

Common Registration Assessment regulations for sittings in 2026



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Introduction

The General Pharmaceutical Council (GPhC) in collaboration with the Pharmaceutical Society Northern Ireland (hereinafter 'the Society') jointly deliver the Common Registration Assessment (hereinafter 'the assessment') across the UK.

These regulations apply to the assessment sittings taking place in 2026 and supersede all earlier versions.

1. General information

Overview

- 1.1. To ensure consistency and integrity, all assessments are developed and moderated by the **Board of Assessors** (hereinafter 'the Board'), an independent body appointed by the GPhC and the Society. The Board's primary purpose is to protect patients and the public by maintaining the assessment at the appropriate standard for safe and effective pharmacy practice at the point of registration. This will take precedence over all other considerations.
- 1.2. Purpose of the assessment: To assure the public that trainee pharmacists have met a common threshold of applying the knowledge and skills necessary for safe and effective person-centred care and professional practice in the UK, at the point of registration.
- 1.3. The assessment format and content are outlined in the **Common Registration Assessment Framework for Sittings in 2026**. The framework for the assessment is set by the Board.
- 1.4. Entry to the assessment constitutes an agreement to be bound by the terms of these regulations, schedules and other materials concerning the assessment published by the GPhC.
- 1.5. The assessment is a computer-based assessment delivered at test centres.
- 1.6. These regulations apply to every trainee pharmacist entering the assessment, whether they have successfully completed an accredited Master of Pharmacy (MPharm) degree or accredited Overseas Pharmacists' Assessment Programme (OSPAP), or if they qualified as a pharmacist in the European Economic Area (EEA) and must take the assessment as part of the route to pharmacist registration.
- 1.7. In these regulations, 'the Registrar' means the Chief Executive and Registrar of the GPhC, appointed under the Pharmacy Order 2010. The Registrar may delegate any function or decision under these regulations, including decisions on appeals and nullifications, to another appropriately qualified individual.
- 1.8. The Board's interpretation of these regulations is final.

Eligibility to apply to sit the assessment

- 1.9. To be eligible to apply to sit the assessment, a trainee pharmacist must:
 - 1.9.1. hold approved foundation trainee pharmacist status.
 - 1.9.2. meet the following conditions based on when foundation training started:
 - 1.9.2.1. trainee pharmacist who started foundation training before 2025/26. The trainee pharmacist may be eligible to sit the assessment, provided they meet all other requirements in their registration criteria. If the trainee pharmacist needs

to complete training to meet the criteria, they must restart during the time windows specified by their Statutory Education Body (SEB).

- 1.9.2.2. trainee pharmacist who started foundation training in 2025/26 or later. For the Summer sitting of the following calendar year, the trainee pharmacist must have started training during their SEB's summer window. For the Autumn sitting of the following calendar year, the trainee pharmacist must have started training during their SEB's autumn window.

- 1.10. A trainee pharmacist in Northern Ireland must have completed not less than 39 weeks of training at the time of the assessment. Any additional eligibility criteria for Northern Ireland are specified on the Society's website.

These requirements apply to all sittings of the assessment.

Applying for the assessment

- 1.11. The decision to apply to sit the assessment lies with the trainee pharmacist. The GPhC and the Society have produced **Ready to Apply Guidance for sittings in 2026** for trainee pharmacists, designated supervisors, and educational supervisors to support this decision.
- 1.12. To sit the assessment, a trainee pharmacist is required to submit a valid and complete application, including all required supporting documentation, by the specified date and in the specified manner. For Great Britain the trainee pharmacist's application must be received by the GPhC, for Northern Ireland the trainee pharmacist's application must be received by the Society. Failure to meet these requirements will result in the trainee pharmacist not being permitted to sit the assessment.
- 1.13. It is the responsibility of each trainee pharmacist to ensure that they:
 - 1.13.1. have read and understood the requirements for applying for the assessment.
 - 1.13.2. have read and understood any associated processes they need to follow to register for the assessment.
 - 1.13.3. have applied to the GPhC or the Society and submitted all supporting documentation, by the specified date.
 - 1.13.4. have read and understood any processes associated with booking a place to sit the assessment once they have received confirmation of their application from the GPhC or the Society.
 - 1.13.5. keep the GPhC or the Society updated about their current email address, postal address and telephone number. Failure to do so may result in essential communications not being received by the trainee pharmacist and a test centre seat being allocated based on proximity to a previous postal address.

The assessment

- 1.14. The assessment comprises a time-limited Part 1 and Part 2:
 - 1.14.1. Part 1 contains 40 pharmacy and healthcare calculations with numerical free-entry responses and a 2-hour (120 minute) time allowance.

- 1.14.2. Part 2 contains 120 multiple-choice questions on the safe and effective pharmacy care of the public with selected responses and a 2.5-hour (150 minute) time allowance. Part 2 contains two sections. Section 1: 90 Single Best Answer (SBA) questions, each with five options, and Section 2: 15 sets of Extended Matching Questions (EMQs), each set consists of two questions with the same eight options.
- 1.15. To pass the assessment, a trainee pharmacist must achieve the pass mark or greater for Part 1 and for Part 2 within the same sitting.
- 1.16. Marks from any previous sitting cannot be carried forward to any future sitting.
- 1.17. In the assessment, the order of questions will be randomised. In Part 2, questions will be randomised within each section, question sets in Section 2 will appear together.
- 1.18. A trainee pharmacist may not be in possession of, or have access to, any reference resources other than those provided by the GPhC during the sitting.
- 1.19. The assessment is set in English. Dictionaries, including any other translation tools are not permitted in the assessment.
- 1.20. Both parts of the assessment must be sat on the same day.

Sitting attempts

- 1.21. The assessment can be sat a maximum of three times within the time limit available to apply for registration as a pharmacist. For this reason, trainee pharmacists are not guaranteed or entitled to three attempts at the assessment.
- 1.22. All previous valid sittings, irrespective of the delivery method count towards the maximum sitting attempts.
- 1.23. Where a trainee pharmacist has had a nullification request granted, an appeal against a failed sitting upheld, or has withdrawn from a sitting they applied to sit, does not extend the timeframe to apply for registration as a pharmacist. It also does not entitle the trainee pharmacist to any additional attempts at the assessment beyond the time limit for registration. Once the registration time limit has expired, no further attempts are permitted.

2. Dates of assessment sittings

- 2.1 Sitting dates are provided on the websites of the GPhC and the Society.

3. Reasonable adjustments for specific needs

- 3.1. The purpose of reasonable adjustments is to remove or reduce any substantial disadvantage that a trainee pharmacist may experience because of a disability or specific need, whether permanent or temporary.
- 3.2. Reasonable adjustments must not alter the standard of the assessment or undermine its purpose, as described in 1.1 to 1.23.
- 3.3. Trainee pharmacists in Great Britain and Northern Ireland who wish to request reasonable adjustments must submit their request to the GPhC in the format and by the deadline specified in the published guidance available on the GPhC website.
- 3.4. Requests will only be considered if the trainee pharmacist meets the requirements set out in the guidance for requesting reasonable adjustments for the assessment.

- 3.5. Once granted, an adjustment may not be withdrawn, and the adjustment will be implemented.
- 3.6. Trainee pharmacists in Great Britain and Northern Ireland may appeal to the GPhC against a decision of the reasonable adjustments panel by the deadline specified in the guidance issued when outcomes are communicated. Appeals may be made on the following grounds only:
 - 3.6.1. there are reasonable grounds to believe that a procedural error occurred that affected the outcome of the decision, and/or;
 - 3.6.2. there is credible evidence that could not have been obtained, or was not known to the trainee pharmacist, at the time of the application, and which would have had an important influence on the decision.
- 3.7. Appeals must be submitted using the method specified in the guidance issued when outcomes are communicated.
- 3.8. There are two possible outcomes to an appeal:
 - 3.8.1. the appeal is not upheld, and the original decision stands.
 - 3.8.2. the appeal is upheld, and the request is granted or partially granted.
- 3.9. Requests or appeals received after the published deadlines will not be considered.
- 3.10. If a trainee pharmacist does not submit a request in accordance with these regulations, or if their request and any subsequent appeal are not granted, and they sit the assessment, they will be deemed to have declared themselves as fit to sit.

4. Admission to and conduct in the assessment

- 4.1. Final instructions will be provided to all trainee pharmacists by the GPhC or the Society before the assessment sitting.
- 4.2. Trainee pharmacists must present identification documents, as specified by the GPhC and the Society, to verify their identity at the test centre prior to each part of the assessment. Only the specified identification documents will be accepted.
- 4.3. Trainee pharmacists will not be permitted to sit the assessment if they arrive more than 15 minutes after the scheduled start time for each part.
- 4.4. Trainee pharmacists may not leave the assessment room during any part of the assessment except to use toilet facilities or where a reasonable adjustment approved by the reasonable adjustments panel is in place for that sitting. Trainee pharmacists must notify an invigilator who will escort them from their seat to the facilities.
- 4.5. During the assessment, other than IT equipment provided by the GPhC for use in the assessment, only items listed in the **Common Registration Assessment Specification and Permitted Items for Sittings in 2026** may be on the trainee pharmacist's person, accessible to them, or on or within the vicinity of their workstation. The only exceptions are items approved in advance by the reasonable adjustments panel through the reasonable adjustment process.
- 4.6. Trainee pharmacists may use pen and paper for rough working during a sitting. These will be provided by test centre staff. All writing materials must remain intact, clearly display the trainee pharmacist's number, and will be collected by invigilators at the end of each part of the assessment. Writing materials must not be removed from the test centre.

- 4.7. No mobile phones, cameras, devices with communication functionality, smart technology (including smart glasses), watches of any kind, or any other electronic devices may be on the trainee pharmacist's person or accessible during the assessment, including any periods of quarantine.
- 4.8. No books, documents, printed or handwritten materials of any kind may be on the trainee pharmacist's person or accessible during the assessment, except for writing materials provided by test centre staff.
- 4.9. Any bag or other belongings brought to the assessment must be left in a location specified by the test centre. Neither the test centre nor the GPhC accepts liability for the loss of any item(s).
- 4.10. Assessment content is the copyright property of the GPhC. Copying, saving, or recording of content in any format is prohibited.
- 4.11. Questions and/or information about questions must not be shared or distributed to any person or organisation by any means.
- 4.12. Each trainee pharmacist must follow all instructions given to them by test centre staff.
- 4.13. Contravention of regulations 4.2 – 4.12 by a trainee pharmacist may be treated as alleged misconduct (see section 8 Alleged Misconduct).

5. Withdrawal from the assessment

- 5.1 A trainee pharmacist may withdraw from an assessment sitting at any point before starting Part 1 and accepting the terms, including the fit to sit declaration. Trainee pharmacists should not sit the assessment if they believe their performance is likely to be adversely affected by illness or adverse circumstances on the day.
- 5.2 A trainee pharmacist who withdraws and does not sit the assessment, does not need to inform the GPhC or the Society. If a trainee pharmacist withdraws from a sitting, that sitting is not counted as one of their available attempts.
- 5.3 Assessment application fees are non-refundable once paid, regardless of when the decision to not sit is made.

6. Being fit to sit the assessment

- 6.1. It is the responsibility of the trainee pharmacist to ensure they only sit the assessment if they are fit to do so. Being 'fit to sit' means the trainee pharmacist is aware of no reason why their performance would be adversely affected during the assessment. A trainee pharmacist who is affected by illness or other adverse circumstances before the sitting including disabilities for which a reasonable adjustment has not been granted but chooses to sit the assessment will be regarded by the GPhC as fit to sit. For further information on deciding whether to sit the assessment, see the guidance on the GPhC website.
- 6.2. If, on or before the day of the assessment, a trainee pharmacist is aware of an illness or adverse circumstance that might affect their performance, they should not sit the assessment. Any illness or adverse circumstance known before or on the day of the assessment cannot be used as grounds for nullification, nor as grounds or evidence for an appeal.

Nullification of sitting attempt

- 6.3. A trainee pharmacist who experiences an unforeseeable significant adverse incident during the assessment, after declaring themselves fit to sit, must immediately inform an invigilator. The invigilator will submit an incident report to the GPhC.
- 6.4. If the trainee pharmacist wishes the incident to be considered for nullification, they must submit a written request to the GPhC in the specified format, with appropriate supporting evidence, by the specified deadline. Requests received after this deadline will not be considered.
- 6.5. Failure to bring required items, as listed in the **Common Registration Assessment Specification and Permitted Items for Sittings in 2026** and assessment day guidance (including a functioning calculator of an approved make and model), cannot be grounds for nullification.
- 6.6. The GPhC will determine nullification requests before the Board begin the mark awarding process.
- 6.7. Trainee pharmacists must include details of any reasonable adjustment(s) granted for the sitting in their nullification request.
- 6.8. If nullification is granted:
 - 6.8.1. the trainee pharmacist will be deemed not to have sat the assessment.
 - 6.8.2. no marks will be disclosed.
 - 6.8.3. the decision is final and irreversible.
 - 6.8.4. the trainee pharmacist may apply for a future sitting if eligible within their registration time limit. A new assessment fee will apply, the original fee will not be refunded.
- 6.9. If nullification is not granted, the trainee pharmacist's marks will proceed to the Board mark awarding process and will be treated in the same manner as all other trainee pharmacists.
- 6.10. If a trainee pharmacist who has requested nullification is subject to an allegation of misconduct, the nullification decision will be withheld until the allegation of misconduct process is complete. If misconduct is upheld, the nullification request will be automatically rejected, and the trainee pharmacist will be deemed to have failed the sitting. If misconduct is not proved, the nullification outcome will then be communicated to the trainee pharmacist.
- 6.11. There is no right of appeal against a nullification decision.

7. Notification of results

- 7.1. Great Britain trainee pharmacists will be notified of their individual results by the GPhC, Northern Ireland trainee pharmacists will be notified of their individual results by the Society. Results will include the pass mark for each part, the trainee pharmacist's mark for each part, and their overall pass or fail outcome.
- 7.2. The GPhC will share individual results with the Society for the purposes mentioned in 7.1.
- 7.3. The GPhC has a duty of co-operation with SEBs and Education Providers to enable them to meet their objectives in relation to education and training. These objectives include the provision of remedial support to trainee pharmacists, as well as administration and quality assurance of their training programmes. The GPhC will share individual results with each of the respective SEBs and Education Providers for the aforementioned purposes, in accordance with its statutory functions.

8. Alleged misconduct

- 8.1 The GPhC will conduct all investigations into alleged misconduct for Great Britain and Northern Ireland trainee pharmacists.
- 8.2 The GPhC and the Society reserve the right to withhold notification of an assessment result if misconduct by the trainee pharmacist in the assessment or relating to the assessment, is alleged. Notification of the trainee pharmacist's result will remain withheld while the alleged misconduct is investigated.
- 8.3 Allegations of misconduct will be considered in accordance with the process for investigating and hearing allegations of misconduct in the assessment as outlined in the **Common Registration Assessment Regulations for Alleged Misconduct**.
- 8.4 Allegations will be determined on the balance of probabilities.
- 8.5 If it is concluded that misconduct has taken place, the trainee pharmacist will be deemed to have failed that sitting of the assessment, irrespective of the marks they obtained. If a trainee pharmacist is failed because of misconduct being determined, their marks will not be released. The trainee pharmacist will be required to declare the finding of misconduct at any subsequent application for registration as a pharmacist with the GPhC or the Society and this will be considered alongside any subsequent application to register as a pharmacist. An upheld allegation of misconduct will be reported to the relevant registration team.
- 8.6 A trainee pharmacist who has failed because a principal hearing panel has determined that misconduct has taken place may appeal to the GPhC within 14 days of the date of the letter communicating the decision of the principal hearing panel to the trainee pharmacist.
- 8.7 There are two grounds for appeal:
 - 8.7.1. that there are reasonable grounds to believe that a procedural error occurred that affected the outcome of the principal hearing.
 - 8.7.2. there is additional evidence, relating to the allegation of misconduct that was not known, or could not have been obtained by the trainee pharmacist before the principal hearing, that would have had a significant effect on the outcome of the principal hearing.
- 8.8 The Registrar (or their Delegate) will consider whether grounds for appeal are established. Where grounds are established, the case will be referred to a new, independent panel of the Board (whose members were not involved in the earlier principal hearing) for final determination.
- 8.9 The appeal determination will be final and no further appeals to the GPhC will be permitted.
- 8.10 Examples of misconduct include:
 - a. disturbing other trainee pharmacists with inappropriate behaviour, which is behaviour likely to distract another trainee pharmacist during a sitting.
 - b. being in possession of unauthorised items contrary to 4.7 and 4.8, or any other items not approved in advance by the reasonable adjustments panel through the reasonable adjustment process. This includes any items on the trainee pharmacist's person, accessible to them, or on or within the vicinity of their workstation.

- c. being in possession of other items, unless approved in advance by the reasonable adjustments panel through the reasonable adjustment process. This includes any items on the trainee pharmacist's person, accessible to them, or on or within the vicinity of their workstation during the assessment, including any periods of quarantine.
- d. being in possession of any electronic device, including a mobile phone, camera, device with communication functionality, smart technology (including smart glasses), watches of any kind, unless approved in advance by the reasonable adjustments panel through the reasonable adjustment process.
- e. being in possession of a calculator that is not a model approved by the GPhC.
- f. concealing reference texts or revision material, including handwritten reference sources and notes, in the environs of the assessment area or its vicinity.
- g. leaving the assessment room during an assessment for any reason other than to visit toilet facilities, unless approved in advance by the reasonable adjustments panel through the reasonable adjustment process, or without notifying an invigilator.
- h. being misrepresented during a sitting of the assessment, for example having someone sit the assessment on one's behalf.
- i. attempting to cheat, any attempt to gain an unfair advantage this includes but is not limited to attempting to see and/or read the work and/or copy answers entered by other trainee pharmacists.
- j. sharing, communicating, or attempting to communicate assessment content or answers with any person, before, during, or after a sitting, including during any period of quarantine.
- k. communicating or attempting to communicate with others during a sitting, for example with a mobile phone, smartwatch, other communications device or verbally.
- l. copying, saving, or recording questions.
- m. failing to comply with reasonable instructions from invigilators or test-centre staff before, during, or after the assessment.

This list is not exhaustive.

9. Quality assurance of trainee pharmacists' marks

- 9.1 Processes for the checking of trainee pharmacists' answers and marks awarded are in place for assurance of accuracy. Processes are reviewed regularly by the Board and the GPhC.
- 9.2 Published results are final; no further review of individual marks will be undertaken.

10. Assessment outcome appeals

- 10.1 A trainee pharmacist who fails an attempt at the assessment may appeal to the GPhC against the fail result on the following grounds only:
 - 10.1.1 **procedural grounds** - they believe there is reasonable evidence that the GPhC did not correctly follow its Common Registration Assessment procedures, and that this failure had a direct impact on the outcome of their assessment sitting.

- 10.1.2 **exceptional circumstances** - they experienced a unique situation that may have negatively affected their performance during the assessment. This situation must not, or could not, have been known to them before, or during, the assessment sitting or the nullification window.

10.2 The following circumstances do not constitute grounds for appeal:

- 10.2.1 failure to bring a functioning calculator that complies with one of the makes and models specified by the GPhC.
- 10.2.2 a request for a reasonable adjustment was made, but was not granted by the reasonable adjustments panel, or a reasonable adjustment was granted by the panel but could not be accommodated due to capacity or other constraints.
- 10.2.3 a specific need was known to the trainee pharmacist, but no application for reasonable adjustment was submitted.
- 10.2.4 a trainee pharmacist chose to wait for the outcome of the assessment rather than submitting a nullification request within the required timeframe.

This list is not exhaustive.

10.3 To ensure that an appeal is heard, the trainee pharmacist must clearly set out the grounds for the appeal in writing using the specified application form and ensure the completed application is received by the GPhC by the deadline stated in the guidance provided when assessment outcomes are communicated on results day.

10.4 Exceptional circumstances which could have formed the basis of a request for nullification cannot be used as the basis of an appeal or as evidence in an appeal.

10.5 There are only two permissible outcomes to an appeal against a fail result:

- 10.5.1 the appeal is not upheld, in which case the fail result stands, and the trainee pharmacist fails that attempt at the assessment.
- 10.5.2 the appeal is upheld, in which case the trainee pharmacist's sitting attempt is nullified.

10.6 Appeals will be considered by the Registrar (or their Delegate) for all trainee pharmacists. The decision of the Registrar (or their Delegate) is final.

10.7 Appeals will be heard as soon as is practicable.

10.8 Trainee pharmacists who have appealed against a result for a given sitting are advised to apply for the next sitting if eligible within their time limit by the specified deadline, if they have not been advised of the outcome of their appeal by then.

10.9 Appeals received after the specified deadline will only be heard when:

- 10.9.1 appropriate supporting evidence is provided to support the reason for late submission.
- 10.9.2 the reason for lateness relates to unforeseeable circumstance(s) beyond the trainee pharmacist's control that meant they were mentally or physically incapable of submitting by the deadline.

