

Pharmacy Education Policy – Fit for the Future

Preregistration training

1. Routes to registration

In order to enter preregistration training all applicants must possess a degree in pharmacy, prove their identity, pay the appropriate fees, sign declarations of good health and good conduct and affirm that they will abide by the Society's Code of Ethics.

UK graduates holding a Master of Pharmacy (MPharm) degree move straight into the preregistration year (a 52-week training programme) becoming preregistration trainee pharmacists.

Overseas pharmacy graduates (excluding European pharmacy graduates – see below) must enter the scheme via the RPSGB Adjudicating Committee, which refers all but a few exceptional cases to the Overseas Pharmacists' Assessment Programmes (OSPAP). Upon successful completion of an OSPAP postgraduate diploma, the overseas graduates enter the preregistration year on the same basis as UK graduates. The OSPAPs, therefore, behave like Schools of Pharmacy for entry to the preregistration year.

All trainees must then complete 52 week's of satisfactory supervised and assessed training in employment and pass the Registration Examination for admission to the register. There are staged assessments every 13 weeks. Trainees are eligible to sit the Registration Examination after a satisfactory 39-week Progress report-3 and after completing 45 weeks of training. There is a final assessment at 52 weeks and a final declaration by the tutor, which must be satisfactory. Once the Registration Examination has been passed, the 52 weeks (or more in some cases) of satisfactory training have been completed and the other requirements met (such as providing a Health Declaration), then applicants can be entered on the register.

Entry on the register confers the award of Member of the Royal Pharmaceutical Society (MRPharmS) which is a "diploma" listed in the Pharmacy Directive.

Pharmacists who are nationals of an European Economic Area (EEA)¹ state holding a qualification listed in the Pharmacy Directive awarded in an EEA state have an automatic right of entry to the register provided that they can also prove their identity, pay the appropriate fees, sign declarations of good health and good conduct and affirm that they will abide by the Code of Ethics. EEA nationals holding a pharmacy qualification not listed in the Pharmacy Directive apply to Overseas Registration for consideration of any identifiable differences in their training and to determine what training they need as an adaptation period or the content of an aptitude test if they chose that option.

¹ the 25 European Union states together with Norway, Iceland, Liechtenstein and Switzerland

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2. Performance standards for preregistration training

The Society's Performance Standards fall under the following headings, that in order to achieve them the trainee must have demonstrated being able to:

- Meet the knowledge requirements laid down by the Society;
- Manage themselves and their behaviour (including attitude);
- Manage their work;
- Comply with Medicines Ethics and Practice;
- Manage problems;
- Demonstrate a commitment to quality in performance;
- Demonstrate ongoing learning and development;
- Communicate effectively;
- Work effectively with others;
- Manage the dispensing process; and
- Provide additional clinical and pharmaceutical services.

The standards are realised in the preregistration placement through the mechanism of a learning contract between the trainee and tutor. The trainee undertakes to comply with the standards as part of their ethical and professional responsibilities and the tutor undertakes to support them in this.

The tutor also acts as an assessor for compliance with the standards in a series of staged assessments (every 13 weeks as previously stated) leading up to a final assessment at the 52-week point. This last assessment is a specific part of the eligibility for admission to the register. The Preregistration Year is designed to develop and test competence in practice against these standards and specifically:

- application of knowledge and experience to the practice situation, learning at every opportunity;
- development of new skills and knowledge fundamental to professional practice; and
- development of a sufficiently professional attitude to demonstrate these behaviours in practice.

3. Registration Examination

The national Registration Examination is an assessment of knowledge and understanding of topics that form the core of knowledge required for effective professional practice. In the examination, candidates are required to demonstrate knowledge and understanding by analysing and evaluating practice-based problems. The knowledge is examinable in its own right i.e. irrespective of whether, at the time of sitting the examination, candidates have had an opportunity to undertake activities that

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are supported by the knowledge. The examination syllabus may therefore be wider than the placement experience.

The Registration Examination complements the testing of skills in practice by tutors during the preregistration year. It tests:

- knowledge;
- the application of knowledge;
- calculation;
- time management;
- managing stress;
- comprehension;
- recall;
- interpretation; and
- evaluation.

There are two examination papers; an open-book and a closed book paper. Questions are based on practice-based situations and are designed to test the thinking and knowledge which lie behind any action. Candidates must demonstrate that they have the necessary knowledge and that they are able to find it in set books. They must also demonstrate that they can evaluate situations in order to apply their knowledge effectively. The examination is not designed to replicate the exact clinical environment of the practice of pharmacy. Candidates who fail are given a breakdown of their marks. Candidates who fail on two attempts must then complete a further six month's training before entering for their final examination sitting.

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