



Revalidation update June 2008

Background

The White Paper published in February 2007, entitled 'Trust, Assurance and Safety – the regulation of health professionals in the 21st Century', contained proposals to ensure that all the statutorily regulated health professionals have arrangements in place for the revalidation of their professional registration through which they can periodically demonstrate their continued fitness to practise. Specialist doctors will also have to demonstrate that they meet the standards that apply to their particular speciality.

The emphasis is on demonstration by the individual doctor and, if demonstration fails, then an evaluation of evidence would be required by the GMC, progressing to assessment if deemed necessary.

Revalidation will have two components: relicensing and recertification.

Relicensing

All doctors wishing to practise in the United Kingdom will require a licence to practise, issued by the General Medical Council every 5 years, starting in 2009. The process of relicensing will be based on:

- satisfactory completion of annual appraisal encompassing all the elements of *Good Medical Practice*;
- an appraisal, supported by an independent 360° feedback (multisource feedback);
- any concerns known to the doctor's employing organisation.

Recertification

All doctors practising in the UK who do not hold a recognised training post will have to demonstrate that they continue to meet the particular standards that apply to their speciality at intervals of no longer than 5 years. The Royal Colleges and their Faculties will have the responsibility for signing off a positive statement of assurance that the individual practitioner has demonstrated that he/she has met the appropriate standards for specialist recertification on behalf of the GMC.

The proposals for recertification suggest that evidence for this process will be drawn from a range of sources and activities such as:

- satisfactory appraisal
- multisource feedback
- clinical audit
- continuing professional development
- simulator tests
- knowledge tests

- observations of practice.

Progress towards Revalidation

The Academy of Medical Royal Colleges has set up a Revalidation Development Group, on which FOM is represented, to coordinate the various strands of revalidation activity taking place in the Colleges and Faculties. It includes representatives of the GMC, DH, NHS, NCAS and BMA. Work is progressing at different rates in the various specialties but some principles are starting to emerge.

Relicensing and recertification will draw on largely the same evidence, which should be generated locally with assessment undertaken in the workplace.

As far as possible, revalidation will be one process with two outcomes – relicensing and recertification.

The principal role of the Colleges and Faculties will be to establish the standards and methodology against which the workplace evaluation will be carried out. Where a doctor is unable to draw sufficient evidence from the workplace the role of the Colleges will be correspondingly greater.

It is likely that there will be a phased approach rather than a 'big bang', dependent on the rate of progress of individual Colleges and Faculties.

The standards for remaining on the Specialist Register or GP Register will be the same as the standards currently required for entry. The range of competencies and required evidence for recertification however will relate to the doctor's actual practice.

Clearly revalidation will happen though there is much work still to be done in defining the standards required in Occupational Medicine. However, appraisal and CPD schemes are available now and any doctor expecting to undergo recertification would be well advised to participate in both in order to start building their portfolio of evidence.

Anyone wishing to contribute their thoughts on revalidation is invited to email them to [Rob Thornton](#), Director of Professional Development.

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