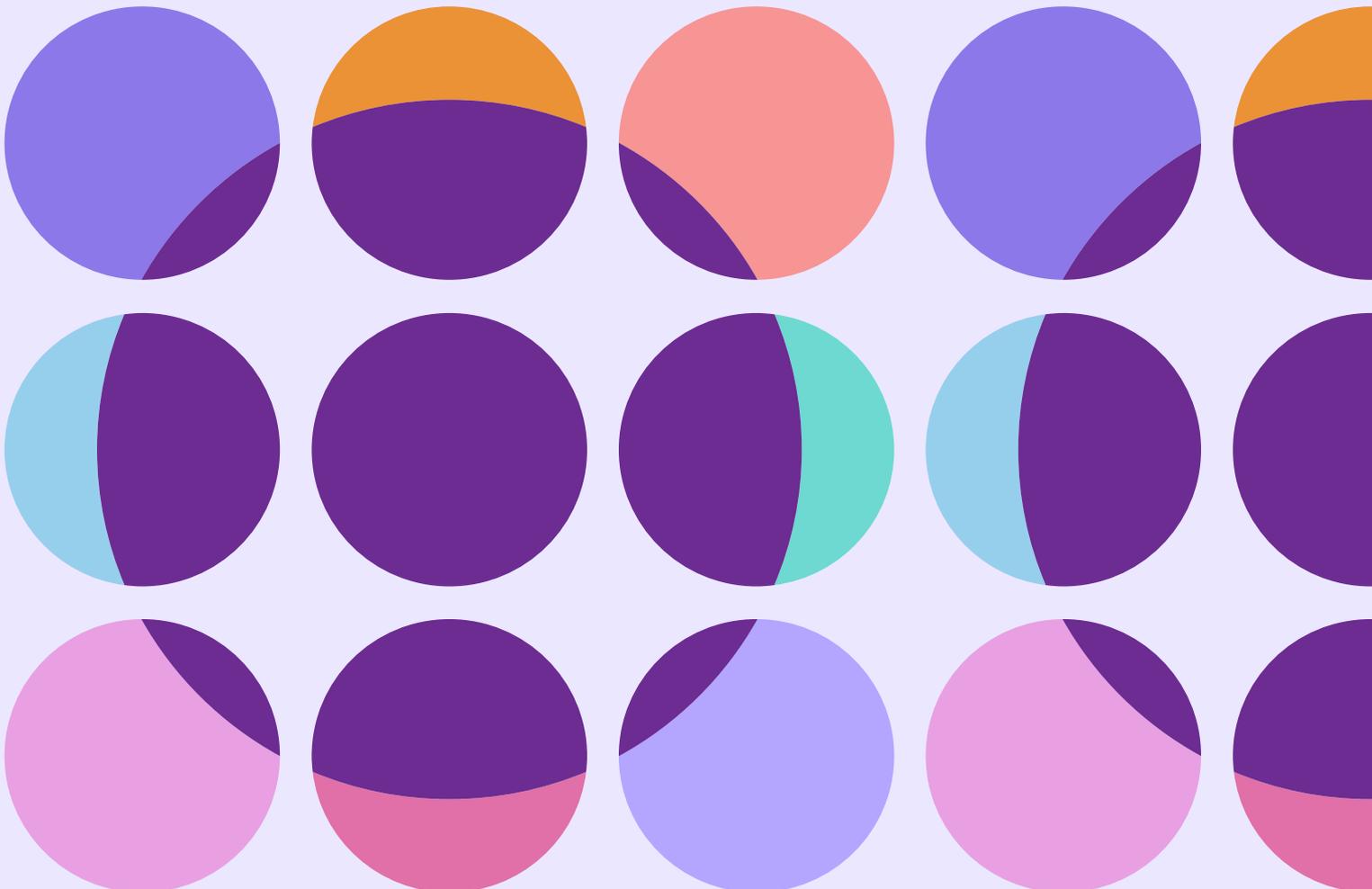


Standards

for Regulators and
Accredited Registers

2026





About the Professional Standards Authority

The Professional Standards Authority for Health and Social Care (PSA) is the UK's oversight body for the regulation of people working in health and social care.

Our statutory remit, independence and expertise underpin our commitment to the safety of patients and service-users, and to the protection of the public.

There are 10 organisations that regulate health professionals in the UK and social workers in England by law. We audit their performance and review their decisions on practitioners' fitness to practise. We also accredit and set standards for organisations holding registers of health and care practitioners not regulated by law.

We collaborate with all of these organisations to improve standards. We share good practice, knowledge and our right-touch regulation expertise. We also conduct and promote research on regulation. We monitor policy developments in the UK and internationally, providing guidance to governments and stakeholders. Through our UK and international consultancy, we share our expertise and broaden our regulatory insights.

Our core values of integrity, transparency, respect, fairness, and teamwork, guide our work. We are accountable to the UK Parliament. More information about our activities and approach is available at www.professionalstandards.org.uk



Standards for Regulators and Accredited Registers

Our Standards (for both regulators and Accredited Registers) are a pivotal component of how we deliver our mission and achieve our vision. They are the instruments we use to hold the organisations we oversee to account. But more than that, the Standards are key to driving improvement by challenging organisations to change.

In this document, you can find

1. An at a glance summary setting out the six categories and our 16 Standards
2. A more detailed description explaining why the Standard is important, what we expect and what meeting it might look like in practice.



Introduction

The following pages provide a summary of our combined standards for regulators and Accredited Registers. Included at the end is the Eligibility and Public Interest Standard which applies only to the Accredited Registers.

We use the term “organisation” to refer to both regulators and Accredited Registers.

Category | Governance

1

Good governance

The governing body and senior leaders put in place arrangements for the organisation to effectively protect the public and maintain public confidence.

2

Reporting on organisational performance and addressing concerns

The organisation publicly reports on its performance, identifies and acts on learning and addresses concerns about its performance.

Category | General

3

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)

The organisation promotes Equality, Diversity and Inclusion and takes action to reduce inequalities and assure its policies and processes are fair and equitable to all.

4

Engaging and working with others

The organisation engages and collaborates effectively, in order to inform, enhance and deliver its work. It seeks appropriate alignment with other organisations, and identifies and manages risks to the public in respect of its registrants.

Category | Standards and Guidance

5

Standards and guidance for registrants

The organisation maintains, publishes and promotes up-to-date standards and guidance that support health and care practitioners to act professionally and practise safely, prioritising public protection.

Category | Education and Training

6

Standards for Education and Training

The organisation maintains and publishes up-to-date standards for education and training that prioritise public protection, prepare learners to work safely and effectively and meet the needs of diverse populations.

7

Quality assurance of Education and Training

The organisation is effective in assuring itself that education and assessment providers are delivering learners who meet the education outcomes and other relevant registration requirements, and provide a safe environment for learning.

Category | Registration

8

The public register

The organisation maintains an accurate and accessible published register of all health or care practitioners, clearly indicating any restrictions on their registration. Where appropriate, this applies to businesses and premises, who are registered.

9

The registration process

The organisation operates a transparent, proportionate, efficient and fair process to allow only suitable practitioners, and, where applicable, businesses or premises to join, remain on, and return to its register.

10

Protecting the public from being misled about registration status

The organisation takes proportionate action in response to the risk of people misleading the public about their registration status.

11

Continuing suitability for registration

The organisation has proportionate requirements and processes in place to assure that registrants maintain their skills and are suitable to practice.

Category | Concerns

12

Raising concerns about a registrant

The organisation ensures that the process for raising a concern is accessible to all, makes clear the types of concerns that should be referred to them, and supports timely local resolution of cases where appropriate.

13

Investigating and resolving concerns - timeliness

The organisation considers, investigates and resolves concerns about registrants as quickly as is possible for a fair and safe resolution of the case.

14

Investigating and resolving concerns - fairness

The organisation's policies and process for considering, investigating and resolving concerns about registrants are fair, proportionate, consistent and transparent, while protecting the public and maintaining public confidence.

15

Concerns about registrants - identifying and acting on risks

The organisation identifies and manages risks in all cases which suggest a registrant poses a serious risk to public safety and confidence and takes timely action to restrict practice where necessary (such as interim measures).

16

Concerns about registrants - support for all parties

The organisation provides complainants, witnesses, and registrants involved in a complaint with the support they need throughout the case and keeps them informed about case progression in a sensitive and timely way.

Accreditation of voluntary register | Eligibility and public interest

The register is eligible for accreditation, operates lawfully, and it is in the public interest to accredit the register.



Combined Standards for Regulators and Accredited Registers

Detail

The following pages give detail on our combined standards for Regulators and Accredited Registers. Included at the end is the Eligibility and Public Interest Standard which applies only to the Accredited Registers.

Category: Governance

1 Good governance

What we expect

The governing body and senior leaders put in place arrangements for the organisation to effectively protect the public and maintain public confidence.

Why it is important

An organisation should be well led and have structures and processes in place in order to make good decisions in the interests of patient and service user safety.

In practice, this would mean that:

- The organisation is well governed and well led.
- The organisation is clear about, and focused on, its purpose of improving public protection and public confidence.
- The organisation fosters a culture of openness and learning, that supports organisational sustainability, improvement and employee wellbeing.
- Governing body decisions are proportionate, consistent, targeted, transparent, accountable, agile and risk-based. They are informed by the best available evidence and consider the views of those affected by them, such as service users and practitioners, as appropriate.
- Conflicts of interest are identified and managed.

Category: Governance

2

Reporting on organisational performance and addressing concerns

What we expect

The organisation publicly reports on its performance, identifies and acts on learning and addresses concerns about its performance.

Why it is important

So that public protection and public confidence is improved by the organisation monitoring its performance, identifying and acting upon concerns and relevant learning. Everyone can be clear about how well the organisation is performing in key areas.

In practice, this would mean that:

- The organisation is transparent in reporting on its performance.
- The organisation analyses its own performance to identify areas for learning and improvement, and acts on issues identified.
- Relevant learning and best practice from external reports and inquiries, including PSA publications, is identified, considered, and integrated into policy and practice.

Category: General

3 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)

What we expect

The organisation promotes Equality, Diversity and Inclusion and takes action to reduce inequalities and assure its policies and processes are fair and equitable to all.

Why it is important

So that everyone's experience of health and care professional regulation and registration is fair and equitable, and unfair differential outcomes between people from diverse groups, including those with shared protected characteristics are reduced.

In practice, this would mean that:

- The organisation understands the diversity of its employees, associates and governing bodies, practitioners, service users, and complainants.
- The organisation's internal and external communications, policies and processes are clear and fair to all and take account of the needs and experiences of diverse groups, including those with shared protected characteristics.
- The organisation understands how its policies and processes may lead to differential outcomes and takes steps to address them where the outcomes are not justifiable or reasonable.
- The organisation actively promotes equality of opportunity and outcomes between diverse groups including those with shared protected characteristics, while encouraging others to do the same.

4 Engaging and working with others

What we expect

The organisation engages and collaborates effectively, in order to inform, enhance and deliver its work. It seeks appropriate alignment with other organisations, and identifies and manages risks to the public in respect of its registrants.

Why it is important

Through consultation and working with other organisations better policies can be developed. Sharing appropriate information on patient and service user safety matters can help to prevent harm.

In practice, this would mean that:

- There is collaborative working between regulators, registers and other relevant organisations, including appropriate exchange of information related to risk and harm to the public.
- Policies and processes are informed by the views of, and information and evidence provided by, other organisations and people, to better support and advance public protection.
- Where appropriate and beneficial for public protection and quality of care, policies and processes are aligned with those of other organisations and regulators / registers and promote consistency of outcomes across the health and care professions.

Category: Standards and Guidance

5 Standards and Guidance for Registrants

What we expect

The organisation maintains, publishes and promotes up-to-date standards and guidance that support health and care practitioners to act professionally and practise safely, prioritising public protection.

Why it is important

Professional standards and guidance provide practitioners with essential information about the standards of practice and behaviour that are expected of them. They are the means by which this is communicated to the public and inform education and training programmes.

Standards and guidance are important because they help enable safe, ethical, and high-quality care and can help prevent problems from happening. When problems do occur they act as a benchmark for assessing a professional's suitability to practise.

In practice, this would mean that:

- Practitioners are aware of and have access to the organisation's standards and guidance they need to support safe and effective practice.
- Standards and guidance are up to date and informed by evidence, address emerging areas of risk, and prioritise public protection.
- Standards and guidance are aligned across practitioner groups where appropriate, to support safe and effective care, and consistent regulatory outcomes.

Category: Education and Training

6 Standards for Education and Training

What we expect

The organisation maintains and publishes up-to-date standards for education and training that prioritise public protection, prepare learners to work safely and effectively and meet the needs of diverse populations.

Why it is important

So that the public and employers can be assured that education and training providers are equipping those working in health and care with the right knowledge, skills and behaviours to provide safe and effective care. If you are receiving treatment from someone who is learning, you can be assured their practice is appropriately supervised.

In practice, this would mean that:

- The outcomes that learners must achieve, and the standards used to assess education and assessment providers and education programmes, are kept up to date.
- The outcomes that learners must achieve link to the professional standards for practitioners and prepare learners to work safely and effectively, prioritise public protection, and meet the needs of diverse populations.
- The standards used to assess education and assessment providers and education programmes prioritise public protection. They support learners to achieve the education outcomes.

Category: Education and Training

7 Quality Assurance of Education and Training

What we expect

The organisation is effective in assuring itself that education and assessment providers are delivering learners who meet the education outcomes and other relevant registration requirements, and provide a safe environment for learning.

Why it is important

Organisations set standards for education and training in health and care professions. In order to ensure that these standards are met, organisations need to have effective quality assurance processes in place. This will mean that education and training providers are equipping those who will deliver health and care with the right knowledge, skills and behaviours. Quality assurance of the learning environment will mean that people who are receiving treatment from someone who is learning, can be assured their practice is appropriately supervised.

In practice, this would mean that:

- The quality assurance processes for education and assessment providers and programmes are proportionate, avoid unnecessary duplication with other organisations and take into account risk.
- The quality assurance processes are transparent and robust and ensure that education and training deliver learners who have achieved the education outcomes.
- Action is taken where concerns are identified about education and training and where there are wider safety issues for patients and service users.
- Information on the outcomes of quality assurance activity are published (for the regulators) or transparent (for the Accredited Registers) and easy to access.

Category: Registration

8 The public register

What we expect

The organisation maintains an accurate and accessible published register of all health or care practitioners, clearly indicating any restrictions on their registration. Where appropriate, this applies to businesses and premises, who are registered.

Why it is important

So that the public, patients, service users, employers and fellow health and care professionals can easily check whether a practitioner is qualified, registered, up-to-date, indemnified, and suitable to practise.

In practice, this would mean that:

- The Information about registrants is accurate, accessible and easy to find.
- The public register contains only information that organisations assess as being necessary for public protection.
- Restrictions on practice are displayed clearly and are visible to anyone accessing a register entry for a practitioner.
- A system is in place for updating and quality assuring the register.

Category: Registration

9 The registration process

What we expect

The organisation operates a transparent, proportionate, efficient and fair process to allow only suitable practitioners, and, where applicable, businesses or premises to join, remain on, and return to its register.

Why it is important

So that everyone can understand the process for registering with an organisation and have confidence that the process operates fairly, ensuring that only suitable practitioners join the register.

In practice, this would mean that:

- Only people with suitable qualifications, skills and knowledge and who are professionally suitable can register with an organisation.
- Only businesses/premises that meet regulators' requirements are on the register.
- Everyone can know what is required to register with an organisation, including how to make an appeal, and the process is easy to understand.
- The process for registering with an organisation, and for appealing registration decisions, is fair, proportionate and efficient.
- Decisions about registration and appeals are clearly explained.

Category: Registration

10 Protecting the public from being misled about registration status

What we expect

The organisation takes proportionate action in response to the risk of people misleading the public about their registration status.

Why it is important

So that the risk of harm resulting from receiving treatment or services from people who lack the qualifications or skills to practise safely is reduced.

In practice, this would mean that:

- The organisation has effective and published processes in place to deal with people who misrepresent their registration status.
- The approach taken to managing the risks posed by people misrepresenting their registration status is proportionate, agile and able to adapt to changing and emerging risks.

Category: Registration

11 Continuing suitability for registration

What we expect

The organisation has proportionate requirements and processes in place to assure that registrants maintain their skills and continue to be suitable to practise

Why it is important

So that health and care practitioners' skills and competencies continue to be updated and developed throughout their careers in order that they can deliver safe and effective care. So that, through appropriate checks, only professionally suitable practitioners are on the register.

In practice, this would mean that:

- The assurance processes that organisations have in place about continued practice competence and suitability are proportionate, fair, and align with best practice.
- The organisation is clear about the purpose of the requirements it places on registrants to assure their ongoing competence and suitability, and supports them to meet the requirements.
- Registrants, employers and the public are clear about what must be done to maintain registration.
- The organisation's assurance requirements about continued practice competence and suitability are risk-based and targeted towards public protection.

Category: Concerns

12 Raising concerns about a registrant

What we expect

The organisation ensures that the process for raising a concern is accessible to all, makes clear the types of concerns that should be referred to them, and supports timely local resolution of cases where appropriate.

Why it is important

So that serious concerns about the conduct and competence of registrants can be brought to the organisation's attention by anyone, and less serious concerns can be addressed locally or through other means where appropriate. This will support effective use of time and resources by employers, regulators and registers, whilst prioritising the protection of the public.

In practice, this would mean that:

- Anyone is able to access information about how to raise a concern about a registrant to the organisation, the sorts of concerns they can take action against, and the process for dealing with them.
- Anyone is able to raise a concern to the organisation about a registrant's practice or behaviour.
- Regulators and registers are encouraging concerns about registrants to be resolved by the right organisation at the most appropriate level.
- Employers and other organisations making referrals have clarity about the types of concerns that should be referred to a regulator or register, and those they should seek to resolve themselves.

Category: Concerns

13

Investigating and resolving concerns about a registrant - timeliness

What we expect

The organisation considers, investigates and resolves concerns about registrants as quickly as is possible for a fair and safe resolution of the case.

Why it is important

So that concerns are addressed in a timely way in order that patients, service users and the public are protected at the earliest opportunity, fairness is maximised and the impact on wellbeing is minimised for all parties.

In practice, this would mean that:

- Concerns are resolved without unreasonable or unjustified delay for registrants, complainants and witnesses.

Category: Concerns

14 Investigating and resolving concerns about a registrant - fairness

What we expect

The organisation's policies and process for considering, investigating and resolving concerns about registrants are fair, proportionate, consistent and transparent, while protecting the public and maintaining public confidence.

Why it is important

So that all fitness to practise decisions regardless of where they fit in the process are adequately protecting the public without unfairly disadvantaging the registrant, and that this is clear and understandable to others.

In practice, this would mean that:

- The processes for examining, investigating and resolving concerns about registrants are fair and protect the public.
- The decisions about concerns are fair to all parties involved and protect the public.
- The organisation clearly explains how and why it makes decisions when examining, investigating and resolving cases.

Category: Concerns

15

Concerns about registrants - identifying and acting on risk

What we expect

The organisation identifies and manages risks in all cases which suggest a registrant poses a serious risk to public safety and confidence and takes timely action to restrict practice where necessary (such as interim measures).

Why it is important

So that patients and service users are protected as soon as possible where there is a serious risk of harm from unsafe practice or poor conduct by a registrant.

In practice, this would mean that:

- The organisation is able to continuously assess and review the level of risk in a case.
- The organisation takes quick and appropriate action to restrict the practice of registrants in the period between receiving the concern and concluding the case, where they assess that there is a serious risk to the safety of patients or service users (for example seeking interim measures where applicable).

Category: Concerns

16 Support for all parties

What we expect

The organisation provides complainants, witnesses, and registrants involved in a complaint with the support they need throughout the case and keeps them informed about case progression in a sensitive and timely way.

Why it is important

So that complainants, witnesses, and registrants can engage fully with the fitness to practise process, any negative impacts are minimised and the best possible evidence can be secured for the process.

In practice, this would mean that:

- Complainants, witnesses, and registrants are kept updated throughout the lifetime of the case.
- Complainants, witnesses, and registrants are treated with dignity, respect and sensitivity.
- The process minimises further harm to the health, including mental health and wellbeing, of all parties.

Category: Accreditation of voluntary register

Eligibility and Public Interest

What we expect

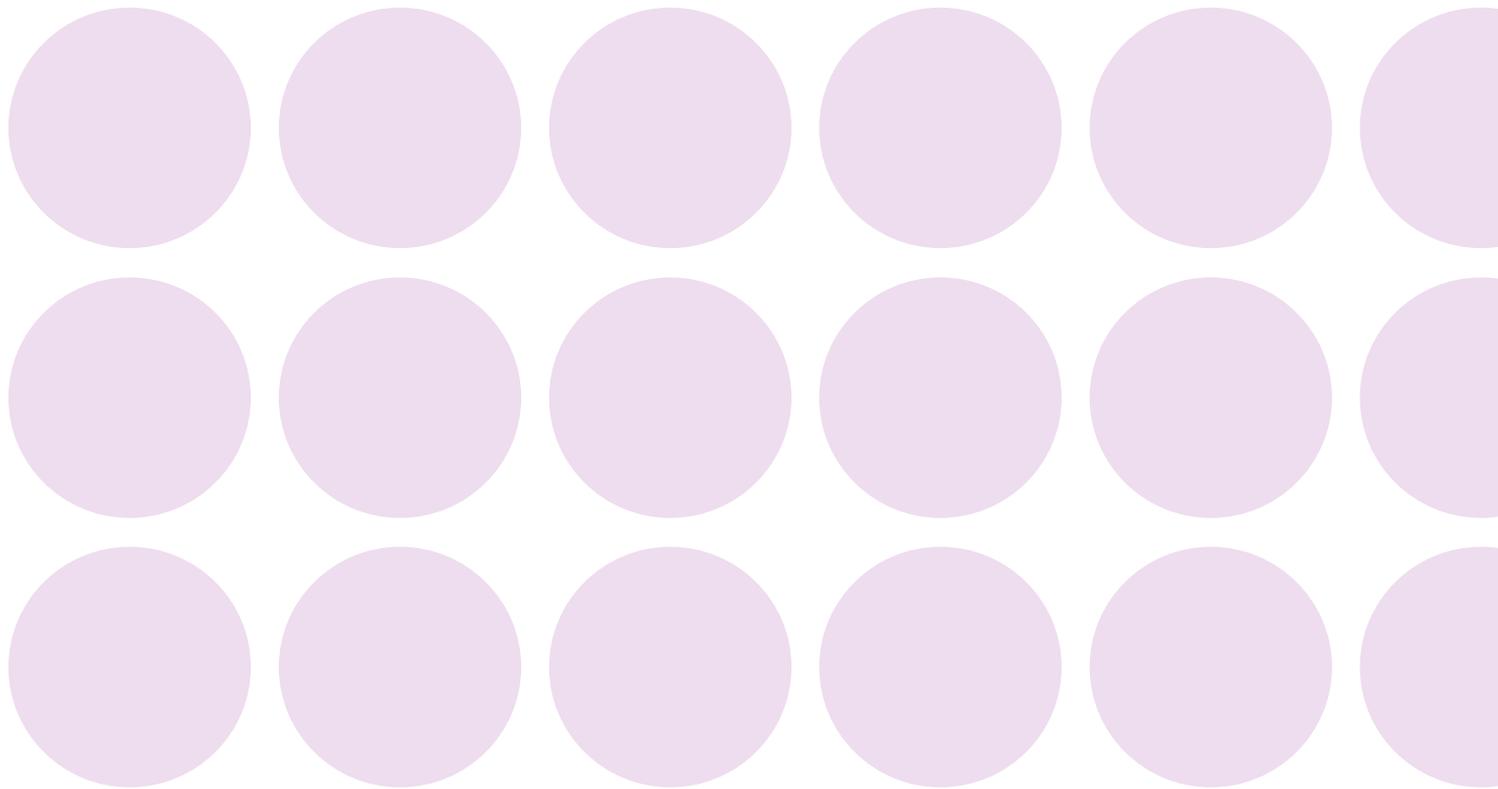
The register is eligible for accreditation, operates lawfully, and it is in the public interest to accredit the register.

Why it is important

So that the members of the public can have confidence in accredited registers, registered practitioners and the PSA because accreditation is only granted when it is lawful, the benefits of the practice are clear and any risks of the practice are managed.

In practice, this would mean that:

- The law permits accreditation of the register because:
 - it is a register of health practitioners (UK-wide) or social care practitioners (England only)
 - there is no legal requirement to be registered to use a protected title and/or perform the practice.
- There is objective evidence that service users benefit from the practice.
- The risks of the practice, including the potential for misleading and unproven claims, are identified, justified, and managed by the register's standards and requirements for registration.
- The benefits of the practice outweigh the managed risks.
- The Register and practitioners comply with relevant UK law.



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