



CAREER PATHWAY

Frequently Asked Questions

Pharmacy Technicians and Pharmacy Support Staff

Frequently Asked Questions

Q. Why is the Pharmacy Technician and Pharmacy Support Staff Development Pathway described in levels and not Agenda for Change (AFC) Bands?

A. The levels expressed are those of the NHS Career Framework for Health which reflects role development and progression, and not those of Agenda for Change, which is related to remuneration. This supports the use of the pathway in Community Pharmacy.

Q. Do Final Accuracy Checkers need to be registrants?

A. Pharmacy Technicians were working as Final Accuracy Checkers before they were registrants. There are Final Accuracy Checking Dispensers in Community Pharmacy. There is no legal requirement for the accuracy checking to be completed by a registrant.

Q. Why should we align the Pharmacy Technician and Pharmacy Support Staff workforce with Skills for Health Career Framework?

A. This framework applies to role development and progression with no connection to remuneration therefore it is suitable for all sectors in pharmacy. This framework is used by Nursing, Midwifery and Allied Health Professionals which represents a large cohort of NHS staff who work at the same level of complexity as Pharmacy Technicians and Pharmacy Support Staff.

Q. What about digital solutions such as AI? Where does that fit in?

A. In the future there will be a digital solution for a range of activities the pharmacy team currently deliver. Whilst we are in this transformational stage the medicines related work needs completed by the pharmacy workforce with the right skills, in the right place, at the right time.

Q. Why are Pharmacy Technicians moving towards accredited post registration qualifications when Pharmacists are moving away from them?

A. There is no national framework for Pharmacy Technicians working directly with patients providing them with advice and education about medicines. The enhanced, advanced and expert roles Pharmacy Technicians take on and the training they receive, can vary across sectors and health boards. As a result, when Pharmacy Technicians move between sectors and boards, there is no system to provide assurance on their competency to take on an enhanced, advanced or expert role they have already been doing.

Q. As a Pharmacy Technician, if I need a degree level qualification, do I need to stop working and go to university?

A. No, this will be an earn and learn model which means you will be supported to learn whilst you are working.

Q. If I develop my knowledge using the NES resources and evidence the development of my skill & experience using the appropriate framework will this be accepted by Universities as evidence to support me undertaking enhanced or advanced post IET qualifications?

A. It will depend on the university, when looking at applications they consider evidence of whether you have experience of either unaccredited knowledge at that level or if you have evidence you are working at that level. There is a plan to work with the relevant university so they are aware of why we need to access these opportunities this way.

Q. This development pathway is ambitious. What are the timelines to achieve it?

A. This will be a generational change which will happen over a 10 to 12 year period in the first instance.

Q. Why do we need two pharmacy professions with a degree?

A. We won't have two professions with a degree. Pharmacy Technicians will be educated to a degree level at SCQF Level 9 and Pharmacists will be educated to a Masters degree level at SCQF Level 11

Q. Who gave NPTGS the mandate to carry out this piece of work?

A. NPTGS was set up at the request of the Directors of Pharmacy Scotland (DoPS). The terms of reference for NPTGS are:

- To enable professional leadership and develop professional practice for Pre-Registration Trainee Pharmacy Technicians and Pharmacy Technicians.
- Lead role development and skill mix for Pre-Registration Trainee Pharmacy Technicians, Pharmacy Technicians and Pharmacy Support Staff, at a national level including collaboration on the development of education strategy.
- Contribute to the delivery of national pharmacy strategy and partner with the Association of Pharmacy Technicians, United Kingdom to lead and influence policy and practices for Pharmacy Technicians in Scotland.
- Act as a consultative resource for matters relating to Pharmacy Technician practice.
- Ensure Pharmacy Technician representation at all relevant regional and national groups impacting on Pre-Registration Trainee Pharmacy Technicians, Pharmacy Technicians and Pharmacy Support Staff education, training and practice.
- Share best practice and collaborate across pharmacy sectors to meet NHS Scotland and patient requirements.

I have been a Pharmacy Technician for a number of years and I do not have the SCQF level of qualification suggested for the SfH level of my role, what should I do?

Use the Pharmacy Technician Foundation Framework to evidence your skill and experience. Only recently qualified Pharmacy Technicians will be expected to register with NES. Use the professional portfolio on the TURAS platform as a repository for your completed evidence. If you identify any gaps in your knowledge go to the NES Pharmacy Programme of Resources to gain the knowledge required.

THE SCOTTISH CREDIT AND QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK

This Framework diagram has been produced to show the mainstream Scottish qualifications already credit rated by SQA and HEIs. However, there are a diverse number of learning programmes on the Framework, which, due to the limitations of this format, cannot be represented here. For more information, please visit the SCQF website at www.scqf.org.uk to view the interactive version of the Framework or search the Database.



SCQF Levels	SQA Qualifications	Qualifications of Higher Education Institutions	Apprenticeships & SVQs
12		Doctoral Degree	Professional Apprenticeship
11		Masters Degree, Integrated Masters Degree, Post Graduate Diploma, Post Graduate Certificate	Graduate Apprenticeship Professional Apprenticeship SVQ
10		Honours Degree, Graduate Diploma, Graduate Certificate	Graduate Apprenticeship Professional Apprenticeship
9		Bachelors / Ordinary Degree, Graduate Diploma, Graduate Certificate	Graduate Apprenticeship Technical Apprenticeship SVQ
8	Higher National Diploma		Higher Apprenticeship Technical Apprenticeship SVQ
7	Advanced Higher, Awards, Scottish Baccalaureate		Modern Apprenticeship SVQ
6	Higher, Awards, Skills for Work Higher		Modern Apprenticeship Foundation Apprenticeship SVQ
5	National 5, Awards, Skills for Work National 5		Modern Apprenticeship SVQ
4	National 4, Awards, Skills for Work National 4		
3	National 3, Awards, Skills for Work National 3		
2	National 2, Awards		
1	National 1, Awards		

Pharmacist

Pharmacy Technician

Pharmacy Support Staff