



Guidance for applicants for UKPHR's *Specialist Registration by Portfolio Assessment*

Pre-application process

May 2022

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. In line with other regulators, UKPHR includes crown dependencies/territories, including Jersey, Isle of Man and Gibraltar within the UK remit.

If you are currently based overseas but have experience of working as a senior public health professional within the UK, you are welcome to submit a SRbPA pre-application in accordance with the guidance. Before proceeding to submit a pre-application, please ensure that you are familiar with the requirements of maintaining your registration as a specialist, which will apply if you remain overseas.

We strongly recommend that you work through each section of this document to first decide whether the *Specialist Registration by Portfolio Assessment* route is suitable for you and then use it to help you apply for approval and if successful compile a 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](#).

The revised UKPHR registration process started on **1st September 2018**. This requires demonstration against a set of competencies (see below) 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.

It is crucial that you read this document and all three of the following Guidance for Applicants to gain a comprehensive understanding of the scope of this process:

- Show How competencies
- Knowledge competencies
- Portfolio submission.

Successful applicants report that the work to compile a successful portfolio is considerable but is extremely useful in undertaking comprehensive CPD to enable one to be an even more proficient professional.

UKPHR want you to succeed BUT not at the expense of quality and standards. So, this guidance is there to help you present as coherent a case as possible for your registration.

It is important to recognise that this pre-application should mark the end point of your specialist development, or at least have very few gaps to fill. It is strongly advised that you have everything ready for writing your portfolio as you only have 18 months from acceptance of your preapplication to submit the portfolio.

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

There are two stages:

1. The **pre-application process** which assesses whether you are working at the right level for this route, and will be able to provide evidence across the full range of UKPHR competencies
2. **Submission of your portfolio** for assessment if UKPHR is satisfied that you are working at the right level

Before you start the pre-application process, please download from UKPHR's website:

- The pre-application form
- The structured reference
- The lists of competencies for both Knowledge and Show How's – UKPHR SRbPA Framework of Competencies 2018 – see Knowledge and Show How guidance documents
- The preapplication matrix of evidence vs all competencies

To fully understand the requirements for this route, **you must also** familiarise yourself with the applicant guidance for the portfolio stage upon considering your pre-application submission as well as the Knowledge and Show How competencies.

3. The pre-application process

UKPHR has introduced a pre-application process for applicants wishing to submit a portfolio for registration as a public health specialist at the level of being able to apply for Consultant posts working in the UK. The pre-application process reflects some of the learning outcomes of the Public Health Specialty Training Curriculum (2015) and aims to maintain equivalency with the CESR route in Public Health (Medicine) overseen by the GMC. A structured reference confirming fulfilment of the eligibility criteria is required to supplement the pre-application form.

4. Eligibility

The focus is to establish that the applicant is working at the right level to ultimately be admitted to the register as a public health specialist.

The applicant **must**:

- Work in, or have worked previously in a public health role and will be able to demonstrate practice in accordance with *Good Public Health Practice*;
- Be able to demonstrate competence in public health practice equivalent to a newly qualified public health professional who has completed the Public Health Specialty Training Programme;
- Hold a post graduate qualification (in any relevant public health discipline) i.e., Level 7 and above in the Qualifications and Credit Framework¹ or Level 11 and above in Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework²;

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/what-different-qualification-levels-mean/list-of-qualification-levels>

² <https://scqf.org.uk/interactive-framework/>

- Maintain and enhance professional knowledge and skills by way of continuing professional development, participating in a relevant formal CPD scheme³ (*for assessment of this requirement, see section 7*);
- Consistently demonstrate sound judgment in effectively using a range of advanced public health expertise and skills, by portfolio assessment against the SRbPA Framework of competencies 2018;
- Use a range of advanced public health skills in working at senior organisational levels to deliver population health in complex and unpredictable environments;
- Have experience of Strategic Leadership and Collaborative Working for Health;
- Be able to submit evidence of recent and complete appraisal documentation together with PDP and 360 feedback (*for assessment of this requirement, see important note below*); and
- Be able to submit a completed portfolio within 18 months of approval to submit a portfolio.

Any issues around the acceptability of public health qualification, CPD scheme, and 360-degree feedback tool – where there may be scope for interpretation – will be assessed by the assessor who considers your pre-application. You should include your representation of why you believe that your qualification, CPD scheme or 360-degree feedback tool, as the case may be, meets UKPHR’s requirement. The office cannot determine this for you.

It is important to describe your role in any work cited and to describe work in relation to the breadth of public health knowledge and shows competencies. This experience can have been built up over time and in different jobs and could have been in a wide variety of settings including health, local government, academic, voluntary sector, independent sector, abroad.

However, this has to be equivalent to a newly appointed consultant working unsupervised in the UK and therefore at least at the level of those successfully completing the Faculty of Public Health (FPH) specialty training programme.

Applicants who have failed the GMC CESR route are not allowed to apply by this route.

Applicants who have been in the formal public health training programme, but not completed for whatever reason, may apply, and use evidence acquired during that training if it demonstrates competency at the appropriate level.

5. What does a pre-application consist of?

Pre-applications and supporting documentation need to be submitted electronically to UKPHR at register@ukphr.org

Should applicants wish to submit paper versions, please note that 2 copies of all documents are required.

UKPHR requires:

1. A comprehensive application form, including completed and signed declaration
2. A current job description

³ FPH CPD scheme or an FPH approved CPD scheme <https://www.fph.org.uk/professional-development/cpd/exemption-and-return-to-practice/>

3. A current CV outlining posts held over the past 10 years. Your CV should clearly show dates of employment and the status of posts.
4. An organisational chart showing your post and that of your line manager
5. Copy of your most recent annual appraisal, conducted within one year of the pre-application. For the purposes of your pre-application, UKPHR does not stipulate whether this a work-based or professional appraisal
6. 360-degree feedback report⁴ and reflection, within three years of the pre-application, with reflection and cited in Personal Development Plan (PDP) / appraisal documents
7. Current Personal Development Plan, completed with the one year of the pre-application
8. Current Continuing Professional Development (CPD) arrangements that include involvement in a formal Public Health CPD scheme, for example, the UK Faculty of Public Health scheme or an FPH approved scheme.
9. The matrix of evidence vs competencies both Knows How and Shows How, including reflection. Using UKPHR's prescribed template, only.
10. Reference from a senior Public Health professional (Director of Public Health or equivalent) based on the eligibility criteria (see guidance and also see reference template).
11. Certified copies of qualifications, membership of professional bodies, certificate of passing FPH Diplomate exam and marriage certificate/change of name deed if any documents are in a different name. Please note that copies should be certified by your referee.
12. Any relevant evidence relating to Section 8 Fitness to Practice declaration section in the pre-application form
13. Payment of a one-off pre-application assessment fee.

It is only once all these requirements have been received and checked for completeness in the office will your pre-application be processed for assessment. An incomplete pre-application that departs from the requirements will not be processed.

6. The preapplication matrix of evidence vs competencies

The main purpose of the matrix is for you to identify any gaps you may have in evidence against all know and show how competencies. **Read the competency documents carefully** and review and review your evidence. You are strongly advised to:

1. Assess how adequate your evidence is against each competency and each part thereof. Remember that you need to have evidence of learning at a Masters' level or equivalent for the knowledge competencies and at the level of finishing the formal training scheme for show how competencies.
2. Identify gaps, plan and arrange any further development you need to be able to demonstrate the full range of competencies. You should then be clear about any gaps in knowledge or experience that you may wish to fill before sending in your pre-application. Once your pre-application has been accepted you will have 18 months to complete your portfolio, which can be considerable work, so if you have gaps this will

⁴ The 360 completed report needs to be a relevant tool (e.g., one of, or similar to, the tools approved by UKPHR for use in connection with revalidation). You can view these on our website here <https://ukphr.org/registration/revalidation/>

increase that work. So, getting the gaps sorted before submitting your pre-application is highly recommended. Assessing the pre-application includes looking for any gaps, which if not addressed may result in the pre-application being refused.

3. Ensure any gaps in your preapplication matrix are highlighted in your PDP. This assures the assessors that you are aware of your gaps and you have plans to address them within your PDP, which are achievable within appropriate timescales.
4. The assessors will look in your CPD for evidence of your learning in preparation for this application. This is especially where the learning is longer than 10 years before any anticipated date of portfolio submission (see Know How guidance). It is also true if you are planning to take the FPH Diplomate examination during the 18 months between preapplication acceptance and due date for portfolio submission.

You are advised to limit your potential evidence to the most relevant for the competency being claimed, or part thereof. Please complete the matrix by citing:

- For knowledge competencies, the course/ modules / learning title that fulfils each part of the competency
- For show how competencies, the work you will use to satisfy each element of each competency.

Title of the work / learning is sufficient. Do not provide a summary of the work. Please state the date for the evidence/work.

This pre-application matrix is for guidance at pre-application only. Please note that if you decide that other courses and/or examples of your work will be more suited to the competency when you come to complete your portfolio, you can use them in your portfolio if you get approval to continue on.

7. Qualification, CPD and 360-degree feedback tools

The required **postgraduate qualification** may be in “any subject relevant to public health”. This is because of the breadth of disciplines that contribute to good public health practice. The purpose of this requirement is to establish that knowledge has been acquired at the appropriate level through formal study you have undertaken after a first degree, including, postgraduate Diploma, Master’s Degree or PhD.

If there is an issue as to whether the qualification’s title or subject matter is “relevant”, this will be determined by the assessors and not the office.

The reason you should already be participating in a **relevant formal CPD scheme** is that at this senior level of practice you are to be expected to be keeping, maintaining and enhancing your competence in a structured way. The most obvious formal CPD scheme in public health practice is that operated by the UK Faculty of Public Health, or an FPH approved CPD scheme: <https://www.fph.org.uk/professional-development/cpd/exemption-and-return-to-practice/>

It is open to you to demonstrate that your CPD activity is recorded, follows public health competencies, and is audited in a scheme operated by a professional body.

Please note that as a UKPHR specialist registrant, you will be expected to follow the FPH CPD policy for specialists.

The reason you should have experience of personal development planning (PDP), appraisal and use of a **360-degree feedback tool** is that at this senior level of practice you are to be expected to be participating in all these activities. At the point of your preapplication, there are

no set processes or tools that we specify for PDP, appraisal and 360-degree feedback but do note that registrants are subject to UKPHR's revalidation requirement and for this we do specify the use of only approved 360-degree feedback tools and a professional appraisal then.

If there is any issue as to whether you have used an appropriate 360-degree feedback tool, this will be determined by the assessor and not the office.

8. The reference

This should be from a senior public health professional, someone with a clear strategic role or reporting to a senior decision-making body and registered with the General Dental Council (GDC), General Medical Council (GMC) or UKPHR as a Public Health Specialist. In most circumstances it would be expected to be a person to whom the applicant has a reporting relationship, and who has direct knowledge of the applicant's work. The referee should be in a position to know if there are any governance or disciplinary issues in relation to the individual. The referee should also set out the support, if any, you will receive while preparing your portfolio for submission (e.g., study leave, mentoring support).

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

- is working 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.
- has 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;
- is working within the Good Public Health Practice Framework 2016;
- has the support of senior colleagues to proceed with a portfolio for assessment.

This means the referee can only be someone who has specialist Public Health registration.

The reference requires the referee to provide a summary statement to confirm your competencies as a public health specialist. This forms part of assessing eligibility to submit a portfolio. This confirmation should be from direct observation of your **work within the past three years from the date of the pre-application.**

The referee must have worked with you and know your work well for **at least one year in the past three years.**

If the applicant is unable to find a referee that can provide a full year reference, an additional reference will be required to make up the shortfall. Please note that all referees will still need to meet the criteria requested by UKPHR

It is expected that the referee will share their reference with the applicant. This information will be assessed alongside their application form.

Referees are expected to have read the competencies, pre-application and portfolio guidance to be fully aware of the assurances they are providing against the applicant.

9. Fee for pre-application

Applicants should be aware that consideration of a pre-application incurs a one-off assessment fee. You can find out the pre-application assessment fee on our website here: <https://ukphr.org/fees-and-charges/>

Payment can be made via the following methods:

BACS:	Bank: Lloyds Bank Account name: Public Health Register Account number: 00875203 Sort-code: 30-94-87
PayPal:	Using the account register@ukphr.org

10. Assessment of the pre-application form

Once UKPHR has received your pre-application it will be checked in the office for completeness. If a pre-application has not been received in full, it will be returned to the applicant to address any outstanding areas.

The pre-application will be then assessed by two assessors who will each complete their individual assessment and then agree a joint recommendation. At least one of the assessors will report their recommendation to one of our monthly Registration Panels. The Panel will make a recommendation that will be ratified later the same month by the Registration Approvals Committee. It should take no longer than 6 weeks from formal acknowledgement of a completed pre-application for you to receive a reply.

If your application is:

1. Accepted then you have **18 months** from the date of the UKPHR response letter to submit your portfolio.
2. Not successful then you will receive the reasons for this decision and be offered a telephone call with the assessor within 10 days of receiving the letter. You must avail yourself of this offer within the time window. You should then review the feedback and consider any development needs should you wish to continue, preferably with a colleague who is already registered as a public health specialist.

You can **re-apply 6 months after** the letter from UKPHR

Up to **three submissions** of a pre-application can be made therefore it is critical to submit a pre-application whilst fully aware of the requirements laid out in the pre-application and portfolio guidance.

Applicants should be aware that material considered in the previous attempts will not be routinely made available to the assessors of the current application. This is to ensure assessment is unbiased. Applications therefore need to send all the information required in the guidance, for each application.