

Section 2 - Curriculum purpose

2.1. A once-in-a-lifetime transformation in pharmacy practice

From 2026, most newly qualified pharmacists in the UK will be prescribers at point of registration, making pharmacists the first non-medical/non-dental healthcare professionals entering practice as prescribers with a Level 7/SCQF Level 11 qualification. This change is mirrored by a record number of pharmacists in the current workforce also undertaking independent prescribing qualifications. Together, these developments mark a major step towards pharmacy becoming a prescribing profession.

Healthcare policy across the UK is changing to reflect this shift, with pharmacists expected to deliver more clinical services involving direct clinical patient care across community, primary care and secondary care settings. As pharmacists take on expanded clinical and prescribing responsibilities, there is a clear need to ensure post-registration development pathways remain relevant, robust, and fit for purpose, to support the profession to meet these new professional expectations with confidence.

To support this, the Post-Registration Foundation curriculum has been revised. The updated curriculum, renamed the **Enhanced curriculum**, will ultimately replace the legacy Post-Registration Foundation curriculum.

2.2. Who is this curriculum designed for?

The enhanced curriculum provides a structured framework to support pharmacists working in patient-focussed roles to develop towards enhanced level practice.

This means it is designed for pharmacists:

- Practising at a pre-advanced level
- Working in roles involving direct clinical care to individual patients and/or patient populations
- Actively make prescribing decisions as part of their practice

The curriculum is designed to support new pharmacist prescribers in their transition to practising without the direct support of a Designated Supervisor (DS) and/or Designated Prescribing Practitioner (DPP).

For clarity:

- Pharmacists do **not** need to be prescribers to **begin** engaging with the enhanced curriculum or building evidence.

- Pharmacists **must** be registered prescribers, with evidence of prescribing-related clinical activity, at the **point of enhanced credentialing**.

2.3. What is enhanced level practice?

Enhanced practice:

- Builds on the competence and level of practice demonstrated on registration as a prescribing pharmacist
- Acts as a stepping stone towards advanced practice
- Aligns with the early stages of proficiency in the Dreyfus model

This aligns with the multiprofessional definition of enhanced practice as:

“A level of practice evident in the healthcare workforce. It is delivered by experienced, often registered professionals who practice with autonomy and independently. They do complex work and manage day to day risk, including risks on behalf of, or with patients.”¹

Pharmacists working at an enhanced level:

- grasp more complex situations
- adapt more readily to changing circumstances
- rely increasingly on experience-based judgement, rather than solely following rules and protocols
- work across the four pillars of practice

In a pharmacy clinical context, this means pharmacists can:

1. Make more autonomous decisions about the safe and effective use of medicines within their individual scope of practice
2. Manage more complex clinical situations with confidence, using experience to guide their approach
3. Move from following rules and protocols about the safe and effective use of medicines to appraising situations using a more person-centred, holistic approach
4. Assess, manage and mitigate clinical risk appropriately

Pharmacists practising at an enhanced level also demonstrate more developed capabilities across:

- Leadership and management

¹<https://www.hee.nhs.uk/sites/default/files/documents/The%20Principles%20of%20Enhanced%20Level%20Practice.pdf>

- Education
- Research and evaluation

These capabilities enable pharmacists to lead change, improve services, and influence practice beyond individual clinical encounters.

In summary, an enhanced pharmacist:

- Communicates information effectively and with confidence, tailoring approach to meet people's needs.
- Takes a holistic, inclusive and person-centred approach to consultations.
- Collaborates with and supports the wider pharmacy and health and social care team to promote safe and effective care.
- Competently and confidently applies clinical knowledge and skills in practice.
- Critically evaluates relevant information to inform decision making, managing uncertainty and risk appropriately.
- Practises professionally within limits of own competence and scope of practice, referring or signposting appropriately.
- Leads the safe and effective use of medicines in their practice setting, proactively driving practice improvements.
- Demonstrates emotional intelligence, resilience, adaptability and professionalism under pressure.
- Develops their practice by identifying learning opportunities and reflecting on feedback.
- Supports the education and development of colleagues.
- Understands best practice in relation to research and evaluation activities and critically evaluates the evidence base to inform practice.
- Leads audit, quality improvement, service evaluation, or research activities and communicates findings effectively.

To support this, the enhanced curriculum mirrors the five-domain structure of the advanced and consultant curricula (*Figure 1*). This creates a coherent post-registration career pathway and aligns pharmacy with the four-pillar multiprofessional workforce model used across UK healthcare professions (*Figure 2*).

Figure 1 – RCPHarm post-registration curriculum domains

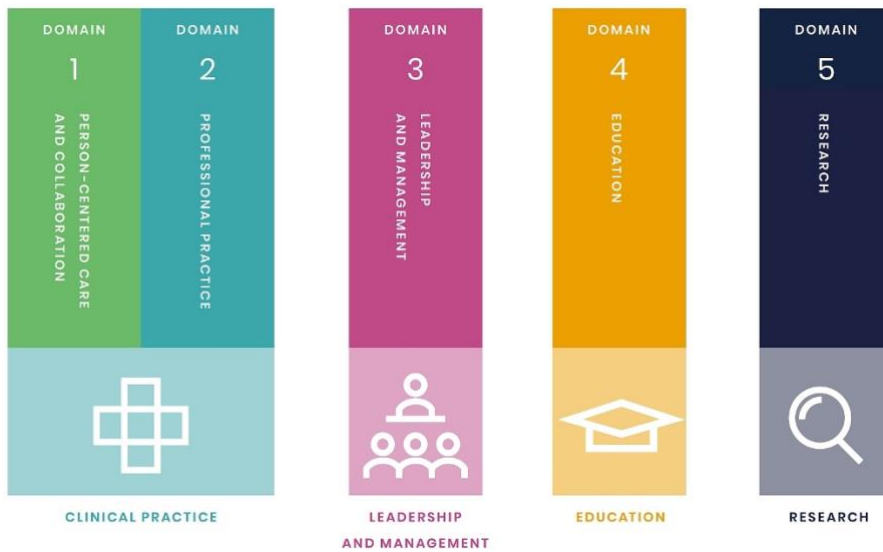


Figure 2 – Patient-focussed pharmacist development pathway

Level of pharmacist practice	Undergraduate	Foundation trainee	Registered pharmacist	Enhanced	Advanced	Consultant
Dreyfus level	Novice	Advanced beginner	Competent	Proficient		Expert
Practice dimensions	Complexity, autonomy, sphere of influence, scope of practice, depth and breadth of expertise, judgment, contextual understanding					
Aligned developmental curriculum/framework	GPhC IET outcomes		RCPHarm enhanced curriculum	RCPHarm advanced curriculum	RCPHarm consultant curriculum	
Progression assessment	MPharm degree	Registration assessment	RCPHarm enhanced credentialing	RCPHarm advanced credentialing	RCPHarm consultant credentialing	
Core pillars underpinning all levels						
Pillars of practice	Clinical (person-centred care and professional practice)		Leadership & management	Education		Research & evaluation

2.4. What is the value of the enhanced curriculum and credentialing?

The enhanced curriculum and the enhanced credential are designed to deliver the following value for system stakeholders:

<p>Pharmacists Developing confident and reflective practitioners</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides scaffolding for pharmacists to safely develop their clinical scope of practice, including prescribing, and practise with confidence • Supports development of non-clinical capabilities to build future pharmacists who are leaders, educators, and researchers • Builds ability to compile a high-quality professional portfolio of practice and develop effective reflective skills • Allows pharmacists to demonstrate their real-life practice using workplace-based learning and/or credit-bearing academic approaches • Offers flexible approaches to validating their advancing level of practice, with modular micro-credentials in the clinical and non-clinical domains as well as a full enhanced credential
<p>Employers Supporting employers to develop and assure their new prescribing pharmacist workforce</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides a structure for employers to support and develop the early (prescribing) practice of their employees, including clinical and non-clinical capabilities, offering a clear career pathway • Supports employers to demonstrate meeting the GPhC standards for Chief Pharmacists and Superintendent Pharmacists by providing a robust workforce development and assurance model • Gives access to an e-portfolio for recording pharmacists' (prescribing) practice for audit and assurance purposes • Credentialing offers assurance of employee capability against a national benchmark, with flexible modular credentials in the clinical and non-clinical domains as well as a full enhanced credential
<p>Multi-disciplinary team (MDT) &</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aligns pharmacy to the multidisciplinary team; the curriculum is structured against the four-pillar model of

<p>wider healthcare system Integrating new pharmacist prescribers into the wider healthcare team</p>	<p>advanced practice and the standard aligns with the multiprofessional definition of enhanced practice in England</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensures all pharmacists working at an enhanced level - regardless of sector - share a common set of capabilities across five core domains of practice, promoting workforce mobility and mutual recognition across different healthcare settings • Encourages pharmacists to engage with other healthcare professionals and patients to gain feedback and corroborate their practice through their portfolio
<p>Patients & the public Building confidence in the profession</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides patients and the public with the assurance that pharmacists are expanding their scope of practice in a structured way, giving them confidence in the ability of the profession to deliver more complex care as they develop professionally.