

Social worker: Adelaide Arkorful

Registration number: SW66537

Fitness to Practise

Final Order Review meeting

Date of meeting: 01 May 2025

Meeting venue: Remote meeting

Final order being reviewed: Suspension Order (expiring 9 June 2025)

Meeting outcome: Removal Order with effect from the expiry of the
current order

Introduction and attendees:

1. This final order review falls under the Transitional and Savings Provisions (Social Workers) Regulations 2019 and, as a result, the review is determined in accordance with paragraph 15(1) of Schedule 2 to the Social Workers Regulations 2018 (the Regulations). The relevant procedural rules are the Social Work England (Fitness to Practise) Rules 2019 (the Rules).
2. This is the sixth review of a final order imposed in respect of the registration of Ms Adelaide Arkorful (Ms Arkorful).
3. On 26 June 2019 a Conduct and Competence Committee of the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) imposed a final conditions of practice order for a period of 12 months. Ms Arkorful appealed the decision to make a final order in respect of her registration. Her appeal was withdrawn under the terms of a Consent Order dated 15 March 2021. As a result of Ms Arkorful's appeal, the final conditions of practice order was not entered on the Register of Social Work England (which replaced the HCPC as regulator of social workers in England in December 2019) until the date of the Consent Order, 15 March 2021. During the period of Ms Arkorful's appeal, she was subject to an interim conditions of practice order which was made at the same time, and contained the same conditions, as the final conditions of practice order.
4. At the first review of the final order on 8 February 2022, a panel of adjudicators varied and extended the final conditions of practice order for a further period of 9 months.
5. At the second review of the final order on 2 November 2022, a panel of adjudicators varied and extended the final conditions of practice order for a further period of 9 months.
6. Ms Arkorful appealed the outcome of the first and second reviews to the High Court. The appeals were heard on 20 July 2023. In a judgment handed down on 8 February 2024, the appeals were dismissed.
7. At the third review of the final order on 31 August 2023, a panel of adjudicators imposed a final suspension order for a period of six months.
8. At the fourth review of the final order on 14 February 2024, a panel of adjudicators extended the final suspension order for a further period of nine months.
9. At the fifth review of the final order on 29 October 2024, a panel of adjudicators extended the final suspension order for a further period of six months.
10. Ms Arkorful did not attend today's review and was not represented.
11. Social Work England was represented by Capsticks LLP and their written submissions are set out within the notice of hearing letter.

12. The panel of adjudicators (the panel) and the other people involved in the review were as follows:

Adjudicators	Role
Frank Appleyard	Chair
Sara (Sally) Scott	Social worker adjudicator

Hearings team/Legal adviser	Role
Titlee Pandey	Hearings officer
Kathryn Tinsley	Hearings support officer
Jane Kilgannon	Legal adviser

13. The panel was provided with a final order review hearing bundle of 1175 pages, a service bundle of 18 pages, and a supplementary bundle of 43 pages.

Service of notice:

14. The panel had careful regard to the documents contained in the service bundle, including:

- A copy of the notice of the final order review hearing dated 1 April 2025 and addressed to Ms Arkorful at the email address which she had provided to Social Work England;
- An extract from the Social Work England Register as at 1 April 2025 detailing Ms Arkorful's registered email address; and
- A copy of a signed statement of service, on behalf of Social Work England, confirming that on 1 April 2025 they sent the documents to the e-mail address held by Social Work England for Ms Arkorful.

15. The panel accepted the advice of the legal adviser in relation to service of notice.

16. Having had regard to all of the information before it in relation to the service of notice, the panel was satisfied that notice of this hearing had been served on Ms Arkorful in accordance with Rules 16, 44 and 45 of the Rules.

Proceeding in the absence of the social worker and as a meeting:

17. The notice of the final order review hearing informed the social worker that the review would take place electronically. The notice stated:

"If you would like to attend before the adjudicators in order to make oral submissions, please confirm your intention by no later than 4pm on 16 April 2025. Unless we hear from you to the contrary, we shall assume that you do not want to attend a hearing and Social Work England may decide to deal with the review as a meeting. If Social Work England do hold a meeting, the adjudicators will be provided with a copy of this letter setting out Social Work England's submissions and a copy of any written submissions you provide."

18. The panel noted that:

- a. Ms Arkorful had replied to Social Work England by email on the evening of 1 April 2025, confirming receipt of the notice of final order review hearing;
- b. Ms Arkorful had completed and returned a Hearing Participation Form to Social Work England, signed and dated 15 April 2025, in which she ticked the box “*I [...] will not be attending the electronic hearing but I enclose my written submissions to be considered in advance of the review. I also understand that in my absence, the review may instead proceed as a meeting*”; and
- c. Ms Arkorful had provided written submissions dated 17 February 2025 and further documentation, including a number of character references.

19. The panel heard and accepted the advice of the legal adviser with regard to Rule 16(d) of the Rules which provides:

“Where the registered social worker makes written submissions and states that they do not intend to attend before the regulator, the regulator may direct that the question of whether an order should be made is determined by means of a meeting”.

20. The panel accepted the advice of the legal adviser in relation to the factors it should take into account when deciding whether it was fair and appropriate to conduct the final order review in Ms Arkorful’s absence. This included reference to the cases of *General Medical Council v Adeogba and Visvardis [2016] EWCA Civ 162*. The panel also took into account Social Work England guidance document: ‘Service of notices and proceeding in the absence of the social worker’.

21. The panel considered all of the information before it. The panel noted that Ms Arkorful was aware of the planned review and had expressly indicated that she did not intend to attend the review. She had not applied for an adjournment. Rather, she had provided written representations for the consideration of the panel. The panel concluded that Ms Arkorful had deliberately absented herself from the review and had indicated her consent for the review to go ahead in her absence, as a meeting. The panel therefore considered that adjourning today’s review would serve no useful purpose.

22. The panel was of the view that there was a strong public interest in the expeditious disposal of the review. Having carefully balanced Ms Arkorful’s interests and the public interest, the panel decided that it was fair and appropriate to proceed in Ms Arkorful’s absence.

23. In all the circumstances, the panel was satisfied that it would be fair and appropriate to conduct the review in the form of a meeting in accordance with Rule 16(d) of the Rules.

Preliminary Matter:

24. Pursuant to Rule 38(a)(ii) of the Rules, and after accepting advice from the legal adviser, the panel decided that any matters relating to Ms Arkorful's health should be heard in private.

Review of the current order:

25. The current final order is a suspension order which is due to expire at the end of 9 June 2025.

The allegations found proved which resulted in the imposition of the final order were as follows:

"Whilst registered with the HCPC as a Social Worker and during the course of your employment with the London Borough of Newham (LBN) between around 6 June 2016 and 9 December 2016, you:

1. In relation to Family A,

a) [Not Proved];

b) In the Child in Need Visit Forms dated 12 August 2016 and 18 August 2016, you:

i. [Not Proved];

ii. Did not progress the Child in Need plan (in relation to the Child in Need Visit Form dated 12 August 2016 only);

iii. Gave minimal detail about observations and/or interactions with the children.

c) Did not record minutes and/or keep any written records regarding issues discussed at Child in Need meetings;

d) Did not set any actions following the Child in Need meetings;

e) Did not consider and/or put in place any additional support for Family A;

f) [Not Proved];

g) Did not explore why a Family Support Worker provided by Adult Services had stopped escorting the mother and Child A to and from the Children's Centre;

h) [Not Proved]

2. In relation to Family B:

- a) *Lent approximately £20.00 to Child C's mother.*
- b) *On or around 18 November 2016, took 3 hours and 20 minutes to arrive at Child C's school after being informed that child C's mother was not at school to pick up Child C at 15:40 hours.*
- c) *On the morning of 21 November 2016, you:*
 - i. *did not update Child C's school about Child C's welfare,*
 - ii. *when Child C's school telephoned you, you were uncertain about where Child C had stayed over the weekend.*
- d) *during your telephone conversation with staff at Child C's school on 21 November 2016 referred to Child C's mother as "manipulating everyone", or words to that effect.*
- 3. *Did not consistently record child protection visits on the LBN's Carefirst system in a timely manner, in that you:*
 - a) *In the case of Child D, did not record child protection visits between 27 October 2016 and 5 December 2016;*
 - b) *In the case of Child E, did not record child protection visits between 27 October 2016 and 5 December 2016;*
 - c) *In the case of Child F, did not record child protection visits between 31 October 2016 and 5 December 2016;*
 - d) *In the case of Child G, did not record child protection visits between 10 November 2016 and 5 December 2016;*
 - e) *In the case of Child H, did not record child protection visits between 10 November 2016 and 5 December 2016;*
- 4. *Did not undertake and/or consistently record Child in Need visits on LBN's Carefirst system in a timely manner, in that you:*
 - a) *In the case of Child A, did not record and/or undertake child in need visits between 3 November 2016 and 5 December 2016;*
 - b) *In the case of Child J, did not record child in need visits between 29 September 2016 and 5 December 2016;*
 - c) *In the case of Child K, did not record child in need visits between 29 September 2016 and 5 December 2016;*

d) *In the case of Child B, did not record and/or undertake child in need visits between 3 November 2016 and 5 December 2016.*

26. The panel which conducted the substantive hearing decided that the matters set out in particulars 1 to 4 above (except those in paragraphs 2(a) and 2(c)(ii)), constituted misconduct.

The previous final order review panel on 29 October 2024 determined the following with regard to impairment:

“As a consequence of Ms Arkorful’s non-attendance the panel was unable to ask questions relating to the documents she had provided. The panel considered on the evidence before it that there was insufficient evidence that Ms Arkorful had acquired an understanding of the seriousness of the regulatory concerns or the impact these concerns on service users and on the reputation of the social work profession as a whole.

While Ms Arkorful has provided extensive written submissions, the panel considered that she is yet to properly address the regulatory concerns and provide evidence of meaningful insight and remediation of the matters that were found proved. The panel was of the same view as previous panels that Ms Arkorful continues to insufficiently demonstrate a depth of reflection, or a full consideration of the impact of the behaviour which was found proved on service users or the reputation of the profession.

The panel noted that Ms Arkorful has continued to engage with Social Work England and has provided dated references, however the panel was concerned that there was little indication within the references that the provider had specific knowledge of the extent and detail of the regulatory concerns. While the reference from Mr Kubeyinje makes reference to being aware of Ms Arkorful being “subject to a fitness to practise process” there is no indication that the referee fully understands the matters that have been found proved against Ms Arkorful.

In the absence of any evidence of meaningful insight and remediation, the panel concluded that there has been no material change in circumstances, since the previous panel’s decision on 14 February 2024. This was despite the fact that Ms Arkorful was provided with a clear list of the types of evidence a reviewing panel would be assisted by.

The panel has not been provided with any information or any evidence of training or Continuing Professional Development (CPD) since the last review in February 2024 and Ms Arkorful has not provided the panel with an adequate written reflection which sufficiently addresses the regulatory concerns.

Ms Arkorful has not attended this hearing. Therefore, there remains no further demonstration of meaningful insight or remediation beyond the written submissions. The panel concluded that there is no evidence provided to suggest that the risk of repetition

of the misconduct has reduced and therefore the panel concluded that there remains a real risk of repetition.

The panel noted that a significant aspect of the public component is promoting and maintaining public confidence and promoting and maintaining proper professional standards for social workers. The panel also acknowledged that there is a public interest in experienced social workers returning to unrestricted practice when it is safe to do so. However, in the present circumstances the panel considered members of the public would be concerned if a social worker in Ms Arkorful's situation was permitted to resume unrestricted practise in circumstances where the regulatory concern which led to a suspension order had not been remediated.

The panel concluded that, in these circumstances, a finding of no impairment would seriously undermine public trust and confidence in the profession and Social Work England as a professional regulator. Therefore, the panel concluded that Ms Arkorful's fitness to practise remains impaired."

The previous final order review panel on 29 October 2024 determined the following with regard to sanction:

"Decision on whether to revoke order/make no further order

The panel noted the following paragraphs of the Impairment and Sanctions Guidance:

215. If a social worker remains not fit to practise, the adjudicators will make a decision on what order should be imposed.

216. A social worker must not be allowed to resume unrestricted practice unless the decision makers are satisfied their fitness to practise is no longer impaired.

The panel concluded that, in view of the nature and seriousness of Ms Arkorful's impairment which has not been remedied, and in the absence of any evidence of meaningful insight or remediation it would not be appropriate to take no further action. Furthermore, such an outcome would be insufficient to protect the public, maintain public confidence and uphold the reputation of the profession, given the risk of repetition.

Decision on whether to issue advice or warning on expiry of suspension order

The panel then considered whether to issue advice or a warning. The panel noted that neither of these sanctions would restrict Ms Arkorful's ability to practise and therefore such sanctions would not be appropriate where there is a current risk to public safety and public confidence in the profession. Therefore, the panel

concluded that issuing advice or a warning would be inappropriate and would provide insufficient protection of the public.

Decision on whether to impose a conditions of practice order on expiry of suspension order

The panel went on to consider a conditions of practice order. The panel took the view that, given the misconduct findings in this case, and the history of matters a conditions of practice order would not be suitable.

The panel noted that over the lengthy period Ms Arkorful was subject to conditions of practice and she did not find them to be workable or sufficient to enable her to return to safe practice. Having reviewed Ms Arkorful's recent submissions, the panel had insufficient confidence that Ms Arkorful was minded or motivated to comply with conditions of practice. Conditions of practice require a level of engagement and commitment from the social worker which Ms Arkorful has not yet demonstrated. The panel therefore decided that conditions of practice were currently unsuitable and insufficient to protect the public.

Decision on whether to extend the period of suspension order

The panel considered carefully whether there remains a prospect that Ms Arkorful is willing to actively engage with the process of review and to separate her denial of the factual findings from her engagement with those findings. The panel noted that Ms Arkorful although not in attendance has continued to engage with the regulator and has sought to provide a reference which is in partial compliance with the previous panel's recommendations.

Given these circumstances, the panel considered that there is a prospect that Ms Arkorful will engage effectively with a future review panel. It also considered that Ms Arkorful should be given a further opportunity to reflect on matters.

A suspension order would prevent Ms Arkorful from practising during the suspension period, which would therefore protect the public and the wider public interest.

The panel determined that the suspension order should be extended for a period of six months. The panel was satisfied that this period was appropriate because it allows sufficient time for this matter to be re-listed and for Ms Arkorful to reflect and consider whether she can contemplate engaging with the findings of the final hearing panel, notwithstanding her denial of the conduct found proved. The time would also provide Ms Arkorful the opportunity to obtain references which indicate that the referee fully understands the matters that have been found proved against Ms Arkorful and comment on her current conduct relevant to the findings.

This panel cannot bind a future panel. However, a future reviewing panel would expect Ms Arkorful to attend the review hearing, and it would be of assistance to that panel if she was able to provide evidence that she had undertaken significant steps

that would facilitate a safe and effective return to the register without restriction. This may include:

Providing references, which may include her current employer, using a template provided by Social Work England, that specifically requests the referee to set out their full understanding of the matters that have raised a question about Ms Arkorful's fitness to practise.

Provide evidence to the panel of training and (to the extent possible whilst she is suspended) of CPD relevant to the concerns identified, this may include the CPD completed as part of the registration process.

Provide a written reflection on the findings of the original panel from June 2019, in terms of impact upon service users, the profession and the wider public. It may be of assistance to Ms Arkorful to complete this reflection from an objective perspective, namely considering what steps a social work colleague may take had they been the subject of the regulatory concerns and what they may do to ensure that these concerns did not reoccur. This may assist Ms Arkorful's in the development of her insight, in light of the fact that she does not accept the original findings.

Such evidence may assist a future panel in respect of their conclusions about impairment. Further, should a future panel consider Ms Arkorful remains impaired, such evidence may be of assistance to a reviewing panel in respect of Ms Arkorful's ability to comply with conditions of practice.

Decision on whether to impose a removal order

The panel noted that a removal order is a sanction of last resort where there is no other means of protecting the public or the wider public interest. The panel took the view that a removal order would not be appropriate because there remains a possibility that Ms Arkorful will engage effectively with a future review panel. The panel therefore decided that a removal order would be disproportionate at this stage. However, Ms Arkorful is directed towards Social Work England's submissions [...] above "words of caution to the social worker that a failure to satisfy the next review panel may well result in a removal order."

Social Work England submissions:

27. The panel was provided with the submissions of Social Work England. They stated the following:

"Social Work England invite the Panel to find the Social Worker's fitness to practise remains impaired and to impose a Removal Order.

Over the course of the previous five reviews, the Social Worker has provided reflective writing, evidence of CPD, and testimonials. The Social Worker continues to dispute the

factual basis of the allegations found proved, however a denial of misconduct is not an absolute bar to a finding of insight.

The Social Worker has stated that she will not attend the next review hearing (contrary to the previous Panel's expressly stated expectation) and has repeatedly failed to follow previous Panels' recommendations as to the contents of testimonials, specifically that the referee should state their knowledge of these proceedings and the substantive misconduct findings made against the Social Worker. When this was most recently brought to the Social Worker's attention by the Case Review team on 21 February 2025, the Social Worker responded saying "this is the same back and forth that has caused **[PRIVATE]**", before restating her emphatic denial of the underlying misconduct facts.

While the Social Worker has carried out CPD training, this has not been on the subject of record-keeping. The Social Worker has not supplied any further evidence of CPD since the last review hearing.

What remains concerning is the Social Worker's communication with the Case Review Team. In February-March 2024, the Social Worker described members of the Case Review Team as "evil", "corrupt" and "stupid". The Social Worker has not apologised for this. While that kind of language has not been repeated, the Social Worker's attitude towards the Case Review Team remains far from appropriate, given that her response to Social Work England's request for evidence on 3 February 2025 led to the Social Worker saying: "Please do not come and **[PRIVATE]** SWE keeps bullying me and abuse your power to do whatever to tarnish my image, defame my character, bring shame / disgrace on me. If SWE had done their job properly – we would not have been here".

Social Work England do not consider that Conditions of Practice are appropriate in this case, given the previous issues with compliance raised at previous review hearings.

The Social Worker unsuccessfully sought to appeal the decisions of the Final Order reviews from February 2022 and November 2022. A hearing took place at the High Court in July 2023. The Order (dated 8 February 2024) and Judgment of the Court set out that one appeal was struck out (as it was out of time) and one was dismissed. The Social Worker has lodged a further appeal hearing in regards to the decision of the Final Order Review Panel on 29 October 2024. The appeal is due to be listed on 5 June 2025. The Social Worker continues to refute the original findings of fact made by the HCPC and to challenge these on appeal.

Given the length of time under a final order, the lack of any progress towards developing insight and demonstrating remediation, and the unacceptable communication with the Case Review Team, Social Work England submits that a removal Order is now appropriate. This is because – despite the Social Worker being warned since the third review on 31 August 2023 that a Removal Order was a real possibility – a Suspension Order has been ineffective in achieving remediation. It is further submitted that there is no realistic prospect that a further period of suspension will result in any improvement.

With that, a Removal Order is the only order that can adequately maintain public safety, confidence in the profession and professional standards”.

Social worker submissions:

28. Ms Arkorful submitted written representations. In summary, she:

- a. Repeated her submission that the regulatory concerns raised did not meet the HCPC threshold for fitness to practise regulatory proceedings;
- b. Repeated her denial of the allegations found proved by the HCPC Conduct and Competence Committee on 26 June 2019;
- c. Drew the panel’s attention to the fact that eight of the HCPC allegations were found not proved by the HCPC Conduct and Competence Committee on 26 June 2019;
- d. Repeated her allegation that the HCPC Conduct and Competence Committee final hearing was procedurally unfair;
- e. Drew the panel’s attention to the fact that she had been a registered social worker for many years, that there had been no regulatory concerns raised prior to 2016, and that the matters of concern found proved in this case related to a narrow timeframe of June to December 2016 only;
- f. Stated that there had been no finding of any actual harm being caused to service users;
- g. Confirmed that she had undertaken some CPD since the final hearing;
- h. Stated that the HCPC and Social Work England proceedings against her had caused her financial difficulties and **[PRIVATE]** and
- i. Asserted that the length of the time that the final orders had been in place – now over four years – was disproportionate and so fundamentally unfair.

29. Ms Arkorful provided a number of character references, including:

- a. A ‘tick-box’ “*Liquid Personnel*” reference (relating to June 2016 to “*present*”) completed by Judith Kinobe (Retired Assistant Team Manager at the London Borough of Newham), undated, in which she assessed Ms Arkorful’s performance as good in all categories rated and confirmed that there were no active allegations or disciplinary investigations against Ms Arkorful at that time;
- b. Sarah Namuganza (Social Worker), dated 19 September 2021, confirming that Ms Arkorful was her mentor early in her social work career, providing her with “*exceptional*” support and role modelling;

- c. Judith Kinobe (Retired Assistant Team Manager at the London Borough of Newham), dated 7 February 2022, confirming that (i) she was Ms Arkorful's line manager at the London Borough of Newham between June and November 2016, (ii) Ms Arkorful did not have any "*incompetency issues*", and (iii) Ms Arkorful needed line manager support to enable her to complete court work;
- d. Judith Kinobe (Retired Assistant Team Manager at the London Borough of Newham), dated 21 August 2022, confirming that (i) she was Ms Arkorful's line supervisor at the London Borough of Newham between June and November 2016, (ii) Ms Arkorful "*completed her recordings in a timely manner*", (iii) Ms Arkorful did not have any issues that needed disciplinary action to be taken, and (iv) Ms Arkorful needed close supervision especially with court work;
- e. Sza Sza Morrison (Senior Social Worker), dated 16 August 2022, confirming that (i) she had been a social work colleague of Ms Arkorful between 2014 and 2016 at the London Borough of Brent, (ii) that they worked together on a number of complex court cases, and (iii) that Ms Arkorful is "*focused, driven, empathetic and adaptable*";
- f. Christine Obi (Social Worker at the London Borough of Newham), dated 6 November 2023, confirming that (i) she was a social work colleague of Ms Arkorful from September to November 2016, (ii) that during that period Ms Arkorful demonstrated "*professional competence and professional curiosity*", and that (iii) Ms Arkorful's assessments, documentation and record-keeping were prepared in a timely manner;
- g. Tatenda Matsatsa, dated 10 November 2023, confirming that (i) they had worked with Ms Arkorful at a therapeutic residential children's home between December 2019 and July 2023, and that (ii) Ms Arkorful is a "*skilled, focused, driven, empathetic, and observant professional*";
- h. Alexander Kubeyinje, dated 26 October 2024, confirming that (i) he has known Ms Arkorful for almost 23 years, first in training and then as social work colleagues, (ii) he is "*aware that [Ms Arkorful] is subject to a fitness to practice process*", and (iii) that he considers Ms Arkorful to be very diligent and very child focused, with integrity and honesty a particular strength;
- i. Elizabeth Asaam-Nketiah (Children's Guardian Social Worker), dated 21 February 2025, confirming that (i) she has known Ms Arkorful for over 50 years including as social work colleagues in 2006-2007 at the London Borough of Lewisham, (ii) that she is aware that Ms Arkorful has been subject to a conditions of practice order and is currently suspended from practising as a social worker, (iii) that Ms Arkorful has been open about the order imposed upon her, and (iv) that she considers Ms Arkorful is "*caring, practical, trustworthy and reliable*"; and
- j. Helen Ankrah, dated 25 February 2025, confirming that (i) she has known Ms Arkorful for over 10 years in a professional and personal capacity, (ii) she is aware that Ms Arkorful is "*subject to fitness policy to practise*", and (iii) that Ms Arkorful is "*hardworking, reliable and dedicated*".

Panel decision and reasons:

30. The panel had regard to all of the documentation before it, including the decision and reasons of the original panel and the previous review panels, and the documentation provided by Ms Arkorful for this review. The panel also took account of the written submissions from Social Work England and Ms Arkorful.
31. The panel took into account the advice it received from the legal adviser as to the approach it should adopt. In particular, that:
- i. The purpose of the review is to consider current impairment based on the agreed disposal, the extent to which Ms Arkorful has engaged with the regulatory process, the scope and level of her insight, and the risk of repetition;
 - ii. The persuasive burden is on Ms Arkorful;
 - iii. In terms of whether the regulatory concerns have been sufficiently, and appropriately remediated, relevant factors include whether Ms Arkorful:
 - a. fully appreciates the gravity of the previous panel's finding of impairment;
 - b. has kept her skills and knowledge up to date;
 - c. is likely to place service users at risk if she were to return to unrestricted practise;
 - iv. The panel should take into account any information that it has received relating to Ms Arkorful's ability to practise safely and effectively and the wider public interest which includes promoting and maintaining proper professional standards of behaviour and promoting and maintaining public confidence in the profession;
 - v. It is only if the panel determine that Ms Arkorful's fitness to practise remains impaired, that it should go on to consider what, if any, sanction to impose by reference to the Regulations, and by applying the guidance set out in the Impairment and Sanctions Guidance and the principle of proportionality which requires Ms Arkorful's interests to be balanced against the interests of the public.

Panel decision and reasons on current impairment:

32. The panel first considered whether Ms Arkorful's fitness to practise remains impaired. In considering the question of current impairment, the panel undertook a comprehensive review of the final suspension order in light of the current circumstances.

33. The panel considered what had happened since the last review on 29 October 2024 and whether Ms Arkorful had engaged with the recommendations of the previous panel. The panel noted that the previous panel had recommended, in outline, that Ms Arkorful:
- attend the next review;
 - provide references that sets out the referees' full understanding of the regulatory matters found proved;
 - provide evidence of training relevant to the regulatory concerns found proved; and
 - provide a written reflection on the findings of the original panel in terms of the impact of the regulatory concerns found proved on service users, the profession and the wider public.
34. The panel noted that Ms Arkorful had decided not to attend today's review. Therefore, although she had engaged in the sense of informing Social Work England that she would not be attending the review, Ms Arkorful had not taken the opportunity (as recommended by the previous panel) to attend to speak to this reviewing panel directly. Ms Arkorful had not provided any explanation for her decision not to attend and, as set out above, the panel was satisfied that the decision not to attend was a deliberate one on Ms Arkorful's part. There was no evidence that she had sought an adjournment and wished to attend on a different date. Ms Arkorful's absence meant that the panel was unable to ask Ms Arkorful questions to better understand her position in terms of development of insight and remediation.
35. The panel had regard to all of the character references that Ms Arkorful had provided throughout the regulatory process. It had particular regard to the references that were dated and had been provided since the last review, namely the references from Elizabeth Asaam-Nketiah dated 21 February 2025 and from Helen Ankrah dated 25 February 2025. Both references provided a positive account of Ms Arkorful's professional qualities, including her reliability and trustworthiness. Both referees indicated that they were aware that Ms Arkorful was subject to fitness to practise proceedings, and Ms Asaam-Nketiah's reference also indicated that she was aware that Ms Arkorful had previously been subject to a conditions of practice order and was now subject to a suspension order. Neither referee, however, stated in clear terms their understanding of the regulatory matters found proved against Ms Arkorful. For example, neither referee made clear their understanding that the regulatory concerns had related to record-keeping, communicating with colleagues and service users, effective note-taking and prioritisation.
36. The panel had regard to all of the evidence of training that Ms Arkorful had provided throughout the regulatory process. The panel noted that none of that training was relevant to record-keeping. The panel noted that Ms Arkorful had not provided any evidence that she had undertaken any relevant training since the last review.
37. The panel noted that Ms Arkorful had provided a written reflection dated 17 February 2025. The panel noted that the reflection focused on providing Ms Arkorful's criticisms

of the HCPC investigation and regulatory proceedings, and of the subsequent Social Work England regulatory proceedings. She re-stated her denial of the matters that had been found proved. She added that the whole process had been unfair and had a substantial negative impact upon her, in particular in terms of her finances and **[PRIVATE]**.

38. Ms Arkorful explained that she was not able to accept matters that she knows she has not done. In that regard she stated *“I [...] haven’t been able to engage efficiently in the review process because I strongly believe and I know that these are unfounded allegations. Accepting this would cast a doubt on my integrity and professionalism”*. The panel noted that Ms Arkorful had not taken the opportunity to approach her reflections in the way offered by the previous panel (*“from an objective perspective, namely considering what steps a social work colleague may take had they been the subject of the regulatory concerns and what they may do to ensure that these concerns did not reoccur”*) – an approach that could have allowed Ms Arkorful to demonstrate the beginnings of a development of insight notwithstanding her continued denial of the matters found proved. The panel also noted that Ms Arkorful had not attempted in her reflective statement to demonstrate an understanding of the impact of her conduct found proved on service users, the profession and the wider public.
39. The panel noted Social Work England’s concern that Ms Arkorful had, in her correspondence with Social Work England, described members of the Case Review Team as “evil”, “corrupt” and “stupid”. The panel noted that correspondence, which had been provided in the bundle, and noted that Ms Arkorful had not sought to apologise for or explain those comments. The panel considered this was inappropriate language for Ms Arkorful to be using in correspondence with her regulator and demonstrated a lack of professionalism. The panel was concerned that it appeared to indicate an unwillingness, or even inability, on Ms Arkorful’s part to respond appropriately to regulatory oversight, which is essential for any registered professional.
40. The panel noted Ms Arkorful’s reference to her **[PRIVATE]**
41. Taking all of these matters into account, the panel considered that the further information provided by Ms Arkorful since the last review did not change the substantive position in terms of risk set out at the last review in October 2024. There had been no evidence that Ms Arkorful had made any progress in terms of insight and remediation. There was no new evidence in terms of training courses undertaken, and the reflective statement provided appeared to demonstrate that Ms Arkorful’s position in relation to the regulatory matters found proved had not changed and was entrenched. She appeared to be unwilling and/or unable to engage with findings and recommendations of the previous panels and to show that she had taken action to ensure that she is able to practise safely in the relevant areas (record-keeping, communicating with colleagues and service users, effective note-taking and prioritisation) in the future. The two new references provided positive support to Ms Arkorful, but without confirmation that the referees had fully understood the areas of

Ms Arkorful's practice that were found to be of concern, the panel was unable to attach significant weight to them.

42. The panel therefore concluded that Ms Arkorful was yet to properly address the regulatory concerns found proved or to provide evidence of meaningful insight and remediation. As such there had been no material change in circumstances since the last review on 29 October 2024. The risk of repetition of the misconduct remained.
43. The panel considered the wider public interest. Given the history of this case – remediable regulatory concerns that have not been addressed despite the passage of a significant amount of time (over four years) and repeated opportunities to demonstrate remedial steps – the panel considered that professional standards would not be upheld and public confidence in the profession would be damaged if there were to be no finding of impairment in this case.
44. The panel therefore concluded that Ms Arkorful's fitness to practise remained impaired on the basis of public protection and in the wider public interest.

Panel decision and reasons on sanction:

45. Having found Ms Arkorful's fitness to practise is currently impaired, the panel then considered what, if any, sanction it should impose in this case.
46. The panel considered the submissions made by Social Work England, in which the panel was invited to impose a removal order. The panel noted that Ms Arkorful had not referenced any specific proposed actions at this review.
47. The panel was mindful that the purpose of any sanction is not to punish Ms Arkorful, but to protect the public and the wider public interest.
48. The panel bore in mind Social Work England's overarching objective which is to protect the public which is achieved by:
- a. protecting, promoting and maintaining the health, safety and wellbeing of the public;
 - b. promoting and maintaining public confidence in social workers in England; and
 - c. promoting and maintaining proper professional standards for social workers in England.
49. The panel was mindful that it must select the least restrictive sanction necessary to protect the public and the wider public interest. The panel applied the principle of proportionality by weighing Ms Arkorful's interests with the public interest.

Decision on whether to revoke order/make no further order

50. The panel considered whether to revoke the current final order or allow it to lapse without making any further final order.

51. Given that Ms Arkorful's fitness to practise remained impaired in terms of public protection and the wider public interest, the panel decided that it would not be appropriate to revoke the current order or allow it to lapse without making any further final order. Allowing Ms Arkorful to return to unrestricted practice as a social worker would not adequately address the risks in this case – to public protection, to the upholding of proper professional standards, and to maintaining public confidence in the profession.

Decision on whether to issue advice or warning on expiry of suspension order

52. The panel then considered whether to issue advice or a warning. The panel noted paragraph 87 of the Impairment and Sanctions Guidance which indicates that advice might be appropriate where a regulatory concern has arisen due to a misunderstanding on the part of the social worker, and paragraph 88 of the Impairment and Sanctions Guidance which indicates that a warning might be appropriate where a breach of standards is not serious enough to lead to a finding of impairment, or where it is serious enough but the failings have been addressed.

53. The panel considered that this was not a case where advice or a warning would be appropriate. The regulatory concerns found proved against Ms Arkorful were serious and amounted to misconduct. Further, there remains a risk of repetition of the misconduct and her fitness to practise remains impaired.

54. The panel therefore concluded that advice or a warning would be inappropriate in this case because it would not adequately address the risks in this case – to public protection, to the upholding of proper professional standards, and to maintaining public confidence in the profession.

Decision on whether to impose a conditions of practice order on expiry of suspension order

55. The panel went on to consider a conditions of practice order.

56. The panel noted paragraph 114 of the Impairment and Sanctions Guidance which indicated that conditions of practice may be appropriate where: the social worker has demonstrated insight; the failure or deficiency in practice is capable of being remedied; appropriate, proportionate, and workable conditions can be put in place; decision makers are confident the social worker can and will comply with the conditions; and the social worker does not pose a risk of harm to the public by being in restricted practice.

57. The panel considered that none of these factors applied in this case. Ms Arkorful had failed to demonstrate meaningful insight into the regulatory findings against her. Whilst the regulatory concerns are remediable, Ms Arkorful had not demonstrated that she had taken effective steps to remedy them. For example, there has been no demonstration of relevant targeted training and the embedding of learning into current

working practices. The panel noted that Ms Arkorful had previously been subject to conditions of practice but that these had not been successful in supporting her to develop meaningful insight and remediation. Given that background and Ms Arkorful's apparent unwillingness to engage with the clear recommendations of the previous panels, the panel also had concerns about whether Ms Arkorful would be willing and able to effectively and fully comply with conditions of practice.

58. The panel therefore decided that imposing a conditions of practice order would be inappropriate. Although it would provide some restriction on Ms Arkorful's practice in terms of protecting the public, this may not be fully effective. Furthermore, in light of the history of this case (and, in particular, a persistent lack of progress in terms of developing insight and remediation), it would not adequately address the risks identified in terms of upholding of proper professional standards and maintaining public confidence in the profession.

Decision on whether to extend the period of suspension order

59. The panel noted paragraph 138 of the SG: *"Suspension is likely to be unsuitable in circumstances where (both of the following): the social worker has not demonstrated any insight and remediation; and there is limited evidence to suggest that they are willing (or able) to resolve or remediate their failings"*. The panel considered that this was the case here. Ms Arkorful had failed to demonstrate any meaningful insight or remediation. Although she had submitted a lot of material, including written reflections, CPD record and character references, she had not managed to demonstrate that she had properly engaged with the findings made against her, understood the impact of those findings on service users, professionals and the public, and that she had taken effective steps to remedy the relevant areas of her practice. Furthermore, Ms Arkorful's persistent lack of progress in terms of developing insight and remediation was notable. It had persisted for more than four years, and despite numerous opportunities provided by panels to start to take corrective steps. This suggested that Ms Arkorful was either unwilling or able to take the necessary steps to remediate.

60. The panel therefore considered that extending the current suspension might be appropriate but had concerns that there had already been two extensions to the final suspension order and those had not resulted in any progress on Ms Arkorful's part.

Decision on whether to impose a removal order

61. The panel noted the following paragraphs of the SG:

"146. In the absence of improved insight or other remediation upon review, a removal order may be an appropriate sanction";

"148. A removal order must be made where the decision makers conclude that no other outcome would be enough to (do one or more of the following): protect the public; maintain confidence in the profession; maintain proper professional standards for social workers in England";

“149. A removal order may be appropriate in cases involving (any of the following): [...] persistent lack of insight into the seriousness of their actions or consequences; social workers who are unwilling and/or unable to remediate [...]”.

62. The panel noted its earlier findings that Ms Arkorful had failed to develop any meaningful insight or demonstrate any relevant remediative steps. The panel noted that Ms Arkorful had been subject to a final order (first a conditions of practice order and more recently a suspension order) for a period of more than four years. The panel noted that the order had been reviewed at regular intervals and on each occasion Ms Arkorful had been given the opportunity to demonstrate that she had understood the concerns found proved and that she had taken effective steps to ensure that such conduct was not repeated. Previous panels had also given Ms Arkorful guidance and recommendations about how she might wish to undertake relevant remediative steps and how they could be presented to future panels. The panel noted that, although Ms Arkorful had engaged with the regulatory process in a procedural sense, she had failed to properly engage with the findings made against her. She had shown a persistent failure to develop insight and remediation, likely indicating that she was either unwilling or unable to do so.
63. On that basis, the panel concluded that no outcome other than a removal order would be sufficient to maintain confidence in the profession and to maintain proper professional standards. Whilst the original failings were remediable, Ms Arkorful had failed to remediate them. This persistent failure undermined proper professional standards and public confidence in the profession, and showed a persistent inability to work appropriately within the regulatory process itself.
64. The panel applied the principle of proportionality. The panel acknowledged that there is a public interest in experienced social workers returning to unrestricted practice where it is safe to do so. The panel took into account that a removal order is the most serious sanction available, and is a sanction of last resort. It also took into account the impact that a removal order would have on Ms Arkorful. She would be removed from the register of social workers and would no longer be able to practise as a social worker. That would have a serious, adverse impact on Ms Arkorful in terms of her professional reputation and finances. However, given the circumstances of this case, in which Ms Arkorful has not been able to demonstrate meaningful insight and remediation over an extended period of time, the panel concluded that the interests of the public significantly outweighed Ms Arkorful's own interests. The panel was also mindful that the reputation of the profession is more important than the fortunes of any individual member of it.
65. The panel therefore concluded that the appropriate and proportionate action to take in this case was to impose a removal order.
66. Pursuant to paragraph 15(1)(b) of Schedule 2 to the Regulations, the removal order will take effect from the expiry of the current suspension order, that is from the end of 9 June 2025.

Right of appeal:

67. Under Paragraph 16(1)(b) of Schedule 2 of The Social Workers Regulations 2018 (as amended), the social worker may appeal to the High Court against:

- a. the decision of adjudicators:
 - i. to make an interim order, other than an interim order made at the same time as a final order under paragraph 11(1)(b),
 - ii. not to revoke or vary such an order,
 - iii. to make a final order,
- b. the decision of the regulator on review of an interim order, or a final order, other than a decision to revoke the order.

68. Under Paragraph 16(2) of Schedule 2 of The Social Workers Regulations 2018 (as amended) an appeal must be filed before the end of the period of 28 days beginning with the day after the day on which the social worker is notified of the decision complained of.

69. Under Paragraph 15(1A) of Schedule 2 of The Social Workers Regulations 2018 (as amended), where a social worker appeals against a decision made under sub-paragraph (1), the decision being appealed takes effect from the date specified in that sub-paragraph notwithstanding any appeal against that decision.

70. This notice is served in accordance with Rules 44 and 45 of the Fitness to Practise Rules 2019 (as amended).

Review of final orders:

71. Under regulation 15(1), 15(2) and 15(3) of Schedule 2 of The Social Workers Regulations 2018 (as amended):

- 15(1) The regulator must review a suspension order, or a conditions of practice order, before its expiry.
- 15(2) The regulator may review a final order where new evidence relevant to the order has become available after the making of the order, or when requested to do so by the social worker.
- 15(3) A request by the social worker under sub-paragraph (2) must be made within such period as the regulator determines in rules made under Regulation 25(5).

72. Under Rule 16(aa) of the Fitness to Practise Rules 2019 (as amended), a social worker requesting a review of a final order under paragraph 15 of Schedule 2 must make the request within 28 days of the day on which they are notified of the order.

The Professional Standards Authority

73. Please note that in accordance with section 29 of the National Health Service Reform and Health Care Professions Act 2002, a review decision made by Social Work England's panel of adjudicators can be referred by the Professional Standards Authority ("the PSA") to the High Court. The PSA can refer this decision to the High Court if it considers that the decision is not sufficient for the protection of the public. Further information about PSA appeals can be found on their website at:

<https://www.professionalstandards.org.uk/what-we-do/our-work-with-regulators/decisions-about-practitioners>