



ROYAL
PHARMACEUTICAL
SOCIETY

The RPS Roadmap: **An Overview –**

supporting professional
development at every career stage,
across every care sector for the
benefit of patients and public health

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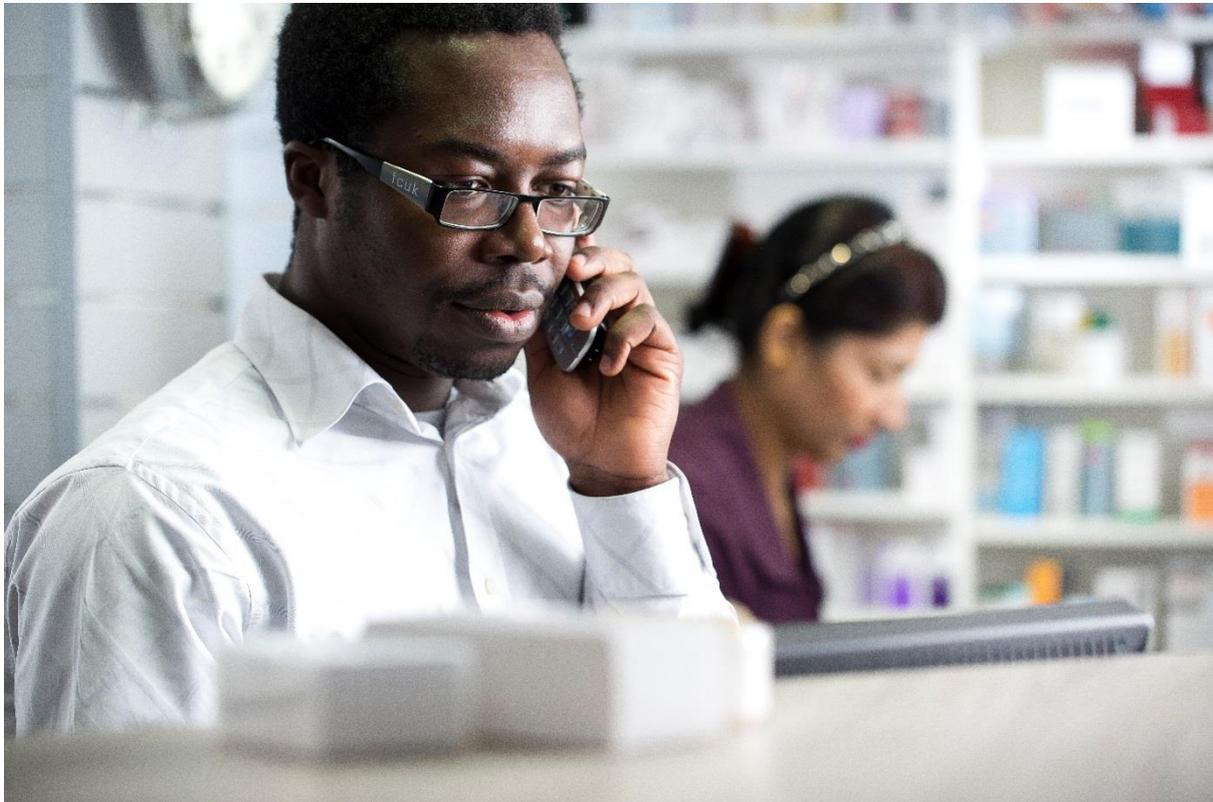


Preface to the document¹

The RPS roadmap outlines career pathways for pharmacy professionals - the elements for progression of their professional careers that anticipate the changing landscape of the delivery of healthcare to address the needs and expectations of patients and the public. The Roadmap describes not only career pathways for pharmacy professionals across Great Britain but also the support and development needs and the methods for assessment from day 1 as a student to the time of retirement from the profession.

The RPS has set out a direction of travel for the pharmacy workforce over the coming years that puts patients at the centre of all that it does, promotes active, compassionate pharmaceutical care and encourages all health professionals, services and organisations to work together.

The RPS Roadmap defines career pathways for pharmacy professionals that are nationally applicable and address the objective for patients and their families in Great Britain to have access to excellent pharmaceutical care from members of our profession.



¹ The full detailed RPS Roadmap to Advanced Practice can be found [here](#)

National Leadership Responsibilities

The mission of the RPS, outlined in its Royal Charter, is to support the profession to achieve a shared vision for the future. The RPS is committed to supporting and empowering its members to make a real difference, to improving health outcomes for patients in every clinical setting.

The Vision² for the advancement and development of the pharmacy workforce is aligned to the strategic drivers of an ageing and increasingly diverse population, advances in medicines technology, the ever changing fiscal policies for health services, and the expectations of patients and their families.

The RPS has constructed robust schemes of support, recognition and career development for pharmacists. These include defining and implementing professional standards that support and share best practice across GB, and assure the safest practice for patients and the public. The RPS Roadmap is a strategy document that supports the RPS Vision for the transformation of the health workforce.

At the centre of RPS's vision is the recognition that an ever evolving healthcare workforce must be trained to be flexible and adaptable in its roles and responsibilities to meet the new and emerging needs of patients – effective healthcare requires a capable workforce. For pharmacy, this specifically means providing support to develop the careers of pharmacists within all sectors to address the changing demography and healthcare needs of an ageing population with increasingly complex medicine regimens in the context of a financially constrained healthcare system. The pharmacy workforce needs transformative growth in clinical capability, a quality assured development of expertise in advanced generalist and specialist skills and, most importantly, the flexibility to adapt to changing patient and health system needs.



² The RPS Vision for Transforming the Pharmacy Workforce in GB can be found [here](#)

Strategic Imperatives for workforce Transformation

The RPS provides a strategic role to develop and sustain a flexible, adaptable and competent workforce, able to deliver consistently high quality levels of pharmaceutical care including medicines optimisation. The RPS stewardship, structures and programmes are designed to support these imperatives: the Foundation and Faculty programmes, professional leadership initiatives and the RPS alignment of Consultant Pharmacist support have all been mapped with patient need.

The two documents, the RPS Vision and Roadmap, set out the framework for education and bring training providers in line with the transformative principles required for workforce development. Fundamentally, the RPS will act to fulfill its Royal Charter obligations working on behalf of the three nations to provide leadership, direction and structure for transformational workforce development.



The Roadmap to Advanced Practice: a Principled Approach

The **RPS Roadmap to Advanced Practice** describes the principles of the Foundation and Faculty development programmes, alongside the support, guidance, quality assurance mechanisms and the range of assessment tools developed for both self and peer assessment. These strategic frameworks are evidence-led designs that meet our workforce development principles.

The Roadmap sets out a needs-based approach in the context of pharmacy training and development; the RPS has a distinct role as a steward of professional development for the workforce and in defining and assessing professional competencies to fulfill regulatory standards throughout careers.

RPS Workforce Development principles

Providing assurance to patients and civil society that the scope and range of advanced generalist and specialist pharmacy practice is safe and effective with the provision of evidence to support this assurance from individual practitioners;

Providing evidence to demonstrate fitness for purpose and clearly describing the components of a system that develops individual practice;

Providing assurance and evidence for employers (NHS and non NHS) and commissioners that an individual has advanced practice attributes;

Providing a robust and effective way to sustain an infrastructure to support career and professional development;

Providing assurance and evidence that demonstrates improved quality, value and patient outcomes related to the RPS workforce development infrastructure.

There are fundamental questions that any healthcare workforce must address, particularly those relating to clinical decision making, the application and provision of expertise and the care of increasingly complex patients. The RPS Roadmap, and the structures and mechanisms described in this Roadmap, provide a way to directly address these questions (see text box 1).

These questions are transnational; the constitutional requirements of the NHS – or any healthcare system - requires that the health workforce is appropriately trained to meet needs^{3,4,5,6,7}.

A consistency of approach to developing the workforce (including assessment and evaluation of workforce competence and performance) and applicability across all areas of practice are essential to provide assurance to all stakeholders. RPS Affiliated Partners, RPS Accredited organisations and RPS Expert Groups and Panels have contributed to these processes as recognised practice experts.

3 Health Education England. Investing in people for health and healthcare: workforce plan for England. 2015.

4 NHS Education for Scotland. Workforce Plan 2015/16. 2015.

5 Welsh Government. Working Differently – Working Together a Workforce and Organisational Development Framework. 2012.

6 The Scottish Government. Prescription for Excellence A Vision and Action Plan for the right pharmaceutical care through integrated. Edinburgh; 2013.

7 Smith J, Picton C, Dayan M. Now or Never: Shaping Pharmacy for the Future. London; 2013.

TEXT BOX I

The 'unanswered questions' that direct our strategic approaches to transformative workforce development.

How can we develop flexible and capable practitioners who can lead, negotiate, manage complexity and deliver change?

*How can we describe **clinical acumen**, in the context of practitioner development? More particularly, how can we better support a seamless transition from **post foundation towards advanced practice**, in terms of Knowledge, Skills, Experience, and Behaviours?*

*What do we mean by the designation and recognition of **advanced practice**, and what **knowledge and skills** are required to demonstrate advanced practice?*

*What are the evaluations and **assessments required** for advancement and also sustainment of advanced practice (the question is also relevant for pharmacists who need to change roles, such as moving to a new practice environment, change specialisms or return to work after a career break)?*

How can we recognise the clinical acumen of practitioners who have not previously had the advantage of Foundation Training?

*What types of assessment of competence provide stakeholder **assurance** (to patients, GPhC, employers, the profession) that practitioners are performing **consistently** well? How can we assure **consistency** of these assessment processes?*

*How do the RPS development programmes and structures align to **GPhC standards** and **Continuing Fitness to Practice**?*

The RPS Roadmap

The RPS has established professional development and support infrastructures and programmes for all stages of a pharmacist's career in order to deliver the RPS Workforce Vision⁸. These programmes support pharmacists from day-1 as a student to the time of retirement from the profession, across all sectors, areas of expert practice, both specialist and generalist. Their objective is to improve both the quality of patient care and the public's health. Together, they provide a Roadmap for Advancement using developmental frameworks, guidance, professional curricula, credentialing structures and quality assured assessments. They can be used by pharmacists, who have been in practice for any length of time, to identify their current stage of development and their training needs to support them in their role. Moreover, it is anticipated that they will play an important role in informing the process of revalidation (continuing fitness to practice).

Contemporary thinking from expert groups and workforce agencies suggests that 'training for jobs' is a short term measure that rarely succeeds in long term workforce planning, particularly given education and training lag times. It is important that any Roadmap produced by the RPS is mindful of the need for pharmacists to develop flexibly and able to adapt; we have a clear recognition that advanced practice is built upon experience from generalist practice and that any option of specialisation occurs alongside and in addition to the broadest general knowledge and clinical skills base. This should result in the workforce developing the fundamental clinical acumen required for any new and emerging future roles.

This is depicted in Figure 1, which shows the broad scope of early career and advanced practitioners, in addition to the RPS professional development programmes that support and recognise advancement. This provides assurance of competence through quality assured assessments at specific milestones.

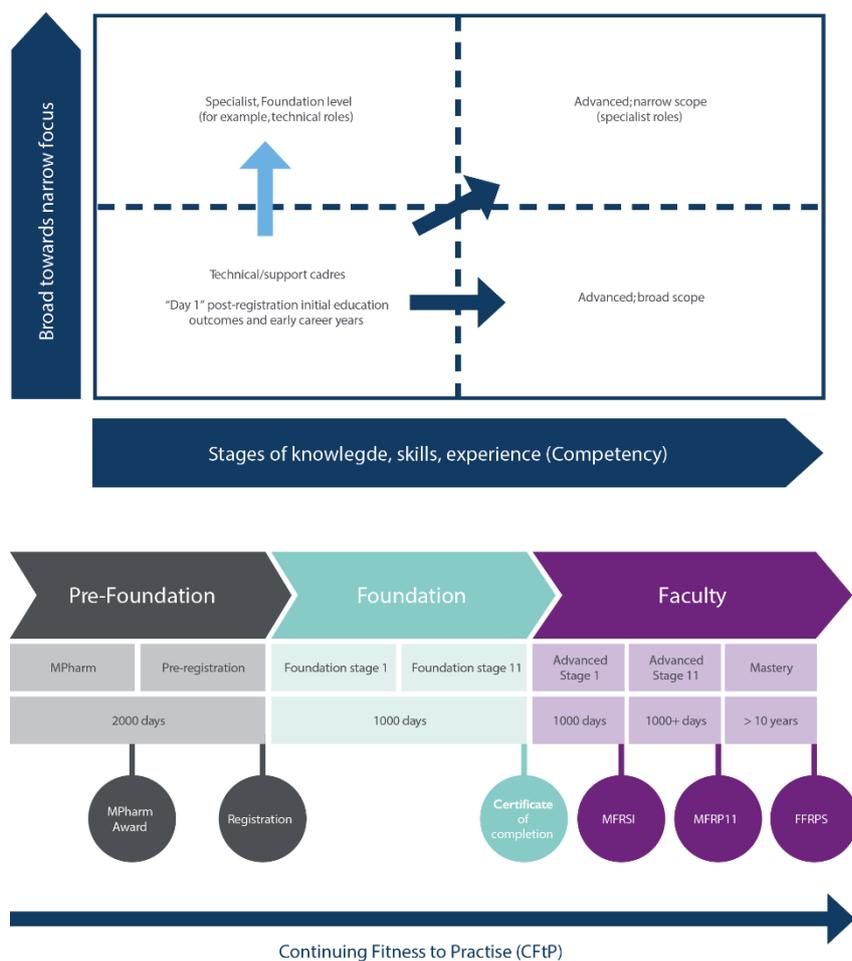


Figure 1 The RPS Professional Development Roadmap

8 The Royal Pharmaceutical Society. Transforming the Pharmacy Workforce in Great Britain : The RPS Vision. London; 2015.

The RPS Roadmap is designed to identify a practitioner's stage of development based on their experience in the workplace, competence and the ability to manage complexity, and then identifying and accessing the support and assessment required to be recognised at that stage.

The RPS describes three principal career stages for pharmacists:

Stage 1: Pre-Foundation programme:

Undergraduate Masters of Pharmacy degree and Pre-registration training.

Stage 2: Foundation programme

The first 1,000 days of registered practice.

Stage 3: Faculty programme

Advancement from foundation practice, both development and maintenance of advanced practice, whether generalist or specialist.

There are a series of credentialing milestones throughout a practitioner's career. The roadmap provides clear direction on how practitioners can continuously demonstrate maintenance at a stage of practice, or continue to advance to the next milestone, in acknowledgement of proposed regulatory changes.

Figure 2 illustrates the core elements for professional support, development and recognition throughout a practitioner's career. The fundamental structures and elements include:

- Defining stages of practice and levels of competency with developmental **frameworks**;
- A Library of Knowledge and Skills: professional **curricula** and **resources**;
- **Portfolios of practice** and formative and summative **assessments**;
- **Credentialing and milestones of professional recognition**;
- Professional **support, mentoring and networks**.



RPS accreditation programmes provide measures for the **quality assurance** of each element.

A pharmacist's career stage provides direction on the applicability of portfolio, support, assessments available, and the depth of knowledge and expertise expected.

Figure 2 Key elements of all RPS professional development programmes

Summary and key recommendations

The key question has been about transformative strategies and mechanism for developing a flexible and capable pharmacy workforce who can lead, negotiate, manage complexity and deliver change. The RPS response to this has been the development of a coherent Vision and associated Roadmap for Advancement. The RPS has painstakingly developed an infrastructure embedded with developmental frameworks, toolkits and support networks as well as quality assured and aligned leadership training and development.

It is recommended that the concept of formative and summative assessment and the specific assessment tools as defined by the Foundation and Faculty programmes are adopted as the gold standard of competence assessment; the best available evidence suggests this is the future direction of workforce development. These tools and mechanisms have been robustly tested and validated in practice^{9,10,11,12,13,14,15,16} and will ensure consistency of approach and standards across all areas of practice and are recognized across healthcare professions.

The RPS additionally recommends that RPS assessment principles and processes are applied to those providing education, training and development, and include the use of RPS assessment tools.

It is recommended that the RPS assessment guidance alongside training of RPS assessors is applied to all development and training programmes to ensure consistency in approach.

9 Costa HA., Shulman R., Bates I. A credentialing process for advanced level pharmacists: participant feedback. *Pharmaceutical J.* 2012, 288: 689. May online. www.pjonline.com/node/1101077

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12 McKenzie C., Borthwick M., Thacker M., Shulman R., Offord R., Tomlin M., Bates I., McRobbie D. Developing a process for credentialing advanced level practice in the pharmacy profession using a multi-source evaluation tool. *Pharmaceutical J.* 2011, 286: online

13 Mills E, Farmer D, Bates I, Davies G, Webb DG. The General Level Framework (GLF): use in primary care and community pharmacy to support professional development. *Int J Pharm Pract.* 2008, 16: 325-331.

14 Patel J., Sharma A., West D., Bates IP., Davies JG. Abdel-Tawab R. An evaluation of using multi-source feedback (MSF) amongst junior hospital pharmacists. *Int. J. Pharm Prac.* 2011; DOI: 10.1111/j.2042-7174.2010.00092.x

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16 Antoniou S., Webb DG., McRobbie D., Davies JG. Wright J., Quinn J., Bates IP. A controlled study of the general level framework: Results of the South of England competency study. *Pharmacy Education* 2005, 5: 201-7.

In conclusion

Patients, the public, Society, health system planners and governments have a clear interest in the performance and impact of the healthcare workforce; this interest cuts across all professions and includes non-regulated healthcare workers.

As the national professional leadership organisation, with its responsibility as the holder of a Royal Charter, the RPS has a duty to provide robust and practical structures, systems and mechanisms to transform and support the pharmacy workforce. The RPS will use the best evidence, the best contemporary expert advice and the available best practices to continuously inform this transformative workforce strategy. The RPS will work with education and training providers and medicines experts to ensure a modern and contemporary pharmacy workforce, one that has access to professional support and development and takes pride in providing the best pharmaceutical care available for our society.

The RPS will identify annual priorities for engagement and communication with stakeholders across Great Britain, as well as work to support the professional development and recognition required to enable stakeholders to implement and use the RPS Roadmap for healthcare workforce development.

The RPS Workforce Vision and Roadmap to Advancement are the culmination of a continuous programme of long term thinking and construction; collectively they form the foundation and principles of our professional workforce.



About Us

The Royal Pharmaceutical Society (RPS) is the professional body for pharmacists and pharmacy in Great Britain. We represent all sectors and specialisms of pharmacy in Great Britain and we lead and support the development of the pharmacy profession to deliver excellence of care and service to patients and the public. This includes the advancement of science, practice, education and knowledge in pharmacy and the provision of professional standards and guidance to promote and deliver excellence. In addition we promote the profession's policies and views to a range of external stakeholders in a number of different forums.

