



# UK Public Health Register

## Employer guidance

# Foreword to employers

## Public Health professionals and registration

Public Health professionals come from a variety of professional backgrounds, all of whom share core knowledge and skills covered by [Good Public Health Practice Framework](#). They can work in a multitude of professional settings, such as NHS, local government, central government, research institutions or private sector.

For employers, registration with UK Public Health Register assures that the staff they employ are safe and effective – similar to the assurance given by professional registration required of medical and nursing staff, lawyers, accountants, or other allied health professionals.

Registration with UKPHR may also be a mandatory requirement for those employed in certain roles, such as a Consultant in Public Health or a Director of Public Health.

For some organisations, it will be human resources colleagues who will commonly interact with public health professionals regarding their registration status. For this reason, our guidance is aimed at providing support through all the levels of organisation and should be shared widely, to ensure that public health professionals are supported in gaining and maintaining their registration.

## About this guidance

We've created this Employer guidance to help you support your employees through their UKPHR registration lifecycle. We set out to address the most common situations when employer support may be needed, so that registrants and employers are clear about our expectations. More information can be found by visiting our [website](#) or by contacting our office on [register@ukphr.org](mailto:register@ukphr.org)

This guidance includes the following sections:

1. Joining the Register
2. Keeping registration active
  - Annual Renewal
  - Revalidation
  - Re-registration
  - Paying registration fees
3. Supporting your employee when things go wrong
  - Lapsing off the Register and Restoration
  - Complaints
  - Fitness to practise process
4. Other ways to support
5. Leaving the Register

## UKPHR Register

Public health professionals registering with us fall within three categories of registration: Public Health Specialists, Public Health Practitioners and Public Health Specialty Registrars.

All registrants are listed on our publicly viewable register here: [UK Public Health Register – View UKPHR Register](#)

UKPHR issues appropriate notices and reminders about upcoming annual renewal, revalidation and re-registration directly to the registrant – we do not hold up to date information about who employs them. Responsibility for maintaining the requirements of registration is up to the registrant, although employers may wish to undertake their own checks.

## Benefits of registration

Registration is designed to assure the public and employers that multidisciplinary public health professionals are appropriately qualified and competent. We set standards for registration that are recognised throughout the United Kingdom and provide significant public protection from unprofessional or unethical behaviour.

The primary reason for the UKPHR is for the protection of the general public, professional accreditation.

Registration demonstrates that registrants have the skills and knowledge to practise in the profession safely and effectively and provides confidence that their skills and knowledge are up to date.

## About UKPHR

UKPHR was set up in 2003 as an independent, dedicated non-statutory regulator for public health professionals in the United Kingdom. Our main objective is to provide significant public protection from unprofessional or unethical behaviour through regulation. Registration with us serves as an assurance for the public, and employers, that those registered meet the set standards of professional practice and behaviour.

Our vision is:

*The public will benefit from excellent public health practice delivered by an effectively regulated multi-disciplinary profession who continuously maintain and enhance their professional competence.*

We work very closely with other public health organisations in complementary ways. For example, many UKPHR registrants are also members of professional membership organisations such as the Faculty of Public Health (FPH), which is the professional home for public health, providing their members with support over all career stages. UKPHR and FPH work closely together - for example, both organisations want to ensure that there is consistency in the standards and practice of all professionals involved in delivering public health services. UKPHR uses the FPH's Good Public Health Practice as our key professional standards document, which all registrants must meet to remain registered with us.

# 1. Joining the Register

## The process

There are several routes to the Register:

Public Health Specialists:

1. Specialist Registration by Portfolio Assessment (SRbPA).
2. Public Health Specialty Training Programme
3. Dual registration with the General Medical Council or General Dental Council

Public Health Practitioners:

1. Retrospective portfolio
2. Public Health Practitioner Apprenticeship

Public Health Specialty Registrars:

1. Selection into the Public Health Specialty Training Programme

You can find more information about these processes on our website: [Join the Register - UK Public Health Register \(ukphr.org\)](https://www.ukphr.org)

## Employer's responsibility

### *Public Health Specialists - Specialist Registration by Portfolio Assessment (SRbPA) route*

Those applying to be registered as Public Health Specialist via the Specialist Registration by Portfolio Assessment (SRbPA) route should discuss with their employer when they are thinking of starting an application – we advise applicants to do this, as the process can, for some, be stressful and time consuming, and individuals may require your guidance and support.

The process has two stages: pre-application and, if this pre-application is approved, the submission of a portfolio of evidence relating to the achievement of relevant public health competencies.

As an employer, your support may be required when:

- Applicants want to speak to someone already registered via a UKPHR Portfolio route to find out more about their experience.
- Applicants want to discuss balancing the requirements of work and collating their portfolio.
- Applicants want to discuss any 'gaps' in the competencies required for UKPHR registration, and any secondments/placements they may need to address these.
- Providing references and testimonials: your input will be vital in validating an applicant's experience and readiness for registration.
- Applicants may also ask you to join any meetings they have with assessors as part of their feedback during the process.

### *Public Health Practitioners - Retrospective Portfolio route*

The retrospective portfolio route is managed, assessed and verified through a quality-assured local assessment scheme. These schemes have different arrangements depending on the country or region of England; contact details for scheme-specific detail can be found here: [Practitioner registration via retrospective portfolio - UK Public Health Register \(ukphr.org\)](https://www.ukphr.org)

As an employer, you can support by:

- Providing guidance on Portfolio development: you can help to identify how work experience aligns with the required competencies and guide the applicant in addressing any gaps.
- Balancing work commitments: as the registration process can be demanding, discuss managing workload while working on the portfolio and offer flexibility where possible.
- Facilitating access to training: if gaps are identified in their competencies, support applicant's professional development by facilitating access to relevant opportunities.
- Providing references and testimonials: your input will be vital in validating applicant's experience and readiness for registration.
- Participating in feedback sessions: applicants may request your presence in feedback sessions with assessors.

### *Public Health Practitioners – Apprenticeship route*

The Level 6 Public Health Apprenticeship is a three-year programme that combines work-based training with academic learning, leading to a Bachelor's degree and eligibility to register with UKPHR as a Public Health Practitioner.

As an employer, your role in supporting apprentices includes:

- Providing work-based learning opportunities: apprentices need to apply their learning in real-world settings so ensure they have opportunities to develop the necessary skills and competencies 'on the job'.
- Ensuring protected learning time: apprentices are entitled to protected time for off-the-job learning (typically 6 hours per week based on a 30-hour work week). As an employer, you must ensure this time is respected and utilized effectively.
- Supporting professional development: if required, provide access to additional training and development opportunities to help apprentices meet all the knowledge, skills, and behaviours required for registration.
- Offering flexibility and mentorship: apprentices may require flexibility in their work schedule and guidance from experienced professionals within your organisation.
- Providing an employer declaration upon completion of the apprenticeship in order to enable UKPHR registration.

### *Public Health Specialty Registrars*

Specialty Registrar registration is available to those trainees from a multi-professional background who are currently completing the Public Health Specialty Training programme. While this is not required, it provides a framework for regulation that can be helpful for multi-professional trainees that puts them on an even footing with GMC-registered trainees. There is a clear pathway to full specialist registration once they have completed the training programme.

Specialist Registrars do not have a revalidation requirement to maintain UKPHR registration.

## 2. Keeping registration active

### Annual Renewal

#### The process

**All UKPHR registrants**, regardless of their registration type, **must renew their registration annually**, by 30 June, to remain registered.

The renewal 'window' is opened between 1 May and 30 June. From April onwards, we notify all registrants regularly to log in to their registrant portal to renew but it is the registrant's personal and professional responsibility to ensure they remain on the register.

The annual renewal process consists of two parts:

1. Signing a declaration that states they continue to meet standards of practice.
2. Paying registration fees to cover the following registration year of 1 July to 30 June.

Those who do not complete the registration process are removed from our Register and need to apply for restoration to regain an 'active' registration status.

#### Employer's responsibility

You can support your employees in maintaining their active registration status in the following ways:

- Ensuring that they are aware of the requirement to remain registered.
- Ensuring that they keep their details up to date with us – by using the registrant portal or contacting us directly.

### Paying registration fees

#### The process

Our registrants make arrangements for paying their annual renewal (registration) fees at the time of first registration and then at the time of their annual renewal. The majority of registrants choose to spread the cost of registration by setting up Direct Debit (DD) payments. Occasionally, the DD instruction fails, invalidating future/remaining registration payment. This leads to accumulation of payments due in arrears and may lead to lapsing from the Register.

#### Employer's responsibility

**It is the registrant's responsibility** to ensure their payment method remains active, otherwise registration may lapse and possibly contravene the terms of employment. UKPHR will notify any registrants that lapse, but employers may wish to assure themselves that individuals have renewed successfully.

Some employers agree to cover employee's registration fees. If you decide to do this, please be aware that UKPHR can't issue invoices for the registration payments to anyone else other than the registrant themselves. To best support the renewal payment, we'd encourage you to make either pre-payment of these fees to your employee or reimburse them after they have paid. Our current fees can be found here: [Fees and charges - UK Public Health Register \(ukphr.org\)](https://www.ukphr.org/fees-and-charges)

## Revalidation

### The process

**All Public Health Specialists** on the UKPHR register need to complete revalidation once every five years, on the anniversary of their registration. We proactively notify registrants of the need to revalidate about 6 months in advance. You can find more about this process here: [Revalidation - UK Public Health Register \(ukphr.org\)](https://www.ukphr.org/revalidation)

As part of revalidation, specialists are requested to provide the following:

- A summary of their latest professional appraisal completed within 12 months preceding their revalidation due date.
- Self-declaration covering:
  - their health and conduct
  - engagement in personal development planning
  - appropriate indemnity arrangements
  - engagement with CPD
  - participation in colleague feedback
- A completed reference form.

If a registrant cannot complete their revalidation by the due date due to reasons such as parental leave, they can apply to defer this via their registrant portal. You can find more about this [here](#).

An exemption from certain requirements of revalidation, such as CPD and professional appraisal, is also possible in exceptional circumstances, including parental leave. You can find more about this [here](#).

### Employer's responsibility

As an employer, you can support your employees by:

- Ensuring they have access to a professional appraisal and completing this annually to fulfil their revalidation requirements.
- Ensuring they engage in appropriate CPD.
- Helping them to complete their colleague feedback once in a five-year registration cycle using a 360-degree tool approved by UKPHR.
- Completing a reference form as part of their revalidation using UKPHR's template.

## Re-registration

### The process

**All Public Health Practitioners** need to complete a re-registration process once every 5 years. We proactively notify registrants of the need to re-register about 6 months in advance. You can find more about this process here: [Re-registration - UK Public Health Register \(ukphr.org\)](https://www.ukphr.org/re-registration)

As part of re-registration, practitioners are requested to provide the following:

- Completed application form.

- A recent workplace appraisal completed within 12 months preceding the re-registration due date and countersigned by a registered specialist with UKPHR/GMC/GDC.
- A recent personal development plan completed within 12 months preceding the re-registration due date and countersigned by a registered specialist with UKPHR/GMC/GDC.
- CPD evidence for the five-year registration cycle.

If a registrant cannot complete their re-registration by the due date due to reasons such as parental leave, they can apply to defer this via their registrant portal. You can find more about this [here](#).

An exemption from certain requirements of re-registration, such as CPD and appraisal, is also possible in exceptional circumstances, like parental leave. You can find more about this [here](#).

### **Employer's responsibility**

As an employer, you can support your employees by:

- Ensuring they have access to a workplace-based appraisal, whether this is formative or summative, completed annually to fulfil their re-registration requirements.
- Ensuring they have a personal development plan in place completed annually.
- Ensuring they engage in appropriate CPD, allowing them time and space to reflect on their practise.



## 3. Supporting your employee when things go wrong

### Lapsing of the Register and Restoration

#### The process

When registrants fail to comply with the Annual Renewal, Revalidation or Re-registration processes, their registration will lapse, and their name will be removed from the Register. When registration lapses, we notify the registrant directly.

Lapsed registration are no longer 'active'. To re-enter the Register, a restoration process must be completed. If a re-registration or revalidation was also required at the time, this will also need to be addressed. More information about restoration can be found here: [Return to the Register - UK Public Health Register \(ukphr.org\)](https://www.ukphr.org)

#### Employer's responsibility

Maintaining an active registration is your employee's responsibility. You can support them through the restoration process by allowing time to complete the online restoration application form and assisting them to provide any required information or evidence.

### Complaints

#### The process

Occasionally we receive a complaint relating to registrant's professional conduct or behaviour.

The threshold for referring a concern to us is where it 'raises a question whether the fitness to practise of any registrant is impaired by reason of health, conduct, professional performance or a conviction or caution in the UK or a conviction elsewhere that would amount to a criminal offence in the UK, or a determination by a regulatory body in the UK or elsewhere to the effect that the registrant's fitness to practise is impaired'.

These are the steps we will take and possible outcomes:

1. The UKPHR Registrar can decide whether the complaint needs to be investigated, or whether it should be dismissed if it is plainly unmerited or vexatious.
2. If a concern is expressed about registrant's conduct or health, we may contact them to hear their views. If necessary, witness statements may be collected, and formal proceedings started (see section below, Fitness to Practise process).
3. Where appropriate, the employer will be informed that a formal complaint has been received. We will keep you, as the employer informed of what is happening and what we intend to do next.

We aim to keep the registrant well informed about the process, and to respond quickly to any complaints.

#### Employer's responsibility

A complaint may be submitted to us by anyone including by you as an employer. We are aware that most complaints against active registrants are first considered and frequently resolved at a local level - we do not need to be notified about these. However, if the concern meets our threshold (ie *the raises a question whether the fitness to practise of any registrant is impaired by reason of health, conduct, professional performance or a conviction or caution*

*in the UK or a conviction elsewhere that would amount to a criminal offence in the UK, or a determination by a regulatory body in the UK or elsewhere to the effect that the registrant's fitness to practise is impaired)* the employer should report to UKPHR. We are happy to have a conversation to provide advice on whether a concern should be reported to us, or whether it is best handled locally.

If something needs to be reported it is best to raise concerns as soon as possible. This will ensure that any investigation is fair to everyone. You can find more information about raising concerns here: [UKPHR-guidance-on-getting-feedback-Aug-2021.pdf](#)

Upon receipt of your complaint, UKPHR will provide you with a named contact to keep you informed of progress.

## Fitness to Practise process

### The process

When we are notified of concerns, and if the Registrar forms the opinion that the concerns meet the threshold for investigation, UKPHR will try to gather as much relevant information as possible. This will very likely include evidence gathered directly from you as the employer. The nature of complaints and individual circumstances can vary widely, so we will want to discuss the evidence available, as well as any potential issues around confidentiality. The registrant themselves will also be contacted to provide evidence for any investigation.

Once the investigation is complete, the Registrar may decide whether there is evidence that a registrant's fitness to practise may be impaired. If it is decided that it is impaired, all the relevant evidence will be submitted to a Fitness to Practise Panel for further consideration.

Decisions of the Fitness to Practise Panel may include dismissing the complaint, taking no further action, placing conditions on a registrant's practise, and suspension of registration or removal of the registrant from the Register completely.

Individuals who are subject to a Fitness to Practise Panel have a right to appeal.

UKPHR [Fitness to Practise Rules](#) provide more detail about the process.

### Employer's responsibility

If you are the complainant or in any other way included in the investigation, you may be required to provide more detail about your concerns as well as a statement to the Fitness to Practice panel.

These types of proceedings are always difficult for registrants. If you are not directly involved in an investigation, your employee may need additional support from you.

## 4. Other ways to support

Employers can support their employees' active registration by:

- Promoting information about UKPHR standards and Good Public Health Practice (see here: [Standards - UK Public Health Register \(ukphr.org\)](https://www.ukphr.org/standards))
- Encouraging participation in professional activities linked to UKPHR registration, such as the annual UKPHR Practitioner Conference – information about this is published on our website and our X (formerly Twitter) account.

## 5. Leaving the Register

### The process

Registrants who do not wish to maintain UKPHR registration, are invited to complete a short form called 'Voluntary withdrawal'. This can be submitted through a registrant's online portal at any point during registration.

Registrants may choose to relinquish their registration for a variety of reasons including:

- They are retiring and will no longer practice within public health
- They are taking a career break due to professional or personal reasons and will not be practicing public health
- They cannot complete the requirements to maintain their registration

**Those on parental leave are expected to maintain their registration, including any CPD requirements, unless they apply for an exemption.**

Those who have left the Register and wish to regain an active registration status, must complete the restoration process.

You can find out more information about our lapsed, withdrawal and restoration process [here](#).

### Employer's responsibility

You can support your employee by having a conversation about your expectations relating to UKPHR registration and your employee's individual circumstances.

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Email: [register@ukphr.org](mailto:register@ukphr.org)

Website: [www.ukphr.org](http://www.ukphr.org)

Telephone: 0121 296 4370

16a McLaren Building, 46 Priory Queensway, Birmingham, B4 7LR

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