

The Nursing and Midwifery Council (Fitness to Practise) Rules 2004 (SI 2004/1761)

Unofficial consolidated text

Effective from 1 October 2026

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Amended text is enclosed in [], a footnote identifies the amending legislation.

Text from amendments that were made by SI 2008/1485, but will not come into force, have been included for information. The text is *italicised* and enclosed in { }, the corresponding footnote sets out why the amendments will not come into force.

This text incorporates amendments made by:

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| SI 2007/893 | The Nursing and Midwifery Council (Fitness to Practise) (Amendment) Rules 2007 |
| SI 2008/3148 | The Nursing and Midwifery Council (Midwifery and Practice Committees) (Constitution) Rules 2008 |
| SI 2009/1182 | <i>The Health Care and Associated Professions (Miscellaneous Amendments and Practitioner Psychologists) Order 2009</i> |
| SI 2012/17 | The Nursing and Midwifery Council (Fitness to Practise) (Amendment) Rules 2011 |
| SI 2015/52 | The Nursing and Midwifery Council (Fitness to Practise) (Education, Registration and Registration Appeals) (Amendment) Rules Order of Council 2014 |
| SI 2015/1923 | The Nursing and Midwifery Council (Fitness to Practise) (Education, Registration and Registration Appeals) (Amendment No. 2) Rules Order of Council 2015 |
| SI 2017/703 | The Nursing and Midwifery Order (Legal Assessors)(Amendment) and the Nursing and Midwifery Council (Fitness to Practise)(Amendment) Rules Order of Council 2017 |
| SI 2018/838 | The Nursing and Midwifery (Amendment) Order 2018 |

- SI 2020/364 The Nursing and Midwifery Council (Emergency Procedures)
(Amendment) Rules 2020 Order of Council 2020
- SI 2020/821 The Nursing and Midwifery Council (Coronavirus) (Amendment) (No.2)
Rules Order of Council 2020
- SI 2026/822 The Nursing and Midwifery Council (Fees) (Practice Committee)
(Fitness to Practise) (Amendment) Rules Order of Council 2026

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The Nursing and Midwifery Council (Fitness to Practise) Rules 2004

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The Nursing and Midwifery Council, in exercise of its powers under articles 22(4), 26(2), 26(3), 26(4), 30(9), 32, 33(4) and 47(2) of the Nursing and Midwifery Order 2001 and of all other powers enabling it in that behalf, and after consulting in accordance with article 47(3) of that Order, hereby makes the following Rules:

Part 1 Preliminaries

Citation and commencement

1. These Rules may be cited as the Nursing and Midwifery Council (Fitness to Practise) Rules 2004, and shall come into force on 1st August 2004.

Interpretation

2. In these Rules—

“allegation” means any allegation of a kind mentioned in article 22(1)(a) or 22(1)(b) of the Order or any matter which is treated as an allegation by virtue of article 22(6) of the Order;

[. . .]¹

[“Case Examiner” means a professional or lay officer of the Council appointed by the Registrar for the purposes of exercising the functions of the Investigating Committee in accordance with article 26A of the Order, and “Case Examiners” means the professional and lay Case Examiner to whom an allegation is referred under rule 2A(2) and includes any replacement Case Examiner appointed by the Registrar;]²

“the Code” means the code of professional conduct, which includes standards of conduct, performance and ethics, established by the Council under article 21(1)(a) of the Order;

“initial hearing” means the first substantive hearing of an allegation;

[“interim order” means an interim suspension order or an interim conditions of practice order;

“interim order notice” is the notice mentioned in rule 8(3);]³

¹ Omitted – SI 2008/3148, rule 12

² Inserted – SI 2015/52, rule 3

³ Inserted – SI 2012/17, rule 3

[“lay”, in relation to a Case Examiner, means a person who—

- (a) is not and never has been a registered nurse, midwife or nursing associate;
- (b) is not and never has been a registered medical practitioner; and
- (c) does not hold qualifications which would entitle them to apply for registration as a registered nurse, midwife, nursing associate or registered medical practitioner;]⁴

“mental disorder” means mental illness, arrested or incomplete development of mind, psychopathic disorder and any other disorder or disability of mind;

“the Order” means the Nursing and Midwifery Order 2001;

“the presenter” means the representative of the Council presenting the case on its behalf (who may be a solicitor or Counsel);

[“professional”, in relation to a Case Examiner, means a [registered nurse, midwife or nursing associate]⁵;]⁶

“review hearing” means a hearing for the purpose of reviewing orders made by the [Fitness to Practise]⁷Committee; and

“restoration hearing” means a hearing to consider an application for restoration to the register.

[“sanction” means either an order made by the Investigating Committee under article 26(7) of the Order or an order made by the [Fitness to Practise]⁸ Committee under article 29(5) of the Order]⁹

[[Virtual meetings and hearings]¹⁰

[2ZA.]¹¹ Meetings and hearings arranged under these Rules may be conducted using audio or video conferencing facilities.]¹²

⁴ Substituted – SI 2018/838, Schedule 2, paragraph 6(a)(i)

⁵ Substituted – SI 2018/838, Schedule 2, paragraph 6(a)(ii)

⁶ Inserted – SI 2015/52, rule 3

⁷ Substituted – SI 2017/703, schedule, rule 3(a)

⁸ Substituted – SI 2017/703, schedule, rule 3(b)

⁹ Inserted – SI 2007/893, rule 3(1)

¹⁰ Substituted – SI 2020/82, Schedule, rule 2(a)

¹¹ Renumbered – SI 2020/82, Schedule, rule 2(b)

¹² Inserted- SI 2020/364, Schedule, rule 3(2)

Part 2

[Investigation of Allegations] ¹³

[Initial consideration of allegations

2A.—(1) Where the Registrar considers that an allegation falls within article 22(1)(b) of the Order, the Registrar must refer the allegation to the Investigating Committee for consideration under rule 5.

- [(2)** Where the Registrar considers that an allegation falls within article 22(1)(a) of the Order, the Registrar, must refer the allegation—
- (a) to the Case Examiners for consideration under rule 6C; or
 - (b) to the Fitness to Practise Committee for consideration in accordance with Part 4.]¹⁴
- (3) Where the Registrar considers that an allegation does not fall within article 22(1)(a) of the Order, the Registrar must notify the maker of the allegation (if any).
- (4) The Registrar may carry out any investigations as in the Registrar's opinion are appropriate to the consideration of—
- (a) whether or not the allegation falls within article 22(1)(a) of the Order;
 - (b) whether or not the allegation falls within article 22(1)(b) of the Order;
 - (c) the registrant's fitness to practise; or
 - (d) the registrant's entry in the register.] ¹⁵

[Notice of allegations of fraudulent or incorrect entries in the register] ¹⁶

3.— [(1) Where an allegation is referred under rule 2A(1), the Registrar shall, in accordance with article 26(2)(a) of the Order, notify the registrant of any allegation referred to the Investigating Committee, by serving a notice of referral upon her.] ¹⁷ .

- [(2)** The notice of referral shall—

¹³ Substituted – SI 2015/52, rule 4

¹⁴ Substituted – SI 2017/703, schedule, rule 4

¹⁵ Inserted – SI 2015/52, rule 5

¹⁶ Substituted – SI 2015/52, rule 6(a)

¹⁷ Substituted – SI 2015/52, rule 6(b)

- (a) be accompanied by any documents relating to the allegation that have not previously been disclosed to the registrant by the Council or a Practice Committee;
- (b) invite the registrant to make written representations, to be received by the [Registrar] ¹⁸ no later than 28 days after the date of the notice;
- (c) unless the allegation is made by virtue of article 22(6) of the Order, inform the registrant that any representations or extracts of any representations received from her may be shown to the person making the allegation for comment; and
- (d) inform the registrant that further information may be sought from other persons in accordance with article 25(1) of the Order or investigations undertaken to assist the Investigating Committee in carrying out its functions. ¹⁹
- [(e) invite the registrant to inform the Registrar within 28 days from the date of service of the notice of referral if the registrant wishes the allegation to be considered at a hearing.] ²⁰

[(3) The Registrar shall give notice of the referral made under paragraph 2A(1) to the following—

- (a) where known, the registrant's employer or any other person with whom the registrant has an arrangement to provide [professional services]²¹; [and] ²²
- (b) where known, any other body by which the registrant is authorised to practise a health or social care profession;
- (c) [...]²³
- (d) [...]²⁴]²⁵

4. [...]²⁶

¹⁸ Substituted – SI 2015/52, rule 6(c)

¹⁹ Substituted – SI 2012/17, rule 4

²⁰ Inserted – SI 2015/52, rule 6(d)

²¹ Substituted – SI 2018/838, Schedule 2, paragraph 6(b)

²² Inserted – SI 2017/703, schedule, rule 5(a)

²³ Omitted – SI 2017/703, schedule, rule 5(b)

²⁴ Omitted – SI 2017/703, schedule, rule 5(b)

²⁵ Inserted – SI 2015/52, rule 6(e)

²⁶ Omitted - SI 2015/52, rule 7

[Procedure of the Investigating Committee where the allegation relates to a fraudulent or incorrect entry in the register

5.—(1) Where—

- (a) the registrant asks for a hearing within the period specified in rule 3(2)(e); or
- (b) the Registrar considers that a hearing is desirable,

the Investigating Committee must consider the allegation at a hearing.

(2) Where a hearing is to be held pursuant to paragraph (1), the Registrar must send a notice to the registrant no later than 28 days before the date fixed for the hearing.

(3) The notice of hearing must—

- (a) inform the registrant of the date, time and venue of the hearing;
- (b) contain a charge particularising the allegation, and the alleged facts upon which the allegation is based;
- (c) inform the registrant of the registrant's right to attend, and to be represented at, the hearing in accordance with rule 20;
- (d) inform the registrant of the Committee's power to proceed with the hearing in the registrant's absence;
- (e) inform the registrant of the registrant's right to adduce evidence in accordance with rule 31;
- (f) inform the registrant of the registrant's right to call witnesses, and to cross examine any witnesses called by the Council or by the Committee;
- (g) require the registrant to inform the Council, within 14 days of receipt of the notice, whether the registrant intends to—
 - (i) attend the hearing,
 - (ii) be represented at the hearing;
- (h) inform the registrant of the Committee's power to impose an interim order under article 26(11) of the Order; and
- (i) inform the registrant of the action the Committee may take under article 26(2)(d)(ii), (7) and (8) of the Order.

- [(3A)** In paragraph (3) “venue” includes details of audio or video conferencing arrangements.**]²⁷**
- (4) Where a hearing is to be held pursuant to paragraph (1), the Investigating Committee—
- (a) may hold a preliminary meeting in accordance with rule 18; and
 - (b) must determine the matter in accordance with the procedure set out in Part 5 of these Rules, and must dispose of the matter in accordance with article 26(2)(d)(ii), (7), (8) and (11) of the Order.
- (5) Where the registrant has not requested a hearing and the Registrar considers that no hearing is necessary—
- (a) the Registrar must invite any person who, in the Registrar’s opinion, has an interest in the proceedings to submit written representations within such time as the Registrar may direct; and
 - (b) the Investigating Committee shall meet in private and, notwithstanding the absence of any representations invited in accordance with sub-paragraph (a), dispose of the matter in accordance with article 26(2)(d)(ii), (7), (8) and (11) of the Order.
- (6) The Registrar must notify, in writing, the registrant and the person making the allegation (if any) of the Investigating Committee’s decision together with its reasons. **]²⁸**

6. [...]²⁹

²⁷ Inserted – SI 2020/364, Schedule, rule 3(3)

²⁸ Substituted – SI 2015/52, rule 8

²⁹ Omitted - SI 2015/52, rule 9

[Notice of fitness to practise allegations

6A.—(1) Where an allegation is referred to Case Examiners under rule [2A(2)(a)]³⁰, the Registrar must notify the registrant of that allegation and referral by serving a notice of referral on the registrant.

(2) The notice of referral must—

- (a) be accompanied by any documents relating to the allegation that have not previously been disclosed to the registrant by the Council or a Practice Committee;
- (b) [inform the registrant of the actions the Case Examiners could take under rule 6C and]³¹ invite the registrant to make written representations, to be received by the Registrar no later than 28 days after the date of the notice;
- (c) unless the allegation is made by virtue of article 22(6) of the Order, inform the registrant that any representations or extracts of any representations received from the registrant may be shown to the person making the allegation for comment; and
- (d) inform the registrant that further information may be sought from other persons in accordance with article 25(1) of the Order or investigations undertaken to assist the Case Examiners in carrying out their functions.

[(3) The Registrar may extend the period specified in paragraph (2)(b).] ³²

³⁰ Substituted – SI 2017/703, schedule, rule 6(a)

³¹ Inserted – SI 2017/703, schedule, rule 6(b)

³² Inserted – SI 2026/822, schedule, rule 4

Investigation of Fitness to Practise allegations

6B.—(1) The Registrar may carry out any investigations, whether or not any have been carried out under rule 2A(4), as in the Registrar's opinion are appropriate to the consideration of the allegation by the Case Examiners.

(2) The Registrar may, in the case of an allegation that the registrant's fitness to practise is impaired by reason of lack of competence, invite the registrant to submit to an assessment.

(3) The Registrar may, in the case of an allegation that the registrant's fitness to practise is impaired by reason of the registrant's physical or mental health, invite the registrant to submit to a medical examination by experts appointed by the Council.

[(3A) Paragraphs (3B) to (3E) apply in the case of an allegation that the registrant's fitness to practise is impaired by reason of not having the necessary knowledge of English.

(3B) The Registrar may direct the registrant to, within such period as the Registrar may specify in a notification referred to in paragraph (3D),—

- (a) undertake an examination or other assessment as specified in that notification; and
- (b) provide the Registrar with evidence of the result of that examination or other assessment in the form required by paragraph (3C).

(3C) The registrant must provide the evidence referred to in paragraph (3B)(b) in the form of a certificate or other document signed by an officer of the body providing that examination or other assessment.

(3D) Where the Registrar makes a direction pursuant to paragraph (3B), the Registrar must notify the registrant, in writing, of the direction and the notice must also inform the registrant of—

- (a) the name of the examination or other assessment that the registrant is directed to undertake;
- (b) the evidence to be provided in accordance with paragraph (3C); and
- (c) the provisions of rule 31(6A).

(3E) The Registrar must provide the Case Examiners with the evidence provided by the registrant pursuant to paragraph (3C). **]** ³³

(4) **[...]** ³⁴

³³ Inserted – SI 2015/1923, part 2, paragraph 3

³⁴ Omitted – SI 2026/822, schedule, rule 5

Consideration of fitness to practise allegations by Case Examiners

6C.—(1) Where an allegation is referred under rule [2A(2)(a)]³⁵, the Case Examiners must consider [...] ³⁶ whether there is a case to answer.

[(1A) Before the Case Examiners make a decision that there is a case to answer under paragraph (2), give advice or issue a warning under paragraph (2B) or refer the case to the Investigating Committee under paragraph (4), they must be satisfied that the Registrar has —

- (a) sent any information or documents obtained pursuant to rule 6B to the registrant;
- (b) given the registrant a period of 28 days, beginning with the date on which information and documents obtained pursuant to rule 6B are sent, to make representations in response; and
- (c) informed the registrant that, after the expiry of the period—
 - (i) specified in sub-paragraph (b), or
 - (ii) if that period is extended under paragraph (1B), the extended period,the Case Examiners can proceed to make a decision in the absence of any representations.

(1B) The Registrar may extend the period specified in paragraph (1A)(b).

(1C) Before making a decision, the Case Examiners must consider the information the Registrar has been able to obtain and any representations or other observations made under these Rules.] ³⁷

³⁵ Substituted – SI 2017/703, schedule, rule 7(a)

³⁶ Omitted – SI 2026/822, schedule, rule 6(a)

³⁷ Inserted – SI 2026/822, schedule, rule 6(b)

- (2) Where the Case Examiners agree that there is a case to answer—
- (a) the Case Examiners must either—
 - (i) refer the case to the Fitness to Practise Committee, or
 - (ii) recommend undertakings to be agreed with the registrant pursuant to rule 6E; and
 - (b) the Registrar must notify in writing both the registrant and the person making the allegation (if any) of the Case Examiners' decision and their reasons for it.
- (2A) Paragraph (2)(a)(ii) does not apply where the Case Examiners consider that, if the allegation were referred to the Fitness to Practise Committee, there is a realistic prospect of that Committee making an order directing the Registrar to strike the registrant off the register.
- (2B) Where the Case Examiners agree that there is no case to answer, they may give advice to the registrant or issue the registrant with a warning.
- (3) Where the Case Examiners agree that there is no case to answer, the Registrar must notify in writing—
- (a) the person making the allegation (if any) of the Case Examiners' decision together with their reasons, including whether the registrant has been issued with a warning or given advice; and
 - (b) the registrant—
 - (i) of the Case Examiners' decision together with the reasons for it,
 - (ii) of the details of any warning issued or advice given,
 - (iii) of the period during which any warning issued will be published under article 22(9) of the Order, and
 - (iv) that the allegation may be taken into account in the consideration of any further allegation about the registrant received by the Council within three years from the date of the Case Examiners' decision that there is no case to answer.³⁸
- (4) Where the Case Examiners fail to agree whether there is a case to answer, they must notify the Registrar accordingly, and the Registrar must refer the allegation to the Investigating Committee for consideration under rule 6D.
- (5) If, during their consideration of the allegation, one or both of the Case Examiners is of the opinion that [a Practice]³⁹ Committee should consider making an interim

³⁸ Substituted – SI 2017/703, schedule, rule 7(b)

³⁹ Substituted – SI 2017/703, schedule, rule 7(c)

order in relation to the registrant, the Case Examiners must direct the Registrar accordingly.

Consideration of fitness to practise allegations by the Investigating Committee

6D.—(1) Where an allegation has been referred to the Investigating Committee under rule 6C(4), the Committee—

- (a) may direct the Registrar to carry out any investigations as the Committee considers appropriate to the consideration of the allegation;
- (b) must direct the Registrar to send any information or documents obtained pursuant to this rule to the registrant and invite the registrant to make written representations to be received by the Registrar no later than 28 days after the date on which these documents are sent;
- (c) must consider, [in private]⁴⁰ in the light of the information which the Registrar has been able to obtain under this rule or [rule 2A(4), 6B(1), (2), (3) or (3B)]⁴¹ and any representations or other observations made to it under rule 6A(2) or [6C(1A)]⁴², whether there is a case to answer.

[(2) Where the Investigating Committee determines that there is a case to answer—

- (a) the Investigating Committee must either—
 - (i) refer the allegation to the Fitness to Practise Committee, or
 - (ii) recommend undertakings to be agreed with the registrant pursuant to rule 6E;
- (b) the Registrar must notify in writing both the registrant and the person making the allegation (if any) of the Investigating Committee's determination and its reasons for it.

⁴⁰ Inserted – SI 2017/703, schedule, rule 8(a)

⁴¹ Substituted – SI 2015/1923, part 2, paragraph 4

⁴² Substituted – SI 2026/822, schedule, rule 7

(2A) Paragraph (2)(a)(ii) does not apply where the Investigating Committee considers that, if the allegation were referred to the Fitness to Practise Committee, there is a realistic prospect of that Committee making an order directing the Registrar to strike the registrant off the register.

(2B) Where the Investigating Committee determines that there is no case to answer, it may give advice to the registrant or issue the registrant with a warning.

(3) Where the Investigating Committee determines that there is no case to answer, the Registrar must notify in writing—

(a) the person making the allegation (if any) of the Investigating Committee's determination together with its reasons, including whether the registrant has been issued with a warning or given advice; and

(b) the registrant—

(i) of the Investigating Committee's determination together with the reasons for it,

(ii) of the details of any warning issued or advice given,

(iii) of the period during which any warning issued will be published under article 22(9) of the Order, and

(iv) that the allegation may be taken into account in the consideration of any further allegation about the registrant received by the Council within three years from the date of the Investigating Committee's determination that there is no case to answer.⁴³ ⁴⁴

Undertakings

6E.—(1) Where, under rule 6C(2)(a)(ii), the Case Examiners recommend undertakings to be agreed with the registrant, or the Investigating Committee makes such a recommendation under rule 6D(2)(a)(ii), the Registrar must write to the registrant—

(a) inviting the registrant to confirm in writing, within 28 days of the date of that invitation, or within such further period allowed by the Registrar, that the registrant will comply with the undertakings recommended by the Case Examiners or by the Investigating Committee, as the case may be (referred to in this rule as “the undertakings”); and

(b) informing the registrant of the provisions of paragraph (4) of this rule.

⁴³ Substituted – SI 2017/703, schedule, rule 8(b)

⁴⁴ Inserted – SI 2015/52, rule 10

- (2) If, in accordance with paragraph (1), the registrant confirms in writing that the registrant will comply with the undertakings—
- (a) the Case Examiners or the Investigating Committee, as the case may be, must cease consideration of the allegation;
 - (b) where the allegation has been referred to the Fitness to Practise Committee, the Fitness to Practise Committee must not consider the allegation; and
 - (c) any interim order in place under article 31 of the Order ceases to have effect.
- (3) Where paragraph (2) applies, the Registrar must notify the registrant and the maker of the allegation (if any) in writing that undertakings have been agreed and the date from which the undertakings have effect.
- (4) Where the registrant does not confirm in accordance with paragraph (1) that the registrant will comply with the undertakings, the Registrar must—
- (a) refer the allegation to the Fitness to Practise Committee for consideration; and
 - (b) notify the registrant and the maker of the allegation (if any) in writing of the referral.
- (5) Where the registrant has agreed to comply with the undertakings and it appears to the Registrar that those undertakings should be varied or cease to apply, the Registrar must inform the Case Examiners and the Case Examiners may—
- (a) direct that the undertakings should continue;
 - (b) invite the registrant to comply with the undertakings, varied as the Case Examiners consider appropriate (“the varied undertakings”); or
 - (c) direct that the undertakings should no longer apply and that the allegation should not be considered further, and the Registrar must notify the registrant and the person making the allegation (if any) in writing accordingly.
- (6) Where the registrant is invited under paragraph (5)(b) to agree to comply with the varied undertakings and the registrant does not so agree in writing within 28 days of the date of that invitation, or within such further period as allowed by the Registrar—

- (a) the Registrar may review, under rule 7A, the Case Examiners' decision under rule 6C(2)(a)(ii) or the Investigating Committee's determination under rule 6D(2)(a)(ii), as the case may be, to recommend undertakings to be agreed with the registrant; and
 - (b) the undertakings remain in effect until the conclusion of any review in accordance with rule 7A(7).
- (7) Where it appears to the Registrar that the registrant has breached undertakings or varied undertakings the Registrar must refer the allegation which resulted in the undertakings to the Case Examiners, who may—
- (a) revoke those undertakings and refer that allegation to the Fitness to Practise Committee; or
 - (b) make a decision under paragraph (5)⁴⁵.

Reconsideration of allegation after a finding of no case to answer

7.—(1) This rule applies where—

- (a) [the Case Examiners or the Investigating Committee have considered an allegation that the registrant's fitness to practise is impaired and decided that there is no case to answer in respect of that allegation; and]⁴⁶
 - (b) at any time within three years from service of the notice of decision, the Council receives a fresh allegation about the registrant.
- (2) Where this rule applies, [the Case Examiners or]⁴⁷ the Investigating Committee may—
- (a) when considering whether or not there is a case to answer in respect of a fresh allegation, take account of the original allegation; and
 - (b) may refer both the original allegation and the new allegation to the [Fitness to Practise]⁴⁸Committee.

⁴⁵ Inserted – SI 2017/703, schedule, rule 9

⁴⁶ Substituted – SI 2015/52, rule 11(a)

⁴⁷ Inserted – SI 2015/52, rule 11(b)

⁴⁸ Substituted – SI 2017/703, schedule, rule 10

[Review of decisions

7A.—**[**(1) All or part of a decision mentioned in paragraph (1A) may, if reached on or after 9th March 2015, be reviewed by the Registrar under this rule (a “reviewable decision”).

(1A) The following are reviewable decisions for the purpose of paragraph (1)—

- (a) a decision under rule 6C(1) or a determination under rule 6D(1)(c) that there is no case to answer (including where the registrant has been issued with a warning or advice);
- (b) a decision under rule 6C(2)(a)(ii) or a determination under rule 6D(2)(a)(ii) to recommend undertakings to be agreed with the registrant; and
- (c) a direction under 6E(5)(c) that undertakings should no longer apply and that the allegation should not be considered further.

(2) The Registrar may carry out such a review if the Registrar has reason to believe that—

- (a) the reviewable decision may, in whole or in part and for any reason, be materially flawed and the Registrar considers that a review would be in the public interest or necessary to prevent injustice to the registrant; or
- (b) there is new information which may have led to a decision that is wholly or partly different from the reviewable decision and the Registrar considers that a review would be in the public interest or necessary to prevent injustice to the registrant. ⁴⁹

(3) Where the Registrar decides to carry out such a review, the Registrar must—

- (a) notify the registrant, the maker of the allegation (if any) and any other person who, in the opinion of the Registrar has an interest in it, of that decision;
- (b) notify the registrant, the maker of the allegation (if any) and any other person who, in the opinion of the Registrar, has an interest in the no case to answer decision of any new information and where appropriate, provide them with that information; and
- (c) seek representations from those persons.

⁴⁹ Substituted – SI 2017/703, schedule, rule 11(a)

- (4) The notification referred to in sub-paragraphs (a) and (b) of paragraph (3) must be in writing and, in the case of the notification referred to in sub-paragraph (a), must give reasons for the Registrar's decision.
- (5) As part of such a review, the Registrar may carry out any investigations which the Registrar considers appropriate for the purposes of making a decision on the review of the [reviewable]⁵⁰ decision.
- (6) Where, as a result of the review, taking into account any information or representations referred to in paragraph (3) and such other matters as the Registrar considers appropriate, the Registrar decides that—
- (a) all or part of the [reviewable]⁵¹ decision was materially flawed and that a fresh decision is required in the public interest [or is necessary to prevent injustice to the registrant]⁵²; or
 - (b) the new information referred to in paragraph (2)(b) would have probably led wholly or partly to a different decision and that a fresh decision is required in the public interest [or is necessary to prevent injustice to the registrant]⁵³,

the Registrar must take one of the decisions referred to in paragraph (7).

[(7) Those decisions are—

- (a) where the reviewable decision falls under paragraph (1A)(a)—
 - (i) to refer to the Case Examiners for reconsideration by them under rule 6C, an allegation that a registrant's fitness to practise is impaired, or
 - (ii) to substitute, for all or part of the reviewable decision, any decision which the Case Examiners or any determination which the Investigating Committee could have made under Part 2 of these Rules;
- (b) where the reviewable decision falls under paragraph (1A)(b), to substitute, for all or part of the reviewable decision, any decision which the Case Examiners or any determination which the Investigating Committee could have made under Part 2 of these Rules; or
- (c) where the reviewable decision falls under paragraph (1A)(c), to recommend undertakings to be agreed with the registrant (and rule 6E applies in respect

⁵⁰ Substituted – SI 2017/703, schedule, rule 11(b)

⁵¹ Substituted – SI 2017/703, schedule, rule 11(c)(i)

⁵² Inserted – SI 2017/703, schedule, rule 11(c)(ii)

⁵³ Inserted – SI 2017/703, schedule, rule 11(c)(ii)

of undertakings agreed under this provision as it does to undertakings recommended under rule 6C(2)(a)(ii) or rule 6D(2)(a)(ii)).⁵⁴

- (8) Where, following the review, the Registrar decides otherwise than in paragraph (6), the Registrar must confirm the [reviewable]⁵⁵ decision.
- (9) Having taken one of the decisions referred to in paragraph (7) or having decided in accordance with paragraph (8), the Registrar must, as soon as reasonably practicable after having done so and in writing, notify—
- (a) the registrant;
 - (b) the maker of the allegation (if any); and
 - (c) any other person who, in the opinion of the Registrar, has an interest in receiving the notification,
- of the decision taken and the reasons for it.
- (10) Save in exceptional circumstances, the Registrar must not commence a review of a [reviewable]⁵⁶ decision more than one year after the date of that decision.]⁵⁷

Part 3

Interim Orders

Notice and procedure

8.— [(1) Subject to paragraphs (2) and (6), following referral by the Council under article 22(5), no interim order may be made, varied, replaced or, in a case where article 31(5)(b) of the Order applies, confirmed by a Practice Committee unless it is satisfied that an interim order notice has been served by the Council.

(2) No interim order notice shall be required where a Practice Committee has served notice in accordance with rule [5(2)]⁵⁸ [...]⁵⁹, 11 or 11A has made an order under article 26(7) or 29(5)(a) to (c) of the Order and subsequently proposes to make an interim order under article 31(1)(b) or (c).]⁶⁰

(3) The interim order notice shall—

⁵⁴ Substituted – SI 2017/703, schedule, rule 11(d)

⁵⁵ Substituted – SI 2017/703, schedule, rule 11(b)

⁵⁶ Substituted – SI 2017/703, schedule, rule 11(b)

⁵⁷ Inserted – SI 2015/52, rule 12

⁵⁸ Substituted – SI 2015/52, rule 13(a)

⁵⁹ Omitted – SI 2017/703, schedule, rule 12(a)

⁶⁰ Substituted – SI 2012/17, rule 8(a)

- (a) invite the registrant to attend a hearing before the Practice Committee;
 - (b) invite the registrant, in the event that she does not wish to attend the hearing, to submit written representations to the Practice Committee before the date of the hearing;
 - (c) contain the matters set out in rule [5(3)(a) and (c) to (f)]⁶¹; and
 - (d) state the reasons why an interim order may be necessary for the protection of members of the public, or is otherwise in the public interest, or is in the interest of the registrant.
- (4) The interim order notice shall be served on the registrant in such time in advance of the hearing as may be reasonable in all the circumstances of the case.
- (5) [. . .]⁶²
- [(6) The Practice Committee may make an interim order notwithstanding the absence of the registrant or the absence of any written representations from the registrant on whether or not an interim order should be made, if the [Practice]⁶³ Committee is satisfied that—
- (a) all reasonable efforts have been made, in accordance with these Rules, to serve the registrant with the interim order notice,
 - (b) in the case that no interim order notice has been served in accordance with paragraph (2), that all reasonable efforts have been made, in accordance with these Rules, to serve the notice of meeting or hearing under rule 11 or rule 11A; or
 - (c) the registrant has informed the Council that she does not wish to appear and be heard on the question whether an interim order should be made.
- (7) In paragraph (6), reference to the Practice Committee making an interim order includes reference to that Committee revoking, varying, confirming or replacing an interim order in accordance with article 31(7) of the Order.]⁶⁴

⁶¹ Substituted – SI 2015/52, rule 13(b)

⁶² Omitted – SI 2012/17, rule 8(c)

⁶³ Inserted – SI 2017/703, schedule, rule 12(b)

⁶⁴ Substituted – SI 2012/17, rule 8(d)

Part 4

[Fitness to Practise Committee]⁶⁵

Action upon referral of an allegation

9.— [(1) Upon referral of an allegation to the [Fitness to Practise]⁶⁶ Committee, that Committee shall notify the registrant of the allegation by serving a notice of referral upon her.]⁶⁷

(2) The notice of referral shall—

- [(a) be accompanied by any documents relating to the allegation that have not previously been disclosed to the registrant by the Council or a Practice Committee;]⁶⁸
- [(b) invite the registrant to submit written representations to the Fitness to Practise Committee and inform the registrant that any such representations must be sent to that Committee no later than 28 days after service of the notice;]⁶⁹
- (c) inform the registrant that any representations received from her may be shown to the maker of the allegation, for comment; [. . .]⁷⁰
- (d) require the registrant to inform the [Fitness to Practise]⁷¹ Committee no later than 28 days after service of the notice, if she would like the allegation to be considered at a hearing;
- [(e) inform the registrant that further information or documents may be sought from other persons in accordance with article 25(1) of the Order to assist the [Fitness to Practise]⁷² Committee in carrying out its functions; and
- (f) inform the registrant of the [Fitness to Practise]⁷³ Committee's power to make an interim order under article 31(1)(c) of the Order, and require the registrant to confirm, no later than 28 days after service of the notice, whether she wishes to appear and be heard on the question whether such an order should be made]⁷⁴.

(3) The Council shall give notice of the referral to—

⁶⁵ Substituted – SI 2017/703, schedule, rule 13

⁶⁶ Substituted – SI 2017/03, schedule, rule 14(a)

⁶⁷ Substituted – SI 2012/17, rule 9(a)

⁶⁸ Substituted – SI 2012/17, rule 9(b)(i)

⁶⁹ Substituted – SI 2017/703, schedule, rule 14(b)(i)

⁷⁰ Omitted – SI 2012/17, rule 9(b)(ii)

⁷¹ Inserted – SI 2017/703, schedule, rule 14(b)(ii)

⁷² Inserted – SI 2017/703, schedule, rule 14(b)(ii)

⁷³ Inserted – SI 2017/703, schedule, rule 14(b)(iii)

⁷⁴ Inserted – SI 2012/17, rule 9(b)(iii)

- (a) where known, the employer of the registrant or any other person with whom she has an arrangement to provide professional services; [and]⁷⁵
 - (b) where known, any other body by which the registrant is authorised to practise a health or social care profession;
 - [(c) ...]⁷⁶
 - [(d) ...]⁷⁷
- (4) Upon referral of an allegation to the [Fitness to Practise]⁷⁸ Committee—
- (a) in the case of an allegation of lack of competence, the [Fitness to Practise]⁷⁹ Committee, may invite the registrant to submit to assessment; [...] ⁸⁰
 - (b) in the case of an allegation that the practitioner's fitness to practise is impaired by reason of physical or mental health, the [Fitness to Practise]⁸¹ Committee may invite the registrant to submit to medical examination by a registered medical practitioner nominated by the [Council; and] ⁸²
 - [(c) in the case of an allegation that the registrant's fitness to practise is impaired by reason of not having the necessary knowledge of English, the [Fitness to Practise]⁸³ Committee may direct the registrant to, within such period as it may specify in the notification referred to in paragraph (4A),—
- (i) undertake an examination or other assessment of the registrant's knowledge of English as specified in the notification referred to in paragraph (4A), and
 - (ii) provide the [Fitness to Practise]⁸⁴ Committee with evidence of the result of that examination or other assessment in the form required by rule 6B(3C).] ⁸⁵
- [(4A) Where the [Fitness to Practise]⁸⁶ Committee makes a direction pursuant to paragraph (4)(c), the Committee must notify the registrant of the direction and the notice must also inform the registrant of the matters set out in rule 6B(3D).] ⁸⁷

⁷⁵ Inserted – SI 2017/703, schedule, rule 14(c)(i)

⁷⁶ Omitted – SI 2017/703, schedule, rule 14(c)(ii)

⁷⁷ Omitted – SI 2017/703, schedule, rule 14(c)(ii)

⁷⁸ Substituted – SI 2017/703, schedule, rule 14(d)(i)

⁷⁹ Substituted – SI 2017/703, schedule, rule 14(d)(ii)

⁸⁰ Omitted – SI 2015/1923, part 2, paragraph 5(a)

⁸¹ Substituted – SI 2017/703, schedule, rule 14(d)(iii)

⁸² Substituted – SI 2015/1923, part 2, paragraph 5(b)

⁸³ Substituted – SI 2017/703, schedule, rule 14(d)(ii)

⁸⁴ Substituted – SI 2017/703, schedule, rule 14(d)(ii)

⁸⁵ Inserted – SI 2015/1923, part 2, paragraph 5(c)

⁸⁶ Substituted – SI 2017/703, schedule, rule 14(e)

- (5) Where any written representations are made to the [Fitness to Practise]⁸⁸ Committee under paragraph (2)(b), that Committee—
- (a) may, if it sees fit, send a notice to the maker of the allegation—
 - (i) notifying her of such representations,
 - (ii) inviting her to deal with any points raised by the [Fitness to Practise]⁸⁹ Committee in respect of those representations, and
 - (iii) requiring her to send any response to the [Fitness to Practise]⁹⁰ Committee no later than 28 days after service of the notice upon her; and
 - (b) shall take into account all representations received before making its decision in respect of the allegation.

Meetings and hearings

- 10.—(1) Where the [Fitness to Practise]⁹¹ Committee is to—
- (a) consider an allegation that a registrant's fitness to practise is impaired;
 - (b) review any order previously made by it; or
 - (c) consider an application for restoration to the register,
- it shall decide whether to hold a hearing in accordance with paragraph (2).
- (2) The [Fitness to Practise]⁹² Committee shall hold a hearing where—
- (a) the registrant asks for a hearing within the period specified in rule 9(2)(d); or
 - (b) the Committee considers that a hearing would be desirable.
- (3) Where no hearing is to be held, the [Fitness to Practise]⁹³ Committee shall—
- (a) consider an allegation that the registrant's fitness to practise is impaired;
 - (b) review any order previously made by it; or
 - (c) consider an application for restoration to the register,

⁸⁷ Inserted – SI 2015/1923, part 2, paragraph 5(d)

⁸⁸ Substituted – SI 2017/703, schedule, rule 14(f)(i)

⁸⁹ Inserted – SI 2017/703, schedule, rule 14(f)(ii)

⁹⁰ Inserted – SI 2017/703, schedule, rule 14(f)(ii)

⁹¹ Substituted – SI 2017/703, schedule, rule 15(a)

⁹² Substituted – SI 2017/703, schedule, rule 15(a)

⁹³ Substituted – SI 2017/703, schedule, rule 15(b)

[and may consider whether to make, vary, replace, revoke or confirm an interim order at a meeting.

- (4) The [Fitness to Practise]⁹⁴ Committee shall determine the procedure to be employed at any meeting before it]⁹⁵.

Notice of hearing

11.—(1) Where a hearing is to be held in accordance with rule 10(2), the [Fitness to Practise]⁹⁶ Committee shall send a notice of hearing to the registrant.

[(2) The notice of hearing shall be sent to the registrant no later than 28 days before the date fixed for the hearing, unless—

- (a) the registrant consents to a shorter period being given; or
- (b) the Registrar or the Fitness to Practise Committee considers it is in the public interest for there to be a shorter period.]⁹⁷

(3) The notice of hearing shall—

- (a) inform the registrant of the date, time and venue of the hearing;
- [(b) where the [Fitness to Practise]⁹⁸ Committee is to consider an allegation at an initial hearing, contain a charge particularising the allegation, which shall set out any alleged facts on which it is based, and be accompanied by copies of any documents in support that have not previously been disclosed to the registrant by the Council or a Practice Committee;]⁹⁹
- (c) where the [Fitness to Practise]¹⁰⁰ Committee is to review an order previously made or consider an application for restoration to the register, contain a copy of the order or striking-off order previously made, and the [Fitness to Practise]¹⁰¹ Committee's reasons for making that order;
- (d) inform the registrant of her right to attend, and to be represented at, the hearing in accordance with rule 20;

⁹⁴ Substituted – SI 2017/703, schedule, rule 15(b)

⁹⁵ Substituted – SI 2012/17, rule 10

⁹⁶ Substituted – SI 2017/703, schedule, rule 16(a)

⁹⁷ Substituted – SI 2026/822, schedule, rule 8(a)

⁹⁸ Inserted – SI 2017/703, schedule, rule 16(b)(i)

⁹⁹ Substituted – SI 2012/17, rule 11(a)

¹⁰⁰ Inserted – SI 2017/703, schedule, rule 16(b)(ii)

¹⁰¹ Inserted – SI 2017/703, schedule, rule 16(b)(ii)

- (e) inform the registrant of the [Fitness to Practise]¹⁰² Committee's power to proceed with the hearing in her absence;
- (f) inform the registrant of her right to adduce evidence in accordance with rule 31;
- (g) inform the registrant of her right to call witnesses, and to cross examine any witnesses called by the Council or by the [Fitness to Practise]¹⁰³ Committee;
- (h) [subject to paragraph (4),]¹⁰⁴ require the registrant to inform the Council, within 14 days of receipt of the notice, whether she intends to—
 - (i) attend the hearing,
 - (ii) be represented at the hearing;
- (i) [. . .]¹⁰⁵
- (j) inform the registrant of the [Fitness to Practise]¹⁰⁶ Committee's power to make an interim order under article 31(2) of the Order;
- (k) where the [Fitness to Practise]¹⁰⁷ Committee is to consider an allegation at an initial hearing, inform the registrant of the action the [Fitness to Practise]¹⁰⁸ Committee may take under article 29 of the Order;
- [(l) [subject to paragraph (4),]¹⁰⁹ where the [Fitness to Practise]¹¹⁰ Committee is to consider an allegation at an initial hearing, invite the registrant to state in writing, no later than 28 days after service of the notice, whether any admissions are made in respect of the allegation, and inform her that any admissions made will be taken into account by the [Fitness to Practise]¹¹¹ Committee; and]¹¹²
- [(m) where the allegation, previous order or application for restoration to be considered by the Fitness to Practise Committee relates solely to the registrant's physical or mental health, invite the registrant to inform the Fitness to Practise Committee if the registrant wishes the hearing, or part of the hearing, to be conducted in public.]¹¹³

¹⁰² Inserted – SI 2017/703, schedule, rule 16(b)(iii)

¹⁰³ Inserted – SI 2017/703, schedule, rule 16(b)(ii)

¹⁰⁴ Inserted – SI 2026/822, schedule, rule 8(b)

¹⁰⁵ Omitted – SI 2012/17, rule 11(b)

¹⁰⁶ Inserted – SI 2017/703, schedule, rule 16(b)(iii)

¹⁰⁷ Inserted – SI 2017/703, schedule, rule 16(b)(ii)

¹⁰⁸ Inserted – SI 2017/703, schedule, rule 16(b)(ii)

¹⁰⁹ Inserted – SI 2026/822, schedule, rule 8(c)

¹¹⁰ Inserted – SI 2017/703, schedule, rule 16(b)(ii)

¹¹¹ Inserted – SI 2017/703, schedule, rule 16(b)(ii)

¹¹² Substituted – SI 2012/17, rule 11(c)

¹¹³ Substituted – SI 2017/703, schedule, rule 16(b)(iv)

[(3A) In paragraph (3) “venue” includes details of audio or video conferencing arrangements.**]**¹¹⁴

[(4) If the notice of hearing is sent less than 28 days before the date fixed for the hearing, the periods specified in the notice may be shorter than those prescribed in paragraphs (3)(h) and (3)(l). **]** ¹¹⁵

[Notice of meeting

11A.—(1) Where a meeting is to be held in accordance with rule 10(3), the **[**Fitness to Practise¹¹⁶ Committee shall send notice of the meeting to the registrant no later than 28 days before the date the meeting is to be held **[** unless—

- (a) the registrant consents to a shorter period being given; or
- (b) the Registrar or the Fitness to Practise Committee considers it is in the public interest for there to be a shorter period **]** ¹¹⁷.

(2) The notice of meeting shall—

- (a) contain a charge particularising the allegation, which shall set out any alleged facts on which it is based, and be accompanied by copies of any documents in support that have not previously been disclosed to the registrant by the Council or a Practice Committee;
- (b) where the Committee is to review an order previously made or consider an application for restoration to the register, contain a copy of the order or striking-off order previously made, and the Committee’s reasons for making that order;
- (c) inform the registrant of the Committee’s power to make an interim order under article 31(2) of the Order;
- (d) inform the registrant of the action the Committee may take under article 29 or 30 of the Order, as applicable; and
- (e) **[** subject to paragraph (3), ¹¹⁸ invite the registrant to state in writing, no later than 28 days after service of the notice, whether any admissions are made in respect of the allegation, and inform her that any admissions made will be taken into account by the Committee. **]** ¹¹⁹

¹¹⁴ Inserted – SI 2020/364, schedule, rule 3(4)

¹¹⁵ Inserted – SI 2026/822, schedule, rule 8(d)

¹¹⁶ Substituted – SI 2017/703, schedule, rule 17

¹¹⁷ Inserted – SI 2026/822, schedule, rule 9(a)

¹¹⁸ Inserted – SI 2026/822, schedule, rule 9(b)

¹¹⁹ Inserted – SI 2012/17, rule 12

- [(3) If the notice of meeting is sent less than 28 days before the date fixed for the meeting, the period specified in the notice may be shorter than that prescribed in paragraph (2)(e).]¹²⁰

[Procedure of the Fitness to Practise Committee]¹²¹

12.—(1) When considering any allegation referred to it at a hearing, the [Fitness to Practise]¹²² Committee shall act in accordance with the procedure set out in Part 5 of these Rules, and shall dispose of the allegation in accordance with articles 22(4) and 29(4) to (8) of the Order.

- (2) When reviewing an order made by it at a previous hearing, or considering an application for restoration to the register, the [Fitness to Practise]¹²³ Committee shall act in accordance with the procedure set out in Part 5 of these Rules, and shall dispose of the matter in accordance with article 30 or 33(5) to (7) of the Order.

Notice of decision

13.—(1) As soon as practicable after the conclusion of [the meeting or hearing]¹²⁴, the [Fitness to Practise]¹²⁵ Committee, shall give notice of its decision to—

- (a) the registrant; and
- (b) the maker of the allegation (if any).

(2) The notice of decision shall—

- (a) set out the decision of the [Fitness to Practise]¹²⁶ Committee;
- (b) set out the reasons for the [Fitness to Practise]¹²⁷ Committee's decision; and
- (c) inform the registrant of her rights of appeal under article 38 of the Order.

14.[...] ¹²⁸

15.[...] ¹²⁹

¹²⁰ Inserted – SI 2026/822, schedule, rule 9(c)

¹²¹ Substituted – SI 2017/703, schedule, rule 18(a)

¹²² Substituted – SI 2017/703, schedule, rule 18(b)

¹²³ Substituted – SI 2017/703, schedule, rule 18(c)

¹²⁴ Substituted – SI 2012/17, rule 13

¹²⁵ Substituted – SI 2017/703, schedule, rule 19(a)

¹²⁶ Inserted – SI 2017/703, schedule, rule 19(b)(i)

¹²⁷ Inserted – SI 2017/703, schedule, rule 19(b)(ii)

¹²⁸ Omitted – SI 2017/703, schedule, rule 20

Part 5

Procedure at hearings

Application of Part 5

16. This part shall apply to—

- (a) the Investigating Committee, when considering [at a hearing]¹³⁰ —
 - (i) an allegation which relates to a fraudulent or incorrect entry in the register [. . .]¹³¹, or
 - (ii) whether to make, revoke, confirm, vary or replace an interim order; and
- (b) the [Fitness to Practise]¹³² Committee when considering [at a hearing]¹³³ —
 - (i) an allegation that the registrant's fitness to practise is impaired [. . .]¹³⁴,
 - (ii) whether to make, revoke, confirm, vary or replace an interim order,
 - (iii) an order previously made by it, at a review hearing, or
 - (iv) an application for restoration to the register.

Interpretation

17. In this part, "Committee" means—

- (a) the Investigating Committee considering an allegation which relates to a fraudulent or incorrect entry in the register, or considering whether to make, revoke, confirm, vary or replace an interim order; [or]¹³⁵
- [(b) the Fitness to Practise Committee.]¹³⁶

¹²⁹ Omitted – SI 2017/703, schedule, rule 19

¹³⁰ Inserted – SI 2012/17, rule 14(a)

¹³¹ Omitted – SI 2012/17, rule 14(b)

¹³² Substituted – SI 2017/703, schedule, rule 21

¹³³ Inserted – SI 2012/17, rule 14(a)

¹³⁴ Omitted – SI 2012/17, rule 14(b)

¹³⁵ Inserted – SI 2017/703, schedule, rule 22(a)

¹³⁶ Substituted – SI 2017/703, schedule, 22(b)

[Case management directions

17A. — (1) A Committee or Chair of the Committee may give directions (referred to in article 32(3) of the Order) as to the conduct of the case and for the consequences of failure to comply with such directions (“case management directions”) acting on the request of a party or on their own initiative.

(2) Case management directions may be given, varied or set aside—

- (a) by the Committee at any hearing or meeting in accordance with these Rules;
- (b) by the Chair at a preliminary meeting held in accordance with rule 18; or
- (c) by the Committee, or a legally qualified chair of the Committee, without a preliminary meeting.

(3) Where a Committee or Chair gives case management directions under these Rules, they must—

- (a) keep a record of the directions given; and
- (b) send written confirmation of such directions to all parties promptly.

(4) Case management directions are binding on the parties and on any subsequent Committee considering the case, unless that Committee considers that—

- (a) there has been a material change in circumstances; or
- (b) it is not in the interests of justice for that to be the case.] ¹³⁷

Preliminary meetings

18.—(1) Before any allegation is considered by a Committee at a hearing in accordance with the provisions of this Part, that Committee or [a Chair] ¹³⁸ of the Committee may hold a preliminary meeting if such a meeting would, in its or her opinion, assist the Committee to perform its functions.

(2) A preliminary meeting referred to in paragraph (1) shall be—

- (a) chaired by [a Chair] ¹³⁹ of the Committee considering the allegation;
- (b) held with a legal assessor in attendance [, unless the meeting is being held by a legally qualified chair or by a Committee with a legally qualified chair] ¹⁴⁰; and

¹³⁷ Inserted – SI 2026/822, schedule, rule 10

¹³⁸ Substituted – SI 2026/822, schedule, rule 11(a)

¹³⁹ Substituted – SI 2026/822, schedule, rule 11(b)

¹⁴⁰ Inserted - SI 2026/822, schedule, rule 11(c)

- (c) held in private with the parties, their representatives and any person the Chair or Committee considers appropriate.
- (3) [...] ¹⁴¹
- (4) [The Chair of the preliminary meeting shall give the parties not less than 14 days notice of any preliminary meeting unless—
- (a) the parties consent to a shorter period being given; or
 - (b) it is in the public interest for there to be a shorter period.] ¹⁴²
- (5) Directions given by the Chair of the preliminary meeting may include, but shall not be limited to—
- (a) time limits for the service of evidence and disclosure of expert evidence (if any);
 - (b) a requirement that each party provide an estimate as to the length of the hearing and any dates on which they or any witnesses would not be able to attend the hearing;
 - (c) where facts are not in dispute, or the issue of misconduct is admitted, a requirement that the parties produce a statement of agreed facts;
 - (d) save in the case of an allegation of a kind referred to in article 22(1)(a)(iv) of the Order, a requirement that the parties state whether or not the health of the practitioner will be raised as an issue in the proceedings, and if so, whether, in their view, medical reports should be obtained [...] ¹⁴³;
 - (e) a requirement that a party call the author of any expert report;
 - (f) where agreed between the parties, a direction that the witness statement of a witness shall stand as the evidence in chief of that witness;
 - (g) where the Committee is considering—
 - (i) an allegation that the registrant's fitness to practise is impaired by reason of her physical or mental health, or
 - (ii) whether to make, revoke, confirm, vary or replace an interim order,whether the proceedings should be held in public or private;
 - (h) special measures to be put in place at the hearing [to support witnesses to give their evidence] ¹⁴⁴; [...] ¹⁴⁵

¹⁴¹ Omitted – SI 2026/822, schedule, rule 11(d)

¹⁴² Substituted – SI 2026/822, schedule, rule 11(e)

¹⁴³ Omitted – SI 2017/703, schedule, rule 23(a)

¹⁴⁴ Substituted – SI 2026/822, schedule, rule 11(f)

- (i) a direction for an adjournment of the preliminary meeting or that a further preliminary meeting should be [held; [...] ¹⁴⁶ ¹⁴⁷
- [(j)] a direction that the registrant, within such period as the Chair may specify in the written confirmation referred to in paragraph (8),—
 - (i) undertake an examination or other assessment of the registrant's knowledge of English as specified in the written confirmation referred to in paragraph (8), and
 - (ii) provide the [Fitness to Practise]¹⁴⁸ Committee with evidence of the result of that examination or other assessment in the form required by rule 6B(3C) [; and] ¹⁴⁹ ¹⁵⁰
- [(k)] where the meeting is conducted by the Committee—
 - (i) a direction determining any legal argument; and
 - (ii) a direction as to the admissibility of evidence.] ¹⁵¹
- (6) [...] ¹⁵²
- (7) [...] ¹⁵³
- (8) [Where a direction is made pursuant to paragraph (5)(j), the Chair of the preliminary meeting must inform the registrant of the matters set out in rule 6B(3D).] ¹⁵⁴

[Legal advice to the Committee

18A.—(1) If the chair is not a legally qualified chair, a legal assessor shall be in attendance to advise the Committee and shall give their advice in accordance with the Nursing and Midwifery Order 2001 (Legal Assessors) Order of Council 2004.

(2) If the chair is a legally qualified chair, they shall give legal advice to the Committee and must do so in the presence of every party in attendance at the hearing unless paragraph (3) applies.

¹⁴⁵ Omitted – SI 2015/1923, part 2, paragraph 6(a)

¹⁴⁶ Omitted – SI 2026/822, schedule, rule 11(g)

¹⁴⁷ Substituted – SI 2015/1923, part 2, paragraph 6(b)

¹⁴⁸ Substituted – SI 2017/703, schedule, rule 23(b)

¹⁴⁹ Substituted – SI 2026/822, schedule, rule 11(h)

¹⁵⁰ Inserted - SI 2015/1923, part 2, paragraph 6(c)

¹⁵¹ Inserted – SI 2026/822, schedule, rule 11(i)

¹⁵² Omitted – SI 2026/822, schedule, rule 11(j)

¹⁵³ Omitted – SI 2026/822, schedule, rule 11(j)

¹⁵⁴ Substituted – SI 2026/822, schedule, rule 11(k)

(3) The legally qualified chair may advise in the absence of the parties where the Committee—

(a) has begun to deliberate on its decision; and

(b) considers that it would be prejudicial to the discharge of its functions for that advice to be given in the presence of the parties.

(4) Where the legally qualified chair gives advice in the absence of the parties under paragraph (3), the chair must—

(a) as soon as reasonably practicable after completion of the deliberations inform each party (or their representatives) who attended the hearing of the advice given, together with any questions which led to that advice; and

(b) subsequently record those matters in writing and give a copy to those parties or their representative.

(5) Copies of written advice, made for the purposes of paragraph (4) shall be available, on application, to every party to the proceedings who does not attend, and is not represented at the hearing before the Committee.] ¹⁵⁵

Public and private hearings

19.—(1) Subject to paragraphs (2) and (3) below, hearings shall be conducted in public.

[(2) Subject to paragraph (2A), a hearing before the Fitness to Practise Committee which relates solely to an allegation concerning the registrant's physical or mental health must be conducted in private.] ¹⁵⁶

[(2A) All or part of the hearing referred to in paragraph (2) may be held in public where the Fitness to Practise Committee—

(a) having given the parties, and any third party whom the Committee considers it appropriate to hear, an opportunity to make representations; and

(b) having [taken legal advice in accordance with rule 18A] ¹⁵⁷ ,

is satisfied that the public interest or the interests of any third party outweigh the need to protect the privacy or confidentiality of the registrant.] ¹⁵⁸

¹⁵⁵ Inserted – SI 2026/822, schedule, rule 12

¹⁵⁶ Substituted – SI 2017/703, schedule, rule 24(a)

¹⁵⁷ Substituted –SI 2026/822, schedule, rule 13

- (3) Hearings other than those referred to in paragraph (2) above may be held, wholly or partly, in private if the Committee is satisfied—
- (a) having given the parties, and any third party from whom the Committee considers it appropriate to hear, an opportunity to make representations; and
 - (b) having [taken legal advice in accordance with rule 18A] ¹⁵⁹,
that this is justified (and outweighs any prejudice) by the interests of any party or of any third party (including a complainant, witness or patient) or by the public interest.
- (4) In this rule, “in private” means conducted in the presence of every party and any person representing a party, but otherwise excluding the public.

[[...] ¹⁶⁰] ¹⁶¹

Representation and entitlement to be heard

20.—(1) The presenter and the registrant shall be entitled to be heard by the Committee.

- (2) The registrant may be represented by—
- (a) solicitor or Counsel;
 - (b) a representative from her professional body or trade union; or
 - (c) subject to paragraph (4), any other person.
- (3) Where the registrant is not represented, she may be accompanied and advised by any person, provided that such person shall not be entitled to address the Committee without its permission.
- (4) A person who represents or accompanies the registrant shall not be called as a witness at the hearing.
- (5) The Committee may exclude from the whole or part of the hearing, any person whose conduct, in its opinion, has disrupted or is likely to disrupt the proceedings.

¹⁵⁸ Inserted – SI 2017/703, schedule, rule 24(b)

¹⁵⁹ Substituted – SI 2026/822, schedule, rule 13

¹⁶⁰ Omitted – SI 2020/821, schedule, rule 2(c)

¹⁶¹ Inserted – SI 2020/364, Schedule, rule 3(5)

Absence of the practitioner

21.—(1) This rule shall not apply to hearings at which the Committee is considering whether to make, revoke, confirm, vary or replace an interim order.

- (2) Where the registrant fails to attend and is not represented at the hearing, the Committee—
 - (a) shall require the presenter to adduce evidence that all reasonable efforts have been made, in accordance with these Rules, to serve the notice of hearing on the registrant;
 - (b) may, where the Committee is satisfied that the notice of hearing has been duly served, direct that the allegation should be heard and determined notwithstanding the absence of the registrant; or
 - (c) may adjourn the hearing and issue directions.

Witnesses

22.—(1) Witnesses shall be required to take an oath, or to affirm, before giving evidence at any hearing.

- (2) The Committee may, upon the application of the party calling the witness, direct that any details which may identify that witness should not be revealed in public.
- (3) Witnesses—
 - (a) shall first be examined by the party calling them;
 - (b) subject to rule 23(4) and (5), may then be cross examined by the opposing party;
 - (c) may then be re-examined by the party calling them; and
 - (d) may then be questioned by the Committee.
- (4) Any further questioning of the witnesses shall be at the discretion of the Committee.
- (5) The Committee may of its own motion require a person to attend the hearing to give evidence, or to produce relevant documents.
- (6) No witness as to fact may observe the proceedings until she has given evidence or been formally released by the Committee.

[Special measures for giving evidence] ¹⁶²

23.—(1) [While ensuring proceedings are conducted fairly, the Committee or the Chair acting under rule 17A (case management directions) may give such directions as they consider appropriate to support witnesses to give their evidence.] ¹⁶³

(2) [When deciding whether to give directions to support witnesses, the Committee or Chair must—

(a) take account of the interests of the witness and the circumstances of the case;

(b) take legal advice in accordance with rule 18A (unless the direction is given by a legally qualified chair acting alone under rule 17A(2)(b) or (c)); and

(c) invite representations from the parties (where present).] ¹⁶⁴

(3) [The directions] ¹⁶⁵ may include, but shall not be limited to—

(a) use of video links;

(b) subject to paragraph (4), use of pre-recorded evidence as the evidence in chief of a witness, provided always that such witness is available at the hearing for cross-examination and questioning;

(c) use of interpreters (including signers and translators); and

(d) the hearing of evidence by the Committee in private.

(4) Where—

(a) the allegation against a registrant is sexual in nature;

(b) a witness is the alleged victim; and

(c) the registrant is not represented,

she shall not be allowed to cross-examine the witness directly in person.

(5) In the circumstances set out in paragraph (4), any questioning of the witness shall be undertaken by such person as the Committee considers appropriate.

(6) [In this rule—

(a) “in private” means conducted in the presence of every party and any person representing a party, but otherwise excluding the public; and

¹⁶² Substituted – SI 2026/822, schedule, rule 14(a)

¹⁶³ Substituted – SI 2026/822, schedule, rule 14(b)

¹⁶⁴ Substituted – SI 2026/822, schedule, rule 14(c)

¹⁶⁵ Substituted – SI 2026/822, schedule, rule 14(d)

(b) “witness” includes a registrant who gives evidence to the Committee.] ¹⁶⁶

[Order of proceedings at initial hearing

24.—(1) Unless the Committee determines otherwise, the initial hearing of an allegation shall be conducted in the following stages—

- (a) the preliminary stage (paragraphs (2)-(5));
 - (b) the factual stage (paragraphs (6)-(11));
 - (c) where the allegation is of a kind referred to in article 22(1)(a) of the Order, the impairment stage (paragraph (12));
 - (d) the sanction stage (paragraphs (13) and (14)).
- (2) The Chair shall—
- (a) ask the registrant (if present) to confirm her name and personal identification number;
 - (b) ask for the charge to be read out; and
 - (c) ask whether the registrant wishes to make an objection to the charge on a point of law.
- (3) Where the registrant makes an objection to the charge the Committee—
- (a) may hear representations from the parties (if present);
 - (b) shall deliberate in private and announce its decision to those parties present as to whether it will uphold the objection; and
 - (c) shall give reasons for its decision.
- (4) Once any objections to the charge have been considered, the Chair shall enquire whether the registrant wishes to make any admissions—
- (a) as to the alleged facts; and
 - (b) where the allegation is of a kind referred to in article 22(1)(a) of the Order, as to whether her fitness to practise is impaired.
- (5) Where facts have been admitted by the registrant, the Chair shall announce that such facts have been found proved.
- (6) The presenter shall open the Council’s case and may present evidence in support of any alleged facts in the allegation, including those admitted by the registrant.

¹⁶⁶ Substituted – SI 2026/822, schedule, rule 14(e)

(7) Except where all the facts have been admitted and found proved under paragraph (5), at the close of the Council's case, and—

- (i) either upon the application of the registrant, or
- (ii) of its own volition,

the Committee may hear submissions from the parties as to whether sufficient evidence has been presented to find the facts proved and shall make a determination as to whether the registrant has a case to answer.

(8) Where an allegation is of a kind referred to in article 22(1)(a) of the Order, the Committee may decide,—

- (i) either upon the application of the registrant, or
- (ii) of its own volition,

to hear submissions from the parties as to whether sufficient evidence has been presented to support a finding of impairment, and shall make a determination as to whether the registrant has a case to answer as to her alleged impairment.

(9) Unless the Committee has determined that there is no case to answer under paragraphs (7) or (8), the registrant may present her case to the Committee and present evidence in support of her case.

(10) The Committee may hear final argument from the parties.

(11) The Committee shall deliberate in private in order to make its findings on the facts and then shall announce to those parties present the findings it has made.

(12) Where the allegation is of a kind referred to in article 22(1)(a) of the Order, notwithstanding any admissions made for the purposes of paragraph (4)(b), the Committee shall—

- (a) invite representations and may hear evidence from the parties as to whether the registrant's fitness to practise is impaired;
- (b) deliberate in private; and
- (c) then announce its decision to those parties present as to whether the registrant's fitness to practise is impaired and give reasons for its decision.

(13) When making its decision on sanction the Committee—

- (a) may invite any person who, in its opinion, has an interest in the proceedings to submit written representations within such time as the Committee may direct;
- (b) shall invite representations from the parties as to any relevant factors which may affect the Committee's decision on the sanction, if any, to be imposed;

- (c) where the allegation is of a kind referred to in article 22(1)(a) of the Order, may hear evidence from the parties as to any previous history or mitigating circumstances or other relevant factors which may affect the Committee's decision on the sanction, if any, to be imposed;
 - (d) shall deliberate in private; [...] ¹⁶⁷
 - (e) then announce its decision on sanction to those parties present and give reasons for its decision. [; and
 - (f) if the sanction is an order made under article 29(5)(b) or (c) of the Order, may issue a direction under article 29(8A) of the Order.] ¹⁶⁸
- (14) Where the Committee considers that it may be appropriate to make an interim order pending the outcome of any appeal following its decision on sanction, it shall—
- (a) invite representation from the parties on whether or not an interim order should be made;
 - (b) take any representations received into account before deciding whether or not to make an interim order;
 - (c) deliberate in private; and
 - (d) then announce its decision to those parties present and give reasons for its decision.] ¹⁶⁹

Order of proceedings at a review or restoration hearing

25.—(1) This rule shall not apply to an interim orders hearing.

- (2) Unless the Committee determines otherwise, the order of proceedings at a review hearing or a restoration hearing shall be as follows—
 - (a) the presenter shall—
 - (i) inform the Committee of the background to the case, and the sanctions previously imposed on the registrant, and
 - (ii) direct the attention of the Committee to any relevant evidence including transcripts of previous hearings;
 - (b) the registrant may adduce any relevant evidence on which she intends to rely;

¹⁶⁷ Omitted – SI 2017/703, schedule, rule 26(a)

¹⁶⁸ Inserted – SI 2017/703, schedule, rule 26(b)

¹⁶⁹ Substituted – SI 2007/893, rule 3(2)

- (c) the Committee shall deliberate in private and shall dispose of the case in accordance with article 30 or 33(5) to (7) of the Order; and
- (d) the Committee shall give reasons for its decision.

[Investigations prior to a review hearing

25A.—(1) This rule applies where a registrant's fitness to practise has been found to be impaired by reason of not having the necessary knowledge of English.

- (2) Prior to the opening of a review hearing, the Registrar may direct the registrant to, within such period as the Registrar may specify in the notification referred to in paragraph (3),—
 - (a) undertake an examination or other assessment as specified in the notification referred to in paragraph (3); and
 - (b) provide the Registrar with evidence of the result of that examination or other assessment in the form required by rule 6B(3C).
- (3) Where the Registrar makes a direction pursuant to paragraph (2), the Registrar must notify the registrant of the direction and the notice must also inform the registrant of the matters set out in rule 6B(3D).
- (4) The Registrar must provide the **[Fitness to Practise]**¹⁷⁰ Committee with the evidence provided by the registrant in compliance with a direction made under paragraph (2). **]**¹⁷¹

Order of proceedings at an interim orders hearing

26.—(1) Except where **[rule 24(14)]**¹⁷² applies, this rule shall apply to any hearing at which the Committee is considering whether to make, revoke, confirm, vary or replace an interim order.

- (2) Unless the Committee determines otherwise, the order of proceedings at an interim orders hearing shall be as follows—
 - (a) the presenter shall inform the Committee of the reasons why it may be necessary to make an interim order on the registrant, or to revoke, confirm, vary or replace any order previously made, and may adduce any relevant evidence in this regard;

¹⁷⁰ Substituted – SI 2017/703, schedule, rule 27

¹⁷¹ Inserted – SI 2015/1923, part 2, paragraph 7

¹⁷² Substituted – SI 2007/893, rule 3(3)

- (b) the registrant may make representations as to why an interim order should not be made, or should be revoked or not confirmed, varied or replaced, and may adduce any relevant evidence, including oral testimony, in support of her case; and
- (c) the Committee shall deliberate in private and shall then announce its decision, together with the reasons for its decision, in the presence of the parties (where present).

Notes and transcript of proceedings

27.—(1) The Council shall arrange for all hearings and preliminary meetings held by a Practice Committee, to be recorded in writing or electronic form.

- (2) Any party to the proceedings shall, on application to the Council, be furnished with a transcript of the record of any part of the hearing or preliminary meeting at which she was entitled to be present.
- (3) Paragraphs (1) and (2) shall not apply to the private deliberations of [either]¹⁷³ Practice Committee.

[Initial hearings commenced before but not concluded by 5th May 2007

27A. Where, prior to 5th May 2007—

- (a) the initial hearing of an allegation has commenced; and
- (b) the charge has been read out,

then rule 24 shall continue to apply as in force immediately before 5th May 2007 for the purposes of that initial hearing.]¹⁷⁴

¹⁷³ Substituted – SI 2017/703, schedule, rule 28

¹⁷⁴ Inserted – SI 2007/893, rule 3(4)

Part 6 General

Amendment of the charge

28.—(1) At any stage before making its findings of fact, in accordance with [rule 24(5) or (11)]¹⁷⁵, the Investigating Committee (where the allegation relates to a fraudulent or incorrect entry in the register) [or the Fitness to Practise]¹⁷⁶ Committee, may amend—

- (a) the charge set out in the notice of hearing; or
 - (b) the facts set out in the charge, on which the allegation is based,
- unless, having regard to the merits of the case and the fairness of the proceedings, the required amendment cannot be made without injustice.

(2) Before making any amendment under paragraph (1), the Committee shall consider any representations from the parties on this issue.

Joinder

29.—(1) Unless of the view that there is a risk of prejudice to the fairness of the proceedings, and upon taking [legal advice in accordance with rule 18A]¹⁷⁷, the [Fitness to Practise]¹⁷⁸ Committee may consider an allegation against two or more registrants at the same hearing where—

- (a) the allegation against each registrant arises out of the same circumstances;
or
- (b) in the view of the Committee, a joint hearing is necessary.

(2) The [Fitness to Practise]¹⁷⁹ Committee may consider one or more categories of allegation against a registrant provided always that an allegation relating to a conviction or caution is heard after any allegation of misconduct has been heard and determined.

(3) Where—

¹⁷⁵ Substituted – SI 2007/893, rule 3(5)

¹⁷⁶ Substituted – SI 2017/703, schedule, rule 29

¹⁷⁷ Substituted – SI 2026/822, schedule, rule 15

¹⁷⁸ Substituted – SI 2017/703, schedule, rule 30

¹⁷⁹ Substituted – SI 2017/ 703, schedule, rule 30

- (a) an allegation has been referred to the [Fitness to Practise]¹⁸⁰ Committee;
- (b) that allegation has not yet been heard; and
- (c) a new allegation which is of a similar kind or is founded on the same facts is received by the Council,

that Committee may consider the new allegation at the same time as the original allegation, notwithstanding that such new allegation has not been included in the notice of hearing.

- (4) Where it is proposed that a new allegation should be heard by the [Fitness to Practise]¹⁸¹ Committee, it shall—
 - (a) inform the registrant of the new allegation, and the alleged facts on which is based; and
 - (b) afford her the opportunity to make written representations on the new allegation and require any such representations to be received within 28 days of notification of the new allegations or within such period of time as is otherwise agreed by the parties.

Burden of proof

30. Where facts relating to an allegation are in dispute, the burden of proving such facts shall rest on the Council.

Evidence

31.—(1) [Having taken legal advice in accordance with rule 18A]¹⁸², and subject only to the requirements of relevance and fairness, a Practice Committee considering an allegation may admit oral, documentary or other evidence, whether or not such evidence would be admissible in civil proceedings (in the appropriate Court in that part of the United Kingdom in which the hearing takes place).

- (2) Where a registrant has been convicted of a criminal offence—
 - (a) a copy of the certificate of conviction, certified by a competent officer of a Court in the United Kingdom (or, in Scotland, an extract conviction) shall be conclusive proof of the conviction; and
 - (b) the findings of fact upon which the conviction is based shall be admissible as proof of those facts.

¹⁸⁰ Substituted – SI 2017/703, schedule, rule 30

¹⁸¹ Substituted – SI 2017/703, schedule, rule 30

¹⁸² Substituted – SI 2026/822m schedule, rule 16(a)

- (3) The only evidence which may be adduced by the registrant in rebuttal of a conviction certified or extracted in accordance with paragraph (2)(a) is evidence for the purpose of proving that she is not the person referred to in the certificate or extract.

- { (3A) *Where it is alleged that a registrant has been included in a barred list (within the meaning of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 or the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (Northern Ireland) Order 2007) by the Independent Barring Board—*
- (a) *information provided by the Secretary of State under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 or the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (Northern Ireland) Order 2007 that attests to that inclusion shall be conclusive proof of that inclusion, unless the registrant can prove that they are not the person referred to in the information provided; and*
 - (b) *a document from the Board, authenticated in whatever way the Council may approve, that provides a statement of the findings of fact made by the Board that led to that inclusion shall be conclusive proof of the facts found proved by the Board.*
- (3B) *Where it is alleged that the Scottish Ministers have included a registrant in the children's list or the adults' list (within the meaning of the Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Act 2007)—*
- (a) *information provided by the Scottish Ministers under the Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Act 2007 that attests to that inclusion shall be conclusive proof of that inclusion, unless the registrant can prove that they are not the person referred to in the information provided; and*
 - (b) *a document from the Scottish Ministers, authenticated in whatever way the Council may approve, that provides a statement of the findings of fact made by the Scottish Ministers that led to that inclusion shall be conclusive proof of the facts found proved by the Scottish Ministers. } 183*
- (4) A certificate as to a determination about a registrant's fitness to practise made by—
- (a) a body in the United Kingdom responsible under any enactment for the regulation of a health or social care profession; or
 - (b) a licensing body elsewhere,

¹⁸³ Inserted – SI 2009/1182, schedule 4, part 2, paragraph 22. Article 1(6)(d) of SI 2009/1182 provided that this amendment would come into force on the coming into force of section 44(1) of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 (the 2006 Act), Section 75(6) of the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 subsequently made provision for section 44 of the 2006 Act to be omitted and the provision was brought into force on 10 September 2012 by article 2(l) of The Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 (Commencement No. 3) Order 2012 (SI 2012/2234). This means that these inserted paragraphs will not come into force.

signed by an officer authorised by the body to sign such certificates shall be admissible as prima facie evidence of the facts referred to in the determination.

- [(4A) Where under these Rules the registrant is directed by the Registrar or the [Fitness to Practise]¹⁸⁴ Committee to undertake an examination or other assessment of the registrant's knowledge of English, a certificate or other document stating the result achieved by the registrant in that examination or other assessment that is signed by an officer of the body providing the examination or other assessment shall be conclusive proof of the result achieved by the registrant in that examination or other assessment.] ¹⁸⁵
- (5) In determining whether a registrant's fitness to practise is impaired by reason of physical or mental health, the [Fitness to Practise]¹⁸⁶ Committee may take into account, amongst other matters—
- (a) a refusal by the registrant to submit to medical examination;
 - (b) the registrant's current physical or mental condition;
 - (c) any continuing or episodic condition suffered by the registrant; and
 - (d) a condition suffered by the registrant which, although currently in remission, may be expected to cause a recurrence of the impairment of the practitioner's fitness to practise.
- (6) In determining whether a registrant's fitness to practise is impaired by reason of lack of competence, the [Fitness to Practise]¹⁸⁷ Committee may take into account any refusal by the registrant to submit to an assessment.
- [(6A) In determining whether a registrant's fitness to practise is impaired by reason of not having the necessary knowledge of English, the [Fitness to Practise]¹⁸⁸ Committee may draw such inferences as seem appropriate to it if a registrant fails to undertake an examination or other assessment or to provide evidence of the result of that examination or other assessment in accordance with a direction made pursuant to these Rules.] ¹⁸⁹
- (7) Where the [Fitness to Practise]¹⁹⁰ Committee finds that a registrant has failed to comply with the standards established by the Council under article 21(1)(a) of the Order and set out in the Code, such failure—
- (a) may be taken into account by the Committee in determining whether or not that registrant's fitness to practise is impaired; and

¹⁸⁴ Substituted – SI 2017/703, schedule, rule 31(a)

¹⁸⁵ Inserted – SI 2015/1923, part 2, paragraph 8(a)

¹⁸⁶ Substituted – SI 2017/703, schedule, rule 31(b)

¹⁸⁷ Substituted – SI 2017/703, schedule, rule 31(a)

¹⁸⁸ Substituted – SI 2017/703, schedule, rule 31(a)

¹⁸⁹ Inserted – SI 2015/1923, part 2, paragraph 8(b)

¹⁹⁰ Substituted – SI 2017/703, schedule, rule 31(a)

- (b) shall not, of itself, be taken to establish that the registrant's fitness to practise is impaired.
- (8) [Where a party, without good reason, fails to comply with a direction issued under article 32(3) of the Order or rule 17A, a Practice Committee may —
- (a) draw adverse inferences; and
 - (b) refuse to admit evidence, where the failure is a failure to comply with directions for service of that evidence, or otherwise relates to the admissibility of evidence.] ¹⁹¹

Postponements and adjournments

32.—(1) The Chair of the Practice Committee may, of her own motion, or upon the application of a party, postpone any hearing of which notice has been given under these Rules before the hearing begins.

- (2) A Practice Committee considering an allegation may, of its own motion or upon the application of a party, adjourn the proceedings at any stage, provided that—
 - (a) no injustice is caused to the parties; and
 - (b) the decision is made after hearing representations from the parties (where present) and taking [legal advice in accordance with rule 18A] ¹⁹².
- (3) Where the proceedings have been adjourned, the Practice Committee shall, as soon as practicable, notify the parties of the date, time and venue of the resumed hearing.

[(3A) In paragraph (3) “venue” includes details of audio or video conferencing arrangements.] ¹⁹³

- (4) In considering whether or not to grant a request for postponement or adjournment, the Chair or Practice Committee shall, amongst other matters, have regard to—
 - (a) the public interest in the expeditious disposal of the case;
 - (b) the potential inconvenience caused to a party or any witnesses to be called by that party; and
 - (c) fairness to the registrant.

¹⁹¹ Substituted – SI 2026/822, schedule, rule 16(b)

¹⁹² Substituted – SI 2026/822, schedule, rule 17

¹⁹³ Inserted – SI 2020/364, Schedule, rule 3(6)

- (5) [Save where the proceedings relate to the consideration of an interim order, before adjourning the proceedings] ¹⁹⁴, the Practice Committee shall consider whether or not to make an interim order and shall—
- (a) invite representations from the parties (where present) on this issue;
 - (b) deliberate in private;
 - (c) announce its decision in the presence of the parties (where present);
 - (d) give reasons for its decision; and
 - (e) notify the registrant of its decision in accordance with article 31(14) of the Order.

Cancellation of hearing

33.—(1) Where—

- (a) an allegation has been referred to a Practice Committee for consideration at a hearing; and
- (b) the presenter considers that, on the evidence available, the hearing should not be held,

the presenter shall inform the Practice Committee of his opinion, forthwith, and of the reasons for such opinion.

- (2) Upon receipt of the presenter's reasoned opinion, pursuant to paragraph (1), the Practice Committee shall convene a preliminary meeting in accordance with article 32(2)(b) of the Order.
- (3) At the preliminary meeting referred to in paragraph (2), the Chair of the Practice Committee may, in accordance with articles 32(3) and 32(4) of the Order, give a direction that the hearing should not be held and that the matter should be closed.
- (4) Notwithstanding paragraph (3), the Chair of the Practice Committee shall not give a direction to cancel a hearing without first giving the maker of the allegation (if any) a reasonable opportunity to comment, and taking into account any comments received from her.

[Service of documents

34.—[(1) Any notice of hearing required to be served upon the registrant shall be delivered by sending it by—

¹⁹⁴ Substituted – SI 2012/17, rule 16

- (a) a postal service or other delivery service in which delivery or receipt is recorded to, or by leaving it at, the registrant's address in the register; or
 - (b) a postal service or other delivery service in which delivery or receipt is recorded to, or by leaving it at, where this differs from, and it appears to the Council more likely to reach the registrant at, the registrant's last known address; or
 - (c) electronic mail to an electronic mail address that the registrant has notified to the Council as an address for communications.¹⁹⁵
- (2) If the registrant is represented by a solicitor, professional body or trade union, a copy of the notice served in accordance with paragraph (1) may also be—
- (a) sent or delivered to the solicitor's practising address;
 - (b) sent or delivered to the professional body or trade union's business address; or
 - (c) sent by electronic mail to an electronic mail address of the solicitor, professional body or trade union, where the address has been notified to the Council as an address for communications.
- (3) Any other notice or document to be served on a person under these Rules may be sent by—
- (a) ordinary post; [...]¹⁹⁶
 - (b) electronic mail to an electronic mail address that the person has notified to the Council as an address for communications [; or]¹⁹⁷
 - [(c) being placed on an online account with the Council where the recipient has agreed to accept communications via the account.]¹⁹⁸
- (4) The service of any notice or document under these Rules may be proved by—
- (a) a confirmation of posting issued by or on behalf of the Post Office, or other postal operator or delivery service;
 - (b) a confirmation of receipt of the notice or document sent by electronic mail; [...]¹⁹⁹
 - (c) a signed statement from the person sending by ordinary post or delivering the notice in accordance with this rule [; or]²⁰⁰

¹⁹⁵ Substituted – SI 2020/364, schedule, rule 3(7)

¹⁹⁶ Omitted – SI 2026/822, schedule, rule 18(a)

¹⁹⁷ Substituted – SI 2026/822, schedule, rule 18(b)

¹⁹⁸ Inserted – SI 2026/822, schedule, rule 18(c)

¹⁹⁹ Omitted – SI 2026/822, schedule, rule 18(d)

- [(d) a confirmation showing the notice or document has been placed on the online account with the Council.] ²⁰¹
- (5) Where any notice or document is sent or otherwise served under these Rules, it shall be treated as having been served—
- (a) on the day after it was sent by delivery service; [...] ²⁰²
- (b) where the notice has been left at an address or sent by electronic mail, on the day on which it was left or sent [; or] ²⁰³
- [(c) on the day it was placed on the online account with the Council.] ²⁰⁴
- [(6) Where these Rules require a notice to include any documents, the requirement will be met if—
- (a) the recipient has agreed to accept communications via an online account with the Council;
- (b) the documents are placed on the online account with the Council; and
- (c) the notice confirms that the documents have been placed on the online account with the Council.] ²⁰⁵

Protection of third party information

35. Nothing in these Rules shall prevent the Council from taking such steps as it thinks fit in order to prevent the disclosure of personal data within the meaning of section 1 of the Data Protection Act 1998 which relates to individuals who are not a party to the proceedings.] ²⁰⁶

End of rules

²⁰⁰ Substituted – SI 2026/822, schedule, rule 18(e)

²⁰¹ Inserted – SI 2026/822, schedule, rule 18(f)

²⁰² Omitted – SI 2026/822, schedule, rule 18(g)

²⁰³ Substituted – SI 2026/822, schedule, rule 18(h)

²⁰⁴ Inserted – SI 2026/822, schedule, rule 18(i)

²⁰⁵ Inserted – SI 2026/822, schedule, rule 18(j)

²⁰⁶ Substituted – SI 2012/17, schedule, rule 17