

ROYAL PHARMACEUTICAL SOCIETY

Introduction

Pharmacists are medicines experts; they support the health of the population and manage patients with acute and long term conditions across all sectors of healthcare. Pharmacists work closely with patients, carers/families, the public and the multidisciplinary health and social care team to deliver safe, effective and person-centred pharmaceutical care through a wide range of services. This curriculum defines the purpose, content of learning and the programme of assessment for foundation pharmacists ensuring that the patient, medicines optimisation and service delivery is at the heart of the pharmacist's role.

The Royal Pharmaceutical Society (RPS) is the professional leadership body for pharmacists in England, Scotland and Wales. It has been tasked by the Chief Pharmaceutical Officers (CPOs) in the four UK nations to develop a professional development pathway for patient facing pharmacists across all sectors in the UK. The continuum of development progresses from foundation, through advanced to consultant pharmacist.

This curriculum sets out the expected outcomes of training programmes for foundation pharmacists (newly qualified pharmacists in the early years of practice). The curriculum is underpinned by the RPS Foundation Pharmacist Framework (2019) which is the output of a multi-method role analysis of foundation level practice.^{ref} The framework was endorsed by the Education Governance Oversight Board (EGOB) which is made up of senior stakeholders from across the profession including the Chief Pharmaceutical Officers from across the UK, senior representatives from community pharmacy, primary and secondary care, the regulator and senior pharmacist academics. The curriculum has been developed in line with the RPS Curriculum Development Quality Framework which defines the standards to be met by any RPS post-registration pharmacy curriculum including its programme of learning and programme of assessment.

Purpose statement

The curriculum has been designed to articulate the knowledge, skills, behaviours and experience required of pharmacists to provide the increasingly pharmaceutical complex care of patients across a range of settings.

The strategic NHS and workforce plans across the four nations are consistent in their inclusion of an upskilled pharmacy profession as one of the key enablers to driving the changes required for modern healthcare delivery. The pharmacy workforce must develop and transform to be confident, flexible and with wider capability including enhanced consultation, diagnostic, clinical examination, and digital literacy skills. Combining these additional skills with existing pharmaceutical expertise, pharmacists can work autonomously within integrated multidisciplinary teams to improve health outcomes for patients in all sectors by delivering better, safer and more cost-effective care. Achieving these ambitions is underpinned by the recognition that the development of the pharmacy

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workforce is a priority, requiring investment (in terms of both time and money) in the training of early careers pharmacists and their workplace trainers/mentors, and a culture of lifelong learning.

Until now, the availability of foundation training across the UK has been variable depending on sector and geography. This curriculum provides a standardised approach to training for all foundation pharmacists across the UK and will develop the capabilities required to meet the current and future NHS service needs and deliver improved patient care. This overarching curriculum will be used by the four UK countries to develop supporting educational programmes to meet their specific needs.

The drivers for developing a national Foundation curriculum to inform training programmes are:

- Develop pharmacists who can enhance the safe and effective use of medicines through medicines optimisation
- Develop pharmacists to manage more complex patients with ageing population and multi-morbidities
- Develop foundation pharmacists who deliver holistic person centred care and ensure the patient's/carer's views are central to all decision making
- Support new models of care which are delivered in primary care and closer to patients' homes
- Develop pharmacists who can work across a range of sectors/settings including new areas such as urgent care and care homes
- Provide more enhanced clinical services to improve skill mix across the health and social care workforce
- Develop pharmacists to work in contemporary integrated multidisciplinary teams
- ~~Develop pharmacists who can deliver efficiency savings through medicines optimisation, deprescribing and reducing waste~~
- Develop pharmacists who can work with patients and prescribers to promote and encourage cost-effective use of medicines through medicines optimisation, deprescribing and reducing waste
- Develop enhanced knowledge, clinical skills and critical decision making to support qualification as independent prescribers
- Provide all foundation pharmacists with structured work-based training in a variety of settings enabling them to be more flexible and adaptive to working in different environments
- Provide opportunities for foundation pharmacists to develop themselves and others, leadership and management skills
- Standardised national assessment will provide quality assurance and patient/public reassurance that pharmacists in the UK have the requisite knowledge, skills and behaviour to deliver safe and effective pharmaceutical care to an increasingly complex patient population

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Scope of practice

The content of the curriculum has been informed by the services a foundation pharmacist would be expected to deliver in community, primary and secondary care, and mental health.

Broadly, these include:

- medicines optimisation and improving prescribing safety
- acting as first contact for individuals requiring care; responding to and managing common clinical conditions
- preventing illness
- delivering pharmaceutical care to patients with acute and long term conditions in all settings
- medicines management
- medicines governance
- quality improvement

Flexibility and transferability

The building blocks for this curriculum are rooted in the role analysis of foundation pharmacists.¹ It identified the attributes associated with successful performance at foundation level to meet the needs of patients and service now and over the next five years. There was agreement across the pharmacy profession that the attributes shared commonalities across all sectors and geography. The learning outcomes that have been included in this curriculum can be evidenced by experiences in a wide range of environments, allowing flexibility to meet the needs of the service and the individual foundation pharmacist in training. The standardised curriculum will enable flexibility for pharmacists who wish to gain experience in different sectors and/or countries during and/or after completion of the training programmes.

Foundation pharmacist training will usually be completed within one or two years [depending on the structure of local training programmes. The duration will depend on whether the foundation pharmacist in training is working full time or less than full time or has any breaks during their training.](#)

The curriculum includes the core knowledge, skills, behaviours and experience required to practice safely across all sectors and countries. Additional training required to deliver services specific to each sector and / or country is out with the scope of this curriculum.

The curriculum includes criteria for recognising prior experience and learning to avoid duplication where achievement of learning outcomes has been demonstrated previously.

1. https://www.hee.nhs.uk/sites/default/files/documents/Foundation%20Pharmacist%20Role%20Analysis%20Final%20Report%20for%20web_0.pdf

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Overall structure of the curriculum

The curriculum consists of X **capabilities** which describe the key clinical and professional aspects of foundation pharmacist practice. Each capability is a synthesis of **learning outcomes** which describe the knowledge, skills and behaviours that should be demonstrated by a foundation pharmacist on completion of training. The capabilities and associated learning outcomes have been grouped together into five broad **domains**

- Professional Practice
- Communication and collaborative working
- Leadership and management
- Education
- Research

Each learning outcome is accompanied by one or more **descriptors**. These have been included to provide guidance on what foundation pharmacists in training will do in practice to demonstrate they have the required standard of knowledge, skills and behaviours. The example descriptors are not exhaustive and alternative supporting evidence may be used when deciding how to demonstrate achievement of the learning outcomes. The curriculum includes examples of descriptors which demonstrate the minimum level of performance of a 'competent' foundation pharmacist.

The curriculum will also include core entrustable professional activities (EPAs) which are a means of translating the learning outcomes into practice. EPAs are tasks or responsibilities to be entrusted to the unsupervised foundation pharmacist in training, after they have attained sufficient competence.

Where the term '**appropriate**' is used, this refers to an action that is evidence-based, safe, cost-effective and in keeping with clinical judgement, as well as the patient's situation and preferences.

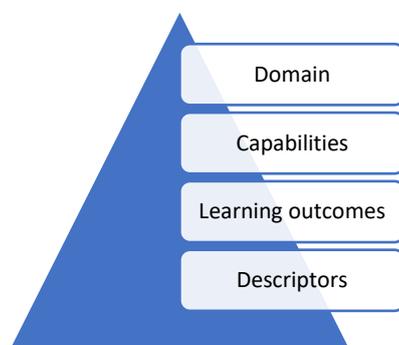


Figure X. Curriculum structure