



Teaching
Regulation
Agency

Mr William Atkins: Professional conduct panel outcome

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

May 2025

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

Teacher: Mr William Atkins

Teacher ref number: 0163107

Teacher date of birth: 13 August 1980

TRA reference: 18255

Date of determination: 29 May 2025

Former employer: Malbank School and Sixth Form College

Introduction

A professional conduct panel (“the panel”) of the Teaching Regulation Agency (“the TRA”) convened virtually between 28 and 29 May to consider the case of Mr William Atkins.

The panel members were Mr Peter Ward (lay panellist – in the chair), Ms Lynsey Draycott Garrett (teacher panellist) and Ms Susan Ridge (lay panellist).

The legal adviser to the panel was Mr Tom Walker of Blake Morgan LLP solicitors.

The presenting officer for the TRA was Mr Slack.

The teacher was not present and was not represented.

The hearing took place in public and was recorded.

Allegations

The panel considered the allegations set out in the notice of proceedings dated 6 February 2025.

It was alleged that Mr Atkins was guilty of unacceptable professional conduct and/or conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute, in that:

1. On or prior to August 2017, he:
 - a. made or possessed one or more indecent images of children;
 - b. possessed one or more images of extreme pornography;
 - c. made one or more searches for pornography that were linked to the profession of teaching.
2. His conduct at 1(a) and/or 1(b) and/or 1(c) above was sexually motivated.

The allegations were not admitted.

Summary of evidence

Documents

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

Section 1: Chronology and anonymised pupil list – pages 5 to 7

Section 2: Notice of proceedings and response – pages 8 to 31

Section 3: Teaching Regulation Agency witness statements – pages 32 to 225

Section 4: Teaching Regulation Agency documents – pages 226 to 434

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

In the consideration of this case, the panel had regard to the document Teacher misconduct: Disciplinary procedures for the teaching profession 2020, (the “Procedures”).

Witnesses

The TRA did not call any witnesses to give oral evidence, relying instead on their written statements.

Decision and reasons

The panel announced its decision and reasons as follows:

The panel carefully considered the case before it and reached a decision.

Mr Atkins was employed as the Head of Science at Malbank School and Sixth Form College ("the School") between September 2015 and August 2017. In August 2017 he was arrested on suspicion of making, distributing and possessing indecent images of children. Mr Atkins was subsequently charged as follows:

1. Count 1: making indecent photographs of children contrary to Section 1 of the Protection of Children Act of 1978 on or before the 22 August 2017 (four Category A indecent photographs on a tablet);
2. Count 2: making indecent photographs of children contrary to Section 1 of the Protection of Children Act of 1978 on or before the 22 August 2017 (one Category B indecent photograph on a tablet);
3. Count 3: possessing an extreme pornographic image contrary to Section 63 of the Criminal Justice and Immigration Act of 2008 on 22 August 2017 (bestiality images on a tablet);
4. Count 4: possessing an extreme pornographic image contrary to Section 63 of the Criminal Justice and Immigration Act of 2008 on 22 August 2017 (bestiality images on a CD Rom).

Indecent images are categorised on a scale of A to C with A being the most serious. Mr Atkins pleaded not guilty to the counts he faced. Following a trial at Chester Crown Court in February 2021, the jury returned not guilty verdicts in relation to Counts 1 to 3 but were unable to return a verdict on Count 4 and so were discharged. Mr Atkins was not convicted of any criminal offences. However, the conduct and behaviour which resulted in the criminal proceedings was then subject to an investigation by the TRA.

Findings of fact

The findings of fact are as follows:

The panel found the following particulars of the allegations against you proved, for these reasons:

You are guilty of unacceptable professional conduct and/ or conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute in that:

- 1. On or prior to August 2017, you:**

- a. made or possessed one or more indecent images of children;**
- b. possessed one or more images of extreme pornography;**
- c. made one or more searches for pornography that were linked to the profession of teaching.**

The evidence for this allegation relates to a police forensic examination of devices which were connected to Mr Atkins (and in his property) as follows:

1. A Google Nexus tablet computer seized from a desk in the kitchen

This device contained 4 category A indecent images of children (girls aged 4 to 7 being penetrated). These images could not be accessed without specialist software.

This device also contained 1 category B indecent image of a child (sexualised naked image of a girl aged 4 to 5). The thumbnail image was an embedded system image not accessible without specialist software. The full-size image which formed the source of the thumbnail image was not located on the device.

It was agreed that it was not possible to say when these images were acquired or how they were acquired. There was no evidence which specifically showed that the user intended to acquire those images. However, the presence of the images confirmed that they had been viewed on the device. The original images had been deleted from the device but cached or system images remained.

This device also contained extreme pornography (bestiality video; penetrative sex with a dog). This video was downloaded at 0041 on 13 May 2017. This video was accessible.

2. A CD-Rom disc

This disc was marked as "Will's disk" and was from a CD wallet found on a shelf inside the computer desk in the kitchen. This contained two videos which have been properly described as extreme pornography depicting penetrative sex with a dog. The disc was burnt on 5 June 2006.

3. A Samsung tablet computer seized from a shelf in the computer desk in the kitchen

This tablet was synchronised with an Apple Mobile Device and recorded blocks of text entered (as at 24 June 2010) as part of a dynamic dictionary function which records words entered on a system. The text included numerous broken sentences which indicated a sexual interest in young people. The text could not be directly attributed to Mr Atkins. However, this text was on his device.

4. A Samsung mobile phone seized from a desk in the kitchen

This device contained evidence of numerous searches made for sexual and/or violent and non-consensual sexual content. The terms include variations of the following: “teacher forced”; “young schoolgirl”; “piano teacher forces teen”; “young lesbian schoolgirl teacher” and “forced schoolgirl porn”. The searches were both autofill and manual which indicates both a pattern of searches but also deliberate agency on the part of the searcher. The searches were recorded as having taken place on many occasions over a period of months from 2015 to 2016. The searches were all conducted within the general time parameters of the hours of 23h00 and 09h30.

Mr Atkins was interviewed by the police and accepted that he had visited mainstream adult sites and chatrooms but denied ever accessing indecent images of children. Mr Atkins denied having any connection to the text on the Samsung Tablet and denied searching for the sexual and non-consensual content involving schoolgirls. Mr Atkins stated that his devices were not always exclusively controlled by him, and nor were they all password protected. It is right to say that the evidence linking Mr Atkins to the text and the searches was inferential. It is also right to say that there was no evidence of any searches being conducted on devices which were directly related to indecent images of children.

Mr Atkins did accept that he had, many years ago, seen the video on the CD-Rom on a shared computer when he was at university in around 2006, but stated that he was not responsible for placing it on the CD-Rom and he did not think he had retained any such content. As at 2006, possession of this video would not have been a criminal offence.

As noted above, Mr Atkins was not convicted of any criminal offences which indicates that the jury was not able to find any of the Counts against him proven beyond reasonable doubt. This panel has a different task and is considering the evidence relevant to each allegation based on whether it is more likely than not that Mr Atkins was responsible for the conduct set out in the allegations.

The panel takes note of the evidence in this case which is said by the TRA to indicate a propensity on the part of Mr Atkins to search for indecent and illegal content. The text found within the dynamic dictionary is troubling and disturbing, but there is no clear link between this and the allegations which assists.

However, the panel has taken note of the volume, nature and timings of the searches for sexual content on the phone. These features, particularly on a phone, which one is unlikely to be away from for a long period, make it inherently unlikely that anyone other than Mr Atkins was responsible for the searches. Indeed, no other plausible explanation has been canvassed by Mr Atkins. The panel takes the view that, on the balance of probabilities, these searches were conducted by Mr Atkins.

Many of the search terms which fall outside the scope of allegation 1 c. (as in, linked to the profession of teaching) betray an interest in images of younger females and extreme

pornographic or non-consensual sexual content, albeit none of the search terms indicate an interest in bestiality per se. The panel takes the view that on the balance of probabilities, Mr Atkins had, at least at the material time, a propensity to search for and view sexual images of younger females, schoolgirls and extreme pornography. This, together with the admissions made by Mr Atkins regarding the video on the CD-Rom, is important contextual evidence when considering the allegations.

As regards allegation 1 a., the panel has approached the terms on the basis of the test set out under the Protection of Children Act 1978. The term 'made' is approached on the basis of knowingly downloading and viewing an image knowing it to be, or likely to be, indecent. The category A and category B images found on the Google Nexus were viewed on the device and the panel takes the view that it is more likely than not that Mr Atkins accessed such images knowing them to be, or likely to be, indecent. However, the panel is not satisfied that Mr Atkins could access such images given the manner in which they were stored and, not having custody or control of them, he cannot be said to have had actual possession of them at the time when the devices were seized. The panel finds allegation 1 a. proved on the basis that Mr Atkins made the indecent images outlined above.

As regards allegation 1 b., the panel has approached the term extreme pornography on the basis set out in the Criminal Justice and Immigration Act 2008 which prohibits depiction of acts which could cause lasting harm; threaten life or which involve sex with animals. The panel notes that Mr Atkins admitted viewing the video on the CD-Rom. The panel takes the view that, in all the circumstances, Mr Atkins had knowledge of the contents of the CD-Rom (even if he did not have active recollection of the contents), and as the video could be accessed in 2017, he had custody and control and thus possession of the video and images.

The panel also takes the view that, given all the other evidence in the case including Mr Atkins' admissions, his searches, and the fact that the Google Nexus tablet was under his overall control as primary user, he had knowledge of the bestiality video found there. The panel notes that this content was of a similar nature to that which was found on the CD-ROM. This too could be accessed. Mr Atkins thus had custody and control and therefore possession of the video and images on the Google Nexus tablet.

The panel finds allegation 1 b. proved on the basis of the videos found on the CD-Rom and the Google Nexus tablet.

As regards allegation 1. c, the panel has found that given the volume, nature and timings of the searches, they were conducted by Mr Atkins. At least four of the terms relate to the profession of teaching ("teacher forced"; "young schoolgirl"; "piano teacher forces teen"; "young lesbian schoolgirl teacher" and "forced schoolgirl porn"). The panel finds this allegation proved.

2. Your conduct at 1(a) and/or 1(b) and/or 1(c) above was sexually motivated.

The panel finds that the conduct found proved at each of the particulars at allegation 1 was inherently sexual. The possession of images depicting sexual activity (allegations 1 a. and 1 b.) and the search for images of sexual activity, including that linked to the teaching profession (allegation 1 c.) is obviously motivated by a drive for sexual gratification. The panel finds that Mr Atkins conduct at allegation 1 was sexually motivated and thus finds this allegation proved.

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

Having found allegations 1 and 2 proved, the panel went on to consider whether the facts of those proved allegations amounted to unacceptable professional conduct and/or conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute.

The panel also considered whether the conduct of Mr Atkins, in relation to the facts found proved, involved breaches of the Teachers' Standards. The panel considered that, by reference to Part 2, Mr Atkins was 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, by
 - having regard for the need to safeguard pupils' well-being, in accordance with statutory provisions
 - showing tolerance of and respect for the rights of others
- Teachers must have an understanding of, and always act within, the statutory frameworks which set out their professional duties and responsibilities.

The panel had regard to the document "Teacher misconduct: the prohibition of teachers", which is referred to as "the Advice" (2022). The panel considered whether Mr Atkins' conduct displayed behaviours associated with any of the offences listed on pages 12 and 13 of the Advice.

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. The panel found the following offences to be relevant:

- any activity involving viewing, taking, making, possessing, distributing or publishing any indecent photograph or image or indecent pseudo photograph or image of a child, or permitting any such activity, including one off incidents;
- child cruelty and/or neglect.

As regards, child cruelty, the panel highlights this as, inevitably, illegal child abuse images involve cruelty to children. The panel takes the view that even though Mr Atkins is not directly responsible for acts of child cruelty, his behaviour is associated with this offence.

The panel noted that the allegations took place outside the education setting. There is no suggestion that any pupil was exposed to harm. However, the panel takes the view that the conduct of Mr Atkins involved an interest in illegal images of child abuse, non-consensual sex and sexual images connected to young people and the teaching profession. The panel takes the view that this conduct would inevitably impact the way in which Mr Atkins fulfilled his teaching role and presented a risk of pupils being exposed to, or influenced by, his behaviour in a harmful way.

For these reasons, the panel was satisfied that the conduct of Mr Atkins amounted to misconduct of a serious nature which fell significantly short of the standards expected of the profession. Accordingly, the panel was satisfied that Mr Atkins was guilty of unacceptable professional conduct.

In relation to whether Mr Atkins' actions amounted to conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute, the panel took into account the way the teaching profession is viewed by others. It considered the influence that teachers may have on pupils, parents and others in the community. The panel also took account of the uniquely influential role that teachers can hold in pupils' lives and the fact that pupils must be able to view teachers as role models in the way that they behave.

In considering the issue of disrepute, the panel also considered whether Mr Atkins' conduct displayed behaviours associated with any of the offences in the list that begins on pages 12 and 13 of the Advice. As set out above, the panel found the following offences to be relevant:

- any activity involving viewing, taking, making, possessing, distributing or publishing any indecent photograph or image or indecent pseudo photograph or image of a child, or permitting any such activity, including one off incidents;
- child cruelty and/or neglect.

The panel took account of the way the teaching profession is viewed by others. The panel considered the findings of misconduct to be so serious as to have a negative impact on Mr Atkins status as a teacher and the teaching profession more generally. Whilst the conduct occurred outside an education setting, it does concern behaviour which presents a risk to children in education. The conduct could seriously affect public confidence in the teaching profession, given the influence that teachers may have on pupils, parents and others in the community.

Any teacher engaged in behaviour such as that found proved against Mr Atkins would tend to bring the profession into disrepute. For these reasons, the panel finds that Mr Atkins' actions 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 was necessary for it 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 had to consider whether it would be an appropriate and proportionate measure, and whether it would be 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 punitive effect.

The panel had regard to the particular public interest considerations set out in the Advice and, having done so, found a number of them to be relevant in this case, namely:

- the safeguarding and wellbeing of pupils and protection of other members of the public;
- the maintenance of public confidence in the profession – assessed by reference to the standard of the ordinary intelligent and well-informed citizen who both appreciates the seriousness of the proposed 'sanction' and recognises the high standards expected of all teachers, as well as other issues involved in the case; and
- declaring and upholding proper standards of conduct;
- that prohibition strikes the right balance between the rights of the teacher and the public interest, if they are in conflict.

In the light of the nature of the panel's findings against Mr Atkins, which included making indecent child abuse images and possessing extreme pornographic images, Mr Atkins' actions raise obvious and significant public and child protection concerns. There was a strong public interest consideration in respect of the safeguarding and wellbeing of pupils.

The panel considered that public confidence in the profession would be very seriously weakened if conduct such as that found against Mr Atkins was not treated with the utmost seriousness when regulating the profession.

For the same reasons, the panel decided that a strong public interest consideration in declaring proper standards of conduct in the profession was also present.

The panel conducted a balancing exercise in which it considered carefully whether or not it would be proportionate to impose a prohibition order, taking into account the effect this would have on Mr Atkins.

No doubt had been cast upon Mr Atkins' abilities as a teacher. The panel received no references, however it treated Mr Atkins as of good character.

However, the findings are very serious and raise significant public interest considerations. These public interest considerations are not outweighed by any interest in retaining Mr Atkins in the profession.

In carrying out the balancing exercise, the panel had regard to the public interest considerations present as well as the interests of Mr Atkins. 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 proved.

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;
- sexual misconduct, e.g. involving actions that were sexually motivated or of a sexual nature ...;
- any activity involving viewing, taking, making, possessing, distributing, or publishing any indecent photograph or image, or indecent pseudo photograph or image, of a child, or permitting such activity, including one-off incidents;
- a deep-seated attitude that leads to harmful behaviour.

There is evidence that Mr Atkins has an entrenched and long-standing interest in extreme and or/indecent content spanning many years. This can be described as a deep-seated attitude which would have the potential to lead to harmful behaviour.

Even though some of the behaviour found proved in this case indicated that a prohibition order would be appropriate, the panel went on to consider the mitigating factors. Mitigating factors may indicate that a prohibition order would not be appropriate or proportionate.

The panel considered that the following mitigating factors are present in this case, namely that there is evidence that Mr Atkins had been suffering from personal problems during this period and also had a record of good teaching performance. The panel did not, however, receive any evidence of insight.

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 would be sufficient.

The panel was of the view that, applying the standard of the ordinary intelligent citizen, it would not be a proportionate and appropriate response to recommend no prohibition order. Recommending that the publication of adverse findings was sufficient would unacceptably compromise the public interest considerations present in this case, despite the severity of the consequences for Mr Atkins of prohibition.

Mr Atkins' actions are fundamentally incompatible with his being a teacher. There were, accordingly, particularly strong public interest considerations in this case in terms of protecting the public, public confidence in the teaching profession and the declaring of proper standards of conduct in this case.

The panel was therefore of the view that prohibition was both proportionate and appropriate. The panel decided that the public interest considerations outweighed the interests of Mr Atkins.

Accordingly, it made 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 proved, would weigh against the recommendation of a review period.

The following behaviours were present in this case

- serious sexual misconduct e.g. where the act was sexually motivated and resulted in, or had the potential to result in, harm to a person or persons, particularly where the individual has used their professional position to influence or exploit a person or persons;
- any sexual misconduct involving a child;
- any activity involving viewing, taking, making, possessing, distributing or publishing any indecent photograph or image or indecent pseudo photograph or image of a child, including one off incidents;
- child cruelty and/or neglect.

The panel decided that its findings indicated a situation in which a review period would not be appropriate.

The nature and seriousness of the findings in this case necessitated the prohibition order to be recommended without provision for a review period.

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 both sanction and review period.

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

In this case, the panel has found all of 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 Mr William Atkins should be the subject of a prohibition order, with no provision for a review period.

In particular, the panel has found that Mr Atkins 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, by
 - having regard for the need to safeguard pupils' well-being, in accordance with statutory provisions
 - showing tolerance of and respect for the rights of others
- 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 Mr Atkins fell significantly short of the standards expected of the profession.

The findings of misconduct are particularly serious as they include a finding of making indecent child abuse images and possessing extreme pornographic images.

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 a less intrusive measure, such as the published finding of unacceptable professional conduct and conduct likely to 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 Mr Atkins, and the impact that will have on the teacher, is proportionate and in the public interest.

In this case, I have considered the extent to which a prohibition order would protect children and safeguard pupils. The panel has observed:

“In the light of the nature of the panel’s findings against Mr Atkins, which included making indecent child abuse images and possessing extreme pornographic images, Mr Atkins’ actions raise obvious and significant public and child protection concerns. There was a strong public interest consideration in respect of the safeguarding and wellbeing of pupils.”

A prohibition order would therefore prevent such a risk from being present in the future.

I have also taken into account the panel’s comment that it did not receive any evidence of Mr Atkins’ insight into his behaviour. In my judgement, the lack of evidence of insight means that there is some risk of the repetition of this behaviour and this puts at risk the future wellbeing of pupils. 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 has observed:

“The panel considered that public confidence in the profession would be very seriously weakened if conduct such as that found against Mr Atkins was not treated with the utmost seriousness when regulating the profession.”

I am particularly mindful of the finding of making indecent child abuse images and possessing extreme pornographic images 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 the public might regard a failure to impose a prohibition order 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 and conduct likely to bring the profession into disrepute, 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 Mr Atkins himself. The panel has commented:

“No doubt had been cast upon Mr Atkins’ abilities as a teacher. The panel received no references, however it treated Mr Atkins as of good character.”

A prohibition order would prevent Mr Atkins from teaching. A prohibition order would also clearly deprive the public of his contribution to the profession for the period that it is in force.

In this case, I have placed considerable weight on the panel’s finding that Mr Atkins’ actions were fundamentally incompatible with his being a teacher. The panel has said:

“There is evidence that Mr Atkins has an entrenched and long-standing interest in extreme and or/indecent content spanning many years. This can be described as a deep-seated attitude which would have the potential to lead to harmful behaviour.”

I have also placed considerable weight on the finding of the panel that it received no evidence of insight on the part of Mr Atkins.

I have given less weight in my consideration of sanction therefore to the contribution that Mr Atkins 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, in light of the circumstances in this case, that is not backed up by evidence of 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 intended aims of a prohibition order.

I have gone on to consider the matter of a review period. In this case, the panel has recommended that no provision should be made for a review period.

I have considered the panel’s comments:

“The Advice indicates that there are behaviours that, if proved, would weigh against the recommendation of a review period.

“The following behaviours were present in this case

- serious sexual misconduct e.g. where the act was sexually motivated and resulted in, or had the potential to result in, harm to a person or persons, particularly where the individual has used their professional position to influence or exploit a person or persons;
- any sexual misconduct involving a child;

- any activity involving viewing, taking, making, possessing, distributing or publishing any indecent photograph or image or indecent pseudo photograph or image of a child, including one off incidents;
- child cruelty and/or neglect.

“The panel decided that its findings indicated a situation in which a review period would not be appropriate.”

I have considered whether not allowing a 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, factors mean that allowing a review period is not sufficient to achieve the aim of maintaining public confidence in the profession. These elements are the serious nature of the findings found proven, the lack of evidence of insight and the risk of repetition.

I consider therefore that allowing for no review period is necessary to maintain public confidence and is proportionate and in the public interest.

This means that Mr William Atkins is prohibited from teaching indefinitely and cannot teach in any school, sixth form college, relevant youth accommodation or children’s home in England. Furthermore, in view of the seriousness of the allegations found proved against him, I have decided that Mr Atkins shall not be entitled to apply for restoration of his eligibility to teach.

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

Mr William Atkins has a right of appeal to the High Court within 28 days from the date he is given notice of this order.



Decision maker: David Oatley

Date: 30 May 2025

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