Certification of Eligibility for Specialist Registration (CESR)
Application Guide
Contents

1. Introduction - Equivalence (CESR) ................................................................. 3
2. Entry requirements ......................................................................................... 3
3. How is a CESR applied for? ........................................................................ 3
4. CESR Application Process ........................................................................... 4
5. How long does the process take once I have submitted my application? .......... 4
6. Specialty Specific Guidance (SSG) ............................................................... 4
7. Who will assess my application? ................................................................. 5
8. Fees ............................................................................................................. 5
9. May I approach members of the Equivalence of Training Committee about my application? ........................................................... 5
10. Who should I ask to be my referees? .......................................................... 5
11. How long does the process take once I have submitted my application? .......... 5
12. How can I get an update on the progress of my application? ....................... 6
13. If my application is unsuccessful, what are my options? ............................ 6
14. What are the most frequently omitted pieces of evidence? .......................... 6
15. Tips for applying for CESR ........................................................................ 7
16. Application for a grant to assist with CESR ............................................... 7
17. Personal support ......................................................................................... 8
18. Contacts for advice and information ......................................................... 8
1. **Introduction - Equivalence (CESR)**

This is the process by which doctors who have not trained in an approved programme can demonstrate their knowledge, skills and experience are equivalent to that of the relevant Certificate of Completion of Training (CCT) curriculum to join the GP or Specialist registers.

Equivalence (CESR) is a Certificate of Eligibility for Specialist Registration in the UK. An applicant for CESR must provide a portfolio of evidence that demonstrates that their specialist training and/or specialist qualifications, together with their experience, are equivalence to the requirements set out in the Faculty of Sexual and Reproductive Health (FSRH) CCT Curriculum for Community Sexual & Reproductive Health (CSRH). You can contact us and the GMC for information and/or advice before you apply.

2. **Entry requirements**

In order for you to be successful in your application it is mandatory that the evidence you supply in your Equivalence application demonstrate that you have achieved all the requirements of the CSRH curriculum. These requirements are set out in detail in the Specialty Specific Guidance (SSG) (see also 6. below).

3. **How is a CESR applied for?**

GMC has a tool which will identify the correct application and give the all the information you need. By doing this, you'll be able to process your application more efficiently. Please follow this link for the tool.

Making an application to the GMC can be an extremely lengthy and stressful process. It is very important to read the GMC’s guidance and the Specialty Specific Guidance before starting to put together an application.
4. CESR Application Process

An overview of the CESR process

5. How long does the process take once I have submitted my application?

The GMC first needs to ensure all application documentation has been received, including structured reports from referees, before sending the completed application to the FSRH. This part of the process can be lengthy, as the GMC may need to ask you for further information.

To help the process advance as quickly as possible, please read all the guidance carefully before submitting your application to ensure you provide all the documentation required and respond promptly to requests for further information from the GMC.

Once the GMC is satisfied with the evidence obtained and has sent the application to the FSRH, it will take approximately two to three months before you are informed of the outcome of the assessment.

6. Specialty Specific Guidance (SSG)

The GMC have created guidance for achieving the CSRH Certificate of Eligibility for Specialist Registration. This will tell you the evidence expected you submit for your application.

Please follow this link for the Specialty Specific Guidance
7. **Who will assess my application?**

You will need to submit your application to the GMC. The FSRH Equivalence Committee assesses applications on behalf of the GMC. Members of the Group are trained Members of the FSRH who will determine whether your training, qualifications and experience are equivalent to the requirements of a CCT. If they are found to be equivalent, you will be recommended for entry on to the Specialist Register.

The GMC has the final say on who enters the Specialist Register and may overturn the FSRH’s decision, but this is rare.

8. **Fees**

There is a fee for the CESR application which is paid to the GMC. An application for specialist or GP registration through the general system of assessment is £1668, rising to £1676 effective from 1 April 2021. Please check the GMC website for updates.

For more information please follow this link.

9. **May I approach members of the Equivalence of Training Committee about my application?**

Canvassing on behalf of applicants through any source is not permitted. It is therefore inappropriate to approach members of the Group about your application. If a Group member has a personal or professional relationship with you, they will be excluded from assessing your application. However, the FSRH will provide you with a mentor, if you request, to support you through putting together your application.

10. **Who should I ask to be my referees?**

You need to provide the details of six people who have agreed to act as your referees, who can attest that you possess the full range, depth and breadth of competencies in the curriculum document. One of your referees must be your current Clinical or Medical Director.

For further information, please see the GMC’s guidance on selecting referees.

11. **How long does the process take once I have submitted my application?**

The GMC first needs to ensure all application documentation has been received, including structured reports from referees, before sending the completed application to the FSRH. This part of the process can be lengthy, as the GMC may need to ask you for further information.
To help the process advance as quickly as possible, please read all the guidance carefully before submitting your application to ensure you provide all the documentation required, and respond promptly to requests for further information from the GMC.

Once the GMC is satisfied with the evidence obtained and has sent the application to the FSRH, it will take approximately two to three months before and you are informed of the outcome of the assessment.

12. How can I get an update on the progress of my application?

Only the GMC can update you on the progress of your application. Please contact the GMC Certification Officer with whom you have been corresponding for further information.

13. If my application is unsuccessful, what are my options?

You would be able to submit a review application within twelve months of receiving the decision letter regarding the outcome of your application. This would involve submitting the evidence that you did not submit in the first application. You will be given guidance as to what is required. Alternatively, under specific circumstances, you would be able to appeal against the decision.

For more information about reviews and appeals, please visit the GMC website.

14. What are the most frequently omitted pieces of evidence?

The most common reasons for applicant failure are as follows:

- certificates of courses/qualifications submitted without full details of course content and length
- lists of publications without any supporting evidence of actual papers, such as a front page showing authorship (independently certified)
- national/international lectures - without identifying audience or conference details
- lack of robust evidence of Public Health Medicine competencies, audit, and clinical governance involvement
- lack of references spread across the depth and breadth of the CSRH curriculum
- attainment of competencies that have not been endorsed by a senior clinician able to conduct the required assessment. For example, three summative OSATS for each surgical procedure, from the required timeframe are required. Within the UK, a FSRH accredited trainer will be able to assess these competencies. Further information can be found on the FSRH website
- Evidence for each element of the curriculum not being triangulated with different types of evidence such as WBPAs, case histories and case lists.
- Skills listed in the approved FSRH List of Procedures must be confirmed by WPBAs
15. **Tips for applying for CESR**

- Consider all of the evidence to be submitted
- Start with the curriculum – ensure you have every curriculum element signed off before you submit your application
- Make sure you have the right number of workplace-based assessments to submit as evidence for procedural skills
- Place most weight on primary evidence
- Secondary evidence helps to triangulate the evidence
- Place most weight on evidence gained over the last 3/5 years as in the SSG
- Avoid guessing or speculating. If you are unsure, ask the GMC or Faculty, as appropriate
- If you identify a gap / deficiency add a recommendation
- Speak to a successful CESR applicant and/or mentor for support

16. **Application for a grant to assist with CESR**

The FSRH has a small amount of money originally given to us by the Department of Health (DH) for ‘top up’ funds for doctors wishing to do SRH training. We have agreed with the Department of Health that this money can now be used to provide financial assistance to doctors working towards SRH Consultant eligibility via the CESR route.

Grants will be awarded of up to £5,000 per applicant. You are not eligible to apply for a second grant if you have already been awarded one.

**Criteria**

- Current Member/Fellow/Diplomate of the FSRH (subscription fully paid).
- Registered with the GMC.
- Close to applying for a CESR in SRH (aiming to apply within the next 24 months).
- Finding it difficult to complete all the training needed to complete the CESR curriculum without financial assistance.
- Clear plan for what you would use the financial assistance for – able to describe which parts of the curriculum this would enable you to complete and to what timescale.
- Not had a previous successful application to this fund.
- PLEASE NOTE that successfully applying for this fund will have no bearing on the outcome of your CESR as this is decided by the GMC.

**How to apply for a CESR Top Up Fund**

Please apply by filling in the [on-line form below](#). You will receive an immediate notification of receipt and the FSRH will make a decision and inform you of it within 4 weeks of your application date.
17. **Personal support**

The FSRH will source a mentor to support you through preparation for your application and advise on peer support on request. They can also provide access to the specialty training ePortfolio to facilitate evidence collection and storage for later attachment to the GMC application. There is a small charge for this.

18. **Contacts for advice and information**

FSRH  
[specialty@fsrh.org](mailto:specialty@fsrh.org)  
Tel: 020 7724 5187

GMC  
[equivalence@gmc-uk.org](mailto:equivalence@gmc-uk.org)  
Tel: 0161 923 6602