

SENR

SPORT AND EXERCISE
NUTRITION REGISTER

Guide to Registration for the Sport and Exercise Nutrition Register (SENR)

October 2022

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Background to the Register

The Sport and Exercise Nutrition Register (SENR) is a voluntary register. It is designed to recognise and accredit suitably qualified and experienced individuals who have the competency to work autonomously as a Sport and Exercise Nutritionist practitioner, with athletes from high performance sport through to the exercising public.

The Register has been established to:

- Protect service users
- Set, protect and promote standards of services and education in Sport and Exercise Nutrition (SEN)
- Support the professional development of registrants; and
- Develop the profession and its knowledge base.

Therefore, it aims to:

- Identify professional standards and competencies for Sport and Exercise Nutritionists.
- Enable individuals to identify the gaps in their knowledge and skills that they need to fill in order to work at the highest levels in the field of Sport and Exercise Nutrition.
- Guide the development of curriculum that would provide the core knowledge competencies in Sport and Exercise Nutrition.
- Enable Registered Sport and Exercise Nutritionists to develop their careers in an appropriate and structured manner.
- Promote recognition of Sport and Exercise Nutrition as a specialism.
- Promote recognition of Sport and Exercise Nutritionists as professionals.

NB: All SENR Graduate and Practitioner Registrants must agree to abide by a code of professional conduct.¹

The format of the Register is designed to enable employers, clients and members of the public to identify and contact registrants. SENR provides a web accessed resource with brief information that identifies each registrant and provides such contact details as the registrant permits. [You can access this here.](#)

The establishment of the Register was a joint initiative of three professions: dietitians, nutritionists, and sport and exercise scientists. Working under a common competency framework, a new 'profession' has emerged, that of the 'sport and exercise nutritionist'. This professional community is strengthened due to the knowledge, skills and attributes that each individual registrant brings. The register is currently administered by The British Dietetic Association, on behalf of the SENR Board.

SENR Board has representation from industry experts including lead performance nutritionists from all four UK Institutes of Sport, from academia and professional practice.

1.2 Challenges in Sport and Exercise Nutrition

Historically, sports nutrition practitioners lacked a single voice to speak for, oversee, and support professional development and care in sports nutrition, owing to a shortage of suitably qualified experienced Accredited Sports Dietitians and a lack of clear career paths for other professionals with sports science and nutrition training. Prior to the emergence of the SENR, there was no framework to provide governance over the quality of professional education in sports nutrition. Sports nutrition required a coherent national framework and standards, like those for sport psychology and sports science, and the Register now supports this through the Endorsement and Accreditation scheme for Higher Education programmes.

Self-sustaining voluntary regulation cannot occur without support from employers of sports nutritionists. Employers and athletes need to be confident that eligibility for registration means timely, safe and up-to-date advice in sports nutrition, high standards among practitioners, with appropriate sanctions if necessary.

Increasing the numbers of suitably qualified sport and exercise nutritionists helps dispel public confusion about sources of credible information, advice and support.

1.3 Purpose of this guide

This document provides guidance on the requirements for registration with SENR. It explains the process, describing in detail the steps an applicant will need to follow in order to apply for registration under the three categories of registration:

- **Graduate**
- **Practitioner**
- **Academic Associate**

Thus, the target audiences for this guide are:

- Students or new graduates seeking to join the Graduate Register.
- Individuals currently registered on the Graduate Register who aspire to achieve Practitioner registration within the three-year timeframe permitted.
- Those working within the field of SEN who aspire to achieve the professional recognition that SENR brings.
- Academics and researchers working within the field of SEN who wish to demonstrate their affiliation with SENR through Academic Associate registration.
- Other stakeholders with an interest in understanding the rigours of the SENR process (including employers, athletes, governing bodies and sports federations.)

All Registrants must conduct themselves in accordance with the SENR Code of Conduct¹, which provides a set of principles that apply to all sport and exercise nutritionists. The premise of the Code is the protection of the health and wellbeing of service users. The Code covers four behaviour areas: conduct, performance, ethics, and professional practice.

2.0 Registration Overview

There are three categories of registration for SENR. These are outlined in the table below:

SENR Registration Categories

Category	Summary	Submission requirements	Period of registration
Graduate	Having achieved relevant undergraduate and postgraduate qualifications Limited practitioner experience	Certificates / transcripts from UG and PG qualifications 1 x up-to-date CV	3 years
Practitioner	Holds relevant qualifications (as above) Significant (2-3 years+) working in a sport and exercise nutrition role <i>NB. SENR recognises that many work in part time roles so it is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that all essential competencies can be met.</i>	Certificates / transcripts from UG and PG qualifications 2 x professional references Completed competency framework and portfolio of evidence	Re-registration every 5 years.
Academic Associate	Holds a PhD in a sport and exercise nutrition related field and strong publication profile Senior academic or researcher Nominated by at least one SENR Practitioner registrant (NB: this is a non-practising registration category)	Letter / email of support from SENR Practitioner Registrant Letter of application with demonstrable support for SENR and profession. Curriculum Vitae.	Lifetime

NB: Each category will be expanded upon in further detail later within this document.

2.1 Routes to Registration (Graduate and Practitioner Registration)

In order to be eligible to apply for Graduate or Practitioner registration with SENR, applicants must hold appropriate undergraduate and postgraduate level qualifications.

There are a number of approaches to meeting the qualification requirements. Examples of different approaches include:

- A pre-registration dietetics degree with an MSc/Postgraduate Diploma or Postgraduate Certificate in Sport and Exercise Nutrition. *This reduced postgraduate requirement is in recognition of the clinical placement training undertaken during the dietetic pre-registration degree programme.*
- An undergraduate degree in nutrition, sport and exercise science or biological sciences with an MSc/Postgraduate Diploma in Sport and Exercise Nutrition.

Individuals holding a relevant undergraduate degree plus a PhD in a relevant (sports nutrition related) subject, would need to supplement qualifications with at least three core postgraduate level taught modules typically offered within a PG Certificate programme that covers the following content:

- Sport and Exercise Nutrition
- Exercise Physiology / Biochemistry
- Measurement and Evaluation (nutritional assessment)

For all routes to registration, applicants must be able to demonstrate significant experience of critical appraisal of published research literature.

NB: Alternative routes and accreditation of prior learning / experience will be considered on an individual basis by the Registration Panel. In the case of applicants who have graduated from SENR Accredited postgraduate programmes, the postgraduate qualification ONLY will be required for consideration by the Registration Panel. This is due to the fact that SENR accreditation denotes confidence in the University programme's recruitment and application processes and the rigour of the final award achieved.

For applicants that have not followed an SENR Accredited programme, please contact the BDA office for suitability for registration @ senr@bda.uk.com.

2.2 Supporting Requirements

At the current time, mutual recognition will apply to applicants who practice as sport and exercise nutritionists in overseas countries (until such time as laws change). Satisfactory demonstration of qualifications and competence may be required in order to meet the full requirements of registration in the UK.

Applicants for Registration must agree to abide by the SENR Code of Professional Conduct¹, pay an annual registration fee, and become a member of the British Dietetic Association (BDA). Registered Dietitians will be required to take out full BDA membership, whilst others will be eligible for SENR Membership.

All SENR registrants must hold appropriate Professional Indemnity Insurance, which is provided as a benefit of membership of the BDA.

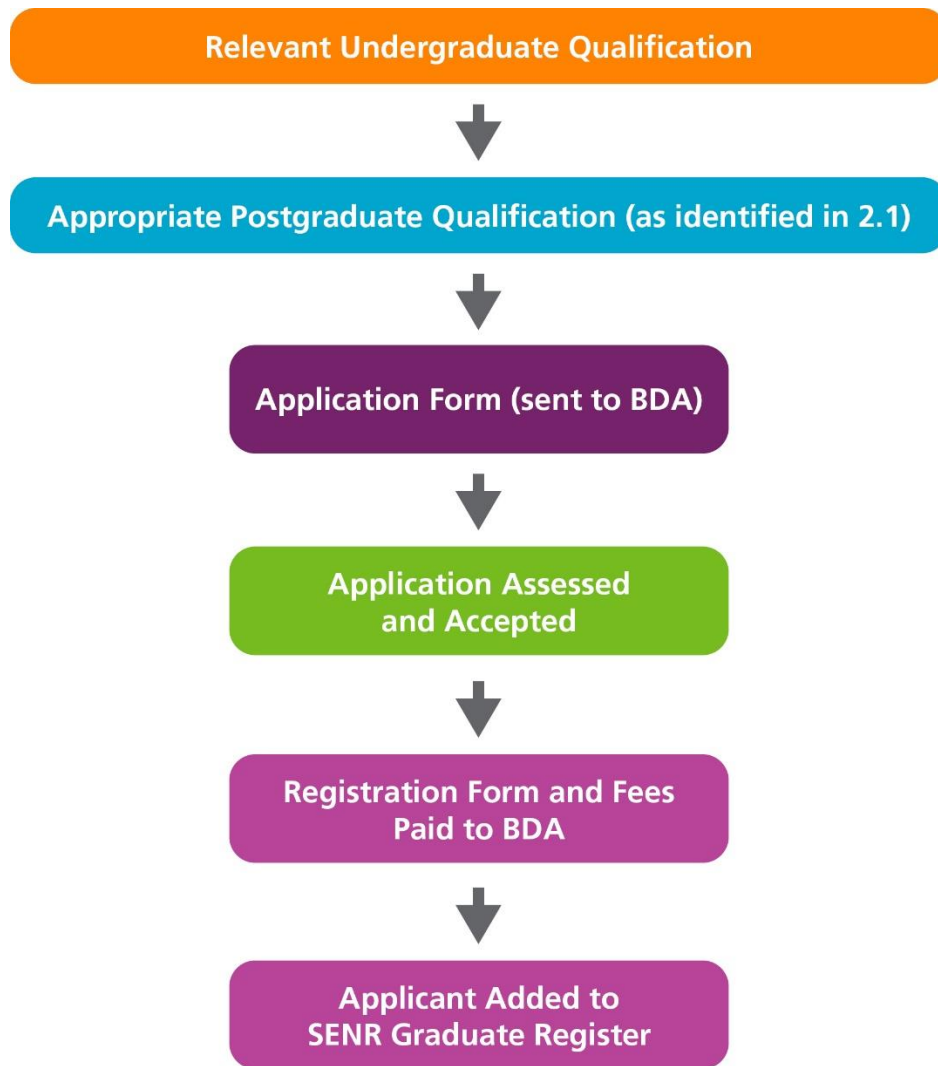
Successful applicants may identify themselves as SENR registrants under the relevant category, as follows:

- SENR Graduate Registrant
- SENR Practitioner Registrant
- SENR Academic Associate Registrant

3.0 Graduate Registration

3.1 Overview

Applications are invited from individuals who can demonstrate all the competencies for Graduate registration as set out in **Section A** of the SENR Competency Framework for Graduate and Practitioner Registration². The table below illustrates a summary of this process.



Summary of the Graduate Registration Process

Those new to the field or recently graduated from accredited post graduate programmes can apply for **Graduate** Registration. This enables those who have the appropriate knowledge base but not yet the experience, to join the Register. It encourages safe and ethical practice in registrants from the point of graduation and during their initial engagement in sport and exercise nutrition. Sport and exercise nutritionists enter the profession as a Graduate Registrant and develop competency through practice during their early post-registration years. They are encouraged to engage in continual professional development to advance their practice and deliver better outcomes for service users as they work towards achieving full Practitioner Registration status.

3.2 Graduate Application Process

Applications for Graduate Registration can be made as part of the [BDA online joining process](#) – applicants should join as a ‘SENR Member’ of the BDA, and will be asked to upload the relevant documentation for your eligibility for registration to be assessed.

If you are eligible for registration with the HCPC as a Dietitian through UK training and education, you must join the BDA as a Full Member. Once you have joined the BDA as a full member, to become a SENR Registrant, you should fill in the HYPERLINK "<https://www.bda.uk.com/senr-sport-and-exercise-nutrition-register/registration/how-to-register.html>" [Graduate Registration application form](#) and return to the BDA Office at senr@bda.uk.com.

The maximum period of Graduate Registration will be 3 years; after which time the registrant will be required to demonstrate the requirements for practitioner registration or as a minimum, demonstrate ongoing commitment to maintaining knowledge of current evidence base through their continuing professional development (CPD) activity. This extension to Graduate Registration is usually limited to one 12-month period. Failure to evidence transition to the practitioner category of registration after this extension period could lead to removal from the Register.

Applications for this extension to Graduate Registration should be made in writing to the BDA Office at senr@bda.uk.com outlining the mitigating circumstances for the extension request, with supporting evidence of engagement in relevant CPD activity during the period of registration. This supporting evidence can include an up-to-date CV, proof of qualifications and/or training, and professional references.

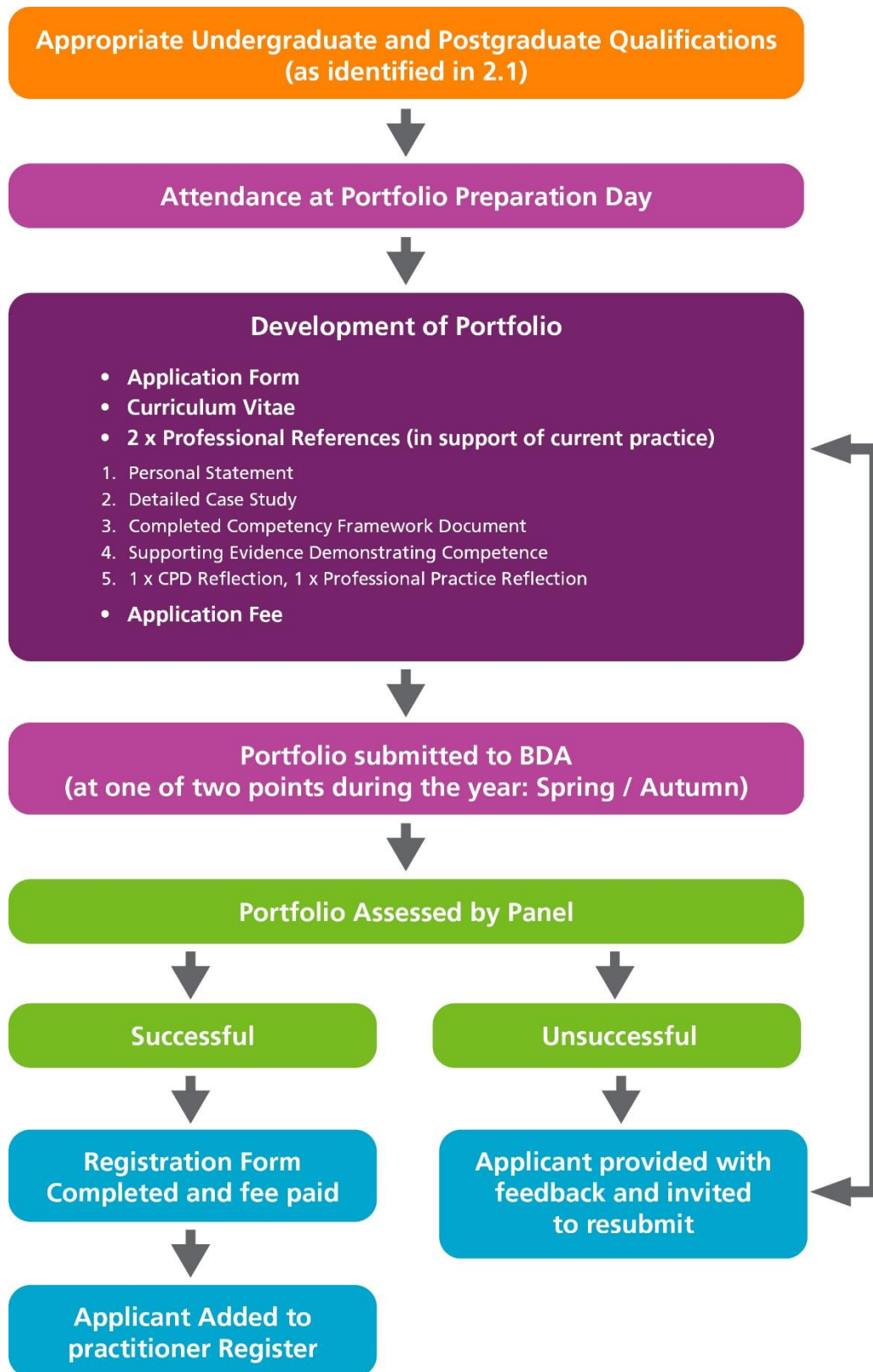
4.0 Practitioner Registration

4.1 Overview

Practitioner Registration is awarded to applicants who can demonstrate appropriate qualifications and proficiency gained after relevant professional experience.

Applications are invited from individuals who can demonstrate all the essential competencies for Practitioner registration as set out in **Sections A-F** of the SENR Competency Framework for Graduate and Practitioner Registration². The table below illustrates this process.

The competencies expected of the registrant in Sports and Exercise Nutrition are outlined in the document, SENR Competency Framework for Graduate and Practitioner Registration². All potential applicants are strongly advised to undertake a self-assessment against the competency framework prior to submitting an application. The purpose of this self-assessment is to ensure that only suitably qualified and experienced applicants proceed to development of a portfolio of evidence. The compulsory **Portfolio Preparation Workshop** helps guide applicants through this self-audit process and prepares them for the requirements of portfolio submission. [Upcoming dates for these workshops can be found here.](#)



The Practitioner Registration Process

4.1 Application Requirements

An application for Practitioner Registration can be made at two points during the year, spring and autumn (exact dates can be found on the [SENR website](#)). Alongside the portfolio of evidence the application must include:

- Photocopies of formal certification of relevant qualifications if applying for Practitioner Registration without have Graduate Registration status;
- Certified translations of transcripts of courses of study and qualification certificates in languages other than English (as appropriate);
- Applicants who qualified in countries outside of the European Union or UK will, in the first instance, be required to submit a full transcript of modules undertaken as part of their qualification. If a clear comparison with UK qualification standards cannot be made by our expert assessors, applicants may subsequently be required to submit an assessment of equivalence to an award from the United Kingdom by National Recognition Information Centre (NARIC);
- Payment of an application fee of £250.

4.2 Summary of Portfolio Requirements

The portfolio of evidence should clearly demonstrate the applicant's ability to meet the professional competencies outlined in the Competency Framework. The portfolio of evidence for Practitioner Registration must include the following:

- a. Completed application form, checklist and application fee
- b. An up-to-date Curriculum Vitae (maximum of 3 pages)
- c. Two completed reference forms supporting the applicant's current practice
- d. A **personal statement** providing a brief overview of your practice
- e. One detailed **case study** with reflective commentary of your work
- f. A completed Competency Framework document.
- g. Two reflective statements, one based on a continuing professional development/ educational event, and one based on a professional practice activity.
- h. Qualifications (certificates/transcripts) if the applicant does not already hold graduate registration status.
- i. Any additional evidence needed to demonstrate competencies.

NB: A portfolio of evidence will only be accepted if it meets the prescribed format. The Competency Framework document needs to be saved as a Word document, The other two documents can be saved as PDF.

4.3 Assessment Process

Portfolios are considered by an Assessor Panel. The Panel is made up of a minimum of four assessors who are highly experienced senior members of the sport and exercise nutrition profession from practice and academia.

The Panel meets twice per year to consider all applications received within the six-month period prior to the meeting. Applications are judged against the Competency Framework² and the applicant's ability to demonstrate adequate experience and evidence against each criterion. It is the applicant's responsibility to clearly signpost their evidence for meeting each criterion.

4.4 Application Outcome

The outcome of an application for Practitioner registration shall be one of the following:

- a. Admission as Practitioner Registrant. The successful applicant is invited to join the Register;
- b. Decision deferred and the applicant receives feedback and is invited to resubmit once essential requirements have been met / evidenced. Each applicant is entitled to resubmit once, free of charge (covered by initial application fee).

NB. Applicants should note that requests from the Panel for further clarifications / additional information are commonplace. Applicants should also note that there is a balance to be maintained between providing sufficient feedback to understand how the Panel decision has been made, and not doing the work of the applicant in demonstrating their competence to practice.

- c. Rejection for any applicant who fails to meet basic criteria for admission, which may include being unfit to practice, inadequate qualifications or a false declaration.

If the Panel deems that the applicant requires additional sector experience, it maintains the right to impose a delayed resubmission date until such time as the applicant has obtained further practice exposure or sought mentorship support.

If the Panel deems that a serious breach of confidentiality has occurred, or identifies activity falling outside the SENR Code of Conduct¹, this information and ONLY this information, will be reported back to the applicant. No further application feedback will be provided until such time as the applicant resubmits having addressed the serious issues noted.

Individuals shall be informed of the outcome of the application by email. The successful applicant will then be invited to join the Register by paying the registration fee and BDA membership fee. Once all fees have been received the successful applicant will be sent a registration certificate and logo (for correspondence and marketing purposes) and their details will be added to the Register. Registration fees must be received within 4 weeks of notification of a successful portfolio application outcome.

4.5 Appeals

Applicants have 28 days to appeal against an assessment decision starting from the date of the application rejection email. If an applicant wishes to appeal against that decision, the BDA requires them to send a “notice of appeal”. This can be in the form of a letter or email, but it must include the following:

- Applicant’s name and address;
- A statement that makes it clear why the appeal is being brought;
- The decision against which the appeal is being made;
- A “concise statement of the grounds of the appeal” (which is explained further below).

It is the applicant’s responsibility to explain why they believe that the Panel’s decision is wrong. Therefore, the appeal must include a “concise statement of the grounds of appeal” which sets out the case.

The statement should explain why the applicant believes that any reasons given by the Panel, or any concerns set out by the Panel, are incorrect. Where the Panel has said that the applicant does not meet any specific standards, an explanation for disagreement with the statement should be made. The applicant must attach any documents upon which the appeal may rely. These documents must be from the original portfolio submitted.

When the notice of appeal has been received, a notice of acknowledgment will be sent.

- Appeals will be considered by the SENR Registration Committee.
- A member of the Panel who was not involved in the assessment of the application, will be nominated to review the appeal.
- The outcome will be reviewed by the Registration Committee to ensure due diligence has been observed, and will be communicated to the appellant by the Committee Chair.

Appeals will only be considered on issues of content (where information is either incomplete or has been misinterpreted). Appeals on the grounds of process will not be considered.

4.6 Re-registration

SENR Practitioner registration is for a period of five years. As such the process of re-registration is for use by applicants who are already SENR Practitioners and must be undertaken every five years.

Applicants for re-registration should demonstrate continuing professional development (CPD), evidencing that they have:

- a. Continued to work in the field of sport and exercise nutrition;
- b. Maintained and advanced their level of knowledge in all appropriate areas; and
- c. Applied current principles in their advice to athletes/clients.

The re-registration process requires:

- a written statement of no more than 500 words describing the applicant's practice history and how they have developed as a sports and exercise nutrition professional over the last five years.
- submission of an up-to-date curriculum vitae detailing the areas of work the applicant has been engaged in, and any relevant professional activities (maximum three pages).

- A log of CPD activities from the last five years that is relevant to the applicant's sport and exercise nutrition practice and a summary of learning from each activity and reflection on implications for their practice development.

[You can access the template documents here](#)

5.0 Academic Associate Registration

Academic Associate registration was established to acknowledge those with significant sport and exercise nutrition academic and research interests but for whom the Practitioner registration route is not feasible because they do not practice in the applied context and cannot meet Practitioner Registrant competences. It aims to recognise the contribution that academics and researchers make to the developing evidence-base in sport and exercise nutrition but ***is not a route to practice***. Those academics and researchers who feel they can comprehensively evidence the competency requirements of Practitioner Registrant status are advised to register through that route.

5.1 Requirements

SENR Academic Associates will hold a relevant PhD and have a recognised profile and standing within the SEN academic and research community.

Applicants are invited to submit the following documentation:

- a CV to outline background, professional qualifications, and research profile (maximum 5 pages)
- a personal statement on how they support SENR initiatives
- a written recommendation from a current SENR Practitioner Registrant

5.2 Review

Upon receipt, the application will be sent to the Registration Panel to review.

The process is not subject to appeal as the Panel's decision is final and there is no payment required for submission of application. Conflicts of interest will be taken into consideration when appointing reviewers.

Individuals shall be informed of the outcome of the application by email. The successful applicant will then be invited to join the Register by paying the SENR membership fee. Once all fees have been received the successful applicant will be sent a registration

certificate and logo (for correspondence and marketing purposes) and their details will be added to the Register. Registration fees must be received within 4 weeks of notification of a successful application outcome.

6.0 Statutory Requirements

6.1 Access to and administration of records

Protocols govern sharing and access to information by staff, agents and service providers to records, in order to secure efficient customer care, fair, robust and high quality of administration.

All correspondence and documents not already in the public domain in respect of an application are treated as strictly confidential to the applicant and members of the BDA and SENR staff, Registration Panel and Board.

Documents pertaining to an application shall be kept electronically whilst the individual remains on the Register. Portfolio submissions are normally kept for a minimum of five years.

We request that all applicants retain a copy of their application, including the portfolio submission.

6.2 British Dietetic Association (BDA) membership

All Registrants are required to be British Dietetic Association (BDA) members.

Those who are Registered Dietitians will be required to join the BDA as full members. SENR Registration will be taken as an additional and separate fee.

All other Registrants (non-dietitians) will join the BDA as SENR Members and pay one combined fee. Registration can be completed online at <https://www.bda.uk.com/join-online.html>

6.3 SENR Fees

The fees for registration with SENR are as follows:

- a. **Application fee:** *This fee **ONLY** applies to those submitting a portfolio of evidence for Practitioner Registration.* The fee is charged to cover the cost of review by the Registration Panel.
- b. **Registration / Annual Fee:** This is payable once the application has been approved and the applicant is granted permission to join the SENR. This fee is for the individual's membership and is due on an annual basis. *The annual membership fee is unaffected if the individual changes SENR registration status (i.e., from Graduate to Practitioner)*

The current BDA/SENR fees can be found at <https://www.bda.uk.com/senr-sport-and-exercise-nutrition-register/registration/registration-fees.html>

The BDA retains the right to review all fees on an annual basis.

For any further guidance regarding the registration process please contact the BDA Office at senr@bda.uk.com.

7.0 References

British Dietetic Association (BDA): [*SEN*R Code of Professional Conduct¹](#). BDA, 2021

British Dietetic Association (BDA): [*SEN*R Competency Framework²](#). BDA, 2022