

## UKPHR's Specialist registration by portfolio assessment route

# Frequently Asked Questions

### How do I apply for registration by UKPHR's Specialist registration by portfolio assessment route?

UKPHR's Board intends that UKPHR's Specialist registration by portfolio assessment route will open on **01 September 2018**. This route will be by retrospective portfolio assessment.

It has a core principle of **equivalence in competencies and process** wherever possible to the CESR (Certificate of Eligibility for Specialist Registration) route operated by the GMC (General Medical Council) and the 2015 Public Health Specialty Training Curriculum (2015 Curriculum).

UKPHR has published the [framework of required competencies](#) for the new Specialist registration by portfolio assessment route.

The knowledge competencies are based on the 2015 Curriculum.

An **implementation group** is preparing for implementation of the changes over the period January 2018 - August 2019. The work of the implementation group includes:

- Eligibility criteria for the new equivalence route
- Application process and forms
- Revised Framework and Guidance
- References and testimonials requirements
- Quality assurance arrangements
- Training for assessors.

The Board and the implementation group agreed a **two-stage application process**.

**Stage 1** will be an application to satisfy UKPHR as to eligibility and readiness.

**Stage 2** will involve applicants in preparing a portfolio and submitting it to UKPHR for assessment.

The implementation group is working on the production of **guidance** to assist would-be applicants and this will be published alongside the framework. Guidance on stage 1 has been [published](#).

## Where can I find the application forms for my completion?

The implementation group is working on the production of the following forms:

- The Stage 1 **application form** (eligibility and readiness) is already [published](#)
- A template for a **reference** (a reference will be required from a referee provided by the applicant) is already [published](#)
- At Stage 2, the **portfolio** and associated documentation
- A template for a **testimonial** (a testimonial will be required).

UKPHR will publish these forms when they have been finalised and it is important that you read guidance in detail before beginning the application process.

UKPHR does not yet offer an **e-portfolio** facility for those who may wish to apply under the new route, but UKPHR's Board has an ambition to introduce an e-portfolio as soon as possible.

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## I have read that evidence to be provided with a portfolio will be subject to a currency rule. What does this mean for applicants who will be preparing a portfolio?

In assessing portfolios received by UKPHR under previous routes, assessors have always had regard to the **age of evidence** provided when determining the current skills and knowledge of applicants.

For UKPHR's Specialist registration by portfolio assessment route, the implementation group has been asked by the Board to provide much more direction as to the need for evidence of an applicant's **current skills and knowledge**. The implementation group is working on guidance to explain how this requirement will be applied and measured – for example, some areas of knowledge are particularly time-critical in terms of currency – and will have regard to the approach taken by the GMC in respect of evidence received under its CESR route.

If applicants have passed Part A of the Faculty of Public Health exam in the 7 years prior to their application, then they do not have to produce any further evidence for the knowledge competencies.

If an applicant has not passed Part A in the 7 years prior to their application, then they will have to produce work that can demonstrate their achievement of all of the knowledge competencies in the 7 years prior to the portfolio being submitted. If knowledge acquisition was longer than 7 years then a reflective piece will be required on that competency to show current understanding, and / or recent relevant CPD. Some knowledge competencies containing organisational change or legal changes will need evidence of learning / understanding since those changes i.e. maybe shorter than 7 years.

The implementation group's **guidance on currency of evidence** will be published when it has been finalised.

## **What support is available for public health professionals who may wish to apply for registration as a public health specialist under the new route?**

UKPHR has never had resources to provide **support and mentoring**. UKPHR will try to match applicants with registrants in their area who have registered by portfolio assessment routes. In some parts of the UK, it has been known for Workforce Leads to provide advice, and there have been some ad hoc support schemes in operation.

We would like there to be system-wide support for the core public health workforce to help them with their development and career progressions. UKPHR and the Faculty of Public Health recently published [a joint report](#) in which the two organisations recommended that such system-wide support should be put in place.

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## **Why is UKPHR proposing that passes in the Part A exams will be an optional means of proving all the knowledge requirements, rather than the only acceptable way of proving knowledge?**

The status of Part A exam passes was extensively considered during the lifetime of the task & finish group set up to advise UKPHR on the requirements for its equivalence route. The issue was also raised in the formal consultation with a wide range of stakeholders.

The General Medical Council does not require passes of Part A exams for its CESR route to registration.

Given the principle of equivalence, UKPHR's position is therefore that all applicants by this new route must prove all the knowledge requirements of the 2015 Public Health Specialty Training Programme Curriculum. They may do so at their option either by passing the Part A exams or by producing in their portfolio evidence to satisfy two experienced assessors that they possess all the knowledge requirements.

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## **Who does the assessment if there are no exams?**

UKPHR has 15 years' experience of assessing evidence of knowledge. UKPHR maintains a pool of senior public health professionals, from a wide range of relevant disciplines, including medicine, who give their time voluntarily to assess portfolios. For the new Specialist registration by portfolio assessment route, which UKPHR proposes to open on 01 September 2018, portfolios of evidence will be assessed by two experienced assessors as in the present defined specialist portfolio system.

As readers may know, these assessments by two assessors are discussed by those assessors and their peer assessors and a Moderator at monthly meetings of UKPHR's Registration Panel. These discussions usually result in applicants being asked to provide further information and/or evidence by way of clarification and/or resubmission. The process is tried and tested, it is rigorous and it is robust.

Feedback from UKPHR registrants, by portfolio, is that this is rigorous, searching and challenging but very helpful in strengthening their effectiveness as public health specialists.

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## How does UKPHR assure the quality of the assessments made?

UKPHR's Quality Assurance work is led by UKPHR's **Moderation Team**, comprising six Moderators led by Cerilan Rogers. Moderators oversee the registration processes in respect of specialists and practitioners. They attend every Registration Panel held by UKPHR (and every verification panel held by every local practitioner registration scheme). They will select portfolios at random for moderation, they may be asked by the Registration Panel to moderate a specific portfolio and assessors may ask for their advice at any time. Moderators have written the detailed guidance for applicants and assessors that UKPHR publishes on its [website](#). The Lead Moderator writes an **annual report** which UKPHR publishes in its Annual Report.

UKPHR has standards in place for providing quality services to all registrants, stakeholders and members of the public, backed by a detailed policy for handling complaints, compliments and comments from all sources. There are clear governance arrangements in place, including rules covering Board members and Board and Committee meetings. The Registrar's independent role is clearly set out.

The Nolan Principles for public service are incorporated in UKPHR's Code of Practice for Directors, assessors and others who do work for UKPHR.

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## When Specialty Registrars are within 6 months of completion of the programme, they are able to look for Consultant roles and confirm they will be finished on a set date. Will UKPHR's Specialist registration by portfolio assessment route allow for the same system, or set timescale for when they will finish?

UKPHR is intending to introduce a **two-stage application process** for this new route. In this way, applicants must first satisfy UKPHR as to their eligibility and readiness. It will only be after UKPHR has given permission in response to this application that applicants will be able to submit a portfolio for **retrospective** evidence assessment.

Once permission has been given for submitting a portfolio for assessment, the applicant's eligibility and readiness to apply will have been confirmed. However, there will no doubt be considerable variability in how long applicants will take to prepare and submit their portfolios (applicants will have up to 18 months from being given permission to submit their portfolio for assessment) and how long UKPHR and its assessors will take to complete the assessment process.

Whilst UKPHR will be happy to confirm to applicants and employers (with permission) that an applicant has made a successful application for permission, and to give information about progress made in assessing a portfolio, we would be unable to say that the applicant's portfolio would be six months away from being successfully assessed and that they would be eligible for consultant posts on a specific date in the way that the Specialty Training route provides.

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### **The competencies for UKPHR's Specialist registration by portfolio assessment route are proposed to be equivalent to the 2015 Public Health Specialty Training Curriculum, how is this being achieved?**

All applicants by this new route must prove all the knowledge requirements of the 2015 Public Health Specialty Training Programme Curriculum (and may do so at their option either by passing the Part A exams or by producing in their portfolio the necessary evidence to satisfy two experienced assessors that they possess all the knowledge requirements). Applicants must also demonstrate understanding and application of the knowledge requirements (the "Show Hows").

The implementation group will publish its mapping of the "Show Hows" to the 2015 Curriculum's learning outcomes and will also publish **guidance** for applicants and assessors as to how they are to be assessed. This is kept under review by UKPHR.

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### **UKPHR's Specialist registration by portfolio assessment route is said to be an equivalent process to the CESR route operated by the General Medical Council, how is this being achieved?**

CESR is an alternative way of achieving registration with the General Medical Council (GMC) as a medical practitioner. For a doctor who is a public health specialist this is an alternative to successful completion of the Public Health Specialty Training Programme.

UKPHR's Specialist registration by portfolio assessment route will be an alternative way of achieving registration with UKPHR as a public health specialist. This is an alternative to successful completion of the Public Health Specialty Training Programme.

The GMC's CESR process requires applicants to complete an application, submit evidence for assessment and pay a fee.

UKPHR's Specialist registration by portfolio assessment route process requires applicants to complete an application and submit evidence (first, in an application for permission to proceed and then secondly in a prescribed form of portfolio) for assessment and pay a fee.

The GMC allows applicants the option of passing the Part A exams as proof of the knowledge required by the 2015 Public Health Specialty Training Programme Curriculum for its CESR route to registration.

UKPHR allows applicants the option of passing the Part A exams as proof of the knowledge required by the 2015 Public Health Specialty Training Programme Curriculum for its equivalence route to registration.

A public health doctor who has previously applied to the General Medical Council for a Certificate of Eligibility for Specialist Registration and has been refused will not be able to apply to UKPHR under the new route.

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## **What is the anticipated workforce impact of introducing the new Specialist registration by portfolio assessment route?**

Since UKPHR's foundation in 2003, it has contributed to the development of a strong, **multidisciplinary** core public health workforce in the UK.

UKPHR has not made an estimate of the likely registration rate under the new Specialist registration by portfolio assessment route which will open on 01 September 2018 but is aware that there remains interest within the public health workforce for such a route to registration to be available from the responses received in its 2017 consultation.

UKPHR is working on the assumption that new registrations through the new route will be similar to the number of registrations through the defined specialist route. The first registration by the defined specialist route was in 2008 and at the time of publication, 133 defined specialists have been successfully registered.

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## **Who should I contact if I have any further queries?**

If you have any queries related to UKPHR's new Specialist registration by portfolio assessment route you can contact UKPHR's Chief Executive, David Kidney with your queries. His email address is [d.kidney@ukphr.org](mailto:d.kidney@ukphr.org) and telephone 0121 293 4371.

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