

Education and training framework for pharmacists and pharmacy technicians in Great Britain

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About us

The General Pharmaceutical Council (GPhC) is the regulator for pharmacists, pharmacy technicians and registered pharmacy premises in England, Scotland and Wales (the countries of Great Britain).

Introduction

This document sets out the framework for the education and training of pharmacists and pharmacy technicians in England, Scotland and Wales and some aspects of education and training in Northern Ireland. The framework should be read in conjunction with the:

- GPhC's professional standards
- GPhC's (initial) education and training standards
- the GPhC's registration assessment framework
- the GPhC's registration requirements
- the GPhC's requirements for accreditation and recognition
- SEB training documents and accreditation or recognition reports on the GPhC's website, which describe academic frameworks in universities and other education providers for delivering accredited courses

The main audience for this framework is, but not restricted to, statutory education bodies, universities, and other providers of pharmacy education.

Since the previous iteration of this document was published, the GPhC's education procedures, statutory education bodies (SEBs) - NHS England (NHSE), NHS Education Scotland (NES), and Health Education and Improvement Wales (HEIW) - have assumed a greater role in delivering foundation training for pharmacists.

The document also sets out key education relationships between the GPhC and the Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland (PSNI) and should be read alongside the Memorandum of Understanding between the GPhC and PSNI.

A significant part of this document refers to the initial education and training of pharmacists, the accreditation of pharmacist independent prescribing courses, information on the recognition of pharmacy technician courses, programmes, and qualifications, and maximum time limits for completing them.

This framework comes into force on the 1 July 2024 and supersedes the GPhC's 2011 education procedures. We will introduce a revised version before the 2025-2026 pharmacist foundation training year, when independent prescribing training is required.

Professional standards and fitness to practise

Professional standards

1. Pharmacy students, pharmacy trainees and pharmacists undergoing GPhC-accredited training must behave professionally at all times.
2. All students and trainees are bound by the **GPhC's Standards for Pharmacy Professionals** and any other professional requirements of SEBs, universities and other providers of pharmacy education.

Fitness to practise

3. Pharmacists undergoing training are subject to the GPhC's fitness to practise procedures and those of course providers.
4. Pharmacy students and trainees are subject to the codes of conduct and fitness to practise procedures of SEBs, universities and other providers of pharmacy education.
5. Serious breaches of a code of conduct and serious fitness to practise concerns must be reported to the GPhC. The GPhC will consider whether it needs to take action or whether the breach has been dealt with by an SEB, university or other provider of pharmacy education.

Accreditation and recognition

Definitions and descriptions

1. 'Accreditation' is the process in by which a course of education and training for registrants is, or those on a pharmacist foundation training programme to become registrants are, assessed and approved by the GPhC. Courses for pharmacy support staff may also be accredited. 'Approval' is the term used in the Pharmacy Order 2010 for the quality assurance of pharmacy courses and includes both accreditation and recognition.
2. 'Recognition' is the process in by which a course or qualification for those in training to become pharmacy technicians is assessed and approved by the GPhC, if:
 - a. it is already approved by one of the national education regulatory bodies - the Office of the Qualifications and Examinations Regulator (Ofqual) or the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA); and
 - b. it is included in a national qualification framework
3. *Standards for the initial education and training of pharmacists in Great Britain* (GPhC, 2021) sets out the initial education and training standards for pharmacists training in Great Britain, including the requirements for pharmacist foundation training.
4. *Standards for the education and training of non-EEA pharmacists wanting to register in Great Britain* (GPhC, 2011) is the companion document for non-EEA pharmacists wanting to register as a pharmacist in Great Britain.
5. *Standards for the Initial Education and Training of Pharmacy Technicians* (GPhC, 2017) sets out the initial education and training standards for pharmacy technicians training in Great Britain.
6. *The accreditation of pharmacy courses leading to registration and annotation in Great Britain* (GPhC, 2013) sets out the criteria and standards the GPhC will apply to providers who seek to offer an accredited course or programme.

7. *Requirements for the education and training of pharmacy support staff* (GPhC, 2020) sets out the requirements for the education and training of pharmacy support staff. Note that pharmacy support staff are not regulated by the GPhC, but the GPhC does set standards for the education and training of pharmacy support staff and may accredit courses for pharmacy support staff.

Scope

8. The GPhC accredits or recognises courses leading to registration and annotation in England, Scotland and Wales and also foundation training programmes run by statutory education bodies (SEBs). The statutory education bodies are NHS England (England), NHS Education Scotland (Scotland) and Health Education and Improvement Wales (Wales). We will update the framework to include the Northern Ireland SEB at a later date.
9. The GPhC and the PSNI jointly accredit courses leading to registration and annotation in Northern Ireland, but in doing so exercise separate legal powers.
10. The PSNI has adopted the GPhC's education standards (see *Standards for the initial education and training of pharmacists in Great Britain* (GPhC, 2019)) and accreditation methodology (see *The accreditation of courses leading to registration and annotation in Great Britain* (GPhC, 2013)). The standards and accreditation methodology are, therefore, applicable across the UK.

The status of accreditation or recognition

11. Accreditation or recognition may be
 - c. granted in full; or
 - d. granted on a probationary basis, if concerns have been raised about a course, programme, or qualification; or
 - e. granted on a provisional basis, if a course, programme, or qualification has not yet been fully accredited; or
 - f. not granted; or
 - g. removed.
12. Where an outcome of 'not granted' or 'removed' is being considered by a team of visitors, a team may exercise its professional judgement to advise a course, programme, or qualification provider to resubmit its application at a later date. If the course, programme, or qualification provider agrees, the accreditation or recognition event will be suspended and reconvened at a time agreed by the GPhC and the course, programme, or qualification provider. If the course, programme, or qualification provider does not accept the advice of a team, then the team will proceed to recommend one of the outcomes above.
13. The outcomes are granted for a specified period determined by the registrar on the advice of an accreditation or recognition team.
14. Providers must ensure that any literature or website entries relating to a course, programme or qualification clearly and accurately states the status of its accreditation or recognition.
15. If the status of accreditation or recognition of a course, programme or qualification changes, providers must notify all prospective and current students or trainees of that change immediately and the implications of that change for that student or trainee.

16. In the case of decisions made about courses, programmes or qualifications accredited jointly by the GPhC and the PSNI, decisions will be valid once the procedures for agreeing decisions by both organisations are complete and both organisations have agreed the decision.

Initial and full accreditation or recognition

17. Accreditation or recognition will initially be granted, if at all, on a provisional basis.
18. Full accreditation or recognition may be granted only once a cohort of students or trainees has completed a course, programme, or qualification.

Re-accreditation or recognition and re-accreditation and re-recognition

19. All accredited or recognised courses, programmes or qualifications will be the subject of periodic re-accreditation or recognition, or re-accreditation or recognition. The period between each review will be determined by the GPhC.
20. A course, programme or qualification may be granted probationary accreditation or recognition following review. If it is, the provider will be required to produce an action plan within 28 days of being notified of the decision to grant probationary accreditation or recognition. The GPhC will make probationary status known publicly.
21. The GPhC will determine the adequacy of the action plan and the period (not exceeding one year) that the provider may have to successfully implement the action plan.
22. At the end of one year, or such shorter period as the GPhC may determine, the GPhC will decide whether the action plan has been satisfactorily and fully completed. If it has, accreditation or recognition, will be restored. If it has not, accreditation or recognition will be removed. The GPhC will make the removal public.

Review of accreditation or recognition

23. The GPhC may review the accreditation or recognition of a course or programme at any time if it becomes aware of a potential concern. The way in which the concern is investigated will be determined by the GPhC.
24. A review may result in a change to the accreditation status of a course, programme, or qualification.

Voluntary withdrawal of accreditation or recognition

25. A course, programme or qualification provider may request voluntary removal of either full or provisional accreditation or recognition.
26. If a voluntary request is made, the provider must provide an action plan for 'teaching-out' students or trainees currently on an accredited course, programme or qualification or a plan for their transfer to another accredited course, programme, or qualification, or both.
27. If a provider fails to deliver the action plan as specified, the GPhC may remove accreditation or recognition involuntarily.
28. Voluntary removal will be made public.

Delegation of authority

29. The GPhC's Council has delegated authority to the registrar for all accreditation or recognition decisions in Great Britain except:
- not granting accreditation or recognition
 - removal of accreditation or recognition
- which remain Council decisions.

Information and assistance

30. In accordance with the Pharmacy Order 2010, providers must supply any information or assistance the GPhC may reasonably require within a timescale specified by the GPhC.
31. Failure to provide information or assistance as required may lead the GPhC to:
- impose probationary status
 - not accredit a course, programme, or qualification
 - remove accreditation or recognition

Appeals

32. A provider that wants to appeal against any accreditation decision must submit a notice of appeal in the form and manner and within the timescale specified by the GPhC.
33. Appeals will be determined by the GPhC's Appeals Committee (a body which makes decisions independently of the GPhC) in a form and manner specified by the Appeals Committee.
34. Appeals against accreditation or recognition decisions made in Northern Ireland by a joint GPhC and PSNI accreditation panel will be heard by the GPhC's Appeals Committee.
35. The PSNI has agreed to accept decisions of the GPhC's Appeals Committee in respect of accreditation appeal decisions made about course, programme, or qualification providers in Northern Ireland.

Visitors

'Visitors' in the term used in the Pharmacy Order but we use 'accreditors' and 'recognisers' to mean members of our Accreditation and Recognition Panel.

Appointment of visitors (accreditors and recognisers)

36. The GPhC will appoint visitors to its Accreditation and Recognition Panel for the purposes of (re)accrediting or recognising courses, programmes, or qualifications.
37. Appointments may be granted for a maximum of eight years in the role of accreditation panel team leader or team member, or a maximum of 12 years overall where a team member is promoted to the role of team leader. Periods of appointment may be varied for operational reasons.
38. Visitors cannot normally be appointed for more than eight years in a 20-year period.
39. Visitors may not be appointed to an accreditation team involved in accrediting any provider at which they regularly give instruction, or in relation to which they have a significant connection.

Standards of conduct

40. All visitors are associates of the GPhC and must abide by its:
 - a. code of conduct for Council members and GPhC associates
 - b. standard of education and training for Council members and GPhC associates
 - c. standard of attendance at meetings for Council members and GPhC associates
41. In addition, all visitors must:
 - a. abide by the GPhC's Code of Conduct for Accreditors and Recognisers
 - b. maintain an up to date, full and accurate record in the GPhC's Register of Interests for Accreditors and Recognisers
 - c. declare any conflict of interest as defined in the GPhC's Conflicts of Interest for Accreditors and Recognisers

Remuneration

42. Visitors will be entitled to claim such expenses, fees and allowances (including allowances to their employer) as the GPhC may determine.

Accreditation and recognition teams

43. Accreditation and recognition teams carry out accreditation assessments on behalf of the GPhC and make recommendations to the GPhC about accreditation or recognition.
44. In Northern Ireland, joint accreditation or recognition teams undertake accreditation or recognition assessments on behalf of the GPhC and the PSNI, and make recommendations to the GPhC and the PSNI about accreditation matters.
45. An accreditation or recognition team is composed of visitors as defined in article 45 of the Pharmacy Order 2010.
46. In Northern Ireland, an accreditation or recognition team is composed of visitors as defined in article 45 of the Pharmacy Order 2010, with:
 - a. a team leader appointed jointly by the GPhC and the PSNI
 - b. a member appointed by the PSNI, and
 - c. other members appointed by the GPhC
47. Accreditation and recognition teams are supported by GPhC staff (and in NI by PSNI staff as well).
48. Each team of visitors usually comprises, as a minimum:
 - a. a team leader
 - b. a pharmacy education expert who is either a pharmacist or pharmacy technician (whichever is most appropriate)
 - c. a lay member
49. The team leader described in is eligible to be an accreditation panel member (including a team leader) for accreditation events in Great Britain.

50. Both joint accreditation or recognition team members may attend accreditation or recognition events in Great Britain as observers.
51. Teams may vary in size and composition, according to the requirements of an accreditation or recognition event.

Accreditation and recognition decisions

52. The GPhC will place accreditation or recognition reports, including decisions, in the public domain.
53. Responses from providers to accreditation or recognition reports will be placed in the public domain.

Reporting to the PSNI

54. The jointly appointed team leader may report to the PSNI's Council on relevant accreditation or recognition matters in Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

The Foundation Trainee Pharmacist Programme

Components of the programme

1. The Foundation Trainee Pharmacist Programme (FTPP) forms part of the education and training leading to initial registration as a pharmacist in Great Britain. The programme comprises:
 - a. 52 weeks of professional training, at the end of which foundation trainee pharmacists must have been signed off by their designated supervisor as having met the GPhC's 2021 learning outcomes relating to foundation training (see (e) below); and
 - b. the registration assessment, which must be passed.
2. In the case of five-year integrated degrees including foundation training, the programme is embedded in the course and is managed by the course provider in collaboration with its training partners.
3. In the case of five-year integrated degrees, successful completion of the programme and graduation happen at the same time.
4. The management of foundation training programmes is delegated to statutory education bodies (SEBs). Currently the SEBs in Great Britain are NHS England (the Workforce, Training & Education directorate), NHS Education Scotland and Health Education and Improvement Wales.
5. From 2025 two versions of foundation training will be offered:
 - a. For trainees whose MPharm was based on the GPhC's 2021 initial education and training standards (the full Training programme); and
 - b. for trainees whose MPharm or OSPAP was based on the GPhC's 2011 initial education and training standards (the Interim training programme).

The interim route will be available from 2025 for a limited period. The GPhC will inform (prospective) trainees in advance of the last iteration of the interim programme available to them.

6. Trainees whose MPharm was based on the 2021 standards must be trained to be a pharmacist independent prescriber and will be annotated as such on initial registration, if successfully signed off by their designated prescribing practitioner.

7. Trainees whose MPharm or OSPAP was based on the 2011 standards will not be trained as pharmacist independent prescribers. To be annotated as an independent prescriber, they will need to complete a free-standing post-registration independent prescribing programme.
8. Trainees may not transfer between the programmes described in point 5 above.
9. Trainees on the programme are bound by the GPhC's standards for pharmacy professionals.

Applications to become a foundation trainee pharmacist

10. Applicants may not commence pharmacist foundation training until they have **either**:
 - a. passed an accredited MPharm degree or Overseas Pharmacists' Assessment Programme (OSPAP – a postgraduate diploma) or MSc degree including the content of an OSPAP; **or**
 - b. successfully completed all elements of an accredited course delivered prior to commencing foundation training (where a period of foundation training is undertaken before the end of an accredited sandwich course); **and**
 - c. successfully completed and passed a recruitment process in the form and manner specified by an SEB; and
 - d. paid requisite fees to an SEB and/or GPhC, where that is required

Evidence of health and character

11. Applicants for a foundation training programme must supply evidence of their health and character to the relevant SEB in the form and manner prescribed by the SEB.
12. The SEB will either evaluate the health and character of applicants directly or defer this evaluation to the applicant's foundation training programme employer as part of pre-employment checks, to determine the applicant's suitability to undergo foundation training in the light of the information supplied.
13. Making an application to enter foundation training will be considered as consent having been given to disclose evidence.

Length of pharmacist foundation training

14. Foundation trainee pharmacists must undertake 52 weeks of foundation training in the manner and form specified by an SEB.
15. Foundation trainee pharmacists must undertake at least 26 weeks training in a patient-facing context but not necessarily contiguously.
16. If learning outcomes for foundation training have not been met after 52 weeks, an SEB or an employer may extend the training period for the learning outcomes to be met.

Pharmacist trainee data

17. An SEB must provide data on foundation trainee pharmacists to the GPhC with an agreed frequency, form and manner agreed between the GPhC and the SEB.
18. SEBs must ensure that trainees give their consent for data to be shared before commencing their foundation training.

Satisfactory completion of a foundation programme and registration as a pharmacist

19. During training, foundation trainee pharmacists must be signed off by their designated supervisor or their delegates, as having met the GPhC's learning outcomes for foundation trainees. During the year the positioning and frequency of signoffs will be determined by the SEB, based on the design of the training programme. The final signoff must be by the trainee's designated supervisor and from 2026 in respect of independent prescribing the trainee's designated prescribing practitioner.
20. All foundation trainee pharmacists must pass the GPhC's registration assessment.
21. The conditions in section 19 and 20 above must be satisfied before a trainee is eligible to be registered. Trainees must submit other specified evidence to the GPhC and pass specified checks in addition to satisfying the criteria.

People holding accredited degrees from Northern Ireland institutions

22. People who hold an accredited pharmacy degree from a Northern Ireland university are eligible to apply to join the GB pharmacist foundation programme in Great Britain, subject to relevant checks.
23. To be eligible to apply to register as a pharmacist in Great Britain in accordance with article 21 (1) (d) (i) of the Pharmacy Order 2010, people who hold an accredited pharmacy degree from a Northern Ireland university who choose to join a programme in Great Britain must:
 - a. successfully complete 52 weeks of foundation training in Great Britain as set out above, and
 - b. pass the GPhC's registration assessment.
24. People as set out in point 22 above who successfully complete 52 weeks of foundation training in Great Britain; and pass the GPhC's registration assessment are bound fully by the requirements of this framework.
25. People as set out in point 22 above who successfully complete 52 weeks of Foundation in Great Britain; and pass the registration assessment must apply to register in Great Britain no later than eight calendar years after beginning their accredited degree in Northern Ireland and no later than two years after completing foundation training.
26. On a case-by-case basis and in accordance with legal requirements, the GPhC will consider requests for extensions to the maximum period for initial education and training. Extensions may be granted where there are legitimate, documented grounds for doing so.
27. On a case-by-case basis and in accordance with legal requirements, the GPhC will consider requests for initial registration in Great Britain after eight calendar years from the beginning of a person's accredited degree in Northern Ireland. Extensions may be granted where there are legitimate, documented grounds for doing so.
28. Subject to the provisions set out above, the GPhC will not accept periods of foundation training in Northern Ireland in lieu of periods of foundation training in Great Britain.

Serious concerns raised about a foundation trainee pharmacist in Great Britain

29. If a serious concern is raised about a foundation trainee pharmacist in GB, an SEB will investigate the serious concern and may raise it with:
 - a. the trainee; and

- b. the trainee's designated supervisor, or designated prescribing practitioner (in the latter case from 2025); and
 - c. the trainee's employer or superintendent; and
 - d. the GPhC; and
 - e. other relevant individuals or agencies.
30. To ensure safe practice in a pharmacy and to protect patients and the public, an SEB may require a trainee to agree to undertakings which restricts their activity or working conditions in a specified way and for a specified period.
31. In order to ensure safe practice in a pharmacy and to protect patients and the public, an SEB may require a trainee's designated supervisor or superintendent to sign an undertaking which will specify how the supervisor or superintendent will ensure that patients and the public are fully safeguarded if a trainee, in relation to whom a serious concern has been raised, continues to train in a particular setting.
32. Trainees must share undertakings with their designated supervisor. Designated supervisors must share undertakings with their trainee and employers or superintendents. Employers or superintendents must share undertakings with the trainee and designated supervisor concerned and other relevant people in their organisation.
33. An SEB will monitor the progress of cases and the use of undertakings. If a serious concern persists, then this process will be repeated as many times as is necessary to secure an outcome which safeguards patients and the public.
34. An SEB will inform trainees in relation to whom a serious concern has been made that the serious concern may be investigated again by the GPhC when the trainee makes an application to register as a pharmacist.
35. If an owner or superintendent fails to provide or comply with an undertaking reasonably required of him or her by an SEB, the SEB will consider whether further action is required.
36. If a designated supervisor fails to provide or comply with an undertaking reasonably required of him or her by the SEB, the SEB will consider whether the matter should be referred to the GPhC.

Removal from a foundation training programme

37. If a foundation trainee pharmacist:
- a. resigns from a programme; or
 - b. is unable to complete a programme for any reason; or
 - c. fails to provide or comply with an undertaking reasonably required of him or her by an SEB under (9)(B) above; or
 - d. cannot secure or ceases to have a Foundation placement for any reason; or
 - e. is not signed off as competent by their designated supervisor and/or designated prescribing practitioner (in the latter case from 2026); or
 - f. has failed the GPhC's registration assessment three times; or
 - g. exceeds the maximum period for completion of their training as set out in [D] below,

they will be removed from a programme by an SEB and the GPhC must be informed.

Appeals against removal from a programme

38. Appeals against removal from a programme must be submitted in the form and manner specified by an SEB within 28 days of the trainee receiving notification of their removal.
39. Appeals against removal from a programme on any ground other than 10 (i)-(iv) must be submitted in the form and manner specified by an SEB within 28 days of the trainee receiving notification of their removal.
40. An appeal panel of at least two people will be convened by an SEB and will determine any appeal based on written information submitted by an SEB, designated supervisor and trainee and any other relevant persons or bodies. Panel members must not have been associated with the trainee's training.
41. If a foundation trainee pharmacist is reinstated to the scheme after successfully appealing against their removal they will have to comply with, and if necessary repeat the process set out above.

Pharmacist foundation designated supervisors

1. All foundation trainee pharmacists must have a designated supervisor (DS), who must be a pharmacist.
2. The designated supervisor or their delegate(s) signs off a foundation trainee pharmacist on occasions specified by an SEB across the training year.
3. The designated supervisor may delegate one or more signoffs to other people, subject to SEB approval, if:
 - a. the person is a GPhC Foundation designated supervisor; or
 - b. the person is a pharmacist with relevant assessment skills; or
 - c. another regulated healthcare professional with relevant assessment skills
4. SEBs must maintain a lists of designated supervisors, subject to SEB approval.

Designated Prescribing Practitioners for foundation training from the 2025 training year

5. From the 2025 training year:
 - a. all foundation trainee pharmacists must have a designated DPP who is responsible for signing off the trainee as a pharmacist independent prescriber who has met all the learning outcomes in the GPhC's 2021 Initial Education and Training Standards.
 - b. foundation trainee pharmacists may be tutored by one or more DPP subject to a suitable scheme of delegation approved by the designated DPP.
 - c. the DPP or their delegate signs off a foundation trainee pharmacist on occasions specified by an SEB across the training year.
 - d. the designated DPP may delegate one or more signoffs to another person or people, if they are regulated independent prescribers.

- e. SEBs must maintain a list of designated DPPs who are involved in foundation training programmes.

Foundation pharmacy training premises

1. An SEB shall issue standards and guidance for the premises at which pharmacist foundation training may be undertaken. SEBs are responsible for quality assuring such premises.
2. Through accreditation the GPhC will check that such standards, guidance and quality assurance processes are appropriate.

The pharmacist trainee registration assessment

1. The registration assessment is a synoptic professional assessment of applied pharmaceutical knowledge and calculations for pharmacists. It is set and moderated by an appointed Board of Assessors on behalf of the GPhC and the Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland (PSNI). It is a complement to other assessments in foundation training programmes, as defined by SEBs.
2. The registration assessment is governed by the registration assessment regulations.
3. The registration assessment tests the topics covered in the registration assessment framework.
4. The regulations, framework and all other governance documents for the registration assessment are made by the Board of Assessors.
5. The registration assessment is run by the GPhC.

Sitting the registration assessment

6. A foundation trainee pharmacist may, if the overall length of their education and training is within the timescales set out in below, attempt the registration assessment a maximum of three times.
7. The registration assessment must be passed at one sitting on one day.
8. Marks from one sitting cannot be transferred to another sitting.
9. If a person restarts their initial education and training (from the beginning of a second MPharm degree) they may take the registration assessment again during their second full period of foundation training and a maximum of three attempts will be permitted.
10. Foundation trainees from Northern Ireland will sit the registration assessment and will be bound by its regulations.

Requesting a reasonable adjustment to accommodate a specific need

11. The Board of Assessors' Adjustments Panel may make reasonable adjustments at the request of foundation trainee pharmacists with specific needs. Reasonable adjustments will be agreed on behalf of the Board by the Board's Adjustments Panel.
12. A reasonable adjustment is any adjustment made for a candidate to the manner and conditions in which the registration assessment is sat.
13. A foundation trainee pharmacist may appeal to the Board of Assessors against a reasonable adjustment decision, in a form and manner specified by the GPhC and by a specified date. Members of the Board hearing an appeal may not have been involved in the original adjustment request.

Appeals against failure of the registration assessment

14. A foundation trainee pharmacist may appeal against their failure of the registration assessment only on the grounds of:
 - a. procedural irregularities in the conduct of the Assessment; or
 - b. procedural irregularities in the marking of the Assessment.
15. Any appeal must be submitted to the registrar on or by a date specified by the GPhC and in a manner specified by the GPhC.
16. The registrar will determine the appeal on the basis of written information submitted.

The Board of Assessors

Appointment to the board

1. The GPhC/PSNI will appoint members of the Board of Assessors for a term of four years. At the expiry of the four- year term, members of the Board may have their appointment renewed on one occasion, for a period of up to four years. Terms of office may be varied for operational reasons.

Composition of the Board of Assessors

2. The Board of Assessors must comprise a minimum of 10 members including:
 - a. pharmacists, one of whom must practise wholly or mainly in England, Northern Ireland Scotland and Wales
 - b. pharmacist academics, professional pharmacy practitioners and pharmaceutical scientists from schools of pharmacy running an accredited MPharm degree
 - c. non-registrants with relevant health education and assessment expertise
3. During their period of appointment, a pharmacist acting as a designated supervisor or designated prescribing practitioner may not be a member of the Board of Assessors, but they may be involved in pharmacist foundation training or other pharmacy education and training activities.

Chair

4. A chair will be appointed by an appointments panel on behalf of the GPhC and PSNI.
5. The chair must be a pharmacist with experience of professional assessment.
6. The chair will be appointed for a period of four years. This term of office may be in addition to terms served in other roles on the board. Terms of office may be varied for operational reasons.
7. In the chair's absence a member of the board may deputise for them.
8. The chair may be a pharmacist registered with either or both the GPhC of the PSNI.

Quoracy

9. Quoracy for a full meeting of the board will be:
 - a. the Chair or deputising chair, who will chair the meeting
 - b. four other members of the board (which can include the chair or deputising Chair)
10. Some meetings will be in person and others will be virtual.

Remuneration

11. The GPhC and PSNI will set the remuneration rate for the Chair and members of the Board.
12. Members are entitled to reimbursement of expenses reasonably and necessarily incurred in the course of their work for the board. The expenses policy will be made available to members, who must abide by the policy.

Maximum time limits for completing initial education and training

13. Pharmacist students or trainees taking an MPharm degree followed by foundation training and the registration assessment must complete and pass the three components in eight years from the date they commence an MPharm degree. This assumes continuous, full-time study and can be adjusted for part-time study.
14. Pharmacist students or trainees taking an MPharm Foundation degree or an MPharm degree with a preparatory year followed by foundation training and the registration assessment must complete and pass the three components in nine years from the date they commence an MPharm degree. This assumes continuous, full-time study and can be adjusted for part-time study.
15. Pharmacist students or trainees taking an OSPAP postgraduate diploma, or postgraduate master's degree including an OSPAP, followed by foundation training and the registration assessment must complete and pass the three components in four years from the date they commence an OSPAP postgraduate diploma, or postgraduate master's degree including an OSPAP. This assumes continuous, full-time study and can be adjusted for part-time study.
16. Pharmacy technician trainees must complete a specified course or qualification within five calendar years of starting them or within two years of completing them, whichever is the sooner. In addition, pharmacy technicians must satisfactorily complete two years of employment in a pharmacy in the UK.
17. A time limit may be extended to accommodate (this is not a complete list):
 - a. part-time study
 - b. reasonable adjustments to accommodate a specific need
 - c. maternity or paternity leave;
 - d. serious illness
 - e. serving in the Territorial Army or national service
18. Extensions will be granted based on verifiable written evidence only.

Independent prescribing training for pharmacists

19. An 'Independent prescriber' is a specialisation as defined in the Pharmacy Order 2010 and is an annotation to Part 1 of the GPhC's register.
20. Pharmacists who want to become an independent prescriber and who are not registered on a foundation training programme (from 2025) must undertake a free-standing training course accredited by the GPhC run by a university. Some are for pharmacists only, and others are multi-disciplinary, usually open to nurses or other allied healthcare professionals.

21. Pharmacists must identify an area of practice in which they intend to train as an independent prescriber.
22. Before commencing an independent prescribing course, a pharmacist must identify a designated prescribing practitioner (DPP) who is willing and suitably qualified to train and assess them. The pharmacist must inform the course provider of their DPP. The course provider must assure itself that the DPP is suitably qualified to undertake the role and should offer training, support and evaluation as if required.

EEA-qualified pharmacists wanting to register with the PSNI

Under the EC's general system for the recognition of evidence of training [Directive 2005/36], there is a route for EEA-qualified pharmacists to register with the PSNI.

1. EEA-qualified pharmacists who wish to register with PSNI under the General System must undergo the GPhC's comparative assessment process in the form and manner specified by the GPhC. The GPhC undertakes these assessments on behalf of the PSNI.
2. After assessing an applicant, the GPhC will recommend a compensation measure to the PSNI.
3. The PSNI has agreed to accept the recommendation as to the compensation measure to apply to an application.
4. An applicant can appeal the compensation measure to the GPhC's Appeals Committee.
5. The PSNI has agreed to accept decisions of the GPhC's Appeals Committee in respect of decisions regarding compensation measures.
6. In the case of a compensation measure which consists of a period of adaptation training with assessments, this can be completed wholly in either Northern Ireland or Great Britain but not a combination of the two. It must be completed in accordance with all of the requirements for foundation training applicable in the given jurisdiction.
7. EEA pharmacists who have undertaken an adaptation period in Northern Ireland may only apply for registration in GB once they have registered with the PSNI.
8. Applicants must pay the requisite fee for a comparative assessment.

Pharmacy technician initial education and training

1. The initial education and training of pharmacy technicians comprises:
 - a. a GPhC-approved knowledge and competency training programme and
 - b. a minimum of two years relevant work-based experience in the UK under the supervision, direction or guidance of a pharmacist or pharmacy technician to whom a trainee is directly accountable for no less than 14 hours per week.

Fees

2. All fees payable to the GPhC in respect of these procedures will be in accordance with a fees schedule.

Related documents and more information

Registrant standards and guidance

The guidance documents below are all available all available by on the **[Standards and guidance for pharmacy professionals page of the GPhC website](#)** .

- *In practice: Guidance on consent*
- *In practice: Guidance on maintaining clear sexual boundaries*
- *In practice: Guidance on raising concerns*
- *In practice: Guidance on religion, personal values and beliefs*
- *Standards for pharmacy professionals*
- **[Guidance on tutoring for pharmacists and pharmacy technicians](#)**

Education and training standards for accreditation and recognition

- **[Standards for the initial education and training of pharmacists](#)** (GPhC, 2019)
- **[Foundation training manual](#)** (GPhC, updated annually);
- **[Standards for the education and training of non-EEA pharmacists wanting to register in Great Britain](#)** (GPhC, 2011)
- **[Standards for the initial education and training of pharmacy technicians](#)** (GPhC, 2017;

Registration

- **[Criteria for registering as a pharmacist](#)** (GPhC, 2012)
- **[Criteria for registering as a pharmacy technician](#)** (GPhC, 2013)

