**Accredited Registers**

**Condition Review: Rehabilitation Workers Professional Network (RWPN)**

# Outcome

## At the RWPN’s initial accreditation, the Professional Standards Authority issued 12 Conditions on its accreditation. Eight of these have previously been agreed as met, and the four outstanding that required an Accreditation Panel were due to be completed by April 2023 (see pages 9 to 10 of the published outcome).[[1]](#footnote-2)

## This report sets out our assessment of the actions taken by the RWPN to satisfy the Condition.

## The Panel found that the RWPN had not met Conditions 7, 9 and 12. Condition 8 was found to have been partially met. The Panel recognised that the RWPN had taken steps towards the Conditions and reissued them with new timeframes, to enable them to be fully met.

# Background

## We assess registers against our *Standards for Accredited Registers* (‘the Standards’).[[2]](#footnote-3) Where a Register has not met a Standard, we can issue Conditions. A Condition sets out the requirements and the timeframe that a Register must meet.

## At the RWPN’s initial accreditation, completed in March 2022, we issued 12 Conditions (a full list is published on the RWPN’s directory page at [Rehabilitation Workers Professional Network | PSA (professionalstandards.org.uk)](https://www.professionalstandards.org.uk/what-we-do/accredited-registers/find-a-register/detail/rehabilitation-workers-professional-network). Conditions 7, 8, 9 and 12 had to be implemented by April 2023. Standard 11 was also due to be completed by this time, but since it required observing a complaints hearing and there have not been any during this period, it is considered as met.

## The Conditions were:

* **Condition 7: The RWPN should publish its processes for registration and renewal, (including information about the decision makers) and update the information on its website to make clear what its registration requirements are for the public. The RWPN should develop a policy for assessing applicants who have trained with another provider for example those who have studied abroad.**
* **Condition 8: The RWPN should review whether it needs to include any additional fitness to practice declarations within its application and renewals processes and update its application and renewal forms accordingly. If so, the RWPN should develop of policy for handling positive declarations.**
* **Condition 9: The RWPN should develop and publish an appeal policy for registration decisions.**
* **Condition 12: The RWPN should review its indicative sanctions guidance to ensure that it has enough flexibility for the RWPN to act in different situations. The RWPN should review if sanctions issued by the Initial Investigation Panel (IIP) should be published taking the public interest into account. The RWPN should consider if the Professional Conduct Panel (PCP) can decide not to issue a sanction, and if so, include information about this within its complaints policies.**

## This report discusses the actions the RWPN took to address the Condition, as well as our decision about whether the Condition is met.

## We reviewed the following evidence:

## The RWPN’s reported actions about what it had done to meet the Conditions.

## Information published on the RWPN’s website.

# Concerns leading to the Conditions

### Condition 7

## At its initial accreditation we noted that the RWPN has processes in place for assuring itself that registrants meet its standards for registration. The RWPN requires registrants to provide evidence of qualifications and has a policy in place for those who have completed accepted training but who cannot provide certificates. However, the RWPN did not have a formal process in place for assessing people who have applied with certificates from other providers such as those who have trained overseas. It had not published information about its application and renewals processes and do not currently have an appeals process for registration decisions.

### Condition 8

## At its initial accreditation, we noted the RWPN required applicants and renewing registrants to sign to say that they have read and understood its *Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct* but did not currently ask any other declarations. Condition 8 was issued to address this, and required the RWPN to develop supporting policies for how any declarations would be considered.

### Condition 9

## At initial accreditation, we noted the RWPN had not published information about its application and renewals processes and did not currently have an appeals process for registration decisions. Linked to Condition 7, we considered it would be important for registrants to be clear on these areas.

### Condition 12

## At its initial accreditation, we noted the Initial Investigation Panel may issue resolutions to the registrant who is subject to a complaint where they have found that a case is upheld but where they have decided not to submit to the Professional Conduct Panel. These resolutions were not published. The Accreditation Panel suggested that the RWPN should consider whether it’s in the public interest to publish resolutions. The Panel noted that the Indicative Resolutions and Sanctions Guidance could include more flexibility, for example publishing the outcomes of the IIP when it is in the public interest or when the RWPN wants to send a message to the membership.

# Assessment of Conditions 7, 8, 9 and 12

## The RWPN provided its response to the Condition on 23 June 2023.

### Condition 7

## The RWPN has updated its webpage setting out how to join its register ([Rehabilitation Workers Professional Network RWPN - HOW TO JOIN](https://www.rwpn.org.uk/join_now)). However, although this sets out the general process, the Accreditation Panel determined that it was still not clear how renewals, or applications from people who have trained through routes not already recognised by the RWPN’s processes (for example, if they trained overseas), would be handled.

## We accepted that the RWPN has told us that they will consider ‘equivalence’ applications of this type, but that they have not received any in the past year. Despite this, it is important that there is some information available about how such applications will be handled, in the interests of transparency and fairness.

## The Accreditation Panel determined that Condition 7 had not been met and reissued it, with a timeframe of three months. The RWPN is advised to consider the different scenarios and routes through which people may wish to apply, and to develop appropriate policies to support this, and how to renew registration for all members.

### Condition 8

## The RWPN’s registration page now includes reference to responsibility of registrants to notify the RWPN of any fitness to practice declarations, and the process for dealing with them.

## However, since a full registration process is not published, this may be difficult to implement. It also remains unclear how the RWPN would handle positive declarations (for example, if someone has been subject to a disciplinary procedure of another registering body) through its published documents currently.

## Consequently, the Accreditation Panel found that Condition 8 was partly met. The second part of the Condition is reissued, with a timeframe of three months: ‘**the RWPN should develop of policy for handling positive declarations.’**

### ****Condition 9****

## The Accreditation Panel considered the RWPN’s rationale for not developing an appeals policy for registration decisions. This centred on the fact that it has clear requirements about the qualifications needed for registration. The Accreditation Panel determined that despite this, there might be scenarios whether applicants are denied registration for other reasons, such as those linked to fitness to practice declarations. This links to Condition 8.

## The Accreditation Panel found that Condition 9 was not met. It reissued the Condition, with a timeframe of three months.

### Condition 12

## The Accreditation Panel noted the RWPN’s submissions that it had reviewed its complaints guidance following input from a variety of sources and experts but acknowledge that further detail and clarification could be added. The RWPN has yet to receive a complaint.

## The Accreditation Panel found that Condition 12 was not met. reissued the Condition, with a timeframe of three months.

## We noted that the RWPN is currently looking at this area and was planning to discuss further in September.

# Conclusion

## The Conditions have not been met. Whilst we have considered the RWPN’s rationale for actions not taken and recognise that they have taken some steps to partially meet Standard 8, the requirements of the Conditions remain. Having fair, transparent and clear policies for key areas such as registration and complaints are important for registrants, and members of the public to have confidence in the Register.

## It will be important for the RWPN to consider the original rationale for these Conditions as set out in the initial accreditation report. The Conditions are reissued against the *Standards for Accredited Registers[[3]](#footnote-4)* that were introduced in July 2021, after the RWPN’s initial accreditation. In meeting these, the RWPN should consider the minimum requirements for Accredited Registers as set out in the *Evidence Framework[[4]](#footnote-5)*. We hope this will provide a helpful framework. The Accreditation Team have also offered to attend a meeting with RWPN to explain what is required in more detail, recognising that it is a new Accredited Register.

## The reissued Conditions, and the Standards they relate to are set out below. The RWPN must provide its evidence against the Conditions to the PSA within three months of the publication of this report.

#### Standard 2: The Register

* **Condition 1: The RWPN should publish its processes for registration and renewal, (including information about the decision makers) and update the information on its website to make clear what its registration requirements are for the public. The RWPN should develop a policy for assessing applicants who have trained with another provider for example those who have studied abroad.**
* **Condition 2: The RWPN should develop of policy for handling positive declarations.**
* **Condition 3: The RWPN should develop and publish an appeal policy for registration decisions.**

#### ****Standard 5: Complaints about registrants****

* **Condition 4: The RWPN should review its indicative sanctions guidance to ensure that it has enough flexibility for the RWPN to act in different situations. The RWPN should review if sanctions issued by the Initial Investigation Panel (IIP) should be published taking the public interest into account. The RWPN should consider if the Professional Conduct Panel (PCP) can decide not to issue a sanction, and if so, include information about this within its complaints policies.**

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## **27 September 2023**

1. [rehabilitation-workers-professional-network-accreditation-decision.docx (live.com)](https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.professionalstandards.org.uk%2Fdocs%2Fdefault-source%2Faccredited-registers%2Fpanel-decisions%2Frehabilitation-workers-professional-network-accreditation-decision.docx%3Fsfvrsn%3Dad644820_6&wdOrigin=BROWSELINK) [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. The RWPN were originally assessed against the *Standards for Accredited Registers* (April 2016). <https://www.professionalstandards.org.uk/docs/default-source/accredited-registers/standards-for-accredited-registers/standards-for-accredited-registers-2016.pdf?sfvrsn=cfae4820_4> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. <https://www.professionalstandards.org.uk/docs/default-source/accredited-registers/standards-for-accredited-registers/standards-for-accredited-registers.pdf?sfvrsn=cc2c7f20_9> [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. <https://www.professionalstandards.org.uk/docs/default-source/accredited-registers/standards-for-accredited-registers/accredited-registers-evidence-framework-for-standards.pdf?sfvrsn=55f4920_9> [↑](#footnote-ref-5)