing the GDC of your convictions nor informing them of separate ongoing police investigations and charges, albeit that they did not lead to convictions. It considered that you had failed to declare your convictions and police investigations on multiple occasions, and even if you did not intend to do so, you had a duty as a registered dental professional to be aware and follow the standards. As a result, the Committee determined that the facts found proved at charges 3-7a amounted to misconduct.

Impairment

59. The Committee then considered whether your fitness to practise is currently impaired by reason of your misconduct and your convictions on the grounds of the protection of patients and the public and/or is in the wider public interest.
60. The Committee first considered whether you are currently impaired on the grounds of protection of patients and the public in relation to your misconduct. The Committee considered that you had demonstrated significant insight into your misconduct. It noted all of your evidence in relation to how you would act should something similar occur, and that you had told the Committee about your supportive work environment, where you had been incredibly open about the matters at this hearing. You took full accountability for your actions despite facing significant personal circumstances during the period in which the misconduct took place. The Committee noted that the misconduct and your convictions had occurred during a period of your life when you had exceptional challenges and were young and [PRIVATE]. You had not used this as an excuse but it was clear that these circumstances no longer existed. The Committee considered there to be no evidence before it that you would repeat the conduct. Having previously found that you did not intentionally fail to inform the GDC about your convictions and police investigations, and in considering that you have a current understanding of the expectation to do so, the Committee was satisfied that you are not currently impaired by reason of your misconduct in relation to public protection.
61. The Committee further considered whether you are currently impaired by reason of your convictions on the grounds of public protection. The Committee considered that the convictions were serious in that you received two convictions for five driving offences in total in 2021 and 2022, including driving while over the legal limit which clearly poses a risk to the public. The Committee also considered that you have successfully completed the process to get your driving licence back, which included psychological and medical testing, and have proved that you are now safe to drive and do not pose a risk to the public. The Committee also noted that you now abstain from alcohol and no longer mix with the same social circle at the time of these offences. The Committee was satisfied therefore that you are not currently impaired by reason of your convictions on the grounds of public protection.
62. The Committee next considered whether your misconduct means that you are currently impaired on public interest grounds. The Committee considered that you had breached fundamental tenets of the dental profession by not informing the GDC of your convictions and police investigations, which were all of a serious nature. The Committee noted that this was not an isolated incident, but that there were repeated failures to inform the GDC. The Committee also considered that a member of the public would be shocked and troubled to learn that a registered professional was not aware of

the standards of their profession. It considered that if a finding of impairment was not made this would undermine public confidence in the dental profession and the GDC as a regulator. The Committee also considered that fellow practitioners would be similarly concerned. Therefore, the Committee determined that a finding of impairment is necessary in the wider public interest, to maintain public confidence in the profession and to uphold proper standards of conduct.

63. The Committee lastly considered whether you are currently impaired on public interest grounds by reason of your convictions. The Committee considered that you had serious criminal convictions in that you had received two convictions for five driving offences in 2021 and 2022, and that the second were a repetition of the first. The Committee considered public confidence in the dental profession could be undermined if no finding of impairment was made given the serious nature of your convictions, that whilst historical, were repeated at the time. Therefore, the Committee determined that a finding of impairment is necessary in the wider public interest, to maintain public confidence in the profession and to uphold proper standards of conduct.

64. Accordingly, the Committee has determined that your fitness to practise is currently impaired by reason of your convictions and misconduct on the grounds of the public interest only.

Sanction

65. The Committee next considered what sanction, if any, to impose on your registration. It recognised that the purpose of a sanction is not to be punitive although it may have that effect. The Committee applied the principle of proportionality balancing your interest with the public interest. It also took into account the *GDC's Guidance*.

66. The Committee considered the mitigating and aggravating factors in this case and took into consideration the relevant paragraphs in the *GDC's Guidance* on these matters.

67. The mitigating factors in this case were that:

- You have previous good character, as confirmed by the good character direction made at stage 1. You also have no previous fitness to practise history.
- There is evidence of good conduct following the convictions, police investigations, and failure to inform the GDC. This has been evidenced within the glowing testimonials you provided, including those provided by colleagues and other members of the dental profession.
- The Committee also noted your compliance with your probation officer and rehabilitation order, and your continued charity work.
- There is evidence of remorse, insight and/or apology, in that you clearly showed in your evidence that you have accepted that you were at fault for your actions

[PRIVATE]

- Remedial action has been taken, in that you have continued to train and show dedication to the profession, have undertaken courses, put in the work that led to you re-gaining a driving licence, and have ceased drinking alcohol.
- There were significant personal factors at the time of the conduct. [PRIVATE] You have since turned your life around.

68. The aggravating factor in this case was that:

- The conviction and misconduct were repeated, in that you were convicted twice for multiple driving offences, and you failed to inform the GDC of both convictions, and two further police investigations and charges.

69. The Committee decided that it would be inappropriate to conclude this case with no further action. It would not satisfy the public interest given the serious matters.

70. The Committee considered a sanction of a reprimand; however it determined that this would be insufficient to address the seriousness of the findings. The Committee considered that the behaviour was not an isolated incident in that you were convicted of five driving offences, which meant that the issues do not fall on the lower end of the scale of seriousness. The Committee took driving whilst over the limit very seriously because of the potential harm it can cause. It noted that the alcohol reading on the second offence was considerably over the legal limit. It also took into account that you had two convictions for driving with no insurance. The Committee also noted that the second drink driving conviction from 2022 included an offence for driving without a valid driving licence, which had been revoked following the first conviction in 2021. It determined that these were repeated serious convictions and that, despite your personal mitigation and remorse, the public interest would not be satisfied by the imposition of a reprimand.

71. The Committee next considered a sanction of conditions. The Committee however considered that no workable conditions could be formulated that would appropriately deal with the matters at this hearing, given that the matters were not clinical in nature. It considered that current impairment had been found on public interest grounds only, and therefore conditions were neither suitable nor workable to address the misconduct and convictions that led to your current impairment.

72. The Committee next considered a sanction of suspension. The Committee considered that the matters were serious and you had displayed a departure from the standards expected of a dental professional. It noted that your conduct was not isolated in that you repeated your criminal offence by committing further driving offenses whilst already being disqualified from driving. It also noted that repeated failures to adhere to the Standards, whether through ignorance or not, were also serious. Standards and guidance are there to protect the public and uphold public confidence in the profession. Ignorance of those standards by a registrant undermines the profession. The

Committee concluded that your conduct required a sanction that would mark its seriousness and demonstrate that it was not acceptable behaviour for a registered dental professional. The Committee noted however that whilst your conduct was serious, you have demonstrated considerable insight and evidence of remediation and reflections. It also considered that your personal circumstances during this period were incredibly challenging. The Committee therefore determined that a sanction of suspension was appropriate and proportionate. It considered that a fully informed member of the public would be satisfied that a suspension would maintain public confidence in the dental profession and uphold the professional standards, and that any lesser sanction would be insufficient to meet the public interest.

73. For completeness, the Committee considered whether a sanction of erasure was appropriate and proportionate, however it concluded that your conduct did not meet the requirements to impose a sanction of erasure. You have not displayed any evidence of a deep-seated personality or professional attitudinal problem and you had significant mitigation despite the seriousness of the matters.
74. The Committee considered that a period of one month would be proportionate and suitable, to mark the seriousness of the matters at this hearing. The Committee considered that the public interest would be satisfied by this length of time. Whilst the Committee bore in mind any sanction is not designed to be punitive but that this suspension would have an effect on your employment, the Committee considered that the public interest outweighs your own interests.
75. Given that the Committee's decision is to impose a suspension on public interest grounds only, it was satisfied that no review needed to be conducted at the end of this period of suspension.
76. Unless you exercise your right of appeal, your registration will be suspended for a period of one month, starting 28 days from the date that notice of this Committee's direction is deemed to have been served upon you.
77. The Committee now invites submissions from Ms Shehadeh and from Ms Furley on your behalf, as to whether an immediate order of suspension should be imposed on your registration to cover the 28-day appeal period, pending the taking effect of its substantive direction for suspension.
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78. No immediate order was made.