

**BEFORE THE FITNESS TO PRACTISE COMMITTEE
OF THE GENERAL OPTICAL COUNCIL**

GENERAL OPTICAL COUNCIL

F(26)11

AND

CHRISTOPHER HURST (01-18552)

**NOTICE OF INQUIRY
SUBSTANTIVE HEARING**

Take notice that an inquiry will be conducted in the above matter by the Fitness to Practise Committee of the General Optical Council.

A substantive hearing will be proceeding:

Remotely

The substantive hearing will commence at 9:30am on **Monday 7 September – Friday 11 September 2026** by way of video conference or telephone conference facilities.

The Inquiry will be based upon the allegation submitted by the Council (see below) and will determine whether the fitness to practise of **Christopher Hurst** is impaired by virtue of the provisions contained in section 13D(2) of the Opticians Act 1989.

Euan Napier
Hearings Manager, General Optical Council

14 August 2026

ALLEGATION

The Council alleges in relation to you, Christopher Hurst (01-18552), a registered optometrist, that:

1. Between around 16 February 2022 – May 2023, you did not manage your business effectively in that, following barring by the Disclosure and Barring Service and/or suspension by the General Optical Council Fitness to Practise Committee:
 - a. you did not make adequate arrangements to ensure continuation of services for patients under the NHS contract; and/or
 - b. you did not ensure adequate qualified staffing levels to ensure testing could be carried out for patients.
2. Between around February 2023 – May 2023, you did not provide goods ordered by patients once the NHS contract had ceased, including contact lenses that had been paid for by direct debit.
3. Between around September 2022 – May 2023, you did not pay one or more of the Practice's suppliers of goods such as frames, lenses, and glazing, resulting in:
 - a. one or more suppliers refusing to supply the Practice with goods; and/or
 - b. patients not receiving orders which they and/or the NHS had paid for; and/or
 - c. invoices remaining unpaid, to date.
4. You did not pay your employees their monthly wages, including:
 - a. [redacted], for the following months:
 - i. March 2023; and/or
 - ii. April 2023; and/or
 - iii. May 2023; and/or
 - b. [redacted], for the following months:
 - i. April 2023; and/or
 - ii. May 2023; and/or
 - iii. June 2023.
5. Between around September 2022 – May 2023, you were rude and/or abusive to Person A, as set out in Schedule A.

And by virtue of the facts set out above, your fitness to practise is impaired by reason of misconduct.

Schedule A

- i. You told Person A that she was attempting to deliberately sabotage the business, or words to that effect; and/or
- ii. You told Person A that she had been off work without reason during the pandemic, or words to that effect, notwithstanding that you knew or ought to have known that she had been off work for health reasons; and/or
- iii. On one or more occasions you told Person A that she was stirring up trouble by raising concerns about the business' financial situation, or words to that effect; and/or
- iv. On or around 6 February 2023, you suggested to Person A that she was responsible for shutting down the business, or words to that effect.

Committee Members: Clive Powell (Chair)
Lisa Hill (Lay)
Jacqueline Telfer (Lay)
Kalpana Theophilus (Optometrist)
Gemma O'Rourke (Optometrist)

Legal Adviser: Kelly Thomas
Hearings Officer: Terence Yates
Transcribers: Marten Walsh Cherer Limited

If you require further information relating to this hearing, please contact the Council's Hearings Manager at hearings@optical.org.