



Teaching
Regulation
Agency

Dr Maria Roopa (aka Thomas): Professional conduct panel outcome

Panel decision and reasons on behalf of the Secretary of State for Education

April 2018

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Professional conduct panel decision and recommendations, and decision on behalf of the Secretary of State

Teacher: Dr Maria Roopa (aka Thomas)

Teacher ref number: 3564220

Teacher date of birth: 21 May 1980

NCTL case reference: 16496

Date of determination: 6 April 2018

Former employer: Miltoncross Academy, Portsmouth

A. Introduction

A professional conduct panel (“the panel”) of the Teaching Regulation Agency (“the Agency”) convened on 5 – 6 April 2018 at 53 – 55 Butts Road, Earlsdon Park, Coventry CV1 3BH to consider the case of Dr Maria Roopa (aka Thomas).

The panel members were Dr Geoffrey Penzer (lay panellist – in the chair), Mr Peter Cooper (teacher panellist) and Dr Melvyn Kershaw (former teacher panellist).

The legal adviser to the panel was Mr Graham Miles of Blake Morgan LLP solicitors.

The presenting officer for the Agency was Ms Samantha Paxman of Browne Jacobson LLP solicitors.

Dr Roopa did not attend the hearing in person, but participated by video link from India.

Dr Roopa was represented by Mr Simon Pettet of NASUWT, who attended the hearing in person.

The hearing took place in public and was recorded.

B. Allegations

The panel considered the allegations set out in the Notice of Proceedings dated 5 February 2018.

It was alleged that Dr Maria Roopa (aka Thomas) was guilty of unacceptable professional conduct and/or conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute, in that prior to and during her appointment to a teaching post at Miltoncross Academy during the 2016/17 academic year, she:

1. failed to disclose that she had not completed her NQT Induction;
2. demonstrated a lack of professional integrity and/or were dishonest in that she:
 - a. deliberately sought to conceal that she had not attained NQT Induction Status;
 - b. suggested on one or more occasions that she had completed her NQT induction period at another school/college, when she knew or ought to know, that was untrue;
 - c. provided a reference from Cowes Enterprise College which she amended and/or knew was amended, without the knowledge and/or consent of Cowes Enterprise College.

Dr Roopa admitted the facts alleged in allegation 1, but did not admit the facts alleged in allegation 2(a), 2(b) or 2(c).

Dr Roopa did not admit unacceptable professional conduct or conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute.

C. Preliminary applications

Application to admit additional document

Ms Paxman made an application to admit the statement of Witness C as an additional document. Ms Paxman explained that the statement had been served on Dr Roopa in accordance with Rule 4.20, but due to an oversight had been omitted from the bundle. Mr Pettet confirmed that Dr Roopa had received a copy of the statement and he did not object to the statement being admitted. The panel agreed to admit the statement of Witness C, which was added to section 3 of the bundle as pages 85A and 85B.

D. Summary of evidence

Documents

In advance of the hearing, the panel received a bundle of documents which included:

Section 1: Chronology – pages 2 to 3

Section 2: Notice of Proceedings and Response – pages 4 to 19

Section 3: TRA witness statements – pages 20 to 102

Section 4: TRA documents – pages 103 to 196

Section 5: Teacher documents – pages 197 to 204

In addition, the panel agreed to accept the statement of Witness C as pages 85A and 85B.

The panel members confirmed that they had read all of the documents in advance of the hearing.

Witnesses

The panel heard oral evidence from the following witnesses called by the presenting officer:

- Witness A, Former Principal of Cowes Enterprise College
- Witness B, HR Manager of Miltoncross Academy

Dr Maria Roopa also gave evidence on her own behalf.

E. Decision and reasons

The panel announced its decision and reasons as follows:

The panel has carefully considered the case and reached a decision.

The panel confirms that it has read all the documents provided in the bundle in advance of the hearing.

Dr Maria Roopa attained Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) on 13 March 2014 through an assessment only route at Northumbria University, whilst teaching as an unqualified teacher at St Joseph's College, Croydon. Between 14 March 2014 and June 2014, Dr Roopa continued her employment at St Joseph's College after attaining QTS, but due to illness and personal circumstances, she resigned from her post in July 2014 and left the country to go to India. In September 2015, Dr Roopa returned to the UK to take up a post at Denefield School in Reading, where she worked until February 2016. Dr Roopa then moved to Cowes Enterprise College, Isle of Wight. After Dr Roopa had taken up this post, Cowes Enterprise College asked Dr Roopa to provide evidence that she had completed her period of induction. Enquiries were also made of St Joseph's College and it was established that Dr Roopa had not completed her induction there. Dr Roopa resigned from

the Cowes Enterprise College in October 2016 on the basis that she leaves with one month's notice and an agreed reference. An agreed reference was then provided to Dr Roopa and her union.

On 28 October 2016, Dr Roopa completed an application with Prospero Teaching Agency in which she stated that she had completed her NQT Induction and she was referred by the agency to Miltoncross Academy ('the Academy'). Following an interview in November 2016, the Academy decided to employ her for the role of Mathematics Teacher. Her employment at the Academy began on 1 January 2017. In April 2017, the HR Manager at the Academy noted, from accessing the NCTL's website, that the induction status of Dr Roopa was recorded as 'required to complete'. This was drawn to the attention of Dr Roopa by the HR Manager, who asked Dr Roopa to provide her with the name of the school at which she had completed her induction so that the HR Manager could contact the school and clarify the matter. At that stage, Dr Roopa did not provide the name of the school, but stated that she would contact the school herself. In a subsequent conversation with the HR Manager, Roopa stated that the school at which she had completed her induction was St Joseph's College. The HR Manager then made contact with St Joseph's College and was informed that Dr Roopa had not completed her induction there. Dr Roopa was suspended by the Academy on 11 May 2017, pending a disciplinary investigation. Dr Roopa resigned before a disciplinary hearing took place.

In addition to the issue concerning completion of her period of induction, it is alleged that Dr Roopa provided a reference to Connaught Resourcing (a teaching agency), which purported to have been written and signed by the Principal of Cowes Enterprise College.

Findings of fact

The panel's findings of fact are as follows:

It was alleged that you are guilty of unacceptable professional conduct and/or conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute, in that prior to and during your appointment to a teaching post at Miltoncross Academy during the 2016/17 academic year, you:

1. failed to disclose that you had not completed your NQT Induction;

Dr Roopa admits this allegation. Dr Roopa now accepts that she had not completed her NQT Induction, although she asserts that she previously believed that she had done so.

The panel has been provided with a statement from Individual D, the Head of Subject (Education and Lifelong Learning) in the faculty of Health and Life Sciences at Northumbria University. This statement confirms that Dr Roopa applied for the assessment only route at Northumbria University in September 2013 and that she commenced the programme in January 2014. Following her assessment, Dr Roopa was recommended for QTS in March 2014. The panel has also been provided with a copy of her QTS certificate issued by the Department for Education dated 13 March 2014. This confirmed that Dr Roopa had

attained qualified teacher status and that she had met '*the requirements for employment in maintained schools and non-maintained special schools in England, provided that a statutory induction period (usually three school terms) is completed satisfactorily*'. The statement from Individual D stated that all applicants to Northumbria University were made aware that they were required to complete an induction programme, regardless of what route was taken by them. All students were required to demonstrate the same level of competencies and have targets set for their induction year.

The panel is satisfied that Dr Roopa had not completed her period of induction and that, as Dr Roopa herself admits, she failed to disclose that she had not done so.

The panel finds allegation 1 proven.

2. demonstrated a lack of professional integrity and/or were dishonest in that she:

a. deliberately sought to conceal that she had not attained NQT Induction Status;

Dr Roopa acknowledges that she completed the application form for Prospero Teaching Agency stating that she had completed her NQT Induction when she had not done so. However, Dr Roopa states that she had no intention to deceive as she genuinely believed that she had completed her induction period at St Joseph's College in 2014, before travelling to India.

The panel has taken into consideration the fact that the first language of Dr Roopa is not English. However, the panel also noted that Dr Roopa had been working and studying in the UK and in USA for a number of years prior to attaining QTS. The panel also noted that Dr Roopa spoke fluently during the hearing and appeared to have good comprehension skills.

The panel has also recognised, given the numerous routes to becoming a fully qualified teacher in England, that there was potential for confusion about the induction requirements. The panel noted that the statement of Individual D referred to what students would be told about the need to complete a period of induction after attaining QTS. The panel also noted that the QTS certificate issued to Dr Roopa referred to an induction period of 'usually three school terms'. This ought to have alerted Dr Roopa to the fact that she still needed to complete a period of induction. The panel then considered the evidence relating to the employment of Dr Roopa at Cowes Enterprise College. The panel noted that, during this employment, an issue was raised about the capability of Dr Roopa and a capability meeting took place on 28 September 2016. Following that meeting, a letter was sent to Dr Roopa the same day, which referred to her career history and asked for details of where she had completed the three terms of her induction. In her oral evidence, Dr Roopa was not clear whether she had received this letter. However, the panel noted that Dr Roopa was in receipt of union support at this time and that it was later agreed that Dr Roopa would resign

from her employment with an agreed reference being provided. The panel is satisfied that, by the time that Dr Roopa completed her application to Prospero on 28 October 2016, she must have been aware that completion of her induction period was being questioned. Despite this, Dr Roopa answered 'yes' to the question on the application form which asked whether she had completed her NQT Induction.

The panel has also taken into consideration the evidence of Witness B, HR Manager at the Academy to the effect that, when she approached her to clarify her induction history, Dr Roopa did not provide clear answers, declining at first to provide details of the school where she claimed induction had taken place. The panel concluded that this was evasive conduct and was an indication that Dr Roopa was aware by that stage that she had not completed her three term NQT Induction. The panel was also not convinced by the assertion of Dr Roopa during her oral evidence that she thought she had completed her period of induction at St Joseph's college when she had only spent one term there after attaining QTS and this term had been significantly interrupted by absence due to illness and other personal circumstances.

The panel is satisfied that, by the time of her application to Prospero on 28 October 2016, Dr Roopa was aware that she had not completed her NQT Induction and that she deliberately sought to conceal this.

The panel finds allegation 2(a) proven.

- b. suggested on one or more occasions that you had completed your NQT induction period at another school/college, when you knew or ought to know, that was untrue;**

In making its findings in relation to allegation 2(a), the panel has referred to the evasive conduct of Dr Roopa when she was asked for clarification of completion of her induction period. On one or more occasions, when Witness B tried to speak to her, Dr Roopa continued to assert that she had completed her NQT Induction, when she knew that was not the case.

The panel finds allegation 2(b) proven.

- c. provided a reference from Cowes Enterprise College which you amended and/or knew was amended, without the knowledge and/or consent of Cowes Enterprise College.**

Dr Roopa admitted that she provided the reference in question to Connaught Resourcing. Dr Roopa stated in her evidence that she was provided with the reference by Cowes Enterprise College as a draft of an agreed reference. Dr Roopa acknowledges that she was subsequently provided with a different version of the reference by her union representative.

The panel was presented with the two versions of a reference for Dr Roopa, both dated 19 October 2016. Both versions were signed by or purported to have been signed by Witness A, Principal of Cowes Enterprise College. In his evidence, Witness A noted differences between the two versions, which made him confident that the version of the reference that had been provided by Dr Roopa to Connaught Resourcing was not one that had been agreed by Cowes Enterprise College or signed by him. This version of the reference stated that Dr Roopa had performed as an outstanding teacher. Witness A said that he would not have expressed this opinion and pointed to the fact that the reference had been prepared after a capability meeting had taken place. In addition, the reference mentioned Industrial Engineering Mathematics, mathematics enrichment programmes of Cambridge and the Royal Institution of Great Britain. Witness A stated that he was not aware of any of these matters. Witness A said that he had not signed this reference and he believed that his signature had been falsely applied to this document.

The panel found Witness A to be a credible witness. The panel is satisfied that the reference was not signed by Witness A. The panel is also satisfied, on the balance of probabilities, that the reference sent by Dr Roopa to Connaught Resourcing had never existed in a draft or proposed form. The panel has concluded that it is more likely than not that the amendments to the agreed reference were made by Dr Roopa (or made with her knowledge) and then presented by her as if it were a genuine reference.

The panel finds allegation 2(c) proven.

Having found the facts alleged in 2(a), 2(b) and 2(c) proven, the panel considered whether, based on the facts found proven, the conduct of Dr Roopa was dishonest and/or amounted to a lack of professional integrity.

In relation to dishonesty, the panel first considered the actual state of knowledge or belief of Dr Roopa as to the facts before considering whether her conduct was dishonest by the standards of ordinary decent people.

As to whether Dr Roopa demonstrated a lack of professional integrity, the panel had regard to the guidance of the Court of Appeal in **Wingate v SRA; SRA v Mallins [2018]**. The panel recognised that professional integrity connotes adherence to the standards of the profession and involves more than mere honesty. The panel considered whether, by her actions, Dr Roopa had failed to adhere to the ethical standards of the teaching profession. The panel recognised the need to avoid applying unreasonably high standards and that the professional integrity of a teacher should be linked to the manner in which the teaching profession serves the public.

The panel considered the facts found proven in allegations 2(a) and 2(b) together as the panel regarded them as closely linked. The panel has found that Dr Roopa deliberately sought to conceal that she had not attained NQT induction status and that she suggested that she had completed her NQT Induction at a time when she knew that this was not true.

In acting in this way, the panel is satisfied that the actions of Dr Roopa were dishonest by the standards of ordinary decent people.

As to professional integrity, there is a public expectation that teachers will be truthful about their professional qualifications and experience. In deliberately attempting to conceal that she had not completed her NQT Induction, Dr Roopa failed to uphold public trust and confidence or maintain the ethical standards expected of the teaching profession.

In relation to allegation 2(c), the panel has concluded that Dr Roopa was responsible for amending the reference concerned and then providing it to a teaching agency purporting that it was a genuine reference when she knew that it was not. The panel has no hesitation in concluding that her conduct was both dishonest and involved a demonstration of a lack of integrity.

In summary, therefore, the panel has found the facts proven in allegations 2(a), 2(b) and 2(c) and that, in each case, has determined that the conduct displayed a lack of professional integrity and dishonesty.

Findings as to unacceptable professional conduct and/or conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute

Having found the allegations to have been proven, the panel has gone on to consider whether the facts of these proven allegations amount to unacceptable professional conduct and/or conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute.

In doing so, the panel has had regard to the document Teacher Misconduct: The Prohibition of Teachers, which the panel refers to as “the Advice”.

The panel is satisfied that the conduct of Dr Roopa in relation to the facts found proven, involved breaches of the Teachers’ Standards. The panel considers that by reference to Part Two, Dr Roopa is in breach of the following standards:

- Teachers uphold public trust in the profession and maintain high standards of ethics and behaviour, within and outside school.
- Teachers must have proper and professional regard for the ethos, policies and practices of the school in which they teach...
- Teachers must have an understanding of, and always act within, the statutory frameworks which set out their professional duties and responsibilities.

The panel is satisfied that the conduct of Dr Roopa amounts to serious misconduct which fell significantly short of the standards expected of the profession.

The panel has also considered whether the conduct of Dr Roopa displayed behaviours associated with any of the offences listed on pages 8 and 9 of the Advice. The panel has found that the offence of serious dishonesty is relevant. The Advice indicates that where

behaviours associated with such an offence exist, a panel is likely to conclude that an individual's conduct would amount to unacceptable professional conduct.

Accordingly, the panel is satisfied that Dr Roopa is guilty of unacceptable professional conduct.

The panel has taken into account how the teaching profession is viewed by others and considered the influence that teachers may have on pupils, parents and others in the community. The panel has taken account of the uniquely influential role that teachers can hold in pupils' lives and that pupils must be able to view teachers as role models in the way they behave.

The panel therefore finds that the actions of Dr Roopa constitute conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute.

Panel's recommendation to the Secretary of State

Given the panel's findings in respect of unacceptable professional conduct and conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute, it is necessary for the panel to go on to consider whether it would be appropriate to recommend the imposition of a prohibition order by the Secretary of State.

In considering whether to recommend to the Secretary of State that a prohibition order should be made, the panel has to consider whether it is an appropriate and proportionate measure, and whether it is in the public interest to do so. Prohibition orders should not be given in order to be punitive, or to show that blame has been apportioned, although they are likely to have a punitive effect.

The panel has taken into account the particular public interest considerations set out in the Advice and, having done so, has found a number of them to be relevant in this case, namely the maintenance of public confidence in the profession and declaring and upholding proper standards of conduct.

In light of the panel's findings against Dr Roopa, which involved findings of dishonesty, the panel considers that public confidence in the profession could be seriously weakened if conduct such as that found against Dr Roopa was not treated with the utmost seriousness when regulating the conduct of the profession.

The panel considered that a strong public interest consideration in declaring proper standards of conduct in the profession was also present as the conduct found against Dr Roopa was outside that which could reasonably be tolerated.

Notwithstanding the clear public interest considerations that were present, the panel considered carefully whether or not it would be proportionate to impose a prohibition order taking into account the effect that this would have on Dr Roopa.

In carrying out the balancing exercise the panel has considered the public interest considerations both in favour of and against prohibition as well as the interests of Dr Roopa. The panel took further account of the Advice, which suggests that a prohibition order may be appropriate if certain behaviours of a teacher have been proven. In the list of such behaviours, those that are relevant in this case are:

- serious departure from the personal and professional conduct elements of the Teachers' Standards;
- dishonesty...;

Even though there were behaviours that would point to a prohibition order being appropriate, the panel went on to consider whether or not there were sufficient mitigating factors to militate against a prohibition order being an appropriate and proportionate measure to impose, particularly taking into account the nature and severity of the behaviour in this case.

The actions of Dr Roopa were deliberate and there was no evidence of her acting under duress. However, Dr Roopa has referred to some significant health issues and family demands that caused periods of absence and impacted on the progression of her teaching career. The panel has also taken into consideration the fact that Dr Roopa has a previously good record and is a well-qualified mathematics specialist. Dr Roopa expressed clear enthusiasm for her students and for teaching.

Notwithstanding these factors, the panel concluded that Dr Roopa did not fully recognise the seriousness of her conduct and has not displayed clear insight into the importance of providing accurate and reliable information.

The panel first considered whether it would be proportionate to conclude this case with no recommendation of prohibition, considering whether the publication of the findings made by the panel is sufficient.

The panel is of the view that applying the standard of the ordinary intelligent citizen recommending no prohibition order is not a proportionate and appropriate response. Recommending that publication of adverse findings is sufficient in the case would unacceptably compromise the public interest considerations present in this case, despite the severity of consequences for Dr Roopa of prohibition.

The panel is of the view that prohibition is both proportionate and appropriate. The panel has decided that the public interest considerations outweigh the interests of Dr Roopa. Her lack of insight was a significant factor in forming that opinion. Accordingly, the panel makes a recommendation to the Secretary of State that a prohibition order should be imposed with immediate effect.

The panel went on to consider whether or not it would be appropriate to recommend that a review period of the order should be considered. The panel was mindful that the Advice

states that a prohibition order applies for life, but there may be circumstances in any given case that may make it appropriate to allow a teacher to apply to have the prohibition order reviewed after a specified period of time that may not be less than 2 years.

The Advice indicates that there are behaviours that, if proven, would militate against a review period being recommended. One of these behaviours is serious dishonesty. In relation to allegations 2(a) and 2(b) the panel believes that the dishonesty did not meet the threshold of serious dishonesty. The panel took a more serious view in relation to the conduct in allegation 2(c). However, the panel has taken into account the fact that Dr Roopa withdrew the false reference and, in the event, gained no personal advantage. Furthermore, the panel concluded that, if Dr Roopa were able to demonstrate that she has gained a clear appreciation of the unacceptability of the conduct that the panel had found proven, she has the potential to become a valuable member of the teaching profession once she has properly completed her three-term induction.

The panel, therefore, felt the findings indicated a situation in which a review period would be appropriate and as such decided that it would be proportionate in all the circumstances for the prohibition order to be recommended with provision for a review after a period of 2 years.

Decision and reasons on behalf of the Secretary of State

I have given very careful consideration to this case and to the recommendation of the panel in respect of sanction and review period.

In considering this case, I have also given very careful attention to the Advice that is published by the Secretary of State concerning the prohibition of teachers.

In this case, the panel has found the allegations proven and found that those proven facts amount to unacceptable professional conduct and conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute. The panel has made a recommendation to the Secretary of State that Dr Roopa should be the subject of a prohibition order, with a review period of 2 years.

In particular, the panel has found that Dr Roopa is in breach of the following standards:

- Teachers uphold public trust in the profession and maintain high standards of ethics and behaviour, within and outside school.
- Teachers must have proper and professional regard for the ethos, policies and practices of the school in which they teach...
- Teachers must have an understanding of, and always act within, the statutory frameworks which set out their professional duties and responsibilities.

The panel finds that the conduct of Dr Roopa fell significantly short of the standards expected of the profession.

The findings of misconduct are particularly serious as they include a finding of dishonesty.

I have to determine whether the imposition of a prohibition order is proportionate and in the public interest. In considering that for this case, I have considered the overall aim of a prohibition order which is to protect pupils and to maintain public confidence in the profession. I have considered the extent to which a prohibition order in this case would achieve that aim taking into account the impact that it will have on the individual teacher. I have also asked myself whether or not a less intrusive measure, such as the published finding of unacceptable professional conduct and conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute, would itself be sufficient to achieve the overall aim. I have to consider whether the consequences of such a publication are themselves sufficient. I have considered therefore whether or not prohibiting Dr Roopa, and the impact that will have on her, is proportionate.

In this case, I have considered the extent to which a prohibition order would protect children. The panel has observed, "The panel has taken into account how the teaching profession is viewed by others and considered the influence that teachers may have on pupils, parents and others in the community. The panel has taken account of the uniquely influential role that teachers can hold in pupils' lives and that pupils must be able to view teachers as role models in the way they behave. The panel therefore finds that the actions of Dr Roopa constitute conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute." A prohibition order would therefore prevent such a risk from being present. I have also taken into account the panel's comments on insight and remorse which the panel sets out as follows, "the panel concluded that Dr Roopa did not fully recognise the seriousness of her conduct and has not displayed clear insight into the importance of providing accurate and reliable information." In my judgement, the lack of full insight means that there is some risk of the repetition of this behaviour. This has the potential to impact on how pupils view teachers and the teaching profession in the future". I have therefore given this element considerable weight in reaching my decision.

I have gone on to consider the extent to which a prohibition order would maintain public confidence in the profession. The panel observe, "that public confidence in the profession could be seriously weakened if conduct such as that found against Dr Roopa was not treated with the utmost seriousness when regulating the conduct of the profession." I am particularly mindful of the finding of dishonesty in this case and the impact that such a finding has on the reputation of the profession.

I have had to consider that the public has a high expectation of professional standards of all teachers and that failure to impose a prohibition order might be regarded by the public as a failure to uphold those high standards. In weighing these considerations, I have had

to consider the matter from the point of view of an “ordinary intelligent and well-informed citizen.”

I have considered whether the publication of a finding of unacceptable professional conduct, in the absence of a prohibition order, can itself be regarded by such a person as being a proportionate response to the misconduct that has been found proven in this case.

I have also considered the impact of a prohibition order on Dr Roopa herself. The panel say, “The panel has also taken into consideration the fact that Dr Roopa has a previously good record and is a well-qualified mathematics specialist. Dr Roopa expressed clear enthusiasm for her students and for teaching.”

A prohibition order would prevent Dr Roopa from continuing in the teaching profession. A prohibition order would also clearly deprive the public of her contribution to the profession for the period that it is in force.

In this case, I have placed considerable weight on the panel’s comments concerning the lack of insight or remorse. The panel has said, “that prohibition is both proportionate and appropriate. The panel has decided that the public interest considerations outweigh the interests of Dr Roopa. Her lack of insight was a significant factor in forming that opinion.”

I have given less weight in my consideration of sanction therefore, to the contribution that Dr Roopa has made to the profession. In my view, it is necessary to impose a prohibition order in order to maintain public confidence in the profession. A published decision that is not backed up by full remorse or insight does not in my view satisfy the public interest requirement concerning public confidence in the profession.

For these reasons, I have concluded that a prohibition order is proportionate and in the public interest in order to achieve the aims which a prohibition order is intended to achieve.

I have gone on to consider the matter of a review period. In this case, the panel has recommended a 2-year review period.

I have considered the panel’s comments “the panel concluded that, if Dr Roopa were able to demonstrate that she has gained a clear appreciation of the unacceptability of the conduct that the panel had found proven, she has the potential to become a valuable member of the teaching profession once she has properly completed her three-term induction.”

The panel has also said, “The Advice indicates that there are behaviours that, if proven, would militate against a review period being recommended. One of these behaviours is serious dishonesty. In relation to allegations 2(a) and 2(b) the panel believes that the dishonesty did not meet the threshold of serious dishonesty. The panel took a more serious view in relation to the conduct in allegation 2(c). However, the panel has taken into account

the fact that Dr Roopa withdrew the false reference and, in the event, gained no personal advantage. Furthermore, the panel concluded that, if Dr Roopa were able to demonstrate that she has gained a clear appreciation of the unacceptability of the conduct that the panel had found proven, she has the potential to become a valuable member of the teaching profession once she has properly completed her three-term induction.”

I have considered whether a 2-year review period reflects the seriousness of the findings and is a proportionate period to achieve the aim of maintaining public confidence in the profession. In this case, I agree with the panel and consider there are two factors that in my view mean that a 2-year review period is required to achieve the aim of maintaining public confidence in the profession. These elements are the dishonesty found and the lack of either full insight or remorse.

I consider therefore that a 2-year review period is required to satisfy the maintenance of public confidence in the profession.

This means that Dr Maria Roopa is prohibited from teaching indefinitely and cannot teach in any school, sixth form college, relevant youth accommodation or children's home in England. She may apply for the prohibition order to be set aside, but not until 24 April 2020, 2 years from the date of this order at the earliest. This is not an automatic right to have the prohibition order removed. If she does apply, a panel will meet to consider whether the prohibition order should be set aside. Without a successful application, Dr Roopa remains prohibited from teaching indefinitely.

This order takes effect from the date on which it is served on the teacher.

Dr Roopa has a right of appeal to the Queen's Bench Division of the High Court within 28 days from the date she is given notice of this order.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dawn Dandy".

Decision maker: Dawn Dandy

Date: 16 April 2018

This decision is taken by the decision maker named above on behalf of the Secretary of State.