

Social worker: Monday Osagie

Registration number: SW88284

Fitness to Practise

Final Hearing

Dates of hearing: 18 August 2025 to 22 August 2025 and 15 September 2025 and 25 November 2025 to 27 November 2025

Hearing venue: Remote hearing

Hearing outcome:

Fitness to practise impaired, suspension order (12 months)

Interim order:

Interim suspension order (12 months)

Introduction and attendees:

1. This is a hearing held under Part 5 of The Social Workers Regulations 2018 (as amended) (“the regulations”).
2. Mr Osagie attended and was not represented.
3. Mr Eagan was present as special counsel to assist Mr Osagie with the cross examination of person A and person B.
4. Social Work England was represented by Mr Carey instructed by Capsticks LLP.

Adjudicators	Role
Gill Mullen	Chair
Jill Wells	Social worker adjudicator
Lynne Vernon	Lay adjudicator

Hearings team/Legal adviser	Role
Andrew Brown	Hearings officer
Molly-Rose Brown	Hearings support officer
Zill-e Huma	Legal adviser

Service of notice:

5. The panel had careful regard to the documents contained in the service bundle, including the notice of hearing dated 10 July 2025, the extract from the Social Work England register confirming Mr Osagie’s registered contact details, and the signed statement of service confirming dispatch by both email and post. Having considered these documents, and noting that Mr Osagie was present at the hearing to confirm receipt, the panel was satisfied that service of the notice was effective.

Preliminary matters:

6. Mr Carey made an application to amend the wording of the allegation at paragraph 1(a)(i), changing the phrase “planning meeting” to “meeting.” He submitted that the amendment was necessary to accurately reflect the evidence and documentation in the case, and that it would not cause any prejudice to Mr Osagie. In support of his application, Mr Carey referred the panel to relevant case law confirming that amendments of this kind are permissible where they do not materially alter the nature of the allegation or the case the registrant has to meet. Mr Osagie objected to the application as he said that the original wording was more serious and this had been his understanding up to this point.
7. The panel heard and accepted the advice of the legal adviser and considered the application made by Mr Carey to amend the allegation from “planning meeting” to “meeting.” Having considered the submissions, the panel concluded that it was in fact

more appropriate to amend the wording to “visit,” as this best reflected the nature of the evidence and the context of the allegation.

8. Mr Carey confirmed that he had no objection to this further refinement of the wording, and Mr Osagie also indicated his agreement. The panel was satisfied that the amendment did not alter the substance, seriousness, or gravity of the allegation, but rather clarified the wording to reflect the factual circumstances more accurately.
9. In reaching its decision, the panel reminded itself that in disciplinary proceedings amendments are permissible provided they do not cause unfairness or prejudice to the registrant. The panel considered that both parties had notice of the proposed change and that Mr Osagie had had a full and fair opportunity to prepare his case on the basis of the underlying factual allegation, which remained unchanged.
10. The panel was therefore satisfied that the amendment from “planning meeting” to “visit” could be made without injustice or prejudice to Mr Osagie. The application was accordingly granted.
11. The panel noted that following a Case Management Meeting on 4 July 2025, the evidence of the accounts given by the following witnesses was determined to be admissible:

a. Person A – paragraphs 34 (regarding what Person B told person A about 8 August 2022) and paragraphs 55–57 (regarding what Person B told Person A about 5 September 2022);

b. Ms Campbell – paragraph 53 (regarding what Ms Campbell said about the Social Worker’s behaviour on 23 August 2022);

c. Mr Griffin – witness statement and exhibits in full;

d. Mr Johnstone – witness statement and exhibits in full, which includes reference to the account of Ms Roberts, who reported that the Social Worker’s role had been terminated (paragraphs 12–13);

e. Ms Criddle – witness statement and exhibits in full; and,

f. Ms Campbell – unsigned witness statement and exhibits in full.

Special measures application was made at a Case Management Meeting on 6 June 2025. The panel approved the application and made the following directions:

- *That the Social Worker has his camera and microphone deactivated for the duration of Person A and Person B’s oral evidence; and*

- *That Person A and Person B's names are anonymised in the publication of the decision.*

Allegations:

12. The allegation arising out of the regulatory concerns referred by the Case Examiners on 27 July 2023 is:

1) You failed to maintain professional boundaries in:

a) On 8 August 2022, by;

i) Asking inappropriate personal questions and/or making inappropriate comments to Person A during a ~~planning meeting~~ visit at Person B's house;

ii) Repeatedly asking Person A to meet outside of work despite her making it clear she did not wish to do so;

iii) Following Person A to her car;

iv) Displaying intimidating and/or threatening behaviour by preventing Person A from driving away.

b) On or around 23 August 2022, by;

i) Making inappropriate comments to Person A during a meeting.

c) On 5 September 2022, by;

i) Asking inappropriate questions and/or made inappropriate comments to Person B during a home visit;

ii) Displaying intimidating and/or threatening behaviour towards Person B.

2) Your actions at paragraph 1 were sexually motivated."

The matters outlined in paragraphs 1–2 amount to the statutory ground of misconduct.

By reason of that misconduct, your fitness to practise is impaired.

Admissions:

13. Mr Osagie denied all the allegations.

Submissions:

Submissions made on behalf of the Social Work England

14. Mr Carey informed the panel, in the course of his oral submissions, that he relied upon his written submissions in addition to the oral submissions he was making. Mr Carey submitted that the burden of proof rests with Social Work England and that the standard is the balance of probabilities. He said the panel should approach the case as a binary exercise. On one side stand the accounts of Person A, Person B and Ms Campbell, and on the other stands the account of Mr Osagie. The panel is required to determine which version of events is more likely. Mr Carey pointed out that during his evidence, Mr Osagie stated in clear terms that Person A and Person B were lying. He submitted that this was a serious accusation with no evidential basis, because both witnesses gave their accounts in a measured and consistent way, showed no dishonesty, and have no motive to fabricate allegations against him. He emphasised that neither Person A nor Person B demonstrated dishonesty or bad character, and that the differences in their accounts were minor, peripheral, and inevitable given the passage of time. He accepted that Mr Osagie is entitled to the benefit of a good character direction, but argued that this does not outweigh the clear and consistent evidence of the complainants and Ms Campbell.
15. In relation to the events of 8 August 2022, Mr Carey submitted that Person A and Person B gave mutually supportive accounts. Both described Mr Osagie asking Person A if she was single, followed by remarks that he was African and could have more than one wife. Person A said that when she responded that she was separated, Mr Osagie told her “that’s a pity as you are such a lovely woman” and “I am sure it won’t take a beautiful woman like you long to find a new husband.” Person B confirmed hearing comments about multiple wives and said she observed Mr Osagie behaving in a flirty way towards Person A. Both witnesses recalled him laughing, smirking, and calling them “trouble.” Person A further reported that when she left, Mr Osagie insisted on walking her to her car. Once there, he blocked her path, leaned through the open window, called her beautiful, asked to take her out, and pressed her repeatedly for her personal phone number, refusing to take no for an answer. Mr Carey submitted that these actions amounted to serious breaches of professional boundaries.
16. Mr Osagie’s explanation was that it was Person A and Person B who steered the conversation into personal matters, and that he merely responded in kind after being encouraged to “lighten up.” He denied blocking Person A’s car and said he only accompanied her to it. Mr Carey argued that this account was self-serving, inconsistent, and implausible. He emphasised that by expressly saying in his evidence that Person A and Person B were lying, Mr Osagie was not simply giving an alternative recollection but directly accusing two professional witnesses of fabrication. Mr Carey submitted that there was no evidence to support such an allegation, and that the panel should reject it.

17. Turning to 23 August 2022, Mr Carey submitted that Person A described further inappropriate conduct by Mr Osagie in the presence of Ms Campbell who was a foster carer. Person A said he called her “trouble” in front of Ms Campbell, repeated the phrase, kicked her under the table, smirked at her, and stared at her in a way she described as “undressing me with his eyes.” He then asked if she was leaving with him, which she declined out of concern for further harassment. She said he lingered until Ms Campbell ushered him away. Ms Campbell, although not a complainant, confirmed that Mr Osagie’s behaviour was “overly friendly” and unlike other professional interactions she had observed. She recalled him asking several times whether Person A would leave with him and her refusing several times. Mr Carey submitted that Ms Campbell’s independent evidence strongly undermined Mr Osagie’s claim that he was reserved and professional, and supported the reliability of Person A’s account.
18. Concerning the events of 5 September 2022, Mr Carey submitted that Person B experienced behaviour which she found intimidating. She described Mr Osagie blocking her path in the kitchen by outstretching his arm, causing her to freeze, and later standing close to her face as he left, whispering that she would be more beautiful after her holiday. She said he asked intrusive questions about her personal life, including repeatedly saying “don’t you miss, don’t you miss,” which she inferred to be a reference to sex, and also laughed and asked how she had survived being divorced for twenty-five years. Mr Carey submitted that this conduct represented a further failure to maintain professional boundaries. He argued that Mr Osagie’s explanation that he may have raised his arms simply to block her from appearing on a video call he was having at the time was unconvincing and failed to account for Person B’s clear and consistent description of what had occurred.
19. Mr Carey concluded that the accounts of Person A, Person B and Ms Campbell are more credible, coherent, and mutually reinforcing than the alternative version given by Mr Osagie. He argued that Mr Osagie’s account relies on the inherently improbable proposition that two professional women and an independent colleague contrived or grossly exaggerated events, and in so doing he has directly accused them of lying. Mr Carey submitted that there is no basis for such an accusation, and that the more likely explanation is that Mr Osagie crossed professional boundaries on several occasions, made inappropriate and personal comments about the witnesses’ private lives, behaved in a flirtatious and intimidating manner, and placed both Person A and Person B in situations where they felt uncomfortable and unsafe. On behalf of Social Work England, Mr Carey invited the panel to find the factual allegations proved on the balance of probabilities.

Submissions made by Mr Osagie

20. Mr Osagie made submissions to the panel. In his submissions, he said that he was relying on both his oral submissions and his written submissions. He reminded the

panel that he has practised as a social worker for approximately twelve years and has never previously had any allegations made against him by foster carers, supervising social workers, young persons, or colleagues. He emphasised that throughout his career he has upheld professional values, worked in line with social work ethics, and has been respected by service users. He said he was therefore deeply surprised and distressed by the allegations in this case, particularly because they are brought by people he had never met before the visits in question.

21. In relation to the visit on 8 August 2022, Mr Osagie explained that he attended Person B's property to see Young Person 1. This was his first visit to that household, and he had spoken to Person B only briefly by telephone beforehand to introduce himself. On arrival he was invited in and introduced to Person A by Person B who said "come, let me introduce your properly to [the] YP1's nice looking social worker". Person B then mentioned that Person A was single. Mr Osagie said he was too stunned to respond immediately but after 10 seconds or so said, "ladies don't you think I am being bullied here? At which point both individuals started laughing.
22. He denied ever making inappropriate comments to Person A, and denied that he asked her personal questions or made flirtatious remarks. He explained that the conversation about Nigerian food and culture arose naturally, and in that context he made a light-hearted comment about being taken for lunch, which was understood at the time as a joke. He said that both Person A and Person B were joking with him, that they told him to "lighten up," and that the exchanges were mutual and good-humoured. He stressed that he never blocked Person A's car or prevented her from driving away, and never asked her repeatedly for her personal telephone number. His position was that he accompanied Person A out of the property at the same time she was leaving, walked with her to her car, and then returned to his own car without incident. He denied behaving in any way that was intimidating or inappropriate.
23. As to the meeting on 23 August 2022, Mr Osagie said this took place at the property of Ms Campbell in connection with a newly arrived young person. He accepted that he had joked by referring to Person A as "she is a naughty one," but said this was clearly in a jocular manner following on from the earlier banter at the first visit. He said that Person A's response was that it was not her it was Person B. He denied kicking Person A under the table as this was not possible as the table was very low. He also denied staring at her in a sexualised manner. He said that the meeting was held in a professional manner. He denied waiting around afterwards to press Person A to leave with him. He explained that he left at the conclusion of his meeting and did not pursue her. He said that he had recently reflected and accepted that calling her a "naughty one" is not professional. He said that if his words had been misinterpreted, he regretted that, but that he had not crossed professional boundaries.

24. In relation to the visit on 5 September 2022, Mr Osagie said he attended Person B's home for a Looked After Child review. He said that Person B was around 45 minutes late and he accepted that he was unhappy about this. He told Person B that he had to conduct a short professional meeting online using his laptop. He accepted that Person B had lent him an earphone to assist with that meeting. He denied ever blocking Person B's path in the kitchen and denied making any comments of a sexual nature to her. He said he may have raised his hand unconsciously during his online meeting to prevent her walking into the background of the camera, but that this was not done with any intention to intimidate her. He denied standing close to her face or whispering that she would be more beautiful after her holiday or suggesting that she would look more attractive with a tan as he was leaving her home. He denied saying "don't you miss, don't you miss" in a sexual sense. He accepted that there was a conversation about Person B being divorced and bringing up her children on her own, but said that he did not make comments intended to suggest sex or anything inappropriate. He told the panel that he was surprised that on that particular day Person B's kitchen camera was not working, because if it had been functioning it would have shown the truth of what really occurred.
25. Mr Osagie said he was sincerely sorry if any words he spoke during these visits were perceived differently or caused discomfort. He stressed that he had no reason to act improperly, that he did not know Person A or Person B prior to these visits, and that there was no motive on his part to behave in the manner alleged. He said that he had always conducted himself professionally and maintained appropriate boundaries. He emphasised again that in his twelve years of practice he had never faced allegations of this nature and that the panel should accept his account as the true reflection of what occurred. He invited the panel to find that he had not crossed professional boundaries and that the allegations are not proved.
26. The panel heard oral evidence from person A and person B in addition to the written evidence and other documentary evidence on behalf of Social work England.
27. The panel heard and accepted the advice of the legal adviser in relation to the findings of fact. The legal adviser reminded the panel that this stage is critical, as the findings will form the foundation for later decisions on misconduct, impairment, and sanction. The panel was advised that the burden of proof rests throughout on Social Work England, and the standard of proof is the balance of probabilities. The task for the panel is, in respect of each allegation and particular, to determine whether it is more likely than not that the alleged fact occurred. The burden does not shift.
28. The legal adviser emphasised that all of the evidence must be considered in the round. Each allegation should be addressed separately with clear reasoning, avoiding generalised conclusions. In assessing witness testimony, the panel was reminded that demeanour is not a reliable indicator of truthfulness, as emphasised in R (Dutta) v

GMC and Khan v GMC. Instead, the panel should focus on whether accounts are consistent, coherent, supported by contemporaneous documents, and aligned with known or probable facts. Any potential motive or bias should also be considered.

29. The legal adviser reminded the panel that contemporaneous documents, such as notes and emails, may carry significant weight if authentic and reliable. Hearsay evidence is admissible, but its weight depends on the circumstances in which it was made, its reliability, and whether it is corroborated. The panel must exercise particular caution if hearsay is untested or stands as the sole or decisive evidence, in line with cases such as *Thornycroft v NMC*.
30. The panel was also reminded of the relevance of evidence of good character. Such evidence may be considered both as to credibility and to propensity, but it is not a defence and must be weighed alongside all other evidence. Finally, while the panel is not at this stage deciding impairment or sanction, it was reminded that the Professional Standards for Social Workers (2019) and Social Work England's Code of Conduct provide important context in assessing the evidence

Finding and reasons on facts:

Allegation 1(a)(i)

31. The panel carefully considered all the evidence before it, including the written statements, contemporaneous notes, and the oral evidence given at the hearing. Both Person A and Person B gave accounts of the events of 8 August 2022. In broad terms their accounts aligned, but there were areas of inconsistency and divergence which the panel examined closely.
32. Person A gave oral evidence in a professional manner and was able to explain her position clearly. However, her account was not fully consistent over time. In her oral evidence she was emphatic that she would never disclose her home address to anyone, including close colleagues, because that was not her practice. Yet in her initial statement provided to the agency she stated that she told Mr Osagie she lived in Bromley. Similarly, in her contemporaneous note, she did not record that Mr Osagie had called her a "lovely woman" or "beautiful woman," comments which later featured in her witness statement and oral testimony. The panel considered these inconsistencies carefully, recognising that they reduced the weight it could place on certain parts of her evidence.
33. The panel also noted that Person A said Person B had telephoned her after the visit to check if she was alright, which she described as showing Person B's concern about Mr Osagie's behaviour. However, Person B did not corroborate this in her evidence, and there was no contemporaneous record of such a call.

34. Person B's evidence did, however, broadly support Person A's account. She said that she did not hear all of the conversation between Person A and Mr Osagie as she was with a young person, but on her return she saw that Person A was looking uncomfortable. She did hear Mr Osagie ask if Person A was single and she intervened to challenge him and then asked him if he was single. She also observed him looking at Person A in a flirty manner. The panel considered that her evidence supported the central feature of Person A's account, namely that Mr Osagie asked personal questions in a manner that was not appropriate in the professional context of the visit. At the same time, the panel accepted that Person B's account did not corroborate every detail of Person A's evidence, particularly regarding the sequence of comments or the precise content of the cultural discussion about multiple wives.
35. The panel then considered Mr Osagie's evidence. He accepted that there had been "banter" but said that any remarks he made were light-hearted and in response to joking from Person A and Person B. He did not dispute that he offered to Person A that she could go out for lunch with him after she mentioned enjoying Nigerian food. In light of the evidence, the panel also found that there had been some discussion of cultural issues, including references to the possibility of multiple wives. The panel nevertheless found that this discussion was inappropriate in a professional capacity. The panel considered that these admissions demonstrated that Mr Osagie had engaged in conversation which was personal and unprofessional.
36. The panel accepted that there were inconsistencies and omissions in the witnesses' evidence, particularly in Person A's varying accounts, but considered that these were not sufficient to undermine the central thrust of their evidence. The panel reminded itself that Mr Osagie did not need to prove anything and that the burden of proof rests on Social Work England. The panel also reminded itself that the correct test is the balance of probabilities, namely whether it was more likely than not that the conduct occurred as alleged.
37. The panel found Mr Osagie's explanation of "banter" less persuasive, as it did not adequately account for why both Person A and Person B described being made to feel uncomfortable at the time and why Person B challenged him. Both witnesses were clear that they did not view the questions and remarks as innocent or light-hearted, and both described Mr Osagie laughing or smirking in a manner they perceived as flirty. The panel considered it unlikely that two professional witnesses, who had no prior connection to each other beyond their work, would independently and consistently describe the same behaviour if it had not occurred. Their reactions at the time, including Person B's challenges to Mr Osagie and Person A's discomfort, were consistent with witnesses experiencing inappropriate conduct in a professional setting.
38. Weighing all of the evidence, the panel was satisfied that on the balance of probabilities Mr Osagie did ask inappropriate personal questions of Person A, including whether she

was single, and discussing that Nigerian men can have more than one wife. The panel determined that these comments were overly personal and unprofessional in context. The panel did not find proved that Mr Osagie said a women like her can find a husband or words of that effect as Person A did not mention this in her contemporaneous note and Person B did not corroborate this. The panel found that he had stepped over professional boundaries and had engaged in conversation that was not consistent with the standards expected of a social worker.

39. Accordingly, the panel finds Allegation 1(a)(i) proved.

Allegation 1(a)(ii)

40. The panel carefully considered all the evidence relating to whether Mr Osagie repeatedly asked Person A to meet outside of work despite her making it clear she did not wish to do so.
41. Person A said in her evidence that during the meeting on 8 August 2022 Mr Osagie made remarks suggesting that they should meet outside of work, including comments when she was in her car. She was clear that she rejected these suggestions and that Mr Osagie persisted despite her refusal. She described feeling uncomfortable and said that his comments went beyond acceptable professional conduct.
42. The panel noted that Person A was consistent in her contemporaneous note, witness statement and oral evidence that Mr Osagie asked if he could take her out for lunch or dinner after work and asked for her personal number. Despite her saying she had no interest in him, he persisted in asking for her personal phone number and she said that he would not take no for an answer.
43. The panel also considered Mr Osagie's account. He denied that he had asked Person A to meet outside of work. He described having a conversation with Person A whilst they were walking to her car about work and career related matters.
44. In assessing this allegation, the panel reminded itself that the burden of proof rests with Social Work England, and that Mr Osagie was not required to prove anything. The test for the panel was whether it was more likely than not that the alleged conduct occurred.
45. On balance, the panel preferred the evidence of Person A. Although her accounts varied in detail over time, her description of Mr Osagie asking her to meet outside of work, and persisting despite her refusal, was clear and consistent in her later written and oral evidence. The panel also noted that this was consistent with the overall pattern of over familiar and personal comments that it had already found proved in relation to Allegation 1(a)(i).
46. The panel did not find it likely that Person A would fabricate or exaggerate such specific behaviour, particularly when she had no apparent motive to do so.

47. **Accordingly, the panel finds Allegation 1(a)(ii) proved.**

Allegation 1(a)(iii)

48. The panel carefully considered all the evidence relevant to this allegation, including the written statements, contemporaneous notes, and the oral evidence of Person A, Person B, and Mr Osagie. The panel reminded itself that the burden of proof rests with Social Work England, that Mr Osagie does not need to prove anything, and that the applicable standard is the balance of probabilities.

49. For this limb, the panel applied the ordinary meaning of “following”: namely, going after another person who is already moving ahead towards a destination, in the sense of trailing or pursuing them (as distinct from leaving together or walking side-by-side by mutual choice).

50. On the evidence, both Person A and Mr Osagie accepted that they walked to her car. Person A described this as Mr Osagie saying he was leaving and going in the same direction as where her car was parked; Mr Osagie said he simply accompanied her out and then returned to his own car which he stated was a few cars away from Person A’s. Person B had initially said that Person A was two/three houses away from her house when Mr Osagie left, however in her oral evidence she accepted that she did not see where Person A was and had guessed where she would be. Person B did not witness them leaving together. Her evidence was that Person A left first; Mr Osagie remained inside for two to three minutes; as she was closing the door she heard him say “wait,” she did not know to whom this was directed, and she did not reopen the door; she then closed the door once he had left. There was no independent observation of any pursuit outside the property.

51. The panel also noted inconsistencies in the broader car-related accounts that undermined certainty on this point. Person A’s description of where Mr Osagie’s car was parked and of what happened outside developed over time, and differed from aspects of Person B’s evidence (for example, whether his car was directly outside Person B’s home). While these discrepancies do not prove the allegation either way, they reduce the weight the panel can place on the more developed versions of events.

52. Taking the evidence as a whole, the panel was not satisfied that Social Work England had established, on the balance of probabilities, that Mr Osagie “followed” Person A to her car in the sense set out above. At most, the evidence supports that they left around the same time and walked to where Person A’s car was parked; that is more consistent with accompanying than with following/pursuit. In the absence of independent corroboration and the fact that person A agreed they walked to the car together the panel cannot be satisfied that this limb is proved.

53. **Accordingly, the panel finds Allegation 1(a)(iii) not proved.**

Allegation 1(a)(iv)

54. The panel carefully considered all the evidence relevant to this allegation, including the written statements, contemporaneous notes, and the oral evidence of Person A, Person B and Mr Osagie. The panel reminded itself that the burden of proof rests with Social Work England, that Mr Osagie does not need to prove anything, and that the applicable standard is the balance of probabilities.
55. For this limb, the panel applied the ordinary meaning of intimidating and or threatening behaviour by preventing someone from driving away, namely conduct which a reasonable person would experience as overbearing or menacing and which in fact obstructs or impedes their ability to close the vehicle and depart, for example physically blocking a door, placing a body or limbs so as to prevent movement, or positioning oneself to obstruct the car's safe exit.
56. Person A's later account described a detailed sequence when she arrived at her car. She said that, she initially went to the passenger side and placed her laptop on the seat, she then walked to the driver's door, got into her car, plugged in her mobile phone charger and wound the window fully down, and tried to close the door. She said Mr Osagie used his hand, placed on the door, to stop it closing, that she had to stretch to the inside handle to pull the door shut, and that he then released it. She said he moved closer to the driver's side window, peered in, commented on her photograph on her mobile phone saying that she was beautiful and that he would treat her well, asked to take her for lunch, and if not lunch then dinner, saying he would pay, and persisted in asking for her personal number, saying he wanted to get to know her. She described positioning the car to reverse out of a space between two vehicles on a one way dead end road, shouting at him to move because he was blocking her, revving the engine multiple times and repeatedly saying she was leaving until he moved aside. She said that as she continued manoeuvring he came to the passenger side on to the pavement and indicated that he would ring her. She replied that any contact must be professional and that his behaviour was inappropriate. She said he laughed and walked back towards Person B's house rather than towards where he had said his car was parked. She added that Person B later called to check she was alright.
57. Person B did not witness the interaction outside. Her evidence was that Person A left first, Mr Osagie remained for two to three minutes, and as she was closing the door she heard him say "wait". She did not know to whom this was directed and did not reopen the door. She did not observe any conduct at the vehicle and denied making a phone call to Person A due to concern for her afterwards on that day as Person A has stated.
58. Mr Osagie denied preventing Person A from leaving. He said he accompanied her towards the car area and then returned to his own vehicle, and he denied any exchange by the car that involved blocking or intimidation.

59. The panel recognised that memories can develop over time. The panel noted that the most serious features of the allegation; placing a hand to stop the car door closing; leaning in through the open window; and physically blocking the vehicle; were not recorded in Person A's earliest contemporaneous note and appeared only in later, more detailed accounts. There was no independent corroboration of a physical obstruction outside the property. Person B did not see the interaction. Her recollection of Mr Osagie calling "wait" does not establish he prevented Person A from driving away. The asserted parking location inconsistency, whether Mr Osagie's car was directly outside or in the same direction as Person A's, could not be resolved on the papers. The absence of any objective evidence, further limited the weight that could be placed on the later account.
60. Taking the evidence as a whole, and applying the balance of probabilities, the panel was not satisfied that Social Work England had proved that Mr Osagie displayed intimidating and or threatening behaviour by preventing Person A from driving away. While Person A felt uncomfortable and later described obstructive conduct, the panel could not be satisfied that actual prevention occurred in the manner alleged.
61. **Accordingly, Allegation 1(a)(iv) is not proved.**

Allegation (b)(i)

62. The panel carefully considered all the evidence relevant to this allegation, including the written statements, contemporaneous notes, and the oral evidence of Person A and Mr Osagie, together with the statement of Ms Campbell. The panel reminded itself that the burden of proof rests with Social Work England, that Mr Osagie does not need to prove anything, and that the applicable standard is the balance of probabilities.
63. Person A's evidence was that during the meeting on or around 23 August 2022 Mr Osagie made inappropriate comments to her, including introducing her to the foster carer by calling her trouble, repeating that phrase during the meeting, and behaving in an overly familiar manner. She said the comment was made in front of the foster carer in a professional meeting and that she told him she did not appreciate it. She told the panel that she needed to challenge Mr Osagie on several occasions.
64. Ms Campbell's statement described the meeting as overlapping with her supervision visit and recorded that the interaction between Mr Osagie and Person A appeared overly friendly, with banter unlike what she had seen between professionals in her home previously. She said that at the end of the meeting Mr Osagie asked Person A whether she was leaving with him and that he waited for a period before leaving alone. The panel noted that Ms Campbell's statement was not tested in cross examination. For that reason, the panel afforded it limited weight, although as the observation of an independent witness with no apparent motive to exaggerate it had some supporting

value when viewed alongside the other evidence. Mr Osagie also agreed in his oral evidence that Ms Campbell was telling the truth in her statement however if she would have been present he could have asked her more questions.

65. The panel also considered Mr Osagie's account. He accepted that, at the start of the meeting, he said or may have said a light hearted remark referring to Person A as a "naughty one", which he said was intended as a joke and did not mean anything improper. He denied further inappropriate conduct and said he left the meeting with Person A remaining behind.
66. In assessing the totality of the evidence, the panel placed greatest weight on Mr Osagie's own acceptance that he made, or may have made, the "naughty one" remark in front of the foster carer, and on Person A's evidence that he referred to her as "trouble" in the same meeting. The panel determined that such terminology used to describe a professional colleague during a meeting with other professionals was unprofessional and risked undermining professional authority and clarity of roles. Ms Campbell's observation of over friendliness and banter, though given limited weight because it was untested, was consistent with Person A's account of the tone of the meeting and supported the conclusion that the exchange occurred in an inappropriately informal context.
67. Applying the balance of probabilities, the panel was satisfied that during the meeting Mr Osagie made an over familiar remark about Person A in front of the foster carer and that, judged objectively by professional standards, this was inappropriate and crossed professional boundaries.
68. **The panel therefore finds allegation 1(b)(i) proved.**

Allegation 1(c)(i)

69. The panel carefully considered all the evidence relevant to this allegation, including the written statements, contemporaneous notes, and the oral evidence of Person B and Mr Osagie. The panel reminded itself that the burden of proof rests with Social Work England, that Mr Osagie does not need to prove anything, and that the applicable standard is the balance of probabilities.
70. Person B's account was that during the visit Mr Osagie asked intrusive questions about her personal life and repeatedly said "don't you miss... don't you miss...", leaving the sentence unfinished. She said she understood these words to be sexual in nature and found them highly inappropriate. She further said that, as he was leaving and after she mentioned arranging the next meeting around her forthcoming holiday to Africa, he stood very close to her and told her she would be even more beautiful after her holiday, clarifying that he meant with a tan. She described feeling uncomfortable because of the

proximity and the personal nature of the remarks, and said she informed Person A the following morning.

71. Mr Osagie denied making inappropriate or flirtatious remarks and denied saying that Person B would be more beautiful after a tan. There was no independent recording of the kitchen or doorway interactions.
72. The panel found Person B's evidence on the comments to be specific, detailed and internally consistent. She identified the timing and words used, explained her reaction at the time, and described her subsequent report. The panel accepted that Person B perceived the unfinished phrase "don't you miss... don't you miss..." as sexual, but the panel's finding does not depend on characterising the remarks as sexual. Judged objectively, the words were overly personal and inappropriate in the context of a visit, as was the comment about being more beautiful after returning from holiday with a tan, especially given the proximity she described.
73. Applying the balance of probabilities, and bearing in mind that Mr Osagie was not required to prove anything, the panel preferred Person B's account on this issue. The panel is satisfied that Mr Osagie made the remarks described and that they were inappropriate and crossed professional boundaries.
74. **Accordingly, the panel finds allegation 1(c)(i) proved.**

Allegation 1(c)(ii)

75. The panel carefully considered all the evidence relevant to this allegation, including the written statements, contemporaneous notes, and the oral evidence of both Person B and Mr Osagie. The panel reminded itself that the burden of proof rests with Social Work England, that Mr Osagie does not need to prove anything, and that the standard of proof is the balance of probabilities.
76. Person B's account was that, as she went to the fridge to get milk for their tea, Mr Osagie suddenly put out his arm in front of her, which caused her to freeze in shock. She shouted stop and pointed to the camera in the kitchen. She described her heart racing and feeling frightened in that moment. However, in her own evidence she accepted that he did not say anything when he put his arm out and did not touch her while doing so. She said that he blocked her from moving with his arm for a few seconds. She confirmed that he did not make any verbal threats.
77. Mr Osagie's explanation was that he may have raised his arm unconsciously during his online meeting in order to stop Person B appearing on his camera. He denied doing anything with the intention of blocking or intimidating her.
78. The panel weighed both accounts carefully. It noted that the alleged incident was very brief, that no words were spoken, and that Mr Osagie lowered his arm as soon as

Person B reacted. The panel found that these features were more consistent with Mr Osagie's account than with the allegation of deliberate intimidation. His explanation provided a rational and coherent reason for the gesture, particularly given that he was conducting a virtual meeting at the time and might reasonably have been conscious of the camera.

79. The panel also noted the absence of any independent corroboration. The kitchen camera, which might have provided objective evidence, was not recording on that day, and Person B accepted that the incident was not observed by anyone else.
80. While the panel did not doubt that Person B genuinely experienced the incident as unsettling and uncomfortable, it was not satisfied on the balance of probabilities that Mr Osagie's behaviour amounted to intimidating or threatening conduct. Judged objectively, the brief and silent gesture did not reach the threshold of behaviour that overbore or obstructed Person B's ability to act, nor did it amount to a threat.
81. **Accordingly, the panel finds Allegation 1(c)(ii) not proved.**

Allegation 2

82. The panel carefully considered whether the conduct it had found proved under Allegation 1 was sexually motivated. In doing so, it reminded itself that the burden of proof rests with Social Work England, that Mr Osagie does not have to prove anything, and that the applicable standard is the balance of probabilities.
83. The panel also reminded itself of the proper test: conduct is sexually motivated if it was carried out either for the purpose of sexual gratification or for the pursuit of a future sexual relationship. The panel noted that the two limbs of this definition are distinct, and that conduct may be sexually motivated even if there is no evidence of immediate sexual gratification.
84. In relation to Allegation 1(a)(i) and 1(a)(ii), the panel had found that Mr Osagie asked inappropriate personal questions of Person A, including whether she was married or single, and made other personal remarks. He also repeatedly asked Person A to meet outside of work, despite her making it clear that she did not wish to do so. These actions were persistent and unwanted. The panel considered that asking about marital status in this context was not a neutral or administrative inquiry but one which created the foundation for subsequent inappropriate invitations. The progression from asking about her personal life to suggesting meetings outside of work pointed towards a developing personal interest in Person A that exceeded professional limits.
85. The panel accepted that Mr Osagie did not subsequently attempt to contact Person A outside of work, and that his conduct was not carried out for the purpose of sexual gratification. However, the panel was satisfied that the repeated nature of the

invitations, despite Person A's refusals, indicated that he was testing or pressing the boundaries in order to develop a more personal connection. The panel concluded that this conduct, judged objectively, was motivated by a desire to explore the possibility of a future sexual or romantic relationship.

86. The panel considered the wider context. These conversations took place during professional visits. Both Person A and Person B described his tone as flirty, accompanied by laughing and smirking. Person B described intervening directly to challenge the appropriateness of the questions, which the panel regarded as a spontaneous and credible reaction. The panel considered that if the comments were simply light-hearted or innocent "banter" as Mr Osagie claimed, they would not have caused that reaction at the time, nor led to Person A making clear her unwillingness to meet him outside of work.
87. The panel further noted that Mr Osagie admitted making at least one inappropriate remark, suggesting that Person A could take him out for lunch. His explanation that this was simply in the context of a conversation about Nigerian food was not persuasive. The panel considered that even in that context, the suggestion was overfamiliar and inappropriate, and when taken together with his other remarks and invitations, demonstrated an interest in spending time with Person A outside of professional boundaries.
88. The panel accepted that some of the wider allegations about physical conduct and more overt remarks had not been proved. It also noted that Mr Osagie did not attempt to pursue contact with Person A, which was a factor weighing against sustained pursuit. Nevertheless, the panel was satisfied that, on the balance of probabilities, the inappropriate personal questions and repeated invitations to meet outside of work were an attempt to pursue a future sexual or romantic relationship.
89. As to the remaining proved allegations, including the comments made on 23 August 2022 and the inappropriate comments made to Person B on 5 September 2022, the panel concluded that these were overfamiliar, unprofessional, and crossed professional boundaries. They demonstrated that Mr Osagie had engaged in personal conversations which were wholly inappropriate in the context of professional visits. However, the panel did not find them to be sexually motivated. In the panel's judgment, those incidents were better characterised as instances of unprofessional overfamiliarity rather than conduct directed at pursuing a sexual relationship or for the purpose of sexual gratification.
90. Accordingly, the panel finds Allegation 2 proved in part. The panel finds that the conduct in Allegation 1(a)(i) and 1(a)(ii) was sexually motivated in the sense of pursuing a future sexual relationship. The panel does not find sexual motivation proved in relation to the other aspects of Allegation 1(b)(i) and 1(c)(i).

Submissions and legal advice on grounds and impairment:

91. Mr Carey submitted on behalf of Social Work England that the facts found proved amount to misconduct. He reminded the panel that misconduct is a matter of judgement, as set out in *Roylance v GMC*, and that Mr Osagie's conduct represented a clear departure from the standards required of the profession. The behaviour occurred on separate dates and involved repeated boundary violations towards both a colleague and a foster carer during visits undertaken in a professional capacity. It was conducted by a person in a position of trust which fell well below the standards requiring social workers to maintain professional relationships, avoid causing harm and preserving public confidence.
92. Mr Carey submitted that the proven sexual motivation significantly aggravates the seriousness of the conduct, reflecting an abuse of professional position and a serious breach of trust. He noted that both Person A and Person B described fear, distress and continuing concern following their experiences. The presence of sexual motivation places this case firmly at the more serious end of boundary violations, although the behaviour would have met the threshold for misconduct even without it. While Mr Osagie has undertaken some limited steps towards remediation, the level of insight demonstrated is insufficient to mitigate the seriousness of the conduct. Mr Carey submitted that public interest considerations alone justify a finding of misconduct, and that Allegation Paragraph 1 by itself would be sufficient to meet the threshold.
93. Turning to impairment, Mr Carey submitted that Mr Osagie's fitness to practise is currently impaired. He submitted that the conduct involved sexualised behaviour carried out during professional visits, amounting to an abuse of position and a breach of trust. This reflects an attitudinal concern rather than an isolated lapse, and such issues are known to be difficult to remediate. The limited insight demonstrated by Mr Osagie does not suggest that the underlying concerns have been addressed.
94. Mr Carey submitted that Mr Osagie has undertaken only minimal remediation. While there is very little reflection and limited victim empathy, there is no meaningful evidence that he has addressed the root causes of his behaviour or considered the wider impact on public confidence. Mr Carey referred to Person B's written account to the panel, in which she stated that even after three years the incident continues to haunt her and affects how she feels during professional visits. This lasting impact underscores the seriousness of the behaviour. Without sufficient insight or remediation, the risk of repetition remains and creates a real risk of harm were impairment not found.
95. Mr Carey submitted that the public element is clearly engaged. The conduct involved breaches of fundamental professional standards, posed a serious risk to service users and was committed by an experienced practitioner in circumstances where sexual

motivation has been proved. Although Mr Osagie has no prior regulatory history, public confidence requires assurance that sexually motivated misconduct of this nature will be identified and addressed. A well-informed member of the public would expect a finding of current impairment in these circumstances. For these reasons, Mr Carey submitted that a finding of impairment is necessary and justified.

96. Mr Osagie submitted that the facts found proved do not amount to misconduct. He stated that he did not intend to behave in a sexual or inappropriate manner and maintained that the interaction was brief workplace banter which ended immediately. He said he did not repeat the conversation, pursue it, or make any further remark of that nature, and that he and the individuals involved never discussed it again during later professional contact. He submitted that his behaviour did not amount to an abuse of position, that there was no pattern of conduct, and that this should be regarded as a one-off misunderstanding. He emphasised that in many years of practice he has never faced any concern or complaint, and no colleague, foster carer or manager has ever raised issues about his professional boundaries.
97. Mr Osagie further submitted that he has reflected on how the situation arose and now recognises that, even if unintended, the interaction could have been perceived differently. He stated that he has learnt from the experience and now fully appreciates the need to maintain clear professional boundaries. He informed the panel that he has been reading social work guidance and professional material to support his learning and is willing to undertake further training. He also explained that the matter has had a significant personal impact, contributing to his relocation to Nigeria, separation from his children, and a long period away from practice. He invited the panel to take account of his previously unblemished record, his developing insight, and his commitment to safe practice, and he asked the panel to conclude that the facts proved do not meet the threshold for misconduct and that he should be permitted to return to practice.
98. The panel heard and accepted the advice of the legal adviser, who advised that it is for the panel to exercise its own independent professional judgment in determining whether the proven facts amount to misconduct. The legal adviser reminded the panel that this is not a matter of further factual proof but a legal characterisation of the conduct, guided by the principles set out in authorities such as *Roylance*, *Biswas*, *Day*, and *Khan*. The panel was advised that misconduct requires a serious departure from the standards expected of a registered social worker, and that not every breach of professional standards will meet this threshold; trivial or momentary lapses will not generally amount to misconduct.
99. The legal adviser further reminded the panel that, in assessing impairment, it must consider both the personal and public components. The personal component concerns insight, remediation and the risk of repetition. The public component concerns the need to maintain public confidence in the profession and uphold proper professional

standards. The panel was directed to the tests in *Cohen* and *Grant*, which emphasise a forward-looking assessment of risk, the remendability of concerns, and whether the registrant's conduct may put service users at risk of harm, bring the profession into disrepute, or breach fundamental tenets of social work practice.

100. The legal adviser advised that the panel should adopt a holistic approach, considering the seriousness of the conduct, the registrant's current attitude and circumstances, any evidence of remediation, and the wider public interest. The central questions for the panel were whether the conduct found proved amounts to misconduct, and whether, in light of all relevant factors, the registrant's fitness to practise is currently impaired.

Panel's decision on Misconduct:

101. The panel considered all the information including the submissions made on behalf of Social Work England and those made by Mr Osagie. The panel reminded itself that misconduct is a matter of judgment and that its task was to determine whether the conduct found proved represented a serious departure from the standards expected of a registered social worker. The panel considered each proven element individually and the totality of the conduct as a whole.
102. The panel determined that the proven conduct included inappropriate personal questions and comments made during professional visits, involving asking a colleague if she was single and making culturally framed remarks about multiple wives in front of a foster carer in her own home. These comments occurred in a setting where both the colleague and the foster carer were entitled to expect wholly professional behaviour from a social worker attending in an official capacity. The conduct also included repeated requests to meet a colleague outside work despite her clear lack of interest, and over-familiar remarks to the foster carer during a visit. The panel had found that the remarks made towards the foster carer were inappropriate, overly personal, and crossed clear professional boundaries.
103. The panel did not accept Mr Osagie's characterisation of the behaviour as "*banter*" or a misunderstanding. Although the conduct did not involve physical contact, the panel determined that the behaviour towards Person A was sexually motivated in the sense of seeking a future intimate or romantic relationship with a social work colleague during professional duties. Whilst this behaviour sat at the lower end of the spectrum of sexually motivated misconduct, the behaviour placed the conduct firmly beyond acceptable professional behaviour. The panel also noted that inappropriate personal comments directed at a foster carer during a home visit would be regarded by

responsible practitioners as plainly unprofessional and concerning, particularly as they risked undermining professional authority and clarity of roles.

104. The panel found that the following professional standards were breached:

Standard 2.3 – “Maintain professional relationships with people and ensure that they understand the role of a social worker in their lives.”

Standard 5.1 – “I will not abuse, neglect, discriminate, exploit or harm anyone, or condone this by others.”

Standard 5.2 – “Behave in a way that would bring into question my suitability to work as a social worker while at work, or outside of work.”

105. The panel concluded that the inappropriate personal comments made in front of a foster carer, the over-familiar conversations with individuals who did not know Mr Osagie, and the sexually motivated invitations extended during professional visits demonstrated a clear failure to maintain professional relationships as required by Standard 2.3. Professional boundaries were blurred, professional roles became unclear, and the trust that service users and members of the public are entitled to place in a social worker was undermined.

106. The panel further considered that the emotional discomfort and ongoing impact described by the individuals involved brought the conduct within the scope of Standard 5.1. While the panel did not find deliberate harm, the behaviour caused emotional harm as described by Person A and Person B by placing them in uncomfortable and inappropriate situations during professional interactions.

107. The panel determined that the nature and context of the conduct towards a colleague occurring during professional visits, in the presence of a foster carer, involving sexually motivated boundary breaches as well as inappropriate comments towards a foster carer was behaviour that would bring into question Mr Osagie’s suitability to work as a social worker for the purposes of Standard 5.2. A reasonable member of the public, aware of the facts, would regard such behaviour as inconsistent with the expectations and integrity of the profession.

108. Taking all these matters into account including the context of home visits, the repeated nature of the behaviour, the sexually motivated elements, and the impact on those involved, the panel was satisfied that the conduct represented a serious falling short of the standards expected of a registered social worker. The behaviour could not be regarded as trivial or inconsequential. The panel was satisfied that the facts found proved, taken individually or as a whole, amount to misconduct.

Panel's decision on Impairment:

109. The panel then turned to consider whether Mr Osagie's fitness to practise is currently impaired. This required an assessment of both the personal component (insight, remediation, and risk of repetition) and the public component (maintaining confidence in the profession and declaring proper standards).
110. In relation to the personal component, the panel considered that Mr Osagie had demonstrated only very limited insight. Throughout the hearing, he repeatedly maintained that his colleague and the foster carer started the inappropriate comments and he joined in, and continued to describe the interactions as "*banter*." His position remained largely unchanged even after the panel's findings, and he did not meaningfully acknowledge the impact of his behaviour on Person A or Person B. While he expressed some regret, this was framed in terms of how his behaviour was "perceived," rather than accepting responsibility for the boundary breaches themselves. The panel considered that this persistent externalisation of blame, and the absence of any deepened reflection over time, demonstrated a lack of meaningful insight.
111. The panel acknowledged that although he stated that he had undertaken some reading around professional boundaries, he was unable to provide details or explain what he had learnt. In response to panel questions he did state that if such a situation occurred again he would not join in and record the interaction and inform his manager. His reflections remained largely focused on the impact on himself rather than on those affected by his actions. The panel considered this to be an attitudinal issue, and noted that attitudinal concerns are more difficult to remediate. As a result, the panel considered there to be a real risk of repetition.
112. In relation to the public component, the panel concluded that a fully informed member of the public would expect a finding of impairment. The conduct involved breaches of fundamental professional boundaries, included behaviour found to be sexually motivated, and occurred during professional visits where the individuals involved were entitled to feel safe and respected. Failure to mark such conduct as impairment would undermine public confidence in the profession. The panel also considered that the behaviour brought the profession into disrepute and breached fundamental tenets relating to respect, integrity, and trustworthiness.
113. The panel accepted that this was the first time concerns had been raised about Mr Osagie, but his limited insight and failure to accept responsibility meant that remediation had not occurred. In the panel's judgment, this maintained the risk of

repetition. The panel concluded that a finding of impairment was necessary both to protect the public and to uphold proper standards.

114. Accordingly, the panel finds that Mr Osagie's fitness to practise is currently impaired on both the personal and public components.

Submissions and legal advice on Sanction:

115. Mr Carey submitted that the panel should now impose a sanction that reflects the seriousness of the findings and meets the overarching objective of protecting the public. That objective includes safeguarding service users, maintaining confidence in the social work profession, and upholding proper professional standards. He acknowledged that Mr Osagie has no previous regulatory history and has already been suspended for nearly three years, but submitted that these factors cannot outweigh the gravity of the misconduct or the ongoing concerns about his current fitness to practise.
116. Mr Carey submitted that the panel heard no meaningful evidence of insight, reflection, or understanding from Mr Osagie. He emphasised that, despite the passage of time, Mr Osagie's position has remained fundamentally unchanged. He continues to minimise the behaviour, portray it as light-hearted interaction, and maintain that the individuals involved provoked or initiated the exchanges. Mr Carey submitted that this indicates a continued externalisation of responsibility and an absence of genuine acceptance that the findings reflect unprofessional and sexually motivated conduct during professional duties.
117. Mr Carey further submitted that the panel heard no developed understanding from Mr Osagie of why the conduct was inappropriate, how it affected those involved, or how it undermined professional boundaries and public trust. His reflections have remained superficial and defensive, focused on justifying his actions rather than understanding their impact. In Mr Carey's submission, this lack of progress, despite years away from practice and clear factual findings demonstrates an attitudinal concern rather than a single lapse of judgement. Such attitudinal failings are inherently difficult to remediate, and in this case they give rise to a real and ongoing risk of repetition.
118. Mr Carey submitted that, given the sexually motivated nature of parts of the misconduct, the persistent boundary violations towards more than one individual, and the absence of meaningful remediation or insight, a Suspension Order would be insufficient to protect the public or maintain confidence in the profession. He submitted that suspension would not address the underlying attitudinal issues, nor provide assurance that the behaviour would not recur. In contrast, a Removal Order is the proportionate and necessary response, reflecting the seriousness of the misconduct, the ongoing risk, and the need to uphold proper professional standards.

119. Mr Carey therefore invited the panel to impose a Removal Order.

Social worker's submissions:

120. Mr Osagie submitted that he has reflected on the panel's findings and accepts the seriousness with which they have been viewed. He stated that he has considered the concerns raised and recognises that he must continue to develop his understanding of professional boundaries and expectations. He told the panel that, during his time away from practice, he has read social work guidance and materials available to him, and that he is willing to undertake any training recommended by Social Work England to strengthen his insight and professional judgment.
121. He submitted that he has never previously been the subject of any regulatory concern and that, since the incidents in question, he has not worked in social care either in the UK or abroad. He explained that the past years have been difficult, and that the long period away from the profession has given him time to reflect on his position and the responsibilities expected of a social worker. He asked the panel to consider that he has always complied with Social Work England's directions and has remained willing to engage with the process.
122. Mr Osagie asked the panel to give him the opportunity to demonstrate that he can meet the required standards. He submitted that he is committed to undertaking further training, to working openly with any regulatory requirements, and to rebuilding trust. He invited the panel to allow him a route back into practise so that he can develop the necessary insight and continue his career safely and professionally.

Legal advice:

123. The panel heard and accepted the advice of the Legal Adviser. The Legal Adviser reminded the panel that its overarching objective is the protection of the public, which includes safeguarding the health, safety and well-being of service users, maintaining public confidence in the social work profession, and upholding the standards expected of registered social workers. The panel was advised that sanctions are not intended to punish the social worker but are imposed to protect the public and to serve the wider public interest. The panel must act proportionately, balancing the interests of the social worker with the public interest, and ensuring that any sanction imposed is the minimum required to meet the regulatory objectives.
124. The Legal Adviser directed the panel to the Impairment and Sanctions Guidance and reminded it to take into account its earlier findings on facts, grounds and impairment.

The panel was advised to consider aggravating and mitigating factors, and to assess each sanction in ascending order of seriousness, beginning with the least restrictive.

125. The Legal Adviser outlined the available outcomes as set out in the Social Workers Regulations 2018, including the options of taking no further action, issuing advice or a warning, or imposing a final order in the form of conditions of practice, suspension, or removal. The panel was reminded that advice or warnings may only be suitable where there is no ongoing risk to the public, that conditions of practice are usually reserved for cases involving competence or health issues, and that suspension may be appropriate only where there is some evidence of insight and a realistic prospect of remediation.
126. The Legal Adviser further advised that a removal order should be considered where no lesser sanction would adequately protect the public or uphold confidence in the profession. The Legal Adviser emphasised that, while the impact of a sanction on the social worker may be taken into account, it should not be the determining factor. What matters is whether the sanction properly reflects the seriousness of the findings, addresses the risk of repetition, and upholds the public interest.

Panel's decision on Sanction:

127. In reaching its decision on sanction, the panel reminded itself that its overarching objective is to protect the health, safety and well-being of the public, maintain public confidence in the social work profession, and uphold proper professional standards. The panel heard and accepted the legal adviser's guidance on the purpose of sanctions, the available outcomes under the Social Workers Regulations 2018, and the requirement to act proportionately. It considered the sanctions available in ascending order of seriousness and applied its earlier findings on facts, misconduct, and impairment.
128. The panel took into account all relevant aggravating and mitigating factors. In relation to aggravating factors it noted the emotional harm as described by both Person A and Person B. The panel also took into account that the inappropriate comments occurred on more than one occasion and within professional settings where clear professional boundaries were expected. The panel also considered that the sexually motivated aspect of asking inappropriate personal questions and repeatedly asking Person A, a social work colleague, to meet outside of work, despite Person A making it clear that she did not wish to do so, was the most serious aspect of the findings. These matters informed the panel's assessment of seriousness and risk.
129. The panel recognised that the misconduct reflected attitudinal concerns rather than issues of competence or isolated error. Despite the passage of time, Mr Osagie had not demonstrated meaningful insight into why the conduct was inappropriate, how it

affected those involved, or how it undermined professional boundaries and public trust.

130. The panel also considered the mitigating factors. These included Mr Osagie's full engagement with the regulatory process over several years, his consistent participation in hearings despite residing abroad, his lack of any previous fitness to practise history. He has acknowledged that his inappropriate comments during one meeting did breach professional boundaries and offered an apology for this. The panel accepted that he expressed regret; however, it concluded that the apology did not demonstrate meaningful insight, as his reflections remained limited.
131. Having addressed these factors, the panel considered each available sanction. It concluded that taking no further action, or issuing advice or a warning, would be wholly inappropriate given the seriousness of the findings, the sexually motivated element, and the ongoing risk of repetition. Such outcomes would not sufficiently protect the public or maintain confidence in the profession.
132. The panel next considered whether a Conditions of Practice Order would be appropriate. It concluded that conditions could not be formulated to address the attitudinal nature of the concerns or to provide sufficient public protection. The misconduct arose in the context of professional interactions in foster carers' homes and during multi-professional meetings. The failings related to judgment, boundaries, and personal conduct. There was insufficient evidence of insight or remediation to give confidence that the risk could be safely managed through conditions of practice.
133. The panel therefore went on to assess whether a Suspension Order or a Removal Order would be the proportionate outcome. It recognised that the misconduct was serious, involved an element of sexually motivated behaviour towards a social work colleague, and represented repeated failures to maintain appropriate professional boundaries. The panel acknowledged that Social Work England's Impairment and Sanction Guidance indicates that removal may be appropriate where sexual motivation is present, especially when combined with attitudinal concerns and limited insight. It gave careful weight to that guidance.
134. However, the panel also identified several significant considerations which supported a less restrictive outcome. The panel gave careful consideration to the nature and scope of the sexually motivated conduct. Although serious, it occurred within a narrow and time-limited context and did not escalate into any form of physical contact, coercion, pursuit outside the workplace, or attempts to initiate further communication once the professional interaction had ended. The behaviour did not involve manipulation, planning, concealment, or exploitation of a position of authority. It was not for sexual gratification but in pursuit of a relationship with a social work colleague. When viewed against the wider spectrum of sexually motivated misconduct contemplated by the

regulatory guidance where removal is often indicated, the panel considered that the conduct in this case, whilst serious, fell at the lower end of seriousness.

135. This distinction was central to the panel's assessment: while the conduct was unacceptable and required a firm regulatory response, it did not exhibit the entrenched, predatory, or escalating features typically associated with cases requiring removal from the register. The panel further noted that although Mr Osagie's insight was limited, he had consistently and respectfully engaged with the investigative and hearing processes, demonstrated willingness to undertake any training, and shown openness to guidance.
136. These matters gave the panel some cautious confidence that remediation remained possible. It also took into account his previously unblemished career. In light of these factors, the panel concluded that a Suspension Order is the appropriate and proportionate regulatory response at this stage, providing both necessary public protection and a final opportunity for remediation.
137. The panel considered carefully the appropriate length of suspension. It noted that Mr Osagie has already been out of practice for almost three years, and that keeping a social worker unnecessarily away from frontline work for a longer period risks eroding professional skills and confidence without adding meaningful protection to the public. The panel also recognised that Mr Osagie had only recently had the benefit of this panel's detailed factual findings and clear reasoning, including findings that several allegations, including some aspects of the sexual motivation allegation, were not proved. Therefore he has lacked a reliable framework for genuine reflection, insight-building, and remediation.
138. In the panel's judgment, a period of 12 months strikes the necessary balance and is proportionate. It is sufficient to allow him to undertake structured reflective work, complete relevant training, and demonstrate a safe and responsible approach to professional boundaries. It also avoids a longer period that would delay the opportunity for a reviewing panel to assess his progress. The panel was therefore satisfied that a 12-month Suspension Order is the appropriate and proportionate regulatory response, adequately protecting the public while marking the seriousness of the misconduct and providing a final opportunity for meaningful reflection and remediation.
139. The panel considered what might assist a future reviewing panel. It determined that the next panel may be assisted by:
 - A detailed reflective statement demonstrating Mr Osagie's understanding of his responsibility for the misconduct, why the behaviour was inappropriate and how it undermined professional boundaries and public confidence in the profession.

- Reflection on the emotional impact described by both person A and person B and consideration of how his behaviour could impact colleagues and their work as well as indirect impact on service users in the future.
 - Evidence of relevant training undertaken during the suspension period, particularly on the importance of professional boundaries and professional relationships.
 - An explanation of what he has learned from such training and how that learning will specifically change his professional conduct.
 - Clear examples of how he would approach similar situations differently in the future, including practical strategies for maintaining appropriate boundaries.
 - Testimonials from employment, voluntary work, or community roles demonstrating professionalism, reliability, and appropriate conduct in settings where boundaries are required.
140. The panel emphasised that it will be for the future reviewing panel to determine whether Mr Osagie has sufficiently developed his insight and reduced the risk of repetition to an acceptable level. The Suspension Order is imposed to protect the public, maintain confidence in the profession, and allow Mr Osagie a final opportunity to remediate and demonstrate readiness to return to safe practice.

Interim Order:

141. The panel next considered an application by Mr Carey for an interim suspension order for 12 months to cover the appeal period before the final order of suspension becomes effective.
142. The panel heard and accepted the advice of the legal adviser on its power to make an interim order under paragraph 11(1)(b) of Schedule 2 to the Social Workers Regulations 2018.
143. The panel further noted that Mr Osagie waived his right to the notice period with regard to the existing interim order, enabling the panel to address the interim position immediately. In light of this, and in accordance with its powers, the panel revoked the existing interim order and proceeded to consider whether a new interim order was necessary.
144. The panel was mindful of its earlier findings and considered that it would be wholly incompatible with the seriousness of those findings not to impose an interim order. The panel had determined that Mr Osagie's misconduct was serious and represented

breaches of professional boundaries, and carried an ongoing risk of repetition. In those circumstances, allowing him to practise unrestricted during the appeal period would present an unacceptable risk to the public and would undermine public confidence in the profession and in the regulatory process.

145. The panel considered paragraph 207 of the Impairment and Sanctions Guidance, which states: *“An interim order may be necessary where the adjudicators have decided that a final order is required, which restricts or removes the ability for the social worker to practise... without an interim order, the social worker will be able to practise unrestricted until the order takes effect. This goes against our overarching objective of public protection.”*
146. Having regard to its findings and this guidance, the panel concluded that an interim suspension order is necessary and proportionate in order to protect the public, maintain confidence in the profession, and uphold proper standards of conduct and behaviour. It therefore made an interim suspension order for a period of 12 months. This order will come to an end upon the expiry of the appeal period, unless an appeal is lodged with the High Court. If no appeal is filed, the final 12-month Suspension Order will take effect at that point.

Right of appeal :

147. Under Paragraph 16(1)(a) of Schedule 2 of the regulations, the social worker may appeal to the High Court against the decision of adjudicators:
- (a) the decision of adjudicators:
- to make an interim order, other than an interim order made at the same time as a final order under Paragraph 11(1)(b),
 - not to revoke or vary such an order,
 - 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.
148. Under Paragraph 16(2) of Schedule 2 of the regulations 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.
149. Under Regulation 9(4) of the regulations this order may not be recorded until the expiry of the period within which an appeal against the order could be made, or where an

appeal against the order has been made, before the appeal is withdrawn or otherwise finally disposed of.

150. This notice is served in accordance with Rules 44 and 45 of the Social Work England Fitness to Practice Rules 2019 (as amended).

Review of final orders:

151. Under Paragraph 15(1), 15(2) and 15(3) of Schedule 2 of the regulations:

- 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), and a final order does not have effect until after the expiry of that period

152. Under Rule 16(aa) of the rules 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:

153. Please note that in accordance with section 29 of the National Health Service Reform and Health Care Professions Act 2002, a final 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>