

The Joint Professional Bodies

Qualified Persons Eligibility Scheme

News Bulletin

Published June 2023

The Joint Professional Bodies (JPB) are committed to keeping in touch with the Qualified Person's community and will be releasing a regular newsletter to share relevant updates and information about the QP eligibility scheme.

UK vs EU Legislation

Following the changes to the Study Guide in October 2021, we are now following the UK legislation as the primary legislative source. Whilst candidates are required to understand EU legislation and directives, following Brexit, candidates are expected to be following UK legislation as the primary source of QP legislation. Candidates should ensure that their knowledge and understanding of the roles and duties of a QP are based on the UK legislation and the associated statutory instruments.

Registration Form

It is now mandatory that all candidates register with their professional body before they intend to submit their final application.

The registration form is available online and at a minimum, candidates will need to be a member of a professional body and have identified a sponsor (see sponsor section later in this bulletin), to submit a form. Once a form is received, the QP Officer will check that:

- the candidate has the appropriate membership level;
- the candidate's qualification meets the legal requirements and;
- the candidate's sponsor(s) meet the requirements.

Once a candidate has successfully registered, they will receive a copy of the application and sponsor forms that they should use.

The registration process is free of charge and does not restrict you to a submission date or even to submit an application. The level of information needed is basic and required to help us identify any potential issues as early in the process as possible and long before the full application.

All candidates, regardless of what stage of their QP training they are in, are encouraged to register as early in the process as possible.

Degree Checking

The process of verifying a candidate's degree and its suitability for a QP application was discussed at the most recent annual Tripartite meeting, which is a meeting between the JPB, the MHRA and VMD. As part of this discussion, it was agreed to review this process and investigate whether it needs updating. Further updates will be provided to candidates through the Newsletter.

At this current time, the professional bodies will be maintaining their existing degree verification processes, which may include verifying the subjects studied in the degree.

Application Fee

As a result of the current economic situation and continued high inflation, the JPB have been reviewing fees for the QP application process.

From the 1st of October 2023 the QP application fee will be increasing to £770 and will apply across all three professional bodies.

The annual professional body renewal fees may also be changing, but these are independent from the QP application process and are the responsibility of the individual bodies.

Sponsors

The role of the sponsor is a fundamental part of the QP application process and is one of the key reasons why the registration process was enacted. The sponsor has many roles, but their key responsibility is to help prepare a candidate for the application process, particularly the interview stage. The JPB expectation is that the sponsor will act as a mentor and have regular interaction with the candidate throughout their training.

Full details of the sponsor and their requirements can be found in the Guidance notes (section 2.5) but if the prospective sponsor requires any further advice on fulfilling the role, they should refer to their own professional body.

Reasons/ Trends for Failure

The JPB have been keeping track of the areas of failure at the interview stage over the past several years. To help current and future candidates prepare for the QP application process, the JPB has decided to share the top five areas of failure.

Top five sections of failure in interviews are:

1. B (The role and professional duties of a QP)
2. C (Pharmaceutical Quality Systems)
3. F (Pharmaceutical formulation and processing)
4. G (Pharmaceutical microbiology)
5. I (Pharmaceutical packaging)

Additionally, many candidates who have failed, partly did so due to their inability to extrapolate their knowledge into areas of the Study Guide outside of their chosen dosage form. As part of the interview process, candidates will be assessed on their ability to apply their knowledge and understanding to any area of the Study Guide. This is done because the assessors need to be satisfied that if a candidate passes, they would be able to function as a QP in any licenced undertaking, after a suitable induction period.

The sharing of this information is to highlight typical areas of failure so that candidates can better prepare for the interview stage of the assessment process.

Training Courses

Several academic institutions and commercial companies offer QP training courses. Taking a course is not compulsory, and the JPB do not recommend, accredit, or endorse any particular courses. It is for candidates and their sponsors to decide whether attending a formal training course would be suitable.

The RSC does approve some courses offered by some of these providers, but this is solely for the purposes of professional development. A RSC approved course in no way implies that a course will fulfil the requirements of the Study Guide and should not be taken as any kind of endorsement by the RSC with regards to the QP application process.

**QP Officers
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