

# **Hospital Pharmacy Pre-registration Training**

## **National Recruitment Scheme 2011**

### **Recruitment timetable & FAQs for employers**

All applications for NHS pre-registration training in England and Wales are made online via [www.pharmacytraining.nhs.uk](http://www.pharmacytraining.nhs.uk)

## Changes for the 2011 intake

### The following changes have been made for the 2011 intake:

1. Applicants from the Overseas Pharmacists Assessment Course (OSPAP) are exempt from UK Academic references because they will have already had the following validated by the Pharmacy regulator:
  - A letter of registration and good standing from the regulator in their own country
  - An academic transcript
  - Two references - one from their most recent employer, and one from either their academic tutor in their own country or another professional e.g. employer
2. The application period for the 2<sup>nd</sup> round has been extended from one week to two weeks
3. We have introduced a system for hospitals to generate their own equality monitoring reports

### Exemption from UK Academic references For OSPAP Applicants

We usually ask for an academic referee from a UK School of Pharmacy tutor which is provided to the hospitals alongside the students' application form. Applicants also provide details of an employment / character reference on their application form – these references are followed up by the hospital after the interviews when offering pre-registration training posts.

The OSPAP course starts after the first round of recruitment and only shortly before the second round of recruitment. The recruitment timetable makes it difficult if not impossible for OSPAP students to obtain an academic reference at the time of application. Therefore, in previous years we have given the OSPAP students other reference options at the time of application (with the UK academic reference followed up by the hospital at a later date).

One of the options that we have given in the past was for the OSPAP students to use an employment reference instead of a UK academic reference at the time of application (with the UK academic reference followed up by the hospital at a later date). However, recent NHS Employers guidance states that employment references should not be used during short listing (this guidance relates specifically to employment references, not to academic references). Therefore for the 2011 intake we had to withdraw this option.

The other option used previously was to give the OSPAP students the option not to provide any referee details at the time of application and for Pharmedica to inform the employer that the applicant had references validated by the pharmacy regulator (the UK academic reference was followed up by the hospital at a later date).

The NHS regional pre-registration training managers have decided to exempt OSPAP applicants from having to provide an academic referee because overseas pharmacists must provide the pharmacy regulator with the following documents in order to secure a place on the OSPAP course:

- A letter of registration and good standing from the regulator in their own country
- An academic transcript
- Two references - one from their most recent employer, and one from either their academic tutor in their own country or another professional e.g. employer

The employer will receive notification on the application form if the applicant is from the OSPAP course and exempt from a UK Academic reference. As the NHS requires a minimum of two references in order to employ an individual we will be asking OSPAP applicants to

provide details of two employment / character references on their application form. The applicant may choose to use an employer or a university tutor or someone else who can vouch for their suitability as their employment / character referee. The hospital will need to follow both of these references after the interview if they wish to appoint an OSPAP applicant.

### **Extension of application period for the 2nd round**

We received following feedback from Universities, students and employers that one week for 2<sup>nd</sup> round applications was insufficient. We have therefore extended the application period to 2 weeks which is in line with the application period for most other NHS jobs.

### **Equality monitoring reports**

The Human Resources department in your hospital collects equality monitoring data via NHS jobs at the application, short-listing and appointment stages of recruitment. As pre-registration posts are advertised on Pharmalife rather than NHS Jobs we needed to introduce a mechanism to provide the equality monitoring data for your hospital. For the 2011 intake, we will be introducing a system to enable hospitals to generate their own equality monitoring reports. In order to generate these reports you will need to use short-listing codes and equality monitoring codes and we will write to you with more information about this when we send you your application forms. The hospital or NHS regional pre-registration co-ordinator will be allocated a username and password to enable them to assign codes and generate reports.

## Recruitment timetable (2011 intake)

### First Round

#### **By 31st August 2010**

Students submit their applications to four hospitals of their choice. Students can choose whether to rank their applications from 1 to 4 to indicate their first, second, third or fourth choice of hospital. They can choose to rank only some hospitals, or none of them.

#### **By 6th September 2010**

Applications will be sent electronically to hospitals and / or NHS regional pre-registration co-ordinators.

#### **September 2010**

You should aim to shortlist for interview in early September and you should complete the interview process before the end of September. It is important not to delay the 1st round of recruitment until October because this will impact on the timetable for the 2nd round of recruitment.

#### **By 1st October 2010**

Students should accept or reject any offers of employment that have been made.

### Second Round

#### **Early October 2010**

A second round of recruitment takes place in October to match remaining vacancies and unplaced students. Hospitals / NHS regional pre-registration co-ordinators will be contacted by Pharmalife (the company that administers the application website) to find out if the hospital has any unfilled places to advertise for the 2nd round of recruitment. **ONLY ADVERTISE IF YOU ARE CERTAIN THAT YOU HAVE A VACANCY.**

#### **By 15<sup>th</sup> October 2010**

A list of unfilled vacancies will be on the website by 15th October 2010 and a second round of recruitment will begin.

#### **By 29th October 2010**

Students submit their applications to four hospitals of their choice if they wish to be considered for the second round of recruitment.

#### **By 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2010**

Applications will be sent electronically to hospitals and / or NHS regional pre-registration co-ordinators.

#### **November 2010**

You should aim to shortlist for interview in early November and complete the interview process before the end of November if possible.

### Later in the year

If you still have unfilled places after the second round has closed, you will be able to advertise these on the website [www.pharmacytraining.nhs.uk](http://www.pharmacytraining.nhs.uk) To advertise these places contact [prereg@pharmalife.co.uk](mailto:prereg@pharmalife.co.uk) You will need to provide the following information:

- Name of hospital
- Code of hospital e.g. G6
- Number of unfilled places
- Name, email and telephone number of the person to contact at the hospital
- Closing date for applications
- Dates of interviews (if known)

Pharmalife will post this information on the home page of the website with a link to the hospital profile. Students will apply by CV directly to your hospital. They will not fill in the online application form. Students who have not secured a pre-registration placement after the 2nd round can register with Pharmalife to be informed of any vacancies. Pharmalife will email all those students who have registered for this facility to inform them of your vacancy.

## FAQs

### Open days

#### **We are holding an open day at our hospital. How can we advertise this?**

There is a facility to advertise open days on the website [www.pharmacytraining.nhs.uk](http://www.pharmacytraining.nhs.uk) To advertise these open days contact [prereg@pharmalife.co.uk](mailto:prereg@pharmalife.co.uk)

You will need to provide the following information:

- Name of hospital and region
- Code of hospital e.g. G6
- Where to go for the open day
- Date of the open day
- Name, email and telephone number of the person to contact at the hospital

### Shortlisting candidates for interview

#### **How do I use the application status codes on the website during shortlisting?**

All of the students can log onto the website to check the status of their application. They are all assigned a code 'Under Consideration' as a default. There is a choice of 3 codes which are to be used AT THE SHORTLISTING STAGE:

- 'Under Consideration'
- 'Invited for Interview'
- 'NOT Invited for Interview'

#### **INSTRUCTIONS FOR USING CODES:**

If you definitely DON'T want to invite a student for interview please assign the 'NOT Invited for Interview' code. This will generate an automatic email to inform the student of your decision.

If you DO want to invite a student for interview please assign the 'Invited for Interview' code. This will generate an automatic email to inform the student of your decision. You will also

need to contact them directly by phone, email or letter to inform them of the time, date and venue of the interview.

If you want to keep a student on a reserve list because you might want to invite them for interview if other candidates decline please leave their code status as 'Under Consideration' and change it at a later date.

#### **AFTER THE INTERVIEWS:**

Contact candidates by phone, email or letter to inform them of the outcome of their interview. **There are no codes for communicating the outcomes of interviews. Codes used at the 'Job Offered' stage of recruitment are for equality monitoring purposes only.**

## **Disabled applicants**

### **What is the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 2005?**

The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) defines a disabled person as someone who has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

Since December 2006, there has been a legal duty on all public sector organisations to promote equality of opportunity for disabled people and significant public authorities have had to publish a 'Disability Equality Scheme'. Each NHS organisation should have one of these - check with your HR department locally. The Equality and Human Rights Commission has responsibility for enforcing the Disability Equality Duty and they can take legal action against public sector organisations that have not done as they are required.

### **What is the Guaranteed Interview Scheme?**

The Guaranteed Interview Scheme is a commitment is to guarantee an interview to any disabled candidate who meets the minimum criteria for the job. You should therefore always ensure it is clear at all stages of the recruitment process what the minimum criteria for selection for interview are. Criteria should be closely audited to ensure they are the absolute minimum to effectively carry out the job being advertised and do not discriminate against disabled people. When shortlisting you must always invite disabled candidates (who meet the minimum criteria for the job) for interview.

All disabled applicants through NHS jobs are offered the Guaranteed Interview Scheme and the National Recruitment Scheme offers this in line with NHS jobs / NHS employers.

For further advice please contact your local HR department.

## **Recruitment practice**

### **What are the NHS Employment Check Standards?**

NHS Employment Check Standards are mandatory checks that employers must carry out in the appointment, and ongoing employment, of all individuals in the NHS. Employers will need to evidence of their compliance with NHS Employment Check Standards as part of the Healthcare Commission's Annual Health Check. The NHS Employment Check Standards cover:

- Verification of identity checks

- Right to work checks
- Registration and qualification checks
- Employment history and reference checks
- Criminal record checks
- Occupational health checks

For further information and to download copies of these standards visit the NHS Employers website <http://www.nhsemployers.org/primary/primary-3524.cfm>

## **Best Practice Guidelines for recruitment of pre-registration trainee pharmacists in the NHS**

The NHS Regional Pre-registration Training Managers have developed guidelines for the best practice for recruitment of pharmacy students into pre-registration training posts. These guidelines are in accordance with guidelines produced by the Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain (RPSGB). The guidelines outline the expectations of students and employers. Both parties are expected to comply with these guidelines.

### **Students best practice guidelines are that they will:**

- Confirm with their nominated non-academic referees that they are a) willing and b) permitted by company policy to provide a reference before completing their application
- Properly research opportunities and organisations and concentrate on those organisations in which they have a genuine interest when making applications
- Be prompt, courteous and honest in all dealings with employers and notify them immediately if they decide not to proceed with their applications at any stage
- Be honest with employers about their preferred aspect of practice for pre-registration training, other applications made or existing offers of pre-registration employment
- When attending interviews at employer's premises, seek only repayment of reasonable expenses incurred
- Only accept offers of employment if conditions and terms of employment have been explained and are acceptable
- Clearly state at the time of acceptance if they wish to qualify their acceptance in any way (the possibility of further study represents such a qualification) and recognise that such a qualification may affect the terms of the offer
- Recognise that both the offer of a post and its acceptance (whether verbal or written) form a legally binding contract. Verbal and written acceptance must be honoured other than in the most exceptional circumstances i.e. those which are beyond their control or which they could justify as being professionally acceptable
- Once an offer has been accepted, decline all other offers and inform all other potential employers to whom they have applied that they have made a commitment elsewhere

See also the RPSGB letter on recruitment of pre-registration trainee pharmacists <http://www.rpsgb.org/pdfs/preregrecruitguid10.pdf>

### **Employers best practise guidelines are that they will:**

- Make available material to give students an objective picture of their organisations and to provide information about specific pre-registration training opportunities
- Offer equality of opportunity and avoid in their literature or application forms for employment in the UK any reference that might be construed as unfair discrimination
- Inform students whether or not they are to be invited for interview
- Make clear to applicants whether and what expenses will be paid for attendance at interviews
- Agree referees with the candidate and not seek references from a person not so designated without the candidate's agreement

- Notify the result of an interview promptly to a student
- Indicate clearly to the candidate and to the referee whether or not the offer is conditional on the reference
- Explain clearly the terms and conditions of service in offer letters and state the condition(s) on which an offer is made
- Recognise that both the offer of a post and its acceptance form a contract unless conditions are attached to either make clear to the applicant that an offer of employment is subject to the Royal Pharmaceutical Society approving the programme of training and/or the premises and/or the tutor
- Not pressure students to give a formal acceptance to an offer prior to the date set by the RPSGB. See also the RPSGB letter on recruitment of pre-registration trainee pharmacists <http://www.rpsgb.org/pdfs/preregrecruitguid10.pdf> and NHS Regional Pre-registration Training Managers have developed guidelines
- When students have other possibilities to consider, inform them if the offer can be held open and for how long
- Not give an impression that any commitment to work after the pre-registration period is enforceable in law

## Employment offers and contracts

### Guidance for students on what to do if they are offered a pre-registration training position

The NHS timetable for recruitment of pre-registration trainee pharmacists in England and Wales may differ from recruitment timetables in community pharmacy. This could cause a dilemma for students if they are offered a pre-registration training place before being able to attend interviews with other organisations. Students may wonder if they should accept the post offered or not? What if it's not their 1<sup>st</sup> choice of hospital? What if they turn it down but then don't receive another offer? To help students, the NHS Regional Pre-registration Training Managers made the following agreement on accepting or rejecting offers. Below is a list of FAQs asked by students and answers.

#### ***When do I have to make my decision on whether to accept or reject an offer?***

- The student must notify the employer of their decision to accept or refuse of an offer of a pre-registration training position on, or preferably before, **1<sup>st</sup> October 2010**
- Employers should not pressurise students to accept an offer prior to **1<sup>st</sup> October 2010** as this is in neither the student's best interests nor the employer's. However if the student is happy with the offer they can accept it prior to **1<sup>st</sup> October 2010** and refuse all other offers immediately
- If an offer is made after **1<sup>st</sup> October 2010**, the employer may ask the student to give them a definite decision within 24 hours of them making the offer

#### ***What do I do if I receive an offer but it isn't from my preferred employer?***

Holding onto an offer is defined as neither accepting the offer nor refusing it. A student may hold onto one offer whilst they are awaiting the outcome of an interview with a preferred employer but should reject one offer if they are made a second offer, so they only ever keep one 'in hand'. This process can continue until they have heard from all their options, then they should make a final decision. They should inform the employer if they do not wish to accept the offer as soon as possible so that the position can be offered to somebody else.

### **What do I do if I receive two or more offers?**

- If a student receives two or more offers, they should think very carefully before accepting one of them. By accepting an offer either verbally or in writing, they are entering into a legally binding contract. Once an offer is accepted the student is expected to honour their acceptance
- Students should not hold onto more than one offer at any time whilst making a decision. If a student holds onto multiple offers they deprive other students of receiving an offer of employment

**Please note – The NHS honours this agreement and expects students to do so too. Standards of honesty and trust are expected of all pharmacy students as described in the Student Code of Conduct**

If you are aware of anyone pressuring students to give formal acceptance prior to **1st October 2010** please inform Helen Middleton, Lead for the NHS National Recruitment Scheme for pre-registration trainee pharmacists (England & Wales) [helen.middleton@chelwest.nhs.uk](mailto:helen.middleton@chelwest.nhs.uk) 020 7763 6585

### **What information should be included in written offers of employment and contracts of employment?**

Employers are expected to ensure that any written offers of employment and contracts of employment clearly specify the terms and conditions of the employment offer / contract. Please note that the guidelines written by the RPSGB recommend that students only accept offers of employment if conditions are acceptable and ensure that terms of employment are provided in writing. Offer letters and contracts are issued by NHS Human Resources Departments and sometimes this is a lengthy process. If the hospital is only able to initially make a verbal offer, this must be explained to the student and the reasons why. All verbal offers should be followed up in writing and students should be notified of when they will receive a written offer or contract. Regardless of whether the initial offer is made verbally or in writing, the conditions of the offer should be clearly explained to the student. These conditions should include the following:

- Satisfactory Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) check
- Occupational Health clearance
- Obtaining the MPharm or passing the OSPAP course
- Whether the employment offer is deferred or withdrawn if the candidate fails the MPharm or OSPAP course
- Whether the employment offer is deferred or withdrawn if the candidate defers sitting the MPharm or OSPAP exam
- For non UK / EEA applicants: Specify the permission necessary for the individual to work in the UK and who is responsible for obtaining this permission

## **Criminal convictions**

### **What type of Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) check does the employer need to undertake for pre-registration trainee pharmacists?**

Applicants will be asked to declare if they have ever been convicted of a criminal offence or received any cautions, reprimands or final warnings. Any offer of employment is subject to a satisfactory disclosure from the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB). It is the responsibility of the employer to undertake the CRB check after offering a place and all offers of employment are

subject to satisfactory CRB checks. There are 2 levels of CRB disclosure, Standard Disclosure and Enhanced Disclosure. NHS Employers has advised us that the Standard Disclosure is the suitable level for pharmacists including pre-registration trainees.

Offers of employment should be withdrawn if the CRB check is unsatisfactory. Failure of the applicant to reveal information relating to any convictions could also lead to withdrawal of an offer of employment.

Further information on CRB checks can be obtained from the following website  
<http://www.crb.gov.uk/>

### **Permission to work in the UK and Leave to Remain: Information on employment of overseas applicants**

This information changes frequently and we endeavour to keep the FAQ for employers section of our website up to date with the latest policy and guidance from the Border and Immigration Agency (BIA). Please check our website for the most up to date information [http://www.pharmalife.co.uk/prr/page\\_help\\_emp.php](http://www.pharmalife.co.uk/prr/page_help_emp.php)

### **Failed undergraduate examinations**

#### **What do I do if one of the students who we have offered a place to fails their MPharm or OSPAP examinations?**

Students will not be able to enter the pre-registration training scheme unless they have passed their MPharm or Overseas Pharmacist Assessment Programme (OSPAP) examinations or successfully completed all parts of the MPharm that precede pre-registration if they are on a sandwich course.

**Both the tutor and the student are responsible for notifying the pre-registration division at the regulatory body in writing (or by e-mail) of delays to the start date of the training and any other changes in training details. The employer will need to discuss any changes to training arrangements with the NHS regional pre-registration co-ordinator as there will be implications for funding.**

#### **What is the cut off date for starting pre-registration training in order to sit the registration assessment?**

There are 2 sittings of the registration assessment (formerly known as registration examination) each year in June and September. Eligibility for entry to either sitting of the registration assessments is subject to the submission of a satisfactory progress report by the pre-registration tutor at the 39 week stage and having completed a minimum of 45 weeks of pre-registration training by the registration assessment date. It is therefore possible to calculate the date by which trainees must have commenced training in order to be eligible for sitting the registration assessment.