Caution order

Reference: SAN-2b Last Updated: 28/01/2026

A caution order is the least serious of our sanctions in that it is the least restrictive. It is a public statement of what has happened and why the Committee found it to be unacceptable. We will record the caution on the Register and publish it on our website.

A caution is only appropriate if the Committee has decided there's no risk to the public or to people using services that requires the professional's practice to be restricted. This means the case is at the lower end of the spectrum of impaired fitness to practise, but the Committee wants to mark that what happened was unacceptable and must not happen again.

A caution may be appropriate when any of the following factors are apparent (this list is not exhaustive):

- significant evidence of re-training and reflection
- significant insight which makes repetition highly unlikely
- a sanction is necessary to uphold professional standards and public confidence in the profession, but the professional is able to practise safely and a more restrictive sanction would be disproportionate

How long can a caution order run?

A caution can run for between one and five years. The Committee will need to make a separate decision on the length of the caution and provide reasons for its decision on length. Generally, the length of the caution order will be indicative of the seriousness of the facts found proven. However, the Committee should remember that cautions are not subject to review. As such, cautions of more than three years may run longer than more restrictive sanctions. In this situation, the professional will not be able to demonstrate to a review panel that their fitness to practise is no longer impaired, which they could have done with a conditions of practice or suspension order.