



Teaching
Regulation
Agency

Mr Gareth Collins: Professional conduct panel meeting outcome

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

July 2025

Contents

Introduction	3
Allegations	4
Summary of evidence	4
Documents	4
Statement of agreed facts	5
Decision and reasons	5
Findings of fact	5
Panel's recommendation to the Secretary of State	9
Decision and reasons on behalf of the Secretary of State	13

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

Teacher: Gareth Collins

Teacher ref number: 0578840

Teacher date of birth: 6 June 1980

TRA reference: 24147

Date of determination: 8 July 2025

Former employer: Ribston Hall High School, Gloucester

Introduction

A professional conduct panel (“the panel”) of the Teaching Regulation Agency (“the TRA”) convened on 8 July 2025 by way of a virtual meeting, to consider the case of Mr Gareth Collins.

The panel members were Ms Gill Lyon (teacher panellist – in the chair), Ms Laura Mullin (lay panellist) and Mr Adnan Qureshi (lay panellist).

The legal adviser to the panel was Mr James Corrish of Birketts LLP Solicitors.

In advance of the meeting, after taking into consideration the public interest and the interests of justice, the TRA agreed to a request from Mr Collins that the allegations be considered without a hearing. Mr Collins provided a signed statement of agreed facts and admitted unacceptable professional conduct and conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute. The panel considered the case at a meeting without the attendance of the presenting officer; Mr Cyale Bennett of Browne Jacobson LLP, Mr Collins or any representative for Mr Collins.

The meeting took place in private.

Allegations

The panel considered the allegations set out in the notice of meeting dated 31 March 2025.

It was alleged that Mr Collins was guilty of unacceptable professional conduct and/or conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute, in that whilst employed as a teacher at Ribston Hall High School;

1. He engaged in inappropriate and/or unprofessional behaviour with Colleague B by;
 - a) Engaging in sexual intercourse and/or sexual activity with Colleague B on the School premises;
 - b) Engaging in sexual intercourse and/or sexual activity with Colleague B during school hours
 - c) Using his mobile phone to send messages of an explicit nature to Colleague B during school hours.
2. His conduct at allegation 1 was of a sexual nature and sexually motivated.

Mr Collins admitted allegations 1(a), 1(b), 1(c) and 2 as set out in the statement of agreed facts, signed by Mr Collins on 21 January 2025.

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 – page 5

Section 2: Notice of referral, response and notice of meeting – pages 7 to 13b

Section 3: Statement of agreed facts and presenting officer representations – pages 14 to 20

Section 4: TRA documents – pages 21 to 109

Section 5: Teacher documents – pages 110 to 116

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”).

Statement of agreed facts

The panel considered a statement of agreed facts which was signed by Mr Collins on 21 January 2025.

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 Collins was employed as a teacher at Ribston Hall High School (‘the School’) from September 2015 to July 2024.

On 26 June 2024, the School was contacted by a third party regarding Mr Collins and Colleague B engaging in sexual intercourse on the School premises.

Screenshots were taken of the messages between Mr Collins and Colleague B.

Mr Collins admitted that he had engaged in sexual intercourse with Colleague B on the School premises during school hours and that he had sent and received messages on his phone during school hours that were of an explicit sexual nature.

The matter was referred to the TRA on 18 July 2024.

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:

- 1. You engaged in inappropriate and/or unprofessional behaviour with Colleague B by;**
 - a) Engaging in sexual intercourse and/or sexual activity with Colleague B on the School premises;**
 - b) Engaging in sexual intercourse and/or sexual activity with Colleague B during school hours**

c) Using your mobile phone to send messages of an explicit nature to Colleague B during school hours.

The panel noted that Mr Collins admitted allegations 1(a), 1(b) and 1(c).

The panel considered the screenshots of the WhatsApp messages between Mr Collins and Colleague B. The panel noted the following in particular:

[REDACTED]

The panel noted and carefully considered the notes of the investigatory meeting of the School of 8 July 2024 and the disciplinary meeting of 16 July 2024. The panel noted that these documents contained hearsay evidence but considered it was in the interests of justice to admit it and consider it as it was relevant, though it carefully considered the weight it placed upon it.

The panel noted that in the investigatory meeting in response to the questions:

- *“Did you engage in sexual activity and sexual intercourse in school with a member of staff?”* Mr Collins responded *“Yes”*.
- *“Over what period of time and on how many occasions did this happen in school”* Mr Collins responded *“Sporadically – a few years”*
- *“Where did this activity take place in school? Was it in your classroom?”* Mr Collins responded *“Yes, my classroom”*
- *“When did this take place in school – before school, after school, during the school day?”* Mr Collins responded *“GC: Large majority after school – also in gain time”*

Also, when confronted with copies of the messages of which the panel have since had sight, the panel noted that in that meeting in response to the questions:

- *“Did you send/receive these messages?”* Mr Collins responded *“Yes”*
- *“Who did you send the messages to?”* Mr Collins identified Colleague B
- *“Who did you receive the messages in these photos from?”* Mr Collins identified Colleague B
- *“Are the arrangements detailed in the messages a representation of liaisons that took place in school?”* Mr Collins responded *“Yes”*

The panel also noted that in that investigatory meeting Mr Collins identified Colleague B as the individual with whom he had engaged in sexual intercourse and sexual activity on School premises.

The panel also noted that Mr Collins was clear in that investigatory meeting that no one had seen them engage in these activities.

The panel noted that during his disciplinary meeting Mr Collins admitted that he had engaged in sexual activities and sexual intercourse on the School site during working hours with a member of teaching staff. Mr Collins also appeared to admit in this meeting that some messages were sent during school hours.

The panel found allegations 1(a), 1(b) and 1(c) proven on the balance of probabilities.

2. Your conduct at allegation 1 was of a sexual nature and sexually motivated.

The panel noted that Mr Collins admitted allegation 2.

The panel's attention was drawn to section 78 *Sexual Offences Act 2003* and to the cases of *Sait v The General Medical Council [2018]*, *Basson v General Medical Council [2018]* and *The General Medical Council v Haris [2020] EWHC 2518*.

The panel considered whether the conduct was sexually motivated. It noted that in *Basson* it was stated that, "A sexual motive means that the conduct was done either in pursuit of sexual gratification or in pursuit of a sexual relationship".

The panel was also mindful of the Court of Appeal's conclusion in *General Medical Council v Haris [2021] EWCA Civ 763*.

The panel again considered the allegations which it had found proved and the evidence from which they derived.

The panel found that on the evidence, Mr Collins had clearly pursued a sexual relationship with Colleague B and that there was sufficient evidence to prove that his conduct was sexually motivated.

The panel felt that Mr Collins was clearly seeking sexual gratification from his conduct with Colleague B, and had engaged in sexual intercourse with her on the School premises. The panel therefore considered that Mr Collins' conduct as found proved at allegation 1 was sexually motivated.

The panel felt that the conduct of Mr Collins was inherently sexual in nature, in that he engaged in sexual intercourse on the School premises during school hours and exchanged messages that were sexually explicit in nature. The panel considered that Mr Collins' conduct as found proven at allegation 1 was therefore sexual in nature.

The panel found allegation 2 proven.

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

Having found all of the allegations 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.

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 first considered whether the conduct of Mr Collins, in relation to the facts found proved, involved breaches of the Teachers’ Standards.

The panel considered that, by reference to Part 2, Mr Collins 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
 - [...] 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 also considered whether Mr Collins’ 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 were relevant.

The panel noted Mr Collins’ various breaches of the Teachers’ Standards. The panel considered that Mr Collins would have been well aware that his actions on school premises constituted very serious and repeated acts of misconduct and that Mr Collins would have known that they were. The panel considered that, noting his repeated indications that he and Colleague B were cautious not to be discovered, the implications for any pupil who had discovered them could have been serious and that he had clearly

not considered those implications sufficiently. The panel considered that he had fallen very far short of the standard of behaviour which was required of him as a teacher.

For these reasons, the panel was satisfied that the conduct of Mr Collins 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 Collins was guilty of unacceptable professional conduct.

In relation to whether Mr Collins' 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.

The panel using its knowledge, skills and experience considered that the public would simply find Mr Collins actions, especially in his engaging in sexual intercourse on school premises during school hours, to be entirely unacceptable and irresponsible and undermining of the profession.

In considering the issue of disrepute, the panel also considered whether Mr Collins' conduct displayed behaviours associated with any of the offences in the list that begins on page 12 of the Advice.

As set out above in the panel's findings as to whether Mr Collins was guilty of unacceptable professional conduct, the panel found that none of these offences were relevant.

The panel considered that Mr Collins' conduct could potentially damage the public's perception of a teacher.

For these reasons, the panel found that Mr Collins' actions constituted 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 safeguarding and wellbeing of pupils and the protection of other members of the public and the maintenance of public confidence in the profession and declaring and upholding proper standards of conduct.

In light of the panel's findings against Mr Collins, which involved engaging in repeated sexual activity during the school day on school premises at a time when he was expected to be working as a teacher there was a strong public interest engaged in the safeguarding and wellbeing of pupils.

Similarly, the panel considered that public confidence in the profession could be seriously weakened if conduct such as that found against Mr Collins was 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 Collins was outside that which could reasonably be tolerated.

In addition to the public interest considerations set out above, the panel went on to consider whether there was a public interest in retaining Mr Collins in the profession.

Whilst the panel noted that it was said that Mr Collins had an unblemished 18 years in the profession there was no material evidence of his abilities as a teacher in the evidence before it. The panel considered that the adverse public interest considerations outweighed any interest in retaining Mr Collins in the profession, since his behaviour fundamentally breached the standard of conduct expected of a teacher.

The panel considered carefully the seriousness of the behaviour, noting that the Advice states that the expectation of both the public and pupils, is that members of the teaching profession maintain an exemplary level of integrity and ethical standards at all times.

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 Collins.

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;
- abuse of position or trust (particularly involving pupils);
- 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;

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.

There was no evidence that Mr Collins' actions were not deliberate.

There was no evidence to suggest that Mr Collins was acting under extreme duress, e.g. a physical threat or significant intimidation.

The panel found no evidence that Mr Collins demonstrated exceptionally high standards in his personal and professional conduct or had contributed significantly to the education sector. The panel had no evidence as to whether or not the incident was out of character.

The panel considered the written evidence of Mr Collins, where he expressed regret for his actions. The panel recognised that it was hearsay but decided that it was in the interests of justice that it be admitted and considered as the only evidence Mr Collins had provided. Mr Collins stated that he recognises that his behaviour fell short of the professional standards expected of an educator.

The panel noted that Mr Collins admitted the facts of the matter when confronted with them. Mr Collins stated that at the time he [REDACTED].

Mr Collins stated that since his dismissal, [REDACTED] he deeply regrets the choices that led him to this point. He stated that he is seeking to make a fresh start and is open to any professional oversight measures, such as probationary teaching, mentoring or ethics training to demonstrate his commitment to professional conduct.

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 severity of the consequences for Mr Collins 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 Collins. The breaches of the Teachers' Standards and the repeated serious misconduct including his having had sexual intercourse during school hours on the School premises with a colleague 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 certain types of case where, if relevant, the public interest will have greater relevance and weigh in favour of not offering a review period.

Having carefully considered this the panel concluded that none of the listed characteristics were engaged by the panel's findings.

The Advice also indicates that there are certain other types of cases where it is likely that the public interest will have greater relevance and weigh in favour of a longer period before a review is considered appropriate. None of the listed characteristics were engaged by the panel's findings.

The panel noted that the teacher has shown limited insight into his actions and some remorse. The panel noted that Mr Collins had admitted the facts when confronted with the evidence. The panel considered the risk of repetition of this conduct to be relatively low but had seen no evidence as to steps taken by Mr Collins to identify and understand his motivations and triggers or seek to establish how he would ensure that his behaviour would not be repeated.

In all the circumstances the panel noted that, however serious and entirely inappropriate the misconduct, these were actions taken with another consenting adult which caused no third party any direct harm (though they had the potential to do so). The panel could envisage a scenario where Mr Collins could return to the profession in the future and noted his stated hope to do so.

The panel decided that 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 provisions for a review 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 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 the allegations proven and found that those proven facts amount to unacceptable professional conduct and/or conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute.

The panel has made a recommendation to the Secretary of State that Mr Gareth Collins should be the subject of a prohibition order, with a review period of 2 years.

In particular, the panel has found that Mr Collins 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
 - [...] 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 finds that the conduct of Mr Collins fell significantly short of the standards expected of the profession.

The findings of misconduct are serious as they include a finding of engaging in sexual intercourse and/or activity with a colleague on school premises and during school hours.

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 or 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 Collins, 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 light of the panel’s findings against Mr Collins, which involved engaging in repeated sexual activity during the school day on school premises at a time when he was expected to be working as a teacher there was a strong public interest engaged in 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 comments on insight and remorse, which the panel has set out as follows:

“The panel noted that the teacher has shown limited insight into his actions and some remorse. The panel noted that Mr Collins had admitted the facts when confronted with the evidence. The panel considered the risk of repetition of this conduct to be relatively low but had seen no evidence as to steps taken by Mr Collins to identify and understand his motivations and triggers or seek to establish how he would ensure that his behaviour would not be repeated.”

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:

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

I am particularly mindful of the finding that the teacher engaged in sexual intercourse on school premises during school hours 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 or 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 Collins himself. The panel has observed:

“Whilst the panel noted that it was said that Mr Collins had an unblemished 18 years in the profession there was no material evidence of his abilities as a teacher in the evidence before it.”

“The panel found no evidence that Mr Collins demonstrated exceptionally high standards in his personal and professional conduct or had contributed significantly to the education sector. The panel had no evidence as to whether or not the incident was out of character.”

A prohibition order would prevent Mr Collins 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 comment that the “breaches of the Teachers’ Standards and the repeated serious misconduct including his having had sexual intercourse during school hours on the School premises with a colleague were significant factors in forming” its recommendation that prohibition was both proportionate and appropriate.

I have also placed considerable weight on the panel's finding that Mr Collins had not demonstrated full insight and remorse.

I have given less weight in my consideration of sanction therefore to the contribution that Mr Collins 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 and remorse, 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 a 2-year review period.

I have considered the panel's comment about the limited insight and remorse shown by Mr Collins. I have also considered the panel's comment:

“In all the circumstances the panel noted that, however serious and entirely inappropriate the misconduct, these were actions taken with another consenting

adult which caused no third party any direct harm (though they had the potential to do so). The panel could envisage a scenario where Mr Collins could return to the profession in the future and noted his stated hope to do so.”

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, factors mean that I agree with the panel that allowing a 2-year review period is sufficient to achieve the aim of maintaining public confidence in the profession. These elements are serious nature of the misconduct found and the lack of full insight and remorse.

I have decided therefore that 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.

This means that Mr Gareth Collins is prohibited from teaching indefinitely and cannot teach in any school, sixth form college, relevant youth accommodation or children’s home in England. He may apply for the prohibition order to be set aside, but not until 17 July 2027, 2 years from the date of this order at the earliest. This is not an automatic right to have the prohibition order removed. If he does apply, a panel will meet to consider whether the prohibition order should be set aside. Without a successful application, Mr Collins remains prohibited from teaching indefinitely.

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

Mr Gareth Collins has a right of appeal to 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 flourish at the end.

Decision maker: David Oatley

Date: 9 July 2025

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