



UKPHR

Public Health Register

Protecting the public – improving practice

Guidance for applicants for UKPHR specialist registration by portfolio assessment

Portfolio submission

December 2019

This guidance will be updated from time to time so please check UKPHR website that you are working with the most up to date guidance.

This is a United Kingdom (UK) registration intended to accredit senior public health professionals working in the UK, by retrospective portfolio assessment.

This guidance is intended to be used by individuals who have been granted approval to submit a portfolio for assessment to gain specialist registration via the pre-application process.

We strongly recommend that you work through each section of this document to help you compile an effective portfolio.

1. Background

Specialist registration with UK Public Health Register (UKPHR), General Medical Council (GMC) or General Dental Council (GDC) is an essential requirement for Consultant or Director of Public Health roles.

If you have a medical degree and are registered with the GMC, then you are strongly advised to apply for public health specialist registration via [GMC's Certificate of Eligibility for Specialist Registration \(CESR\) route](#).

There are three routes to UKPHR specialist registration via retrospective portfolio assessment until 31 August 2019, namely RSS (Recognition of Specialist Status), defined specialist and the new Specialist Registration by Portfolio Assessment. Please ask UKPHR's office if you want information about RSS. In this guidance, we focus on two of these routes:

1. Defined specialist route:

This route has been open since 2006 and UKPHR will no longer accept defined specialist portfolios after the **31st August 2019**. It requires demonstration of competency at a generalist level i.e. that of a consultant as well as at a higher level for approximately 1-4 show how competencies. Essential guidance on how to compile a portfolio for this route is available on the [UKPHR's website](#). You must read the guidance carefully as to whether you are working at the right level to be able to be successful in the route.

This route expects applicants to *demonstrate an appropriate level of leadership in a public health role, have worked at a senior level for 3 or more years and have had several years in a leadership role within public health*. It is **not a developmental route**, and your portfolio will need to reflect you are **currently working** at this senior level.

2. Specialist Registration by Portfolio Assessment:

A new *equivalence route* launched on **1st September 2018**. This requires demonstration against a [new competency framework](#) that aligns with the 2015 Public Health Specialty Training Curriculum. This gives equivalence in knowledge and experience to the level attained at the end of the Faculty of Public Health Specialty Training Programme.

2. Applying for approval to begin the process of *Specialist Registration by Portfolio Assessment*

There are two stages to this retrospective portfolio assessment route:

1. The **pre-application process** which assesses whether you are working at the right level for this route
2. Submission of your portfolio for assessment if UKPHR is satisfied that you are working at the right level from your pre-application documents

Guidance and documents in regards to the pre-application process can be downloaded from [UKPHR's website](#).

3. Compiling a portfolio for Specialist Registration by Portfolio Assessment - Before you start the portfolio (having approval to submit)

You **MUST** have received a formal letter from UKPHR before you can submit a full portfolio.

Please download the following documents from UKPHR's website and ensure you understand them.

- Specialist registration by portfolio assessment application form
- Structured reference form
- Specialist registration by portfolio assessment proforma
- Knowledge competencies and Show How's competencies and guidance
- Matrix template
- The most up-to date portfolio guidance for applicants for applying, as this will be refined with experience.
- Checklist for specialist registration by portfolio assessment applicants

4. What does a portfolio consist of?

At present UKPHR requires 4 paper-based copies of your portfolio. An electronic portfolio system is being created and will be available in 2019.

You will need to ensure that each copy of your portfolio has the following:

- Specialist registration by portfolio assessment proforma.
- Updated Curriculum Vitae (CV)
- Current job description
- A description of your current arrangements for Continuing Professional Development (CPD) which must be as part of a formal CPD scheme
- A current Personal Development Plan
- A current reference
- Testimonials (if required)
- Knows How and Show's How matrices
- Knowledge evidence and key area reflective notes
- Show How summaries and evidence.

If changed since your application:

- Certified copies of qualifications and membership of professional bodies;

- If applicable, a certified copy of marriage certificate if any documents are in a different name.

5. Submitting a portfolio

Please note that your portfolio **must be submitted within 18 months** of the letter from UKPHR approving your pre-application. This deadline is outlined in your approval letter. The Registrar may grant extensions to this deadline if you can demonstrate exceptional circumstances. Should UKPHR not be in receipt of your portfolio within 18 months and you have not requested an extension, it will be determined that you no longer wish to submit a portfolio for assessment. If at a later stage you would like to reconsider this route, you must reapply for approval via the pre-application process.

Once you have compiled your portfolio, 4 paper copies should be submitted to UKPHR's office at the following address. Office opening hours are: Monday to Friday, 9:00 till 4:30pm.

UKPHR, Suite 18c, McLaren Building, 46 Priory Queensway, Birmingham, B4 7LR

It is advised that you inform UKPHR of the arrival of your portfolio in writing to register@ukphr.org. This is in addition to emailing the portfolio assessment proforma in MS Word format.

An e-portfolio will be developed for use in 2019.

6. Fees

Assessment of a portfolio incurs a one-off payment of the portfolio assessment fee of £510. Please note that this fee may change and therefore ensure that you refer to the most up-to date documents.

Payment can be made via the following methods and is required alongside the portfolio submission.

There are no fees relating to submitting clarifications or resubmissions. Once you are successfully registered, you will be required to make payment of registration fee, calculated pro-rata to bring you to the Register's common renewal date of 1st July for all specialists.

Cheque:	Made payable to <i>Public Health Register</i>
BACS:	Bank: Lloyds Bank Account name: Public Health Register Account number: 00875203 Sort-code: 30-94-87
PayPal:	Using the account register@ukphr.org

7. Evidence Matrices

You must complete the matrices for both the *Knowledge and Shows How* competencies, outlining which piece of evidence and summary is being used to demonstrate each competency. This must be updated with each clarification or resubmission of evidence. We recommend you retain the electronic versions. Please see examples on our website.

These are crucial for the assessor to be able to navigate easily within your portfolio. Poor navigation may mean your portfolio is returned as unassessable.

8. Assessment proforma

Please ensure you have completed this in full and do not amend the format of the proforma. A MS Word version of your assessment proforma must be emailed to UKPHR as it is used to record the assessment findings. This is in addition to the paper copies requested as in section 4 above.

You must update the evidence column within the proforma upon requests for clarifications and/or resubmissions using a different coloured font, see section 9 below. So we recommend you retain an electronic copy.

9. Updating documents during further submissions

If you are required to submit clarifications or resubmissions, this will also require submitting an updated assessment proforma and matrices to aid clear signposting of additional or new evidence that has been submitted.

To ensure a clear audit trail we strongly advise that you update the proforma and matrices in different coloured font at each stage and leave previous text within the document. For example:

1. BLACK font for their initial portfolio submission.
2. BLUE font for any second submissions to UKPHR
3. RED font for any third and final submission to UKPHR

10. Reference

If the submission of your portfolio is more than 12 months from approval to submit, then an updated reference is required. The template as prescribed by UKPHR should still be used.

This should be from a senior public health professional i.e. with a clear strategic role or reporting to a senior decision-making body. In most circumstances it would be expected to be a person to whom you have a reporting relationship, and who has direct knowledge of your work. They should be in a position to know if there are any governance or disciplinary issues in relation to you.

The purpose of the reference is to provide assurance that you:

- work at the appropriate level to achieve registration as a public health specialist, with the full range, depth and breadth of experience and skills specified in the UKPHR competency framework for specialist registration;
- have the full set of competencies required for registration as a Public Health Specialist, at least to those equivalent to those completing the Faculty of Public Health Training Scheme and is therefore suitable for appointment at Public Health Consultant level;
- work within the Good Public Health Practice Framework 2016;
- and have the support of your senior colleagues to proceed with compiling a portfolio for assessment.

It is important to note that the reference requires the referee to provide a summary statement to confirm your competencies as a public health specialist. Please note this is from direct observation of your **work within the past three years**. If the referee has worked with you for less than three years, then a second referee maybe needed.

It is expected that the referee will share their reference with you.

11. Testimonials

Testimonials from a senior public health colleague may be used in support of specific work within the portfolio. You must use the testimonial structure as set out in the appendix and the Show How competencies guidance document.

Occasionally a Testimonial can be used as evidence or to validate other evidence where otherwise it is not documented. Testimonials must be from someone senior to you, specific to the competency being claimed and verify your personal involvement in the work cited and competence as claimed.

12. Certified copies of documents

Document should be certified by your referee.

13. The Knowledge competencies

If you have passed Part A of the Faculty of Public Health exam in the 7 years prior to your pre-application, then you do not have to produce any further evidence for the Knowledge competencies. You must submit a certified copy of your certificate and indicate this clearly on your application form.

If you have not passed Part A exams, then you are required to demonstrate that you have achieved the Knowledge competencies by submitting evidence against each competency, as well as a reflective note to cover each key area.

14. The Knowledge competencies – What is evidence?

For each individual Knowledge competency, you must provide evidence of how you acquired the knowledge. This should include details of degree courses, modules, short courses or other sources. Your evidence should show sufficient detail of the content through handbooks, training programmes, handouts etc. You may use the same evidence to demonstrate different Knowledge competencies as appropriate. If in doubt in regards to the detail, then refer to the Part A syllabus as a reference.

Please note that some competencies require current knowledge at the time of submitting your portfolio. These have the word “current” within the competency. If formal courses have been undertaken but are now out of date in respect of current knowledge for these competencies, then you must show how you have maintained your knowledge and kept it up-to date.

15. The Knowledge competencies – Reflective notes

If your knowledge acquisition for any competency was more than 7 years from the date of your portfolio submission (not pre-application), then you must write a reflective piece on that competency. This needs to show your understanding of the whole of that competency and

how you have maintained your competence. You may cross reference to pieces of work described in your Shows How summaries.

Each key area needs an overall reflective piece covering the whole of the area. Reflective pieces demonstrating your understanding of the relevant competency wording will also be required if formal courses do not cover each part of the competencies. Your Show How evidence can be used if that is relevant to the competency.

16. The Knowledge competencies – Evidence of competence

Using the Knowledge matrix (see website for template) ensure that all your pieces of evidence are clearly numbered and use the matrix to indicate which pieces of evidence you are using to demonstrate which Knowledge competencies.

17. The Knowledge competencies – Assessment guidance

Assessors cannot judge or mark an academic piece of work and hence you are not recommended to submit entire theses or assignments. Please do not simply reference a single multi-page document for Knowledge competencies without clearly signposting relevant evidence i.e. which page for each Knowledge competency.

18. The Show How competencies

In order to demonstrate retrospectively that you have acquired the equivalent competency level for a consultant level post in Public Health, you need to write a number of chapters (summaries) about substantial pieces of work done in the course of training and subsequent career. Each summary should demonstrate one or more competencies from the assessment framework and must describe a substantial piece of work in which you took a personal and senior role. Within the summary you must make it clear to the assessors **your role** within the piece of work, and the associated evidence submitted, and demonstrate **how the particular competency was met**. Such evidence may include reports, proposals, papers, minutes of meetings, supporting correspondence, presentations etc. and **at least 50% must be less than five years old**. (See section on What is Evidence?).

The competencies in the assessment framework are grouped in the key areas of public health: use of public health intelligence; assessing evidence of effectiveness; policy and strategy development and implementation; strategic leadership and collaborative working; health improvement, determinants of health and health communication; health protection; health and care public health; academic public health; and professional, personal and ethical development. Whilst competencies may be evidenced from across the key areas in a summary (as is appropriate for the work being described), bear in mind the context of the key area from which the competency is drawn when claiming it.

19. The Show How competencies – The summaries

While there is no recommendation about the number of summaries required to be sufficient to demonstrate the breadth and depth of specialist public health practice, it is advised that each competency should be claimed once only wherever possible, and that each summary should not aim to cover too many competencies. Your summary should contain the following elements:

- A list of the competency, or competencies, being addressed
- The aims and objectives of the piece of work (*Why?*)

- The organisational and chronological context of the work (*Where, When?*)
- A clear description of **your individual role and responsibilities** within the work, and how **your actions** relate to the relevant competency. It must be possible to see that you did the work you are claiming in your evidence either by: citation as author; clear citation of your role; or by testimonial (*What?*)
- A description of the methodology and approach to the work, explaining why that approach was chosen including theoretical underpinning, evidence base as appropriate (*How?*)
- Key results and outcomes of the work, which should include major outputs such as:
 - change in policy
 - change in practice
 - change in health outcomes (What happened?)
- A section reflecting on your learning from the experience, again reflecting on the specific competency, or competencies, being claimed. (What would you do differently now?)
- A list of the evidence that is being referenced, clearly signposted to the competencies being claimed, using a matrix.

Assessors will be looking for the detail within the summary that convinces them that you are as competent as you are claiming. Assessors will not 'join up the dots' for you. You will need to ensure that in addition to telling a compelling story about the work you have done, that you clearly signpost the evidence you are citing and make sure that your portfolio is easy to navigate. This will allow assessors to readily gain a clear understanding of how you can demonstrate each competency and will help to prevent delays in assessment.

20. The Show How competencies – Evidence of competence

You should ensure there is a full and clear explanation of how the work described meets each word of the competency, noting that the assessment process will focus on the detail provided in the narrative. The evidence provided to support the claim must be relevant to the competency, demonstrate your own work and be easy for the assessor to find. You should **download and complete the evidence matrices** from the website clearly showing which piece of evidence is being used for each Knowledge and Show How competency.

All evidence must demonstrate your personal role, but it is recognised that there may be pieces of work in which you supervised others. In this case there must be a clear description of your role and responsibilities in this work and of the guidance given to those supervised, with supporting evidence.

Occasionally a Testimonial can be used as evidence or to validate other evidence where otherwise it is not documented. Please see section 11 for further guidance.

21. The Show How competencies – Assessment guidance

In the Show How competencies document the competencies are listed by key area of public health and provide illustrative guidance about what is expected to be demonstrated to provide assurance that the applicant meets the required standards.

Some examples are given of the types of work that might be described to demonstrate competence, these are for illustrative purposes only. Assessors will be using the same framework and guidance to support their decision making in assessment.

22. The Show How competencies – What is evidence?

All claims for competencies must be supported by relevant evidence and the supporting evidence should be clearly signposted in summaries to indicate to which competency it relates.

In most cases, each competency claim will need to be supported by evidence from one or more major pieces of work, but they may also be supplemented by other types of evidence. Across all the Show How competencies, **at least 50% of the evidence must be less than five years old.**

All evidence cited must relate to the competency claimed.

The various forms of evidence which are admissible are:

- Reports for publication, reports to Boards, partners and other similar audiences, and reports about projects, which clearly demonstrate your skills in relation to the competency claimed. Authorship should be clearly demonstrated. If you are not the author, the respective roles of yourself and the author must be clearly indicated.
- Chapters of larger publications, sections of longer reports, and other similar collaborative writing. For example, a chapter of a complex Health Needs Assessment. Authorship must be clearly demonstrated.
- Presentations to professional, lay, public or Board audiences, compiled and delivered by you.
- Project proposals, grant applications, Project Initiation Documents (PIDs), authored by you.
- Minutes of meetings. Your contribution to the meeting should be highlighted. Hand written notes of meetings are not acceptable. Presence only at a meeting is insufficient evidence to demonstrate competence.
- Testimonials from senior staff can be used to demonstrate your role for a particular competency but they can only be used as supporting evidence, they are not sufficient evidence on their own.
- Commissioned work. Where you commissioned other bodies, organisations, specialists or other similar providers to do a particular piece of work that is being presented as evidence for a competency, evidence must be provided of your role in the commissioning process. For example, an authored project, specification document or proposal.
- Contemporaneous correspondence from other professionals may be used to support claims of, for example, joint working, effective leadership, recognition of expertise.
- Any work which includes names or personal information about patients or members of the public will automatically be regarded as a breach of confidentiality. This does not apply to correspondence between professionals in the course of their publicly accountable work, except for personal appraisals or any other confidential matters, however any personal contact details should be redacted.

23. The most common issues that assessors have with portfolios are

- Lack of clear objective evidence of your role
- Poor navigation between the competency and its evidence. Assessors will struggle to understand where and how your evidence fits the competency. Your portfolio may be returned as unassessable. Using a clear referencing system and page markers for your evidence is highly recommended
- Timing of some of the learning and work. For example, understanding the arrangements for health protection prior to 2013 is insufficient given the major reorganisation in England, so this would apply to both Knowledge and Show How competencies if you are based in England.
- Readability: using a readable font size (e.g. not less than Arial 11) and helpful layout of the summary e.g. use of paragraphs and appropriate headings are all helpful for the assessor.

24. Confidentiality

If assessors witness a breach of confidentiality in your portfolio, you will be required to redact the material constituting the breach. The breach of confidentiality will also result in an automatic requirement of a resubmission of KH8.F - even if the assessors had already accepted your KH8.F evidence.

25. Continuing Professional Development

In signing your application, you are agreeing to abide by UKPHR's Code of Conduct, which includes CPD standards. You are also declaring that you are aware of the CPD requirements for continued registration, you agree to undertake learning appropriate to your practice at specialist level and you will maintain a CPD log with suitable evidence, including reflective comment.

You are also declaring that you are aware that you must produce evidence of compliance with CPD requirements in support of your 5-yearly revalidation and if and when requested by UKPHR for auditing purposes.

It is recommended that you refer to UKPHR's Code of Conduct and the revalidation policy and guidance for specialists on [UKPHR's website](#).

Assessors will be looking for evidence of CPD and reflective practice in a number of ways:

- In the application form you must describe your current CPD arrangements in Public Health. This should be up-to date and linked to a personal development plan. You must be a member of a formal CPD programme relevant to Public Health.
- Information in the CV should reflect recent learning activities relevant to your professional development at the Public Health specialist practice level.
- There is sufficient evidence throughout the portfolio, with CPD and reflective activity included in the evidence summaries and development summaries to fulfil SH 9c.

26. What is the process for assessment?

We are greatly assisted by a group of senior public health professionals who voluntarily provide our assessment capacity.

There a limited number of assessors and in the past, there have been considerable delays in getting the portfolios assessed. This is usually due to a high number of portfolios being received; a number of portfolios being poorly assembled either in navigation or content often due to the applicant not working at the right level. So, there are a number of assessments on the same person's portfolio to get the evidence that they have fulfilled all the competencies required. A portfolio assessment can take between 15 and 35 hours to assess.

Each portfolio is assigned to 2 assessors, having been checked for completeness by the UKPHR office. If there are any queries, the office will contact you before sending your portfolio to the assessors.

The aim is to have assigned the portfolio within 6 months of receipt of portfolio, but this can be longer if demand is great given the finite number of assessors and their availability.

Once the assessors receive the portfolio they will aim to return their joint assessment to UKPHR within 8 weeks.

Assessors' recommendations are discussed at monthly Registration Panel meetings, in the presence of a UKPHR Moderator who is responsible for Quality Assurance. These meetings are chaired by one of our Registration Panel Chairs and are attended by other specialist portfolio assessors.

It is very rare for applicants to achieve registration following initial assessment. In most cases, you should expect to receive notice that the Registration Panel, on the assessors' advice, requires you to provide some clarifications and/or resubmissions.

When the Registration Panel is ready to recommend that you be admitted to the Register, this recommendation goes to our Registration Approvals Committee, which is chaired by UKPHR's Registrar.

For reasons of fairness, we send all notifications to applicants on the day of the Registration Approvals Committee's meeting, whether they be admission to the Register, clarifications and/or resubmissions are required. The outcome of any assessments cannot be released any earlier.

In the event of clarifications being required, a telephone call with one of the assessors will be provided. One of your assessors will contact you within 10 days of the letter being sent from UKPHR to arrange this. This maybe with both assessors, one acting as lead and the other acting as observer to help the conversation proceed smoothly.

Outcomes can vary from:

- All claims have been achieved and you are **registered**
- **Clarifications** are required. These will be listed in the outcome letter and you will have a telephone discussion with their assessors to discuss these in further details. You then have **6 months** from the discussion date to submit the clarifications. A clarification requires further explanation or additional evidence from work already submitted against that competence. Normally only one clarification is offered. Exceptionally a second

clarification maybe required where there are minor changes to be made to the portfolio. Additional work can be used and you must submit an updated matrix and assessment proforma.

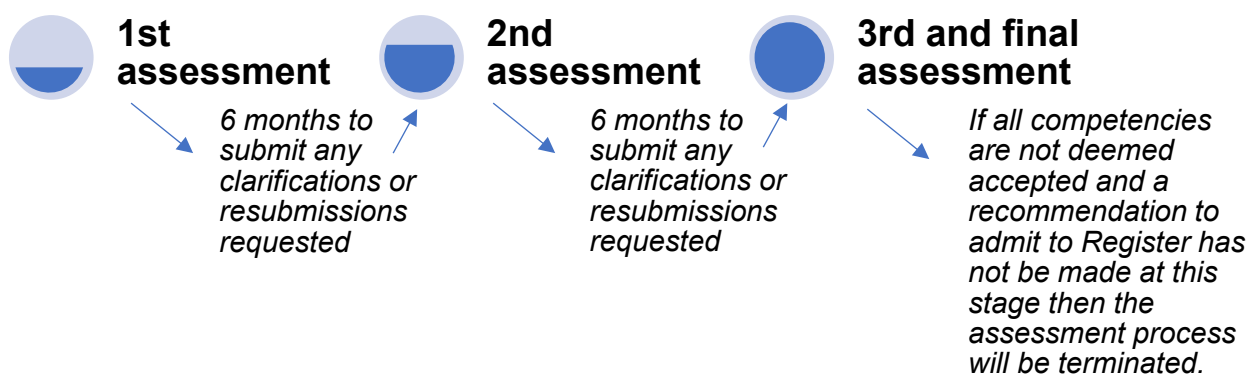
- **Resubmissions** are required. This requires a completely new piece of work as evidence, although some original evidence may still be used to contribute if supporting the competency. These will be listed in the outcome letter and you will have a telephone discussion with their assessors to discuss these in further details. You then have **6 months** from the discussion date to submit the resubmissions. An updated matrix and assessment proforma must be submitted as well.

The telephone call must be scheduled for within 1 month of the date of the outcome letter. If you do not take up the offer for a telephone call or it is not scheduled on time, the 6-month time window will apply from the date of the outcome letter.

If clarifications are requested from you but you feel it will be difficult to provide the right type of evidence required, then you may opt to resubmit i.e. provide a completely new piece of work as evidence.

- The Registration Panel recommended **moderation** of the entire portfolio or for select competencies
- The portfolio is deemed **unassessable** where the Panel feel that the applicant is working at the right level, but the portfolio cannot be assessed in its current form. This is usually due to poor navigation or narrative. The portfolio should be resubmitted within 8 weeks of the applicant receiving the letter from UKPHR.
- The portfolio is deemed a **complete return** when the Panel feel that the applicant is not working at the right level. This involves moderation. This should be very rare due to the pre-application process.

It is important to note that the **maximum number of assessments is three**. Experience has shown that an applicant having to submit their portfolio three times is usually due to not providing adequate evidence.



27. What happens if I cannot or do not submit my clarifications and/or resubmissions in time?

If you have exceptional circumstances which prevent you from submitting your clarifications or resubmissions on time, then you must apply to seek an extension request from the

Registrar. This can be done via a short application form. Please contact the office to request this. The Registrar has the discretion to authorise extensions up to six months each on two occasions and exceptionally.

If you do not submit your clarifications or resubmissions within the allotted time and you do not request an extension, you are technically out of time. The Registration Approvals Committee, chaired by the Registrar will ultimately decide whether you are provided additional time. The Committee may decide not to provide additional time and your assessment will no longer proceed.

If you decide not to proceed further with submitting clarifications and/or resubmissions, please notify us via email so that we can notify your assessors and stop your assessment.

28. Communication with an assessor

The telephone call offered with one of your assessors will brief you on what the problems are but not how to solve them. The call maybe with both assessors, one acting as lead and the other acting as observer to help the conversation proceed smoothly.

You should not correspondence with your assessors beyond the telephone call. For example, you should not send your assessors any draft clarifications or resubmissions for their views before formal submission to UKPHR.

29. What is the Appeals process?

UKPHR's appeals process can only be on process of application and assessment, not on the content of the assessment. The full details are on [UKPHR's website](#).

An appeal must be submitted in writing by the applicant to the Registrar and must be received within 20 working days of the date of the decision appealed against.

30. Updates on assessment

Once UKPHR are reassured that all documents are in order via their initial office checks, applicants will receive written confirmation that UKPHR are in receipt of their portfolio.

Periodically, UKPHR will e-mail applicants with updates on where their portfolio may be placed in the queue to be assigned to two assessors. Applicants are also able to contact UKPHR at any time to request this update.

We appreciate that current or prospective employers may request an update on your application during any point of your assessment. UKPHR are unable to provide an update on a portfolio apart from the applicant themselves. UKPHR are willing to issue letters of current status as evidence to demonstrate to employers how far along the process applicants are. Applicants must request this in writing at register@ukphr.org and a letter will be issued to the applicant for their use.

Appendix

**Testimonial to support portfolio assessment for UKPHR's
*Specialist Registration***

Section 1 – Applicant details

Title:	
Forename(s):	
Surname:	

Section 2 – Details and credentials of person providing testimonial

Title:	
Forename(s):	
Surname:	

Professional registration and number:	
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Your current position and place of work:	
Your position and place of work when working with applicant relevant to information covered in this testimonial:	
Relationship to the applicant when working with them:	

Section 3 – Details of competency

Competency:	<i>[Specific competency and description]</i>
Submission:	<i>[Title of Summary in which competency is being claimed]</i>
Summary:	<i>[Short summary of work done by applicant, with the dates when work was undertaken]</i>
Key Skills:	<i>[Details of the skills and competencies demonstrated by the applicant in relation to this competency] Word limit – 300</i>
Evidence:	<i>[Confirmation that evidence listed in the Summary has been cited and is the work of the applicant]</i>
Signature:	<i>[Confirmation that information provided in this testimonial is true and current]</i>
Date:	