EUROPE · UNITED KINGDOM · OSPAP ROUTE FOR NON-EEA DEGREES

GB How to register as a pharmacist in United Kingdom

To practise in England, Scotland or Wales you must be on the register of the General Pharmaceutical Council (GPhC). With a degree from outside the EEA, the route is OSPAP, a 52-week foundation training year and the Common Registration Assessment. Northern Ireland has its own regulator, the PSNI. Licence or registration: **Registration as a pharmacist with the GPhC**. Regulator: **General Pharmaceutical Council (GPhC), Great Britain**. Every fact was checked against official sources on **20 November 2026**.

ROUTE UNDER REVIEW The GPhC consulted on a new route for internationally qualified pharmacists, which closed in July 2026. It says there is no firm timetable for any change, and it is considering aligning the route with the 2021 standards, which include independent prescribing. Today, OSPAP is still the only route for non-EEA degrees.

Who decides what	
General Pharmaceutical Council (GPhC)	Decides OSPAP eligibility, runs the CRA with the PSNI, and decides registration in Great Britain.
OSPAP university	Decides whether to offer you a place, sets tuition fees and runs the course assessments.
Statutory education body	NHS England, HEIW (Wales) and NES (Scotland) recruit trainees and manage foundation training.
UK Visas and Immigration (Home Office)	Decides visas. Separate from registration.
Employer	Decides hiring and, for a work visa, whether to sponsor you. Registration is not a job offer.

Who can apply

- A pharmacy qualification from outside the EEA, and registration, or eligibility to register, as a pharmacist in the country where you qualified.
- The GPhC considers your qualifications, work experience, fitness to practise and English.
- If your degree is not assessed as at least equal to a UK bachelor's in pharmacy, you must assess your syllabus using the international comparative assessment framework.
- The GPhC recommends a UK ENIC Statement of Comparability if you are unsure how your degree compares.
- If you are not eligible, the only way forward is a UK qualification such as an MPharm.
- Non-EEA nationals with an EEA degree not recognised in the UK follow the same OSPAP route.

The steps, with approximate time and cost

1. **Prove your English**
   IELTS Academic overall 7 with no band below 7, or Pharmacy OET grade B in all four parts, at one sitting. The GPhC will not process an application without it.
   Time: 2–6 months (est.) · Cost: set by test provider
2. **Apply to the GPhC for OSPAP eligibility**
   The GPhC checks your degree, experience, fitness to practise and English, then tells your chosen universities. Send it to arrive before 31 July. The letter is valid for 2 academic years.
   Time: 2–4 months (est.) · Cost: £830
3. **Complete an OSPAP course**
   A full-time, one-year postgraduate diploma at a GPhC-accredited UK university. The university decides on your place. It meets MPharm graduate criteria but does not award an MPharm.
   Time: 1 academic year · Cost: set by university
4. **Complete 52 weeks of foundation training**
   Supervised training in England, Scotland or Wales. Posts are filled only through the national recruitment schemes. Apply in June the year before, often before OSPAP starts.
   Time: 52 weeks
5. **Pass the Common Registration Assessment**
   A two-part exam at UK test centres, usually held twice a year, in summer and autumn. You must pass both parts at the same sitting.
   Time: 2 sittings a year · Cost: £208
6. **Join the GPhC register**
   Apply online through myGPhC. You must finish every step and apply within 4 years of the date you started your OSPAP course.
   Time: set register dates · Cost: £128 + £311

Typical total: About 3–4 years (est.)

Language requirements

- IELTS Academic, including IELTS for UKVI but not Life Skills: overall 7, with no band below 7, at one sitting.
- Pharmacy OET on paper or computer: grade B in all four parts at one sitting. OET@Home is not accepted. Share results via myOET.
- Evidence should be under 2 years old when you apply. Older scores need proof you kept up your English.
- Alternatives: a pharmacy degree taught and examined in English, or 2 years of recent practice, in a mainly English-speaking country.

Read this before you plan

- Licence ≠ visa ≠ job. The GPhC says meeting its criteria does not mean you can enter the UK or find work, and it cannot answer visa questions.
- Study, training and work each need the right immigration permission, decided by UK Visas and Immigration, not by the GPhC or your university.
- You cannot practise as a pharmacist until you are on the register. Foundation training is a supervised trainee post found only through recruitment schemes.

Exams, costs and documents

Checked 20 November 2026

Exam pattern and mode: online, test centre or onsite

Common Registration Assessment (CRA)

TEST CENTRE

- Part 1: 40 calculation questions in 120 minutes
- Part 2: 120 questions (90 SBA, 30 EMQ) in 150 minutes
- Approved calculator allowed in both parts
- Pass both parts at the same sitting
- Maximum 3 attempts
- Pass marks vary by sitting; the standard stays the same

Computer-based, at test centres across the UK only. Not available online or from Pakistan. Open to approved trainees in foundation training.

OSPAP course assessments

ONSITE

- Format set by each university
- Taught modules plus assessments
- Some teaching may be exempted
- All assessments must be completed

Set and held by the UK university running your OSPAP course, as part of a full-time programme in the UK.

Official fees	Amount
OSPAP eligibility application Paid to the GPhC. Non-refundable, even if refused or you cannot find a university place	**£830**
Common Registration Assessment Per sitting, non-refundable	**£208**
Registration application Application for entry in Part 1 of the register, from 1 September 2026	**£128**
Registration entry Charged when the application is granted, from 1 September 2026	**£311**
Annual renewal Pharmacist renewal fee from 1 September 2026	**£311**
OSPAP tuition Set by each university. Not published by the GPhC	**set by university**

Fees in pounds sterling (£) under the GPhC fees rules 2025. Tuition, English tests, visas and living costs are extra.

Documents usually required

- Completed OSPAP eligibility application form
- Evidence of English language competency
- Pharmacy degree certificate and transcript
- Proof of registration or eligibility in your country
- Syllabus assessment under the comparative framework, if needed
- UK ENIC Statement of Comparability (recommended)
- Your chosen OSPAP universities
- £830 application fee
- Passport or driving licence for CRA identity checks

Expected time

- Send the OSPAP eligibility form so the GPhC receives it before 31 July for a September or October start. The eligibility letter lasts two academic years.
- Recruitment for foundation training opens in June each year for posts starting the following year. Late applications are not accepted.
- Next CRA: 15 June 2027, results 20 July 2027. Everything must be done, and registration applied for, within 4 years of starting OSPAP.

Typical total: About 3–4 years (est.)

Independent prescribing and the review

- UK MPharm graduates trained to the 2021 standards can complete prescribing training in their foundation year. OSPAP does not include independent prescribing.
- OSPAP pharmacists can take a GPhC-accredited prescribing course after registration to add the prescriber annotation.
- In 2026 the CRA format and content are the same for every trainee, whatever their route.
- The GPhC's consultation closed in July 2026. No firm timetable for changes has been set.

Visas, pay and next steps

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Immigration route (separate from registration)	What official sources say	Status
Student visa (for OSPAP)	OSPAP is a full-time UK university course. Check the Student visa rules on GOV.UK and confirm with your university that it can sponsor you. This route was not checked for this guide.	Confirm
Graduate visa	A general postgraduate diploma is not on GOV.UK's list of eligible courses. A course that leads to a regulated job may qualify; ask your university. 2 years if you apply by 31 Dec 2026, 18 months from 1 Jan 2027. Fee £937, health surcharge £1,035 a year.	Confirm
Health and Care Worker visa	Pharmacists (code 2251) are an eligible occupation. Needs a job offer and certificate of sponsorship from a Home Office-approved employer. Salary at least £25,000 or the national pay scale rate if higher. Fee £324 (up to 3 years) or £628. No health surcharge.	Open
Skilled Worker visa	Pharmacists (2251) are listed as higher skilled. Needs a sponsoring employer. For healthcare jobs on national pay scales, at least £25,000 or the going rate; most other jobs need £41,700 or the going rate.	Open

If you are applying from Pakistan

- UK visas are applied for online on GOV.UK, with biometrics at a visa application centre. Check current centre locations on GOV.UK before booking.
- Pakistan is on the Home Office list of countries where a TB test at an approved clinic is needed for some UK visas.
- The CRA is held only at UK test centres. There is no centre in Pakistan and no online option.
- OSPAP and foundation training both take place in Great Britain. Neither can be completed from Pakistan.
- The GPhC pages checked do not set Pakistan-specific attestation rules. Follow the application form exactly.

Pay and funding

- No official pay figure for pharmacists was found. The Home Office uses NHS pay scales 2024/25 for visa going rates (England): Band 5 £29,970, Band 6 £37,338, Band 7 £46,148.
- GOV.UK does not assign pharmacists to one band. Actual pay depends on the employer, role and UK nation.

Avoid these common mistakes

- Missing the June recruitment window for foundation training. Late applications are never accepted.
- Paying the £830 eligibility fee before checking university places. It is non-refundable.
- Taking IELTS General, IELTS Life Skills or OET@Home, or combining scores from different sittings.
- Letting the 4-year limit from the start of OSPAP run out before registering.
- Assuming OSPAP or registration brings a visa, a Graduate visa, or a job.

How ASGHCA supports you

- GPhC assessment preparation
- International Career Mapping: consult, assess, roadmap, prepare
- Documentation and registration guidance
- English test preparation: IELTS, PTE and OET
- 1-on-1 mentorship, CV and interview support
- Webinars, CPD sessions and a lifetime community

ASGHCA offers education and guidance. Regulated immigration advice is referred to authorised professionals.

Official sources, all checked 20 November 2026: GPhC (pharmacyregulation.org): non-EEA qualified international pharmacists page (updated 29 Sep 2026); factsheet Registering as a pharmacist in Great Britain, internationally qualified pharmacists (July 2026); Common Registration Assessment page, sitting page and CRA framework for 2026; guidance on evidence of English language skills (June 2025); Registration and Renewal Fees Rules 2025 · GOV.UK: Health and Care Worker visa, Skilled Worker visa, eligible healthcare jobs, national pay scales, Graduate visa, TB test countries.

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