

Step by step guide to the GP Return to Practice Programme (England)

There are several steps you will need to undertake to be able to re-register and work as a GP in the NHS. This is a summary to help you understand all the steps required under the GP Return to Practice (RtP) programme in England. For eligibility criteria please see the GP NRO website.

1. Usually the first thing you should do is register with the NRO for the GP Return to Practice programme who will direct you to the HEE Local Educational Lead. This may take a little while to organise and to arrange a review appointment.
2. Some qualified GPs with previous UK experience who are currently working in an equivalent role may be able to apply for the [Portfolio Route](#), which requires approval by the NHS England Medical Director before application to the RCGP.
3. GPs with previous UK experience will need to renew their GMC registration and Licence to Practise (LtP) for the programme
4. You must be on the GMC [GP Register](#), without GMC conditions or undertakings (except those relating solely to health matters) to qualify for the programme.
5. You will also need to apply for the [Medical Performers List](#). (MPL)
6. North West (previously Cheshire and Mersey) NHS England and Improvement team (NHSE/I) lead on all applications to the MPL on behalf of the Local NHSE/I team. Upon satisfactory completion of the RtP programme you will be transferred to the Local NHSE/I team where you work. The MPL application includes a lot of checks; you will need an [Occupational Health check](#), [a Disclosure and Barring Service check](#) and a [Police Check](#), two [references](#) to name a few things. (See below)
7. You will need to register for an NHS Email address; you can usually only do this when you have an identified RtP placement in a GP practice.

You should plan to start these applications at about the same time as you register for the MCQ unless you wish to have a deferred start of 6 or more months.

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To register for the Return to Practice Programme

- You should register with the GP NRO as soon as you know you want to undertake a Return to Practice programme or need advice about it
- Visit the GPNRO website and download the registration form and send this to the GP NRO.
- They will send your form to the appropriate Local Health Education England team where you wish to be for your placement and future work.

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| <p>If you are applying to Northern Ireland, Scotland or Wales please see their websites for further information and advice</p> |
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The local HEE team for the RtP programme will contact you to arrange a review with the HEE Educational Lead

(If you have not heard anything within 5 working days please let the NRO office know)

- Following the review with the HEE Educational Lead, which may be by phone, Skype or in person, they will be able to advise you on the next steps in your application process. This may include
 - a. Approval to apply for the RtP Learning Needs Assessment (LNA) route or
 - b. A recommendation to apply for the [Portfolio Route](#) This must have approved by the Lead (NW) NHS England team before formal application to the RCGP can proceed or
 - c. Advise you to speak directly to the Local NHSE/I team where you wish to live and work or
 - d. Give you advise on what further requirements are need before you can undertake an RtP programme
 - e. Review the results of the First Self-Test module to help identify your individual learning needs

and

- The HEE Educational Lead will inform the NRO of the agreed outcome plan
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Learning Needs Assessment route

- Once the NRO have been informed that you will be taking the LNA route you may register to sit the MCQ in a UK based Person Vue test centre or an approved Overseas test centre
- Once registered the NRO will notify the NW NHSE/I team of your application
- [The MCQ assessment](#) must be passed for entry to the programme, and up to four attempts are permitted.
- Dependant on the Band outcome you may be also required to undertake the Simulated Surgery.
- You should apply to the NW NHS England team only if you plan to proceed with a formal application to be included in the national MPL.
- This should usually be at the same time as you have been accepted for the MCQ, but please be aware the MPL application can take up to 3 months, or occasionally longer especially if checks are required from outside the UK.

To sit the MCQ -

- You must be registered with the GP NRO and
- Have been approved by the HEE Educational lead (CV, career review etc.)
- Register for the MCQ
- You can then also register with the e-LfH, RCGP and Fourteen Fish websites and start to access the e-Learning modules
- Take the MCQ in an approved test centre (in a number of approved UK and worldwide sites)
- There is an option for an [Observational Placement](#) if you are in the UK prior to sitting the MCQ.

MCQ band outcomes

There are two parts to the MCQ: the Professional Dilemma's (PD) paper (this is a situation judgement test) and Clinical Problem Solving (CPS) paper. In the PD paper only a pass is required in order to proceed. The CPS will give one of five possible outcomes:

- Band 5 outcomes will be able to enter the short one-month placement programme and do not have to take the Simulated Surgery subject to agreement by NW NHSE/I.
- Final approval by the NHSE/I Medical Director is subject to completion of a satisfactory “Short End of Placement report”
- Band 4 will be able to enter a 3-month placement programme and do not have to take the Simulated Surgery subject to agreement by NHSE/I.
- Final approval by the NHSE/I Medical Director is subject to completion of a satisfactory “Full End of Placement report”
- Band 3 outcomes will need to book to sit the Simulated Surgery having agreed this with the HEE Educational Lead and will normally be expected to complete a placement of up to 6m.
- Final approval by the NHSE/I Medical Director is subject to completion of a satisfactory “Full End of Placement report”
- Bands 1 and 2 need to arrange a telephone appointment to review the outcome and to consider their Learning Needs and how this can be achieved. They will need to re-sit and pass the MCQ (max 4 attempts allowed) before they can progress further with the programme.

To sit the Simulated Surgery (for doctors who achieved a Band 3 outcome in the CPS and a pass in the PD paper of the MCQs):

- You must have passed the CPS MCQ at Band 3 and the PD paper
- Have approval to sit the Sim surgery by the HEE Educational lead
- On the day you sit the Sim surgery you must have approval or have evidence of application to be on the GMC register with a Primary Care Qualification (i.e. a CCT, EU graduate or CEGPR holder) this will require a UK based face to face check with the GMC
- Formal evidence you are in good standing (part of GMC registration)
- Take the Sim surgery in the RCGP headquarters at 30 Euston Square, London or virtually due to government pandemic guidelines.
- There is a short [briefing video](#) to help inform you about the Simulation Surgery.

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Portfolio Route

- Following the interview (CV, career review) with the HEE local Educational lead, approval has to be sought from the NW NHSE/I team.
 - Once the NW NHSE/I team have agreed that you may do the Portfolio Route, the NRO will inform the RCGP of your application
 - You may then register with the RCGP for a Portfolio assessment
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Return to Practice Placements

To undertake the clinical placement (short or standard)

- Have an approved Return to Practice programme placement arranged through the local HEE Educational Team
- Have passed the MCQ and Sim surgery (Sim surgery does not apply to Bands 5 & 4 MCQ outcomes) or been approved by the Portfolio Route
- Have full GMC registration
- Be on the GMC GP Register with a current Licence to practise
- Be in good standing (no Restrictions, except for the requirement to complete the Return to Practice programme)
- Non-UK citizens must have a Skilled Worker Visa if you do not have rights of residence to work and live in the UK, you will also be required to have an employing sponsoring practice post
- Have completed Safeguarding training for Children to Level 2 and Adults (e-LfH)
- Be on the NHSE Medical Performers List (MPL) with the conditions that you undertake and complete the Return to Practice programme (requires DBS, police checks and occupational health among other things that take time and face to face checks)
- Have “top up” medical indemnity (there is funding support for this while in the programme)
- Complete the e-LfH mandatory modules and to Safeguarding level 2 for children and Adult Safeguarding.

To successfully exit the programme and gain full entry to the MPL without conditions or restrictions

- Have successfully completed the Return to Practice placement
- Have a satisfactory WPBA report (includes an MSF and PSQ)
- Completed safeguarding training for children to Level 3
- Submit the appropriate WPBA report to the NW NHSE/I team and any other required evidence (they should have evidence of all your LNA's already but important you check what they need)
- Start your portfolio preparation for an early [appraisal](#) in the placement this will be a MPL requirement on exit from the Return to Practice placement, normally required at 3 to 6 months after successful programme completion.
- Received confirmation from NHSE/I local team where you plan to work that you are included on their MPL without conditions, NW NHSE/I will arrange this transfer

Successfully passed the LNA or Portfolio Route

- Once you have passed either the LNA's (MCQ and Simulated surgery if required) or the Portfolio route you may start your approved practice placement
- The NW NHSE/I team will inform the Local NHSE/I team where your placement will occur, this is usually in the same area as your HEE team who will have set up your placement in an approved supervising practice

Requirements for the MPL Application

Apply to the NW NHSE/I Team

- Download and complete the application form which must be sent to the Lead NW NHSE/I team

Occupational Health Check

- Applicants must provide an occupational health screening 'fit to practise' declaration from a Safe Effective Quality Occupational Health Service (SEQOHS) accredited occupational health provider (or one that is seeking accreditation). A list of accredited SEQOHS providers is available on the website.
- This must also include an Exposure Prone Procedure (EPP) clearance
- A fee will be payable, and applicants should contact them in good time to arrange an appointment as the service does get booked up.
- If you cannot access a SEQOHS provider, NW NHSE/I will normally accept Occupational Health clearance from an NHS Occupational Health provider, but please check with them first.

Disclosure and Barring Service

- You must provide an up-to-date **enhanced DBS certificate** and have registered for the online update service.
- You must register for the online update service within 19 days of DBS certificate being issued or you can register at the time of making the DBS applications (you will need the number of your application form.) There is an annual fee and you should opt for this to be automatically renewed each year.
- If you have worked abroad in the last 5 years you will also need to obtain a Police Check from this country. This can be requested through the Embassy of the country where you worked.
- If you do not have a current DBS certificate and registration for the online updates when you apply for the MPL then you will need to have another DBS check
- This is the most common cause for delay with applications for the MPL and you should start the DBS application process at the earliest opportunity, usually when to apply to take the MCQ
- You will be able to re-claim some of the costs of this from the NRO, please see the [Funding page](#) on the NRO website
- Alternatively, a list of the umbrella bodies recommended by the Home Office for supporting applicants with their DBS application is available.
- The NW NHS E&I may be able to advise you of appropriate local links for both the Occupational Health Check and a local Umbrella body for the DBS check

References

- The references required by HEE will normally be accepted for your application to join the MPL
- The Health Education England (HEE) programme requires that you provide two Clinical references covering the last two years

- Please ask your referees to complete the Clinical Reference form (download from the GP NRO website) and return it to the HEE local lead who is managing your Return to Practice programme application
 - If you have no recent clinical referees a full explanation as to why this is the case and the names and addresses of two alternative referees should be provided and ask, them to complete the Non-Clinical References form
 - They should not be sent to the GP NRO
 - References will need to be provided as part of your application to the Return to Practice programme and to the NW NHSE/I
 - Copies of these two references will be sent to the NW NHSE/I local team by the HEE Lead along with confirmation of your registration and application for entry to the programme.
 - Please note: That NHSE/I may request additional references if these are deemed insufficient for the purposes of a MPL application.
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Child and Adult Safeguarding

- For an application to the MPL for a Return to Practice placement you are required to have completed level 2 but during the placement will need to attain SG level 3
 - Unless the applicant is in an agreed training programme agreed by the GMC or is in a placement under the Return to Practice programme, applicants to the medical performers list are required to provide evidence of child protection training at level 3, as a minimum, otherwise attainment at level 2 will be accepted at the point of entry with the requirement to have achieved level 3 as a minimum at CCT or completion of the Return to Practice programme
 - You must also have training in Adult Safeguarding
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Basic Life Support

- You are required as the very minimum to hold a UK BLS certificate or higher.
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