

Non-medical prescribing programme: Admissions Guidance (Pharmacists/AHPs)

Admission* to the non-medical prescribing programme is achieved through a rigorous and comprehensive process, designed to ensure that all regulatory body requirements are met. It also provides evidence that appropriate support will be available to students to enable their successful development as safe and appropriate prescribers within their intended scope of prescribing practice.

This guidance document is designed to ensure that you have all the relevant information to enable you to decide whether the prescribing course is appropriate for you and that you have the relevant support systems in place. It includes the following:

1. An overview of the programme and its requirements (page 2)
2. Criteria for entry to the programme (please see those relevant to your professional registration) (pages 3-4)
3. Flowchart outlining the steps that applicants must follow to be offered a place on the course (page 5)
4. Arrangements that must be in place to support the period of practice learning which is an essential element of the programme (pages 6-9)

Further information and advice about the admissions process is available from CPD Admissions, University of Hertfordshire, cpdhealth@herts.ac.uk

Please also ensure you review the standards for prescribing available from your regulatory body:

General Pharmaceutical Council:

<https://www.pharmacyregulation.org/education/pharmacist-independent-prescriber>

Health & Care Professions' Council:

<http://www.hcpc-uk.co.uk/aboutregistration/medicinesandprescribing/>

*** Please note: There is currently an unprecedented level of demand for this programme and priority will be given to applicants sponsored by the NHS. Please ensure you submit all required documents to ensure there is no delay in informing you about the outcome of your application.**

1.0 An overview of the programme

The non-medical prescribing programme enables appropriately qualified practitioners to develop the knowledge and skills to prescribe safely and appropriately as independent/supplementary prescribers or supplementary prescribers, able to prescribe from within the British National Formulary. (see: <https://psnc.org.uk/dispensing-supply/receiving-a-prescription/who-can-prescribe-what/>)

The following independent /supplementary prescribing modules are available within the prescribing programme:

7NMH1054	Pharmacist Independent Prescribing
7HSK0109	AHP Independent Prescribing (Physiotherapists, podiatrists, paramedics and therapeutic radiographers)
7HSK0110	AHP Supplementary Prescribing (Diagnostic radiographers and dietitians)

Course aims

The course provides opportunities to develop and demonstrate knowledge, understanding and skills in practice within the intended scope of prescribing through independent reasoned thought, systematic enquiry, reflection and evaluation.

Course content

The course covers the following topics:

- Systematic approaches to assessment and diagnosis.
- Pharmacology and prescribing practice.
- Medicines' optimisation and governance frameworks in prescribing practice
- Supervised practice

Assessment

The assessment for this course includes:

- Practice Portfolio – demonstrating achievement of required practice learning hours and professional competencies outlined in RPS (2016) Competency Framework for all Prescribers
- Numeracy assessment
- Unseen applied pharmacology examination – involves 20 questions – MCQ and short answer format
- Coursework: prescribing consultation and rationale for prescribed product
- Objective Structured Clinical Examination

When does this course run and how long is it??

The programme commences in either September or January and is delivered over a 5-month period as follows:

Independent /supplementary prescribing modules: The course involves 26 days' theoretical learning (involving both University-based sessions and compulsory guided study) together with an additional period of 90 hours' practice learning.

Course dates for each intake are listed on the CPD application website

www.applycpd.co/herts

Teaching normally takes place on one-day per week between 09.30 and 15.30

The timetable specific to your intake will be provided once your application is accepted.

2. Criteria for entry to the programme

For pharmacists undertaking the Independent Prescribing Course:

1. Current registration with the General Pharmaceutical Council &/or Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland. The applicant's registration status must not be subject to any cautions or interim suspension orders
2. Have at least two years appropriate patient orientated experience (or equivalent in part time employment) practicing in a UK hospital, community or primary care setting following their pre-registration year.
3. Identify an area of clinical practice and need in which to develop their prescribing skills
4. Have up-to-date clinical, pharmacological and pharmaceutical knowledge relevant to their intended area of prescribing practice
5. Demonstrate how they reflect on their own performance and take responsibility for their own CPD;
6. Have a named medical practitioner, recognised by the employing/ Health Service commissioning organization a) as having experience in a relevant field of practice, b) training and experience in the supervision, support and assessment of trainees, c) who has agreed to: provide the student with opportunities to develop competencies in prescribing and to supervise, support and assess the student during their clinical placement. Written confirmation of this support will be required as part of the admissions procedures.
7. Evidence of current DBS clearance (enhanced disclosure) i.e. obtained within the last three years.

For AHPs undertaking the independent Prescribing or Supplementary Prescribing Course:

1. Registration with the HCPC in one of the relevant allied health professions. The applicant's registration status must not be subject to any cautions or interim suspension orders
2. Normally at least 3 years relevant post-qualification experience in the clinical area in which they will be prescribing (or equivalent in part time employment)
3. Working at an advanced practitioner or equivalent level
4. Ability to demonstrate how they reflect on their own performance and take responsibility for their own Continuing Professional Development (CPD) including development of networks for support, reflection and learning
5. Evidence of current DBS clearance (enhanced disclosure) i.e. obtained within the last three years
6. Professionally practising in an environment where there is an identified need for the individual to regularly use independent /supplementary prescribing (physiotherapists, podiatrists, paramedics and therapeutic radiographers only) or supplementary prescribing (diagnostic radiographers and dietitians)
7. Ability to demonstrate support from their employer / sponsor including confirmation that the entrant will have appropriate supervised practice in the clinical area in which they are expected to prescribe.
8. Ability to demonstrate medicines and clinical governance arrangements are in place to support safe and effective supplementary and / or independent prescribing.
9. Have an approved medical practitioner, normally recognised by the employer / commissioning organisation as having:
 - Experience in the relevant field of practice
 - Training and experience in the supervision, support and assessment of trainees, and who has agreed to:
 - Provide the student with opportunities to develop competences in prescribing
 - Supervise, support and assess the student during their clinical placement

Information and advice about the admissions process is available from CPD Health Admissions: cpdhealth@herts.ac.uk or alternatively please contact the Programme Admissions Tutor nmpadmin@herts.ac.uk

Applicants can receive the relevant information regarding NMP from the University's CPD applications website – applycpd.com/herts

Initial discussion with manager to ascertain organization's approval of application, support available and clinical need for role. Gain preliminary agreement from a DMP re supervision in practice. Further information re Practice Supervisor/Assessor role available from; <https://www.nmc.org.uk/standards-for-education-and-training/standards-for-student-supervision-and-assessment/> and DMP role is available from: https://www.southampton.ac.uk/assets/centresresearch/documents/alps/designated_medical_practitioners_guide1.pdf

Application submitted via applycpd.com/herts and reviewed by CPD Admissions

Placement agreement sought if not already in place

Submitted application forms must include:

1. A fully completed CPD application form – which needs to show evidence of professional development, and relevant experience in field of intended prescribing practice
2. Copies of academic and professional awards
3. **Confirmation of DBS clearance (original must be checked prior to final registration)**
4. Confirmation of NHS or other funding
5. Supporting admissions form with required signature from nominated signatory within NHS organisation or senior manager in PVI sector

Application reviewed by Admissions Tutor to confirm appropriate documents submitted and whether entry criteria demonstrated

Full application not received/ Entry criteria not

Applicant informed of reasons for non-offer and may submit further documents as required

Application fully completed, and entry criteria demonstrated – application processed

Official offer made and sent via email

First part of remote registration which is to: confirm a place at UH sent via email

Final part of registration to be done when on site – originals of educational & professional certificates, DBS and passport reviewed

Practice learning within the Non-medical prescribing programme

In addition to the taught elements within the prescribing programme you are required to undertake a period of 12 days' learning in practice (equivalent to 90 hours). During this period of practice learning you must be supported and supervised by a designated medical practitioner (DMP) who is medically qualified.

The DMP is responsible for developing a learning agreement with you relevant to your individual needs and facilitating your access to appropriate learning experiences. They also undertake a formative and summative assessment of your competency in practice, using the Royal Pharmaceutical Society (2016) Competency Framework for Prescribers:

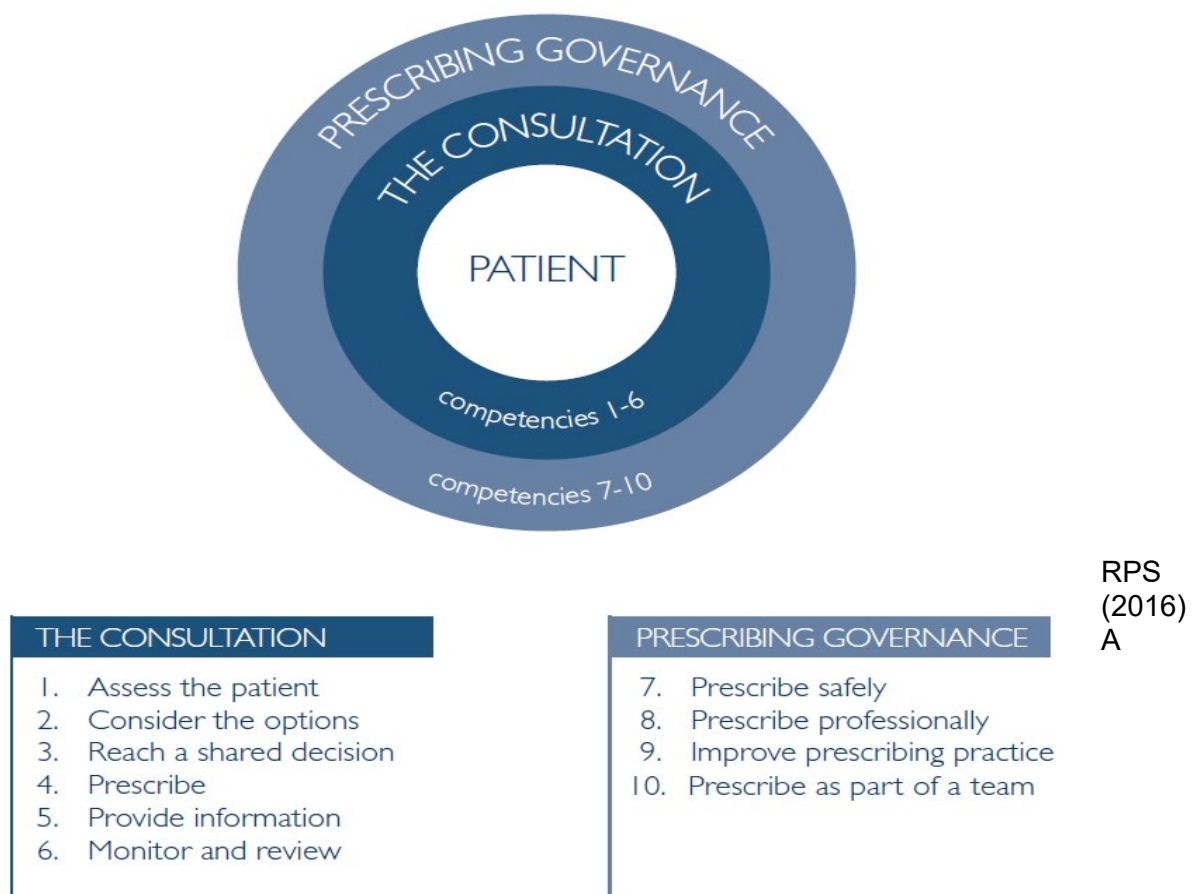


Figure 1 The prescribing competency framework

Competency Framework for All Prescribers

Available from:

<https://www.rpharms.com/Portals/0/RPS%20document%20library/Open%20access/Professional%20standards/Prescribing%20competency%20framework/prescribing-competency-framework.pdf>

Scope of intended Prescribing Practice

It is important to be aware that regulatory body standards require that you have an identified scope/field of intended prescribing practice and the importance of a clearly-defined scope of prescribing practice is emphasised within the Competency Framework since it enables you to develop the level of expertise required for safe and appropriate prescribing practice. Once qualified as a prescriber a defined scope of prescribing practice is essential in enabling your acceptance as a prescriber by the organisation in which you work. You will be asked to state your intended scope of prescribing practice within the course application process and it is important that you consider this carefully.

It is likely that your scope of prescribing practice will reflect the area in which you currently practise and can thus demonstrate considerable experience and higher-level clinical skills. It is recommended however that you discuss your intended scope of prescribing with your employing organisation and/or DMP.

During the 80/90 hours spent in supervised practice you are required to spend a minimum of 25 hours with your DMP to achieve the RPS competencies applied to your scope of prescribing practice and to enable the DMP's valid assessment of the level of competency you have achieved. The remainder of the time involves a minimum of 20 hours focused on the development of the assessment & diagnostic skills required within your scope of prescribing practice and time spent working with other prescribers, both medical and non-medical. Experience should also be gained with experts within your field of intended prescribing practice and members of the wider prescribing team such as the clinical governance and non-medical prescribing lead.

The DMP's role

The DMP must meet the following criteria:

- Registered on the GP or specialist register of the General Medical Council
- have experience or training in teaching and/or supervising in practice
- have at least 3 years' recent clinical experience for a group of patients/clients in the student's intended field of prescribing practice
- a GP who is either vocationally trained or in possession of a certificate of equivalent experience from the Joint Committee for Post-graduate Training in General Practice Certificate (JCPTGP)
- a specialist registrar, clinical assistant or a consultant working within an NHS Trust or other NHS employer
- have the support of the employing organisation or GP practice to act as the designated medical practitioner
- **To ensure an independent and objective assessment of the student, the DMP must not be related to the student nor should they be the person sponsoring the student to undertake the programme.**

The role involves:

- Supporting the student in the identification of their learning needs and development of a learning agreement
- Agreeing learning activities which enable the student to meet identified learning needs and gain competency in prescribing. This will include dedicated time with the DMP and also time with other medical and non-medical prescribers and members of the multi-disciplinary prescribing team

- Providing opportunities for the student to observe how a consultation is undertaken with patients and carers and the decision-making involved in the development of a management plan, including any prescribing
- Providing opportunities for the student to carry out consultations and propose strategies for clinical management and prescribing. These must then be discussed with the DMP who will take any necessary decisions, including any prescribing
- Providing opportunities for in-depth case review when clinical management and prescribing decisions are examined and evaluated
- Facilitating learning by encouraging critical thinking and reflection
- Enabling the integration of theory with practice
- Assessing, at the end of the course, the student's achievement of the competences outlined in the RPS (2016) Competency Framework for All Prescribers.
- Taking responsibility for completing the summative assessment and confirming the student's competence for entry on their professional register as a prescriber

Support with the role

The DMP is not expected to attend a University induction. A detailed DMP Handbook is however provided which outlines their role with the student and the programme and the DMP should ensure they are familiar with its contents. Support with the role is offered by the student's personal tutor and it is anticipated that the DMP will engage with the tutor, particularly if there are any concerns about the student's progress.