

Skills 4 Pharmacy, Pharmacy technician training course accreditation event report, October 2023



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Event summary and conclusions

Provider	I & F limited T/A Skills 4 Pharmacy
Course	Pharmacy Technician Training course
Names of courses	Pharmacy Technician Training Programme -Apprenticeship Route 10001/1 Pharmacy Technician Training Programme -Non-Apprenticeship Route 10001/2
Event type	Accreditation
Event date	05 October 2023
Approval period	January 2024 – January 2027
Relevant requirements	Standards for the initial education and training of pharmacy technicians, October 2017
Outcome	Approval The accreditation team agreed to recommend to the Registrar of the General Pharmaceutical Council (GPhC) that the pharmacy technician course proposed by Skills 4 Pharmacy should be accredited for a period of three years.
Conditions	There were no conditions.
Standing conditions	A link to the standing conditions can be found here .
Recommendations	No recommendations were made.
Registrar decision	The Registrar is satisfied that Skills 4 Pharmacy has met the requirement of approval in accordance with Part 5 article 42 paragraph 4(a)(b) of the Pharmacy Order 2010, in line with the Standards for the initial education and training of pharmacy technicians, October 2017. The Registrar confirms that Skills 4 Pharmacy is approved to offer the Pharmacy technician course, including the associated apprenticeship pathway, for a period of 3 years.
Key contact (provider)	Amerjit Singh, Managing Director*
Provider representatives	Jamie Crinigan, Operations Director, Skills 4 Pharmacy* Amerjit Singh, Managing Director, Skills 4 Pharmacy

	<p>Sam Collins, Quality Manager, Skills 4 Pharmacy</p> <p>Sarah Rhodes, Quality and Curriculum Lead, Skills 4 Pharmacy</p> <p>Arun Sharma, Owner, Pharmacy Direct</p> <p>Shelly French, Head of Pharmacy Technician Development, Barts Health NHS Trust</p> <p>Idnan Hussain, Pharmacist Manager, Sharoe Green Pharmacy</p> <p>Sophie Cameron, PTPT, Sharoe Green Pharmacy</p> <p>Talha Ahsanuddin, PTPT, Barts Health NHS Trust</p>
Accreditation team	<p>Ruth Edwards (Team Leader - pharmacist), Head of School of Pharmacy, University of Wolverhampton*</p> <p>Sheetal Jogia (team member - pharmacy technician), Head of Education and Training, Pharmacy Technical Services, Bart's Health Pharmaceuticals (BHP), Bart's Health NHS Trust</p> <p>Leanne Bartholomew (team member - pharmacy technician), Principal Pharmacy Technician, Suffolk and North East Sussex, ICB</p> <p>Liz Harlaar (team member - lay), Independent Business Consultant</p>
GPhC representative	<p>Rakesh Bhundia, Quality Assurance Officer (Education), General Pharmaceutical Council*</p>
Rapporteur	<p>Ian Marshall, Proprietor, Caldarvan Research (Educational and Writing Services); Emeritus Professor of Pharmacology, University of Strathclyde</p>

*Attended pre-event meeting on 28 September 2023

Introduction

Role of the GPhC

The General Pharmaceutical Council (GPhC) is the statutory regulator for pharmacists and pharmacy technicians and registered pharmacy premises in England, Scotland and Wales (the countries of Great Britain). In order to practise in Great Britain, pharmacists and pharmacy technicians must be registered with the GPhC and have satisfied us that they meet our detailed requirements. If you are a training provider or awarding body, you will need to follow the process set out **Standards for the initial education and training of pharmacy technicians, October 2017** to have your pharmacy technician competency and knowledge-based course/qualification approved by us.

The powers and obligations of the GPhC in relation to the accreditation of pharmacy education are legislated in the Pharmacy Order 2010. For more information, visit:

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2010/231/contents/made>

Background

Skills 4 Pharmacy is an online distance learning pharmacy education provider. Since its inception in 2015, the institution has delivered pharmacy qualifications through apprenticeship routes. Skills 4 Pharmacy has collaborated with pharmacy-based employers, including national community pharmacy chains, the NHS Hospital Trust, and independent pharmacy proprietors. These partnerships encompass both level 2 and level 3 apprenticeship programmes.

Since 2020, Skills 4 Pharmacy has been accredited by the GPhC for delivering level 2 apprenticeships and components. This was prompted by sector demands to meet Level 2 initial training and education requirements for pharmacy support staff. This led to the exploration of a similar option for a level 3 pharmacy technician programme. Given changes in the role of technicians within the multidisciplinary team, pharmacy technicians, pharmacy support workers, and medicines counter assistants constitute 62% of the pharmacy workforce in England. Addressing a skills shortage among pharmacy technicians and the NHS Long Term Workforce Plan 2023, Skills 4 Pharmacy has developed a curriculum aligned with sector needs.

Engagement with stakeholders led to a demand for more specialized units at both levels 3 and 4, recognizing the evolving role of pharmacy technicians and the need for specific skills, such as leadership. A level 4 requirement garnered support from 50% of stakeholders. This consensus aligned with similar programme providers due to the inclusion of extended clinical skills and patient perspectives. Although a level 4 option presented certain constraints within the sector, it was proposed that additional units be introduced, enabling both workplaces and learners to make informed decisions when enrolling in either an apprenticeship or a non-apprenticeship pathway. The GPhC accreditation process assesses the meeting of minimum GPhC standards at level 3. As a result, material delivered at level 4 was not considered at this event.

Documentation

Prior to the event, the provider submitted documentation to the GPhC later than the agreed timescales. The documentation was reviewed by the accreditation team and it was deemed to be satisfactory to provide a basis for discussion.

Pre-event

In advance of the main event, a pre-event meeting took place via videoconference on 28 September 2023. The purpose of the pre-event meeting was to prepare for the event, allow the GPhC and the provider to ask any questions or seek clarification, and to finalise arrangements for the event.

The event

The event began with a private meeting of the accreditation team and GPhC representatives on 5 October 2023. The remainder of the event took place via videoconference on 5 October 2023 and comprised a series of meetings with the provider staff and stakeholders involved in the design of the course.

Declarations of interest

Sheetal Jogia declared that her professional association with Skills 4 Pharmacy had been discussed beforehand. The GPhC had determined that it did not constitute a conflict of interest. However, she declared that Shelly French, a participant in the meeting with stakeholders, is a colleague with whom she works closely at Bart's Health and in a professional capacity. She also declared that she has spoken to Jamie Crinigan, a staff member of Skills 4 Pharmacy, on a few occasions regarding functional skills and the Manufacturing Qualification that Skills 4 Pharmacy has just started delivering for staff with aseptic services at Bart's Health. The team determined that these represented a conflict of interest and that she should not contribute to the meeting with stakeholders or in discussions about the meeting.

Schedule

Day 1: Pharmacy technician focus 5 October 2023

	09:15 – 11:45	Private meeting of the accreditation team and GPhC representative Discuss provision and agree final questions and allocation
	11:45 – 12:30	Lunch
1.	12:30 – 15:00	Presentation from provider (20 mins max) Questions to provider focused on accreditation of pharmacy technician provision (to include apprenticeship questions)
	15:00 – 15:15	Break
2.	15:15 – 16:00	Pharmacy technician learning outcome testing session
	16:00 – 16:15	Break
3.	16:15 – 17:00	Meeting with stakeholders involved in the design of the pharmacy technician provision

Day 2: Pharmacy support staff focus 6 October 2023

	09:00 – 09:15	Private meeting of the accreditation team
4.	09:15 – 10:00	Meeting with support staff student
	10:00 – 10:15	Break
5.	10:15 – 12:00	Questions to provider focused on reaccreditation of support staff provision (to include apprenticeship questions)

	12:00 – 13:00	Lunch
6.	13:00 – 14:00	Support staff learning outcome testing session (NOS focus)
	14:00 – 14:15	Break
7.	14:15 – 14:45	Meeting with internal and external quality assurance of the courses (both pharmacy technician and support staff)
	14:45 – 16:45	Private meeting of accreditation team
8.	16:45 – 17:00	Deliver outcomes to provider

Key findings - Part 1 - Learning outcomes

During the event the accreditation team reviewed the provision against all 53 outcomes relating to the pharmacy technician course. To gain additional assurance, the accreditation team also explored a sample of 6 learning outcomes during a separate meeting with the provider and was satisfied that **all 53 learning outcomes will be met** during the course to the level required by the GPhC standards.

A detailed list of learning outcomes can be found in the [Standards for the initial education and training of pharmacy technicians, October 2017](#)

Domain: Person-centred care (outcomes 1-12)

Learning outcomes met/will be met? Yes No

Domain: Professionalism (outcomes 13-25)

Learning outcomes met/will be met? Yes No

Domain: Professional knowledge and skills (outcomes 26-48)

Learning outcomes met/will be met? Yes No

Domain: Collaboration (outcomes 49-53)

Learning outcomes met/will be met? Yes No

Key findings - Part 2 - Standards for the initial education and training

Standard 1: Selection and entry requirements

Standard met/will be met? Yes No

The team was satisfied that all four criteria relating to the selection and entry requirements will be met.

Learners that enrol must work in a pharmacy environment that allows them to meet the requirements of the course. Skills 4 Pharmacy is able to recruit for employers if necessary. Applicants must provide a good character reference and a health check showing that they are fit to practise as a pharmacy technician. Learners must demonstrate, including in interviews, that they have appropriate person-centred approaches, and be supported by the workplace educational supervisor that will be the point of contact throughout the course. Learners will undergo pre-employment checks with their designated workplace, which may involve the submission of a DBS check. Learners that have not undertaken a DBS check, must provide appropriate references, preferably a GPhC registrant but otherwise a suitable professional. Applicants must have GCSE English and Mathematics at Grade A-C, with a Level 2 pharmacy qualification as an optional requirement. A tripartite agreement will support the learner's enrolment onto the course. There is a standard set of guidance and responsibilities for on-job training. Learners with disabilities can declare any conditions that may prohibit them from completing the role of a pharmacy technician or any additional learning requirements that may need to be supported. The team was told that the same application form, requirements, and check lists are used for all applicants to assure consistency.

Learners must have a job title that states that they are a pre-registration trainee pharmacy technician and have a contract of employment that is for the minimum duration of the apprenticeship and training requirements of the GPhC (24 Months; 27 months for apprentices). Learners must be registered for the course within three months of their enrolment. Roll-on monthly programmes are provided that allow the learners to take up the course within the three-month requirement. The minimum expectation of completion is 24 months. Learners that choose to withdraw from the programme will be given credit for their achievements and given a specific period of 5 years to return to their studies and complete the course.

NHS trusts will usually conduct their own recruitment and will have an unbiased selection process that meets the requirements of equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI). Learners' applications will be sent to the employer for review and potential interview. The employer will be responsible for selecting the candidate and references will be required. Skills 4 Pharmacy provides information and guidance for interviewers and may sit in on interview panels. Interviewers are made aware of relevant legislation and must have undergone training in EDI and unconscious bias.

Standard 2: Equality, diversity and inclusion

Standard met/will be met? Yes No

The team was satisfied that all three criteria relating to equality, diversity and inclusion requirements will be met.

The submission stated that Skills 4 Pharmacy has established policies for Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI), along with an Equality and Delivery Monitoring Policy, and with EDI principles integrated throughout the course. The team was told that a recent Ofsted inspection had indicated that EDI gaps had been identified and closed. During the induction phase, learners will be introduced to equality and diversity principles from the Equality Act 2010. There is a designated welfare office available at any point in the programme. There is also a designated safeguarding team.

EDI data is accessible via the learner's profile and account on the centralised BUD system, allowing assessors and tutors to access relevant information. Learners with specific needs provide this information at the time of enrolment, and it is communicated to the assigned assessor. Assessors will then tailor the assessment strategy and methods, including the use of different font sizes and colours, and verbal assessments, to accommodate the learner's specific requirements. Teaching and assessment schedules can also be modified to accommodate cultural or religious needs. Teaching and learning principles are shared with learners, enhancing mutual respect. The team was told that EDI data is monitored formally every month to identify any trends or needs. Any changes are normally effected quickly but may be slower if trainees require extra tuition in maths or English. Relevant current topics are discussed in the course, including dealing with neurodiversity.

Standard 3: Management, resources and capacity

Standard met/will be met? Yes No

The team was satisfied that all seven criteria relating to management, resources and capacity requirements will be met.

Prior to enrolment and as part of their employment, each learner will receive a job description outlining their role. During the enrolment process, learners will receive a learning agreement that aligns with both apprenticeship regulations and the requirements for non-apprenticeship routes. This outlines the roles and responsibilities of everyone involved in the learner's programme. This tripartite agreement with the learner, employer and Skills4Pharmacy covers the learner's progress through the course. Learner agreements will be monitored at quarterly review meetings with employers and monthly meetings with learners. Each learner will be assigned a dedicated workplace supervisor, responsible for overseeing their training. The roles and responsibilities will be defined to the learner and the educational supervisor at the outset of the course, and in training plans and employer packs. Learners are provided with a Learning schedule and Learner handbook. The Course handbook outlines the responsibilities of quality assurance staff, educational supervisors, and any expert witnesses involved in the training programme. Workplace educational supervisors undergo training specifically related to their role in supervising a Pharmacy Technician Pre-registration Trainee (PTPT) that clarifies their responsibilities to the learner and their relationship with Skills4Pharmacy. There is a risk register with policies in place for the Board and management to mitigate risks.

The proposed course has been designed by a pharmacy professional. It is designed to adhere to the 2017 General Pharmaceutical Council's (GPhC) standards for initial education and training. It also aligns with the Knowledge, Skills, and Behaviours (KSBs) criteria associated with the apprenticeship standard. The original course requirements, as outlined in the course specification, have been reviewed and approved internally by the Skills4Pharmacy quality assurance team.

The team was told that there is capacity for around 500 learners with a current population of around 500, including 50-70 on the pharmacy technician course. There is a team of 18 tutors spread across the UK. All staff members responsible for delivering pharmacy qualifications are registered with the GPhC, possessing a range of experience, including pharmacy technicians from community, primary care, and hospital backgrounds, as well as pharmacists from community and primary care settings. All tutors and assessors hold appropriate assessor and teaching qualifications and have myriad support opportunities including protected study time and tutor handbooks with expectations of both tutors and learners. In situations where assessors cannot physically visit or assess certain areas, expert witness testimonies provided by workplace-nominated experts may be used. In such instances, the allocated assessor conducts additional assessments through professional discussions to ascertain the learner's competence level. The team was told that the company has filled 50 percent of the current vacant posts with interviews taking place for the remainder. One person has been appointed to cover any requirements on an *ad hoc* basis.

The team was told that workplace educational supervisors and expert witnesses are supplied with an explanatory pack that is updated as necessary. They have to self-declare that this has been studied. There are existing lines of communication which will be extended to any new employers. Reviews take place with educational supervisors every 8-12 weeks, covering meeting business needs, access to PPE, EDI, safeguarding, safety, accidents and wellbeing, all recorded on BUD.

The team learned that the course had been run previously under the aegis of the awarding body, Open Awards. That course will be taught-out over 24 months from the start of the new programme.

There is a distance learning package for Level 3 programme learners. Prior to commencing any knowledge-based sessions, it is ensured that learners have access to support teams. It is confirmed that workplaces meet the necessary health and safety requirements to accommodate learners and provide them with the requisite training throughout the 24-month duration.

Standard 4: Monitoring, review and evaluation

Standard met/will be met? Yes No

The team was satisfied that all five criteria relating to monitoring, review and evaluation requirements will be met.

The submission stated that the course is supported by an internal quality assurance strategy to ensure the consistent and rigorous delivery of the programme by all staff members. Each tutor's performance is assessed using a metric system aligning with the Ofsted numerical system for evaluating outcomes. Tutors undergo regular interim and summative reviews. Clear objectives and action points, with specific timelines, are provided to tutors, and their progress is tracked within the e-portfolio system.

During the initial two years of teaching, the course undergoes quarterly reviews to assess its delivery, structure, and content. A comprehensive final review is conducted upon the completion of the first cohort. A quality handbook outlines the cycle of learning that includes contributing factors such as

Ofsted requirements, GPhC initial education and training requirements and also the KSBs aligned to the apprenticeship standard. Internal Quality Assurance (IQA) involves sampling of learners' work against the standards of expectations, and all learners will be quality assured at the point of completion and moving to gateway. Assessors will receive feedback to support their learning and development.

A quarterly course review takes place to verify the correct sequencing and placement of units, ensuring that they align with the learner's schedule of learning. Some units will be 100 percent sampled, with lower risk units being sampled at 25-50 percent. This involves curriculum staff working closely with the course lead. Following the completion of the first cohort of learners an overarching course review is conducted every two years, with triennial reviews aligning with the re-accreditation process of the GPhC. For the proposed programme, the IQA findings will be shared with the External Quality Assessor (EQA), an assessor independent from the company.

Throughout the course, learners will receive feedback to ensure continuous improvement and support. They will receive feedback after submitting assignments or completing exams, on competency-based work submitted via BUD, from peer-to-peer reviews, and during periodic progress reviews from both their assigned tutor and their educational supervisor. The team was told that feedback is standardised for consistency and correct level.

The team was told that any changes/developments in medicines, medical devices, pharmacy law, pharmacy practice and national guidelines are identified through normal professional contacts and channels, and are reflected in the curriculum almost immediately. It was pointed out to the provider that any substantial changes to the accredited programme or to the resources must be reported to the GPhC.

Standard 5: Course design and delivery

Standard met/will be met? Yes No

The team was satisfied that all ten criteria relating to the course design and delivery requirements will be met.

The submission explained that the course provides a structured framework to describe the procedures, legislation, and regulations essential for the competency element of the training. The course is organized into a series of units, each sequenced over four quarters, covering a 24-month period, and designed to facilitate skill progression and knowledge development throughout the course. Specific learning outcomes are categorized as either part of the Year 1 quarterly delivery or Year 2 quarterly delivery, allowing learners to acquire the requisite skills before attempting competencies in these areas. The curriculum is designed to highlight the importance of patient safety by instilling the ability to effectively supervise within a team and collaborate within a multidisciplinary environment. Each unit has been designed not only to capture the GPhC initial education and training requirements, but also the standards expected of learners. The repetition of the standards throughout the course structure enables learners to show their continuous adherence to these standards and apply the level of knowledge and understanding upon registration with the GPhC. The team noted the optional/extended units proposed within the programme and wished to know how an employer will be made aware of what units have been undertaken that go above the IETPT standards. It was told that this will be discussed at the tripartite meetings to allow employers and learners to make an informed choice.

The submission stated that a range of individuals was involved in the design of the course, including Skills 4 Pharmacy tutors and assessors, to provide an alignment to current practices and the achievement of learning outcomes against industry services. However, employers/stakeholders interviewed, although very supportive of the course and company, did not indicate that they had had a role in the design of the programme although the company was responsive to any suggestions. The suggested course outline was reviewed by peers within Skills 4 Pharmacy, by a pharmacist and educational specialist to ensure that the content and design was aligned with the GPhC requirements for initial education and training for pharmacy technicians, and with the apprenticeship standards. Patients/service users reviewed the role of a pharmacy and their expectations of the types of services they believe this level of pharmacy professional will complete as part of their role. The example given of such input was that patients/service users would like technicians and support staff to be able to provide informed advice, rather than depending on the pharmacist. However, it was stressed that technicians must know when to refer to the pharmacist and to stay within the limits of their knowledge and competence.

Each learner will have a nominated educational supervisor within the workplace that will be responsible for the learner's training. The nominated supervisor will need to undertake additional training offered by Skills 4 Pharmacy to support the learner within the workplace. They will be required to update their knowledge and skills periodically throughout their appointment. If there are any areas of concern, the educational supervisor must inform Skills 4 Pharmacy. For learners that are not progressing or engaging as intended, there will be discussions with their line manager/ educational supervisor. An additional supervisor may be required if the trainee is working in an area in which the nominated educational supervisor does not have the required competencies. The nominated supervisor will remain responsible for the overall training and development of the learner, and the additional supervisor will need to undertake educational supervisor training and be responsible for their area of competency. Learners working under the supervision of the responsible pharmacy professional, will stay within the defined scope of their roles. The team learned that the Skills 4 Pharmacy IQA makes observational visits to workplace sites once per academic year on a risk basis. There is a procedure for reporting concerns; concerns will be addressed in accordance with the protocols outlined in the whistleblowing policy and in collaboration with the safeguarding and welfare team. All concerns raised will be subject to discussion with the learner's employer. The team was told that any concerns will be dealt with in less than 48 hours.

Standard 6: Course assessment

Standard met/will be met? Yes No

The team was satisfied that all ten criteria relating to the course assessment requirements will be met.

The submission stated that the assessment strategy builds on the learner's knowledge and skills before commencing specific roles and responsibilities. In principle, the learner will gain the required knowledge to be able to complete the required competencies in the workplace. Learners will engage with a variety of different assessments and in-house training programmes to enable them to work within their remit and to ensure that patient safety is paramount. Learners will only be deemed competent when all parties agree that the learner has undertaken the required skill training and can independently complete the process. The team learned that once apprentices have completed all the units, KSBs and the required number of hours they will be submitted to gateway and the End-Point

Assessment (EPA). EPA is contracted out to an EPA organisation which informs the GPhC of positive outcomes to allow registration.

The team learned that assessors are derived from the diverse workforce and include a registered pharmacist and hospital pharmacy technicians with different skills, for example, in aseptic practice. Second assessors may be used occasionally in the case of need for specialised knowledge, but this is rare.

To ensure that assessment methods align with standards and cater to individual learner needs, the range of assessment techniques includes closed-book examinations with a pass mark of 80 percent, assignments serving as the summative assessment for units or individual learning outcomes, discussion-based assessments, observations while performing various tasks within the workplace to assess competency development, and evidence demonstrating completion of specific tasks. Learners will complete two competency logs for unit 7, one for dispensing practices and the other for final accuracy checking. Each log will comprise a minimum of 500 items and will be standardized by the workplace. The team was told that the educational supervisor and/or expert witness will provide testimony confirming that the learner has met all competency-based learning outcomes and consistently worked at the required level. The declaration will also detail how learners have adhered to pharmacy professional standards throughout the learning programme.

Each learner is assigned a GPhC registrant with the expertise to conduct quality assurance for regulated qualifications. The IQA follows a process akin to systems employed by organizations overseeing regulated qualifications. Only learners who have successfully met the standards in accordance with course expectations then receive sign-off from the EQA. Although the team was told that the IQA and EQA work together closely, the external reviewer will operate independently from the course provider to provide an unbiased and objective evaluation, maintaining a separation from the course's day-to-day operations and trainees' activities. The EQA has full autonomy to choose when to undertake assessments and intends to interview tutors and trainees. The EQA will sign off apprentices before they move to gateway but will have no involvement beyond that point. The EQA will also consider any appeals and report back to the IQA if learners are not achieving the required standards; repetitive failures will be reported to the GPhC. The EQA review process examines the validity and reliability of assessment tools and methods. The level of sampling of work will be 100 percent sampling for Cohort 1, if no issues identified; 75 percent sampling for Cohort 2, if no issues are identified; and 50% sampling for Cohort 3 and beyond. Where issues are identified in any cohort, sampling rationale will remain the same or increase. Each sample will consist of two units and all learning outcomes. The learner will receive appropriate and timely feedback on their performance within a 28-day period. Assessment regulations prioritize professionalism, patient safety, and safe and effective healthcare practices.

Standard 7: Pre-registration trainee pharmacy technician support and the learning experience

Standard met/will be met? Yes No

The team was satisfied that all seven criteria relating to pre-registration trainee pharmacy technician support and the learning experience requirements will be met.

An induction process introduces trainees to the curriculum structure, learning methods, and assessment strategies, including broader skills such as safeguarding, British values, equality, diversity, inclusion, and soft skills. Learners become acquainted with the role expectations of educational supervisors and the support available, including entitlement to off-the-job training if on an apprenticeship programme. Educational supervisors receive a supervision pack outlining their responsibilities, including progress monitoring and guidance aligned with the course's learning objectives. The curriculum is designed with balance between academic rigour and trainee capacity, to accommodate trainees' needs, employer requirements, and rigorous assessment. A safeguarding team comprises four members, all of whom are Level 3 safeguarding-trained, with one holding Mental Health First Aid certification. Additionally, two staff members support learners with mathematics and English requirements, while one staff member aids in upskilling in science where necessary.

Learners participate in a live online training session each week. This represents the six hours of off-the-job training per week, as reinforced in the apprenticeship training plans. Regular reviews of learners' plans ensure alignment with desired progress, confirming both learner and employer commitment. For non-apprenticeship routes, a schedule of learning supports six hours of off-the-job training. There are systems to ensure regular interaction and the documentation of progress among trainees and their workplace colleagues. Learners have access to 1:1 support through a bookings link, where they can select an appropriate member of the team for support. There is no minimum or maximum number of times this can be used. Impartial careers advice and guidance is provided to learners on the careers in pharmacy and other industries. Tutors have access to careers guidance that tailors support to individual learners. Careers are discussed at least on a quarterly basis in progress reviews.

The team of pharmacy professionals, comprising pharmacists and pharmacy technicians for support of learners, is all familiar with the GPhC standards for pharmacy professionals. Tutors hold, or are actively pursuing, teaching and assessing qualifications. The training plan provided by the educational supervisor supports the opportunity to work within a multidisciplinary team; learners may need to visit external organisations to gain the required skills to meet this criterion. The team, cognisant of the fact that the proposed programme had not yet started and that many trainees are in small community pharmacies, **noted** that criterion 7.5 on multidisciplinary experience must be revisited at the next reaccreditation event.

There are clear lines of communication and policies in place for learners to raise concerns and appropriate action will be taken to ensure concerns are considered seriously with an investigation conducted.

Apprenticeship pathway and End Point Assessment (EPA) Delete if not required

A brief overview of the apprenticeship structure EPA integration of the apprenticeship route.

The submission stated that in accordance with the course specification, there exists a distinct pathway and course identifier for apprenticeship routes.

The apprenticeship pathway will undergo continuous monitoring, including progress reviews within the workplace and regular meetings with the assigned educational supervisor. This educational supervisor possesses access to the learner's BUD account and has the capacity to review reports in alignment with their designated access rights. Each learner will be assessed and categorised using a RAG (Red, Amber, Green) rating system based on their progression relative to the curriculum framework.

The comprehensive curriculum program, akin to the current delivery model, will be entirely managed through BUD. Educational supervisors will have the capability to track and oversee learner progress, engagement levels, and the rationale behind assigned RAG levels. Additionally, all reporting will be centralized to facilitate assessors' access to crucial information and data.

Adhering to the requisites outlined in the apprenticeship standards, learners will only transition to the gateway phase upon the successful completion of the accredited course and the fulfilment of internal and external quality assurance protocols. External verification of the accredited course will be conducted by an individual who has had no prior involvement with on-programme delivery or the learner's educational journey.

Learners will advance through the gateway exclusively when all parties involved concur that the learner is performing in accordance with the expected standards. Those learners who are either unprepared or have not met the required standards within the accredited course will be offered additional on-programme learning opportunities to bolster their competencies.

Given the integration of apprenticeships within its framework, Skills 4 Pharmacy will obtain the requisite approval from Ofqual to oversee the end-point assessment process.

