

Access after role or employer change: _____

Backup or approved export tested: _____

Next review date: _____

Deletion should follow the applicable retention and governance requirements; it is not a method for removing an inconvenient professional history. Equally, keeping everything forever is not a safe portfolio strategy. Record why material is retained, where the authoritative version sits and when its continuing need will be reconsidered.

Appendix D Specialist progression toolkit

Tool D1 destination selector

Do not begin with a folder of certificates. Begin with the professional destination and the decision that would recognise it.

My intended destination is:

- broader or deeper practice within my current grade;
- progression or regrading to Specialist under a national policy;
- competitive appointment to an advertised Specialist post;
- specialist registration through the GMC Portfolio Pathway;
- formal training or another registration route;
- leadership, education, research or a portfolio career; or
- a combination that needs separate plans.

Why this destination fits my intended work:

Nation, employer or regulator that owns the decision: _____

Live criteria checked on: _____

Decision-maker and likely timetable: _____

What the destination does not confer: _____

Alternative destination if circumstances change: _____

Tool D2 capability gap map

Use the live framework or person specification for the intended destination. Copy its actual wording into your working document. For each requirement, distinguish experience from evidence and evidence from an assessor's conclusion.

Requirement or capability: _____

Current scope in which it is demonstrated: _____

Primary evidence available: _____

Supporting explanation or reflection: _____

Independent observation or confirmation: _____

Quality, outcome or impact: _____

Gap: experience / recency / breadth / depth / evidence / verification

Development opportunity required: _____

Time, supervision, data or authority required: _____

Owner and review date: _____

Repeat this map for clinical practice, judgement, communication, governance, improvement, education, leadership and any specialty-specific requirement. A blank row is useful when it produces a development request. It is dangerous only when it is concealed by a loosely related document.

Tool D3 Wales regrading preparation

Confirm first that the current All-Wales policy applies to the doctor's contract and circumstances. Retain the operative policy and live submission form used.

Eligibility provision relied upon: _____

Current defined scope of practice: _____

Specialist capabilities demonstrated within that scope: _____

Evidence index location: _____

Existing work wholly or partly at the proposed level: _____

Evidence relevant to the policy's service-need test: _____

Line-manager discussion date: _____

Support offered or development identified: _____

If not supported, written reasons received on: _____

SAS advocate, representative or adviser contacted: _____

Central submission date and confirmation: _____

Further information or interview requirement: _____

Outcome, reasons and effective date: _____

Job-plan and employment actions following outcome: _____

Review or appeal deadline checked from live policy: _____

This route assesses capability and service need under its own policy. Budget pressure, an existing establishment description and the absence of a pre-

created vacancy may be relevant facts, but should not be allowed to replace the policy's stated test without a written decision and appropriate advice.

Tool D4 Scotland regrading preparation

Current circular number and date: _____

Effective period or successor check: _____

Eligibility and service requirements: _____

Current scope and capability evidence: _____

Required organisational approvals or confirmations: _____

Submission route and date: _____

Assessment stage and material considered: _____

Development or workforce issue identified: _____

Outcome and written reasons: _____

Review, reconsideration or appeal route: _____

Representative or adviser: _____

Do not substitute the Welsh process, terminology or forms. A general description of progression is insufficient where the Scottish circular states eligibility, assessment or review requirements precisely. Recheck the circular immediately before submission.

Tool D5 competitive Specialist appointment

Use this route for an advertised post in England or Northern Ireland and wherever appointment is made through open recruitment rather than regrading of the existing post.

Vacancy and closing date: _____

Nation and employing organisation: _____

National contract and local appointment documents: _____

Essential criteria copied exactly: _____

Criteria requiring clarification: _____

Evidence example for each essential criterion: _____

My contribution and result in each example: _____

Scope or opportunity gap: _____

Pre-application question and response: _____

References and declarations checked: _____

Interview examples rehearsed for context, judgement, action, result, learning and transfer: _____

The Specialist employment grade is distinct from the Specialist Register. Do not state or imply specialist registration unless it is held. Equally, do not assume that absence from the Specialist Register makes an applicant ineligible where the current person specification does not require it.

Tool D6 Portfolio Pathway map

Specialty and intended register entry: _____

Current GMC application guide checked on: _____

Curriculum version and specialty-specific guidance: _____

Application eligibility confirmed from: _____

For each curriculum outcome record:

- the outcome and level required;
- evidence identifier and activity date;
- the setting and scope demonstrated;
- how the evidence addresses the outcome;
- recency, breadth or quality limitation;
- required verification and who can provide it;
- additional experience or evidence needed; and
- cross-reference where one item supports several outcomes.

Outcome: _____

Evidence and explanation: _____

Verification: _____

Gap and action: _____

Before submission, check that documents are readable, accurately labelled, appropriately anonymised and organised as the current guidance requires. Do not submit repeated copies merely to fill several rows. Do not ask a verifier to confirm activity outside their knowledge or authority. Record the application fee and evidence rules only after checking the live GMC page.

Tool D7 twelve- to twenty four month development plan

Destination: _____

Three priority gaps: _____

Opportunity to address gap one: _____

Agreed supervisor, measure and date: _____

Opportunity to address gap two: _____

Agreed supervisor, measure and date: _____

Opportunity to address gap three: _____

Agreed supervisor, measure and date: _____

Job-plan change or protected time required: _____

Quarterly evidence review dates: _____

Point for changing destination or timetable: _____

The plan should create capability and credible evidence through real work. Courses may support development, but course accumulation is not a substitute for supervised opportunity, contribution, result and review.

Tool D8 application evidence narrative

For each major example, prepare a concise account that can be adapted without changing its facts.

Context and required standard: _____

My role and authority: _____

Decision or difficulty: _____

Action I personally took: _____

Contribution of others: _____

Result and how it was measured: _____

Learning and later application: _____

Evidence identifiers: _____

Limit or uncertainty: _____

Test the account against the destination's wording. A clinically impressive example may not demonstrate the required governance, education or leadership capability. An outcome achieved by the service does not establish the applicant's individual contribution unless the connection is evidenced. Keep the wording consistent across the form, CV, portfolio and interview.

Tool D9 opportunity request

State the capability gap and ask for a real opportunity to address it.

Capability requiring development: _____

Why it is relevant to current or intended work: _____

Proposed supervised activity: _____

Named supervisor or assessor: _____

Time, access and governance approval: _____

Expected output or observation: _____

Review point: _____

If the request cannot be supported, ask for the reason and a workable alternative. Do not undertake unfamiliar or higher-risk activity merely to generate evidence. Development must remain within competence, governance and patient-safety arrangements.

Tool D10 route comparison review

When more than one destination remains plausible, compare the decisions rather than ranking titles.

Route one: _____

What it recognises: _____

Criteria and decision-maker: _____

Evidence and opportunities still needed: _____

Likely time, cost and employment dependency: _____

Route two: _____

What it recognises: _____

Criteria and decision-maker: _____

Evidence and opportunities still needed: _____

Likely time, cost and employment dependency: _____

Which route fits the intended work, and why? _____

Specialist employment and specialist registration may both be valuable, but one is not a lesser version of the other. A national regrading route addresses an employment decision. Competitive appointment addresses selection for a vacancy. Portfolio Pathway addresses regulatory registration. They may draw on overlapping practice evidence while retaining different standards and consequences.

Worked progression case

An experienced doctor has independent practice, strong feedback and years of appraisal material. She is considering a Specialist post and Portfolio Pathway. Her first map reveals that much of the evidence demonstrates clinical service but little records her contribution to quality improvement, education or broader governance. She does not submit everything at once. She checks the person specification, prepares examples for the employment application and separately maps the current specialty curriculum. Some

evidence can be cross-referenced; other gaps require supervised opportunity and verification. She also asks whether the time and intended future work justify pursuing both routes concurrently. The plan remains ambitious, but it is now based on two defined decisions rather than the assumption that one successful process will automatically complete the other.

Tool D11 independent readiness review

Ask a suitably experienced reviewer to assess the map against the live destination criteria, not against their general opinion of the doctor.

Reviewer and relevant experience: _____

Documents supplied: _____

Criteria clearly evidenced: _____

Claims requiring narrower wording: _____

Gaps requiring experience rather than more documentation: _____

Verification or recency problems: _____

Recommended sequence: _____

Review date: _____

Final progression gate

Before submission or application, confirm:

- the destination and jurisdiction are correctly named;
- the live criteria and form have been used;
- eligibility has been checked independently of perceived merit;
- scope, capability and service need are separated where the process requires it;
- every central claim has evidence and an honest limitation;
- confidential material is appropriately prepared;
- verifiers understand the required function;
- managerial or organisational dependencies are recorded;
- the application is internally consistent; and
- feedback, review or appeal arrangements and deadlines have been checked.

Preserve the exact version sent, the evidence index and confirmation of receipt. If unsuccessful, request and analyse reasons against the stated criteria before deciding whether to appeal, develop, reapply or choose another destination. A disappointing outcome is evidence about one decision at one time; it is not a complete judgement on a career.