

Return to Practice Information for Podiatrists and their Mentors

College of Podiatry



The COLLEGE
of PODIATRY

(Updated May 2020)

Return to Practice Information

This guide has been developed to support and advise those wishing to return to practice who:

- have a recognised qualification in podiatry but who are not currently practising
- are not registered with the Health Care Professions Council (HCPC), wish to return to practice after a period of absence and resume their HCPC **registration**
- have a recognised qualification in podiatry that was gained more than 5 years ago and have never worked as a podiatrist or registered with the HCPC

The Health and Care Professions Council

The HCPC is the UK-wide statutory regulator for a number of allied health professions. It was set up following the Health Professions Order in 2001 (Great Britain, Parliament 2002) and currently regulates 16 different professions including podiatry.

The function of the HCPC is to protect the public and it does this by setting the standards of professional training, performance and conduct for the professions it regulates and by maintaining a register of health professionals who meet those requirements. The titles 'podiatrist' and 'chiropodist' are protected and may be used only by people who have a qualification in podiatry/chiropractic and who are registered with the HCPC.

Further information about the HCPC can be found at www.hcpc-uk.org.

As part of registration the HCPC expects podiatrists to undertake Continuing Professional Development (CPD) to keep up to date and to develop their knowledge and skills. Registrants are required to keep a record of their CPD and to sign a statement every 2 years when renewing their registration confirming they have kept up to date. At the time of re-registration the HCPC randomly audits 2.5% of podiatry registrants to check their CPD meets HCPC standards.

HCPC Regulations on Returning to Practice

The HCPC sets out the requirements for practising and returning to practice. Before an application for HCPC registration will be considered, podiatrists who haven't practised in the UK for 2 years or more are required to complete a period of updating their skills and knowledge:

- over 2 years but less than 5 years: 30 days of updating
- 5 years or more: 60 days of updating

There is no update requirement for podiatrists who haven't practised for less than 2 years.

The period in which you undertake your required amount of update must take place no more than a year before you intend to submit your application for HCPC registration and can consist of the following:

- Supervised Practice, or Shadowing¹
- Formal study (e.g. courses, e-learning, lectures, distance learning etc.)
- Private study² (e.g. reading and reflecting on articles, CPD inserts in Podiatry Now, research, clinical audit, branch meetings, conferences)
- Any or all of the above

¹ a 'template letter' is available for membership applicants who wish to approach local practitioners to request their assistance with supervised practice and can be used with different mentors

² this must not account for more than half of the total update; i.e. no more than 15 days for a 30 day update

Mentored Membership of the College of Podiatry

It is advisable to (re)join the College as a Mentored Member, an associate membership type, before commencing any clinical practice update as you should not practice without suitable insurance cover. This type of membership together with the accompanying insurance, which is one of the many membership benefits, acknowledges supervised practice as being part of the process of working towards HCPC re-registration. This arrangement also helps to limit any concerns about the implications of supervised practice for mentors and their insurance.

On completion of the return to practice update and **reinstatement** of HCPC registration, the College's Membership Department should be informed so that the membership 'type' can be amended to that of full practising member.



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Rejoining the College

Re-joining the College gives access to a number of benefits which include:

- Public liability and medical malpractice insurance and product liability insurance cover
- Access to numerous online CPD courses
- Comprehensive best practice documents
- Clinical guidelines
- Network of union learning representatives
- Nationwide branch network of podiatrists
- Public liability and medical malpractice insurance and product liability insurance cover
- Access to numerous online CPD courses
- Comprehensive best practice documents
- Clinical guidelines
- Network of union learning representatives
- Nationwide branch network of podiatrists
- Trade union support
- Advice on starting up and managing a private practice
- Full library of resources on the members only website
- News bulletins
- Articles and news in Podiatry Now
- The largest annual podiatry conference and exhibition in Europe

The College of Podiatry's e-learning modules, Podiatry CPD, are delivered in conjunction with BMJ OnExamination and members are able to access a range of clinical modules in subjects such as diabetes and rheumatology for a discounted price. Time is allotted in each of the modules to write reflective notes. On completion of each module a certificate will be awarded which can be printed and filed in a personal portfolio or uploaded to an e-portfolio for future reference.

CPD is an integral component of ongoing HCPC registration and the College aims to provide members with the tools and support they require to ensure continuing compliance with the HCPC standards for CPD. Once your **membership** application has been processed, further information on accessing the discounted e-learning can be found on the **College's** website www.cop.org.uk.





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What to do now

If you would like to receive support from the College with your return to practice, please contact the Membership Department for a Mentored Membership application form. If you do not as yet have a mentor to support your application, keep hold of the relevant page of the form until you are able to complete the details and return the rest of the form to the Membership Department.

Once **you have a confirmed** mentor please ask him/her to complete the remaining page of the application form which requires them to confirm their assignment as your supervisor/mentor, and return this to the Membership Department.

Further questions?

- **For guidance on returning to practice updates, templates and more:**
[Clinical Leadership and Education Department](#)
Email: courses@cop.org.uk
- **For further details on Mentored Membership:**
[Membership Department](#)
Email: membership@cop.org.uk
- **For information on professional practice and clinical standards:**
[Professional and Private Practice Officers](#)
Email: professionalsupport@cop.org.uk