



➔ Ready for revalidation

Revalidation Frequently Asked Questions for overseas regulators and overseas organisations

General
Medical
Council

Regulating doctors
Ensuring good medical practice



On 3 December 2012, the United Kingdom's General Medical Council introduced revalidation.

All doctors holding registration with a licence to practise with the GMC are now required, by UK law, to regularly demonstrate, usually every five years, that they are up to date and fit to practise.

These FAQs provide further details on revalidation, the licence to practise, and information for doctors who work wholly outside of the UK.

For more information, please visit www.gmc-uk.org/revalidation.

What is revalidation?

Revalidation is the GMC's way of checking that doctors holding registration with a licence to practise are up to date and fit to practise. It aims to give further assurance to patients that doctors are competent and safe. It is part of a wider system of measures designed to promote improvements in the safety and quality of UK healthcare, and is intended to ensure that all medical practice is conducted within a governed system.

Only doctors who have GMC registration with a licence to practise are legally required to revalidate. Doctors who hold registration without a licence to practise are not required to do so.

How does revalidation work?

Doctors holding registration with a licence to practise must revalidate, usually every five years. Revalidation is based on an evaluation of a doctor's practice in the workplace by way of participation in an annual appraisal process. The appraisal must be based on our core guidance for doctors, *Good Medical Practice*.

Doctors also need to collect and reflect on a range of supporting information about their practice (including evidence of continuing professional development and feedback from patients). This must be discussed at their appraisal.

Doctors are supported with revalidation by the organisation in which they work. This organisation is called a 'designated body' in UK law. These organisations have a statutory duty to provide the doctors connected to them with a regular appraisal and to help them with their revalidation. Designated bodies have a 'responsible officer' (normally the medical director of their organisation) who, every five years, will make a recommendation to the GMC that a doctor is up to date and fit to practise. We use this recommendation to make our decision to revalidate the doctor.

Can non-UK organisations be designated bodies?

No. Only UK organisations can be designated bodies. This is because the regulations that give them this legal status (The Medical Profession (Responsible Officers) Regulations 2010) only cover the UK.

When was revalidation introduced?

Revalidation in the UK officially started on 3 December 2012. We are planning to revalidate the majority of licensed doctors by March 2016.

Who will need to participate in revalidation?

All doctors who hold a licence to practise will need to revalidate. This includes licensed doctors who practise wholly outside of the UK.

How will licensed doctors who practise permanently outside the UK revalidate?

We recognise that licensed doctors who practise wholly outside of the UK may find it challenging to comply with the requirements of revalidation. This is because they will not have a relationship with a UK-based organisation that has the status of a designated body. This means they will not be able to access the systems, such as a regular appraisal based on our core guidance, *Good Medical Practice*, which they will need to support their revalidation. Our advice to licensed doctors who work wholly outside of the UK is that they do not need to hold registration with a licence to practise.

Do doctors who practise permanently outside the UK need to hold a licence to practise?

No. Doctors who work wholly outside of the UK do not need a licence to practise in the UK. The licence to practise gives doctors legal rights and privileges in the UK (such as writing prescriptions) that do not apply in any other country in the world. Doctors who work wholly outside the UK must abide by whatever regulatory requirements exist in the country in which they practise.

Doctors who work wholly outside the UK can hold registration without a licence instead. They can apply to restore their licence if they wish to return to the UK to practise in the future.

What is the difference between registration with and without a licence to practise?

Doctors can be registered with a licence to practise or registered without a licence to practise.

Holding registration without a licence with the GMC:

- ▶ allows doctors to show to employers, overseas regulators and others that they remain in good standing with the GMC
- ▶ is an acknowledgement that the doctor's primary medical qualification allowed them to gain entry to the medical register in the UK.

Holding registration with a licence to practise:

- ▶ enables doctors to legally undertake in the UK any of the activities which are restricted by law to doctors holding a licence (such as signing death certificates and writing prescriptions)
- ▶ applies only to UK medical practice and has no legal standing outside of the UK
- ▶ means a doctor has to participate in revalidation.

How can a doctor holding registration restore their licence?

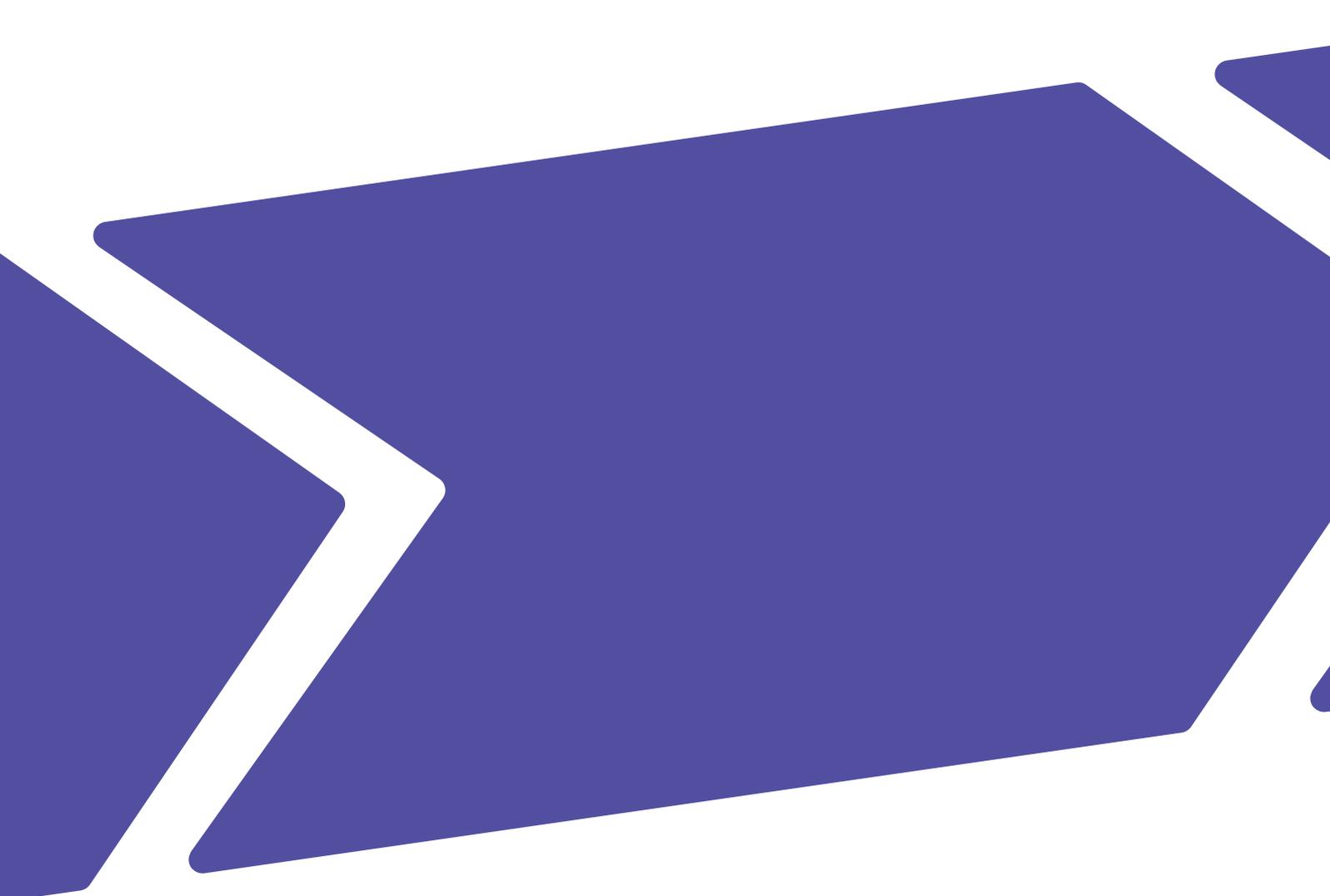
Doctors who want to return to work in the UK at any point can apply to restore their licence to practise on their return to the UK. The process for restoring a licence when holding full registration is relatively straightforward.

More information about restoring a doctor's licence to practise can be found on our website at www.gmc-uk.org/doctors

How do I know if a doctor holds GMC registration and/or a licence to practise?

The GMC has an online register, called the List of Registered Medical Practitioners, which provides details of all doctors on the GMC's register. Our online register is available here: www.gmc-uk.org/register. The Register clearly distinguishes between doctors holding GMC registration and/or a licence to practise.

You can find an explanation of the different types of registration and routes into registration on our website at www.gmc-uk.org/information_for_you/registration_factsheet.asp.



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This information can be made available in alternative formats or languages. To request an alternative format, please call us on **0161 923 6602** or email us at **publications@gmc-uk.org**.

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