

The Joint Professional Bodies QP application process

(Permanent provisions; for applications via the transitional provisions, please refer to the Guidance Notes)

The Society of Biology, the Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain and the Royal Society of Chemistry administer the application process on behalf of the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) and the Veterinary Medicines Directorate (VMD). Members should apply through their own professional body. This is a brief description of the application process; you will find more details in the application documents. If you have further questions, you should contact the QP Officer at the IOB, RPSGB or RSC (contact details on each website).

1 Preparing to apply

You should first refer to the five application documents:

- Study Guide
- Guidance Notes for Applicants and Sponsors
- Application Form
- Sponsor Form
- QP Code of Practice.

Before you send your application, you need to ensure that you meet the requirements for qualifications and experience. The Guidance Notes set out the requirements for members of the three professional bodies. You will also need a sponsor, who will act as a mentor and ensure that you are ready for assessment, and who will provide a sponsor's report and verify the information you give on your application form.

2 Sending your application

You should send your completed form with your sponsor's report, fee and any certificates relating to QP educational courses to your QP Officer. There is a checklist at the end of the application form.

3 Initial assessment

Your QP Officer will ensure that your application is complete and that you satisfy the requirements for qualifications and membership. Your application will then be sent to two assessors from the QP Panel of Assessors for your own professional body.

The members of each Panel of Assessors are experienced practising QPs, who attend appropriate training and CPD meetings throughout the year.

The assessors will review your application to ensure that your experience meets the requirements, and that you have covered all areas of the Study Guide. Occasionally the assessors will ask you (via the QP Officer) for further information, which is usually just for clarification or more detail.

4 Invitation to interview

When the assessors are satisfied, your QP Officer will contact you to agree an interview date. We aim to offer you a date within 6 months of receiving your application, although the average time for a straightforward application is three to four months (and sometimes less). If we receive a large number of applications we will arrange extra interview dates.

If the assessors consider that you should not be invited for interview, your QP Officer will contact you and advise you how to proceed.

5 The interview

Your interview will be in London at the offices of one of the three professional bodies. We have a joint programme of interviews and will offer you the first available date regardless of location.

An interview panel is normally three assessors, one from each professional body, and the interview will be chaired by the assessor from your own professional body. Your QP Officer will attend and will note the questions. There may also be an observer (usually an assessor in training, but the MHRA and VMD have also observed interviews), who will take no part in the interview.

The assessment normally lasts 1 to 1¼ hours. The assessors will ask questions in turn, which will include fact-based and scenario questions. When the interview is finished, your QP Officer will escort you from the room. After a discussion you will be asked to return and the assessors will tell you their decision.

6 The result

If you have satisfied the assessors, you are eligible for nomination to the Register of Eligible QPs of your professional body. Your QP Officer will write to you to confirm this and your QP certificate will follow (usually in two to three weeks as it is signed by all three professional bodies).

If you have not satisfied the assessors, they will tell you why and will advise you on how to proceed. This will be confirmed in a letter. You can make another application when you and your sponsor feel that you have addressed the concerns of the assessors at your interview.

For further information or enquiries, you should contact your QP Officer.