

Registering as a pharmacist in Great Britain: internationally-qualified pharmacists

Find out about the route to registering as a pharmacist in Great Britain if you have a non-UK qualification which is not a 'relevant' EEA qualification

Who this factsheet is for

If you want to register as a pharmacist with us and you

- have a non-EEA qualification, **or**
- are a non-EEA national with an EEA qualification other than a UK-recognised pharmacist qualification

and you have completed all the education and training requirements to be eligible to register as a pharmacist in the country where you qualified, this factsheet explains the steps you will need to complete and the additional education and training you will need to carry out in Great Britain before you are able to apply to register.

What education and training do I need to complete?

To be eligible to apply to register as a pharmacist, you will need to complete:

1. **an Overseas Pharmacists Assessment Programme (OSPAP)**
2. **52 weeks of foundation training** in England, Scotland or Wales recruited and managed by your Statutory Education Body (SEB)
3. **the GPhC registration assessment** with a pass result

You must complete these steps and apply to be registered within four years from the date you start your OSPAP course.

The right to live and work in the UK

If you complete the education and training you need to be able to apply to register, this does not mean that you will be able to live or work in the UK, or that you are guaranteed to find a job as a pharmacist.

Before you start the education and training, you should carefully consider information provided by the UK Borders Agency (UKBA) to see whether you will be able to get the necessary visas and work permits. Unfortunately, we are not able to answer questions about this.

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About the GPhC

Who we are

We regulate pharmacists, pharmacy technicians and pharmacies in Great Britain.

We work to assure and improve standards of care for people using pharmacy services.

What we do

Our role is to protect the public and give them assurance that they will receive safe and effective care when using pharmacy services.

We set standards for pharmacy professionals and pharmacies to enter and remain on our register.

We seek assurance that pharmacy professionals and pharmacies continue to meet our standards, including by inspecting pharmacies.

We act to protect the public and to uphold public confidence in pharmacy if there are concerns about a pharmacy professional or pharmacy on our register.

Through our work we help to promote professionalism, support continuous improvement and assure the quality and safety of pharmacy.

The course is designed to make sure that you receive the right education and training to prepare you to practise in the UK, and to complete foundation training.

You will need to pay a fee to a university to complete the course, and you will have to consider how to support yourself while you are studying.

Applying to complete an OSPAP course

We will verify your qualifications and experience to check that you are eligible to apply to complete an OSPAP course.

Complete our *Applying for eligibility to complete an Overseas Pharmacists Assessment Programme (OSPAP)* form so that we can assess your eligibility. There is a fee for processing this application form- see the form for the current amount.

Your pharmacy qualification

You will need to know how your pharmacy qualification compares to the UK MPharm qualification.

The UK ENIC organisation can assess your qualification and provide an official document called a 'Statement of Comparability', that states how your international qualifications compare to UK qualifications.

You can **find out more on the UK ENIC website**. If you have any doubts about how your qualification compares with a UK qualification, we recommend that you request an assessment before going any further.

Step 1: completing an OSPAP course

An OSPAP course is a one-year, full time postgraduate diploma course run by some UK universities. You can find **a list of universities that offer OSPAP courses on our website**.

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If we decide that your qualifications and experience meet the eligibility criteria, you will be able to apply for an OSPAP course. You must start a course within the next two academic years of the date of the decision. For example, if you receive confirmation of the decision before November 2025, you must start your course in 2025, or in 2026.

If you do not meet the eligibility criteria, you must complete one of the qualifications leading to registration (such as an MPharm) to be able to practise as a pharmacist in Great Britain.

As part of the *Applying for eligibility to complete an Overseas Pharmacists Assessment Programme (OSPAP)* form, we will ask you to choose the universities where you would like to complete your OSPAP.

You can find **a list of universities that offer OSPAP courses on our website**. We recommend that you find out about the different courses on offer before you send us your form.

If your qualifications and experience meet the eligibility criteria, we notify the universities you have chosen that you are eligible to apply. We will contact them to confirm that you are eligible to apply for the course, and we may send them some more of the information that you provide as part of your application.

The university may contact you once we have written to them to confirm that you are eligible to apply, but we recommend that you get in touch with them yourself, once you know the outcome of your application.

Once we have sent your information to the university, they may ask you for more information about your qualifications and

experience, to decide about offering you a place. The information we send them shows that you are eligible to apply, but it does not mean that they must offer you a place.

Make sure you apply in good time for your course and your training placement

There is no deadline for you to submit your application to us, but you should do it in good time before the start of the course that you plan to study.

The OSPAP course normally starts at the start of the UK academic year, in September or October. To make sure you can apply for courses, you should send your application to us so that we receive it before 31 July.

Foundation training programmes in England and Wales fill places through a national recruitment scheme (NRS), and programmes in Scotland are filled in a similar way. You can't begin your training after your OSPAP unless you have registered with the NRS. Applications open June every year for training that starts in the following year, so you should be aware of this deadline too.

You can find out more in the *Finding a foundation training programme* section below.

Providing evidence of English language competency

You will need to provide evidence of your English language competency as part of your application- we won't start processing an application without this information. You can find out how to provide evidence, and what types we will accept in the **Providing evidence of English language competency guidance pack**. You can find more information about the

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legal requirements in our [**guidance on evidence of English language skills**](#).

The OSPAP course structure and content

The course includes:

- a structured academic assessment of your qualifications
- attending specific modules
- completing assessments

Depending on your knowledge and previous experience, you may be exempt from some taught elements, but you will have to complete all the assessments.

If you complete the OSPAP course successfully, this will demonstrate that you have met the UK MPharm graduate criteria, but it will not give you a MPharm (Master of Pharmacy) degree qualification.

You can find out more information about each course structure and content on the university website.

Step 2: foundation training placement

Under the supervision of a designated supervisor, trainees spend at least 52 weeks in a training site quality managed by their statutory education body, developing their practice to meet a range of learning outcomes. Their progress is guided by and verified by their designated supervisor, using an e-portfolio system.

Both UK-qualified MPharm and OSPAP students must successfully complete the foundation training programme and successfully pass the

registration assessment to meet the criteria for registration.

Finding a training programme

Once you have successfully completed your OSPAP, you will be eligible to start your foundation training programme.

You must apply for a training post through the national recruitment scheme. This is the only way to get a training post- you can't apply to individual employers directly.

Training places are filled over one year in advance. For example, you would need to apply for your training place in June 2026, to start your training in 2027.

Important: For any training post in England, Wales or Scotland, you must register within the application window or you won't be able to start your training after you have completed your OSPAP. The application window may close before you have received your eligibility confirmation from the GPhC or your university, but you **must** still register before the deadline. The statutory education body will contact you if they need any further information after the window has closed.

For full details of the scheme including how and when to apply, see the [**National Recruitment Scheme Student Zone**](#), which includes information for overseas applicants.

You will need to join the myGPhC system before you start training. We will contact you to tell you when you can do this.

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Step 3: the registration assessment

The registration assessment is one of the ways we test whether trainees can demonstrate that they understand how to apply knowledge appropriately and in a timely way, to make professional judgements in pharmacy practice. It also tests their number sense and that they can perform the calculations needed to practise as a pharmacist.

There are two registration assessments per year, in summer and autumn. The registration assessment consists of two question papers. Candidates must pass both papers at one attempt but can have up to three attempts to pass the registration assessment. The assessment is carried out simultaneously in locations across Great Britain.

You can **find out more about the registration assessment** on our website.

Step 4: registration

Once you have successfully completed an OSPAP course, 52 weeks of foundation training, and the registration assessment, you are eligible to apply to register with us as a pharmacist. You will need to apply through the myGPhC online system. You must apply to be registered within four years of the date you start your OSPAP course. You can **find out more about applying to register as a pharmacist on our website**.

