Suspension order

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

This order suspends the professional's registration for a period of up to one year. The professional will not be able to practise while the suspension order is in place. It may be appropriate in cases where:

- the impairment is very serious but not fundamentally incompatible with continuing to be a registered professional
- an outcome less severe than strike-off would still satisfy the over-arching objective.

A suspension order is usually reviewed before it expires. The professional may not practise as a registered nurse, midwife or nursing associate during the period the order is in force.

Key things to weigh up before imposing this order include (but aren't limited to):

- whether the risk posed to the public, or to people receiving care, can only be managed by temporary removal from the Register?
- will suspension be sufficient to protect people using services, public confidence in the profession, or professional standards?
- is it realistic that the professional could return to unrestricted practice in the future, even if it is not appropriate for them to do so now?
- What would the registrant need to do in order to be fit to practise in the future? Is it realistic that they will be able to do this?

Below is a non-exhaustive list of circumstances that may make a suspension order an appropriate sanction:

- the charges found proved are at the most serious end of the spectrum and call into question the professional's suitability to continue practising, either currently or at all
- while it is possible that the professional could be fit to practise in future, only a period out of practice would be sufficient to allow them to fully strengthen their practice through reflection, the development of their professional skills and / or development of insight and remediation
- there is a risk to the safety of people using services if the professional were allowed to continue to practise even with conditions
- what went wrong is so serious that public confidence in the profession and professional standards could not be maintained if the professional were able to continue practising without stopping for a period of time
- despite the seriousness of what happened, the professional has engaged in the proceedings and has shown at least some meaningful insight which evidences a realistic possibility that they will continue to develop this insight, address their concerns and return to practice.

The Committee needs to make a separate decision as to whether the suspension should be subject to a review at the end. When ordering suspension with a review, the Committee should explain clearly what expectations it has, or what actions the professional could take, to help the future review Committee. This could include what kinds of learning the professional should do or evidence they should provide. However these are not binding on the future Committee, which will need to make its own decision on whether or not the professional is still impaired when it reviews the suspension.[1]

[1] Khan v General Pharmaceutical Council [2016] UKSC 64