
QCF/NVQ Level 3 Diploma in pharmacy service skills

1. My trainee technician does not have time to continue with their course at the moment? How will the NPA support?
 - A. The NPA realises that with the COVID-19 pandemic pharmacies will be struggling to cope with primary functions. Understandably, training will have to take a back seat until pharmacies are able to cope. The NPA has agreed with the GPhC and Pearson that members will be able to put all coursework on hold so that they can focus on helping at the front line of the pandemic. Learners do have the option to carry on with their course should they choose – there may be delays for marking.

2. Will my student be offered an extension for time lost due to the COVID-19 pandemic?
 - A. The NPA has agreed with the GPhC that learners on this accredited programme will be given an extension for any time lost due to COVID-19.

3. My student is nearing their deadline to register with the GPhC, will an extension be given?
 - A. The NPA is currently liaising with the GPhC to determine if extensions beyond the registration requirements will be allowed. Please see guidance from the GPhC/APTUK: <https://www.pharmacyregulation.org/sites/default/files/document/gphc-aptuk-letter-to-pharmacy-technician-preregistration-trainees-impact-of-covid-19-april2020.pdf>

4. Will there be a delay with regards to marking of coursework?
 - A. Please be assured that the NPA is working hard to turn around your student's work within 28 days. With potential isolation, postage delays and sickness, unfortunately, there could be an increase in turnaround times. Furthermore, professional discussions may also have to be rescheduled.

5. My student has completed the course but still hasn't received their certificate, why is there a delay?
 - A. We can confirm that a delay has been caused by Pearson/Edexcel stopping all sampling for a period of time due to COVID-19. Once a portfolio is completed Pearson, as the awarding organisation, have to sample the portfolio and ensure there are no gaps (call it a quality measure). If they are satisfied with the sample they enable us to order a certificate from them. Initially, Pearson entered discussions with Ofqual and the GPhC with regards to sampling but decided to indefinitely stop sampling to minimise risk. We have been in regular contact with Pearson and the GPhC as we recognise the need to certificate learners that have completed in order to help upskill the workforce in a timely fashion. Pearson have agreed to sample one lot of learners which is due to be sent out week beginning 01/06/20.

Pre-registration training programme

1. Will the mock exam still be delivered by the NPA?
 - A. Yes it will, but details on the structure and timing will depend on further information from the GPhC. For the time being, we are cancelling the mock exam sessions which were scheduled in May 2020. We will update you when we have more answers.
2. What does the recent announcement made by the GPhC and PSNI mean with regards to my studies?
 - A. We still recommend you continue revising as best as you can. All the NPA Learning Academy resources will remain accessible to you. We have been in contact with the GPhC regarding collating evidence and signing off competencies. They are aiming to provide more details soon along with PSNI.
3. I have enrolled to attend one of the mock exam sessions in May and paid for this online? Will you be providing me with a refund?
 - A. Yes, we will be contacting you directly regarding this shortly.
4. What is the criteria that needs to be met in order to be placed onto the provisional register?
 - A. Details of what the criteria will entail are yet to be confirmed.
5. Why can't the GPhC exam be created into an online format?
 - A. The GPhC are considering different options the exam could be formatted in, including the possibility of an online sitting.
6. Do I still need to submit a progress report at week 39?
 - A. The GPhC have stated that tutors should still carry out the week 39 assessment. However, this does not need to be sent into the GPhC at present.
For students undertaking the PSNI exam, tutors are being urged to 'complete any remaining compulsory aspects of training including 39 week appraisals and ensure that at least 45 weeks training have been completed by the end of July.'
7. When will I be able to sit the exam?
 - A. This is yet to be confirmed by the GPhC for England, Wales and Scotland.
PSNI have announced that they are planning for the exam to commence in August 2020 subject to government advice on gatherings. Venues which can facilitate adequate social distancing are being researched.

8. I'm a student sitting the PSNI exam where my training will finish in July 2020. If the exam does go ahead in August 2020 what do I do in that interim period?
- A. Pharmacist supervision will still be required for trainees, but need not be the sole pupil of their tutor. During this time, exam preparation and preparation to enter practice should continue.
9. I was meant to be sitting the GPhC exam in September, will I still be legible for the provisional register?
- A. This is yet to be confirmed by the GPhC.

Level 2 courses – Dispensary assistant course, Medicines counter assistant course, Delivering medicines safely & effectively and Introduction to pharmacy stock control

1. Can my student still send in work/assessments to be marked by the NPA or their markers?
- A. If your student wishes to send in work/assessments, they are welcome to do so. Please note that the NPA endeavours to mark your student's work within 28 days however due to potential isolation and sickness of NPA staff, there is a possibility of an increase in turnaround times. Please note that marking delays apply to students on online courses and paper courses.
2. Will my student be offered an extension for time lost due to the COVID-19 pandemic?
- A. The NPA has agreed with the GPhC that learners on this accredited programme will be given an extension for any time lost due to COVID-19, within their guidelines for completion (within three years).
3. My student is nearing their three year deadline - will an extension be given?
- A. The NPA is currently liaising with the GPhC to determine if extensions beyond the registration requirements will be allowed. We do not have a definitive answer on this yet, but will provide an update when we do.
4. My student has the capacity to submit their modules however is worried about posting – how can the NPA support?
- A. The NPA are in the process of creating a procedure by which students can submit via email. Further details will be sent out as soon as available.

Pharmacy undergraduate programme

1. Will I still receive a certificate if I complete the course during this period?

A. Yes, but there may be a slight delay.

Accuracy in dispensing/Accuracy checking for technicians

1. I had a final assessment centre booked in March/April – when will this now take place as they have been cancelled?

A. New dates have been advised to trainees who have had their final assessment cancelled. These are also available on the reservation form on the NPA website, which can be found at: www.npa.co.uk/aid-final-assessment-reservation-form/

2. Should I still send in my portfolio for marking?

A. You can still send portfolios in and we will endeavour to give you feedback within the current timescale of four weeks. We may in the future ask you to stop sending these in for a short period of time if the country goes into lockdown. Please be advised that if they are sent in there may be an increase in turnaround times due to potential isolation and sickness of staff at the NPA.

New BTEC Level 3 Diploma

1. I want to enrol onto the new Level 3 course – how can I do this?

A. Due to the pandemic, the launch of the new Level 3 course will be slightly later than originally planned. We are therefore currently unable to take enrolments. We will update the NPA website when we have more information.

Leadership for Healthy Living Pharmacy

1. Can I still enrol onto the Leadership for HLP course?
 - A. We are still taking enrolments for the Leadership course, which will be available as a webinar, to help your pharmacy reach HLP Level 1 status. The PSNC announced on 19th March that the **Pharmacy Quality Scheme** will be postponed for three months and the period of delay will be kept under review. Please complete the enrolment form on our website if you wish to register for the webinar.

Healthy Living Champion course

1. Can I still enrol onto the Healthy Living Champion course?
 - A. We are taking enrolments for the Healthy Living Champion course as PSNC announced on the 19th March that the **Pharmacy Quality Scheme** will be postponed for three months and the period of delay will be kept under review.
2. Will my student be offered an extension for time lost due to the COVID-19 pandemic?
 - A. Yes as PSNC announced on 19th March that the **Pharmacy Quality Scheme** will be postponed for three months and the period of delay will be kept under review.