

1. Who is eligible for AC Approval? What are Professional requirements for AC status?

- Psychiatrists on the GMC specialist register – straightforward application
- Doctors not on the specialist register – Portfolio Route (min 7 Years in Psychiatry with 4 years at Senior Level)
- Psychologists, OT's, Nurses, Social Workers – Portfolio Route (Please check with your regional approvals panel for more information as the suitability of each professional may vary, depending upon their experience in psychiatry)

2. Required documentation for all applicants applying for AC for the first time.

- Completed Application form with two supporting referees (One from their current or most recent MD/TPD/CD or equivalent)
- Attended 2 day AC Introductory Training Course within the two year period immediately preceding the date of the application
- CV, ARCP/CPD compliance and DBS as required by each Panel (as per the DH New Instructions 2015)
- If training has been abroad then approving panel may ask to demonstrate steps the applicant has taken to familiarise themselves with Mental Health Act in England or Wales. (Please contact your regional Approval Panel for further information)

3. Whom shall I nominate as my referees?

The Approval Panels require two supporting references. One of your referees must be either your current Medical/Clinical Director or equivalent and for trainees TPD or equivalent. Both referees should have worked with you for a reasonable period (Approving Panels consider 3 months would be reasonable for referees to make sound judgements) and one referee must have worked with you for a period of minimum 3 months in the preceding 12 months.

4. Why my references are unsatisfactory for AC renewal?

You may not meet the reference requirement if you no longer possess all of the professional competencies set out in Schedule 2 of the Secretary of State's Instructions 2015 or your referees may not have met with the reference criteria.

5. Can I get course conditional approval?

No, a suitable course must be completed prior to the approval being considered.

6. I am retired and no longer need AC approval. Can I still apply for S12(2) approval?

Yes, you could still apply for S12 approval, provided you meet the professional requirements and eligibility criteria for S12(2) approval at the time of application

However, the Panel must be satisfied that the applicant has provided satisfactory evidence of ongoing involvement in the diagnosis or treatment of mental disorder.

7. How long does it take for me to get my approval?

If your application is in order and you meet the criteria for approval it can take up to 6-8 weeks or longer for the Panel to complete the process (note that portfolio application process can take months).

8. I am S12(2) approved in England. Can I work as a S12(2) approved doctor in Wales?

Yes, Sec 12(2) approval transferable between England & Wales.

9. I am AC approved in Wales, can I work as an AC in England without obtaining a separate AC status in England?

No, AC approval is not transferrable between England & Wales – you must apply separately for AC in England and in Wales)

Scotland MHA is different from England.

10. How long is my AC approval valid for?

5 years.

If you have any other questions please contact your Regional Approval Panel.