



The Royal College of Pathologists

Pathology: the science behind the cure

PORTFOLIO PATHWAY ASSESSOR Role Description

Background

It is a legal requirement to be listed on the General Medical Council's (GMC) Specialist Register before individuals can take up a substantive, honorary or fixed-term NHS consultant post in the UK.

The Portfolio Pathway (formerly known as CESR) is the route to specialist registration for doctors who have not completed a GMC-approved programme in the relevant specialty but who can demonstrate that they have the relevant knowledge, skills and experience.

Doctors applying for specialist registration via the Portfolio Pathway will need to provide evidence that they have the knowledge, skills and experience required to practise as a specialist in the UK. Doctors are no longer required to demonstrate equivalence to the respective Certificate of Completion of Training (CCT) curriculum (a requirement of the previous CESR pathway) but must instead demonstrate how they meet the high-level outcomes, known as Capabilities in Practice (CiPs).

The College is responsible for recommending doctors for entry to the Specialist Register via the CCT and Portfolio Pathway route. For Portfolio Pathway applications, the College's role is to evaluate and return applications to the GMC, either approved or with recommendations about what is required for a successful re-application to be made.

The College has responsibility for reviewing Portfolio Pathway applications in the following specialties:

Chemical Pathology
Diagnostic Neuropathology
Forensic Histopathology
Histopathology
Medical Microbiology
Medical Virology
Paediatric & Perinatal Pathology



CESR Assessors

What does the role entail?

Ensure that:

- applications are evaluated according to the guidelines set by the GMC and the College's specialty-specific guidance.
- the evaluation (including discussions by teleconference call) is conducted in a fair and transparent manner and in accordance with relevant legislation, the current process and advice.
- the patient's best interests are protected, and the applicant receives a fair assessment of their application in accordance with relevant legislation, the current process and advice.

It is important for an assessor to ensure that this standard is maintained as the decision to grant a Portfolio Pathway will allow the applicant to be eligible for appointment to a substantive consultant post in the NHS.

The role of Portfolio Pathway Assessor offers several valuable opportunities which include:

- A chance to be actively involved in ensuring the maintenance of high professional standards in the pathology workforce.
- Contributing to increasing the pool of appropriately qualified pathology specialists in the UK.
- Sharing of good practices with colleagues throughout the country.
- Use of the learning experience to claim CPD points.

The Portfolio Pathway Evaluation Process

Evaluate individual applications, including any subsequent appeals and reviews. (An evidence bundle is typically between 800-1200 pages and assessors are given 3-4 weeks to complete their work). Further information on what evidence doctors should submit as part of their Portfolio Pathway application can be found in the relevant [Specialty Specific Guidance](#).

The Portfolio Pathway applications are accessed online through a GMC secure portal called GMC Connect.

Determine if applications are successful or recommend appropriate top-up training, examination assessment or any other test of competence if and when those requirements have not been satisfied.

Attendance at virtual meetings may be required from time to time e.g., where Portfolio Pathway Assessors may need to discuss complex applications.

The Training Department will provide administrative support.

Portfolio Pathway Assessors:

- Must keep up to date with scientific, medical and educational developments in the specialty.
- Will be expected to commit to regularly evaluating applications for Portfolio Pathway, ideally, assessing 3 a year depending on the number of applications received from the GMC.

- must be willing to attend training about the Portfolio Pathway process and keep up to date.
- let the Training Department know as soon as possible whether or not they are able to evaluate a Portfolio Pathway application.

Person specification

- In active clinical practice in the UK in one of chemical pathology, diagnostic neuropathology, forensic histopathology, histopathology, medical microbiology, medical virology or paediatric and perinatal pathology and listed on the GMC's Specialist Register.
- Be GMC-registered with a license to practice and be listed on the GMC's Specialist Register in the specialty in which they are in active practice.
- Ideally should be a Fellow of the College, undertaking Continuing Professional Development.
- Require knowledge of the training and capabilities expected of a Day-1 consultant in NHS practice.
- Have evidence of having undertaken and being up to date with EDI training.

What is the time commitment?

Portfolio Pathway assessors should expect to commit up to 6 days a year (approximately 0.25 PAs).

Please note that the role is not remunerated and that this is intended only to be a guide to the time assessors may spend on this work.