

Case Examiner Decision
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FTPS-25183

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The role of the case examiners

The case examiners perform a filtering function in the fitness to practise process, and their primary role is to determine whether the case ought to be considered by adjudicators at a formal hearing. The wider purpose of the fitness to practise process is not to discipline the social worker for past conduct, but rather to consider whether the social worker's current fitness to practise might be impaired because of the issues highlighted. In reaching their decisions, case examiners are mindful that Social Work England's primary objective is to protect the public.

Case examiners apply the 'realistic prospect' test. As part of their role, the case examiners will consider whether there is a realistic prospect:

- the facts alleged could be found proven by adjudicators
- adjudicators could find that one of the statutory grounds for impairment is engaged
- adjudicators could find the social worker's fitness to practise is currently impaired

If the case examiners find a realistic prospect of impairment, they consider whether there is a public interest in referring the case to a hearing. If there is no public interest in a hearing, the case examiners can propose an outcome to the social worker. We call this accepted disposal and a case can only be resolved in this way if the social worker agrees with the case examiners' proposal.

Case examiners review cases on the papers only. The case examiners are limited, in that, they are unable to hear and test live evidence, and therefore they are unable to make findings of fact.

Decision summary

Decision summary	
Preliminary outcome	22 July 2026
	Accepted disposal proposed - conditions of practice order (18 months)
Final outcome	4 August 2026
	Accepted disposal - conditions of practice order (18 months)

Executive summary

The case examiners have reached the following conclusions:

1. There is a realistic prospect of regulatory concerns 1 and 2 being found proven by the adjudicators.
2. There is a realistic prospect of regulatory concerns 1 and 2 being found to amount to the statutory ground of misconduct.
3. For regulatory concerns 1 and 2, there is a realistic prospect of adjudicators determining that the social worker's fitness to practise is currently impaired.

The case examiners did not consider it to be in the public interest for the matter to be referred to a final hearing and that the case could be concluded by way of accepted disposal.

As such, the case examiners requested that the social worker be notified of their intention to resolve the case with a conditions of practice order of 18 months.

The social worker agreed to this proposal and the case examiners have concluded the case by way of accepted disposal.

The case examiners have considered all of the documents made available within the evidence bundle. Key evidence is referred to throughout their decision and the case examiners' full reasoning is set out below.

Anonymity and redaction

Elements of this decision have been marked for redaction in line with our Fitness to Practise Publications Policy. Text in [REDACTED] will be redacted only from the published copy of the decision, and will therefore be shared with the complainant in their copy. Text in [REDACTED] will be redacted from both the complainant's and the published copy of the decision.

In accordance with Social Work England's fitness to practise proceedings and registration appeals publications policy, the case examiners have anonymised the names of individuals to maintain privacy. A schedule of anonymity is provided below for the social worker and complainant, and will be redacted if this decision is published.

Person A	[REDACTED]
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The complaint and our regulatory concerns

The initial complaint

The complainant	The complaint was raised by the social worker's former employer.
Date the complaint was received	03 November 2025
Complaint summary	It is alleged that the social worker: • Accessed a service user's record with no professional reason to do so • Blurred professional boundaries with a service user

Regulatory concerns

Regulatory concerns are clearly identified issues that are a concern to the regulator. The regulatory concerns for this case, as amended by the case examiners, are as follows:

Between April and July 2025 and whilst registered as a social worker:

Regulatory Concern 1

You accessed the record of a service user without a legitimate or professional reason to do so.

Regulatory Concern 2

You blurred professional boundaries with a service user by engaging in personal and inappropriate interactions.

Grounds of impairment:

The matters outlined in the regulatory concerns amount to the statutory ground of misconduct.

Your fitness to practise is impaired by reason of misconduct.

Preliminary issues

Investigation		
Are the case examiners satisfied that the social worker has been notified of the grounds for investigation?	Yes	☒
	No	☐
Are the case examiners satisfied that the social worker has had reasonable opportunity to make written representations to the investigators?	Yes	☒
	No	☐
Are the case examiners satisfied that they have all relevant evidence available to them, or that adequate attempts have been made to obtain evidence that is not available?	Yes	☒
	No	☐
Are the case examiners satisfied that it was not proportionate or necessary to offer the complainant the opportunity to provide final written representations; or that they were provided a reasonable opportunity to do so where required.	Yes	☒
	No	☐

Any other preliminary issues that have arisen
The case examiners have made the following amendment to the regulatory concern, in bold: Between April and July 2025 on or around 15 April 2025 and 16 June 2025 and whilst registered as a social worker: Whilst concerns were raised about the social worker to their employer on 15 April 2025, the case examiners have made this amendment to better capture the timeframe of evidence presented to them. The case examiners are satisfied that the amendment they have made is minor, and that the social worker has responded to concerns throughout this time period so there is no detriment to them in amending the regulatory concern. The case examiners therefore considered it to be unnecessary and disproportionate to adjourn and delay consideration of the case further.

The realistic prospect test

Fitness to practise history

The case examiners have been informed that there is no previous fitness to practise history.

Decision summary

Is there a realistic prospect of the adjudicators finding the social worker's fitness to practise is impaired?

Yes

☒

No

☐

The case examiners have determined that there is a realistic prospect of regulatory concerns 1 and 2 being found proven, that those concerns could amount to the statutory ground of misconduct, and that the social worker's fitness to practise could be found impaired.

Reasoning

Facts

Between April and July 2025 and whilst registered as a social worker:

Regulatory Concern 1 - You accessed the record of a service user without a legitimate or professional reason to do so.

The social worker's employer reported that on 3 June 2025, the social worker accessed a service user's record after receiving a message from a colleague telling them to look at the record.

The case examiners have been provided with a screenshot of a WhatsApp conversation, although note this is undated. At 12:52, the social worker's colleague directs a message to the social worker, stating "I don't want to have to tell you this but have a look at notes for [service user] ... police and forensics were there Sunday morning".

The local authority have provided an access audit for the service user's record which shows that the social worker viewed the record on 3 June 2025 at 12:59.

The case examiners are therefore satisfied that the evidence indicates that the social worker did access the service user's record.

The case examiners next considered whether the social worker had a legitimate or professional reason to do so.

The case examiners note that the service user was not allocated to the social worker and had not previously been on their caseload.

The local authority have provided a screenshot of their 'acceptable use agreement' which they state is shown to staff each time they log in. Within this it states:

“By logging into LAS you agree to follow the Acceptable Use Agreement.

You will only access records as part of your current workload and where there is a legitimate business need to carry out the duties of your job.”

It also states that access should not be used to check an old case to see how things are progressing if you are not the current case worker.

The case examiners therefore consider that the social worker should have been aware of record access restrictions and as they were not involved with the service user, should not have accessed the record.

In an interview with their employer, the social worker is recorded as stating that accessing records for “learning purposes” was common practice and therefore they did not perceive their actions as a breach of data protection rules.

The social worker, within their submissions to the regulator, accepts that they accessed the service user's record. They however state that the access was because of their involvement in team and case discussions regarding the service user over the years.

Whilst the case examiners appreciate that the social worker was prompted to look at the service user's record by a colleague, they consider that the social worker had no legitimate or professional reason to do so.

The case examiners are satisfied there is a realistic prospect of this concern being found proven by adjudicators.

Regulatory Concern 2 - You blurred professional boundaries with a service user by engaging in personal and inappropriate interactions.

This concern relates to the social worker's involvement with Person A, an adult service user who was allocated to the social worker.

On 14 April 2025 the local authority received an email from the area manager of the service user's supported living accommodation stating that they had safeguarding concerns. It was reported that the social worker had been visiting Person A "three or four times per week" and picking up medication for them. The area manager stated, "This just feels like a very unhealthy, unprofessional relationship."

It is reported by the local authority that whilst allocated to the service user's case, the social worker administered medication to them. It is suggested that the social worker collected the medication, stored it at their home address, and arranged to see the service user twice a day to administer it, either in a public place or at the service user's home address.

As social workers are not trained to administer medication, the case examiners consider that if proven, this would constitute a blurring of professional boundaries.

On 17 April 2025, following the safeguarding concern being raised, the social worker was taken off the service user's case and instructed not to make any further contact with the service user.

It was however reported to the local authority by Person A's doctor, that on 6 June 2025, the social worker attended a hospital appointment with the service user and was seen holding hands with them. The hospital informed the local authority that they were going to raise a safeguarding concern regarding the inappropriate relationship between Person A and the social worker.

The social worker was interviewed by their employer on 17 July 2025 whereby they provided admissions regarding their interactions with Person A and their rationale for maintaining contact. The social worker accepted that they had visited Person A on their days off, taken them shopping, and attended medical appointments. They explained these actions were intended to support Person A's wellbeing due to their mental health, cognitive difficulties, and lack of alternative support.

The social worker acknowledged collecting, storing, and administering Person A's medication at their home and arranging to meet them twice daily for administration.

The social worker does not however accept holding hands with Person A.

While acknowledging some awareness of professional boundaries, they emphasised that their primary concern was Person A's immediate safety and welfare.

It is understood that whilst the disciplinary investigation was ongoing, the social worker continued to visit the service user at their home and out in the community,

despite being instructed by management to cease contact. The social worker told their employer that they were unwilling to end their contact as they were aware that Person A had no other sources of support. They explained that stopping contact abruptly would have negatively affected Person A's wellbeing and expressed a sense of moral obligation to maintain support. This resulted in the social worker handing in their notice during the disciplinary investigation.

It is reported that following the social worker handing in their resignation they are believed to have maintained contact with the service user in a personal capacity.

The case examiners note that the social worker's employer and other professionals considered the social worker's actions to be inappropriate and to blur boundaries. They also note that despite receiving instructions from their manager to have no further contact with Person A, they continued to do so.

Having reviewed the evidence, the case examiners consider that the social worker's actions do appear to have gone beyond the remit of their role as a social worker. They therefore consider that the social worker may have blurred professional boundaries, as they seem to have engaged in personal and inappropriate interactions with Person A.

The case examiners are satisfied there is a realistic prospect of this concern being found proven by adjudicators.

Grounds

The case examiners are aware that there is no legal definition of misconduct, but it generally would consist of serious acts or omissions, which suggest a significant departure from what would be expected of the social worker in the circumstances. This can include conduct that takes place in the exercise of professional practice, and also conduct which occurs outside the exercise of professional practice, but calls into question the suitability of the person to work as a social worker.

To help them decide if the evidence suggests a significant departure from what would be expected in the circumstances, the case examiners have considered the following standards, which were applicable at the time of the concerns.

As a social worker, I will:

1.7 Recognise and use responsibly, the power and authority I have when working with people, ensuring that my interventions are always necessary, the least intrusive, proportionate, and in people's best interests.

2.2 Respect and maintain people's dignity and privacy.

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

3.1 Work within legal and ethical frameworks, using my professional authority and judgement appropriately.

As a social worker, I will not:

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.

Regulatory concern 1

Social workers in their roles have access to a large amount of confidential information about people. Members of the public therefore need to be confident that when social workers access records, they do so for legitimate reasons only. The case examiners recognise that the social worker may have been curious about the service user but are minded that social workers are entrusted with access to highly sensitive information about people and any non-legitimate access to this information would be considered a breach of public trust.

The case examiners recognise that the social worker doesn't appear to have accessed the record with any malicious intent.

Nonetheless, given the importance of handling case records appropriately, the case examiners consider that if the matter were to be found proven by adjudicators, the social workers actions would be considered a significant departure from the professional standards.

Accordingly, the case examiners are satisfied there is a realistic prospect of adjudicators determining that regulatory concern 1 amounts to the statutory ground of misconduct.

Regulatory concern 2

The professional standards guidance is clear about the importance of professional boundaries, setting out that "Social workers should maintain clear and professional relationships with people. As social work is fundamentally about people and relationships, it is important that social workers are alert to relationships becoming inappropriate.

With the authority, knowledge and influence a social worker has in the professional relationship, there is almost always an imbalance of power. This is important to acknowledge alongside personal values, views and motivations to ensure that they do not influence the relationship".

The case examiners acknowledge that social workers may feel a strong sense of responsibility towards those they are supporting. In this case, the case examiners are aware that the social worker's support seemed to be helping Person A. Nevertheless, it is imperative that social workers maintain professional boundaries as this is essential to prevent misunderstandings, protect service users and ensure clear expectations around future involvement.

The case examiners have given consideration to harm caused, or risk of harm, relating to the alleged behaviour of the social worker. It is noted that Person A was considered vulnerable due to their health concerns and the social worker was aware of this. It is acknowledged that the social worker was clearly concerned for Person A, who appeared to have no friends or family willing or able to support or advocate for them. However, the case examiners consider that their actions could have easily caused confusion about the role of a social worker for Person A. This may lead to Person A becoming dependent upon the social worker or expecting that other professionals should also provide such high levels of support and intervention.

The case examiners consider that some of the social worker's alleged actions were not within the remit of their professional role. By giving Person A medication, going with them to hospital appointments, and continuing to visit them after being told not to by their employer, the case examiners are of the view that the social worker may not have acted appropriately. This conduct would have the potential to blur professional boundaries and constitute a significant departure from the professional standards.

Accordingly, the case examiners are satisfied there is a realistic prospect of adjudicators determining that regulatory concern 2 amounts to the statutory ground of misconduct.

Impairment

Assessment of impairment consists of two elements:

1. The personal element, established via an assessment of the risk of repetition.
2. The public element, established through consideration of whether a finding of impairment might be required to maintain public confidence in the social work profession, or in the maintenance of proper standards for social workers.

Personal element

With regards to the concerns before the regulator, the case examiners have given thought to their guidance, and they note that they should give consideration to whether the matters before the regulator are easily remediable, and whether the

social worker has demonstrated insight and/or conducted remediation to the effect that the risk of repetition is highly unlikely.

Whether the conduct can be easily remedied

The case examiners are of the view that the social worker's conduct is capable of remediation through the social worker demonstrating full insight into the seriousness of the concerns raised, attending training, and engaging in positive reflection. The social worker could demonstrate that they understood why concerns had arisen, and that they are capable of acting in accordance with the required professional standards in future.

Insight

In respect of insight, the case examiners are aware that they must take care to assess the quality of any insight. A social worker may accept they have acted wrongly. However, simply asserting this is unlikely to be enough to demonstrate genuine insight.

Regulatory concern 1

The case examiners acknowledge that the social worker has provided reflections which indicate developing insight into the concern. The social worker states:

“Despite my reasons for checking [service users] record and the belief that I would always treat a service user's information with sensitivity – [employer] made it clear to me that this is still a data protection breach and I accept that. Had I continued in social work I would have been much, much more cautious about everything that I accessed on LAS.”

The case examiners consider that although the social worker appears to acknowledge the concern raised, they have not evidenced a full understanding of the impact of accessing records without a legitimate professional reason.

Regulatory concern 2

The social worker stated their actions were motivated by concern for Person A, citing systemic failures and lack of support for the service user. The case examiners note that the social worker left their job as a social worker as they stated they were unwilling to end contact with Person A.

The case examiners however acknowledge that the social worker has provided reflections which indicate developing insight. The social worker acknowledged that they could not refer Person A for formal support without a completed Care Act

assessment and that they were struggling to find time to write up their assessment, due to workload pressures and personal circumstances. They have reflected that had they written up the assessment, they may have been able to request support workers to assist Person A with their medication.

The social worker states “This was a complete one-off situation” and “I can obviously understand why there would be concerns regarding this and I recognise that boundaries are in place for good reason to protect vulnerable individuals”. The social worker, within their submissions, appears to have grappled with the conflict between their desire to help someone who is isolated and maintaining the professional standards expected. They have concluded that whilst they have never before made friends with a service user, for Person A, it felt like the ethical thing to do; “I still believe that to provide support to someone in this exact circumstance is more important than following the rules – and if that means I can’t be a social worker anymore- then so be it.”

The social worker also acknowledges that they were not trained to give Person A medication, and this went beyond the remit of their role.

The case examiners note that in an interview with their employer, the social worker is reported to have confirmed that if they returned to social work, it may be that they would be better suited to less complex work and they recognised that they would need to be supported and monitored to do this.

The case examiners are also aware of the difficult personal circumstances in the social worker’s personal life at the time. Whilst these circumstances may provide context as to the social worker’s actions, it cannot excuse such conduct.

Whilst the case examiners do consider that the social worker appears to be developing insight into how the concerns arose in this case, they consider that the social worker could have demonstrated further insight into the impact that their alleged actions may have had on Person A, particularly in relation to their perception of how professionals should behave. The only thing the social worker appears to have suggested that they could have done differently is complete a Care Act Assessment. The case examiners have also not seen evidence that the social worker has considered the impact of their conduct on the perception of the profession.

The case examiners consider the social worker has demonstrated developing insight, rather than a full appreciation of the potential far-reaching impact of their conduct.

Remediation

Turning their minds to remediation, the case examiners are aware that this is best shown by objective evidence. For example, by the successful completion of education or training courses (and information from the social worker to explain what they have learned from these), satisfactory performance appraisals, or other positive feedback in relation to their professional practice.

Training

The social worker has not provided any evidence of completion of any relevant education or training courses.

The case examiners consider that the social worker could have undertaken training on record access/GDPR and professional boundaries and provided written reflections on their learning.

Employment reports and testimonials

The case examiners have not had sight of any employment reports or testimonials.

They do however note that the social worker has not worked in a social work role since the time that concerns were raised.

Risk of repetition

The purpose of case examiners assessing multiple factors when considering the personal element of impairment, is to assess the risk of repetition, put simply the likelihood of the conduct happening again.

Whilst the social worker has shown some insight, without significant evidence of remediation, the case examiners are satisfied that a risk of repetition remains.

Public element

The case examiners have next considered whether the social worker's actions have the potential to undermine public confidence in the social work profession, or the maintenance of proper standards for social workers.

Whilst the public may have some understanding regarding the social worker's motivation to support Person A, regulatory concerns regarding blurring of professional boundaries and inappropriate record access go to the heart of public confidence in the social work profession. These concerns have the potential to undermine the public's trust in social workers.

As such, if the matters are found proven, it is likely the public would expect that a finding of current impairment is made by adjudicators to maintain public confidence in both the social work profession, and in the regulator's maintenance of proper standards for social workers.

Accordingly, the case examiners are satisfied that there is a realistic prospect of adjudicators making a finding of current impairment.

The public interest

Decision summary

Is there a public interest in referring the case to a hearing?	Yes	☐
	No	☒

Referral criteria

Is there a conflict in the evidence that must be resolved at a hearing?	Yes	☐
	No	☒
Does the social worker dispute any or all of the key facts of the case?	Yes	☐
	No	☒
Is a hearing necessary to maintain public confidence in the profession, and/or to uphold the professional standards of social workers?	Yes	☐
	No	☒

Additional reasoning

The case examiners have not found a public interest in referring the case to a hearing.

The case examiners have noted that the social worker has not indicated to the regulator whether they consider their fitness to practise to be currently impaired. Where a social worker does not accept impairment, case examiner guidance suggests that a referral to a hearing may be necessary in the public interest.

However, the case examiners note that the guidance states the social worker must accept the matter of impairment at the point of concluding the case and are of the view that this does not prevent them offering accepted disposal prior to this.

The case examiners consider that it is reasonable to offer accepted disposal in this case because:

- There is no conflict in the evidence.
- The social worker does not dispute the key facts of the case.

- The accepted disposal process will provide the social worker an opportunity to review the case examiners reasoning on impairment and reflect on whether they are able to accept a finding of impairment. It is open to the social worker to reject any accepted disposal proposal and request a hearing if they wish to explore the question of impairment in more detail.
- The case examiners are also of the view that the public would be satisfied to see the regulator take prompt action in this case, with the publication of an accepted disposal decision providing a steer to the public and the profession on the importance of adhering to the professional standards expected of social workers in England.

The case examiners will therefore seek to resolve this matter through the accepted disposal process.

Accepted disposal

Case outcome

Proposed outcome	No further action	☐
	Advice	☐
	Warning order	☐
	Conditions of practice order	☒
	Suspension order	☐
	Removal order	☐
Proposed duration	18 months	

Reasoning

In considering the appropriate outcome in this case, the case examiners had regard to Social Work England's sanctions guidance and reminded themselves that the purpose of a sanction is not to punish the social worker but to protect the public and the wider public interest. Furthermore, the guidance requires that decision makers select the least severe sanction necessary to protect the public and the wider public interest.

In considering sanctions, the case examiners have considered the following mitigating and aggravating factors:

Mitigating

- There is no evidence to suggest Person A has come to any harm as a result of the social worker's alleged conduct and conversely, the social worker's support seems to have helped Person A.
- The social worker appears to have been experiencing personal challenges at the time the concerns arose.
- The social worker's developing insight.

Aggravating

- The social worker's disregard for management instructions.

- The social worker's continued relationship with Person A.
- The social worker's lack of understanding of the potential impact a lack of professional boundaries could have on Person A.
- Lack of remediation

In determining the most appropriate and proportionate outcome in this case, the case examiners considered the available sanctions in ascending order of seriousness.

No further action, advice, and warning order

The case examiners have already determined there is a realistic prospect that the social worker's fitness to practise would be found impaired. The sanctions guidance advises that if the personal element of impairment is found, "a sanction restricting or removing a social worker's registration will normally be necessary to protect the public". The case examiners are therefore led to consider sanctions which restrict the social worker's practice. They note that the guidance suggests it may therefore "be reasonable to move beyond the lower sanctions (no action, advice or a warning) on this basis alone". The case examiners have already determined that they do not consider that the social worker has demonstrated sufficient insight or remediation and that a risk of repetition remains. Therefore, the sanctions of no further action, advice or a warning are considered inappropriate on the basis that these outcomes will not restrict practice and therefore not sufficiently protect the public.

The case examiners therefore next considered restrictive sanctions.

Conditions of practice order

The primary purpose of a conditions of practice order is to protect the public whilst the social worker takes any necessary steps to remediate their fitness to practise.

The case examiners have consulted their guidance, which states conditions of practice may be appropriate in cases where (all the following):

- The social worker has demonstrated insight.
- The failure or deficiency in practice is capable of being remedied.
- Appropriate, proportionate, and workable conditions can be put in place.
- Decision makers are confident the social worker can and will comply with the conditions.

- The social worker does not pose a risk of harm to the public by being in restricted practice.

The case examiners are of the view that the above considerations apply in this case. Whilst they are mindful that the social worker did not follow their manager's instructions, and therefore this may raise concerns regarding whether the social worker can and will comply with the conditions, the case examiners are aware that an early review of the order is available if the social worker accepts but does not comply with a conditions of practice order.

Furthermore, the case examiners have been informed by the social worker's previous employer that the social worker recognised if they were to resume practice, they would need to be supported and monitored; something the case examiners think can be achieved with a conditions of practice order.

The case examiners consider there are workable conditions that could be put in place which would enable the social worker to practise without risk of harm to the public.

A conditions of practice order would offer the social worker an opportunity to develop further insight, and demonstrate remediation, whilst under the supervision of a reporter and workplace supervisor, should they resume social work employment.

As part of the condition requirements, the social worker's reporter and workplace supervisor would be required to be made aware of the regulatory concerns in this case and therefore they would be alert to any issues regarding professional boundaries or inappropriate record access.

The case examiners have therefore decided that a conditions of practice order is necessary, proportionate and would protect the public.

Suspension order

The case examiners have established that for the reasons outlined above, it is possible for them to offer a conditions of practice order. To test their reasoning, they next considered a suspension order.

The case examiners have considered carefully whether the social worker's ongoing friendship with Person A suggests that they cannot return to practice at this time. They acknowledge that it could be argued that the lack of professional boundaries is incompatible with continued registration as a social worker. However, they have concluded that this is not the case due to the evidence which suggests that the social worker's intervention in Person A's life has been very positive for Person A. There is no evidence to suggest any exploitation or abuse of Person A, and while the

case examiners consider the social worker could have done more to facilitate formal support in Person A's life, to ensure continuity if the social worker is unavailable, there is no evidence to suggest that the social worker has sought to make Person A dependent upon them.

Based on the above considerations, the case examiners are of the view that suspension from the register would be a punitive outcome in this case, where it is considered that risk to the public could be managed by appropriate and workable conditions of practice. Furthermore, a suspension order would risk deskilling the social worker.

Length of the conditions of practice order

As the case examiners have determined that a conditions of practice order is the appropriate sanction in this case, they next considered the length of the order.

The case examiners are aware from the sanctions guidance that conditions of practice orders can be imposed for up to three years.

As the social worker is not currently in practice, the case examiners consider that a one-year order would not allow the social worker sufficient time to complete the required remediation. Instead, a period of 18 months would allow the social worker to gain further insight, demonstrate remediation, and return to practice. The case examiners consider that a three-year conditions of practice order would be excessive as this might place an undue burden on the employer in terms of resource and monitoring, where this might not be required.

Conclusion

The case examiners have decided to propose to the social worker a conditions of practice order of 18 months duration. They will now notify the social worker of their intention and seek the social worker's agreement to dispose of the matter accordingly. The social worker will be offered 28 days to respond. If the social worker does not agree, or if the case examiners revise their decision regarding the public interest in this case, the matter will proceed to a final hearing.

Conditions of practice

Conditions 1-16 (inclusive) should be in place for an 18 month period. In accordance with paragraph 15 of Schedule 2 of The Social Workers Regulations 2018, the regulator must review the conditions of practice order before its expiry. The social

worker and/or Social Work England can seek early review if new evidence becomes available to suggest the current order needs to be varied, replaced or removed.

1. You must notify Social Work England at any time you are employed in a role, or providing social work services, which require you to be registered with Social Work England and provide the contact details of your employer, agency or any organisation with which you have a contract or arrangement to provide social work services, whether paid or voluntary.
2. You must allow Social Work England to exchange information with your employer, agency or any organisation with which you have a contract or arrangement to provide social work or social work educational services, and any reporter or workplace supervisor referred to in these conditions.
3.
 - a. At any time you are employed in a role, or providing social work services, which require you to be registered with Social Work England, you must agree to the appointment of a reporter nominated by you and approved by Social Work England. The reporter must be on Social Work England's register (and can be the same person as the workplace supervisor).
 - b. You must not start or continue to work until these arrangements have been approved by Social Work England.
4. You must provide reports from your reporter to Social Work England every 3 months and at least 14 days prior to any review and Social Work England will make these reports available to any workplace supervisor referred to in these conditions on request.
5. You must inform Social Work England within 7 days of receiving notice of any formal disciplinary proceedings taken against you from the date these conditions take effect.
6. You must inform Social Work England within 7 days of receiving notice of any investigations or complaints made against you from the date these conditions take effect.
7. You must inform Social Work England if you apply for social work employment / self-employment (paid or voluntary) outside England within 7 days of the date of application.
8. You must inform Social Work England if you are registered or subsequently apply for registration with any other UK regulator, overseas regulator or relevant authority within 7 days of the date of application [for future

registration] or 7 days from the date these conditions take effect [for existing registration].

9. a. At any time you are employed, or providing social work services, which require you to be registered with Social Work England; you must place yourself and remain under the close supervision of a workplace supervisor nominated by you, and approved by Social Work England. The workplace supervisor must be on Social Work England's register (and can be the same person as the reporter).

b. You must not start or continue to work until these arrangements have been approved by Social Work England.
10. You must provide reports from your workplace supervisor to Social Work England every 3 months and at least 14 days prior to any review, and Social Work England will make these reports available to any reporter referred to in these conditions on request.
11. You must keep your professional commitments under review and limit your social work practice in accordance with your workplace supervisor's advice.
12. You must only work as a social worker at an establishment where at least 2 other social workers are employed at any one time and are working daily.
13. a. You must undertake a piece of continuing professional development (CPD) in relation to GDPR/record access.

b. You must provide evidence of CPD undertaken to Social Work England within 6 months of these conditions taking effect.
14. a. You must undertake a piece of continuing professional development (CPD) in relation to professional boundaries.

b. You must provide evidence of CPD undertaken to Social Work England within 6 months of these conditions taking effect.
15. You must read Social Work England's 'Professional Standards' (July 2019), and provide a written reflection to Social Work England 9 months after these conditions take effect, focusing on how your conduct, for matters relating to this case, was below the accepted standard of a social worker, outlining what you should have done differently. Your written reflection should include reflections on:

- Inappropriate record access and the impact of this on both service users and the public's trust in the profession
- Blurring of professional boundaries and in particular:
 - The potential impact of your involvement with Person A
 - How you can prevent Person A's over reliance upon you
- Your learning from the CPD activity undertaken in Conditions 13 and 14.

16. You must provide a written copy of your conditions, within 7 days from the date these conditions take effect, to the following parties confirming that your registration is subject to the conditions listed at (1) to (15), above:

- Any organisation or person employing or contracting with you to undertake social work services whether paid or voluntary.
- Any locum, agency or out-of-hours service you are registered with or apply to be registered with in order to secure employment or contracts to undertake social work services whether paid or voluntary (at the time of application).
- Any prospective employer who would be employing or contracting with you to undertake social work services whether paid or voluntary (at the time of application).
- Any organisation, agency or employer where you are using your social work qualification/knowledge/skills in a non-qualified social work role, whether paid or voluntary (at time of application).

You must forward written evidence of your compliance with this condition to Social Work England within 14 days from the date these conditions take effect.

Response from the social worker

The social worker provided a response on 31 July 2026 confirming the following:

"I have read the case examiners' decision and the accepted disposal guide. I admit the key facts set out in the case examiner decision, and that my fitness to practise is

impaired. I understand the terms of the proposed disposal of my fitness to practise case and accept them in full.”

Case examiners’ response and final decision

In light of the social worker’s acceptance of the conditions of practice order, the case examiners have considered again whether there would be a public interest in referring this matter to a public hearing. They remain of the view that this is unnecessary for the reasons set out earlier in the decision.

The case examiners have turned their minds as to whether a conditions of practice order remains the most appropriate means of disposal for this case. They have reviewed their decision, paying particular regard to the overarching objectives of Social Work England, i.e. protection of the public, the maintenance of public confidence in the social work profession, and the maintenance of proper standards. Having done so, they remain of the view that an accepted disposal by way of a conditions of practice order for 18 months is a fair and proportionate disposal and is the minimum necessary to protect the public and the wider public interest.