

Fitness to Practise Committee and Investigating Committee Recruitment pack- Registrant Members, Lay Members and Chairs



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1. Introduction



Image 1: Elisabeth Davies

Pharmacy has never occupied a more significant part in our lives. Whether we ultimately see ourselves as customers or patients, pharmacy matters hugely to each of us and our communities and therefore so does the quality of the provision of care and service.

If you agree, then there couldn't be a more rewarding time for you to join the Statutory Committee membership. You can find out more about the specific skills and backgrounds that we're looking for in this pack.

The ideal statutory committee member candidates will be able to demonstrate their commitment to fairness and working in a spirit of collaboration. They will bring different perspectives, energy and fresh thinking. Once appointed they will have the opportunity to participate in a thorough induction process, learning from existing members and ensuring they feel comfortable with the processes that they'll be expected to follow.

All of this will be underpinned by the GPhC's commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion. The Assurance and Appointment Committee has adapted and updated the appointment process to ensure that the process is fairer, more inclusive and minimises bias by adopting an anonymised shortlisting process. We are serious about our commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion and putting this into practice.

If you care about the provision of pharmacy services and if you can offer the dedication and commitment that we're looking for, then I hope you will consider applying to join. This remunerated role offers an unrivalled opportunity for you to help turn GPhC's bold ambition to be a truly person-centred regulator into a reality.

I look forward to reading your application and thank you for your interest in our work.

With best wishes,



Image 2: Elisabeth Davies

Chair, GPhC Assurance and Appointments Committee

2. About the General Pharmaceutical Council

- 2.1 The General Pharmaceutical Council (GPhC) is the independent regulator for pharmacy professionals and registered pharmacies in Great Britain. Our vision is for safe and effective pharmacy care at the heart of healthier communities.
- 2.2 We have a statutory duty to protect, promote and maintain the health, safety and wellbeing of the public by upholding high standards and public trust in pharmacy. We have an important part to play in making sure people receive safe and effective care when using pharmacy services and have trust in pharmacy.
- 2.3 Our independent Statutory Committees play a crucial role in the regulatory function to uphold pharmacy standards. We make fair, lawful and consistent decisions on concerns raised against pharmacy professionals and pharmacy premises. This includes making sure that our decisions are free from discrimination and that we take steps to minimise risk of bias in all areas of our work.
- 2.4 We are seeking to appoint Pharmacists and Pharmacy Technicians (who we call “Registrant Members”) Who are currently registered to practise and also Lay Members, people who have never been on the GPhC’s register or the register of any other health or social care register, to fill several roles on two of our committees. These are our Fitness to Practise Committee and our Investigating Committee.

You can read more about our committees below.

Investigating Committee (IC)

When a concern is raised with the GPhC, an investigation takes place and if the concern meets a certain criteria, it is referred to the IC. IC meetings take place remotely and take place at least twice per month. Each meeting consists of a panel of three committee members: one lay Chair, one Lay Member and one Registrant Member (either a Pharmacist or a Pharmacy Technician). IC meetings are in private and consider only documentary evidence. Witnesses and pharmacy professionals do not attend these meetings and do not give evidence. The IC has a range of outcomes available to them including taking no action and referral to the Fitness to Practise Committee.

The IC is assisted by the **[Good decision making: Investigating Committee meetings and outcomes guidance](#)**

Fitness to Practise Committee (FtPC)

The FtPC considers cases at different types of hearings, depending on where that is within the fitness to practise process. At each hearing, a panel of three committee members, one Lay Chair, one Lay Member and one Registrant Member hear submissions and evidence from witnesses on behalf of the GPhC and the pharmacy professional involved. The FtPC makes decisions on risk and impairment and has a range of outcomes available to them, including suspension and removal from the GPhC register.

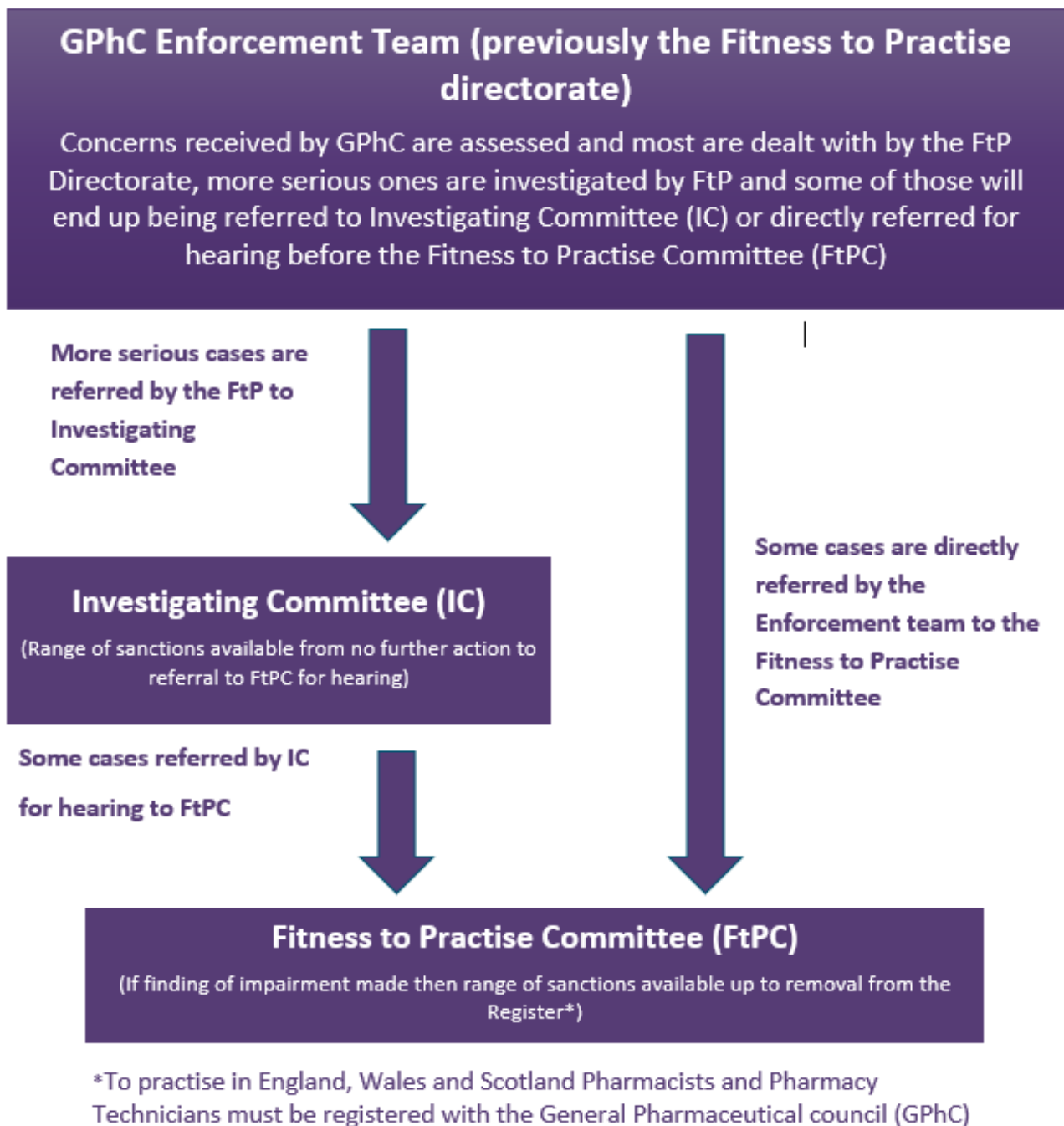
FtPC is assisted by the **[Good decision-making: Fitness to practise hearings and outcomes guidance](#)**

Reserve List/Reserve Members

We are also recruiting for reserve Registrant and Lay members and Chairs.

Reserve members will only sit if no full committee members are available for a hearing or meeting. Reserve members are therefore often approached nearer to the date of a hearing or meeting.

Image 3: Making decisions about more serious concerns



Above is a schematic showing where the Fitness to Practise Committee and the Investigating Committee fit in the process of a concern that is raised to the GPhC.

3. Eligibility to apply

3.1 **Lay Members/Chairs:** The person applying has never been entered onto the GPhC register or the register of any other health or social care regulator.

3.2 **Registrant Members:** Must currently be registered on the GPhC register.

4. Disqualification criteria

4.1 If you meet any of the ineligibility criteria listed in the Pharmacy Order, by law you are unable to join our Statutory Committees. See the ineligibility criteria at paragraphs 7-8 within the **General Pharmaceutical Council (Statutory Committees and their Advisers Rules) Order of Council 2010**.

5. Conflicts of interests

5.1 If you think you may have a conflict of interest, please **contact the Associates and Partners Team**. Conflicts are managed on a case-by-case basis.

6. Committee member role requirements

6.1 Duties and responsibilities of panel members

- Read paperwork and gather an understanding before the meeting or hearing starts.
- Attend hearings either in person or virtually that you have agreed to.
- Deliberate with the other members of the Committee to reach a decision.
- Contribute to the drafting of the written decision in clear and straightforward language.
- Attend initial induction and annual refresher training.
- Complete feedback forms following each hearing to aid continuous improvement.

6.2 Essential criteria – Must be able to demonstrate:

- a. Excellent communication and interpersonal skills, with the ability to set out views clearly and listen actively.
- b. An appreciation of, and commitment to protecting, promoting and maintaining the health, safety and wellbeing of patients and the public.
- c. Able to work efficiently, including when under pressure, manage time effectively and contribute to clear, reasoned decisions.
- d. Able to exercise independence whilst working as part of a team.
- e. Commitment to equality, diversity, and inclusion; impartiality and fair treatment.
- f. Able to make objective and well reasoned decisions.
- g. Ability to evaluate and assess often high volumes of complex information.
- h. Knowledge of pharmacy practice (Registrant member)
- i. Experience of chairing meetings, hearings or tribunals and able to manage time effectively (Chairs)
- j. Legally qualified and in possession of a current practicing certificate (Legally Qualified chairs)
- k. Expertise in/experience of regulatory law and practice or litigation or tribunals, and knowledge of the laws of evidence relevant to regulatory proceedings (Legally Qualified chairs)

6.3 Desirable criteria

- a. An interest in healthcare regulation.
- b. Capable of making effective use of technology, including video and telephone conferencing (Please note: training will be provided as part of the induction to understand what the GPhC uses.)
- c. An understanding and commitment to the Nolan Principles of public life.

7. The Nolan Principles

- 7.1 **The Seven Principles of Public Life (also known as the Nolan Principles)** apply to anyone who works as a public officeholder. This includes all those who are elected or appointed to public office, nationally and locally, and all people appointed to work in the Civil Service, local government, the police, courts and probation services, non-departmental public bodies (NDPBs), and in the health, education, social and care services.
- 7.2 It also covers you if you are successfully appointed to join the GPhC's Committees so you will need to follow these principles.

8. Hear from our current members

Image 4: Manuela Grayson



I've just begun my second term as a Deputy Chair with the Fitness to Practise Committee. I hear cases as part of panel of three with myself, a Lay Member and a Registrant Member. I would say there is a good atmosphere amongst Members with openness in training and meeting discussions. It has been good to see both Members and GPhC staff work-together to continually improve processes.

Manuela Grayson, Deputy Chair Fitness to Practise Committee

I have found a good balance in managing my other responsibilities with my commitment as a Fitness to Practise Committee Lay member. It is an exciting role to be a Lay member and having other commitments should not stop those who are interested to apply. If any issues arise, I speak to the staff team who are always accommodating and willing to support you.

Andrew Popat, FtPC Lay Member since 2020

Image 5: Andrew Popat



I live outside London and that did not stop me applying to be a committee member. Since covid the holding of many of the hearings and meetings online means, I don't always need to commute to London to fulfil my duties as an FtP member. Whilst much of my interaction is online, I still feel fully part of the Committee.

Sam Stephenson, FtPC Pharmacist Member since 2016

Image 6: Sam Stephenson



Image 7: Claire Bonnet



I have found the role of an FTP Lay Member to be very satisfying, interesting and varied.

This role makes a real difference contributing to this important work in protecting the public and supporting the profession in upholding standards.

I enjoy working with and feel supported and valued by my fellow Committee Members and GPhC staff.

The feedback process encourages any concerns to be raised and we give feedback after every hearing.

We also have annual refresher training, which is an opportunity to further our knowledge, be kept up to date with developments as well as an opportunity to meet up with colleagues and share ideas.

Claire Bonnet, Lay Member since 2016

9. Remuneration and expected number of sitting days

- 9.1 Detailed fees are set out in the table below. Expenses will also be paid for in-person events attended. Additional expenses may be covered if discussed with the Hearings Team prior to accepting work.
- 9.2 Fitness to Practise Committee Lay and Registrant Members will sit around 20-30 days per year, with Chairs sitting around 25-35 days per year. The number of sitting days is subject to a member's availability so some members will sit more often and some less often than the average.
- 9.3 Investigating Committee Lay and Registrant Members will sit around 10-15 days per year.

9.4. Fitness to Practise Committee fees

Table 1: Fees for the FtPC

	Daily hearing attendance fee	Training: Half day / Full day	Performance review
Registrant and Lay	£320	£114.41 / £228.85	N/A
Chairs	£440	£114.41 / £228.85	£167.81
Legally Qualified Chairs (not sitting with a Legal Adviser)	£520	£114.41 / £228.85	£167.81

9.5 Investigating Committee

Table 2: Fees for both the IC

	Reading fee	Preparation fee	Daily meeting attendance fee	Training: Half day / Full day	Performance review
Registrant and Lay	£150 up to 1000 pages £300 1000+ pages	N/A	£320	£114.41 / £228.85	N/A
Chairs	£150 up to 1000 pages £300 1000+ pages	£150 1-2 cases £300 3+ cases	£350	£114.41/£228.85	£167.81

10. Frequently asked questions

Why are you recruiting?

We are replacing Committee Members who have come to the end of their “term of office”.

I have never done this sort of thing before. Are you only looking for people with previous experience of this sort of role?

No, not at all and we would actively encourage you to apply if this area is new to you. The Assurance and Appointments Committee are keen to attract applications from all background and sections of the community. Especially those who feel they meet the role specifications and competences – which would be gained in various walks of life- rather than specific tribunal experience.

I am interested in applying but I work full-time, is it still possible to do this role?

We do appreciate that it can sometimes be hard for people in full-time employment to find the time to do committee work with the GPhC. However, the demand varies, and we do understand that our members all have other commitments that must be juggled. Several of our current committee members who are in full-time employment have found that their employer is happy to allow them some time to sit with us, as they appreciate the opportunity for personal growth and career development that the roles offer. If in doubt, have a conversation with your employer before applying.

How many positions will be available?

3 FtPC Chairs

9 FtPC Reserve Chairs

1 IC Reserve Chair

12 FtPC Lay Members

20 FtPC Registrant Members

2 Reserve Lay Members

Please note the number of positions available in each group may change during the process.

How long are the appointments for?

Member appointments are usually for an initial term of four years, after which members may be eligible for a further term of up to four years. All appointments are at the discretion of the Assurance and Appointments Committee (AAC) and are subject to availability, attendance at training and performance at appraisals. Reserves are appointed for a period of three years, after which time (if they have not been elevated to full membership in the interim) the AAC will re-assess their continued suitability to remain on the reserve list.

What induction and training is provided and/or expected?

All new members must attend an induction and observe at least one hearing or meeting before sitting themselves. The induction will include comprehensive training which will provide you with the skills and knowledge required to carry out the role with confidence. Each new member will be allocated a ‘buddy’ who is a current statutory committee member who will be there to support them as required. The

induction process will be held across several days and these will not usually be consecutive. The GPhC holds 1-2 days of annual refresher training each year, which all members and reserves are expected to attend as a condition of their agreement. Induction, observation and training days are all remunerated.

What is the timetable for the recruitment?

Applications must be submitted by 5pm on Monday 6 May 2024. We will notify candidates who are being called for interview in the week commencing 17 June 2024.

I have additional needs and would like to request support during my application and interview process. What are you doing to support applicants?

We want to make sure that nobody is disadvantaged at any stage of the application process because of an additional need. We will be happy to support you through the application and interview process. If you have additional needs, please email the **Associates and Partners Team** to let us know how we can help you. Anything that you choose to share with us will be treated in confidence and will not be part of the selection process unless you wish it to be. We welcome applications from people who may need reasonable adjustments through the process and in order to carry out the role including to travel, accommodation and associated expenses. All applications will be treated equally and fairly.

What is the status of Statutory Committee Members? Will they be employees of the GPhC?

No, they are not employees. Committee Members are classed as Associates of the GPhC and are self-employed for the purposes of their work with us. GPhC Associates sign a fixed-term agreement with the GPhC which places them in a 'bank' of individuals, who are willing to be offered the opportunity to undertake work, from time to time at the GPhC's discretion, relevant to the role to which they are appointed.

Will there be an opportunity for me to speak to a current Committee Member or GPhC staff member about the role before submitting an application?

Yes, we are holding an open evening on the **23 April 2024**. This will be held **remotely** in the evening from **6:30pm to 7:30pm**. It will allow you to speak to current members who sit on the Investigating Committee and the Fitness to Practise Committee. There will also be the chance to speak with GPhC staff members who can answer any questions about the GPhC, the application process or anything else you may need support with. An agenda and information will be given out to those who email the Associates and Partners team to sign up to the open evening. Content will be made available on request to those who cannot attend. The last day to sign up for the open evening is Monday 22 April.

11. How we will handle your applications and interviews

Table 3: Timetable for the recruitment

Recruitment process	Dates
Application deadline	6 May 2024 (5pm)
Interviews for shortlisted candidates	1 st – 19 th July 2024 (<i>interviews will not be taking place on the 3rd and 16th July</i>)
Offers made	August 2024
Training and induction	September 2024
Appointment start date	Following successful training and induction

- 11.1 At the end of the application, you will see a thank you message saying that your application has been submitted along with the next steps. If you do not see this, this means that your application has not been submitted. If you have any issues with the application form or require it in another format, please contact the A&P Team at A&P@Pharmacyregulation.org.
- 11.2 The application forms will be anonymised to remove any identifying protected characteristic and longlist of anonymised applications will then be sent to the members of the GPhC's independent Assurance and Appointments Committee (AAC) who will make up the selection panel. These members are:
- Elisabeth Davies (AAC Chair)
 - Kathryn Foreman (Lay Member)
 - Ahmed Aboo (Registrant Member)
 - Karen Hong (Registrant Member)
 - Rebecca Chamberlain (Registrant Member)
- 11.3 The panel will then use an anonymised process to shortlist and decide which candidates will be invited to interview, taking into account the evidence presented in the anonymised applications. The Associates and Partners team will then be in contact with candidates who have been invited to interview. If you do not receive an invite to interview, on this occasion you have not been successful. Due to the high number of expected applications, we will not be able to offer feedback to candidates who are not invited to interview.
- 11.4 If you are invited to interview and you accept, the interview will be about one hour and will be conducted remotely via Teams. You will meet three members of the AAC who will make up the interview panel. Questioning will be targeted at measuring the candidate's suitability to carry out the role they have applied for.
- 11.5 If you are successful at interview, we will email you offering the appointment. If you accept, we will proceed to take up your references and schedule your induction and relevant committee observation, which must be completed before starting the role.
- 11.6 If you are unsuccessful, you will be told as soon as possible and can have feedback if you ask for it. If you would like feedback, please email A&P@pharmacyregulation.org.

11.7 If at any point during the application or interview stage you require additional support, please contact our team by email A&P@Pharmacyregulation.org and we will be more than happy to assist.

12. How we use your personal information

12.1 We will use your personal information in line with the Data Protection Act 1998. You will not receive unsolicited paper or emails because you have sent us any personal information. We will not pass any information on to third parties for commercial purposes.

12.2 **When we ask you for personal information, we promise we will:**

- Only ask for what we need, and not collect too much or irrelevant information
- Make sure you know why we need it
- Protect it and, as far as possible, make sure nobody has access to it who shouldn't
- Make sure you know what choice you have about giving us information
- Make sure we don't keep it longer than necessary

We ask that you:

- give us accurate information
- tell us as soon as possible about any changes
- tell us as soon as possible if you notice mistakes in the information, we hold about you.

12.3 If you apply for a post, we will share some of the information you give with the members of the selection panel so that your application form can be assessed. The monitoring information you give us, is not used in the selection process and will not be shared with the panel assessing your application.

12.4 **Information management**

If you are selected, we will keep your application in your records for the duration of your agreement and then for a further six years. If your application is not successful, we will keep your information for up to two years after the closing date for applications.

12.5 **Contact from the GPhC**

We may contact you about your application or to arrange an interview. We will not use your personal data or contact you for other reasons and we will not pass your information on to third parties for commercial purposes. If at any time you want your personal information to be removed from the GPhC systems, please contact the Associates and Partners Team at A&P@Pharmacyregulation.org.

