

Notification of change: Play Therapy UK (PTUK)

Once accreditation has been granted, a register must tell us of any significant changes it has made or plans to make. We consider these through our Notification of Change process.

The process

The Professional Standards Authority (PSA) accredits registers of people working in a variety of health and social care occupations that are not regulated by law. To become an Accredited Register, organisations holding registers of unregulated health and social care roles must prove that they meet our **Standards for Accredited Registers** (the Standards).

Once accreditation has been granted, a register must tell us of any significant changes it has made or plans to make that may affect whether it meets our Standards. We consider these changes through our **Notification of Change** process. Not all changes will require a notification of change and in some cases, it will be sufficient to tell us about them at either an annual check, or full renewal assessment.

Changes requiring a notification of change application are considered by an Accreditation Panel (the Panel). The Panel will decide whether to accept the change or not.

The options available to the Panel are:

- Accept the change
- Accept the change, with Conditions and/or Recommendations
- Not accept the change at this time, with reasons specified
- Adjourn to request further information from the Register.

Notification of change

Play Therapy UK (PTUK) operates an Accredited Register for Play and Creative Arts Therapies. PTUK's registrants must hold a qualification in play and creative arts at Regulated Qualification Framework (RQF) Level 4 or equivalent. Registrants with advanced qualifications and experience may hold higher grades of registration.

PTUK intends to add a new title or occupation to its UK accredited register as a means of progression in post qualifying courses accredited by PTUK:

1. Certified Play and Creative Arts Counsellor for Adults

At the time of the assessment and preparation of this report, this new role has not yet been added to the PTUK register.

Play Therapy UK (PTUK)

We considered PTUK's Notification of Change application under the 2023 edition of the **Standards for Accredited Registers** which were in place when the Notification of Change was submitted in November 2024.

The outcome

We decided that the change would not affect PTUK's compliance with the Standards for Accredited Registers. The Panel approved the change subject to Conditions, following a review of evidence supplied by PTUK and gathered by the Accreditation Team.

We issued PTUK the following Conditions:

1. PTUK must review its application processes and registration policy to ensure that they are sufficiently robust and take into account the underlying requirements of the proposed new role.
2. PTUK must review its competency framework and address issues of accreditation and supervision, including the standards set for education and training.
3. PTUK must ensure that the issue of continued practice competence is incorporated into the review of registration and re-registration requirements as well as the revision of the competency framework recommended in numbers (1) and (2) respectively above.
4. PTUK must ensure that the Register is updated to reflect the new role and that all entries relating to those registrants are accurate.
5. PTUK must review its terms and conditions of registration to consider any differences relating to the proposed new role to be added to the register.
6. PTUK must re-evaluate its code of ethics and professional standards to ensure that they encompass guidelines pertinent to adult counselling.
7. PTUK must provide specific details on how the new course to be introduced meets National Occupational Skills (or other relevant) requirements.
8. PTUK must provide detailed information on training providers for the new course and the process for quality assuring them.
9. PTUK must provide detailed information on how it intends to assess the quality of education and training courses for the new role.
10. PTUK must establish guidelines on equivalence routes to entry for practitioners seeking the Certified Play and Creative Arts Counsellor for Adults title.
11. PTUK must update its website and other public materials to provide clear and accessible information about the benefits and limitations of treatments offered by the new role to be added to the register.

We issued PTUK the following Recommendations:

1. PTUK should consult further on its competency framework, including the potential for alignment with the SCoPED framework, for the new role it is proposing to add
2. PTUK should ensure that their Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) finalises the development of their Level 2 and 3 safeguarding training, provides bespoke safeguarding training each year to PTUK members in relation to working with children, young people and adults, and develops tailored safeguarding training to registrants of the new title.
3. PTUK should review the wording in their guidance on suicide and self-harm to avoid confusion between the use of “standardised assessment tools” and risk ratings in compliance with NICE Guidance 225 (NG225).

The Register

This section gives an overview of the PTUK and its register.

Name of organisation	Play Therapy UK (PTUK)
Website	https://playtherapy.org.uk/
Type of organisation	<p>PTUK is a private limited company registered in England and Wales (company number 04596316)</p> <p>Registered Address: The Coach House, Belmont Road, Uckfield, East Sussex, TN22 1BP</p>
Role(s) covered	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Certified Play Therapist• Accredited Play Therapist• Certified Practitioner in Therapeutic Play Skills• Filial Play Coach• Certified Play and Creative Arts Counsellor of Children and Young People (CCYP)• Certified Supervisor of Play and Creative Arts Therapists• Certified Play and Creative Arts Counsellor for Adults
Number of registrants	2,876 as of 1 January 2025
Overview of governance	<p>PTUK is a professional body for ‘Play and Creative Arts Therapists (Play Therapists) within the UK. It operates its Register of Play and Creative Arts Therapies at: <u>Register of Play and Creative Arts Therapists</u> (playtherapyregister.org.uk).</p> <p>PTUK has three Directors: the Chief Executive (also holds the role of Chief Executive for PTUK’s training provider the Academy of Play and Child Psychotherapy (APAC)), Operations Director and Clinical Director. PTUK has an employed Registrar and other staff.</p>

The British Council for Therapeutic Interventions With Children (BCTIWC) (**Home - The British Council for Therapeutic Interventions With Children (bctiwc.org)**) provides oversight of PTUK's functions and investigates complaints against PTUK.

Overview of the aims of the register

From the **Register of Play and Creative Arts Therapists (playtherapyregister.org.uk)**:

- 'People on our register meet PTUK's standards for safe and effective practice. This is especially important for working with the most vulnerable client group, children.
 - It enables members of the public and employers to find practitioners easily and to understand what they offer.
 - It provides an assurance of high-quality practice.
 - It provides commissioners with additional assurance when placing contracts for services for working with children's social, emotional, behavioural and mental health problems.
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Assessment against the Standards

1. Standard 1 | Eligibility and 'public interest' Standard

- 1.1 The new role PTUK intends to add to its register is not a protected title and raises no issue about statutory boundaries. Therefore, the proposed change does not impact our assessment of PTUK as a "voluntary accredited register".

There is evidence that the activities of registrants of the proposed new role are likely to be beneficial; harms and risks are appropriately mitigated; and treatments and services are to be offered in a way that does not make unproven claims or in any way mislead the public.

2. Standard 2 | Management of the register

The Panel set the following Conditions:

- 2.1 PTUK must review its application processes and registration policy to ensure that they are sufficiently robust and take into account the underlying requirements of the proposed new role.
- 2.2 PTUK must review its competency framework and address issues of accreditation and supervision, including the standards set for education and training.
- 2.3 PTUK must ensure that the issue of continued practice competence is incorporated into the review of registration and re-registration requirements as well as the revision of the competency framework recommended in numbers 2.1 and 2.2 respectively above.
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- 2.4 PTUK must ensure that the Register is updated to reflect the new role and that all entries relating to those registrants are accurate.

The Panel recommended that:

- 2.5 PTUK should consult further on its competency framework, including the potential for alignment with SCoPEd standards, for the new role it is proposing to add.

3. Standard 3 | Standards for registrants

The Panel set the following Conditions:

- 3.1 PTUK must review its terms and conditions of registration to consider any differences relating to the proposed new role to be added to the register.

- 3.2 PTUK must re-evaluate its code of ethics and professional standards to ensure that they encompass guidelines pertinent to adult counselling.

The Panel recommended that:

- 3.3 PTUK should ensure that their Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) finalises the development of their Level 2 and 3 safeguarding training, provides bespoke safeguarding training each year to PTUK members in relation to working with children, young people and adults, and develops tailored safeguarding training to registrants of the new title.

- 3.4 PTUK should review the wording in their guidance on suicide and self-harm to avoid confusion between the use of “standardised assessment tools” and risk ratings in compliance with NICE Guidance 225 (NG225).

4. Standard 4 | Education and Training

The Panel set the following Conditions:

- 4.1 PTUK must provide specific details on how the new course to be introduced meets National Occupational Skills (or other relevant) requirements.

- 4.2 PTUK must provide detailed information on training providers for the new course and the process for quality assuring them.

- 4.3 PTUK must provide detailed information on how it intends to assess the quality of education and training courses for the new role.

- 4.4 PTUK must establish guidelines on equivalence routes to entry for practitioners seeking the Certified Play and Creative Arts Counsellor for Adults title.

5. Standard 5 | Complaints and concerns about registrations

- 5.1 We have not identified any impacts from the proposed change affecting this Standard.

6. Standard 6 | Governance

- 6.1 We have not identified any impacts from the proposed change affecting this Standard.

7. Standard 7 | Management of the risks arising from the activities of registrants

The Panel set the following Condition:

- 7.1 PTUK must update its website and other public materials to provide clear and accessible information about the benefits and limitations of treatments offered by the new role to be added to the register.

8. Standard 8 | Communications and engagement

- 8.1 The Panel agreed that some minimum requirements of this Standard were impacted - 8(1), 8(2), 8(4) and 8(6) - but that separate conditions were not required
- 8.2 The Panel noted that this Standard would be met by Conditions already set on Standard 2 and Standard 7 above.

9. Standard 9 | Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

- 9.1 We have not identified any impacts from the proposed change affecting this Standard.

Share your experience

We ran a public consultation for PTUK between 24th February and 3rd April 2025. The responses highlighted a few themes, which the Panel considered in its decisions under the relevant Standards above.

Impact assessment

PTUK's proposed change, if implemented in the aftermath of fulfilment of the Conditions and Recommendations above, retains the potential for positive impact on access to services by members of the public across all demographics; for registrants; for the profession of counselling and psychotherapy through play and creative arts; and for the wider society through benefits to the broader health system.

The Panel, therefore, agreed that it was in the public interest to accredit the new register, subject to the Conditions above.

Timelines

As PTUK plans to open registration to the new register by 1 November 2025, all Conditions should be met two months prior to that date (i.e. 1 September 2025).

August 2025