

Accredited Registers

Condition Review: British Psychological Society (BPS) Wider Psychological Workforce Register

1. Outcome

- 1.1 At the British Psychological Society (BPS)'s initial accreditation of its Wider Psychological Workforce (WPW) Register, we issued eight Conditions of accreditation. Condition One was in two parts, part one to be completed by 10 October 2022 and part two by 10 January 2023 (see section seven of the published outcome).¹ This report sets out our assessment of the actions taken by the BPS to satisfy the Condition.
- 1.2 We found that the BPS met Condition One.

2. Background

- 2.1 We assess registers against our *Standards for Accredited Registers* ('the Standards')². 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.
- 2.2 At the BPS' initial accreditation, published in August 2023, we issued eight Conditions (a full list is published on the BPS's directory page)³, Condition One was in two parts, part one to be completed by 10 October 2022 and part two by 10 January 2023:

The BPS should complete its recruitment to its Register Advisory Panel and its Complaints Standing Committee without undue delay and should provide reports to the Accreditation team about the following:

- a) Update on its recruitment of the Register Advisory Panel Chair
- b) Recruitment of other members of the Register Advisory Panel members.

For both reports, the BPS should also provide an update on its recruitment of lay people to its Complaints Standing Committee.

¹ [British Psychological Society - initial accreditation decision August 2022 \(professionalstandards.org.uk\)](https://www.professionalstandards.org.uk)

² The BPS 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

³ [British Psychological Society | joins PSA Accredited Registers programme \(professionalstandards.org.uk\)](https://www.professionalstandards.org.uk)

2.3 This report discusses the actions the BPS took to address the Condition, as well as our decision about whether the Condition is met. The BPS's responses to the remaining Conditions will be considered in due course.

2.4 We reviewed the following evidence:

- a) The BPS' reported actions about what it had done to meet Condition One
- b) Information published on the BPS website about its new Register Advisory Panel, including its terms of reference.

3. Concerns leading to Condition One

3.1 At its initial meeting in March 2022, the Accreditation Panel decided to adjourn the meeting to allow the BPS time to make changes to its governance. The Accreditation Panel was concerned about the dual role of the Members Board in promoting the benefits of membership with the BPS as a professional body, and in overseeing its regulatory functions (which inevitably involved taking decisions which might affect the size of the membership and burdens on registrants). The Accreditation Panel found that this represented a significant and unacceptable conflict of interest.

3.2 The Accreditation Panel noted the importance of a separation between functions aimed at membership, and those aimed at regulation. This allows a focus on public protection, for example making sure decisions about appropriate standards are separate from those about financial viability and membership interests. The Accreditation Panel also noted the importance of lay input within the body that has overall responsibility for the Wider Psychological Workforce (WPW) register, as well as within panels and committees which make other key decisions such as complaints, and ethics. The addition of lay people and people with lived experience would help provide a rounded perspective on decisions and ensures they are not driven by member interests.

3.3 The BPS reviewed and updated the governance of the register and decided to establish a Registration Advisory Panel (RAP). At the reconvened Accreditation Panel meeting in July 2022 the BPS reported that the RAP would be chaired by a lay person and would include additional lay members, including those with regulatory experience and service users. At the time of the meeting the BPS was recruiting for the lay Chair.

3.4 The Accreditation Panel welcomed the changes made by the BPS and agreed that the addition of the RAP which reports to the Board of Trustees addresses the potential for conflicts of interest previously identified. However, the Accreditation Panel noted that this mechanism was not yet in place and decided to issue a Condition requiring the BPS to ensure these changes were made without delay and to report its progress on the implementation to the Accreditation team.

3.5 We also considered the BPS' plans to add additional lay people into its governance and its complaints handling panels. Again, the Accreditation Panel welcomed the changes and noted the importance of including lay people with specific skills and knowledge, such as knowledge of regulation or finance as

well as people with lived experience on Boards and Committees responsible for the WPW register and the handling of complaints.

- 3.6 Further details can be found under Standard Seven of the BPS' initial accreditation outcome.

4. Assessment of Condition One

- 4.1 The BPS provided updates to the Accreditation team in October 2022 and January 2023 detailing its response to the Condition.

- 4.2 We reviewed the terms of reference for the RAP noting that the purpose of the group was to:

‘To provide assurance that competency, safe practice and high standards are maintained for the Wider Psychological Workforce register and that the register continues to fulfil its objective of public protection.

To ensure that voluntary register functions are carried out fairly, effectively, proportionately and transparently and in line with the standards set by the Professional Standards Authority (PSA).

To engage with relevant stakeholders and work in partnership with other bodies where appropriate to ensure registrants continue to meet the required standards for entry and maintenance on the Wider Psychological register.’

- 4.3 The terms of reference provide details of the membership of the RAP, it has a lay Chair as well as additional lay members. We reviewed BPS' progress on introducing the new RAP, noting that it recruited the lay Chair in October 2022 and that it was progressing the recruitment of other members with the aim of holding its first meeting in late February/early March 2023.
- 4.4 BPS has also progressed the recruitment of lay people to its Complaints Standing Panel, these members will be ratified for the WPW Register Complaints Standing panel at the RAP's first meeting.

5. Conclusion

- 5.1 We found that the BPS has made changes to its governance to include more lay people and to add independent oversight to its register in the form of the RAP. The independent Chair for this Panel was recruited in October and additional members are currently being recruited. The BPS advised that they are aiming for the first RAP meeting to be held in late February/early March 2023, at this meeting the appointment of the four lay people to the WPW register complaints panel will be ratified.
- 5.2 We noted during our assessment of the Condition that the terms of reference for the RAP state that the service user member of the RAP would be non-voting which did not provide parity when compared to the registrant members who would be voting members. The BPS confirmed however that this was an

oversight and an amendment to the terms of reference would be put forward to its Board to change the service user member to a voting member.

- 5.3 We therefore found that Condition One has been met. We will review the changes to the terms of reference and the implementation of the new RAP as part of our ongoing assessment of the register.