



Teaching  
Regulation  
Agency

# **Ms Susan Avizius (also known as Ms Susan Elmore): 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**

<b>Teacher:</b>	Ms Susan Avizius (also known as Ms Susan Elmore)
<b>Teacher ref number:</b>	9242745
<b>Teacher date of birth:</b>	23 May 1971
<b>TRA reference:</b>	20886
<b>Date of determination:</b>	29 January 2026
<b>Former employer:</b>	St John's School, Leatherhead

### **Introduction**

A professional conduct panel (“the panel”) of the Teaching Regulation Agency (“the TRA”) convened on 26 to 29 January 2026 by way of a virtual hearing, to consider the case of Ms Susan Avizius.

The panel members were Miss Sue Davis (lay panellist – in the chair), Dr Martin Coles (teacher panellist) and Mrs Fiona Fowles (teacher panellist).

The legal adviser to the panel was Mrs Samantha Cass of Birketts LLP solicitors.

The presenting officer for the TRA was Miss Leah Redden of Browne Jacobson LLP solicitors.

Ms Avizius was not present and was not represented at the hearing.

The panel noted that the teacher was referred to under two different names by different witnesses. Some witnesses knew the teacher as Ms Avizius and some knew the teacher as Ms Elmore. For ease of reference, the teacher is referred to as Ms Avizius throughout this decision document but the panel noted that reference was often made to Ms Elmore in the witness testimony and confirmed that this was the same person as Ms Avizius.

The hearing took place in public and was recorded.

### **Allegations**

The panel considered the allegations set out in the Notice of Hearing dated 12 November 2025 as amended on day one of the professional conduct panel hearing (“PCPH”).

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

1. Whilst employed at Ibstock Place School between January 2021 and 3 May 2022, on or around 3 March 2022, she:
  - a. Brought alcohol onto school premises;
  - b. Was under the influence of alcohol whilst on school premises and/or during school hours;
2. Whilst employed at St John's School between December 2022 and December 2024, on or around 14 November 2024, she was under the influence of alcohol whilst on school premises and/or during school hours.
3. Her conduct as may be found proven at allegation 1 and/or 2 above put one or more pupils at a risk of harm;
4. Whilst employed for the role of Teacher of Art at St John's School and/or following her appointment, she provided false and/or misleading information and/or failed to disclose relevant information in order to improve her prospects of securing and/or retaining a teaching post, namely by:
  - a. omitting Ibstock Place School from her application and/or CV;
  - b. failing to disclose that she was subject to ongoing TRA proceedings
5. She demonstrated a lack of insight in relation to her conduct at allegations 1 and/or 2 above in that:
  - a. She had received a final written warning in or around November 2018 from Notre Dame School for being under the influence of alcohol whilst at work;
  - b. She was the subject of a disciplinary investigation in or around May/June 2019 by Notre Dame School following an empty vodka bottle being found in her classroom
  - c. At the time of her conduct at allegation 2 above, she was the subject of TRA proceedings in relation to being under the influence of alcohol on school premises and/or during the workday.
6. Her conduct at allegation 4 above was dishonest/and or lacked integrity

## **Summary of evidence**

### **Documents**

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

Section 1: Notice of Proceedings and response – pages 5 to 13

Section 2: TRA witness statements – pages 14 to 212

Section 3: TRA documents – pages 213 to 279

Section 4: Teacher documents – pages 280 to 289

In addition, the panel agreed to accept the following:

Three pages of disciplinary documentation - pages 290 to 292.

The panel members confirmed that they had read all of the documents 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 Teacher Misconduct: Disciplinary Procedures for the Teaching Profession May 2020 (the “2020 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]

Witness D [REDACTED]

Witness E [REDACTED]

Witness F [REDACTED]

## **Decision and reasons**

The panel announced its decision and reasons as follows:

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

On 1 January 2021, Ms Avizius commenced employment at Ibstock Place School as Head of Art.

On 3 March 2022, Witness A reported to Ibstock Place School that Ms Avizius allegedly smelled of alcohol during school hours. In the evening, Witness C found a water bottle which allegedly had a strong smell of alcohol among Ms Avizius' belongings.

On 3 May 2022, Ms Avizius' employment with Ibstock Place School terminated.

In October 2022, Ms Avizius was employed at St John's School via an agency. On 14 December 2022, Ms Avizius submitted a job application for an art teacher position at St John's School. Ms Avizius subsequently commenced employment by St John's School in January 2023.

On 14 November 2024 during school hours, a staff member asked Witness E to see Ms Avizius who was in the pupils' lunch area and appeared unwell. Witness E thought that Ms Avizius was under the influence of alcohol.

On 2 December 2024, Ms Avizius attended a meeting at St John's School. At 6.15pm, Witness E was asked to go see Ms Avizius who was in Witness D's room. Witness D thought that Ms Avizius was under the influence of alcohol.

On 22 January 2025, St John's School referred the matter to the TRA. It subsequently came to light that during the proceedings, that Ms Avizius had failed to disclose her employment with Ibstock Place School and to disclose that she was subject to ongoing TRA proceedings when applying for her position at St John's School.

Ms Avizius noted on her application form that she had been dismissed from Notre Dame School in August 2019 which was also linked to consuming and possessing alcohol.

## **Findings of fact**

The findings of fact are as follows:

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

**1. Whilst employed at Ibstock Place School between January 2021 and 3 May 2022, on or around 3 March 2022, you:**

**a. Brought alcohol onto school premises;**

Ms Avizius denied allegation 1(a).

The panel considered the written and oral evidence of Witness A who stated that on 3 March 2022 Ms Avizius smelled of what he believed was alcohol, namely "vodka" and that she was displaying "unusual" behaviour. The panel noted that Witness A reported

this to Witness C and that he sent a message to Witness C stating that “*she smells of vodka...it was quite noticeable*” and, although she may have been “*cleaning brushes in white spirit,*” she was “*also being quite weird.*”

The panel considered the written and oral evidence of Witness B who stated that, at approximately 6.30pm on 3 March 2022, following a disclosure that Ms Avizius had allegedly smelled of alcohol that day, Witness B went to the art department and searched the work benches and on top of Ms Avizius’ desk. Witness B stated that his search was “*reasonably thorough*” and said that he found water bottles which did not cause him to be concerned. Witness B stated that at 7pm, Witness C presented to Witness B a water bottle he had found in Ms Avizius’ classroom and said that Witness C had searched a different area. Witness B said that he smelled the bottle which smelled of gin. Witness C also smelled the bottle and agreed that it smelled of alcohol.

In Witness B’s written and oral evidence, he stated that in the morning of 4 March 2022, he went to speak to Ms Avizius along with the [REDACTED]. Witness B stated that Ms Avizius was “*bright and cheery and not at all emotional*”. Witness B stated that he showed Ms Avizius the water bottle – which he stated had smelled of gin – and Ms Avizius said that it belonged to her [REDACTED]. Witness B stated that he asked Ms Avizius to smell the bottle and she did so. Witness B stated that Ms Avizius said “*very little*” and that she looked “*surprised and bewildered*”. Witness B stated that he then told Ms Avizius that he was going to suspend her. The panel noted the notes of Witness B’s interview dated 7 March 2022 appeared consistent with Witness B’s written and oral evidence and further recorded Witness B stating that Ms Avizius had asked “*Why do you think I would be drinking?*” when Witness B gave her the letter which suspended her.

Witness B, in his evidence, further explained that it was rare for staff to bring their children to Ibstock Place School but that he did recall instances during the school holidays where this happened. Witness B stated that he was usually made aware when staff brought their children on site and further stated that he was not aware of Ms Avizius bringing her [REDACTED] to Ibstock Place School.

The panel then considered the written and oral evidence of Witness C who stated that on 3 March 2022 at about 7pm, he was photocopying outside of Ms Avizius’ classroom. Witness C stated that, following a disclosure that Ms Avizius had allegedly smelled of alcohol that day, he went into Ms Avizius’ classroom and saw three water bottles on Ms Avizius’ desk. Witness C stated that two of the bottles were empty and smelled “*odd*”. Witness C further stated that the other bottle had something that appeared to be blackcurrant squash and that he was unsure whether the smell of the drink was alcohol. Witness C further stated that he had a cold at the time. Witness C stated that, in addition to the three bottles, there was another metal bottle on the floor behind Ms Avizius’s desk which had a “*very obvious smell of gin*”. Witness C stated that he brought the metal bottle to Witness B who agreed that it smelled of gin. The panel also had sight of, and

considered, the notes of Witness C's interview dated 7 March 2022 which appeared consistent with Witness C's written and oral evidence.

The panel also considered Ms Avizius' written version of events which was that on 4 March 2022, she was asked to attend Witness B's office and the [REDACTED] was also present. Ms Avizius stated that she was shown an empty water bottle and said that it was her [REDACTED]. In her written evidence, Ms Avizius explained that she brought her [REDACTED] to the art room at Ibstock Place School during the Easter holidays where they tidied the room and did some art. Ms Avizius stated that she brought in water bottles from home as water in the art room could not be drunk. Ms Avizius stated that she asked her [REDACTED] to fill the water bottles in the kitchen and her [REDACTED] had said that the green bottle "*stank*". Ms Avizius stated that her [REDACTED] left the bottle there and used a glass instead. Ms Avizius further stated that she was not told that there was any liquid in the bottle and that the bottle was empty.

The panel noted that Ms Avizius' version of events could not be tested in oral evidence as Ms Avizius was not present to give oral evidence at the hearing. However, the panel considered that there were inconsistencies in the accounts as to if and when Ms Avizius' [REDACTED] had been on Ibstock Place School's premises since the incident occurred prior to the Easter holidays. The panel noted from Witness A's evidence that he had never seen Ms Avizius' [REDACTED] at the school and that, although Witness C recalled that there may have been an occasion during a holiday when Ms Avizius' [REDACTED] was using the school facilities, he could not recall when this was. The panel also considered Ms Avizius' evidence which was that the water in the art department was not drinkable and that, if this was the case, it would be unusual to have brought an empty water bottle smelling of alcohol to the premises.

The panel considered that two witnesses suspected a smell of alcohol and found all witnesses to be reliable and credible witnesses with corroborated accounts of the suspected smell of alcohol albeit they suggested different spirits.

The panel therefore found that, on the balance of probabilities, Ms Avizius was more likely than not to have brought alcohol onto Ibstock Place School's premises on or around 3 March 2022.

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

### **Were under the influence of alcohol whilst on school premises and/or during school hours;**

Ms Avizius denied allegation 1(b).

The panel had sight of, and considered, the following text messages sent by Witness A to Witness C on 3 March 2022 at 3.31pm which recorded him saying "*SEL just been in*";

*“She smells of vodka”; “it was quite noticeable”; “maybe she’s been cleaning brushes in white spirit”; “But she was also being quite weird”.*

The panel considered the written and oral evidence of Witness A who stated that on 3 March 2022 at around 3pm, Witness A was teaching a class. Witness A stated that Ms Avizius knocked on the classroom door and asked to speak to him. Witness A stated that he stepped outside of the classroom.

Witness A stated that Ms Avizius was holding a small box containing knives. Witness A stated that Ms Avizius seemed *“agitated, emotional and teary”*. Witness A stated that Ms Avizius said she had been teaching in the Design Technology (DT) workshop and that she had found the box of knives laying on the counter unsupervised.

Witness A stated that Ms Avizius was in *“a heightened emotional state”*. He further stated that Ms Avizius said she was finding DT difficult to manage and she was not being listened to. Witness A stated that at times during the conversation, Ms Avizius said that the knives were on the counter and at other times, Ms Avizius said that she had to go into a cupboard to find the knives. Witness A stated that Ms Avizius repeated both versions of the story several times and *“to an extent that felt much more obsessive and repetitive than a normal conversation with a colleague would be”*. The panel noted that in his evidence, Witness A stated that Ms Avizius’s usual character *“could be quite emotional in her conduct and would often express herself in a loud and colourful way”*. Witness A stated that during the conversation, Ms Avizius got closer to him, to an approximate distance of within one metre and that he could smell alcohol as Ms Avizius got close. Witness A stated that he saw Ms Avizius’ hands were trembling.

The panel noted that Witness A’s written and oral evidence appeared consistent with his statements that were recorded in the notes of his interview dated 7 March 2022. In his interview, Witness A was recorded as also stating that Ms Avizius had not been *“slurring”* her words. Witness A had stated that Ms Avizius said, *“You can see these are too sharp to leave lying around”* and she ran her fingers across the knives and pointed the knives towards him whilst doing so.

The panel considered the written and oral evidence of Witness C who stated on 3 March 2022, he went to speak to Ms Avizius after the school day, after receiving Witness A’s text messages. Witness C stated that he saw Ms Avizius leaving the DT block and had a conversation with Ms Avizius outside. Witness C stated that he was *“getting over a cold”* at the time and could not smell alcohol on Ms Avizius. Witness C stated that Ms Avizius *“was being quite incoherent.”* Witness C stated that he *“could not tell if her words were slurred or if this was just her accent”* and that he *“did not think Ms Avizius was more incoherent than usual...”* The panel noted that the written and oral evidence of Witness C stated that Ms Avizius usually *“had quite a short temper and became emotional easily”*.

The panel had sight of, and considered, the notes of Witness C's interview dated 7 March 2022 which appeared consistent with Witness C's written and oral evidence.

The panel considered the written and oral evidence of Witness B who stated on 3 March 2022, he went to the art department to speak to Ms Avizius at approximately 4.10pm after receiving an email from Witness C who alleged that Ms Avizius smelled of alcohol. Witness B stated that he and Ms Avizius had a conversation about the knives and that Ms Avizius became "*tearful and emotional*" when she spoke. Witness B stated that Ms Avizius then spoke about her [REDACTED] and was "*emotional*". Witness B stated that he "*pick[ed] up the occasional whiff of what might have been an alcoholic substance*" and that the smell "*was not clear*". He further stated that "*it came and went and was never especially strong.*"

In Witness B's interview dated 7 March 2022, it recorded him additionally stating that during the conversation he had with Ms Avizius on 3 March 2022, he said to her that he came to check in with her [REDACTED]. The notes also recorded Witness B stating that Ms Avizius appeared "*lucid*" and was "*coherent throughout*" the conversation.

The panel continued to consider Witness B's interview notes and evidence which was that at approximately 6.30pm on 3 March 2022, he searched Ms Avizius' classroom and found water bottles and that they did not concern him. Witness B stated that at 7pm, Witness C presented to Witness B a water bottle which smelled of gin.

The panel considered the interview notes of Individual A dated 8 March 2022 who was recorded stating that on 3 March 2022, he was in the DT workshop during Ms Avizius' class. Ms Avizius appeared "*no different*" when he spoke to her that afternoon. Individual A stated that he did not see any box of knives in the machine room.

The panel considered the interview notes of Individual B dated 8 March 2022 who was recorded stating that on 3 March 2022, she was present during Ms Avizius' class that afternoon. Individual B stated that Ms Avizius found the knives in a drawer in the workshop and said that the drawer was not locked. Individual B stated that Ms Avizius kept the knives. Individual B stated that Ms Avizius appeared the "*same as usual*" and that Ms Avizius was "*flabbergasted*" about the pupils having access to knives and was concerned about the knives not being locked away. Individual B stated that Ms Avizius left with the knives part way through the lesson.

The panel went on to consider the written evidence of Ms Avizius who stated that on 3 March 2022, she spoke to Witness A, Witness B and Witness C about the knives. In her evidence, Ms Avizius further explained that she came across the box of knives whilst she was beside a pupil who was [REDACTED]. Ms Avizius also stated that when she spoke to Witness C, he stood several metres away from her and he had a cold.

The panel again considered Ms Avizius' written evidence which was that she brought her [REDACTED] to the art room during the Easter holidays and brought the bottles along because the water in the art room cannot be drunk. Ms Avizius stated that her [REDACTED] said that the green bottle "*stank*" and left the bottle in the classroom. Ms Avizius further stated that she was not told that there was liquid in the bottle and that the bottle was empty. For the reasons set out in allegation 1(a), the panel did not consider the suggestion that the bottle had been brought to school by Ms Avizius' [REDACTED] to be a credible explanation for Ms Avizius having a bottle which smelt of alcohol in her classroom.

The panel considered the credible and consistent witness evidence of Witness B, Witness C and Witness A regarding the smell of alcohol on Ms Avizius (whilst recognising that none of the witnesses could be 100 percent sure of this). The witnesses all reported Ms Avizius' volatile, emotional and unusual behaviours. The panel considered Ms Avizius' version of events and the fact that Witness B had found her to be "*coherent and lucid*" and that suggesting her behaviours were anything other than this was a "*fabrication*". However, the panel found the witnesses to be credible and consistent and very fair in their explanation of Ms Avizius' behaviour generally and as a teacher as they all acknowledged some doubt as to whether alcohol was the cause of the smell and there appeared no reason for them to invent accounts. The panel considered that, if the witnesses had invented this scenario, it was more likely that they would report being sure that Ms Avizius smelled of alcohol rather than stating that they had any doubt.

The panel considered that three witnesses all suspected a smell of alcohol and found all witnesses to be reliable and credible witnesses with corroborated accounts of the suspected smell of alcohol albeit they suggested different spirits. Further, the panel noted the consistencies between the witnesses when describing Ms Avizius' behaviour on or around 3 March 2022. All witnesses described Ms Avizius as being more volatile than usual and to have been displaying unusual behaviours and being particularly emotional.

The panel also noted that Ms Avizius had provided a number of different dates as to when she had stopped drinking alcohol which were inconsistent and therefore did not believe that, on the balance of probabilities, there was any clear evidence of Ms Avizius' sobriety on this date.

The panel therefore found that, on the balance of probabilities, Ms Avizius was more likely than not to have been under the influence of alcohol on Ibstock Place School's premises and/or during school hours on or around 3 March 2022.

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

**2. Whilst employed at St John's School between December 2022 and December 2024, on or around 14 November 2024, you were under the influence of alcohol whilst on school premises and/or during school hours.**

## 14 November 2024

The panel noted that Ms Avizius admitted allegation 2 during St John's School's investigation to the extent that on 14 November 2024, she was under the influence of alcohol whilst on school premises and/or during school hours whilst employed at St John's School. Notwithstanding Ms Avizius' admissions, the panel went on to make its own determination as to the facts.

The panel considered the written statement of Witness E dated 16 November 2024 which recorded Witness E stating that on 14 November 2024 at about 1.35pm, Individual C had said to Witness E that she thought Ms Avizius was "*drunk*". Witness E had stated that he saw Ms Avizius sat at a table in the dining hall with her head in her hands. Witness E stated that he went up to Ms Avizius to speak to her and stated that he "*immediately noticed the smell of alcohol*". Witness E stated that Ms Avizius agreed to go to his office.

Witness E, in his written statement, stated that Ms Avizius "*struggle[d]*" to get up from the table and walked "*very slowly*" to the door. Witness E said to Ms Avizius to "*take her time*". Witness E stated that Ms Avizius "*struggled to negotiate the door and the first step*" and he gave Ms Avizius his arm to support her down the steps. He stated that Ms Avizius was not able to walk in a straight line and that she bumped into the door frame. Witness E stated that he again gave Ms Avizius his arm to support her. He stated that Ms Avizius said that she was not feeling well because of her heart condition. He had stated Ms Avizius was "*slow and slurred*" when she spoke.

Witness E, in his written statement, stated that when he and Ms Avizius arrived at his office, Ms Avizius sat on the sofa. He then asked Ms Avizius if she was "*ok*". Ms Avizius then cried and talked about the difficulties she was having [REDACTED]. Witness E stated that Ms Avizius "*was not coherent*" when she spoke. He stated that Ms Avizius had paused at various times in the conversation to sit upright, take a breath and wipe her eyes and that she then "*[fell] back*" on the sofa and had continued to talk [REDACTED]. Witness E stated that he tried to give Ms Avizius reassurance and that Ms Avizius "*calm[ed] down*".

In his written statement, Witness E stated that he then asked Ms Avizius, "*I am sorry to ask this, but have you drunk any alcohol today?*". Witness E stated that Ms Avizius immediately became "*defensive and agitated*" and responded that she had not drunk any alcohol and asked him why he asked. Witness E stated that he said to Ms Avizius that her speech was slurred, that she smelled of alcohol and could not walk in a straight line. Ms Avizius then said that she was ill and on medication. Witness E stated that Ms Avizius repeatedly asked him why he had asked her and said that "*it was a very strange thing to ask someone*". Ms Avizius said she had not had a drink since sometime in March 2019. Witness E stated that Ms Avizius "*remained distressed*" and was "*very upset*". Witness E stated that the conversation between him and Ms Avizius lasted approximately 25 to 30 minutes. He stated that after the conversation, he briefly left the office and asked for a

staff member from the medical centre to support Ms Avizius. Witness E stated that he helped Ms Avizius leave the office.

The panel then considered the written and oral evidence of Witness F who stated that on 14 November 2024, she asked Individual C to collect Ms Avizius's bag and put it in Witness F's office. Witness F stated that upon entering her office, she saw a tote bag that was open which contained a bottle of "*Smirnoff vodka*".

The panel then considered two photos, both of which showed an open tote bag with a bottle that was approximately two thirds full of clear liquid and labelled "*Smirnoff Vodka*".

The panel had sight of the email sent from Individual D who was recorded stating that when she entered Witness E's office after Ms Avizius and Witness E left, there was a "*strong smell similar to alcohol*".

The panel considered the written statement of Individual E, a staff member of the health centre, dated 14 November 2024. In her statement, she explained that on that day, she was called to see Ms Avizius to take her to the health centre. She stated that Ms Avizius was "*unsteady on her feet*" on the way to the centre and "*did not appear to be particularly aware of her surroundings*". She stated that she was behind Ms Avizius when walking up some stairs towards the centre and Ms Avizius fell backwards. Individual E stated that she put her hand on Ms Avizius' bottom to stop her falling backwards.

Individual E stated that when she and Ms Avizius arrived at the health centre, Ms Avizius laid on the bed and was "*very emotionally labile, appeared confused and wasn't making much sense*". Individual E stated that Ms Avizius was "*slurring her words*". Individual E [REDACTED]. Individual E stated that Ms Avizius' then slept for about 30 minutes and that she was "*more coherent but uninhibited*" when she woke up. Individual E stated that Ms Avizius asked Individual E if she could hug her a few times and swore a few times. Individual E stated that when Ms Avizius' [REDACTED] arrived to collect her, Ms Avizius was "*still a little bit unsteady on her feet*". [REDACTED].

The panel went on to consider Ms Avizius' written statement dated 28 September 2024 although clarified during the hearing that this should have in fact been 28 November 2024. Ms Avizius said that on 14 November 2024, it was the first time she had drunk alcohol since 8 September 2020. Ms Avizius disclosed in her written statement that on the evening of 13 November 2024, [REDACTED]. Ms Avizius stated that she received several [REDACTED] messages from her [REDACTED] on the morning of 14 November 2024 and submitted that this contributed to her conduct on 14 November 2024.

## **December 2024**

Ms Avizius made no admissions regarding allegation 2 in relation to her conduct in or around December 2022.

Witness D reported that he met with Ms Avizius on 2 December 2024 to inform her of the results of the disciplinary hearing which had taken place prior to that. He reported that Ms Avizius was dismissed and that Ms Avizius was “*very upset*”.

The panel considered the email from Witness E to Witness F dated 5 December 2024 which recorded him stating that on 2 December 2024 at approximately 6.15pm, Witness E had been working during a parents evening at St John’s School and Witness D asked Witness E to see Ms Avizius. Witness E stated that he entered Witness D’s office where Ms Avizius and Individual F, who was a union representative, were present and that there was a “*strong smell of alcohol*” in the room. Witness E stated that Ms Avizius was “*clearly distressed*” and had her head in her hands. Witness E stated Ms Avizius said that she was “*shocked that the school hadn’t done more to support her*”. Witness E stated that she continued to talk about [REDACTED] and that her behaviour was “*erratic*”. Witness E stated that Ms Avizius then said she wanted to go to hospital. Witness E stated that he called for an ambulance. The paramedics spoke to Ms Avizius and left the premises with her.

In his written statement, Witness E stated that he then went to the “*same*” bathroom that Ms Avizius had used a number of times that evening and saw a “*premixed canned cocktail drink*” in the toilet bin. Witness E stated that he took a picture of it. The panel then considered two photos which showed a drinks can in a bin and had the label which said “*Moth: Espresso Martini Vodka Cold Brew Coffee Liq... Playlist 14.9% Vol*”.

The panel considered the written and oral evidence of Witness F who stated that on the evening of 2 December 2024, Witness F was contacted to see Ms Avizius. Witness F stated that a staff member brought Witness F a bag which was found in Ms Avizius’ classroom, close to her desk and which contained Ms Avizius’ diary and “*an empty 1 litre bottle of vodka*”.

The panel considered the consistent, credible and clear evidence of the witnesses who all reported Ms Avizius’ unusual behaviours and smell of alcohol along with the evidence of a bottle of vodka in Ms Avizius’ bag. The panel noted that the St John’s School policy stipulated that the school hours were between 08:30 and 17:30 and that, although Ms Avizius had admitted to having had a drink off site rather than on the St John’s School premises, there was sufficient evidence that she had been under the influence of alcohol on school premises during school hours. The panel also noted that the specific behaviours of Ms Avizius found proven at allegation 1 in relation to Ibstock Place School were consistent with the behaviours of Ms Avizius described in relation to St John’s School.

The panel therefore found that, on the balance of probabilities, Ms Avizius was more likely than not to have been under the influence of alcohol whilst on St John’s School premises and/or during school hours.

Having considered the evidence before it, the panel found allegation 2 proven.

**3. Your conduct as may be found proven at allegation 1 and/or 2 above put one or more pupils at a risk of harm;**

Ms Avizius made no admission in respect of allegation 3. The panel therefore treated allegation 3 as disputed and went on to make its own determination as to the facts.

The panel considered the meaning of “*at risk of harm*” in relation to this allegation and the difference between actual harm and potential risk of harm.

The panel reminded itself of the facts it had found proven in relation to allegation 1.

In making a determination of allegation 3 in relation to allegation 1, the panel considered the notes of the interviews with Individual A and Individual B who both stated that Ms Avizius was teaching seven pupils in the workshop. Individual B stated that Ms Avizius was helping the pupils with wooden casts and liquid metal. Individual B stated that she left the room once or twice to get equipment and was in the room for the rest of the lesson. Individual A stated that he was present for the majority of the time and Individual B stated that Individual A was drilling wood.

Whilst the panel noted that there was no evidence of actual harm having been caused to pupils in respect of allegation 1, the panel considered there to be risk of harm in particular due to Ms Avizius’ teaching environment which was an art and DT classroom with dangerous equipment which needs close supervision from a health and safety perspective. The panel also noted that Ms Avizius had accepted that there were sharp tools, in particular knives in the classroom as in Ms Avizius’ own evidence this was what had initiated the interaction between Ms Avizius and her colleague on the day in question. The panel were most concerned in terms of risk by the presence of a bottle containing alcohol on school premises which was readily accessible to pupils.

Having found allegation 2 proven, the panel then considered whether her conduct put one or more pupils at a risk of harm. The panel reminded itself of the facts it had found proven in relation to allegation 2.

In particular, the panel again considered the written statement of Witness E dated 16 November 2024 in which he had stated that on 14 November 2024 at approximately 1.35pm, he saw Ms Avizius in the dining hall where there was a large number of pupils present. Witness E had stated Ms Avizius had her head in her hands.

The panel also considered the written and oral evidence of Witness E who explained that St John’s School is a boarding school and that the pupils did not use the area around Witness D’s office other than at the beginning and the end of the day and stated that the incident started at 6.15pm and that the ambulance crew were speaking to Ms Avizius for 30 to 45 minutes. Witness E spoke to them again at 10pm and told the crew that there

were children on site and that the crew needed to take Ms Avizius off site. Witness D stated that there were relatively few pupils boarding on 2 December 2024 and it was “*unlikely*” that any pupils saw what had occurred. However, the panel also noted that the incident regarding Ms Avizius’ behaviour while intoxicated had taken place at lunchtime in the busy dining hall where there was a number of children and staff present.

Whilst the panel noted that there was no evidence of actual harm having been caused to pupils in respect of allegation 2, the panel considered there to be risk of harm in particular due to Ms Avizius’ behaviour in front of many children and members of staff and that this increased the likelihood of harm being caused by others witnessing this incident. Although the panel noted that none of the witnesses gave evidence to suggest that any pupils had commented that she was intoxicated, it was more likely than not that they would have seen Ms Avizius being assisted out of the dining hall.

The panel considered Witness F’s evidence which was that a conscious decision had been made to take Ms Avizius out of the St John’s School premises via a back gate in order to minimise the risk of Ms Avizius being observed and that St John’s School had assessed this as being a risk to one or more pupils and staff on this basis.

The panel considered that a teacher being under the influence of alcohol and bringing alcohol onto the St John’s School site presented a risk of harm to pupils, particularly as the teacher’s judgment could be impaired. Several witnesses commented that this was completely unacceptable and that teachers needed to be able to respond at all times to any incidents arising.

The panel carefully considered the evidence before it and found allegation 3 proven.

**4. Whilst employed for the role of Teacher of Art at St John’s School and/or following your appointment, you provided false and/or misleading information and/or failed to disclose relevant information in order to improve your prospects of securing and/or retaining a teaching post, namely by:**

**a. Omitting Ibstock Place School from your application and/or CV;**

Ms Avizius made no admissions in relation to allegation 4(a).

The panel had sight of, and considered, Ms Avizius’s job application dated 14 December 2022 that she submitted to St John’s School. This recorded Ms Avizius stating that her current or most recent employer at the time was Notre Dame School. In her application, Ms Avizius also stated that the reason for seeking new employment was that she was dismissed following a period of [REDACTED] and going through a disciplinary process.

Ms Avizius’s application also recorded Ms Avizius stating that she was a supply teacher at Brooklands College and St John’s School which lasted from January 2020 to March 2020 and October 2022 to December 2022 respectively. The panel noted that the

application form stated clearly on it that details of the last employer were to be included and that upon signing Ms Avizius was signing to confirm that all information included on the form was true and accurate and that it was a criminal offence to provide false or misleading information. The panel noted that Ms Avizius had ticked the relevant boxes on the form and signed her name to the information provided.

The panel also considered Ms Avizius' CV which recorded Ms Avizius stating her present experience, which started on January 2020, was that she had set up and ran her own business and website as an art tutor to help pupils prepare their portfolios and prepare them for interviews and exams. Whilst the panel was unable to verify the truth of this information, it was able to find that there was information missing regarding Ms Avizius' last employer. The panel considered that the CV and application form were completed at the time of Ms Avizius applying for a teaching post at St John's School and that it was therefore likely that this information had been omitted in order for Ms Avizius to improve her prospects of securing and/or retaining a teaching post at St John's School.

The panel considered Witness D's written and oral evidence which was that he "*was not aware*" of Ms Avizius's employment at Ibstock Place School and that he only became aware of it when he was asked to produce his evidence for this hearing.

The panel therefore considered that, whilst employed at St John's School and/or following Ms Avizius' appointment as teacher of art, she had provided false and misleading information and failed to disclose relevant information in order to improve her prospects of securing and/or retaining a teaching post by omitting her previous employer.

The panel found allegation 4(a) proven.

#### **b. Failing to disclose that you were subject to ongoing TRA proceedings**

Ms Avizius made no admissions in relation to allegation 4(b).

The panel had sight of, and considered, the TRA referral form which referred Ms Avizius to the TRA dated 18 June 2022.

The panel had sight of Ms Avizius' job application that she submitted to St John's School. The application recorded Ms Avizius had ticked the boxes which declared that she confirmed that she was not prohibited from carrying out "*teaching work*"; that the information she provided on the application form was true and correct to the best of her knowledge; and that she understood that providing false or misleading information could result in rejection of her application or summary dismissal. The panel noted that the form did not specifically require Ms Avizius to state whether she was currently under investigation.

The panel noted that Witness D's written and oral evidence was that he "*was not aware*" that Ms Avizius was subject to ongoing TRA proceedings and that he only became aware when he was asked to produce his evidence for this hearing.

The panel considered that none of the witnesses were aware of Ms Avizius' involvement in TRA proceedings at any time and that the witnesses were all clear, credible and consistent in stating that this was the case.

The panel also considered the St John's School Staff Code of Conduct which stated that "*failure to immediately notify the School if you are or become the subject of a referral to the Teaching Regulation Agency...*" was an example of gross misconduct. The panel considered that the duty to disclose this information was therefore ongoing. Ms Avizius had not only failed to disclose this on applying for the role but had also failed to disclose this at the point of being asked to sign to state that she had read the Code of Conduct which Witness F confirmed was when she was appointed on or around January 2023. Further, the panel noted that Ms Avizius would have been provided with the St John's School safeguarding policy when she joined and should have been aware of KCSIE and Working Together to Safeguard Children both of which refer specifically to the TRA and safer recruitment practices.

The panel noted that Ms Avizius had disclosed the fact that she had been the subject of disciplinary action at Notre Dame School and had been referred to the TRA. This made the omission of Ms Avizius' time and subsequent disciplinary action at Ibstock Place School and referral to the TRA more serious because she had given the impression that she was being open and honest about her employment history by disclosing the issues at Notre Dame School.

The panel therefore considered that, whilst employed at St John's School and/or following Ms Avizius' appointment as teacher of art, she had provided false and misleading information and failed to disclose relevant information in order to improve her prospects of securing and/or retaining a teaching post by failing to disclose her involvement in ongoing TRA proceedings.

The panel found allegation 4(b) proven.

**5. You demonstrated a lack of insight in relation to your conduct at allegations 1 and/or 2 above in that:**

- a. You had received a final written warning in or around November 2018 from Notre Dame School for being under the influence of alcohol whilst at work;**

Ms Avizius made no admissions in relation to allegation 5(a).

The panel reminded itself of the facts it had found proven at allegation 1 and 2.

The panel did not have sight of further evidence in relation to allegation 5(a) at the start of the PCPH although had agreed to admit the disciplinary documentation from the bundle of disputed documents during the hearing which included the final written warning and investigation summary from November 2018 from Notre Dame School.

The panel considered the wording of this allegation, in particular that the wording of the stem of the allegation did not appear to be complete. The panel did not consider that it followed that allegation 5(a) was relevant to the matter of insight. Although the panel noted that the statement of fact in relation to 5(a) was factually correct, the panel did not consider that this linked to Ms Avizius having demonstrated a lack of insight. The panel had no evidence as to Ms Avizius' explanation or motivation for repeating the behaviours in allegations 1 and 2 and therefore did not draw a link between the insight and her final written warning.

The panel therefore found allegation 5(a) not proven.

**b. You were the subject of a disciplinary investigation in or around May/June 2019 by Notre Dame School following an empty vodka bottle being found in your classroom**

Ms Avizius made no admissions in relation to allegation 5(b).

The panel reminded itself of the facts it had found proven at allegation 1 and 2.

The panel did not have sight of further evidence in relation to allegation 5(b) at the start of the PCPH although had agreed to admit the disciplinary documentation from the bundle of disputed documents during the hearing which included the final written warning and investigation summary from November 2018 from Notre Dame School.

The panel considered the wording of this allegation, in particular that the wording of the stem of the allegation did not appear to be complete. The panel did not consider that it followed that allegation 5(b) was relevant to the matter of insight. Although the panel noted that the statement of fact in relation to 5(b) was factually correct, the panel did not consider that this linked to Ms Avizius having demonstrated a lack of insight. The panel had no evidence as to Ms Avizius' explanation or motivation for repeating the behaviours in allegations 1 and 2 and therefore did not draw a link between the insight and her being the subject of a disciplinary investigation.

The panel therefore found allegation 5(b) not proven.

**c. At the time of your conduct at allegation 2 above, you were the subject of TRA proceedings in relation to being under the influence of alcohol on school premises and/or during the workday.**

Ms Avizius made no admissions in relation to allegation 5(c).

Having found allegation 2 proven, the panel again considered the TRA referral form which referred Ms Avizius to the TRA dated 18 June 2022. The panel again considered Witness D's written and oral evidence which was that he "*was not aware*" that Ms Avizius was subject to ongoing TRA proceedings.

The panel again considered Ms Avizius's job application that she submitted to St John's School. The application recorded that Ms Avizius had ticked the boxes which declared that she confirmed that she was not prohibited from carrying out "*teaching work*"; that the information she provided on the application form was true and correct to the best of her knowledge; and that she understood that providing false or misleading information could result in rejection of her application or summary dismissal.

The panel considered the wording of this allegation, in particular that the wording of the stem of the allegation did not appear to be complete. The panel did not consider that it followed that allegation 5(c) was relevant to the matter of insight. Although the panel noted that the statement of fact in relation to 5(c) was factually correct, the panel did not consider that this linked to Ms Avizius having demonstrated a lack of insight. The panel had no evidence as to Ms Avizius' explanation or motivation for repeating the behaviours in allegations 1 and 2 and therefore did not draw a link between the insight and her being the subject of TRA proceedings in relation to being under the influence of alcohol on school premises and/or during the workday.

The panel therefore found allegation 5(c) not proven.

## **6. Your conduct at allegation 4 above was dishonest/and or lacked integrity**

Ms Avizius made no admissions as to allegation 6.

Having found allegation 4 proven, the panel then went on to consider whether Ms Avizius 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 Ms Avizius' knowledge or belief as to the facts.

The panel reminded itself of the facts that it had found proven in allegation 4. Ms Avizius had been employed by Ibstock Place School from 1 January 2021 to 3 May 2022 and had also been referred to the TRA in 2022.

The panel found that Ms Avizius had provided false information and that she had knowingly failed to complete the application form to include her previous employer, Ibstock Place School.

The panel then went to consider whether Ms Avizius' conduct was dishonest by the standards of ordinary decent people.

The panel again considered Ms Avizius' job application that she submitted to St John's School which clearly requested a full and accurate employment history. On this application form Ms Avizius ticked to say that she understood that providing false or misleading information could result in rejection of her application or summary dismissal.

The panel again considered Witness D's written and oral evidence which was that he "was not aware" that Ms Avizius had been employed by Ibstock Place School or that she was subject to ongoing TRA proceedings.

The panel considered the clarity on the application form and the fact that Ms Avizius would have known that she should disclose this information both at the point of applying for the role and during her employment at St John's School.

The panel concluded that Ms Avizius' conduct as found proven at allegation 4 above was clearly dishonest.

The panel considered whether Ms Avizius had failed to act with integrity. The panel considered the case of *Wingate & Anor v The Solicitors Regulation Authority* which defines "integrity" as "*the higher standards which society expects from professional persons*". The panel was mindful that professionals are not expected to be "*paragons of virtue*".

The panel again reminded itself of the facts that it had found proven in allegation 4 and as set out above.

The panel considered that providing true, accurate and honest information as part of recruitment processes and during employment was a basic moral quality which was vital for safer recruitment processes in order to safeguard children and for the public to have confidence that teachers are safe to teach.

The panel was satisfied that Ms Avizius had failed to act within the higher standards expected of a teacher although the panel acknowledged that this particular act of dishonesty was not specific to teaching and that by any person's standards there was an expectation to provide truthful and accurate employment history information on a CV and as part of any job application process. The panel considered that teachers are role models in the way that they behave and that there is an expectation that they will be honest.

The panel was satisfied that Ms Avizius' conduct, as found proven at allegation 4, lacked integrity.

Therefore, the panel found allegation 6 proven.

The panel found allegations 1(a), 1(b), 2, 3, 4(a), 4(b) and 6 proven and allegations 5(a), 5(b) and 5(c) not 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.

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

The panel considered that, by reference to Part 2, Ms Avizius was in breach of the following standards:

- Teachers uphold public trust in the profession and maintain high standards of ethics and behaviour, within and outside school, by
  - having regard for the need to safeguard pupils’ well-being, in accordance with statutory provisions.
- 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 was satisfied that the conduct of Ms Avizius, in relation to the facts found proved, involved breaches of Keeping Children Safe In Education (“KCSIE”), in particular significant breaches of part 3 of KCSIE Guidance 2022 and 2024 in relation to safer recruitment. The panel noted that KCSIE stated that this specifically referred to the information that should be provided on application forms and, more generally, safeguarding responsibilities for children in the education sector and the importance of providing a safe environment for children to access learning.

The panel considered that Ms Avizius was in breach of point 7, page 6 of the 2022 KCSIE Guidance which states: “*All staff have a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn.*” The panel noted the provisions relating to the information that should be included on an application form and the fact that the application form requested the information that needs to be included. The panel found that Ms Avizius had failed to include this information in her completed application form and/or disclose the relevant information which was in breach of the standard safer recruitment practices.

The panel considered the importance of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and that this was Ms Avizius’ responsibility to uphold.

The panel also considered whether Ms Avizius' conduct displayed behaviours associated with any of the offences listed on pages 12 and 13 of the Advice.

The panel found that the offence of serious dishonesty was relevant. The panel also noted that repeated use of alcohol was listed as a minor offence on the list on page 14 of the Advice and felt this was relevant in a school environment.

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.

For these reasons, the panel was satisfied that the conduct of Ms Avizius amounted to misconduct of a serious nature which fell significantly short of the standards expected of the profession.

Accordingly, the panel was satisfied that Ms Avizius was guilty of unacceptable professional conduct in respect of all allegations found proven.

In relation to whether Ms Avizius' 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 Ms Avizius' 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 Ms Avizius was guilty of unacceptable professional conduct, the panel found that the offences of serious dishonesty and offences involving alcohol were relevant.

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

For these reasons, the panel found that Ms Avizius' actions constituted conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute in respect of all allegations found proven.

## **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; 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 Ms Avizius, which involved being under the influence of alcohol during school hours and whilst on school premises; and failing to disclose relevant information in order to improve her prospects of securing her position as an art teacher in which Ms Avizius was dishonest and lacked integrity, there was a strong public interest consideration 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 Ms Avizius 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 Ms Avizius 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 Ms Avizius in the profession. Whilst there is evidence that Ms Avizius had ability as an educator, the panel considered that the adverse public interest considerations above outweighed any interest in retaining Ms Avizius in the profession, since her 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 Ms Avizius.

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;
- failure in their duty of care towards a child, including exposing a child to risk or failing to promote the safety and welfare of the children (as set out in Part 1 of KCSIE); and
- dishonesty or a lack of integrity, including the deliberate concealment of their actions...

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

In light of the panel's findings, the panel considered whether Ms Avizius' actions were deliberate. The panel considered that Ms Avizius' actions both in relation to the conduct involving alcohol and Ms Avizius' dishonesty and lack of integrity found proven were deliberate albeit the panel considered the deliberate concealment and dishonesty in relation to the information on her application form and CV to be more serious. However, the panel considered that the alcohol related misconduct was particularly serious due to the repeated incidents and ongoing nature of the behaviour at different schools over a significant period of time. Although the panel considered that the alcohol related misconduct was deliberate and repeated, the panel took account of the fact that Ms Avizius was clearly suffering with [REDACTED] and had understood that she had received support for this. Notwithstanding this, the panel considered that Ms Avizius had been given several opportunities over a number of years to change her behaviours and, despite apparently having received support, had not provided evidence of insight or demonstrated a change in her behaviours.

There was no evidence to suggest that Ms Avizius was acting under extreme duress, e.g. a physical threat or significant intimidation although the panel did note that Ms Avizius was clearly suffering with [REDACTED]. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] The panel also noted that there was no direct evidence of this and therefore attached reduced weight to Ms Avizius' hearsay evidence on this matter.

The panel took account of Ms Avizius' otherwise good history as a teacher, having demonstrated good standards of teaching. The panel noted that some of the witnesses, in particular Witness E commented both in written and oral evidence during the hearing on her being "*devoted to her pupils*" and that she was a good teacher. The panel also

noted that Ms Avizius had achieved particularly high academic results in her subject area.

The panel saw evidence that showed Ms Avizius was previously subject to disciplinary proceedings, warnings and [REDACTED].

Ms Avizius submitted a character reference from Individual G who was a teacher at Ibstock Place School, to attest to her ability as a teacher. The panel noted that in the character reference, Individual G stated that Ms Avizius is a “*consummate professional*” and that Individual G “*would unreservedly recommend her for her professionalism and integrity and would rely on her without question.*”

Ms Avizius, in her statement dated 28 September 2022, said that she “*worked extremely hard*” whilst at Ibstock Place School, [REDACTED]. The panel did not find that this view was corroborated by any of the witnesses.

The panel also considered Ms Avizius’ written statement dated 28 September 2024 (established as being 28 November 2024 during the hearing) where she showed remorse for her conduct on 14 November 2024 and acknowledged the severity of her conduct. Ms Avizius said that she had not drunk alcohol since 8 September 2020 and acknowledged that in hindsight, she should have used the support network available to her and would seek support in future at an earlier stage. [REDACTED]. The panel noted that the statement about the last day of drinking alcohol was not consistent with Ms Avizius’ other evidence or the findings of the panel in relation to these allegations.

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 considered the seriousness of Ms Avizius’ misconduct and behaviours found proven. The panel was concerned about the future risk of repetition and noted that there were two separate schools who had investigated Ms Avizius’ alcohol related misconduct and that there had been a previous TRA referral relating to alcohol from a third school. This, combined with allegations found proven of Ms Avizius’ serious dishonesty, meant that the panel did not consider that publicising the outcome would sufficiently meet the expectations of the public regarding a member of the teaching profession.

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 Ms Avizius 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 Ms

Avizius. The ongoing and repeated nature of Ms Avizius' serious misconduct was a significant factor 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 two 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 although the panel noted that the list was not exhaustive.

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.

One of these includes "*...serious dishonesty*" which the panel found was engaged in this matter.

The panel considered the level of insight and remorse that Ms Avizius had shown and noted that there was a small amount of insight shown at St John's School. However, the panel noted that Ms Avizius had provided dishonest information during St John's School's investigation which it considered undermined any remorse or insight shown. The panel noted that there was no insight shown in relation to the investigations by Ibstock Place School. The panel had received no separate submissions for this hearing from Ms Avizius.

The panel considered that Ms Avizius' conduct had been ongoing for many years and that she had not provided any evidence to satisfy the panel that there was no risk of repetition or that she had insight or remorse for her previous misconduct. The panel noted that there was a recurring pattern of behaviours which had shown no evidence of improvement. The panel considered that Ms Avizius had been given a number of opportunities to reverse the behaviours in relation to alcohol, three different schools had taken disciplinary action against her and she had been the subject of a previous TRA finding for alcohol related offences. The panel found Ms Avizius had been extremely dishonest in concealing this information and had been dishonest about her sobriety.

The panel decided that the findings indicated a situation in which a review period would not be appropriate and, as such, decided that it would be proportionate, in all the

circumstances, for the prohibition order to be recommended without provision for a review period.

## **Decision and reasons on behalf of the Secretary of State**

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

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

In this case, the panel has found 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 allegations 5(a), 5(b) and 5(c) not proven and I have therefore put those matters entirely from my mind.

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

In particular, the panel has found that Ms Avizius is in breach of the following standards:

- Teachers uphold public trust in the profession and maintain high standards of ethics and behaviour, within and outside school, by
  - having regard for the need to safeguard pupils' well-being, in accordance with statutory provisions.
- 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 was satisfied that the conduct of Ms Avizius involved breaches of the responsibilities and duties set out in statutory guidance Keeping children safe in education (KCSIE).

The panel finds that the conduct of Ms Avizius fell significantly short of the standards expected of the profession.

The findings of misconduct are particularly serious as they include findings of being under the influence of alcohol whilst on school premises and during school hours, and dishonesty.

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 Ms Avizius, 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 Ms Avizius, which involved being under the influence of alcohol during school hours and whilst on school premises; and failing to disclose relevant information in order to improve her prospects of securing her position as an art teacher in which Ms Avizius was dishonest and lacked integrity, there was a strong public interest consideration 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, including:

“Although the panel considered that the alcohol related misconduct was deliberate and repeated, the panel took account of the fact that Ms Avizius was clearly suffering with [REDACTED] and had understood that she had received support for this. Notwithstanding this, the panel considered that Ms Avizius had been given several opportunities over a number of years to change her behaviours and, despite apparently having received support, had not provided evidence of insight or demonstrated a change in her behaviours.”

“The panel also considered Ms Avizius’ written statement dated 28 September 2024 (established as being 28 November 2024 during the hearing) where she showed remorse for her conduct on 14 November 2024 and acknowledged the severity of her conduct. Ms Avizius said that she had not drunk alcohol since 8 September 2020 and acknowledged that in hindsight, she should have used the support network available to her and would seek support in future at an earlier stage. [REDACTED]. The panel noted that the statement about the last day of drinking alcohol was not consistent with Ms Avizius’ other evidence or the findings of the panel in relation to these allegations.”

I have noted the panel’s conclusion that:

“The panel considered that Ms Avizius’ conduct had been ongoing for many years and that she had not provided any evidence to satisfy the panel that there was no risk of repetition or that she had insight or remorse for her previous misconduct.”

In my judgement, the lack of evidence of 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:

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

I am particularly mindful of the findings of dishonesty and repeated incidents of being under the influence of alcohol at school 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 Ms Avizius herself. The panel has commented:

“The panel took account of Ms Avizius’ otherwise good history as a teacher, having demonstrated good standards of teaching. The panel noted that some of the witnesses, in particular Witness E commented both in written and oral evidence during the hearing on her being “*devoted to her pupils*” and that she was a good teacher. The panel also noted that Ms Avizius had achieved particularly high academic results in her subject area.

The panel saw evidence that showed Ms Avizius was previously subject to disciplinary proceedings, warnings and a [REDACTED].”

The panel has also noted a character reference that “stated that Ms Avizius is a *“consummate professional”* and that Individual G *“would unreservedly recommend her for her professionalism and integrity and would rely on her without question.”*”

I have also considered the comments that the panel has made about the mitigating factors put forward by Ms Avizius in her written evidence, including:

“There was no evidence to suggest that Ms Avizius was acting under extreme duress, e.g. a physical threat or significant intimidation although the panel did note that Ms Avizius was clearly suffering with an [REDACTED]. [REDACTED]”

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

In this case, I have placed considerable weight on the panel’s comments concerning the serious and repeated nature of the misconduct found proven. The panel has said:

“The panel was concerned about the future risk of repetition and noted that there were two separate schools who had investigated Ms Avizius’ alcohol related misconduct and that there had been a previous TRA referral relating to alcohol from a third school. This, combined with allegations found proven of Ms Avizius’ serious dishonesty, meant that the panel did not consider that publicising the outcome would sufficiently meet the expectations of the public regarding a member of the teaching profession.”

I have also placed considerable weight on the findings of the panel on the lack of evidence of insight and remorse on the part of Ms Avizius and of any change in her behaviours.

I have given less weight in my consideration of sanction therefore to the contribution that Ms Avizius has made to the profession. In my view, it is necessary to impose a prohibition order in order to maintain public confidence in the profession. A published decision, in light of the circumstances in this case, that is not backed up by evidence of insight 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 that no provision should be made for a review period.

The panel notes that the Advice indicates that in cases involving serious dishonesty the public interest will have greater relevance and weigh in favour of a longer review period.

I have considered the panel's comments:

"The panel considered the level of insight and remorse that Ms Avizius had shown and noted that there was a small amount of insight shown at St John's School. However, the panel noted that Ms Avizius had provided dishonest information during St John's School's investigation which it considered undermined any remorse or insight shown. The panel noted that there was no insight shown in relation to the investigations by Ibstock Place School. The panel had received no separate submissions for this hearing from Ms Avizius.

The panel considered that Ms Avizius' conduct had been ongoing for many years and that she had not provided any evidence to satisfy the panel that there was no risk of repetition or that she had insight or remorse for her previous misconduct. The panel noted that there was a recurring pattern of behaviours which had shown no evidence of improvement. The panel considered that Ms Avizius had been given a number of opportunities to reverse the behaviours in relation to alcohol, three different schools had taken disciplinary action against her and she had been the subject of a previous TRA finding for alcohol related offences. The panel found Ms Avizius had been extremely dishonest in concealing this information and had been dishonest about her sobriety.

The panel decided that the findings indicated a situation in which a review period would not be appropriate and, as such, decided that it would be proportionate, in all the circumstances, for the prohibition order to be recommended without provision for a review period."

I have considered whether not allowing a review period reflects the seriousness of the findings and is a proportionate period to achieve the aim of maintaining public confidence in the profession. I agree with the panel that the misconduct in this case is serious as it involves dishonesty, recurring incidents of being under the influence of alcohol at school and putting pupils at risk of harm. I share the panel's concern about the lack of insight and remorse on the part of Ms Avizius and the consequent risk of repetition. However, I am also mindful that Ms Avizius' misconduct did not include characteristics that the Advice indicates would weigh in favour of not offering a review period. In my judgement, not offering a review period is not proportionate and a review period of 5 years would be appropriate. After 5 years Ms Avizius would remain prohibited unless she was able to demonstrate to a panel that she had developed full insight into and remorse for her behaviour and had taken concrete steps to avoid any repetition so that there would be no risk of harm to pupils.

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

**This means that Ms Susan Avizius is prohibited from teaching indefinitely and cannot teach in any school, sixth form college, relevant youth accommodation or children's home in England.** She may apply for the prohibition order to be set aside, but not until 9 February 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 she does apply, a panel will meet to consider whether the prohibition order should be set aside. Without a successful application, Ms Avizius remains prohibited from teaching indefinitely.

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

Ms Avizius has a right of appeal to the High Court within 28 days from the date she is given notice of this order.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D Oatley', written in a cursive style.

**Decision maker: David Oatley**

**Date: 3 February 2026**

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