



Teaching
Regulation
Agency

Mr Antony Jones: Professional conduct panel outcome

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

May 2025

Contents

| | |
|--|----|
| Introduction | 3 |
| Allegations | 4 |
| Summary of evidence | 7 |
| Documents | 7 |
| Witnesses | 7 |
| Decision and reasons | 7 |
| Findings of fact | 8 |
| Panel's recommendation to the Secretary of State | 18 |
| Decision and reasons on behalf of the Secretary of State | 21 |

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

Teacher: Mr Antony Jones

Teacher ref number: 1243541

Teacher date of birth: 4 September 1965

TRA reference: 19938

Date of determination: 16 May 2025

Former employer: Humphry Davy School, Penzance

Introduction

A professional conduct panel (“the panel”) of the Teaching Regulation Agency (“the TRA”) convened online on 25 – 27 November 2024 and on 16 May 2025 via Microsoft Teams to consider the case of Mr Anthony Jones (“Mr Jones”).

The panel members were Mr Martyn Stephens (lay panellist – in the chair), Mrs Bernie Whittle (teacher panellist) and Miss Janette McCormick (lay panellist).

The legal adviser to the panel was Ms Clare Strickland of Blake Morgan solicitors.

The presenting officer for the TRA was Ms Ella Crine of counsel, instructed by Kingsley Napley solicitors, on 25 – 27 November 2024, and Ms Calla Randall of counsel, instructed by Kingsley Napley solicitors, on 16 May 2025.

Mr Jones was 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 hearing dated 4 September 2024 and as amended following an application by the presenting officer.

It was alleged that Mr Jones was guilty of unacceptable professional conduct and/or conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute, in that, whilst employed as a Secondary Teacher of Science at Humphry Davy School:

1. On or around 25 November 2019 he failed to maintain professional boundaries towards Pupil A in that he:
 - a. Exchanged a number of messages with Pupil A on Facebook Messenger;
 - b. Told Pupil A that he missed her and/or liked her company in the exchange of messages set out at allegation 1a; and/or
 - c. Asked Pupil A to "Spend some time with your least favourite teacher in a pub doing Maths?... drinks on me" when he knew or ought to have known that this was not appropriate.
2. Between on or around 26 September 2019 and 21 October 2019, he failed to maintain professional boundaries towards Pupil B in that he:
 - a. Exchanged a number of messages with Pupil B on Facebook Messenger;
 - b. Asked Pupil B to send him three photographs she liked; and/or
 - c. Sent Pupil B one or more inappropriate messages, that include:
 - i. 'I'm driving for the next 3 hours if you want a chat x'
 - ii. 'If the agreement is for the morning can I take you out for lunch? X'
 - iii. 'You are so photogenic! That translates to being beautiful! Hehe'.
 - iv. 'Think you will have time to pop into school for a coffee? Now you have worked out how to break in! X'
 - v. 'I really do miss you'
 - vi. 'I do want to see you though x'
 - vii. 'I thought you looked amazing last night x'
 - viii. "I do want you to come on Sunday, if you need a lift I will come and pick you up x"

And/or

ix. "Please come x"

3. On an unknown date prior to 24 January 2020, he failed to maintain professional boundaries towards Pupil C in that:
 - a. He spoke to Pupil C about his personal life and/or discussed class romances;
 - b. He hugged Pupil C;
 - c. He informed Pupil C and/or one or more pupils that he was "good at guessing sizes" of female breasts or words to that effect;
 - d. His discussion with Pupil C as set out in allegation 3a and/or 3b and/or 3c made Pupil C feel uncomfortable; and/or
 - e. Following a discussion with Pupil C regarding her personal concerns, he did not report safeguarding concerns to the school safeguarding team in a timely manner and/or at all.
4. On an unknown date between on or around June 2019 and December 2019, he failed to maintain professional boundaries towards one or more former Pupils in that he:
 - a. Set up a Facebook Group for an ex year 11 physics class with one or more pupils who left the school in 2019;
 - b. Exchanged a number of messages with one or more Pupils on the Facebook Group;
 - c. Remained on the Facebook Group despite the name of the Group changing to the derogatory term '[REDACTED]';
 - d. Sent a message to the Facebook Group asking "So who was the best looking girl in your year";
 - e. [REDACTED];
 - f. Voted for Pupil B in the poll set out at allegation 4v;
 - g. Sent a Facebook request to Pupil B and/or asked Pupil B why she had not accepted his Facebook request;
 - h. Sent one or more messages to Pupil B regarding his personal life; and/or
 - i. Made one or more comments on the Facebook Group in relation to Pupil D measuring the length of his penis.
5. On an unknown date in or around October 2019, he organised a private go-karting trip with former pupils from the Facebook Group;

6. On an unknown date in or around October 2019, he posted a message to the Facebook Group regarding the go-karting trip "[Pupil B] comes as well or I don't, simple";
7. On or around 20 January 2020, he indicated that he had friendships and/or interact with some recent former pupils and/or class these former pupils as "social friends" when he knew or ought to have known that this was not appropriate.
8. –
 - a. His conduct as set out in one or more allegations at 1 and/or 2 and/or 3 and/or 4 was sexually motivated;
 - b. His conduct as set out in 3c and/or 4c and/or 4d and/or 4e and/or 4f and/or 4i was of a sexual nature
9. His behaviour as set out in allegation 1 and/or 2 and/or 3 and/or 4 and/or 5 and/or 6 demonstrates elements of building an inappropriate relationship with one or more pupils.

Mr Jones made the following factual admissions:

- Allegation 1a – c
- Allegation 2a – b
- Allegation 2ci - ix – Mr Jones admitted sending the messages but denied they were inappropriate
- Allegation 3a, b, c and e
- Allegation 4a, b, c, d, e, f, h, i
- Allegation 5
- Allegation 6
- Allegation 7
- Allegation 8b insofar as it concerns allegations 3c and 4i

He denied:

- Allegation 3d
- Allegation 8a
- Allegation 8b insofar as it concerns allegations 4c, 4d, 4e, 4f
- Allegation 9

Mr Jones did not make formal admissions of unacceptable professional conduct and/or conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute.

Summary of evidence

Documents

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

Section 1: Chronology and list of key people – pages 4 to 5

Section 2: Notice of proceedings and response – pages 6 to 24

Section 3: Teaching Regulation Agency witness statements – pages 25 to 32

Section 4: Teaching Regulation Agency documents – pages 33 to 362

Section 5: Teacher documents – pages 363 to 416

In addition, the panel agreed to accept the following:

- Correspondence with Pupil B bundle
- Tony Jones supporting bundle final

The panel also received draft skeleton submissions for the substantive hearing from the TRA.

Witnesses

The panel heard oral evidence from

- Witness A [REDACTED]

Decision and reasons

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

Mr Jones was employed at the School as a teacher of science from 1 January 2014. At the end of November 2019, the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) contacted the School after concerns were raised about some messages Mr Jones exchanged with Pupil A, a former pupil. Then further concerns arose about his messages with Pupil B, another former pupil, and his involvement with a Facebook group including other former pupils. Then in January 2020, Pupil C made a disclosure about a conversation she had had with Mr Jones at the School.

Findings of fact

The findings of fact are as follows.

The panel found the following particulars of the allegation(s) against you proved, for these reasons:

1. On or around 25 November 2019 you failed to maintain professional boundaries towards Pupil A in that you:

a. Exchanged a number of messages with Pupil A on Facebook Messenger;

This allegation was admitted and was supported by evidence presented to the panel. The allegation was therefore found proved.

b. Told Pupil A that you missed her and/or liked her company in the exchange of messages set out at allegation 1a; and/or

This allegation was admitted and was supported by evidence presented to the panel. The allegation was therefore found proved.

c. Asked Pupil A to "Spend some time with your least favourite teacher in a pub doing Maths?... drinks on me" when you knew or ought to have known that this was not appropriate.

This allegation was admitted and was supported by evidence presented to the panel. The allegation was therefore found proved.

2. Between on or around 26 September 2019 and 21 October 2019, you failed to maintain professional boundaries towards Pupil B in that you:

a. Exchanged a number of messages with Pupil B on Facebook Messenger;

This allegation was admitted and was supported by evidence presented to the panel. The allegation was therefore found proved.

b. Asked Pupil B to send you three photographs she liked;

This allegation was admitted and was supported by evidence presented to the panel. The allegation was therefore found proved.

c. Sent Pupil B one or more inappropriate messages, that include:

i. 'I'm driving for the next 3 hours if you want a chat x'

ii. 'If the agreement is for the morning can I take you out for lunch? X'

- iii. 'You are so photogenic! That translates to being beautiful! Hehe'.
- iv. 'Think you will have time to pop into school for a coffee? Now you have worked out how to break in! X'
- v. 'I really do miss you'
- vi. 'I do want to see you though x'
- vii. 'I thought you looked amazing last night x'
- viii. "I do want you to come on Sunday, if you need a lift I will come and pick you up x"

And/or

- ix. "Please come x"

Mr Jones admitted sending these messages to Pupil B, but denied that they were inappropriate. The panel therefore considered the content of these messages, and the context in which they were sent. It considered whether they were inappropriate, having regard to the School's policies and culture, and wider social norms. In doing so, it reminded itself that it did not have in evidence all of the messages exchanged between Mr Jones and Pupil B.

The panel noted a number of factors about the messages and the context in which they were sent which, in the panel's view, made them inappropriate:

- They breached appropriate professional boundaries between a teacher and a 16/17-year-old pupil [REDACTED]
- They commented on Pupil A's appearance without good professional reason;
- On more than one occasion, they sought to initiate a personal conversation or meeting;
- Objectively, they could be perceived as putting a degree of pressure on Pupil B to agree to speak to or meet with Mr Jones;
- A number of them ended with kisses.

Given the evidence that Mr Jones sent these messages, and the panel's conclusion that they were inappropriate, the panel found allegation 2c proved in its entirety.

3. On an unknown date prior to 24 January 2020, you failed to maintain professional boundaries towards Pupil C in that:

- a. You spoke to Pupil C about your personal life and/or discussed class romances;**

This allegation was admitted and was supported by evidence presented to the panel. The allegation was therefore found proved.

- b. You hugged Pupil C;**

This allegation was admitted and was supported by evidence presented to the panel. The allegation was therefore found proved.

- c. You informed Pupil C and/or one or more pupils that you were "good at guessing sizes" of female breasts or words to that effect;**

This allegation was admitted and was supported by evidence presented to the panel. The allegation was therefore found proved.

- e. Following a discussion with Pupil C regarding her personal concerns, you did not report safeguarding concerns to the school safeguarding team in a timely manner and/or at all.**

This allegation was admitted and was supported by evidence presented to the panel. The allegation was therefore found proved.

4. On an unknown date between on or around June 2019 and December 2019, you failed to maintain professional boundaries towards one or more former Pupils in that you:

- a. Set up a Facebook Group for an ex year 11 physics class with one or more pupils who left the school in 2019;**

This allegation was admitted and was supported by evidence presented to the panel. The allegation was therefore found proved.

- b. Exchanged a number of messages with one or more Pupils on the Facebook Group;**

This allegation was admitted and was supported by evidence presented to the panel. The allegation was therefore found proved.

- c. Remained on the Facebook Group despite the name of the Group changing to the derogatory term '[REDACTED]';**

This allegation was admitted, but Mr Jones maintained that he did not know what the word '[REDACTED]' meant, nor did he make any attempt to find out what it meant when one of the Group members changed the name. Even if his account on this point was accepted (and the panel had doubts about its accuracy, given that this is a slang term that has been in general use for many years), the panel concluded it was incumbent on Mr Jones to check what it meant when it first appeared on the Group name. It was satisfied that remaining in the Group despite this name change was a breach of professional boundaries. It therefore found this allegation proved.

d. Sent a message to the Facebook Group asking "So who was the best looking girl in your year";

This allegation was admitted and was supported by evidence presented to the panel. The allegation was therefore found proved.

e. Voted in a poll in the Facebook Group entitled "[REDACTED]";

This allegation was admitted and was supported by evidence presented to the panel. The allegation was therefore found proved.

f. Voted for Pupil B in the poll set out at allegation 4e;

This allegation was admitted and was supported by evidence presented to the panel. The allegation was therefore found proved.

h. Sent one or more messages to Pupil B regarding your personal life;

This allegation was admitted and was supported by evidence presented to the panel. The allegation was therefore found proved.

i. Made one or more comments on the Facebook Group in relation to Pupil D measuring the length of his penis.

This allegation was admitted and was supported by evidence presented to the panel. The allegation was therefore found proved.

5. On an unknown date in or around October 2019, you organised a private go-karting trip with former pupils from the Facebook Group.

This allegation was admitted and was supported by evidence presented to the panel. The allegation was therefore found proved.

6. On an unknown date in or around October 2019, you posted a message to the Facebook Group regarding the go-karting trip "[Pupil B] comes as well or I don't, simple".

This allegation was admitted and was supported by evidence presented to the panel. The allegation was therefore found proved.

7. On or around 20 January 2020, you indicated that you had friendships and/or interact with some recent former pupils and/or class these former pupils as "social friends" when you knew or ought to have known that this was not appropriate.

This allegation was admitted and was supported by evidence presented to the panel. The allegation was therefore found proved.

8. –

a. Your conduct as set out in one or more allegations at 1 and/or 2 and/or 3 and/or 4 was sexually motivated.

The panel found this allegation proved insofar as it related to Pupil B only, as set out in allegations 2 and 4h.

The panel considered all the evidence very carefully, including Mr Jones' evidence. It was clear from his evidence that he was very fond of Pupil B, and held her in high regard. But he also commented on her appearance, calling her "beautiful" and "photogenic", [REDACTED]. He sent her messages which had a flirtatious tone, ending in kisses, something he said he would never do to anyone male. In those messages he sought to persuade her to speak to him, and to meet with him.

The panel was troubled by his evidence that he told Pupil B not to tell [REDACTED] about their contact. He suggested that this was because Pupil B's [REDACTED] would make up an allegation about him as a result. He appears to have recognised that his conduct towards Pupil B put him in a position where his motivations could be perceived in a negative light, but rather than stop behaving as he was, he continued and told Pupil B not to say anything to [REDACTED] about it.

On the balance of probabilities, the panel concluded from all of the evidence that Mr Jones' fondness for Pupil B had led to him becoming attracted to her, and that by contacting her in the way he did, he was pursuing the remote prospect of a future sexual relationship. The panel therefore concluded that his actions in respect of her were sexually motivated.

b. Your conduct as set out in 3c and/or 4c and/or 4d and/or 4e and/or 4f and/or 4i was of a sexual nature.

Mr Jones admitted that his conduct as set out at 3c and 4i was sexual in nature, because it involved mention of the words “breast” and “penis”.

The panel noted the context of allegation 3c, as described in Pupil C’s hearsay evidence. The panel took great care with this evidence, given the inherent difficulties of challenging it. When asked about Pupil C’s hearsay evidence, Mr Jones said he did not remember things in the same way, but accepted he had made a comment about being able to estimate breast size. The panel was satisfied that his comment was made in response to at least one sexualised comment from one or more male pupils in the class, and that his comment was in itself sexual in that context. The panel concluded that in these circumstances, a reasonable person would consider Mr Jones’ comment to be of a sexual nature, and therefore it concluded that this allegation was proved in relation to allegation 3c.

The panel also noted the context of allegation 4i. Mr Jones was part of a Facebook Group which was making a sexual joke about penis length. He joined in with the joking. The panel considered that a reasonable person would consider this to be of a sexual nature, and therefore concluded that this allegation was proved in respect of allegation 4i.

Mr Jones disputed that the conduct alleged at 4c, 4d, 4e and 4f was sexual in nature.

Regarding allegation 4c, the panel concluded that a reasonable person would consider the use of the slang term “[REDACTED]” to be sexual in nature. Regardless of whether Mr Jones realised it was such, by remaining in the Group, he endorsed the use of a Group title that was sexual in nature. The panel therefore found the allegation proved in relation to allegation 4c.

Allegations 4d, e and f concerned Mr Jones initiating a Facebook Group conversation about the best-looking female pupil in the year, the establishment of a poll by one of the Group, and Mr Jones voting for Pupil B within that poll. In evidence, Mr Jones suggested that asking who was best looking was not necessarily the same thing as asking who was the most sexually attractive. The panel considered this very carefully in the context in which his actions took place. It noted that it was within a Facebook Group consisting mostly of males, and there was no corresponding question or poll about the best-looking male pupil. The Group’s name was sexualised, and there were other Group conversations involving sexualised jokes. In this context, the panel concluded on balance that his question, and the poll, were not purely about aesthetics, but involved an element of enquiry about sexual attractiveness that a reasonable person would consider to

be sexual. In these circumstances, the panel found the allegation proved in relation to allegations 4d, 4e and 4f.

9. Your behaviour as set out in allegation 1 and/or 2 and/or 3 and/or 4 and/or 5 and/or 6 demonstrates elements of building an inappropriate relationship with one or more pupils.

This allegation was denied by Mr Jones. The panel approached its decision on this allegation by considering whether his behaviour, as described in allegation 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 demonstrated elements of building inappropriate relationships with pupils. It focused on the overall effect of his actions, taken individually and collectively. When considering what was appropriate, the panel had regard to the School's policies and culture and wider social norms.

The panel concluded that there were individual aspects of his conduct that, taken alone, would not necessarily have demonstrated he was building inappropriate relationships. For instance, had the go-karting trip been a one-off event, it might not have demonstrated building inappropriate relationships (although it was poor practice for other reasons), but together with Mr Jones' presence on the Facebook Group, the panel concluded it did build an inappropriate relationship with that group of boys. Mr Jones was significantly older than them, and was their recent ex-teacher. Yet he indulged in sexual jokes and comments about another pupil from their year, as well as another teacher, with them. The panel was satisfied that his continued presence in that Group was part of an inappropriate relationship with those boys.

The panel also concluded that Mr Jones' actions relating to Pupils A, B and C involved breaches of professional boundaries and demonstrated that he was building inappropriate relationships with them, to varying degrees. His failure to maintain appropriate boundaries meant that his actions went beyond a teacher showing appropriate and professional concern, or an ex-teacher showing a healthy interest in his ex-pupils, and instead became inappropriate.

The panel therefore concluded that allegation 9 was proved.

The panel found the following allegations not proved, for the reasons set out below.

3d. Your discussion with Pupil C as set out in allegation 3a and/or 3b and/or 3c made Pupil C feel uncomfortable;

Mr Jones denied this allegation, saying that he did not notice signs that Pupil C was uncomfortable during the conversation.

The panel noted that the only evidence that Pupil C felt uncomfortable as a result of her conversation with Mr Jones came from a hearsay account of what she had reportedly said to an unnamed person. Some elements of that account were accepted as accurate by Mr Jones, but the panel was concerned that it was the sole and decisive evidence on this allegation, and that there was no means by which it could test its reliability.

Given Mr Jones' description of what he said to Pupil C during the conversation, the panel was satisfied that a natural consequence might be for Pupil C to feel uncomfortable. But without being able to explore her evidence on this, it concluded that this allegation was not proved.

4g. Sent a Facebook request to Pupil B and/or asked Pupil B why she had not accepted your Facebook request;

Mr Jones denied this allegation, saying that it was Pupil B who sent the Facebook request to him.

The panel noted that Pupil B's hearsay account was the sole and decisive evidence on this allegation. It was not provided with any evidence from Facebook which showed who had first sent the friend request.

Although Pupil B's hearsay account included some detail which gave it credibility, the panel concluded that in the absence of any means by which it could properly test the reliability of her account on this point, the TRA had not proved its case on the balance of probabilities. Accordingly, the panel found this allegation not proved.

8a. Your conduct as set out in one or more allegations at 1 and/or 2 and/or 3 and/or 4 was sexually motivated.

The panel found this allegation not proved insofar as it related towards Pupil A (allegation 1), Pupil C (allegation 3), and the Facebook Group generally (allegation 4 except those aspects relating to direct contact with Pupil B).

In relation to the conduct set out at allegation 1 in relation to Pupil A, the panel concluded that the nature, tone and extent of Mr Jones' contact did not go far enough to demonstrate a sexual motivation, and nor was there any evidence that it was of a sort that would lead to sexual gratification.

Regarding allegation 3 and Pupil C, the panel concluded that Mr Jones had breached professional boundaries but there was no evidence he was seeking to pursue a sexual relationship with her, or that his actions were done for sexual gratification. Instead, it was more likely that he had acted out of a desire to support her.

Regarding allegation 4 (except insofar as it concerned direct contact with Pupil B), the panel was satisfied that there was no evidence of pursuit of sexual relationships. Although Mr Jones was engaging in sexualised joking within the Facebook Group, the panel considered it more likely than not that this was intended to be funny, rather than being done for sexual gratification.

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

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

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

The panel was satisfied that the conduct of Mr Jones, in relation to the facts found proved, involved breaches of the Teachers’ Standards. The panel considered that, by reference to Part 2, Mr Jones 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
 - treating pupils with dignity, building relationships rooted in mutual respect, and at all times observing proper boundaries appropriate to a teacher’s professional position
 - having regard for the need to safeguard pupils’ well-being, in accordance with statutory provisions
- 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 was satisfied that the conduct of Mr Jones amounted to misconduct of a serious nature which fell significantly short of the standards expected of the profession. It concluded that:

- In respect of Pupil A, a vulnerable young woman, Mr Jones’ conduct was a serious breach of appropriate professional boundaries and his School’s policies. There was clear guidance in place to protect adults and children, which he failed to comply with.

- In respect of Pupil B, Mr Jones' actions were sexually motivated. He put his needs ahead of hers and failed to maintain appropriate boundaries in a way that put her at risk of harm and raised serious safeguarding concerns. Again, he failed to comply with his School's clear policies.
- In respect of Pupil C, Mr Jones overshared his personal information in a way that had potential to cause harm to her well-being. He failed in his safeguarding responsibilities towards her by not recording or reporting their conversation. Given her significant vulnerability, this was a serious breach of the standards to be expected.
- In respect of allegation 4, Mr Jones' presence and activity on the Facebook Group fell seriously short of the standard to be expected of a teacher. Again, he failed to comply with his School's clear policies, leading to a breach of boundaries.
- In respect of allegation 5, Mr Jones failed to comply with safeguarding procedures and participated in an activity with 16/17-year-old former pupils without going through appropriate channels. This breach was serious because it was part of the wider picture of him building inappropriate relationships with children.
- Allegation 6 forms part of Mr Jones' inappropriate conduct involving Pupil B, which is a serious departure from the standards to be expected.
- In respect of Allegation 7, it is not unacceptable professional conduct to indicate the truth, but his admission reflects Mr Jones' lack of insight into the inappropriate nature of some of his conduct.
- In respect of Allegation 8b, the panel was satisfied that Mr Jones indulged in inappropriate comments and conduct of a sexual nature on one occasion within the classroom, and then in an online Group with recent former pupils. Although the panel concluded that the comments individually were at a lower level of seriousness, amounting generally to innuendo, taken together they demonstrated a pattern of behaviour which fell far short of the standard to be expected.
- Allegation 9 reflects that Mr Jones' behaviour related to a number of different pupils over a short space of time. Professional boundaries are in place to protect children and adults alike, and by failing to maintain them, Mr Jones put people, including himself, at risk. As such, his conduct did fall seriously short of that to be expected.

The panel also considered whether Mr Jones' 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 that none of these offences was relevant. Although it concluded that some of Mr Jones' conduct was sexually motivated, he had not engaged in sexual activity or sexual communication with a child.

Taking all of this into account, the panel was satisfied that Mr Jones was guilty of unacceptable professional conduct.

The panel took into account the way 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 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.

The panel concluded that his conduct towards Pupils A, B, C, and his activity with the Facebook Group, individually and collectively, constituted conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute.

Accordingly, the panel further found that Mr Jones' proven conduct amounted to both unacceptable professional conduct and 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 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 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 protection of pupils (including former pupils), the maintenance of public confidence in the profession, declaring and upholding proper standards of conduct, and the interest of retaining the teacher in the profession.

In the light of the panel's findings against Mr Jones, which involved failures to maintain professional boundaries and building inappropriate relationships, including sexually motivated conduct towards one former pupil, and failures in safeguarding, there was a

strong public interest consideration in respect of the protection of pupils and former pupils.

Similarly, the panel considered that public confidence in the profession could be seriously weakened if conduct such as that found against Mr Jones were not treated with the utmost seriousness when regulating the conduct of the profession.

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

The panel decided that there was a public interest consideration in retaining the teacher in the profession, having seen some positive references from Mr Jones' former colleagues.

In view of 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 Mr Jones.

In carrying out the balancing exercise, the panel had regard to the public interest considerations both in favour of, and against, prohibition as well as the interests of Mr Jones. 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 were relevant in this case were:

- serious departure from the personal and professional conduct elements of the Teachers' Standards;
- misconduct seriously affecting the education and/or safeguarding and well-being of pupils, and particularly where there is a continuing risk;
- an abuse of any trust, knowledge, or influence gained through their professional position in order to advance a romantic or sexual relationship with a pupil or former pupil;
- sexual misconduct, e.g. involving actions that were sexually motivated or of a sexual nature and/or that use or exploit the trust, knowledge or influence derived from the individual's professional position;
- failure to act on evidence that indicated a child's welfare may have been at risk e.g. failed to notify the designated safeguarding lead and/or make a referral to children's social care, the police or other relevant agencies when abuse, neglect and/or harmful cultural practices were identified;

- failure in their duty of care towards a child, including exposing a child to risk or failing to promote the safety and welfare of the children (as set out in Part 1 of KCSIE);
- collusion or concealment including:
 - failure to challenge inappropriate actions, defending inappropriate actions or concealing inappropriate actions;

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 concluded that the Mr Jones' actions were deliberate, and he was not acting under duress.

The panel accepted that Mr Jones was not previously subject to any disciplinary proceedings or warnings, and noted that some former colleagues spoke highly of him.

The panel recognised that Mr Jones had made admissions to a number of the allegations against him, and expressed a sincere apology and remorse for any pain that he had caused to anyone else by his conduct. He had shown some insight into the poor decision making that led to the allegations against him.

The panel also noted Mr Jones' evidence about how he had changed his behaviour since these allegations were made, including by removing himself from social media. It further noted his indication that he had left teaching and had no intention of returning to it.

However, the panel remained of the view that when giving evidence, Mr Jones had not shown full insight into his conduct or provided sufficient assurance that it would not be repeated should he find himself in a similar situation in future.

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 would be sufficient would unacceptably compromise the public interest considerations present in this case, despite the consequences for Mr Jones of prohibition.

The panel was of the view that prohibition was both proportionate and appropriate. The panel decided that the public interest considerations outweighed the interests of Mr Jones. That he had failed to demonstrate an exemplary level of integrity as a teacher,

and had behaved in a way that would have a negative influence on pupils and former pupils, were significant factors in forming that opinion. Accordingly, the panel 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 for it to decide to recommend a review period of the order. 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 militate against the recommendation of a review period.

These behaviours include:

- 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;

The panel found that Mr Jones' conduct towards Pupil B was sexually motivated, and he engaged in sexualised jokes with other former pupils who were children. The panel concluded that his breaches of professional boundaries in these ways did have the potential to cause harm to his former pupils.

The panel recognised that Mr Jones had shown genuine remorse and a degree of insight, but concluded that the seriousness of the findings, and the risk of harm to the public interest presented by them, were such that it would be proportionate to recommend a prohibition order with no 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 some of the allegations proven and found that those proven facts amount to unacceptable professional conduct and conduct that may bring

the profession into disrepute. In this case, the panel has found some of the allegations not proven, and I have therefore put those matters entirely from my mind.

The panel has made a recommendation to the Secretary of State that Mr Antony Jones should be the subject of a prohibition order, with no provision for a review period.

In particular, the panel has found that Mr Jones 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
 - treating pupils with dignity, building relationships rooted in mutual respect, and at all times observing proper boundaries appropriate to a teacher's professional position
 - having regard for the need to safeguard pupils' well-being, in accordance with statutory provisions
- 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 was satisfied that the conduct of Mr Jones involved breaches of the responsibilities and duties set out in statutory guidance Keeping children safe in education (KCSIE).

The panel finds that the conduct of Mr Jones fell significantly short of the standards expected of the profession.

The findings of misconduct are particularly serious as they include findings of sexually motivated conduct towards one pupil and failing to maintain professional boundaries with other pupils.

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 Jones, 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 panel’s findings against Mr Jones, which involved failures to maintain professional boundaries and building inappropriate relationships, including sexually motivated conduct towards one former pupil, and failures in safeguarding, there was a strong public interest consideration in respect of the protection of pupils and former 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 comments on insight and remorse, which the panel has set out as follows:

“The panel recognised that Mr Jones had made admissions to a number of the allegations against him, and expressed a sincere apology and remorse for any pain that he had caused to anyone else by his conduct. He had shown some insight into the poor decision making that led to the allegations against him.

“The panel also noted Mr Jones’ evidence about how he had changed his behaviour since these allegations were made, including by removing himself from social media. It further noted his indication that he had left teaching and had no intention of returning to it.

“However, the panel remained of the view that when giving evidence, Mr Jones had not shown full insight into his conduct or provided sufficient assurance that it would not be repeated should he find himself in a similar situation in future.”

In my judgement, the lack of full 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 that “public confidence in the profession could be seriously weakened if conduct such as that found against Mr Jones were not treated with the utmost seriousness when regulating the conduct of the profession.” I am particularly mindful of the finding of sexually motivated conduct towards a pupil 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 Jones himself. The panel has commented that “Mr Jones was not previously subject to any disciplinary proceedings or warnings, and noted that some former colleagues spoke highly of him.”

A prohibition order would prevent Mr Jones 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 comments concerning the seriousness of Mr Jones’ misconduct conduct in breaching professional boundaries and failing to comply with safeguarding duties, including sexually motivated conduct towards one pupil. The panel has said that “the conduct found against Mr Jones was outside that which could reasonably be tolerated” and that “he had failed to demonstrate an exemplary level of integrity as a teacher, and had behaved in a way that would have a negative influence on pupils and former pupils.”

I have also placed considerable weight on the finding of the panel that Mr Jones had failed to demonstrate full insight into his behaviour.

I have given less weight in my consideration of sanction therefore to the contribution that Mr Jones 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 full 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.

The panel has noted that the Advice states that behaviours that would militate against a review period include serious sexual misconduct and any sexual misconduct involving a child.

I have considered the panel’s comments:

“The panel found that Mr Jones’ conduct towards Pupil B was sexually motivated, and he engaged in sexualised jokes with other former pupils who were children.

The panel concluded that his breaches of professional boundaries in these ways did have the potential to cause harm to his former pupils.

“The panel recognised that Mr Jones had shown genuine remorse and a degree of insight, but concluded that the seriousness of the findings, and the risk of harm to the public interest presented by them, were such that it would be proportionate to recommend a prohibition order with no review period.”

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 misconduct found proved, including sexually motivated conduct towards a pupil, and the lack of full insight.

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 Antony Jones 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 Jones 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 Antony Jones has a right of appeal to the King’s Bench Division of the High Court within 28 days from the date he is given notice of this order.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D Oatley', with a large, sweeping loop at the end.

Decision maker: David Oatley

Date: 27 May 2025

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