

Ready to apply guidance

To help you decide if you are ready to apply to sit the Common Registration Assessment

For sittings in 2026

Being 'ready to apply' means that you have made an informed, confident decision—based on your progress, preparation, health and wellbeing—that you are fully prepared to take the upcoming Common Registration Assessment (CRA).

The deadline to apply for a CRA sitting is around 10 weeks before the assessment date. Before completing your application and paying the non-refundable assessment fee, it is important to consider your readiness to sit. Your decision should be based on your own progress, preparation and confidence.

Key considerations before you apply

1. Progress in foundation training year

- Have you made sufficient progress in your foundation training year and are you on track to complete it by your planned end date?

If you've experienced setbacks (such as sickness, absences or changes in your training environment), consider whether these have impacted your learning and readiness.

If you decide not to sit the upcoming assessment, think about your developmental needs required for sitting the assessment at a future sitting.

If you are completing your foundation training year with the Northern Ireland Centre for Pharmacy Learning and Development (NICPLD), you must have completed at least 39 weeks of training by the assessment date to be eligible to sit.

2. Achievement of learning outcomes

- Have you covered the required learning outcomes and made meaningful progress in your e-portfolio or progress management tool?
- Have you had reflective discussions with your designated supervisor or educational supervisor, or other colleagues to assess your development?

3. Familiarity with the assessment framework

- Have you thoroughly read the **assessment framework** and feel confident that you understand and can apply the knowledge and skills it outlines?

- Are you confident in your ability to apply pharmacy knowledge and skills accurately and efficiently?

4. Understanding the assessment format

- Have you familiarised yourself with the Surpass system (the assessment software used to display and record your answers on the day of the assessment) and reviewed the **example questions** provided?
- Do you understand the structure, question styles and expectations of both parts of the assessment?
- Have you read the Board of Assessors' cohort feedback from previous sittings?
- Are you familiar with the structure of resources commonly used in practice so you can find and apply all the required information accurately and efficiently?

The Board of Assessors does not endorse any other revision materials, as they may differ in content and style of the Common Registration Assessment. The best preparation comes from the experience gained during the foundation training year.

5. Assessment specification and adjustments

- Have you read and understood the **assessment specification** in full?
- If applicable, have you submitted a request for **reasonable adjustments** in good time, including the appropriate evidence to support your request?

6. Assessment attempts and registration deadlines

- How many assessment attempts do you have remaining?
- Are you aware of your registration deadline and how this may affect your decision?

7. Health and wellbeing

- Are you in a good physical and mental state to sit the assessment?

If you are experiencing health issues or personal circumstances that may affect your performance, consider whether now is the right time to sit.

Pharmacist Support provides trainee pharmacists with a variety of free and confidential services to support their health and wellbeing in Great Britain. For more information, **[see the Pharmacist Support website](#)**.

In Northern Ireland Pharmacist Advice and Support Service (PASS), provides assistance to trainee pharmacists. For more information, please contact **pharmacy.forum@psni.org.uk** .

Making your declaration

As part of your assessment application, **you will be asked to declare that you are ready to apply**. This is your decision to make. While you may seek advice and support from others, it is important that your decision is based on your own judgement and circumstances.

Withdrawing from the assessment

If you apply and later decide you are not fit to sit, **you will not receive a refund** of your assessment fee and this fee is non-transferable to a future sitting attempt. You can find out more information in the **withdrawal, nullification, and appeals guide**.