

Feedback from the November 2023 registration assessment sitting

About this document

This document contains feedback drawn from candidate performance in the November 2023 registration assessment. It is from the board of assessors, the body that sets and moderates the registration assessment. Many of the areas of feedback have been highlighted previously but candidate performance remains low in these areas.

The registration assessment framework

All questions in the registration assessment are derived from the assessment framework. The different outcomes have different weighting and trainee pharmacists should use the framework as the basis for preparation. Many questions in the assessment concern patients who have co-morbidities, and these questions are mapped across multiple parts of the framework. The November 2023 assessment mapped to the learning outcomes as follows:

- 67% of the questions mapped to high weighted outcomes
- 28% of the questions mapped to medium weighted outcomes
- 6% of the questions mapped to low weighted outcomes

Numbers are rounded to the nearest whole number and do not add to 100%.

Example questions

Trainee pharmacists should use the example questions available via the GPhC website to help prepare for the registration assessment. The example questions provide a guide as to what to expect in the registration assessment and the opportunity to become familiar with the onscreen platform used to deliver the assessment.

Part 1

In the November 2023 sitting, the part 1 passing score was 25 marks out of a possible 40. In total, 79.1% of trainee pharmacists achieved this.

All the questions in part 1 of the registration assessment reflect scenarios that could be encountered when practising as a pharmacist. Underpinning pharmacy knowledge and understanding will be required to answer some questions. When reviewing their answers, trainee pharmacists should check that each answer is practical and realistic as this will help identify incorrect answers.

As observed previously, questions that feature additional resources are the questions most likely to be omitted in the assessment. Trainee pharmacists are reminded to familiarise themselves with common resources during their foundation training.

When calculating intravenous infusion rates, trainee pharmacists should consider all of the relevant information that is provided in the question such as the duration of the infusion, the maximum concentration, and the maximum rate of infusion. For example, a candidate may be asked to calculate the dose of an intravenous medicine and then calculate the minimum volume in which it can be diluted as shown in the box below:

A patient requires a dose of 200mg of an IV medicine. The medicine can be diluted to a concentration of between 1mg/mL and 5mg/mL with sodium chloride 0.9%w/v. The minimum volume that the medicine can be infused in is 40mL.

Trainee pharmacists are expected to apply their underpinning knowledge and round at appropriate stages in a pharmacy calculation. In some questions, the rounding should occur at the end of the calculation, but in other questions rounding should occur earlier in the calculation. For example, when calculating the total amount of a medicine that should be supplied, rounding should occur for an individual dose before calculating a final amount.

When necessary, instructions are provided in the question about rounding for the final inputted answer. Often in the November 2023 sitting, trainee pharmacists did not follow specific rounding instructions or failed to apply knowledge of the practicalities of providing a specific dose. Examples of specific instructions/ information include:

- round your answer up to the nearest pound
- give your answer to one decimal place
- give your answer to the nearest 0.05mL
- give your answer to the nearest multiple of 5mL
- round your answer up to the nearest 15mg for ease of administration
- the pre-filled syringe comes with 2.5mg graduation markings

Trainees are expected to understand what is meant by the potency of a medicine, and to be able to safely convert the dose of a particular opiate medication to the equivalent dose of another opiate medication when provided with the relevant potency information.

Part 2

In the November 2023 sitting, the part 2 passing score was 77 marks out of a possible 118. In total, 74.98% of trainee pharmacists achieved this.

The following list highlights topics answered less well and outlines expectations:

- Trainee pharmacists should be able to differentiate between red flag symptoms and those that are most likely associated with illness that can be managed appropriately with advice from a pharmacist. Trainee pharmacists must be able to identify when it is appropriate to offer advice and treatment and when it is more appropriate to refer to another health care provider. When referring patients, trainee pharmacists are expected to identify the most appropriate referral pathway.
- Trainee pharmacists should recognise when certain patient groups may require urgent referral and prompt assessment, for example, those that are immunosuppressed.

- Trainee pharmacists should understand why anticoagulation is offered to patients with atrial fibrillation, and to be able to recommend appropriate treatment options.
- Trainee pharmacists should be able to select the most appropriate formulation of a medication for a particular patient, by balancing the needs of the patient, with the characteristics of the available formulations. For example, be able to choose the most appropriate concentration of a liquid medication so that the volume required for each dose is practical and sensible for the patient.
- Trainee pharmacists should know the correct route of administration for vinca alkaloids.
- Trainee pharmacists should be knowledgeable about women's health. For example, trainees should be aware of the advantages and disadvantages of hormone replacement therapy (HRT) in women with differing menopausal symptoms and be aware of the contraindications to particular types of HRT.
- Trainee pharmacists should be able to interpret blood glucose results in patients with diabetes who are using insulin and be able to offer insulin dosing advice when provided with the necessary dosing information.
- Trainee pharmacists should understand the different ways in which the metabolism of medicines can be affected by a person's genomic profile.
- Trainee pharmacists should know that breastfeeding is an important public health priority and be able to advise on the use of medicines in breastfeeding including the treatment of patients with conditions that frequently present in the pharmacy.
- Trainee pharmacists should be knowledgeable about public health advice related to children's health, for example, recommendations for vitamin supplementation.