

**National Pharmacy Association pharmacy support
staff accreditation event report, Accuracy Checking
for Dispensers part 3, August 2022**



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Event summary and conclusions

Provider	National Pharmacy Association
Course name	Accuracy Checking for Dispensers
Event type	Accreditation
Event date	August 2022
Approval period	August 2022 – Jan 2025
Relevant requirements	Requirements for the education and training of pharmacy support staff, October 2020
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 decision	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.

PLEASE NOTE: The examination of this course was conducted by desktop review by the accreditation team: Rebecca Chamberlain (team leader - pharmacy technician) Education Officer, Health Education and Improvement Wales and Education and Training Pharmacy Technician Independent Consultant and Laura McEwen-Smith (team member - pharmacy technician) National Programme Lead; Primary and Community Integrated Care. Commentary by the team and subsequent responses from the provider have been copied and pasted into the accreditation team commentary below.

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

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

How and where does the course/qualification support trainees to achieve this NOS outcome?

Provider's commentary

The Accuracy Checking Dispenser 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 a responsible pharmacist. 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. 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.

Knowledge information – The trainee booklet contains the main information in relation to the course for the learner. It highlights key information for the learner and outlines expectations for the course. The trainee booklet also highlights further reading and directs learners to the relevant polices, local and national guidelines.

Supervisor guidance – The supervisor guidance enables the supervising pharmacist to effectively support and monitor the learner during the course. The detailed 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.

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

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

carry out some learning and assignments 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 a learner is able to 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 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.

Written assignments – Learners have to complete various written assignments, which can be found in the trainee booklet. 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 completed satisfactorily by the learner.

Portfolio of evidence – Prior to sitting the final assessment, learners must accuracy check a minimum of **1,000 items** that a registered pharmacist 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 accuracy checking must be paused and an appraisal must be carried out with the supervising pharmacist. Depending on the severity of error and number of errors missed, additional accuracy checking may need to be undertaken.

Reflective exercises – There are three reflective exercises that all learners must complete. 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 – The main assessment form is the final assessment. The final assessment is set up by the supervisor using the guidance in the supervisor pack. 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 results in a fail.

Learners are given two attempts. If the first is unsuccessful they can attempt the next after reflecting with their supervising pharmacist. 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 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 interview. Each learner must have an interview with a Learning and Development Pharmacist/Pharmacy technician. The questions allow the learner to reflect on the course and they are given a situational-based scenario question to answer. 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 going out into the practice. The terms and conditions of the certificate are explained to the learner as part of the interview.

GPhC use only.

Learning outcome met? Yes

It was noted that K24, K26 and K29 from NOSPHARM28 have been omitted from this course as those knowledge elements go beyond the scope of this role at support staff level. The course has been benchmarked at RQF level 2 in both learning and assessment to reflect the content of the course. Completion of a support staff dispensing assistant course is a prerequisite before commencement of this ACD course. Where a learner holds a historic qualification that may have been grand parented to meet the new standards, the learner must demonstrate appropriate knowledge prior to enrolment by:

- Submitting a log having dispensed 200 items before enrolment.
- A signed statement from a supervisor that confirms they have been working as a dispenser.

The accreditation team noted that these requirements apply to all learners, who will have to attach a log of the 200 dispensed items, as well as their ADAC/DA certificate.

On completion of the ACD course, learners will be issued with a certificate which specifies the pharmacy setting they have completed the training in. Learners must complete their training under the supervision of a Responsible Pharmacist. Learners will need to revalidate their ACD certificate every two years.

The accreditation team noted learners can obtain a new certificate through revalidation if they meet the requirements of the reassessment portfolio, which includes evidence of accuracy checking on a regular basis, 20-24 completed monthly diary logs over a 2-year period. This is supplemented by evidence of regular appraisals, signed supporting statement from the responsible pharmacist to declare that they are confident in the ACD's checking ability and a copy of their current certificate.

The team questioned validity of the Accuracy Checking Dispensers certificate, inside and outside the NPA membership network. The provider confirmed validity both inside and outside the NPA membership network within the revalidation period. It was noted that the accuracy checking certificate demonstrates achievement of competence to GPhC-accredited standards for accuracy checking, and provides assurance to any responsible pharmacist, within a community pharmacy setting. However, learners should contact the NPA member services team if there are changes in their supervising pharmacist or a change in employment. This is to ensure that the contact details held by the NPA are accurate.

Once the ACD is qualified, the certificate is only valid within a community pharmacy setting. Learners may use the certificate whilst working with registered pharmacists within their workplace, including any branches of the same company. However, the learner, in conjunction with the responsible pharmacist, must ensure that the SOPs are the same. If the responsible pharmacist has not worked with the learner before, and they would like further assurance of ability they are able to request a follow up accuracy check of 200 items under their supervision, should they wish to establish competence. The responsible pharmacist may contact a member of the NPA L&D team if they require template logs for this. If the SOPs are not the same, and no follow up accuracy checks are requested, the learner, under supervision of a responsible pharmacist, must ensure that they familiarise themselves with the SOPs prior to commencing accuracy checking.

If the learner moves employment to another pharmacy whilst within the two-year certification period, NPA strongly advise that the learner completes a transfer portfolio. The transfer portfolio can be obtained from the NPA member services team. The accreditation team note, the transfer portfolio is not the same as being re-enrolled onto the ACD course. The purpose of this transfer portfolio is to provide assurance to the supervising pharmacist, and also serves as refresher training, where learners can familiarise themselves with working according to the accuracy checking SOP. The requirement to re-validate by doing a 2-year portfolio is still mandatory, regardless of whether the learner completes a transfer portfolio or not.

The team note that although there is flexibility in terms of revalidation upon movement of stores or employment, NPA strongly recommends the completion of a transfer portfolio. The transfer portfolio is seen as best practice in this circumstance, not a set requirement. Ultimately, the onus and professional responsibility falls to the responsible pharmacist to ensure that any training is completed as required for the role.

