

**National Pharmacy Association pharmacy support
course reaccreditation event report, Accuracy
Checking for Dispensers (ACD) part 3, November
2024**



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Event summary and conclusions

Provider	National Pharmacy Association
Course name	Accuracy Checking for Dispensers (ACD)
Event type	Reaccreditation
Event date	27 – 28 November 2024
Approval period	January 2025 – January 2028
Relevant requirements	<u>Requirements for the education and training of pharmacy support staff, October 2020</u>
Framework used	National Occupational Standards
Outcome	Please refer to parts 1 and 2.
Standing conditions	A link to the standing conditions can be found here .
Recommendations	Please refer to parts 1 and 2.
Minor amendments	Please refer to parts 1 and 2.
Registrar decision¹	Please refer to parts 1 and 2.

Technical knowledge and skills

The technical knowledge and skills content of the course/qualification must be derived from, and mapped to, an appropriate national framework for pharmacy knowledge and skills recognised in the UK.

¹ Registrar or appointed delegate

Part 3: Role-specific learning outcomes (National Occupational Standards)

Please note, the NOS unique identifiers are hyperlinked to the relevant NOS standard.

PHARM28 - Undertake the final accuracy check of dispensed medicines and products

How does the course/qualification support the trainee to achieve this NOS outcome and where the outcome is taught?

Provider's commentary

The Accuracy Checking for Dispensers course builds on knowledge and skills from the level 2 dispenser's qualification. Each trainee must have completed a GPhC accredited level 2 dispensers qualification or equivalent before being allowed to enrol onto this qualification. The course actively supports learners to be able to accurately check dispensed medicines and products whilst under the supervision of their supervisor (this can be a qualified pharmacist that is GPhC registered or an accuracy checking technician that is GPhC accredited and has been regularly practicing as an accuracy checker for a minimum of 3 consecutive years). The course focuses on patient safety and aims to ensure each learner is equipped with the relevant knowledge and practical skills to practice safely in reality.

There are several components to the qualification that work cohesively to build the learners knowledge and skills. These include:

Pre course preparation– Before starting the qualification, each learner has to have already demonstrated, to the supervisor, a consistent level of accuracy when dispensing (through submission of a 200-item dispensing log). Once the supervisor is happy that a learner is at the required level to start our qualification, we ask our supervisors to discuss the legal and ethical implications of accuracy checking with the trainee and draw up a training plan that takes into account their working pattern. The wider pharmacy team will be made aware of the role of the accuracy checker and changes to roles and responsibilities as well as how they can support the learner.

Trainee guide contains knowledge including, information on SOPs and their importance when accuracy checking, how to report and deal with errors that the student has missed, how to report errors that the trainee has identified by other staff members, patient safety and clinical governance, the legal and ethical implications of an accuracy check, further information can be seen in the trainee guide. The trainee guide also highlights key information for the learner and outlines expectations for the course, it also includes additional reading links for further reading and directs learners to the relevant polices, local and national guidelines.

Supervisor guide – The supervisor guide enables the supervisor to effectively support and monitor the learner during the course. The booklet provides information on course structure, skill mix and the role of the supervisor. The booklet also highlights the importance of SOPs from a supervisor's perspective, indemnity and liability. The aim is to prepare supervisors to continue to support the learner once they have achieved their qualification and certificate. The supervisor will also have access to the course trainee guide if they would like to read the theory/knowledge to help trainees with answering any questions.

Learning and development team support – Each trainee has access to the NPA support team which is on hand to answer queries and provide support wherever necessary. The Learning and development team are contactable Monday-Friday 9am-5pm by phone or by email checkingcourse@npa.co.uk. Technical queries are referred to one of our experienced team of Learning and Development Pharmacists and Technicians.

This course supports learners to achieve this outcome with patient safety as our prime concern when developing the qualification. For this reason, we ask supervisors to ensure there is some pre course preparation and require involvement from a working GPhC professional. The learner will first have to complete activities and knowledge based MCQs within their trainee guide, the answers to which will need to be discussed with their supervisor. They will then need to complete the assignment questions on the NPA Learning Academy which comprise of written assignments and MCQs, these must be completed before commencing any practical based training in order to consolidate their learning. The NPA recommend a probationary period after certification to ensure learners are ready to check on their own and to give the pharmacist confidence that the qualified accuracy checker can independently complete checks safely and accurately.

There are aspects of the NOS that have either not been covered directly, or omitted due to relevance. Some information has been covered in detail as part of the learners dispensing qualification, which is a mandatory entry requirement to this qualification.

These NOS include:

K3, K7, K8, K9, K10, K16, K17, K18, K19, K20, K21, K22, K23, K25, K27, K28

The NOS that have been omitted for relevance are:

K24, K26, K29

How and where does the course/qualification assess the trainee's achievement of this NOS outcome at the stated competency level?

Provider's commentary

The Accuracy Checking for Dispensers course assesses the trainees to ensure they have met the required standard using a variety of robust assessment methods. Once the learner has passed each component of our assessment strategy they receive their certificate. The components that form our assessment methodology for this course are:

Signed accuracy checking SOP – All learners must read, sign and submit a copy of their pharmacy's accuracy checking SOP as part of the qualification, they are required to do this for assignment 8.

Completion of activities – All learners need to complete the activities that are in their trainee guide. Their answers then need to be discussed with their supervisor; they do not need to be submitted to the NPA.

Completion of knowledge based MCQs – There are MCQs throughout the trainee guide that the student must answer to help to consolidate their learning for particular topics that have been taught. The answers to these MCQs need to be discussed with their supervisor.

Written assignments – Learners have to complete various written and MCQ assignments, which can be found on the NPA learning academy. These assignments will help the learner to understand the

role of an accuracy checker along with its responsibilities and the skills and resources needed prior to commencing the practical training. There are 9 assignments in total that will have to be attempted by the learner and form part of the portfolio to be assessed by the NPA.

Portfolio of evidence –Prior to sitting the final assessment, learners must accuracy check a minimum of **1,000 items** that their supervisor has deemed suitable for a final accuracy check — labelled and assembled by other members of the dispensary team. These 1000 items must be checked across a **minimum** of three consecutive months. As part of the portfolio learners are required to keep an accuracy checking diary log and a log of any errors missed. If an error is missed, this must be documented on the log of missed accuracy checking errors and it must be reflected on using the reflection form for missed accuracy checking errors. In addition to this an appraisal must be carried out with the supervisor. Depending on the severity of the error and number of errors missed, additional accuracy checking may need to be undertaken according to the guidance provided in the trainee and supervisors guide.

Reflective exercises – There are three reflective exercises that all learners must attempt. These exercises help the learners to improve practice and get into the habit of reflection for continued professional development.

Supervisor Appraisal –The NPA have integrated competency checks within the appraisals that must be signed off by the supervisor. These are then documented as part of the portfolio. The competencies within the appraisals cover all performance criteria from **PC1-PC12**. The supervisor only signs off a competency once they have witnessed the learner carrying out the task/skill safely and effectively.

Final assessment test – The main assessment form is the final assessment test. The final assessment test is divided into two parts: the pre-test MCQs and the practical test.

The student must pass the pre-test which comprises of 5 MCQs on the NPA learning academy before they can progress to the practical test. The pass rate for the pre-test is 100%, and consists of prescriptions and images of dispensed boxes with their labels. The student has to correctly identify all of the errors. The student may have up to three attempts at the pre-test.

The practical test is set up by the supervisor using the guide for final assessment test for supervisors. The final assessment is made up of 15 prescription stations where learners must accurately find any errors amongst pre-made prescriptions. The learner is given a different prescription with different items and errors (or no errors) at each station. The final assessment is timed (45 minutes) they cannot revisit any prescriptions already checked which puts sufficient pressure on learners to mimic checking in the real world. Learners must score 100% on the final assessment – missing any error will result in a fail.

Learners are initially provided with two attempts. If the first is unsuccessful they can attempt the next after reflecting with their supervisor. The second attempt can take place on the same day or within seven days of the first attempt. If they fail both attempts before any further attempts can be carried out, they must notify the NPA and send a 200-item checking log to the NPA.

Final assessment interview – The final method used to assess learners is the final assessment interview. This is divided into two parts: the pre-interview and a subsequent telephone interview. Before the learner begins the pre-interview, they will need to be aware of procedures that are in place in their company for dealing with dispensing errors, patient safety incidents and complaints. They will need to have read the relevant SOPs before starting the MCQs. The pre-interview will comprise of 10

MCQs and all questions need to be answered correctly. If the student does not satisfactorily answer the MCQs for the pre-interview then they will have the opportunity to provide the correct answer or information when the telephone interview is conducted.

Each learner must have an interview with a Learning and Development Pharmacist/Pharmacy Technician. During the telephone interview, questions will also be asked which require the student to have read the SOP for dealing with complaints, and the procedures in place for dispensing errors and patient safety incidents. The interview is a chance for the learner to consolidate the learnings from the course and also ask any questions as they may be apprehensive about when carrying out accuracy checking independently.

GPhC accreditation/recognition team use only:

NOS met/will be met? Yes No

Accreditation team's commentary:

This learning outcome was discussed at the event. The team sought to understand how the learning outcome is introduced, how it is developed in line with Miller's triangle, and how the assessment ensures learning outcomes are assured at the right level.

The team heard how the student guide encourages trainees to create a plan for accuracy checking medications. The guide gives examples on how to fill in the log, the range of items that are expected to be included, and how to calculate a running balance. The guide emphasises the importance of following company-specific SOPs. If a company does not have an accuracy checking SOP, NPA can provide a customisable template.

Trainees are required to accuracy check a minimum of 1,000 items over three consecutive months and this is checked by the supervisor. Occasionally the checking takes longer than three months due to circumstances outside of the trainee's control. Logs are still accepted as long as the trainee has been checking consecutively.

The student and supervisor guides set out the process to be followed if a trainee is making mistakes. If one serious error is made, or three less serious errors, the trainee must check an extra 250 items in addition to the 1,000. If a further serious error is made, the trainee must restart their checking log from zero. If a further error is made, it is escalated to the course lead who liaises with the supervisor on next steps. The student and supervisor guides explain what is meant by serious and less serious errors.

Once the 1,000 item checking assessment has been satisfactorily completed, the trainee undertakes a pre-test screening test to confirm readiness for the final test, which is then followed by the final assessment test itself. The supervisor is informed how to set up the test for the trainee who needs to check 15 prescriptions in 45 minutes. The pass rate is 100%.

The team queried the maximum number of attempts allowed for the final ACD practical checking test, and made a recommendation. This is referred to in the reaccreditation report for parts one and two under criterion three, and is incorporated within the recommendation in the event summary and conclusions section.

