

Social worker: Bukola Jessica
Aina Ahmed
Registration number: SW143903
Fitness to Practise
Final Order Review Hearing

Date of hearing: 27 August 2026

Hearing venue: Remote

Final order being reviewed:
Suspension order (expiring 10/10/2026)

Hearing outcome:
Extend the current suspension order for a further period of 6 months with
effect from the expiry of the current order

Introduction and attendees:

1. This is the first review of a final suspension order originally imposed for a period of 18 months by a panel of adjudicators on 13 March 2025.
2. Ms Ahmed attended and was not represented.
3. Social Work England was represented by its case presenter Ms Carla Hazlewood.
4. The panel of adjudicators conducting this review (hereafter “the panel”) and the other people involved in it were as follows:

Adjudicators	Role
Kerry McKevitt	Chair
Christine Anne Rice	Social worker adjudicator

Hearings team/Legal adviser	Role
Hannah McKendrick	Hearings officer
Ryan Torr	Hearings support officer
Elliott Kenton	Legal adviser

Service of notice:

5. The panel of adjudicators had careful regard to the documents contained in the final order review service bundle as follows:
 - A copy of the notice of the final order review hearing dated 9 July 2026 and addressed to Ms Ahmed at their email address which they provided to Social Work England;
 - An extract from the Social Work England Register detailing Ms Ahmed’s registered address;
 - A copy of a signed statement of service, on behalf of Social Work England, confirming that on 9 July 2026 the writer sent by email to Ms Ahmed at the address referred to above: notice of hearing and related documents;
6. The panel noted that Ms Ahmed was in attendance today.
7. Having had regard to Rules 44 and 45 and 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 Ahmed in accordance with the Rules.

Review of the current order:

8. This final order review hearing is taking place under Paragraph 15(1) of Schedule 2 of The Social Workers Regulations 2018 (as amended) and Social Work England's Fitness to Practise Rules 2019 (as amended).
9. The purpose of this review is to review the current order, which is due to expire on the 10 October 2026. The order subject to review is a suspension order.

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

1. *On 23 November 2022 at Worcester Crown Court, you were convicted of a criminal offence, namely: 'Possessing with intent to supply a controlled drug of Class A – Heroin / Possessing with intent to supply a controlled drug of Class A – Crack Cocaine', contrary to sections 4(1) and 5(3) of and Schedule 4 to the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971. **PROVED BY ADMISSION***
2. *You did not inform Sandwell Children's Trust ("the Trust") that you were subject to criminal proceedings during your application process. **PROVED BY ADMISSION***
3. *You informed your employer, the Trust, that you were absent from work from 21 to 23 November 2022 due to ill health, when you were in fact attending your Crown Court trial. **PROVED BY ADMISSION***
4. *Your actions in 3 above were dishonest in that you sought to conceal from your employer that you were subject to criminal proceedings. **PROVED BY ADMISSION***
5. *On 12 September 2022, you informed Social Work England in your registration application form that you were not subject to any convictions, cautions, investigations and penalty notices, when you were subject to criminal investigations and awaiting a Crown Court trial. **PROVED BY ADMISSION***
6. *Your actions in 5 above were dishonest in that you sought to conceal from Social Work England that you were subject to criminal investigations. **PROVED BY PANEL***
7. *You did not inform Social Work England and/or your employer that you were convicted of a criminal offence on 23 November 2023. (amended during the hearing to 23 November 2022) **PROVED BY ADMISSION***
8. *Your actions in 7 above were dishonest in that you sought to conceal your conviction from Social Work England and/or your employer. **PROVED BY PANEL***

By reason of your conviction as set out in allegation 1 above, and your misconduct in allegations 2 – 8 above, your fitness to practise is impaired.

The final hearing panel determined the following with regard to impairment:

Conviction

Personal impairment element

142. The panel considered whether Ms Ahmed's conduct was easily remediable. The matters are not easily remediated but Ms Ahmed has had enough time to make progress on her remediation.

143. The panel went on to consider whether the conduct has been remedied. Ms Ahmed has completed her community order requirements as ordered by the Crown Court. Ms Ahmed has also sought support outside of the mandated programmes to work on social and personal matters.

144. The panel considered the risk of future repetition of similar conduct. The panel found Ms Ahmed to be credible when she stated that she had stopped associating with her co-accused. She was not a social worker at the time. The panel accepted that the criminal proceedings and these regulatory proceedings have been a lesson to her in themselves.

145. The panel accept that Ms Ahmed was scared by the prospect of going to prison. The panel accept this will operate as a deterrent to her to reduce the risk of reoffending in the future.

146. Ms Ahmed's conduct has caused harm. The panel considered paragraph 20 of the Impairment and Sanction Guidance.

"20. Decision makers should be careful when assessing actual harm caused by a social worker's actions and its impact on the seriousness of the case. An action that (by luck) has not caused harm may still represent an unacceptable risk of serious harm if repeated. If this is the case, decision makers should not regard it as any less serious because actual harm did not occur."

147. Ms Ahmed has not been convicted of selling drugs or making a profit from doing so. However, she was convicted of possessing Class A drugs, heroin and crack-cocaine, with Intent to Supply. The harm caused by Class A drugs is well known amongst social workers and the general population. Ms Ahmed could and should have foreseen the risk of harm by involving herself in such matters.

148. Ms Ahmed has some insight into her conduct. Ms Ahmed's insight is at an early stage and is incomplete. Ms Ahmed has never denied before the panel that she has a criminal conviction. She has struggled before the panel to accept the full extent of the factual findings against her from the criminal court. When explaining the conviction she

still considers herself as being in the wrong place at the wrong time. Ms Ahmed has expressed that she takes responsibility but she has repeatedly sought to minimise her role.

149. Over the course of the proceedings Ms Ahmed has shown a fuller understanding of the impact of her actions on others in particular vulnerable service users. Most of the reflective work prior to the hearing has focused on the impact on Ms Ahmed herself. It is difficult for Ms Ahmed to have full insight at the same time as being unable to fully accept the matters that require reflection.

150. The panel have reviewed the testimonials. They provided evidence of the effort that Ms Ahmed has put into remediation before this hearing.

151. The criminal offence is now of some age. Ms Ahmed has completed the requirements of her community order. The panel applied weight to the lack of further offending since her arrest in 2020.

152. Ms Ahmed should be fairly credited for the progress she has made and what she has done to reduce the risk of offending. However, the lack of insight, especially when taken alongside Ms Ahmed continuing to minimise her own role in her criminal conviction leads the panel to conclude her fitness to practice is personally impaired.

153. Ms Ahmed has been convicted for a serious crime and she has not taken full responsibility for it despite the passage of five years.

Public impairment element

154. The panel considered that a finding of impairment is necessary to promote and maintain both public confidence in social workers in England and to promote and maintain proper professional standards for social workers in England.

155. Public confidence in social workers in England would be undermined if a finding of impairment was not made in this case.

The question of Misconduct.

156. The panel identified The Professional Standards Guidance which state

“Professional integrity

Duty of candour

Standard 6.1, 6.3, 6.4, 6.5, 6.6 and 6.7

Social workers are open and honest with people, including when something goes wrong or has the potential to cause physical, emotional, financial or any other harm or loss.

Where they are not open and honest, it can put people at risk and may damage confidence in them as a social worker and the social work profession.

... Duty of candour also applies to being open and honest with colleagues, employers and relevant organisations, including Social Work England. A social worker must declare any charges, convictions or cautions that've been issued to them in the UK or any other country.

They must also tell us if they're being investigated for a criminal offence in the UK or any other country, are subject to a regulatory finding, or if there is anything that might affect their ability to do their job competently or affect their fitness to practise."

157. The panel considered paragraphs two to eight of the Allegation. Each of the paragraphs have been considered separately but the reasoning overlaps. Each of the paragraphs go against the fundamental principle of the profession to be open and honest. The need to be open and honest is expressly set out in the guidance above. Each of the paragraphs two to eight amount to misconduct and are serious.

158. The panel noted that paragraph three is an example of actively lying about her health in order to attend her Crown Court hearing and conceal from her employer that she was a defendant in a criminal trial. Other paragraphs deal with dishonesty by omission. Consistent with the reasoning set out at the facts stage the panel concluded that the motivation behind the dishonesty was a desire to avoid the consequences of telling the truth.

159. Taken as a whole, there is an established pattern of behaviour by Ms Ahmed to be dishonest.

160. The panel considered the CHRE v NMC and Paula Grant [2011] EWHC 297 (Admin) features of impairment. Each of the criteria are engaged.

Personal impairment element

161. Dishonestly is difficult to remediate. The panel went on to consider whether the conduct has been remedied. Ms Ahmed has done relevant work towards remediating.

162. The panel considered the risk of future repetition of dishonesty. The panel considered that there remains a risk of repetition.

163. Ms Ahmed's conduct has caused harm and there was a risk of harm to others.

164. The panel considered paragraph 20 of the Impairment and Sanction Guidance again.

165. Ms Ahmed accepted that she may have emotionally harmed vulnerable young children from a family that she was working with when she suddenly had to leave

following her suspension from work. Social Workers need to gain the trust of service users in order to build a working relationship and advocate on their behalf. This trust would have been undermined when Ms Ahmed suddenly left their lives with no explanation and without being able to say goodbye. This is a particular point to note when considering vulnerable children going into foster care.

166. Ms Ahmed is beginning to understand the harm and risk of harm to others.

167. Ms Ahmed has some insight into her conduct. Ms Ahmed made admissions to the majority of the Allegation. Despite contesting paragraphs six and eight of the Allegation by virtue of having admitted paragraph four Ms Ahmed admitted some dishonesty from the beginning of the hearing. The panel do not place any weight at all on the fact that Ms Ahmed contested some paragraphs of the Allegation.

168. Ms Ahmed has expressed remorse and she has engaged in this regulatory process. Ms Ahmed's insight work is incomplete. In this hearing she has started to grasp the impact of her dishonesty on others and the importance of the regulatory standards.

169. The panel have reviewed the testimonials and credit Ms Ahmed for the work she has done. It is to Ms Ahmed's credit that she has sought similar work to social work so that she can develop relevant skills. It is further to her credit that she was able to obtain good quality references from those who were entirely aware of why she was coming before this panel.

170. Ms Ahmed does not have a previous regulatory history. In light of the overall scope of the matters before the panel, it was able to apply no weight to this because Ms Ahmed's dishonesty stemmed right from the application for the Social Work England registration.

171. Ultimately, there is persistent dishonesty in Ms Ahmed's case. Despite Ms Ahmed's efforts she has incomplete insight which leaves her open to the risk of further dishonesty. Therefore Ms Ahmed's fitness to practice is currently impaired under the personal impairment element.

Public impairment element

172. Persistent dishonesty is a serious matter. Ms Ahmed has been dishonest with her employer and her regulator both actively and by omission.

173. The panel considered that a finding of impairment is necessary to promote and maintain both public confidence in social workers in England and to promote and maintain proper professional standards for social workers in England.

174. Further, if a finding of impairment was not made, it would undermine public confidence in social workers in England.

175.As Ms Ahmed’s fitness to practice is currently impaired it will be necessary to consider what, if any, sanction should be imposed.

The final hearing panel determined the following with regard to sanction:

199.When considering the question of sanction, the panel took into account Social Work England’s ‘Impairment and sanctions guidance’ (“the guidance”).

Mitigating Features

200.Ms Ahmed has been able to demonstrate developing insight. Ms Ahmed made early admissions to the majority of the Allegation and has engaged with the regulatory process. Ms Ahmed attended the hearing, provided written reflections and has given oral evidence at all three stages.

201.The panel have received testimonials from people Ms Ahmed has been working with. Ms Ahmed has been described her as “a valuable asset to the team” and having made a “positive impact”. Ms Ahmed has engaged in work to develop skills relevant to a career as a social worker.

202.Ms Ahmed has sought external support to improve her life. The panel accept that she has changed who she associates with and has made progress to turn her life around.

Aggravating Features

203.The panel considered that there had been a repetition of dishonesty both actively and by omission. The context of the dishonesty relates to dishonesty with the regulator as well as her employer.

Aggravating Features

204.The dishonesty and the criminal conviction are both particularly serious examples of their kind.

205.There is no evidence of apology with the exception that Ms Ahmed has apologised to the panel.

206.Ultimately, the panel determined that her current level of insight into her own personality and reasons for acting how she did was more of a mitigating factor. However the panel acknowledge that her insight into the impact of her actions on others, and remediation are incomplete.

No further action / Advice / Warning

207. Each of these disposals would be inappropriate and disproportionate in this case. None of the above would be commensurate with the nature nor the seriousness of this case.

Conditions of practice order

208. Conditions of practice would not meet the dishonesty concerns in this case.

209. The guidance suggests that conditions are unlikely to be appropriate in dishonesty cases. The panel agree that this principle applies in this case.

210. No workable, measurable or proportionate conditions could be formulated to meet the concerns in this case.

211. The panel did not consider that the regulatory objectives would be met by an order of conditions.

Suspension order

212. The panel considered that this is a case where conditions cannot be formulated to protect the public or the wider public interest but the case falls short of requiring the removal of Ms Ahmed's name from the register.

213. A period of suspension would allow Ms Ahmed to continue to train and to continue working in a related field.

214. This was a very serious set of matters but Ms Ahmed is at a very early stage in her career and she has shown potential to remediate. Ms Ahmed has provided lots of evidence of the ability to make positive changes and a determination to become a social worker. The panel determined that Ms Ahmed is willing and able to remediate.

215. A suspension order would protect the public sufficiently and would protect, promote and maintain the regulatory objectives.

Removal order

216. The panel considered paragraph 149 of the guidance which sets out:

“A removal order may be appropriate in cases involving:

- Dishonesty, especially where persistent and/or concealed.*
- Criminal convictions for serious offences”*

217. The panel considered that the mitigating factors, passage of time and the progress Ms Ahmed has made are such that she is suitable for a lesser sanction than a removal order. The panel were struck by the extent to which Ms Ahmed has tried to turn a negative into a positive. For example, she has engaged with youths at risk of entering

into criminal offending and has tried to be a positive influence, sharing her lived experience of the criminal justice system and this regulatory process.

218. Removal orders must be made where the decision makers conclude that no other outcome would be enough to protect, promote and maintain the regulatory objectives. The panel did not think a removal order would be the only way to satisfy the regulatory objectives.

Length of suspension order and whether a review is appropriate

219. The panel considered that a period of 18 months of suspension of Ms Ahmed's registration would be the minimum necessary period of suspension in this case. This period will protect the public and give Ms Ahmed the opportunity to develop herself and demonstrate insight and remediation addressing the matters behind these regulatory proceedings.

220. Ms Ahmed has already made good progress in understanding why she acted as she did, and has developed strategies to make better choices and decisions. She has made more limited progress in her understanding of the impact of her actions on others. The panel considered that 18 months is long enough to allow this to develop and give her the chance to engage in focused remedial work.

221. Ms Ahmed needs to continue to reflect on her actions, understand the impact of her actions on others and continue with her personal self-development.

222. It will be necessary for there to be a review in this case prior to the end of the suspension order.

223. Any future panel may be assisted by evidence of:

- a. A written reflective piece based on Ms Ahmed's progress over the period of time between today and the next review;*
- b. Up to date references or testimonials from any/all of her employers from now until the review hearing;*
- c. Up to date character references;*
- d. Anything else that Ms Ahmed deems appropriate.*

224. This panel does not seek to bind any future panel. Ms Ahmed should be aware that in the absence of improved insight or other remediation upon review, a removal order may be an appropriate sanction.

Social Work England submissions:

10. The panel heard submissions from Ms Hazelwood. Ms Hazlewood referred the panel to the background and the previous panel's findings in relation to impairment and sanction as set out in the final order review bundle. Ms Hazlewood submitted that Ms Ahmed remains in employment, has engaged with Social Work England extensively since the final order hearing and has no further fitness to practice concerns. She referred the panel to the numerous positive references provided in connection with Ms Ahmed, and Ms Ahmed's reflective pieces.
11. Ms Hazelwood invited the panel to find that Ms Ahmed is no longer impaired. Ms Hazlewood confirmed that Ms Ahmed has shown sufficient insight with her reflective pieces being detailed, targeted and relating to the regulatory concerns. Those reflections have been successfully translated through the workplace where a number of professional references are provided. The referees speak very highly of Ms Ahmed, and highlight her openness and honesty.
12. Ms Hazlewood submitted that the appropriate course of action would be to allow the order to lapse upon expiry, rather than the order to be revoked today. She referred the panel to the previous panel's decision at paragraph 219:

"The panel considered that a period of 18 months of suspension of Ms Ahmed's registration would be the minimum necessary period of suspension in this case. This period will protect the public and give Ms Ahmed the opportunity to develop herself and demonstrate insight and remediation addressing the matters behind these regulatory proceedings."
13. Ms Hazlewood submitted that to revoke the order would have the risk of undermining the seriousness of the concerns which were highlighted by the previous panel.

Social worker submissions:

14. Ms Ahmed did not provide any submissions in the hearing.

Panel decision and reasons on current impairment:

15. In considering the question of current impairment, the panel undertook a comprehensive review of the final order in light of the current circumstances. It took into account the decision of the previous panel. However, it has exercised its own judgement in relation to the question of current impairment. The panel also took into account Social Work England's 'Impairment and sanctions guidance'.
16. The panel had regard to all of the documentation before it, including the decision and reasons of the original panel, the professional references provided on behalf of Ms

Ahmed, Ms Ahmed's reflective pieces and medical evidence. The panel also took account of the submissions made by Ms Hazlewood on behalf of Social Work England.

17. The panel heard and accepted the advice of the legal adviser. In reaching its decision, the panel was mindful of the need to protect the public and the wider public interest in declaring and upholding proper standards of behaviour and maintain public confidence in the profession.
18. The panel first considered whether Ms Ahmed fitness to practise remains impaired.
19. The panel noted that the original panel had found that the allegations were not easily remediable. The original panel found that Ms Ahmed had developing insight but that insight was at an early stage and incomplete. The panel considered how developed Ms Ahmed's insight was at this stage, by reference to the evidence they have available including Ms Ahmed's reflective pieces and the testimonials. The panel agreed with the previous panel that the allegations, which were found proven are not easily remediable.
20. The panel considered that Ms Ahmed had shown demonstrable insight in connection with the dishonesty elements of the allegations but Ms Ahmed's insight was still developing in connection with the conviction for a serious criminal offence. The panel determined that the dishonesty element of the misconduct, which Ms Ahmed had shown insight was resultant from the criminal conviction and the two were interlinked. The panel took into account the previous panel's findings of Ms Ahmed *"She has struggled before the panel to accept the full extent of the factual findings against her from the criminal court. When explaining the conviction she still considers herself as being in the wrong place at the wrong time. Ms Ahmed has expressed that she takes responsibility but she has repeatedly sought to minimise her role"*.
21. Given the interrelationship between the criminal conviction and the dishonesty elements of the allegations, the panel determined that full insight would be required in connection with the criminal conviction to find that Ms Ahmed is no longer impaired. In the absence of insight in relation to her criminal conviction and in consideration of the conduct in question being difficult to remediate, the panel determined that Ms Ahmed remains impaired on a personal grounds.
22. In connection with public impairment, the panel determined that the concerns remain very serious, and in the absence of full insight are not fully remediated as the concerns are attitudinal in nature. Therefore, the panel determined that removing the order or allowing it to lapse upon expiry would undermine public confidence in the social work profession at this stage and public impairment is also engaged.

Decision and reasons:

23. Having found Ms Ahmed's fitness to practise is currently impaired, the panel then considered what, if any, sanction it should impose in this case. The panel had regard to

the submissions made along with all the information and accepted the advice of the legal adviser.

24. The panel considered the submissions made by Ms Hazlewood on behalf of Social Work England, during which they invited the panel to consider allowing the order to lapse upon expiry. However, this was predicated on finding Ms Ahmed no longer impaired. The panel also took into account the 'Impairment and sanctions guidance' published by Social Work England.
25. The panel was mindful that the purpose of any sanction is not to punish Ms Ahmed, but to protect the public and the wider public interest. The public interest includes maintaining public confidence in the profession and Social Work England as its regulator and by upholding proper standards of conduct and behaviour. The panel applied the principle of proportionality by weighing Ms Ahmed's interests with the public interest.

Extend the current suspension order for a further 6 months with effect from the expiry of the current order:

26. The panel considered that it would not be appropriate to revoke the order or allow the order to lapse upon expiry as they had made a finding of continued impairment. The panel also considered that replacing this order with a conditions of practise order would also not be appropriate as the concerns were attitudinal in nature, and did not concern Ms Ahmed's professional practice.
27. The panel determined that the most appropriate and proportionate order in this case would be to extend the current suspension order for a further period of 6 months with effect from the expiry of the current order. The panel were mindful that Ms Ahmed had made positive progress since the final hearing but that a further period of 6 months from expiry of the current order would permit her to develop full insight into her criminal conviction.
28. A future panel may benefit from a further reflective piece from Ms Ahmed.
29. A suspension order would prevent Ms Ahmed from practising during the suspension period, which would therefore protect the public and the wider public interest.

Right of appeal:

30. 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.

31. 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.

32. 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.

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

Review of final orders:

34. 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).

35. 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

36. 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>