



Teaching
Regulation
Agency

Mr Tahir Khawaja: Professional conduct panel outcome

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

January 2026

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

Teacher: Mr Tahir Khawaja

Teacher ref number: 1680848

Teacher date of birth: 14 July 1962

TRA reference: 24135

Date of determination: 20 January 2026

Former employer: Wendover Online School, Northampton

Introduction

A professional conduct panel (“the panel”) of the Teaching Regulation Agency (“the TRA”) convened on 19 January 2026 to 20 January 2026 at Cheylesmore House, 5 Quinton Road, Coventry, CV1 2WT, to consider the case of Mr Tahir Khawaja.

The panel members were Mrs Emma Hendry (lay panellist – in the chair), Mr Tim Cole (lay panellist – in the chair) and Mrs Yvonne Weston (teacher panellist)

The legal adviser to the panel was Ms Abigail Trencher of Birketts LLP solicitors.

The presenting officer for the TRA was Ms Amalea Bourne of Browne Jacobson LLP solicitors.

Mr Khawaja 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 26 September 2025.

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

1. Whilst employed as a Maths teacher at Pensby High School between September 2018 and 31 August 2019 he engaged in unprofessional behaviour towards and/or failed to maintain appropriate professional boundaries with one or more pupils and/or former pupils, in that he:
 - a. initiated and/or maintained a conversation with Pupil A by way of text and/or social media messaging;
 - b. engaged in conversations with one or more female pupils encouraging them to take up modelling and/or suggesting that he could take photographs.

Mr Khawaja admitted to the facts to allegations 1(a) and 1(b) and he accepted that his conduct set out in allegations 1(a) and 1(b) amounted to unacceptable conduct and 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 anonymised pupil list – pages 6 to 7

Section 2: Notice of referral and proceedings – pages 9 to 30

Section 3: Teaching Regulation Agency witness statements – pages 33 to 93

Section 4: Teaching Regulation Agency documents – pages 95 to 222

Section 5: Teacher documents – pages 225 to 327

Section 6: Teacher mitigation documents – pages 328 to 330.

The two documents at Section 6, namely an email from [REDACTED] dated 20 January 2026 and an email chain between Mr Khawaja and Pupil A's [REDACTED] between 25 July 2019 and 30 July 2019, were provided by Mr Khawaja to the presenting officer and the panel at the sanction part of the proceedings as evidence of mitigation.

The panel members confirmed that they had read all of the documents within the bundle, in advance of the hearing, and in respect of those at section 6 in advance of the sanction stage of the proceedings.

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

Witnesses

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

Witness A – Pupil A

Decision and reasons

The panel announced its decision and reasons as follows:

In September 2018, Mr Khawaja commenced employment at the School as a mathematics teacher on a one-year contract.

On 12 June 2019, the Head of PSHE at the School disclosed information relating to Mr Khawaja to the School’s [REDACTED]. It subsequently came to light that Mr Khawaja had allegedly initiated and maintained social media conversations with a pupil and encouraged one or more pupils to take up modelling.

On 31 August 2019, Mr Khawaja ended his employment at the School.

On 5 September 2022, Mr Khawaja commenced employment at the Wendover Online School as a maths teacher.

On 1 July 2024, Wendover Online School was notified that Mr Khawaja allegedly contacted pupils of the School out of school hours.

On 18 July 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. Whilst employed as a Maths teacher at Pensby High School between September 2018 and 31 August 2019 you engaged in unprofessional behaviour towards**

and/or failed to maintain appropriate professional boundaries with one or more pupils and/or former pupils in that you:

a. initiated and/or maintained a conversation with Pupil A by way of text and/or social media messaging;

Mr Khawaja admitted allegation 1(a). Notwithstanding Mr Khawaja's admission, the panel made its own determination as to the facts.

The panel considered the 18 pages of photographs of Pupil A's mobile telephone showing the numerous Facebook Messenger messages that had been exchanged between Pupil A and Mr Khawaja between June and October 2019. Mr Khawaja's communications with Pupil A via Facebook Messenger began towards the end of the academic year 2018/19 [REDACTED].

The messages took place whilst Mr Khawaja was employed by the School, up until the end of his employment on 31 August 2019, and continued beyond this time. They occurred during both the school term and the school holidays, and on numerous occasions took place late in the evening.

The panel also noted that further communications took place between Mr Khawaja and Pupil A, via Facebook Messenger, between November 2023 and February 2024, which were initiated by Mr Khawaja four years after the initial communications which are the subject of this allegation.

In respect of allegation 1(a), whilst it was not clear who had initiated the first communication, it was clearly evidenced that Mr Khawaja had proactively maintained the messaging with Pupil A.

Having considered all the evidence before it, the panel found allegation 1(a) proven.

b. engaged in conversations with one or more female pupils encouraging them to take up modelling and/or suggesting that you could take photographs.

Mr Khawaja admitted allegation 1(b). Notwithstanding Mr Khawaja's admission, the panel made its own determination as to the facts.

The panel had regard to photographs of Facebook Messenger messages exchanged between Mr Khawaja and Pupil A between 30 July and 31 August 2019, which showed that:

- Mr Khawaja raised the topic of modelling with Pupil A on numerous occasions, despite acknowledging that Pupil A's [REDACTED] had said that Pupil A did not want to try modelling.

- Across multiple dates, Pupil A expressed discomfort or reluctance about modelling, and Mr Khawaja continued to encourage Pupil A to participate.
- Mr Khawaja explained that modelling would involve taking “*head shots*”, potentially at Pupil A’s home, and stated that he would be with Pupil A “*all the way*” and would “*protect*” and “*look after*” Pupil A.
- He suggested that other pupils (Pupil E and Pupil F) could take part and discussed the need for parental consent.
- He indicated that he could undertake the initial photographs himself once consent was obtained.
- He continued to message Pupil A about the modelling opportunity late at night and over an extended period despite Pupil A having communicated on 3 August 2019: “*Not doing the modelling*”. On 9 August 2019, Pupil A wrote: “*just do not feel comfortable doing modelling*”. When Mr Khawaja continued to attempt to persuade Pupil A, Pupil A wrote later on 9 August 2019: “*Okay, I will tell you if I want to do it*” and later on that same day Pupil A wrote: “*Okay, but I don’t know if I want to do it yet*”.

The panel noted that these conversations were not isolated; they occurred repeatedly over several weeks. The content of the messages showed that modelling was introduced and promoted by Mr Khawaja and not by Pupil A.

The panel also considered Pupil A’s Incident Report dated 5 November 2019, which Pupil A had prepared for the School, which was consistent with the messages and recorded that:

- Mr Khawaja had asked Pupil A to stay behind after class when he asked Pupil A, when they were alone together, whether Pupil A was interested in modelling for his [REDACTED] agency.
- Pupil A felt he was trying to persuade them.
- Mr Khawaja had commented that Pupil A had the “*perfect body*” for modelling.
- Pupil A reported that he continued texting them.

The panel further considered the incident reports of two other pupils (Pupil E and Pupil F), made in November 2019, which were consistent with each other and corroborated Pupil A’s account.

The panel considered Mr Khawaja’s written and oral evidence, including his explanations that the communications were predominantly for teaching purposes, and that he only questioned Pupil A about their reluctance to pursue a possible modelling opportunity at

the behest of Pupil A's [REDACTED]. However, his account was inconsistent with the documentary evidence and the pupils' incident reports. The panel found the pupils' accounts to be consistent with each other and supported by the Facebook Messenger messages.

The panel was also concerned by two particular responses Mr Khawaja gave to questions put to him by members of the panel. First, he confirmed that the modelling opportunity he discussed with Pupil A could have led to financial gain for both him and Pupil A, as he would have received a "*finder's fee*" if Pupil A was recruited by a modelling agency. Second, when asked what "*specific qualities*" Mr Khawaja was referring to, in his response to the TRA's letter dated 19 October 2024, as to why he considered Pupil A was "*suitable for modelling*", he replied that [REDACTED].

Having considered all the evidence, including the contemporaneous Facebook messages, consistent contemporaneous pupil reports, Pupil A's oral and written evidence and Mr Khawaja's own admission of the allegation, the panel found that Mr Khawaja had engaged in conversations encouraging female pupils to take up modelling and/or suggesting he could take photographs.

Accordingly, allegation 1(b) was found 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 Khawaja, in relation to the facts found proved, involved breaches of the Teachers' Standards.

The panel considered that, by reference to Part 2, Mr Khawaja 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

- showing tolerance of and respect for the rights of others
- Teachers must have proper and professional regard for the ethos, policies and practices of the school in which they teach, and maintain high standards
- Teachers must have an understanding of, and always act within, the statutory frameworks which set out their professional duties and responsibilities.

The panel considered whether Mr Khawaja'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 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.

The panel, however, noted that allegations 1(a) and 1(b) included conduct that took place outside the education setting. The panel considered that Mr Khawaja's conduct in the proven allegations amounted to an abuse of his position of trust. It had led to Pupil A feeling uncomfortable at his attention towards their physical appearance, when [REDACTED] he was their teacher. It was also pursued, at least in part, for his own potential financial gain.

The panel considered the nature and circumstances of Mr Khawaja's behaviour and concluded that it represented a serious falling short of the standards expected of a teacher, amounting to unacceptable professional conduct.

First, the panel determined that Mr Khawaja had failed to maintain proper professional boundaries with pupils. He initiated and sustained inappropriate conversations with Pupil A and other pupils for his own purposes. He did so despite having been spoken to by senior leaders at the School in June 2019, concerning a separate issue involving his use of Snapchat. The evidence confirmed he was advised of the need to maintain boundaries and had been issued with the School's Code of Conduct and Social Networking policy and Guidance for Safer Working Practices. At that time, he responded by email to the [REDACTED] on 14 July 2019 saying "*Thank you for the guidance. Will strictly follow them to the letter*". Despite this management intervention, the misconduct nevertheless continued, demonstrating that Mr Khawaja was fully aware of the standards expected but did not comply with them.

Second, the panel found that Mr Khawaja's behaviour involved a clear breach of safeguarding expectations. In engaging in conversations of such an inappropriate nature with a [REDACTED] child, Mr Khawaja acted in a manner that was exploitative, ignored the inherent power imbalance, and was fundamentally inconsistent with the safeguarding framework within which teachers must operate. Rather than acting to protect and

promote a pupil's welfare, he acted in a way that placed his own interests at the forefront and placed pupils at risk of harm.

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

In relation to whether Mr Khawaja'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.

The panel noted Mr Khawaja's acceptance that his conduct had amounted to conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute. He said that he should have maintained a higher standard and accepted that his conduct "*shattered the confidence of the general public*". He said he regretted the lapse of judgement.

In considering the issue of disrepute, the panel considered whether Mr Khawaja'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 Khawaja was guilty of unacceptable professional conduct, the panel found that none of these offences were relevant.

The panel was of the opinion, however, that Mr Khawaja's actions extended beyond a single isolated lapse and affected multiple pupils and even their families, thereby broadening the scope of concern and the potential damage to public confidence in the profession. Contacting pupils privately and without legitimate educational justification, and then continuing such contact over an extended period, was behaviour that the panel considered to be wholly inappropriate in any context.

For these reasons, the panel concluded that Mr Khawaja's actions represented a serious departure from the standards of personal and professional conduct set out in the Teachers' Standards. His behaviour fell significantly below the expectations of the profession, compromised safeguarding obligations, exploited his position of trust, and demonstrated conduct that would be regarded by the public as wholly unacceptable for a teacher. The panel therefore determined that the facts found amounted to conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute.

The findings of misconduct are serious, and the conduct displayed would be likely to have a negative impact on Mr Khawaja's status as a teacher. The panel considered that Mr Khawaja's conduct could potentially damage the public's perception of a teacher.

For these reasons, the panel found that Mr Khawaja'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/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 a 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, 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 Khawaja, which involved having social media conversations with a pupil and encouraging pupils to model, there was a strong public interest consideration in the safeguarding and wellbeing of pupils in that Mr Khawaja overstepped the boundaries between that of a pupil and a teacher.

Similarly, the panel considered that public confidence in the profession could be seriously weakened if conduct such as that found against Mr Khawaja 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 Khawaja 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 Khawaja in the profession. Whilst there was little evidence that Mr Khawaja had ability as an educator, the panel considered that the adverse public interest considerations above outweighed any interest in retaining Mr Khawaja in the profession, since his behaviour fundamentally breached

the standard of conduct expected of a teacher, and he sought to exploit his position of trust.

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. The panel noted that Mr Khawaja's behaviour towards Pupil A sought to exploit his position of trust and should be viewed very seriously in terms of its potential influence on pupils and be seen as a possible threat to the public interest.

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 Khawaja.

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

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 evidence that Mr Khawaja's actions were deliberate.

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

There was limited evidence regarding Mr Khawaja's previous history, and particularly no evidence of him having demonstrated exceptionally high standards in both his personal and professional conduct and having contributed significantly to the education sector.

The panel also took into account the lack of genuine insight, remorse, or reflection demonstrated by Mr Khawaja. When asked what had changed in his practice, the only explanation he offered was that the TRA proceedings had brought the matter to his attention. He did not demonstrate an understanding of the impact of his conduct on the pupils concerned, including the distress caused to Pupil A who had to revisit these events

in giving evidence. The panel was particularly concerned that Mr Khawaja offered no acknowledgement of the potential emotional harm suffered by Pupil A.

The panel noted that in Mr Khawaja's submissions during mitigation he stated that neither Pupil A nor Pupil A's [REDACTED] were concerned about his communications at the time (that is in 2019). However, the panel considered this demonstrated a lack of insight in that:

- [REDACTED] he was their teacher
- Pupil A's [REDACTED] made it clear in her email exchange with Mr Khawaja that he produced in mitigation, in an email dated 30 July 2019, that Pupil A was reluctant and that she did not want to force Pupil A to do anything Pupil A was uncomfortable with
- Despite this, Mr Khawaja continued to message Pupil A regarding modelling on 3, 9 and 10 August 2019
- The Incident Report Pupil A wrote on 5 November 2019, indicated strongly to the panel that Pupil A was concerned by Mr Khawaja's persistent approaches regarding modelling
- Pupil A was willing to attend and give oral evidence at a professional conduct panel hearing in this regard, as a vulnerable witness.

The panel also identified instances in Mr Khawaja's questioning of Pupil A (on his behalf by Mr Jones as a [REDACTED]) that suggested an attempt to manipulate or reframe the narrative, including occasions where he appeared to challenge the pupil's account in a way that sought to shift responsibility onto Pupil A. Pupil A however, remained clear and consistent on the relevant points during their oral evidence.

The panel considered the admissions Mr Khawaja made, and his acceptance that his conduct amounted to unacceptable professional conduct and conduct that may bring the conduct into disrepute. In Mr Khawaja's letter dated 5 November 2024, he accepted that he was "*overly enthusiastic*" about encouraging Pupil A to model and that he should have communicated with Pupil A's [REDACTED] rather than communicate with Pupil A directly.

The panel also considered Mr Khawaja's reflective statement which stated that he acknowledged speaking directly with a pupil regarding modelling "*fell outside [his] professional role*". Mr Khawaja stated that he deleted the social media accounts and "*stopped the activity*" when concerns about his conduct were raised. Mr Khawaja said that since the allegations came to light, he has undergone safeguarding training which "*reinforced*" his understanding of how a teacher's conduct could be perceived and the importance of maintaining a professional distance. Mr Khawaja stated that he was

committed to using approved communications channels, document parental consent where appropriate and fully comply with safeguarding policies.

The panel, however, noted that the only evidence of further safeguarding training provided at the hearing related to training that: a) was no more than the standard required for a teacher, and b) the last training module was dated 21 June 2024, which was before he received his initial notification of the allegations from the TRA in its letter dated 9 August 2024. There was no evidence that Mr Khawaja had taken any additional measures or training since that date.

During mitigation, Mr Khawaja also provided an email purported to be from [REDACTED], [REDACTED] school, confirming his employment there and that they had no safeguarding concerns. When asked by the panel if his [REDACTED] knew the purpose for which the reference was requested, Mr Khawaja said that he had not disclosed the reason why it was being requested, as he did not want to jeopardise his future employment there.

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 Khawaja 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 Khawaja. The risk of repetition and Mr Khawaja's lack of insight and remorse 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.

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.

Notwithstanding the absence of the factors in the Advice referred to above, the panel was concerned at the seriousness of the conduct concerned. In particular, that at its root was the intention to exploit a [REDACTED] pupil for his own financial gain. In the fairly lengthy email he sent to Pupil A's [REDACTED] on 27 July 2019 explaining the process that would be required if Pupil A were to take up his offer of assistance and representation in modelling, which would involve a lot of travel and time, he confirmed he "*could safeguard [Pupil A] on your behalf*".

The panel concluded that the conduct was at the more serious end of the spectrum. The panel decided that the findings indicated a situation in which a review period would be appropriate but that it should be more than two years, to provide more time for Mr Khawaja to consider the impact of his conduct. The panel therefore decided that it would be proportionate, in all the circumstances, for the prohibition order to be recommended with provision for a review period after 5 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 of the allegations proven and found that those proven facts amount to unacceptable professional conduct and conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute.

The panel has made a recommendation to the Secretary of State that Mr Tahir Khawaja should be the subject of a prohibition order, with a review period of 5 years.

In particular, the panel has found that Mr Khawaja 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
- showing tolerance of and respect for the rights of others
- Teachers must have proper and professional regard for the ethos, policies and practices of the school in which they teach, and maintain high standards
- 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 Khawaja fell significantly short of the standards expected of the profession.

The findings of misconduct are particularly serious as they include a finding of engaging in unprofessional behaviour and failing to maintain appropriate professional boundaries with 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 Khawaja, 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 Khawaja, which involved having social media conversations with a pupil and encouraging pupils to model, there was a strong public interest consideration in the safeguarding and wellbeing of pupils in that Mr Khawaja overstepped the boundaries between that of a pupil and a teacher.”

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 also took into account the lack of genuine insight, remorse, or reflection demonstrated by Mr Khawaja. When asked what had changed in his

practice, the only explanation he offered was that the TRA proceedings had brought the matter to his attention. He did not demonstrate an understanding of the impact of his conduct on the pupils concerned, including the distress caused to Pupil A who had to revisit these events in giving evidence. The panel was particularly concerned that Mr Khawaja offered no acknowledgement of the potential emotional harm suffered by Pupil A.”

In my judgement, the lack of genuine insight and remorse means that there is some risk of the repetition of this behaviour and this puts at risk the future wellbeing of pupils. I have therefore given this element considerable weight in reaching my decision.

I have gone on to consider the extent to which a prohibition order would maintain public confidence in the profession. The panel has observed:

“The findings of misconduct are serious, and the conduct displayed would be likely to have a negative impact on Mr Khawaja’s status as a teacher. The panel considered that Mr Khawaja’s conduct could potentially damage the public’s perception of a teacher.”

I am particularly mindful of the findings that a teacher engaged in social media conversations with a pupil and also encouraged pupils to take up modelling for his own financial gain in this case and the impact that such findings have 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 Khawaja himself. The panel has commented:

“There was limited evidence regarding Mr Khawaja’s previous history, and particularly no evidence of him having demonstrated exceptionally high standards in both his personal and professional conduct and having contributed significantly to the education sector.”

A prohibition order would prevent Mr Khawaja 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 findings concerning the abuse of position and trust in this case and the impact on the safeguarding and well-being of pupils. The panel has said:

“...the panel found that Mr Khawaja's behaviour involved a clear breach of safeguarding expectations. In engaging in conversations of such an inappropriate nature with a [REDACTED] child, Mr Khawaja acted in a manner that was exploitative, ignored the inherent power imbalance, and was fundamentally inconsistent with the safeguarding framework within which teachers must operate. Rather than acting to protect and promote a pupil's welfare, he acted in a way that placed his own interests at the forefront and placed pupils at risk of harm.”

I have also placed considerable weight on the panel's comments concerning the lack of genuine insight and remorse on the part of Mr Khawaja and the consequent risk of repetition. The panel was concerned that Mr Khawaja had provided no evidence of having undertaken any additional safeguarding measures or training since he received his initial notification of the allegations from the TRA.

I have given less weight in my consideration of sanction therefore to the contribution that Mr Khawaja 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 genuine 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 5-year review period.

I have considered the panel's comments:

“Notwithstanding the absence of the factors in the Advice referred to above, the panel was concerned at the seriousness of the conduct concerned. In particular, that at its root was the intention to exploit a [REDACTED] pupil for his own financial gain. In the fairly lengthy email he sent to Pupil A's [REDACTED] on 27 July 2019 explaining the process that would be required if Pupil A were to take up his offer of assistance and representation in modelling, which would involve a lot of travel and time, he confirmed he “*could safeguard [Pupil A] on your behalf*”.

The panel concluded that the conduct was at the more serious end of the spectrum. The panel decided that the findings indicated a situation in which a review period would be appropriate but that it should be more than two years, to provide more time for Mr Khawaja to consider the impact of his conduct. The panel therefore decided that it would be proportionate, in all the circumstances, for the prohibition order to be recommended with provision for a review period after 5 years.”

I have considered whether a 5-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 allowing a shorter review period is not sufficient to achieve the aim of maintaining public confidence in the profession. These elements are the serious nature of the misconduct found proven, the lack of genuine insight and remorse, and the risk of repetition.

I consider therefore that a 5-year review period is required to satisfy the maintenance of public confidence in the profession.

This means that Mr Tahir Khawaja 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 28 January 2031, 5 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 Khawaja remains prohibited from teaching indefinitely.

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

Mr Khawaja 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 'David Oatley', with a large, sweeping loop at the end.

Decision maker: David Oatley

Date: 21 January 2026

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