

General Pharmaceutical Council

Fitness to Practise Committee

Principal Review Hearing

Remote videolink hearing

4 March 2026

Registrant name:	Shane Dixon
Registration number:	5100734
Part of the register:	Pharmacy Technician
Type of Case:	Misconduct
Committee Members:	David Bleiman (Chair) Leanne Beverley (Registrant member) Catherine Beckett (Lay member)
Legal Adviser:	Ralph Shipway
Committee Secretary:	Gemma Staplehurst
Registrant:	Not present and not represented
General Pharmaceutical Council:	Represented by Gareth Thomas, Case Presenter
Order being reviewed:	Suspension (4 months)
Fitness to practise:	Impaired
Outcome:	Suspension (6 months), with review

This decision including any finding of impairment and sanction is an appealable decision under *The General Pharmaceutical Council (Fitness to Practise and Disqualification etc. Rules) Order of Council 2010*. Therefore, this decision will not take effect until 1 April 2026 or, if an appeal is lodged, once that appeal has been concluded. However, the interim

suspension set out in the decision takes effect immediately and will lapse when the decision takes effect or once any appeal is concluded.

Particulars of Allegation forming basis of finding of misconduct at the Principal Hearing

You at the relevant time a registered Pharmacy Technician,

2. On one or more occasions made discriminatory comments and/or demonstrated bullying behaviour towards Colleague 2, in that you referred to him as a 'mong'.

Documentation

Exhibit 1- Council's hearing bundle (100 pages)

Exhibit 2- Council's skeleton argument dated 20 February 2026 (8 pages)

Exhibit 3- Council's proof of service bundle (4 pages)

Exhibit 4- Proceeding in absence bundle (5 pages)

Exhibit 5- Signed copy of monitoring record (8 pages)

Introduction

1. This is the written determination of the Fitness to Practise Committee ('we' / 'the Committee') at the General Pharmaceutical Council ('the Council').
2. This hearing is governed by *The Pharmacy Order 2010* ('the Order') and *The General Pharmaceutical Council (Fitness to Practise and Disqualification etc. Rules) Order of Council 2010* ('the Rules').
3. The statutory overarching objectives for these regulatory proceedings are:
 - a. To protect, promote and maintain the health, safety and well-being of the public;
 - b. To promote and maintain public confidence in the professions regulated by the Council; and
 - c. To promote and maintain proper professional standards and conduct for members of those professions.
4. The Committee also has regard to the guidance contained in the Council's *Good decision making: Fitness to practise hearings and outcomes guidance, 2024* ('the Guidance').

5. At a Review Hearing the Committee must decide whether the Registrant's fitness to practise remains currently impaired and, if so, what should be the appropriate outcome. If the Committee find that the Registrant's fitness to practise is no longer impaired the current order will lapse on expiry.

Service of Notice of Hearing

6. The Committee has seen a letter dated 4 February 2026 from the Council headed 'Notice of Review Hearing' ('Notice') addressed to the Registrant and sent to him by email and Special Delivery post. The Special Delivery letter was returned as undelivered. However a screenshot of the Register confirms that Mr Dixon has opted to receive essential and bulk emails to his email address as noted on the Register. We checked and confirmed that the email was sent to that address.
7. We accepted legal advice.
8. The Committee was satisfied that there had been good service of the Notice in accordance with Rules 3 and 16.

Application to proceed in the absence of the Registrant

9. The Registrant was not in attendance at this hearing, nor was someone attending on their behalf. The Committee heard submissions from Mr Thomas, on behalf of the Council under Rule 25 to proceed in the absence of the Registrant.
10. The Committee noted that the Registrant had not responded to the Notice of Hearing.
11. The Committee accepted the advice of the Legal Adviser.
12. The Committee decided to proceed in the absence of Mr Dixon for the following reasons:
 - The Committee has found good service of the Notice therefore Mr Dixon is, or should be, aware of today's proceedings. The Committee has therefore considered that Mr Dixon has chosen to voluntarily absent himself from this hearing.
 - The Council contacted Mr Dixon again regarding this hearing via email on 18 February and he has not responded. Further attempts have been made to

contact Mr Dixon including by the Committee Secretary on the day of the hearing. We are satisfied that all reasonable efforts have been made to engage Mr Dixon with these proceedings.

- The Council's last correspondence from Mr Dixon was on 19 April 2023 when he wrote to the Council's case officer informing them that he was starting his new job "*outside the world of pharmacy*" and was "*considering leaving the GPhC register*" (though in fact he remains on the Register). He did not attend the Principal Hearing of this case in October 2025.
- There is nothing to suggest an adjournment would result in Mr Dixon's attendance in future.
- The existing suspension order is due to expire on 27 March 2026 and, if the case were adjourned beyond that date, the order would lapse without due review.
- There is a public interest in the expeditious disposal of cases.

Hearing history

- Principal Hearing (27-29 October 2025)- impairment found; Mr Dixon was suspended for a period of four months, coming into force on 28 November 2025.
- The current suspension is due to expire on 27 March 2026.

Decision of the Principal Hearing Committee

13. Mr Dixon was alleged firstly to have deliberately incorporated errors into his work in a way that put two patients at risk of harm. It was found that he had incorporated errors but the allegation that this had been done deliberately was found not proved by the Committee. However, a second allegation, that Mr Dixon on one or more occasions referred to Colleague 2 (who was autistic) as a "mong" was found proved.
14. Although Mr Dixon was not in attendance at the Principal Hearing, the Committee had sight of his earlier responses to that allegation including that:

"I do not recall ever calling him a mong and I can't believe I would have done so repeatedly and in front of other staff members." The Registrant had enjoyed a good relationship with Colleague 2 until he believes Colleague 2 was told that he (the Registrant) had implicated him in an incident of graffiti. He believes Colleague 2 had been turned against him and that parts of his statement are "completely fabricated".

15. The Committee heard oral evidence from Colleague 2. The Committee considered that Mr Dixon's conduct breached Standards of the profession, in particular Standard 6 (professionalism) and Standard 9 (leadership). The Committee took account of the evidence that Colleague 2 was upset by the comments and eventually made a complaint to his manager. Neither the Registrant's struggles with his mental health nor wider evidence of a poor workplace culture excused his conduct. Making discriminatory comments and demonstrating bullying behaviour towards Colleague 2 on one or more occasions amounted to misconduct.
16. Turning to current impairment, the Committee *"was of the view that the Registrant's conduct which led to the charge was capable of being addressed"*. However, it *"could not be sure that the Registrant understands the seriousness of his misconduct and how it would have affected Colleague 2's experience at work, and confidence in the Registrant's profession more widely"*. Nevertheless, some aspects of Mr Dixon's written responses suggested a degree of insight into the seriousness of the allegation (he did take responsibility for his negative behaviour generally and its effect on colleagues). The Committee further noted that Mr Dixon was otherwise said by one of the witnesses to be a competent Pharmacy Technician, and that the misconduct occurred some years ago.
17. The Committee determined that Mr Dixon's conduct engaged Rule 5(2)(b) (brought the profession of pharmacy into disrepute) and (c) (breached one of the fundamental principles of the profession of pharmacy). Furthermore, the Committee was *"bound to conclude"* that there remained a risk that he could repeat his misconduct.
18. In relation to sanction, the Committee concluded that taking no action or issuing a warning would be inappropriate in light of the Committee's finding in relation to the risk of repetition and the need to mark the seriousness of the misconduct. Conditions of practice would also be inappropriate, given the Registrant's non-engagement with the Council and its process. Removal of the Registrant's name from the register would be disproportionate as his conduct was capable of being addressed and was *"not fundamentally incompatible"* with continued registration *"provided he takes the necessary steps to address it"*.
19. The Committee imposed a suspension for the following reasons:

"... taking into account the circumstances of this case, that a short period of suspension would be appropriate and proportionate. A suspension would ensure that until the Registrant has demonstrated his learnings from this Committee's findings, he would be prevented from taking up work as a pharmacy technician; and it would also send a message to his profession and the public that the conduct which the Committee found proved was unacceptable for a registered professional."

20. The Committee considered that a review would give Mr Dixon *“an opportunity to attend a hearing and demonstrate that there is no longer a risk that he might repeat his conduct at work in future.”* Four months would be sufficient for him to reflect and remediate his conduct *“should he wish to do so”*.
21. The Committee at the last hearing suggested that today’s committee may be assisted by:
- The Registrant’s attendance at the review
 - A reflective statement from the Registrant demonstrating that he has insight into the seriousness of the Committee’s findings against him and the effect of his conduct on Colleague 2, on the culture in his workplace more generally, on other members of the profession and on the wider public interest
 - Attendance at training about Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
 - Testimonials or references

Determination

Decision on Impairment

22. We considered whether Mr Dixon’s fitness to practise remains impaired. We have taken into account all of the documentation before us and the submissions on behalf of the Council. We accepted the advice of the legal adviser.
23. We recognised and applied the following guidance in *Abrahaem v GMC [2008] EWHC 183*:
- “...the review has to consider whether all the concerns raised in the original finding of impairment through misconduct have been sufficiently addressed to the Panel’s satisfaction. In practical terms there is a persuasive burden on the practitioner at a review to demonstrate that he or she has fully acknowledged why past professional performance was deficient and through insight, application, education, supervision or other achievement sufficiently addressed the past impairments.”*
24. As Mr Dixon has not been in contact with the Council and has provided no information for this hearing, he has done nothing to discharge the persuasive burden on him to demonstrate that he has addressed the impairment of his fitness to practise sufficiently, or indeed at all.
25. Mr Dixon has provided nothing to show that he has done any of what was recommended by the Principal Hearing. There is no reflective statement to demonstrate insight into the seriousness of the findings against him and the effect of his conduct on colleague 2 and more widely on the culture of his workplace, other

members of the profession and the wider public interest. We have no evidence that he has attended any of the recommended training. He has not supplied any testimonials or references.

26. For all of the above reasons we find that Mr Dixon's current fitness to practise remains impaired on public interest grounds.

Decision on Outcome

27. Having found impairment, we went on to consider the matter of outcome. The Committee's powers are set out in Article 54(3) of the Order. The Committee should consider the available outcomes in ascending order from least restrictive, namely take no action, to most restrictive, namely removal from the Register, in order to identify the appropriate and proportionate outcome that meets the circumstances of the case.
28. The purpose of a sanction is not to be punitive, though a sanction may in fact have a punitive effect. The purpose of the sanction is to meet the overarching objectives of regulation, namely the protection of the public, the maintenance of public confidence and to promote professional standards. The Committee is therefore entitled to give greater weight to the public interest over the Registrant's interests.
29. We took into account the submissions made on behalf of the Council.
30. We accepted the advice of the Legal Adviser and had regard to the Guidance.
31. This is a case in which the misconduct in question is potentially remediable and in which a sanction was found necessary to maintain public confidence and uphold the standards of the profession. While the Committee, at the Principal Hearing, considered that a suspension of four months would suffice to allow Mr Dixon to show remediation, unfortunately he has not used this opportunity.
32. In the absence of his engagement, no purpose would be served by merely warning Mr Dixon and conditions would be wholly impracticable as there is nothing to suggest that he would be minded to comply. In any event, the seriousness of the matter has not diminished as he has shown no remediation whatsoever.
33. We gave serious consideration to whether a further period of suspension would suffice to maintain public confidence and allow time for remediation, or whether Mr Dixon should now be removed from the Register.
34. It may be thought futile to continue with suspension, when Mr Dixon has had no engagement with the Council for nearly three years and indicated an intention of leaving the profession. A time must come when there is so little realistic prospect of remediation that it may be proportionate to remove a Registrant from the Register, even though the underlying misconduct is capable of remediation.

35. On balance, we concluded that it would still, at this time, be disproportionate to remove Mr Dixon from the Register. He should have a further chance to show remediation. We have therefore concluded that a further period of suspension is the appropriate and proportionate sanction in this case.
36. The suspension should be for a period of six months which should be ample time for Mr Dixon to re-engage with the Council and remediate his misconduct. We have nothing to add to the short and highly practicable list of recommendations which the Committee at the Principal Hearing said would be helpful for Mr Dixon to provide to a future review.
37. The suspension should be reviewed before its expiry. The Committee, hearing such a review, will have the full range of outcomes available and Mr Dixon should be aware that this includes the possibility of removal from the Register.
38. We therefore direct that the Registrar impose a suspension on Shane Dixon for a further period of six months, with a review.

Review Hearing

39. This matter will be reviewed by a Committee before the sanction expires. The reviewing Committee may be assisted by:
 - Mr Dixon's attendance at the review
 - A reflective statement demonstrating that he has insight into the seriousness of the Committee's findings against him and the effect of his conduct on Colleague 2, on the culture in his workplace more generally, on other members of the profession and on the wider public interest
 - Attendance at training about Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
 - Testimonials or references

Interim Measures

40. Mr Thomas applied for an interim measure of suspension under Article 60 of the Order. We accepted legal advice.
41. The suspension we have imposed will not take effect for 28 days, by which time the existing suspension, due to expire on 27 March 2026, will no longer be in force. Should Mr Dixon lodge an appeal, there would be a period in which he would be free to practise unrestricted, until such time as any such appeal is determined.
42. We have concluded that it is necessary in the wider public interest, of maintaining public confidence in the profession and declaring and upholding the standards of the profession, that Mr Dixon remain suspended without a potential gap.

43. The reasons are those which have been given for the imposition of the substantive suspension order.
44. This concludes the determination.