



**RWPN**

## **Registration and Renewal Policy**

### **Register of Vision Rehabilitation Specialists and Qualified Habilitation Specialists**

#### **Becoming a member of RWPN**

[Throughout this policy, the term 'full member' is used – this incorporates Full, HabVI Joint, part-time, NISCC registered membership levels]

To become a full member of RWPN (and join the professional register) applicants are advised of the following.

By applying for **full membership** of RWPN you are stating that you are a qualified Vision Rehabilitation or Habilitation Specialist and, as a consequence of this, that your name will appear on our public-facing professional register. By applying to join as a full member/registrant you are stating:

- I have qualified by an [appropriate qualification route](#)
- I will submit evidence of my qualification either by post or email to RWPN
- I am consenting to my name appearing on the public facing register
- I will abide by RWPN's [Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct](#)
- I will undertake Continuing Professional Development in order to remain on the register, in accordance with RWPN's [CPD policy](#)
- I will notify RWPN of any fitness to practice declarations issued by other accredited/statutory registrant bodies. (Such a declaration will not necessarily exclude registration with RWPN, but the application will need to be reviewed by our Registration and Professional Standards committee.)

#### **Proof of Qualification Policy**

Vision Rehabilitation or Qualified Habilitation Specialists must have undertaken and qualified to practise through a specified and specialist

course. Admission to RWPN's register can only be through these specified qualification routes. These qualification routes are listed and stated on our website: <https://www.rwpn.org.uk/The-Profession>.

To register, the Vision Rehabilitation/Habilitation Specialist is required to submit a copy of their original certificate of qualification. This can be submitted by email or by post. This copy will be uploaded to the registrant's membership record and retained by RWPN in line with our [Data Protection Statement](#) and [Privacy Policy](#). The registrant's membership record will then be updated to indicate that the evidence has been seen. The registrant's name will appear on the public-facing register.

### **What can I do if I cannot find my certificate?**

RWPN recognises that some registrants may not be able to locate a copy of their original certificate of qualification. Some registrants qualified a significant number of years ago and, in some instances, from institutions that are no longer extant. However, we still need to establish that the registrant has qualified to practise.

Where proof of qualification cannot be supplied, we require that the registrant:

- state, in writing, that they are unable to locate their certificate
- state the name of the institution where they qualified and the year
- provide us with the name of a referee who we will contact to seek supporting evidence

The registrant will **not** be admitted to the public-facing register, but this additional information is recorded in the area of the registrant's membership record that is not public-facing. Once the additional evidence has been obtained their record will be updated accordingly, unless we are unable to get corroborating evidence. In this case their name will be withdrawn from the register.

RWPN aims to contact a referee within one month of a registrant's application to join the register.

## **Choosing a referee**

There are two options for choosing a referee:

Option 1. The referee will have been a course tutor or administrator when the registrant undertook qualification training and can testify that they completed and passed the course successfully.

Option 2. The referee will be a manager or former employer who has employed the registrant and can confirm in writing that satisfactory written evidence of qualification was seen when the registrant was employed as a Vision Rehabilitation Worker or Habilitation Specialist.

## **How do we decide on the basis of the referee's evidence?**

If the information provided by referees via option 1 or 2 is satisfactory, the membership secretary of RWPN's Registration and Professional Standards committee can admit them to the register and update the registrant's personal record. The registrant will be notified of this decision.

## **Qualifications from outside the UK**

Where RWPN receives an application to join any of RWPN's registers and where the qualification is from an institution outside the UK, the membership secretary will seek guidance on the applicability of this qualification from the Registration and Professional Standards Committee. To support this they may ask the applicant to provide information about their qualification and work experience. This might include, for instance, descriptors of module content, duration of qualification or recent employment history outside the UK in this field. The committee may also liaise with Birmingham City University (BCU) for their opinion, given their many years' experience of reviewing specialist sensory qualifications in relation to their own course admissions. An administration fee may be levied for carrying out this investigation.

In discussion with BCU and where possible, the committee may suggest that a potential applicant undertakes a top-up module that would entitle them to join one of our registers. Until any qualification has been endorsed as making the holder fit for practice, the would-be registrant will not appear on RWPN's registers, but may still benefit from other full member benefits. A decision can be appealed (see below).

## **Fitness to Practice Declarations**

In accordance with the statement at the introduction to this policy, when applying to become a full member/registrant of RWPB, applicants are required to tick a box to state that they will notify RWPB of any fitness to practice declarations issued by other accredited/statutory registrant bodies.

**Positive declarations** A positive declaration will not necessarily exclude registration with RWPB, but the application will need to be reviewed by our Registration and Professional Standards committee – see “the decision makers?”). To gather information to review a positive declaration, the membership secretary will contact the registrant for information relating to a) the registering body publishing the sanction b) a link to where this information is published. This information will then be provided to members of the Registration and Professional Standards committee for a decision. The registrant/potential registrant will be informed of the decision in writing. This decision can be appealed (see below).

See also “renewing registration” below.

## **The Decision Makers**

Where an application is submitted with a proof of qualification from a recognised qualification route, or through a satisfactory reference the decision maker is the membership secretary of the Registration and Professional Standards Committee. Where the reference is not deemed satisfactory and where an appeal has been made (see “appealing decisions” below), the appeal decision will rest with the Registration and Professional Standards Committee.

## **Renewing Registration**

Registration is renewed annually when membership is renewed. Upon renewal registrants will be required to acknowledge that it is their responsibility to keep their profile updated, agree to abide by RWPB’s Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct and declare whether they have any current sanctions.

## **Lapse of registration**

Registration will be deemed to have lapsed when full membership has lapsed. Reasons for lapse in membership would include non-payment of fees or non-compliance with [RWPN's CPD requirements](#). When a member's name is removed from full membership their name will automatically be removed from the public-facing register. In the event of any member/registrant being removed from membership, but where the time limit on a **published** sanction or condition has not expired, their name will still appear on the sanctions page of our website until that sanction has expired. This is to protect the public and as information to other register holders.

## **Appealing decisions**

If an application to join or renew registration is turned down, the membership secretary will provide applicants with the reason in writing. Appeals should be made in writing stating the reasons and any additional evidence or testimony that the applicant feels to be relevant. This appeal will be discussed by RWPN's Registration and Professional Standards Committee and may entail further investigations, based on the additional supporting evidence. In extenuating circumstances, such as where it relates to an overseas qualification, the committee may seek external guidance to reassure themselves of the qualification's relationship to rehabilitation and habilitation practice in the UK.

This policy was agreed by the RWPN Registration & Professional Standards Committee on September 28<sup>th</sup> 2023.