There are two routes to being placed on the Specialist Register. This register is held by the GMC and is a requirement for doctors applying for substantive, fixed term or honorary consultant contracts in the UK. Doctors in the UK who have successfully completed an approved training programme are awarded a Certificate of Completion of Training (CCT) which allows placement on the Specialist Register.

The equivalence route allows doctors from anywhere in the world with any combination of training and experience to apply for a Certificate of Eligibility for Specialist Registration (CESR) if they feel they are of the same standard. The standard is therefore of someone who has recently obtained a CCT in Ophthalmology. This standard is set in law by order of parliament and is to ensure the highest standard of patient care and safety. It is important as an assessor to ensure that this standard is maintained as the decision to grant a CESR will allow the applicant to be appointed a Consultant in the NHS and become an independent practitioner and supervise and teach others.

**The role of the College and the CESR assessor**

The College’s role is to evaluate individual applications and send recommendations to the GMC. The College works closely with the GMC to ensure that a robust system of assessment is established.

The equivalence process requires attention to detail for the both the applicant and the assessor. The assessor will go through the paperwork submitted as evidence in detail and this is followed by a teleconference with a second assessor to discuss the application prior to completing an evaluation form. There will be an experienced lead assessor matched with a less experience non-lead assessor in order to maintain the high standard required during the assessment process and also to help with the training of the non-lead assessor. The completed evaluation form is then returned to the College before it is forwarded to the GMC for final approval. It is envisaged that no more than 2 assessments will be required per year. A training day at the College will be provided for new assessors prior to an initial observation of the process and then finally involvement in an application as a non-lead assessor. Only when the assessor is competent and experienced in the process will he or she be required to take on the role of lead assessor.

**Appointment and term of office**

1. A fixed term, substantive or honorary NHS Consultant in ophthalmology

2. Fellows, Members or Affiliate Members of the Royal College of Ophthalmologists (and be on the current membership roll).

3. Registered with the College for Continuing Professional Development, or an equivalent body which is acceptable to the Training Committee.

4. Be actively or recently involved in training in ophthalmology.

5. Have been in a consultant post for a minimum of three years.

1. Be appointed for a term of three years renewable once.

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