



Teaching
Regulation
Agency

Mr Kabir Zafar: Professional conduct panel hearing outcome

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

September 2025

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

Teacher: Mr Kabir Zafar

TRA reference: 23276

Date of determination: 25 September 2025

Former employer: All Saints Catholic College, Huddersfield

Introduction

A professional conduct panel (“the panel”) of the Teaching Regulation Agency (“the TRA”) convened on 22 to 25 September 2025 by way of a virtual hearing, to consider the case of Mr Kabir Zafar.

The panel members were Ms Rosemary Joyce (teacher panellist – in the chair), Mrs Emma Hendry (lay panellist) and Mr Terry Hyde (former teacher panellist).

The legal adviser to the panel was Mr Nicholas West of Birketts LLP solicitors.

The presenting officer for the TRA was Mr Lee Bridges, instructed by Kingsley Napley solicitors.

Mr Zafar 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 8 May 2025.

It was alleged that Mr Zafar was guilty of unacceptable professional conduct and/or conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute in that whilst working as a Faculty Leader in ICT at All Saints Catholic College:

1. On or around 24 May 2023, in relation to the OCR Cambridge Nationals Creative IMedia Units R082 and/or R083, he:
 - a) asked and/or allowed at least one pupil to amend their work after submission of marks to OCR, when he knew or ought to have known this was not allowed;
 - b) provided feedback and/or assistance to at least one pupil, when he knew or ought to have known this was not allowed;
 - c) added to and/or edited at least one pupils' work after submission of marks to OCR, when he knew or ought to have known this was not allowed.
2. His conduct at paragraph 1:
 - a) was dishonest;
 - b) lacked integrity.

There was no admission of facts by Mr Zafar in respect of allegations 1(a), 1(b), 1(c), 2(a) or 2(b), prior to the hearing.

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 Hearing and response – pages 6 to 14

Section 3: TRA witness statements – pages 15 to 37

Section 4: TRA documents – pages 38 to 391

Section 5: Teacher documents – pages 392 onwards

In addition, the panel agreed to accept the following:

Mr Zafar's late bundle of documents dated 12 September 2025 (including four mp3 audio recordings) and a further 21 separate documents provided by Richard Woffenden, a number of which were duplicated.

The panel members confirmed that they had read all of the documents and listened to all of the audio recordings within the bundle, in advance of the hearing and the additional documents that the panel decided to admit.

In the consideration of this case, the panel had regard to the Procedures.

Witnesses

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

Witness A – [REDACTED]

Witness B – [REDACTED]

Witness C – [REDACTED]

Pupil B

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 Zafar commenced employment at All Saints Catholic College ('the School') on 1 September 2022.

Mr Zafar taught an OCR Cambridge Nationals in Creative IMedia and set students coursework.

On 26 April 2023, an extension was granted to Mr Zafar to submit the coursework marks to the exam board, OCR. The new deadline was set for 22 May 2023.

Mr Zafar was unwell on 22 May 2023. He returned to School on 23 May 2023 and submitted the coursework marks on the morning of 24 May 2023. Later in the day, a pupil told Witness C that they had been removed from an afternoon lesson to add to their coursework, and the School's IT department found evidence to suggest that some coursework had been added to and altered by pupils after the marks had been submitted by Mr Zafar.

On 26 May 2023, Mr Zafar was preparing a sample of pupils' work to be submitted to the exam board in the presence of Witness A. Witness A noted that some of the paper copies of pupils' work included Mr Zafar's annotated handwritten feedback which she considered to exceed the level of permitted feedback and assistance. On further investigation, Witness A identified certain passages Mr Zafar had written in purple pen were incorporated word for word in the printed versions of the pupils' coursework that Mr Zafar had prepared for submission to the exam board.

On 5 June 2023, Witness A and Witness B compared the work that Mr Zafar had collated to be submitted as part of the sample work to the exam board, with the work Mr Zafar suggested he had used to base his marks from the pupils' live drive from the School's IT system and a copy of the pupils' drive which Mr Zafar copied in order to view outside of the School's premises. Witness A and Witness B found discrepancies, including added feedback and more detailed documents.

On 6 June 2023, the School contacted OCR to advise of possible malpractice.

On 27 February 2024, the matter was referred to 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:

1. On or around 24 May 2023, in relation to the OCR Cambridge Nationals Creative iMedia Units R082 and/or R083, you:

- a) asked and/or allowed at least one pupil to amend their work after submission of marks to OCR, when you knew or ought to have known this was not allowed;**

The panel considered the contemporaneous documentary evidence in the form of written statements taken from Pupil A, Pupil B, Pupil C, Pupil D and Pupil E.

Pupil A stated that on 24 May 2023, *"Mr Zafar came to my class to find my file/work as he couldn't find it. We went to his class to try locate and go through my files. I did a re-write up of what I had lost and placed it in my work. Sir directed me to quickly do the piece on 2D/3D to complete as the work was lost"* in their statement dated 26 May 2023. Pupil B stated, *"On Wednesday 24th, I stayed after school for an hour and did remaining work required for iMedia"*. Pupil D stated that on 25 May 2023, he was *"picked up by Mr Zafar period three to finish off a task for LO3"*. Pupil E stated, *"Mr Zafar came and picked me and Pupil F up out of sports studies and took us to his class and he asked us both to print and email him bits of our coursework from RO82 and 83"*.

The panel was mindful that it did not have an opportunity to test the evidence of Pupil A, Pupil C, Pupil D or Pupil E and it should consider how much weight to give this hearsay evidence. The panel was able to question Witness C who confirmed that she was present whilst these pupils wrote their statements on 26 May 2023. Witness C stated that she was confident that the pupils were not instructed what to write, they wrote their statements separately and there was no possibility of collusion. The panel therefore considered that these statements could be given appropriate weight, despite containing hearsay evidence.

The panel considered the oral evidence and written statement of Pupil B. Pupil B's written statement dated 17 December 2024 stated, *"On 24 May 2023, Kabir Zafar asked me to stay behind and complete some work required for iMedia...I believe that I was aware that the deadline for the submission of this work had passed, however, I did not consider this at the time...I remember that I took a screenshot of some work that I had done from this session. The screenshot was to form part of my iMedia work and was to be submitted with the rest of my work. The date (24 May 2023) was visible in the corner of the screenshot. Kabir Zafar asked me to crop out the date of this screenshot. I did not ask him why he asked me to do this, however, I commented to him that this was "dodgy".*

The panel considered Pupil B to be an honest witness who accepted that his recollection was limited during questioning. The panel did not consider that Pupil B had any motive to lie in his evidence and accepted that it was more likely than not that Mr Zafar had asked Pupil B to complete some work for his iMedia course on 24 May 2023, after marks had been submitted by Mr Zafar.

The panel considered the written statement of Mr Zafar which states, *"following my realisation that some of the paper copies were missing and the electronic copies had gone missing, I sent students to the IT technicians. The students told me that the technicians couldn't find the work and so I panicked and without thinking rationally, I let the students go on the computers to print out their work. They looked for the work and couldn't find it so I told them to find it or do it again. I then realised what I had said and them told to stop and said that I was going to contact OCR and seek guidance as nothing like this had ever happened to me before".*

The panel noted that Mr Zafar's statement confirms that he accepted OCR's sanctions, but he added he did not intentionally act in the manner alleged at allegation 1(a). As it was unclear whether this amounted to an admission by Mr Zafar, the panel carefully considered all of the available evidence and reached its own determination.

The panel considered the oral evidence and written statement of Witness A, who stated that pupils are required to save their coursework under their username so that the college have a copy, and the work is then sent to the exam board either online or via paper copy by the teacher or exams officer. Witness A explained that all teachers have access to pupil drives and so a teacher would simply have to go into a coursework folder to find the

pupils' work. She stated that the teacher is required to mark the coursework and then enter a mark into the exam board tracker, after which the exam board will ask to see either all of the students' work or a sample.

Witness A stated that on 26 May 2023, she and Witness B spoke with Mr Zafar who told them that some of the coursework had gone missing and as a result, he had made pupils redo it. She confirmed that once the grades have been submitted, the work cannot be re-done by pupils and there is a specific form to report that the work is lost or missing. Witness A stated that this form confirms that the work existed, and that the teacher had marked it, but does not entitle the pupil to re-do the work. She stated that Mr Zafar did not complete this form.

Witness A explained that on 5 June 2023, Mr Zafar brought in all pupil coursework for OCR Level 1/Level 2 Cambridge Nationals in Creative IMedia units R082 and R083. She stated that this was printed and ready to be sent to the exam board to moderate.

Witness A stated that she and Witness B reviewed the sample prepared by Mr Zafar and cross referenced it with the versions in the pupils' electronic folders, which were the versions used for marking. She confirmed that the sample should have been a direct print out of what was contained in the pupils' electronic folders. Witness A stated that she and Witness B found discrepancies between the prepared sample and the version of the pupils' work in their electronic folders, noting that some of the coursework included in the prepared sample did not exist in the electronic folders.

Witness A provided examples of work this had impacted, stating that in Pupil I's prepared sample there was a 'workplan', which could not be found in their electronic folder. She stated that some of the work in the prepared sample was more detailed than the version in the electronic folder, for example Pupil A's 'test table' in the sample had additional information and was not the same document as in their electronic folder. Witness A stated that she could not confirm who had made the changes.

Witness A confirmed in her oral evidence that she assisted Mr Zafar to input and submit the marks for the R082 and R083 courses during their line management meeting in period 1 on 24 May 2023. Witness A confirmed that this would have been completed in the first 15 minutes of the meeting which started at 9.20am on 24 May 2023.

The panel considered the oral evidence and written statement of Witness B, who stated that during a meeting with Mr Zafar on 26 May 2023, Mr Zafar confirmed that pupils completed work after the marks were submitted.

Witness B stated that he asked Mr Zafar to send him the trackers for all three units of the course which showed the breakdown on how marks were awarded. He stated that he chased Mr Zafar, and eventually on the 28 May 2023 Mr Zafar sent him two of the three

trackers and claimed he could not find the third. Witness B stated that Mr Zafar was told to prepare a sample of the work.

Witness B stated that he and Witness A reviewed the sample and noticed clear inconsistencies as between the work from within the sample and the pupils' electronic folders containing the work that the marks had been based upon.

The panel considered the oral and written evidence of Witness C, Exams Officer at the School, who stated that teachers would send her marks to be uploaded on to the exam board's mark tracker. She stated that OCR's deadline for the Creative IMedia course that Mr Zafar taught was extended to all schools in Autumn 2023. On 26 April 2023, she informed Mr Zafar of this via email and he asked to apply for the extension, and so the deadline was extended to 22 May 2023.

Witness C stated that on 22 May 2023 Mr Zafar was off sick, and so on 23 May 2023 she emailed him chasing him to put his marks into the board's secure platform. She stated that in the morning of 24 May 2023, Mr Zafar told her that he had inputted the grades, but they had not saved.

Witness C stated that in the afternoon of 24 May 2023, she saw Pupil A who had not been in lesson, and he informed her that he had been with Mr Zafar doing coursework. She stated that this was confusing as the marks had already been submitted.

Witness C stated that the IT Manager reviewed the School's systems and found some files had increased in size between 24 May 2023 and 25 May 2023 indicating that work had been added to and altered on 24 May 2023, after the marks had been inputted that morning. The panel found Witness C to be a truthful and compelling witness.

The panel noted evidence produced by Mr Zafar, which was stated to have been written by Pupil A, suggesting that Witness B had told them what to write in their statements. The panel accepted the evidence of Witness C that Pupil A's written statement dated 26 May 2023 was written by him, without any assistance, and the copy of the statement that the panel reviewed had not been amended by Witness B, save for some yellow highlighting, which did not affect the content of the statement. The panel also accepted Pupil B's oral evidence that their statement had not been amended since they wrote it.

Based on the available evidence, the panel found that on 24 May 2023, Mr Zafar had asked and/or allowed at least one pupil to amend their work after the submission of marks to OCR. The panel noted that Mr Zafar was an experienced teacher who had taught this subject previously and his evidence to OCR indicated he had studied the OCR specification. The panel therefore considered Mr Zafar reasonably understood the expectations and requirements for the OCR Cambridge Nationals Creative IMedia Units R082 and R083 and he therefore knew or ought to have known that this was not allowed.

The panel therefore found allegation 1(a) proved.

b) provided feedback and/or assistance to at least one pupil, when you knew or ought to have known this was not allowed;

The panel considered the OCR Level 1/Level 2 Cambridge Nationals in Creative IMedia guidance and noted that the teacher is allowed to *'give general feedback and support'* but is not allowed to *'provide specific advice and guidance'*.

The panel considered the oral evidence and written statement of Witness A, who stated that she saw print outs of pupils' coursework with Mr Zafar's feedback in purple handwriting. Witness A explained that she was concerned about the level of detail Mr Zafar had provided in his feedback. She stated that the level of feedback Mr Zafar had included did not meet the criteria in the specification of what a teacher is allowed to do.

Witness A described in her oral evidence some images of what she considered to be Mr Zafar's handwritten comments on students' work. Witness A noted that some of these were substantial paragraphs of feedback which had then been copied on to amended versions that were included in pupils' folders to be submitted to the exam board. The panel considered Witness A's evidence to be entirely credible and she was able to explain in clear terms what level of feedback would be permissible, what may be considered to be a 'grey area' (which she considered would still be inappropriate) and what would amount to wholly 'improper assistance'. The panel accepted Witness A's oral evidence that some of the feedback provided by Mr Zafar in handwritten purple pen absolutely went beyond a potential grey area and amounted to improper assistance.

The panel noted there were a number of examples where Mr Zafar had provided full paragraphs of text in his handwritten feedback which was incorporated and subsequently submitted as part of the pupils' coursework. In particular, some of the comments that Witness A believed Mr Zafar to have added to the work to provide improper assistance to the pupils, included:

- *"change title"* and he then provided a suggested title
- On a student's slide regarding advertising, *"types of graphics can be found in a number of areas like newspapers, magazines poster, bill boards, websites and on social media..."*
- On a student's slide regarding promoting, *"definition. Images are to promote and similar to images to advertise but mostly involve immediate incentives or are used to promote campaigns or product where new or old. This information has to be generally easy to see or create, for example the audience has a clear understanding of what is being promoted."*

The panel considered the oral evidence and written statement of Pupil B who stated in their written statement dated 17 December 2024, *"I have a recollection that Kabir Zafar instructed me on what to write in my work. I cannot remember what the work was about,*

nor exactly what he told me to write". During Pupil B's oral evidence, he confirmed that Mr Zafar would *"usually just give me a sentence or two to write if especially clueless"*. Pupil B confirmed that the level of guidance Mr Zafar provided was different to other teachers and he would sometimes *"stand beside me and tell me what to write"*.

The panel noted Mr Zafar alleged that the work Witness A believed to include an inappropriate level of feedback was *"Pupil A's practice tasks and not his final work"*. The panel accepted Witness A's oral evidence during questioning that she recognised the distinctive images on Pupil A's work which was also included in the printed sample of Pupil A's work prepared by Mr Zafar for submission to the exam board so this could not have amounted to a practice task.

Based on the available evidence, the panel was satisfied, on the balance of probabilities, that Mr Zafar had provided feedback and/or assistance to at least one pupil for the OCR Cambridge Nationals Creative IMedia Units R082 or R083. The panel noted that Mr Zafar had experience of teaching these courses and knew or ought to have known what level of feedback and assistance is permissible and the level of assistance he provided was likely to amount to "improper assistance".

The panel therefore found allegation 1(b) proven.

c) added to and/or edited at least one pupils' work after submission of marks to OCR, when you knew or ought to have known this was not allowed.

The panel considered the oral evidence and written statement of Witness A who was asked about who may have made the amendments to pupils' work that she had identified. Witness A confirmed in her oral evidence that she *"wouldn't like to guess"* as it could have been that a student *"printed and accidentally deleted"* their work for submission.

The panel considered the oral and written evidence of Witness C who stated that the IT Manager reviewed the School's systems and found some document files had increased in size between 24 May 2023 and 25 May 2023 indicating that work had been added to and altered by pupils on 24 May 2023, after the marks had been inputted that morning. However, the panel considered it had not been made clear which files had increased in size. The oral evidence of Witness A and Witness B was consistent in explaining that pupils' electronic folders were unstructured and *"chaotic"* and there was no evidence available to the panel that such files formed part of the coursework that was submitted by Mr Zafar for the OCR Cambridge Nationals Creative IMedia Units R082 or R083.

The panel noted that Mr Zafar did not admit adding to or editing pupils' work after submission of marks on 24 May 2023. There was evidence to suggest that he accepted instructing pupils to amend their work which he stated he then realised was wrong and asked them to stop.

The panel considered that there was insufficient evidence to enable it to find, on the balance of probabilities, that any additions or edits to pupils' work after the submission of marks on 24 May 2023 were done by Mr Zafar.

The panel therefore did not find allegation 1(c) proven.

2. Your conduct at paragraph 1:

a) was dishonest;

b) lacked integrity.

The panel considered whether Mr Zafar had acted dishonestly and, in doing so, had regard to the case of *Ivey v Genting Casinos (UK) Ltd t/a Crockford*.

The panel firstly sought to ascertain the actual state of Mr Zafar's knowledge or belief as to the facts. The panel considered that Mr Zafar had knowingly permitted amendments to be made to pupils' coursework after the marks had already been submitted to the exam board. Given that Mr Zafar was responsible for submitting the marks himself, the panel could find no alternative explanation and concluded that he must have been aware that his conduct was dishonest.

The panel noted that Mr Zafar had repeatedly been advised when the date for submitting marks was and he knew or ought to have known the expectations of the exam board. The panel considered the oral evidence of Witness B and Witness C that Mr Zafar had taken pupils out of lessons without permission and in breach of the School's policies and procedures which suggested that he was trying to hide what he was doing.

The panel also accepted the oral and written evidence of Pupil B that Mr Zafar had instructed him to crop out the date from a screenshot that was taken on 24 May 2023 (after the submission of grades to the exam board) so that this screenshot could be submitted to the exam board as part of the sample of work. The panel noted that Mr Zafar's conduct in instructing Pupil B to crop out the date was inherently dishonest.

The panel accepted the oral evidence of Witness A who confirmed that she didn't believe Mr Zafar was "*deliberately trying to cheat*" in order to significantly inflate the pupils' grades. Witness A confirmed that the highest mark awarded was equivalent to a grade C and seven of the 10 students did not pass with the equivalent of a grade C or above. The panel accepted Witness A's oral evidence that Mr Zafar's conduct was to enable the pupils to be in a position to submit some work, not to significantly inflate their grades.

The panel concluded that Mr Zafar's conduct as found proven at allegation 1 was intended to enhance the appearance of the coursework being sent to the exam board, despite those samples not reflecting the actual work used by Mr Zafar to provide pupils'

grades. The panel was therefore satisfied that Mr Zafar had acted dishonestly, and that his conduct would be dishonest according to the standards of ordinary decent people.

The panel then went on to consider whether Mr Zafar had failed to act with integrity. The panel considered the case of *Wingate & Anor v The Solicitors Regulation Authority*. The panel was provided with evidence that Mr Zafar had allowed students to add to their coursework after the marks had been submitted. The panel had sight of the exam board guidance which confirmed that this was not allowed. The panel also noted that Mr Zafar had regular line management meetings and there was therefore an opportunity for him to raise any concerns regarding the completion and submission of coursework.

The panel was mindful that professionals are not expected to be “*paragons of virtue*”. However, the panel was satisfied that Mr Zafar had failed to act within the higher standards expected of a teacher by deliberately allowing students to add to their coursework after their marks had been submitted. The panel noted that pupils were expected to sign an authentication statement before submitting their coursework, and Mr Zafar’s actions in allowing them to amend their work after their grades had been submitted compromised the pupils’ integrity unfairly.

The panel was therefore satisfied that Mr Zafar’s conduct, as found proven, lacked integrity.

The panel found allegations 2(a) and 2(b) proven.

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 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 Zafar, in relation to the facts found proved, involved breaches of the Teachers’ Standards.

The panel considered that, by reference to Part 2, Mr Zafar 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
- Teachers must have proper and professional regard for the ethos, policies and practices of the school in which they teach...

The panel also considered whether Mr Zafar's 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 type exist, a panel is likely to conclude that an individual's conduct would amount to unacceptable professional conduct.

The panel found that the offence of serious dishonesty was relevant. The panel considered that Mr Zafar's conduct as found proved, sought to deliberately subvert the integrity of a nationally accredited controlled assessment which forms an integral part of the nation's education system.

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

In relation to whether Mr Zafar's 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 Zafar's 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 Zafar was guilty of unacceptable professional conduct, the panel found that the offence of serious dishonesty was relevant.

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

For these reasons, the panel found that Mr Zafar's 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 maintenance of public confidence in the profession, declaring and upholding proper standards of conduct and that prohibition strikes the right balance between the rights of the teacher and the public interest, if they are in conflict.

In light of the panel's findings against Mr Zafar, which involved asking and/or allowing pupils to amend their work after submission of marks to OCR when he knew or ought to have known that this was not allowed and providing feedback and/or assistance to at least one pupil when he knew or ought to have known that this was not allowed, there was a strong public interest consideration in declaring and upholding proper standards of conduct.

Similarly, the panel considered that public confidence in the profession could be seriously weakened if conduct such as that found against Mr Zafar 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 Zafar 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 Zafar in the profession. The panel was provided with no evidence to attest to Mr Zafar's ability as an educator.

The panel considered the character evidence provided by Mr Zafar from two previous colleagues, noting that it was unclear whether the referees were aware of the allegations in these proceedings.

Firstly, the panel considered a reference from Rosalind Clarke, retired Division Leader:

- *“During our time working together, I found Kabir to be a reliable and conscientious teacher. He demonstrated a commitment to helping students reach their academic potential and took his role as a teacher seriously. His focus was always on supporting students in achieving the best results they could, particularly by offering clear instruction and being available when students needed extra help”*
- *“As a colleague, he was approachable, professional, and respectful. Kabir contributed to the school community, and was well-regarded by both staff and students”*

Secondly, the panel considered a reference from Zed Maqsood, former Head of Mathematics:

- *“I found Kabir to be an extremely hard-working and dedicated teacher always committed to his job and doing his best to support students in every way that he could”*
- *“On occasion I would often find him at work on a Saturday as I used to take my young children to Saturday morning swim class based at the school. His manner and conduct was exemplary. He was well liked and respected by staff and students alike and was very approachable and down to earth. He was a valuable asset to the school”*

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 Zafar. The panel was mindful of the need to strike the right balance between the rights of the teacher and the public interest.

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 Zafar. 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;
- dishonesty or a lack of integrity...; and
- deliberate action in serious contravention of requirements for the conduct of an examination or assessment leading to an externally awarded qualification or national assessment (or deliberate collusion in or deliberate concealment of such

action) particularly where the action had, or realistically had the potential to have, a significant impact on the outcome of the examination assessment;

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 Zafar's actions were not deliberate. However, the panel accepted Mr Zafar's evidence that he was not deliberately intending to deceive in respect of allegations 1(a) and 1(b), and his judgement was clouded by a number of different pressures.

There was no evidence to suggest that Mr Zafar was acting under extreme duress. However, the panel recognised the pressures that Mr Zafar was facing which led to his dishonest decision making and misconduct in May 2023. The panel accepted the written evidence of Mr Zafar that he joined a challenging class and course. Pupil B provided oral evidence that Mr Zafar "*seemed quite stressed all of the time*" and the class were often "*pushing the boundaries*" and would "*avoid doing work*". The panel accepted Mr Zafar's written evidence that he inherited a challenging cohort, with little to no induction in his role as a Head of Faculty and noted that there were issues regarding access to necessary documents due to GDPR which affected his ability to track pupils' progress. The panel also heard oral evidence from Witness A and Witness B about the chaotic nature of the work that the class had completed.

The panel accepted Witness A's oral evidence that Mr Zafar did have regular and supportive line management meetings and he did have an opportunity to raise concerns but did not do so, providing necessary reassurance. Witness A provided detailed minutes from these meetings evidencing positive management support and she provided two specific examples of support in assisting Mr Zafar to input the grades on 24 May 2023 and sitting with him to assist with the collation of the sample evidence of work to submit to the exam board.

Although the panel considered Mr Zafar's conduct to have been enormously disruptive to the School, it noted that Mr Zafar showed some level of insight, and this was an isolated incident that was limited to a short space of time. The panel was conscious that the wider context cannot be underestimated, and noted that Mr Zafar now recognises this stating, "*what I have learned from this experience is rather than trying to fix or deal with things myself. I should go straight to the exam officer and talk to an OCR Exam Officer myself and seek their guidance*".

The panel was satisfied that Mr Zafar would recognise similar issues in the future and be able to ask for support to avoid a situation like this arising again. The panel therefore identified that it was unlikely there would be a risk of repetition as it was confident that Mr

Zafar had genuinely learnt from his actions. The panel particularly noted that Mr Zafar had a previously unblemished disciplinary record, and this was an isolated series of events that took place over a short period. The panel further accepted that a very particular set of circumstances and external pressures [REDACTED] which impaired his judgement on or around 24 May 2023.

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.

With the case of *Wallace v Secretary of State for Education* in mind, the panel critically considered proportionality. The panel accepted that, regarding allegations 1(a) and 1(b), Mr Zafar's conduct was not for personal gain. The panel noted the oral evidence of Witness A who confirmed that she didn't believe Mr Zafar was "*deliberately trying to cheat*" in order to inflate the pupils' grades. The panel accepted Witness A's oral evidence that Mr Zafar's conduct was to enable the pupils to be in a position to submit some work, not to inflate their grades. The panel therefore concluded that the misconduct, although serious, fell at the lower end of the scale of severity.

The panel was of the view that, applying the standard of the ordinary intelligent citizen, the recommendation of no prohibition order would be both a proportionate and an appropriate response. Given that the nature and severity of the behaviour were at the less serious end of the possible spectrum and, having considered the mitigating factors that were present, the panel determined that a recommendation for a prohibition order would not be appropriate in this case. The panel considered that the publication of the adverse findings it had made was sufficient to send an appropriate message to Mr Zafar as to the standards of behaviour that are not acceptable, and the publication would meet the public interest requirement of declaring proper standards of the profession.

The panel was of the view that prohibition was not proportionate and publication of the adverse findings was a less intrusive measure which it could use without unacceptably compromising the achievement of the objectives in relation to public confidence and standards. The panel also drew particular attention to the fact that Mr Zafar was prohibited from involvement in OCR qualifications for a period of three years. The panel accepted that OCR's sanction, coupled with the publication of the adverse findings by the TRA, was appropriate and sufficient to uphold public confidence in the profession.

Taking all of the circumstances into account, the panel decided that the public interest considerations weighed in favour against prohibition. The panel considered that prohibition would not produce any material change or serve any useful purpose in the circumstances.

The panel concluded that the publication of the adverse findings it had made was sufficient to send an appropriate message to Mr Zafar as to the standards of behaviour

that are not acceptable, and the publication would meet the public interest requirement of declaring proper standards of the profession.

Decision and reasons on behalf of the Secretary of State

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

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 one of the allegations not proven (allegation 1.c), and. I have therefore put that matter entirely from my mind.

The panel has made a recommendation to the Secretary of State that Mr Kabir Zafar should not be the subject of a prohibition order. The panel has recommended that the findings of unacceptable professional conduct and conduct likely to bring the profession into disrepute should be published and that such an action is proportionate and in the public interest.

In particular, the panel has found that Mr Zafar 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
- Teachers must have proper and professional regard for the ethos, policies and practices of the school in which they teach...

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

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 Zafar, 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 made no comments on whether the actions of Mr Zafar had a detrimental impact on pupils, but the panel has noted “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.”

I have also taken into account the panel’s comments on insight and remorse, including that “Although the panel considered Mr Zafar’s conduct to have been enormously disruptive to the School, it noted that Mr Zafar showed some level of insight, and this was an isolated incident that was limited to a short space of time.” The panel has also commented that “it was unlikely there would be a risk of repetition as it was confident that Mr Zafar had genuinely learnt from his actions.” I have therefore given this element some 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 Zafar was not treated with the utmost seriousness when regulating the conduct of the profession.” I am particularly mindful of the finding of dishonesty and a lack of integrity 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 Zafar himself. The panel has commented that “Mr Zafar had a previously unblemished disciplinary record, and this was an isolated series of events that took place over a short period. The panel further accepted that a very particular set of circumstances and external pressures [REDACTED] which impaired his judgement on or around 24 May 2023.” The panel has also noted positive character evidence from 2 previous colleagues of Mr Zafar

A prohibition order would prevent Mr Zafar 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 on the mitigating factors and that the misconduct was at the less serious end of the spectrum. The panel has said, "The panel accepted that, regarding allegations 1(a) and 1(b), Mr Zafar's conduct was not for personal gain. The panel noted the oral evidence of Witness A who confirmed that she didn't believe Mr Zafar was "deliberately trying to cheat" in order to inflate the pupils' grades. The panel accepted Witness A's oral evidence that Mr Zafar's conduct was to enable the pupils to be in a position to submit some work, not to inflate their grades. The panel therefore concluded that the misconduct, although serious, fell at the lower end of the scale of severity."

I have also placed considerable weight on the finding of the panel that there was unlikely to be a risk of repetition and that it "was satisfied that Mr Zafar would recognise similar issues in the future and be able to ask for support to avoid a situation like this arising again."

I have also taken account of the panel's comment that "Mr Zafar was prohibited from involvement in OCR qualifications for a period of three years. The panel accepted that OCR's sanction, coupled with the publication of the adverse findings by the TRA, was appropriate and sufficient to uphold public confidence in the profession."

For these reasons, I have concluded that a prohibition order is not proportionate or in the public interest. I consider that the publication of the findings made would be sufficient to send an appropriate message to the teacher as to the standards of behaviour that were not acceptable and that the publication would meet the public interest requirement of declaring proper standards of the profession.

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

Decision maker: David Oatley

Date: 26 September 2025

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