

Accredited Registers

Condition Review: UK-Society for Behaviour Analysis (UK-SBA)

1. Outcome

- 1.1. When we accredited the register of the UK-Society for Behaviour Analysis ('the UK-SBA') in January 2023, we issued two Conditions of Accreditation that were to be completed by 10 April 2023. These are set out in the [UK-SBA's accreditation report](#).
- 1.2. We assessed the UK-SBA against these Conditions and found it had met Conditions One and Two. We also issued four new Recommendations to improve operation of its register:
 - Recommendation One:** The UK-SBA should publish guidelines that help people using the register to determine if a registrant is actively working, available for employment, and has the required protections in place.
 - Recommendation Two:** The UK-SBA should develop a template or guidance that assists non-practising registrants to communicate their status and why they do not hold the required protections.
 - Recommendation Three:** The UK-SBA should provide further information about the 'Practising Member' category including that they are required to have regular supervision.
 - Recommendation Four:** The UK-SBA should consider how registrants at all grades who are 'available for work' can be distinguished from the grade of Practising Member.
- 1.3. This report outlines our analysis of the steps taken by the UK-SBA to meet the Conditions.

2. Background

- 2.1. We assess registers against our Standards for Accredited Registers ('the Standards')¹. Where a Register has not met a Standard, we can issue Conditions. A Condition sets out the requirements and the timeframe that a Register must meet.
- 2.2. The two Conditions set as part of the UK-SBA's initial accreditation were:
 - Condition One (Standard 8):** The UK-SBA should review and clarify the status of those displayed as 'not looking for work' on its Register. It should ensure that evidence of professional insurance, safeguarding training, and all other requirements are confirmed before Register entries are published.
 - Condition Two (Standard 9):** The UK-SBA must provide its new application processes within three months of the publication of this report and before publication. This should include clear definitions for its registration grades setting out the remit of each category.

¹ The UK-SBA were originally assessed against the *Standards for Accredited Registers* (April 2016). https://www.professionalstandards.org.uk/docs/default-source/accredited-registers/standards-for-accredited-registers/standards-for-accredited-registers-2016.pdf?sfvrsn=cfae4820_4

2.3. The UK-SBA submitted their evidence to us for both Conditions within the specified timeframe.

2.4. We reviewed the following:

- a) The UK-SBA's report on what it had done to meet each Condition.
- b) Checks of the UK-SBA's website and register.

3. Concerns leading to the Conditions

3.1. Applicants to the UK-SBA register must provide evidence of appropriate insurance cover, a Disclosure and Barring Service certificate or national equivalent² and evidence of recent safeguarding training. The UK-SBA may also admit qualified Behaviour Analysts who do not hold these protections to the register if they are non-practising.

3.2. During our original assessment we found it was unclear whether a register profile stating the registrant was 'not looking for work' meant they did not meet the above requirements, or may have been practising but not taking on new clients. There was a risk that someone accessing the register could interpret a non-practising practitioner as holding the required protections.

3.3. While we accepted the reasons for allowing non-practising practitioners to register without the required protections, we determined that registrants' insurance, disclosure and safeguarding training status must be verified by the UK-SBA and made clear on the public register. Condition One was issued accordingly.

3.4. At the time of our assessment, there were two experience-based application routes. Applicants could apply for Associate Grade if they held a Postgraduate Diploma, Master's Degree or Doctorate in Behaviour Analysis; or had at least 1,000 hours of experience. They were required to provide evidence from an employer and a letter of support from a full UK-SBA member, or equivalent qualified person. Affiliate grade registration was open to practitioners working in the field of behaviour analysis who did not meet the requirements of the other categories. Affiliates had to provide a letter of verification from a UK-SBA-registered supervisor, or equivalent.

3.5. We found that a reliance on references was not sufficient to assure consistent registration decisions for applicants who did not hold recognised qualifications. Condition Two was issued accordingly.

3.6. Further details can be found under Standards 8 and 9 of the UK-SBA's [initial accreditation outcome](#).

4. Assessment of Condition One

4.1. The UK-SBA updated its application process, requiring applicants to supply evidence of their insurance cover, disclosure status, and safeguarding training. These requirements are published in their online application guidance, registration categories information, and registration requirements.

² This must be at Enhanced level if working with children or vulnerable adults. Independent practitioners who cannot obtain this must discuss with the UK-SBA.

- 4.2. The UK-SBA also updated the presentation of registrants' website profiles. Practising registrants must display the above information, including relevant dates. Non-practising registrants may be listed without this information however are required to clearly indicate the reasons for this in their profile. Existing registrants had been given a timeframe to provide up to date information for publication or be removed from the register.
- 4.3. We checked register entries of registrants who indicated they were 'not available for work' and the reasons they provided for not listing the necessary information. We found that the reasons provided may not have adequately explained why they were registered without holding the required protections, for example someone accessing the register may not understand that a registrant did not hold individual liability insurance cover due to their full-time employment.
- 4.4. We were also concerned that we could not find guidance on registrants' practice status or availability for work. Existing published guidance could give the impression that everyone on the public register held the required protections regardless of their status.
- 4.5. We found that the Condition had been met, however issued new Recommendations to address those issues:
Recommendation One: The UK-SBA should publish guidelines that help people using the register to determine if a registrant is actively working, available for employment, and has the required protections in place.
Recommendation Two: The UK-SBA should develop a template or guidance that assists non-practising registrants to communicate their status and why they do not hold the required protections.

5. Assessment of Condition Two

- 5.1. The UK-SBA has revised its register categories, coinciding with the launch of its new 'UKBA(cert)' certification requirements in March 2023. There are now three categories of practitioner appearing on the register: 'UKBA(cert)', 'aUKBA(cert)' and 'Practising Member'. Registration in these categories cannot be attained through letters of reference.
- 5.2. During our assessment of the Conditions, we noted that the aUKBA(cert) and Practising Member categories are broadly similar to the previous Associate and Affiliate categories and available to practitioners who had not met the requirements of the UKBA(cert). The UK-SBA told us that registrants in these categories are required to undertake regular supervision by a UKBA(cert) registrant, however we could not confirm that requirement on their website. We noted that the aUKBA(cert) category logo included the word 'supervised' however the Practising Member logo did not.
- 5.3. We also considered a possibility that the grade of Practising Member could be confused with registrants' practising or non-practising status.
- 5.4. We noted that the UK-SBA's new grades of registration do not require letters of reference or endorsement. Register entries list the relevant grade and information is available for these. We noted that it was not stated whether Practising Members were required to have regular supervision and considered that title may be confused with members 'available for work'. We found that the UK-SBA had met

the requirements of the Condition but issued new Recommendations to address those issues:

Recommendation Three: The UK-SBA should provide further information about the Practising Member category including that they are required to have regular supervision.

Recommendation Four: The UK-SBA should consider how registrants at all grades who are 'available for work' can be distinguished from the grade of Practising Member.

6. Conclusion

6.1. We noted the actions the UK-SBA has taken to address the Conditions. We found some concerns remained about whether those accessing the register would have sufficient information to make informed decisions about practitioners. This was particularly important where registrants may not hold protections expected of a practitioner on an Accredited Register. We felt that Recommendations could address these issues.

6.2. We therefore found that Conditions One and Two have been met.