

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

GENERAL OPTICAL COUNCIL

F(24)09

AND

MATTHEW BICKERSTAFFE (01-19063)

**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 15 – Tuesday 16 July 2024** 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 **Matthew Bickerstaffe** is impaired by virtue of the provisions contained in section 13D(2) of the Opticians Act 1989.

Euan Napier
Operations Manager (Hearings)

20 June 2024

ALLEGATION

The Council alleges that you, Matthew Bickerstaffe, a registered Optometrist (01-19063):

1. On or around 26 October 2021, you sent messages via ChatIW, under the username [redacted], as set out in Schedule A.
2. On or around 26 October 2021, you sent messages via Snapchat, under the username [redacted], as set out in Schedule B.
3. One or more of the messages as referred to in Schedule A and/or B were:
 - i. Inappropriate;
and/or
 - ii. Sexual.

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

Schedule A

- Haha in looks or action??

Schedule B

- I wouldn't know where to look
- Nice, she started changing yet?
- [redacted]
- Nice. Get some pics for me
- You given her to anyone else?
- Can I see a pic?
- [redacted]
- Do you or would you play with her
- Can I see her?
- No vids of her playing I assume
- She a skinny mini?
- [redacted]
- Bendy
- [redacted]

Committee Members: Sara Fenoughty
Mark McLaren
Mark Richards
Alexander Howard
Kamlesh Gohil

Legal Adviser: Clare Bunting

Hearings Officer: Arjeta Shabani

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.