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Consultation document

# Consultation on HCPC fees - 2026

28 April – 17 July 2026

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# About the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC)

The HCPC's statutory role is to protect the public by regulating healthcare professionals in the UK. We promote high quality professional practice, regulating 356,000 registrants across fifteen professions by:

- Setting standards for education and training and practice.
- Approving education programmes which professionals must complete to register with us
- Maintaining a register of professionals who meet our standards.
- Acting if professionals on our Register do not meet our standards.
- Acting to stop unregistered practitioners from using protected professional titles.

## Summary

This consultation document seeks views on a proposal to increase the registration fees charged by the HCPC.

The UK Parliament has given us the responsibility to ensure we have the finances to meet our statutory duties. This means that we need to set fees that cover our costs and enable us to remain financially sustainable.

We aim to review our fees at least every two years, with the expectation that regular, incremental increases will be needed to maintain our financial sustainability. We understand the continuing cost of living pressures that registrants face, which is why we are continuing to make efficiencies and have restricted the proposed increase to cover necessary costs and essential improvements.

We propose to increase the annual registration renewal fee by £5.06, to £128.40, with equivalent percentage increases to our other fees. The renewal fee increase would be phased according to renewal windows, but equivalent rises to fees outside of this timetable would come into effect immediately. The proposed increase would take effect from 2027 with the increase to our annual registration renewal fee phased in over two years. We would maintain the existing 50% graduate discount for the first two full professional years for eligible UK graduates.

The proposed increase is lower than the increases that entered effect in 2023 and 2025 and the resulting fee (£128.40) is still one of the lowest of all the healthcare regulators<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> The Nursing and Midwifery Council has the lowest annual fee (£120) but they are currently reviewing this, with a proposed fee of £143.

This proposal is the minimum necessary to keep the HCPC financially sustainable, meet our statutory public protection obligations, and continue to make essential improvements. It reflects careful financial modelling that takes account of non-discretionary increases in external demand and planned efficiencies, including from more cost-effective handling of fitness to practise (FTP) cases.

The HCPC's profession-by-profession renewal cycles mean that most registrants would not pay the new fees until 2028 or 2029, even though the revised fees would begin to take effect from 2027.

## Background

We are an independent regulator whose role is to protect the public. To do this, we maintain a register of professionals who meet our standards for their professional skills and behaviour.

In accordance with our founding legislation, our costs are funded almost entirely by the fees that registrants pay. We do not receive any regular funding from the government. We know that the public values our regulatory role and recognises that our finances must be in good order.

We remain one of the most financially efficient regulators in the sector. In recent years, we have undertaken regular, incremental reviews of fees to maintain financial sustainability and avoid large step-changes, consulting publicly each time and seeking the necessary approvals before implementation.

Our last fee increase began to be phased in from 25 April 2025 for renewals, and came into effect fully on that date for equivalent increases. This increased the annual renewal fee to £123.34.

## Rationale: why this proposed fee rise is necessary

Despite stringent control of our costs, we face a tight budgetary position in 2026-27 and over the medium term as a result of unavoidable increases in our externally driven costs.

We are implementing an ambitious efficiency programme that will save £1.5m annually in operational costs and we will continue to make additional efficiencies on top of that.

Without the proposed fee increase we would soon be unable to sustain our activities and fulfil our statutory duty to protect the public.

The fee increase would not be used to fund proposals to regulate NHS managers, which would be financed separately from our existing fee structure.

In line with the priorities set out in our new corporate strategy the proposed increase would enable the HCPC to:

- **Balance the books responsibly and sustain performance** in the face of increased external demand and cost pressures, across our statutory registration, fitness to practise, and education functions. As an example, FTP demand via new concerns has increased by over a third in the last three years. In addition, the fees that we have to pay to the Professional Standards Authority for their regulatory oversight of the HCPC have increased to over

£1m per year.

- **Make further improvements in timely management of FTP concerns:** we will review systems and processes to identify further opportunities to streamline how cases are handled and maximise the opportunities that will be unlocked by regulatory reform. This will include exploring the potential for the use of artificial intelligence, with strong ethical and data security guardrails.
- **Provide better support to registrants:** building on improvements already being delivered, we will introduce a more personalised digital experience for registrants, providing targeted information and guidance relevant to their profession, career stage, CPD needs and interests. Through a new website and contact centre we will provide improved online self-service tools to help professionals manage their registration with the HCPC.
- **Engage with regulatory reform:** the UK government has committed to reforming the legislative framework for healthcare professional regulation. New legislation will allow us to adapt to the changing health and care environment and continue to protect the public into the future. We will work with colleagues in government to ensure that the changes enable us to protect the public even more effectively.
- **Provide ready access to the HCPC's data, standards and guidance:** further developments in our data hub and AI-assisted search tools will help registrants, stakeholders and the public quickly find the information they need, enabling more effective upstream intervention and prevention.
- **We will invest in essential capability** to deliver these and our other priorities, with a focus on building our technological and operational capability.

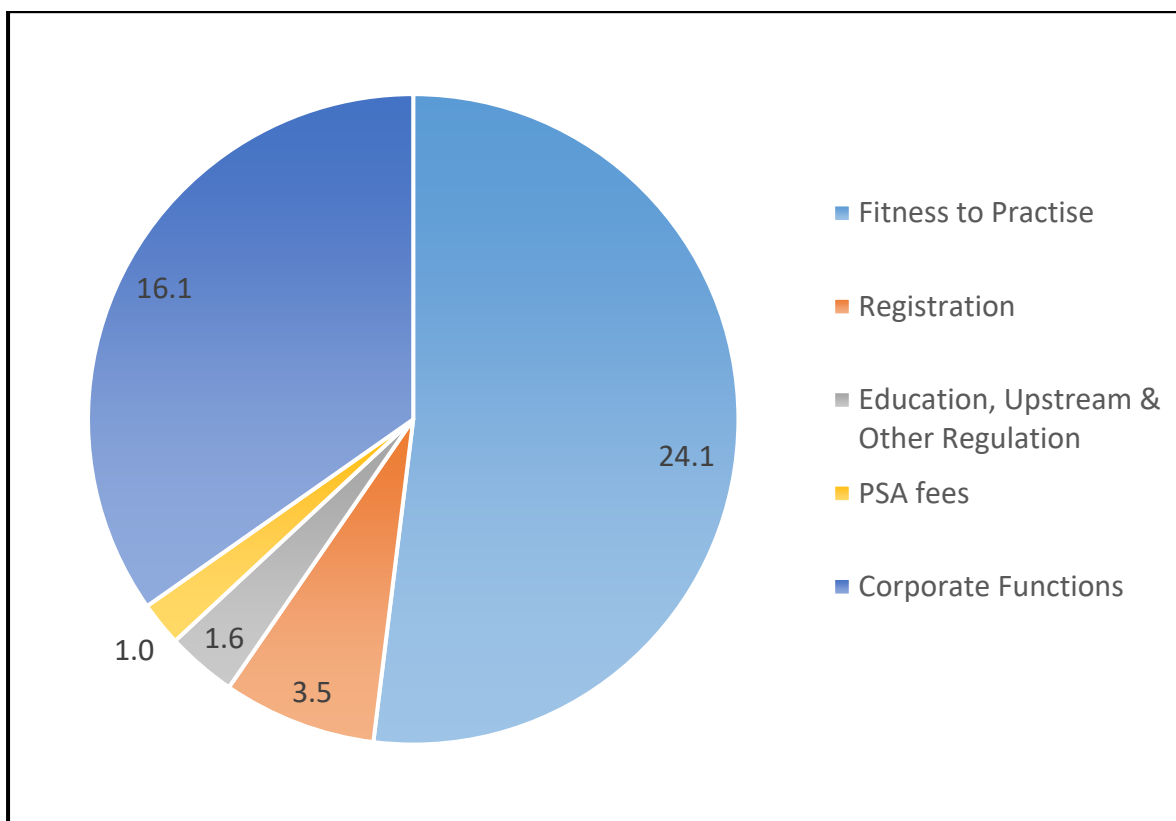
## Financial background

The proposal is designed to generate funding for further essential improvements, including ensuring HCPC's readiness for regulatory reform and a multi-annual investment programme.

### How registrants' fees are spent

Parliament has given us a responsibility to make sure we have the finances to fulfil our statutory duties. All of our expenditure relates to these duties, directly funding our regulatory and essential corporate functions.

Figure 1: Breakdown of expenditure, 2025-26 (£m)



Note: 'Corporate functions' include Finance, HR and IT, Governance, Communications and other functions which provide essential support for our regulatory and improvement activity. Figures exclude non-cash depreciation.

### Controlling our costs

The HCPC is committed to remaining an efficient regulator, with tight cost control and lean budgets. The HCPC's renewal fee is relatively low when compared to other healthcare regulators. Our average expenditure per registrant in 2025-26 was £123

(based on the budget set at the beginning of the year), aligned with our renewal fee, and within that the cost of our corporate functions compares favourably to the benchmark for the sector.

*Figure 2: Comparison between health and care regulators*

	<b>HCPC</b>	<b>GMC</b>	<b>NMC</b>	<b>GDC</b>	<b>GPhC</b>
Number of registrants at time of data collection	<b>356,104</b>	393,357	853,707	125,736	105,919
Renewal fee or equivalent	<b>£123</b>	£463	£143*	£698	£293
Total corporate function costs per registrant	<b>£30</b>	£153	£46	£108	£88

*\*NMC is consulting on this figure at the time of writing. The current revalidation fee is £120.*

*Note: the table above is based on a selection of regulators with high numbers of registrants. Corporate costs comprise the following equivalent functions: CEO and Chair, IT, HR, Finance, procurement, facilities and Governance.*

We expect that our average total costs per registrant, including the costs of our corporate functions, would remain significantly lower than those of other healthcare regulators, after taking account of the proposed fee rise. We are committed to remaining a lean organisation with tight cost control, delivering good value from registrants' fee income.

Recent examples of efficiencies achieved include a 50% estates downsizing, reduction in fees paid to recruitment agencies and £126,000 contract savings from procurement of our new telephony platform.

Between our last fee increase (phased in from 2025) and the time the proposed rise would come into effect (April 2027), cumulative inflation will have been 6.1%. However, the proposed fee rise equates to 4.1%, requiring HCPC to make efficiencies worth £2.59m to maintain current service levels.

Examples of further planned efficiencies are:

- We are targeting a significant increase in the productivity of our Fitness to Practise processes. Over 2026-27 we aim to achieve a 10% improvement in productivity, measured in terms of the average caseload held by team members, as part of a wider programme of ongoing improvements. By

moving to a new delivery model based on more cost-effective in-house provision we will avoid having to pay £1.5m of higher annual legal costs.

- Ongoing benefits from modernising the HCPC's IT network, moving our systems and data to the cloud, and looking at the scope for further AI-enabled automation, building on progress we have already made in processes including administration of invoices, document redaction and responding to customer queries.

Further information about our financial performance can be found in our Annual Report and Accounts<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> [HCPC annual report and accounts 2024-25](#)

## Framework for fees reviews

We set our fees on the principle of cost recovery, allocated fairly across registrants and applicants. We review our fees at least every two years, consulting publicly on proposals including any equality impacts, assessing feedback and publishing our decisions. The renewal cycle operating by profession means income changes are realised over two years, so timely consultation is essential to maintain stability and plan improvements.

We expect to require regular incremental increases in our fees to take account of unavoidable cost pressures, plus what is required for essential further improvements and to meet unavoidable financial liabilities. We are committed to making savings and efficiencies in order to help fund improvements.

Within this framework we manage our finances carefully to ensure that our expenditure matches our income. We do not budget for large surpluses or hold surplus financial reserves.

Without the proposed fee increase our medium-term financial projections show that we would be unable to cover our costs without forgoing essential improvements and would quickly face moving into deficit budgets, which would put public protection and services to registrants at risk (see Figure 3).

These projections are consistent with the analysis underpinning our fees consultation in 2022, which assumed that the HCPC would have regular, incremental fee rises in future, to maintain the financial stability achieved by subsequent increases.

Figure 3: projected deficits without fee increase (£'000)

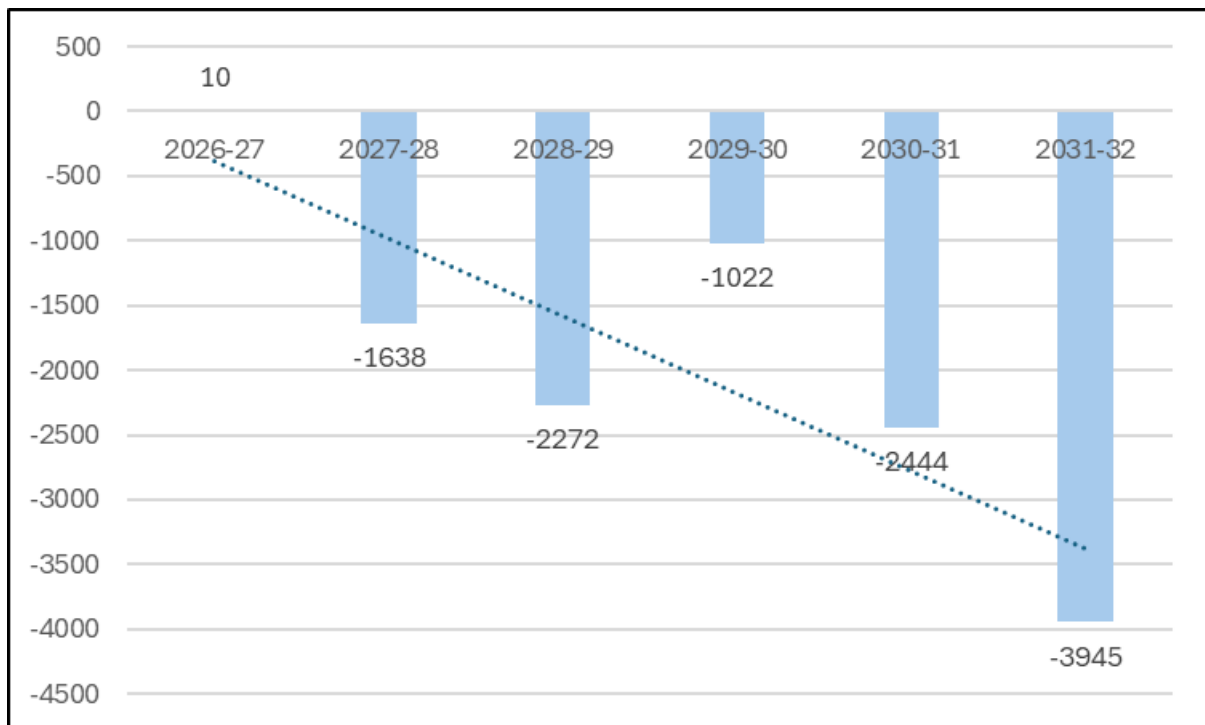
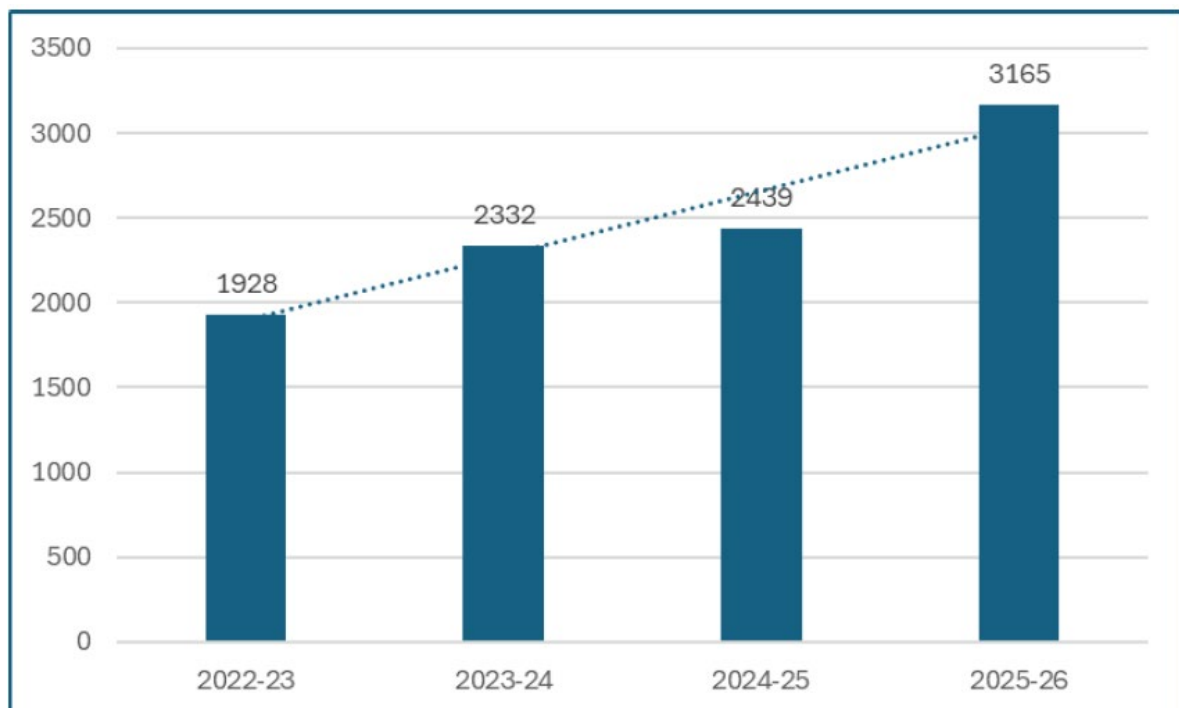


Figure 4: projected increase in FTP demand (new concerns)



Note: 2025-26 figure is based on forecast at the time of writing

## Proposed revised fees

We have kept the proposed increase to the minimum level necessary to enable us to continue meeting our statutory public protection duties and fund the programme of critical investments summarised in the rationale given above. The HCPC Council considered alternative, higher increases, but decided on the recommended amount taking account of the impact on registrants including in relation to protected characteristics, and wider equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) considerations.

The proposed new fees would come into effect from 2027 subject to the necessary parliamentary approvals. Most registrants will first pay the revised fee in 2028 or 2029, depending on their profession's renewal window. The existing graduate discount (50% for the first two full professional years) would be retained.

*Figure 5: Existing scrutiny fees and proposed revised scrutiny fees (£)*

Fee type	Existing fee	Proposed new fee
Registration / Renewal (per year)	£123.34	£128.40
New graduates (per year)	£61.67	£64.20
Approved programme (UK) scrutiny fee	£86.34	£89.88
Readmission / Restoration	£185.01	£192.60
International scrutiny fee	£678.38	£706.19
Grandparenting	£678.38	£706.19

*Figure 6: Existing annual registration fees and proposed revised fees (£)*

Fee type	Existing fee	Proposed new fee
Approved programme (reduced)	£61.67	£64.20
Approved programme (full)	£123.34	£128.40
Renewal	£123.34	£128.40
Readmission	£123.34	£128.40
Restoration	£123.34	£128.40

International	£123.34	£128.40
Grandparenting	£123.34	£128.40

Note:

- *'Approved programme' means a UK programme of education and training that the HCPC approves so that someone successfully completing that programme is eligible to apply to us for registration.*
- *Graduate applicants receive a 50% discount on their registration fees for the first two professional years of registration, as long as they apply within two years of completing their approved programme.*
- *Grandparenting' is a route of entry to our Register. If the HCPC undertakes the regulation of a new profession, we open a time-limited grandparenting period during which individuals who do not hold an approved qualification, but who can demonstrate through their training and experience that they meet certain criteria, can be registered.*

## Legislative process

Our proposals require an amendment to the Health and Care Professions Council (Registration and Fees) Rules 2003<sup>3</sup>. Under the Health Professions Order 2001, any amendment to the Rules must be made by the HCPC's Council and then approved by an order of the Privy Council.

## Equality Impact Assessment

We have kept the proposed increase to the minimum necessary. The revised fees would enable us to continue meeting our statutory public protection duties and fund the programme of critical investments necessary to safeguard public protection, make sure that the HCPC is efficient and sustainable, and carry out our new corporate strategy.

As part of preparing this proposal we also considered alternative, higher increases, but decided to propose the minimum necessary amount, taking account of the overall financial impact on all registrants, including considerations regarding impacts on protected characteristics and other potential barriers such as income.

The HCPC will publish an updated Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) alongside the consultation outcome. Previous assessments found that while fee increases can

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<sup>3</sup> [Health and Care Professions Council \(Registration and Fees\) Rules 2003](#)

have distributional impacts, reductions to regulatory activity would also negatively impact patients and service users, including people with protected characteristics.

Mitigations progressed since the last review include more frequent Direct Debit options and greater promotion of tax relief on fees. The 50% graduate discount is retained, and no new discounts are proposed unless the EIA identifies significant new impacts not addressed in previous reviews.

## Consultation questions

- 1) To what extent do you agree or disagree with the rationale we have set out for increasing our fees by the minimum necessary amount?**

*Strongly agree / Agree / Neither agree nor disagree / Disagree / Strongly disagree / Don't know*

If you would like to give reasons for your answer, or suggest alternative options or mitigations, you may do so here.

- 2) Given the rationale, to what extent do you support the fee increase proposal?**

*Strongly agree / Agree / Neither agree nor disagree / Disagree / Strongly disagree / Don't know*

If you would like to give reasons for your answer, or suggest alternative options or mitigations, you may do so here.

- 3) In addition to the equality impacts set out in the Equality Impact Assessment, can you identify any further impacts relating to protected characteristics that we should consider?**

Protected characteristics consist of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, ethnicity, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation. If you would like to make any suggestions about how any negative equality impacts you have identified could be mitigated, you may do so here.

## How to respond to the consultation

To respond to this consultation, complete our [online survey](#).

If you would like a paper version of this document, a version in Welsh or in an alternative format, or would like to respond in an alternative way, please email **consultation@hcpc-uk.org** or write to:

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Health and Care Professions Council  
Park House  
184-186 Kennington Park Road  
London SE11 4BU

This consultation is open from 28 April 2026 to 23:59 on 17 July 2026. After it closes, we will consider all responses and publish a document summarising the comments we received and explaining our decisions.