

Specialist/GP Registration through the Portfolio pathway route

Applicant pack

NHS Education for Scotland

[26.04.2024]

Introduction

Welcome to our Portfolio pathway workshop!

Throughout today's session we hope that you will gain an insight into the Portfolio application process and tips on how to create a strong application.

We've put together this pack containing useful bits of information and top tips to get you started on your Portfolio pathway journey. We have a wealth of further information and guidance available on our website – you'll find links for these webpages throughout this pack.

We understand that the Portfolio application can be a daunting process, and we're here to make that as smooth as possible. Those leading the workshop today will be able to answer any of your queries, and we will ensure there is dedicated time for questions and answers.

We hope that you find the workshop helpful and that it sets you off on the first step of your Portfolio journey. Don't forget that you can contact for advice the Specialist Applications Team at any point before and after submitting your application (you can find our details on the last page).

Very best of luck!

Specialist/GP Registration via Portfolio pathway

What is the Portfolio pathway?

Entry onto the Specialist/GP Register for doctors who have not completed a UK training programme.

The application is

- Assessed against the high level learning outcomes in the UK CCT curriculum*
- An evidence based application

How am I eligible?

To be eligible to make an application via Portfolio pathway you must have either of the following:

- A specialist medical qualification in the specialty in which you are applying

OR

- At least six months continuous training in the specialty in which you are applying

The above criteria can be from any point in your career, and from anywhere in the world.

How do I apply?

Applications can be made via GMC Online. Once you've started your application, you will need to submit it to us within 24 months.

You can upload your documentary evidence electronically through GMC Online. We've created step-by-step instructions on how to apply via Portfolio pathway in GMC online.

[User Guide for online applications](#)

The process

We process your application in different stages and have summarised these below to help you understand what's involved.

* Applications in Non-CCT specialties are assessed against the standards of a consultant in the UK health services. Further information can be found here: [Portfolio application in a Non-CCT specialty - GMC \(gmc-uk.org\)](#)

Step one: Initial checks

A member of the specialist applications team will initially check:

- you're eligible for the application you've made
- we've received the appropriate number of uploaded documents
- you've provided completed pro-formas to verify your evidence
- you've nominated the correct type and number of referees.

If you have missed any evidence or the information you gave us is incorrect, we'll contact you to let you know.

Step two: Assigning to an adviser

If your application passes the initial checks, it will be assigned to your adviser. They will contact you to confirm that your application evidence will be reviewed, and you will receive their comments within 30 calendar days.

We'll also contact your verifiers to confirm they completed the pro-forma you've submitted and send out requests to your referees to complete a structured report.

Step three: Adviser comments

Once your adviser has reviewed your evidence, they will update your online application with their comments highlighting any additional evidence you may need to provide to strengthen your application.

Any evidence that didn't meet our [anonymisation requirements](#) will be deleted from your application and you'll be asked to resubmit it once it's been fully redacted. In line with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), we cannot keep a record of documents that haven't been redacted appropriately.

Step four: Adding/amending evidence

You'll have another 60 days to provide [additional and amended evidence](#) after we've sent our advice on your initial submission of evidence.

The 60-day period is given to make sure you have enough time to gather any additional evidence and get the appropriate verification of your evidence. You can also carry out any amendments, redaction and grouping of evidence, based on the comments from your adviser.

To make best use of your 60-day period, try to address the areas highlighted by your adviser in full before resubmitting your application, rather than make multiple submissions.

This is because once you resubmit, your adviser is given 15 working days to review your additional and amended evidence, and this time is taken from your 60-day period. Each submission will mean

less available time remains for you to make any subsequent amendments if they are needed and will add time to processing your application.

While small extensions can be given in certain circumstances, to align with the estimated submission date communicated to the royal college or faculty, it is important that these are kept to a minimum.

Step five: PSV

Samples of your evidence will be prepared, and we will ask your verifiers to register for our secure document sharing site GMC Connect. Once your verifiers have registered and their accounts have been approved, the sample of your evidence will be shared with them.

We will then ask that they respond to confirm two statements; that they verified the evidence and that it is an accurate record of your experience.

Step six: Application finalisation

Your application is deemed complete when we've:

- received all of your evidence, including any extra information we requested
- verified a sample of your evidence directly with your verifiers
- received all of your structured reports

Step seven: Evaluation of your evidence

We'll then send it for evaluation by the relevant royal college, faculty or associate. We'll let you know when we've done this. From the point we send your application to the royal college or faculty, it takes up to three months until we give you your final decision.

Step eight: Decision

We get a recommendation from the royal college, faculty or associates on whether your application should be successful. However, this is not binding on the GMC, the final decision on whether to enter your name on the Specialist Register is ours to make.

Help us complete your application quickly

Your application can take between three to six months before it's complete and can be sent for evaluation.

The Portfolio pathway CV

You must provide a copy of your up to date CV. It's important that your CV meets our requirements and outlines all relevant information.

We strongly recommend that you write your CV specifically for this application. The information in your CV must match the information in your application.

We've picked out the following key points when writing your CV:

- Employment history – start with the most recent and work backwards. It's important that you include the below for each post:
 - Post title
 - Dates of post
 - WTE percentage (if part time)
 - Institution name and location
 - Name of supervisor
- Gaps in employment – include the details of any gaps in your employment over 28 days
- Research experience, publications and presentations
- Audit experience
- Teaching and training experience
- Management experience
- Procedures performed
- Any extra activities

[How to structure CESR CV](#)

Evidence requirements

It's important that your evidence meets our requirements. Ensuring that your evidence meets these before you apply could help to speed up your application. Further information on the following areas can be found by following the links below.

Authentication

Only the following documents require authentication:

- Specialist Medical Qualification from outside the UK

These should be authenticated by either the awarding body or a solicitor. This confirms that the qualification or registration details are a true and accurate copy of the original.

Verification

Most of your documentary evidence will need to be verified. This so that we can be assured that your evidence is a true and accurate reflection of your practice.

You'll need to identify a 'verifier' from each institution you are submitting evidence from. This person must be in a medical supervisory position.

You'll need to complete a pro-forma, listing all evidence provided for the particular institution. Your verifier will check the relevant evidence and sign the pro-forma to confirm they've reviewed this, and that it's an accurate reflection of your practice.

The GMC will contact your verifiers and will send a percentage of your evidence to them to confirm as the evidence they originally checked.

[GMC guidance on verification](#)

Anonymisation

It's essential that all documentary evidence has been appropriately anonymised. Any documents containing patient identifiable information must be fully redacted. Any names or GMC numbers of colleagues who you've appraised or assessed will also need to be removed.

Any evidence containing identifiable information will be deleted from your application and will not be included in your application.

[GMC guidance on anonymisation and redaction](#)

Structured Reports

You'll need to nominate referees for your application.

Structured reports from your referees are an important part of your application – the evaluators will use these to triangulate with your primary evidence.

Who should I choose?

The [specialty specific guidance \(SSG\)](#) for your specialty sets out the number of referees you should nominate and who these individuals should be.

We recommend that all of your referees are on the Specialist or GP Register or are of equivalent standing, unless otherwise stated in your SSG. You may choose referees who do not hold this type of registration, or work in grades other than as a substantive consultant or GP - for example, locum consultants or associate specialists.

If you choose a referee from a non-medical background, unless specified in your SSG, they may not be able to comment on your clinical skills across the breadth of your specialty, and their comments may not be given the same weight as a substantive consultant or GP.

All of your referees should be able to comment from their own direct observations on your current level of expertise. If your referees have retired from practice more than three years ago, they may not be able to comment on your current skills.

If you are unable to choose referees that meet the above criteria, we strongly advise you to delay submitting your application until you are able to do so.

What should I do before nominating my referees?

It's important that you:

- Obtain their approval to nominate them as a referee
- Discuss your application with them and have their support
- Make them aware of the structured report process
- Give them a copy of your CV
- Make them aware that the GMC will contact them for their report

[GMC guidance on referees for Portfolio pathway applicants](#)

Uploading evidence electronically

Evidence in support of your application should be uploaded electronically.

Electronic evidence can be uploaded for each of the different evidence sections of the application. The online application remains open for 24 months, meaning that it can be used as a portfolio to gather evidence against each of the different sections.

Our Applications Advisers will share guidance with you about your application electronically through GMC Online, making the application faster and more secure.

What can I upload?

There are many file types that you can upload to your application, although **we recommend** that you use **pdf files**. All documents you upload will be stored in a read-only format.

We accept:

- ✓ .pdf
- ✓ .ppt
- ✓ .doc
- ✓ .xls
- ✓ .jpeg

How do I upload evidence?

Uploading your electronic evidence is a simple process. You'll need to open a Portfolio application in GMC Online before you can start uploading your electronic evidence.

We've created a user guide with step-by-step instructions and troubleshooting guidance – [click here](#) to read this.

In order for us to process your application quickly and effectively you must follow our guidance on how to group and organise your evidence.

Evidence guidance

It's vital you read through the guidance we have available on our website. There are many useful resources available that will aid you in collating your evidence.

Specialty specific guidance (SSG)

The SSG is a valuable document for all Portfolio applicants. The SSGs have been created in conjunction with the Royal Colleges and Faculties – they contain advice on what documents are expected for each area of the application, in addition to tips on how to create a strong application.

There is an SSG available for each CCT specialty*. If you choose to apply in a non-CCT specialty, you should use the SSG which closely matches the specialty you're applying in.

Important: these documents are updated on a regular basis, therefore it's important to ensure you're using the most current version.

You can view the [SSGs through our website](#).

Specialty curricula

Applications are assessed against the high level learning outcomes in the CCT curriculum for your specialty (that's in place at the time you apply). It's important that you're familiar with your specialty curricula, and that you're able to demonstrate you have the knowledge, skills and experience required for specialist/GP registration.

Important: specialty curricula are updated on a regular basis, therefore it's important to ensure you're using the most current version.

You can view the relevant [CCT curriculum through our website](#).

Other resources

The Royal Colleges and Faculties often have guidance and FAQs on their websites. We recommend also utilising these resources.

* A CCT specialty is one where the GMC have approved a curriculum which, if followed in training in the UK, leads to the award of a CCT.

Top 10 Tips

- 1) Verification of evidence** – if your evidence hasn't been verified, it won't be seen by your evaluators
- 2) Submit evidence of your eligibility** – this should be either an SMQ or an employment letter detailing your training
- 3) Familiarise yourself with the curriculum** – this is what your application will be assessed against
- 4) Read the specialty specific guidance (SSG)** for the specialty you're applying in
- 5) Anonymise your evidence** – any evidence that doesn't meet our anonymisation requirements won't be seen by your evaluators
- 6) Don't apply too early** – make sure you've got your evidence ready before you submit your application
- 7) Gather evidence prospectively** where you can
- 8) Make sure your CV meets our guidance** and your employment history matches your CV
- 9) Don't duplicate evidence** – you should cross reference instead
- 10) Listen to your adviser** – they are experts in processing these applications

Contacting us

The Specialist Applications team are on hand to answer any queries you may have regarding making a Portfolio pathway application



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