December 2018

RCGP Accreditation of General Practitioners with Extended Roles

Terms & Conditions
Contents

1. Introduction .................................................................................................................................................. 2
  1.1 Date of publication ................................................................................................................................. 2
  1.2 Data Protection ........................................................................................................................................ 2
  1.3 Copyright of GPwER accreditation materials ......................................................................................... 2
  1.4 Duties of Doctors ................................................................................................................................ 2
  1.5 Key candidate responsibilities .............................................................................................................. 3
  1.6 Anonymising Portfolios for Submission ............................................................................................... 3
2. Eligibility .................................................................................................................................................... 4
3. Timescales for undertaking GPwER accreditation ..................................................................................... 4
4. Misconduct .................................................................................................................................................. 5
  4.1 Plagiarism ............................................................................................................................................... 5
  4.2 Falsification of Documentation ............................................................................................................ 5
5. Complaints and Appeals ............................................................................................................................. 6
  5.1 Complaints ............................................................................................................................................ 7
  5.2 Appeals ................................................................................................................................................ 8
6. Fees ............................................................................................................................................................ 10
7. Making an application for GPwER accreditation by the RCGP ............................................................... 10
8. Withdrawals ............................................................................................................................................... 10
9. Submission ................................................................................................................................................ 11
10. Assessment .............................................................................................................................................. 11
    10.1 Submission Stage ............................................................................................................................... 11
    10.2 Accreditation Panel .......................................................................................................................... 12
11. Candidates who Fail ................................................................................................................................ 12
12. Notification of Results ............................................................................................................................... 13
Appendix 1 – GPwER Accreditation Mitigating Circumstances .................................................................. 14
Appendix 2 – GPwER Accreditation Mitigating Circumstances Form ..................................................... 15
Appendix 3 – Complaint Form .................................................................................................................... 16
Appendix 4 – GPwER Accreditation Appeal Form ..................................................................................... 17
1. Introduction

These Terms and Conditions relate to the accreditation of General Practitioners with Extended Roles (GPwERs) by the Royal College of General Practitioners (RCGP).

The RCGP will assess a candidate’s portfolio of supporting information against a specific framework to determine whether it contains sufficient evidence to demonstrate the competence of that individual to practise independently in their extended scope of work.

It is a condition of entry for accreditation that candidates agree to be bound by these Terms and Conditions. They will continue to be binding even in the event that a candidate chooses to withdraw from the accreditation process.

1.1 Date of publication

This version of the Terms and Conditions came into effect on 1 May 2018. The Terms and Conditions may change over time. Candidates should ensure that they familiarise themselves with the Terms and Conditions that are current at the time they are undertaking GPwER accreditation. The current version will always be available to download from the RCGP website (www.rcgp.org.uk/GPwER). The RCGP will give appropriate advance notice of any change which may have a material effect on candidates to ensure that they are not disadvantaged as a result.

1.2 Data Protection

The information we hold about candidates will be stored and processed in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

See the RCGP Privacy Statement (candidates’ section) for full details.


1.3 Copyright of GPwER accreditation materials

Material relating to GPwER accreditation is protected by copyright. Candidates who are found to have infringed this protection will be penalised in accordance with the guidance on misconduct in these Terms and Conditions.

1.4 Duties of Doctors

All registered medical practitioners have a duty placed on them by the General Medical Council (GMC) to be honest and trustworthy. Portfolios submitted to the RCGP for the purposes of GPwER accreditation are reviewed by doctors who themselves have a duty to notify the GMC if they have concerns. Failures of a very serious nature, raising concerns about a doctor’s fitness to practise, evidence of lack of competence, or misconduct before, during or after the process of accreditation may be escalated by the
GPwER Accreditation Clinical Lead through the appropriate College governance processes. Ultimately the candidate may be referred to the appropriate regulatory person or body (such as the Responsible Officer, the GMC or the relevant designated body).

1.5 Key candidate responsibilities

By agreeing to these Terms and Conditions, the candidate accepts that:

They retain full responsibility for all aspects of their contractual and ethical obligations regarding the provision of services to their patients.

Following accreditation, the RCGP will provide a certificate confirming successful accreditation in an extended role. However, it is the responsibility of the candidate to demonstrate to employers, commissioners and responsible officers that they have attained and maintained the knowledge, skills and competencies necessary for ongoing practice in their extended role.

A doctor must be competent in all aspects of their work. The candidate will demonstrate evidence of continued competence in both their generalist and extended roles via their full scope of practice annual appraisal.

The College’s accreditation programme pertains to the knowledge, skills and competencies of an individual in an extended scope of practice. It is the candidate’s responsibility to ensure that they are delivering care in a safe environment for patients and that care is supported by appropriate governance structures. Additionally, it is the responsibility of the candidate to ensure that they are appropriately indemnified and they have appropriate certificates (e.g. DBS).

1.6 Anonymising Portfolios for Submission

The information provided in your portfolio submission for GPwER accreditation must be fully pseudonymised so patients cannot be identified. Please see section 9 and 10.1 in the Terms and Conditions for more information.

Pseudonymising personal data can reduce the risks to data subjects and help controllers and processors to meet their data protection obligations by ensuring that additional information that attributes the personal data to a specific data subject is kept separately.

The GDPR defines pseudonymisation as “the processing of personal data in such a manner that the personal data can no longer be attributed to a specific data subject without the use of additional information, provided that such additional information is kept separately and is subject to technical and organisational measures to ensure that the personal data are not attributed to an identified or identifiable natural person.”
2. Eligibility

In order to be eligible for GPwER accreditation, applicants must hold a Certificate of Completion of Training (CCT) or Certificate of Eligibility for General Practice Registration (CEGPR), formerly a Statement of Eligibility for Registration, from the General Medical Council (GMC) or Postgraduate Medical Education Training Board (PMETB), or a Certificate of Prescribed Experience from the Joint Committee on Postgraduate Training for General Practice (JCPTGP).

In addition, candidates must:

- currently hold a licence to practise according to the GMC
- be on the GP register
- be participating in annual medical appraisal covering full scope of practice, which meets GMC requirements for revalidation
- to have undertaken at least 40 core (undifferentiated) general practice sessions in the 12 months prior to application, unless exceptional circumstances can be demonstrated to the RCGP prior to application

Candidates must declare any complaints, warnings, undertakings, restrictions, GMC investigations or clinical governance issues at the time of their application or as soon as these arise during the accreditation process.

All outstanding issues will be addressed on an individual basis before an applicant’s eligibility is confirmed, or, in the case of existing candidates, as soon as they arise.

Candidates whose GMC registration (or its equivalent overseas) is subject to suspension, referral, or any condition must provide the RCGP with full details immediately. Candidates must submit all information and correspondence relating to any complaint and/or clinical governance issues to the GPwER Manager to be reviewed through appropriate governance processes.

3. Timescales for undertaking GPwER accreditation

The GPwER accreditation office will allocate a portfolio to the first available quarterly panel. It cannot be guaranteed that the portfolio will be considered at the next panel if, for example, there is high demand.

When candidates are asked to resubmit information, this will need to be provided to the GPwER office within 6 months. If the resubmission is not received by the deadline, the candidate may be marked as “out of time”.
4. Misconduct

4.1 Plagiarism

Candidates are advised that the RCGP does not tolerate any form of plagiarism or collusion in candidates’ submissions for GPwER accreditation. By agreeing to these Terms and Conditions candidates give their consent to their submissions being scanned through plagiarism detecting software. By giving consent, candidates are agreeing that, subject to conventional rules on the use of source material, allowable quotations and citation of sources, their submitted material is their own work. Suspected cases of plagiarism will be investigated and, where identified, may be reported to the candidate’s Responsible Officer or referred to the GMC where appropriate.

Plagiarism is presenting work as your own when it is derived substantially from someone else’s work, as a result of using someone else’s thoughts or words without using quotation marks and identifying the origin, or using someone else’s work without proper acknowledgement. This applies to all published and unpublished material, whether in manuscript, printed or electronic form. Collusion is another form of plagiarism involving unauthorised collaboration with others in a piece of work with the intention of deceiving the RCGP. If a candidate is submitting evidence from collaborative work, this must be made clear within the submission and their reflections must be their own.

Submissions for GPwER accreditation may be scanned through plagiarism detecting software.

If plagiarism is suspected or blatant, the following procedure will be followed:
- The GPwER Accreditation Manager* will write to the GPwER Clinical Lead to inform him/her of their concerns, identifying suspect statements, pieces of text etc
- The GPwER Accreditation Clinical Lead* will review the information and write to the applicant informing him/her of their concern. The applicant will be asked to provide a full explanation in writing within ten working days.

(* = nominated deputy)

Allegations will not continue to be investigated where they lack substance or appear, upon investigation, to be unfounded. Where a case of plagiarism is apparent, the GPwER Accreditation Clinical Lead* may, if the case appears to be isolated or minor, deal with the matter him/herself.

In other cases, an appropriate course of action will be decided by the RCGP.

4.2 Falsification of Documentation

If falsification of documentation (including but not limited to the embellishment of records/letters and the altering of dates of events) is suspected or blatant, the following procedure will be followed:

The GPwER Accreditation Manager* will write to the GPwER Accreditation Clinical Lead* to inform him/her of their concerns, identifying suspect statements, pieces of text etc.

The GPwER Accreditation Clinical Lead will review the information and write to the applicant informing him/her of their concern. The applicant will be asked to provide a full explanation in writing within ten working days.

Allegations will not continue to be investigated where they lack substance or appear, upon investigation, to be unfounded. Where a case of falsification of documentation is apparent, the GPwER Accreditation Clinical Lead may, if the case appears to be isolated or minor, deal with the matter him/herself.

In other cases, an appropriate course of action will be decided by the RCGP.

(* = nominated deputy)

5. Complaints and Appeals

A complaint raised by a candidate relates to the administration or conduct of an assessment by the RCGP where there is no intention to query the result of the assessment.

An appeal raised by a candidate is a request for a review of the decision of the RCGP to fail a candidate in their application for GPwER accreditation.

Complaints and appeals processes are separate but the subject of one may later become the subject of the other.

Complaints and appeals relating to any component of GPwER accreditation should be made in writing and submitted to the GPwER Accreditation office. The relevant form (in Appendix 3 and Appendix 4 of this document) must be completed and submitted.

Any submission must be made by the candidate personally and should be addressed to the GPwER Accreditation office. The RCGP will not usually enter into correspondence with any third parties in relation to complaints or appeals.

The content of complaints and appeals procedures is intended to be internal and confidential. No-one involved in them shall, without the prior written consent of the RCGP, communicate, publish or otherwise disclose any detail, written material or evidence produced to any unauthorised person.
5.1 Complaints

A complaint will not normally be considered if its specific subject matter or closely related subject matter is currently being considered by the RCGP as part of an appeal process, by the GMC under fitness to practise procedures, or by a court, tribunal or similar.

Candidates will not suffer any disadvantage or recrimination as a result of making a complaint.

In the first instance a candidate should attempt to resolve a complaint informally with the most relevant person, for example GPwER Accreditation Manager. If the complaint is of a general nature it should be submitted to the GPwER office at the RCGP or, if the complaint is about a member of the GPwER Accreditation administrative staff, GPwER Accreditation assessor, or panel member, to the GPwER Accreditation Clinical Lead or nominated deputy.

Formal complaints must normally be received no later than ten working days after receipt of the outcome of an accreditation application. The only exception is when an appeal has been lodged. In these circumstances a complaint must be lodged within ten working days of receipt of the decision relating to the appeal panel.

Formal complaints must be submitted in writing using the form available in Appendix 3 of this document and must include supporting evidence.

There is no fee for making a complaint.

Receipt of the complaint will be acknowledged within ten working days.

Formal complaints are considered in the first instance by the GPwER Accreditation Manager or, if the complaint is about the administration of the GPwER Accreditation office and/or a member of its staff, by the Head of Professional Development or nominated deputy.

Clarification of the precise nature of the complaint may be sought.

Any individual complained about and/or the person directly responsible for the matter being complained about will be given the opportunity to respond to the complaint.

Further information may be required. The parties will be invited to comment on any information submitted by the other side and will be given adequate time to do so.

In taking a decision on whether or not a complaint is justified, the GPwER Accreditation Clinical Lead or nominated deputy or, if applicable, Head of Professional Development,
will act reasonably and objectively, observing the principles of natural justice and will make its decision on the balance of probabilities.

The decision will be final and communicated to the complainant in writing, with reasons, as soon as is reasonably possible and normally no more than six weeks after receipt of the complaint.

Complaints that are judged to be inappropriate or unsubstantiated will not be accepted.

If a complaint is upheld, the RCGP may offer an apology or some other appropriate form of redress.

5.2 Appeals

An appeal will not normally be considered if its specific subject matter or closely related subject matter is currently being considered by the RCGP as part of the complaints process, by the GMC under fitness to practise procedures, or by a court, tribunal or similar.

The purpose of an appeal is to review the decision of the RCGP to fail a candidate in their application for GPwER accreditation.

There is an administrative fee for making an appeal, to be payable to the RCGP at the time of submitting the appeal. The administrative fee will normally be refunded if the appeal is successful.

The following are grounds for appeal:

- An irregularity in any part of the assessment process.
- Evidence of prejudice or bias on the part of the assessor(s) or panel.

No appeal will be entertained solely on the grounds that the candidate wishes to challenge the academic judgment of the assessors or panel. Appeals may only relate to the process or the assessors or panel, not to dissatisfaction with the academic outcome.

Candidates will not suffer any disadvantage or recrimination as a result of making an appeal.

Appeals must be lodged by the candidate in writing using the form available in Appendix 4 and must include supporting evidence.

A candidate wishing to appeal must submit written representations, together with the required fee and supporting evidence, to the GPwER Accreditation office.

Appeals must be received within 28 days of the date of receipt of the result of the accreditation outcome. Receipt of the appeal will be acknowledged within ten working
days. The GPwER Accreditation Manager may seek clarification of the precise nature of the appeal. Appeals that are judged to be inappropriate or unsubstantiated will not be accepted.

The evidence will be considered by an Appeal Panel within 12 weeks. The Appeal Panel will include two trained GPwER assessors in the relevant field – one a GPwER and other a specialty doctor, one of whom will act as Chair, and a lay member. Members of the Appeal Panel will not have been involved in the initial assessment of the candidate’s portfolio.

The appellant will be supplied with, and given the opportunity to comment in advance on, all the information to be considered by the Appeal Panel.

Appeals will normally be considered on the basis of paper evidence only. Appellants will, however, have the right to request an oral hearing and the right to be accompanied at the hearing by a friend, colleague or a member of their professional body. Appellants should not normally be accompanied by a family member or legal representative. An appellant seeking to be accompanied should identify the person accompanying him or her and inform the RCGP at least five days in advance of the hearing.

In reaching a decision on whether to uphold or dismiss an appeal, the panel will act reasonably and objectively, observing the principles of natural justice. The panel will make its decision on the balance of probabilities.

The Appeal Panel may reach one of the following conclusions:
- that the appeal should be dismissed
- that the appeal should be upheld and either that: The result of the component should be declared void and the appellant be allowed to resubmit without payment of a fee; and/or some other form of redress be offered to the appellant, at the discretion of the panel

The Chair of the Appeal Panel shall communicate its decision to the appellant in writing, with brief reasons, within one month of the date of the Appeal Panel meeting. The Chair of the panel will be authorised to decide whether all, part of, or none of the appeal fee should be refunded.

The Appeal Panel’s decision shall be made on a majority basis and shall be final.

Once the Appeal Panel’s decision has been communicated to the appellant, the GPwER Accreditation administrative staff will not normally enter into any communication with the appellant regarding the outcome of the appeal.

The RCGP will deploy a process to manage any actual or perceived conflicts of interest relating to Appeal Panel members.
6. Fees

The accreditation fee is payable on submission of the candidate’s application for accreditation.

The GPwER Accreditation office will provide instructions for payment when confirming receipt of the application submission by email.

Fees are not normally refunded.

In exceptional circumstances a reduced fee may be considered at the RCGP Honorary Treasurer’s discretion. Please contact the GPwER Accreditation Office to discuss any such instances.

There is an administrative fee payable where a candidate wishes to appeal against the result of their assessment outcome. Please refer to the Appeals section for further information.

The accreditation fee may vary depending on whether the candidate meets the criteria to receive an externally-funded subsidy.

7. Making an application for GPwER accreditation by the RCGP

Having checked they meet the criteria for accreditation (see www.rcgp.org.uk/GPwER), applicants must submit their application using the pro-forma available on the website. Evidence provided in other formats will not be accepted.

8. Withdrawals

Candidates who wish to withdraw from the accreditation process must inform the GPwER Accreditation office in writing, by post or email.

No refund will be made to candidates withdrawing after any submission.

If a candidate withdraws from the process because of mitigating circumstances (such as illness), any refund will be at the discretion of the Head of Professional Development in accordance with advice from the GPwER Clinical Lead or a nominated deputy. Candidates may apply for a refund by writing to the GPwER Accreditation office by post or email with a full explanation of their circumstances. Normally, written evidence will be required.
9. Submission

The GPwER Accreditation Portfolio template is a PDF document that candidates can download from the RCGP website. Candidates must complete all sections of the document to meet the accreditation requirements.

All GPwER accreditation submissions must be written in the English language.

Portfolios must contain information that relates to the candidate’s actual management of real patients and must accurately represent their own clinical practice. All material must be fully anonymised before criteria are submitted.

All submissions must be sent by email to the GPwER Accreditation office (gpwer@rcgp.org.uk). Only electronic submissions will be accepted. If there are technical problems in submitting via email, a CD or other electronic storage device may be used instead.

The GPwER Accreditation office will check the submission for completeness and the submission’s format prior to sending it to the assessors. The candidate may be requested to make some amendments at this stage. If the amendments are not received by the GPwER Accreditation office within an agreed timeframe, usually 6 weeks, the candidate may be marked as “out of time and will lose their fee.

Material submitted in the portfolio must be current and relate to practice within a UK jurisdiction (i.e. GMC regulated). If it appears that dates of evidence may have been altered (and thereby falsified), the process for “Falsification of Documentation” (Section 2.5 of these Terms and Conditions) will be followed.

Candidate submissions will be sent to the assessors when the candidate fee and signed declarations have been received by the GPwER office.

10. Assessment

10.1 Submission Stage

Submissions for GPwER accreditation may be scanned through plagiarism detecting software.

Following an initial check for completeness, a candidate’s anonymised submission will be sent by the GPwER Accreditation office to two trained assessors for marking, one a GPwER and the other a specialty doctor – both in the relevant field and practising outside the geographical locality of the candidate.
The assessors mark the portfolios independently against standard assessment criteria before conferring and recommending an outcome to the Accreditation Panel.

Any section that is not deemed satisfactory will require new material to be submitted.

Candidates are permitted to make one portfolio resubmission within a maximum time frame of 6 months. No amendments should be made to earlier submitted material.

The RCGP will deploy a process to manage any actual or perceived conflicts of interest relating to portfolio assessors.

### 10.2 Accreditation Panel

The purpose of the Accreditation Panel is to validate the assessors’ recommendation and challenge where necessary. The panel will comprise the Accreditation Clinical lead who will act as Chair, two trained GPwER assessors in the relevant field – one a GPwER and other a specialty doctor, and a lay member. Members of the panel will not have been involved in the initial assessment of the portfolio. The lay member is there to provide a quality assurance check that fair decisions are being made by the whole panel, while also ensuring that quality judgments include a consideration of the patient perspective.

The Accreditation Panel will be held at quarterly intervals throughout the year. A portfolio will be considered by an Accreditation Panel within 12 weeks of submission or resubmission.

Candidates will be informed of the date of the Panel which will be reviewing their submission in advance.

The Accreditation Panel will consider a candidate’s marked portfolio only.

Results will be sent by post to candidates within four weeks of the date of the Accreditation Panel. If a results letter is not received by the candidate by this date, a duplicate can be requested which will also be sent by post. GPwER accreditation administrative staff are not permitted to discuss results with candidates.

Candidates will be given written feedback from Accreditation Panels.

The RCGP will deploy a process to manage any actual or perceived conflicts of interest relating to Accreditation Panel members.

### 11. Candidates who do not demonstrate the required standard
Candidates whose portfolio does not demonstrate the required standard should consider that this brings to an end this particular attempt but they are welcome to make a new attempt if they so wish. They will need to complete the portfolio again and use entirely fresh evidence.

Although there is an appeals procedure that may be followed, a candidate may not question the academic judgment of the assessors.

12. **Notification of Results**

Results will be sent by post to candidates within four weeks of the date of the Accreditation Panel to which their portfolio has been assigned. If a results letter is not received by the candidate by this date, a duplicate can be requested which will also be sent by post. GPwER accreditation administrative staff are not permitted to discuss results with candidates.
Appendix 1 – GPwER Accreditation Mitigating Circumstances

Within the context of GPwER Accreditation, mitigating circumstances would be serious, unforeseen and unpreventable events that significantly affect the candidate’s ability to submit or resubmit supporting information within the required timeframe.

All reports of mitigating circumstances will be considered by the GPwER Accreditation Manager, GPwER Accreditation Clinical Lead, or a nominated deputy, who may consult others as they see fit.

Mitigating circumstances will not result in any change to the outcome of an assessment.
## Appendix 2 – GPwER Accreditation Mitigating Circumstances Form

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<th>Name of Candidate</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GMC Number / Candidate Number</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date of submission of form</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Mitigating Circumstances

Please describe below the circumstances you wish RCGP to take into account.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nature of supporting evidence submitted</th>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Candidate Signature</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recipient at RCGP</th>
<th>Date</th>
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## Appendix 3 – Complaint Form

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Name of Candidate</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GMC Number / Candidate Number</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nature of Complaint</td>
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</tbody>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Nature of supporting evidence submitted</th>
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<tr>
<th>Candidate Signature</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<th>Recipient at RCGP</th>
<th>Date</th>
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# Appendix 4 – GPwER Accreditation Appeal Form

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Appellant</th>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GMC number / Candidate Number</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accreditation Panel Date</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reason for Appeal</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Please indicate the nature of your appeal with reference to Section 5.2 of the Candidate Terms and Conditions. Appeals cannot be made on the grounds that you wish to challenge the academic judgment of the assessors or Accreditation Panel.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Nature of supporting evidence submitted |  |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fee attached</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Appellant Signature</td>
<td>Date</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recipient at RCGP</td>
<td>Date</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>