

# NATIONAL PHARMACY ASSOCIATION

## COVID-19

### Learning & Development

#### FAQs

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Date of next review:	This will be updated regularly.

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## INTRODUCTION

In light of the current COVID-19 Pandemic the Learning & Development department has put together some FAQs to update members on the functioning of the department. The department will take all reasonable measures to ensure delays to students are minimised.

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## SCOPE

The scope of this document is all activities associated with the Learning & Development department including but not limited to marking, quality assurance, re-sit reviews, learner support, administrative support and plagiarism & malpractice.

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## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) applicable to all NPA training courses

1. My pharmacy is struggling to cope with primary functions. How will the NPA be supporting members with active students?
  - 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 coursework can be put on hold so that our members can focus on helping at the front line of the pandemic.
2. Can I still enrol my student onto courses?
  - A. You can still enrol your student onto a course but please bear in mind that it may take us a little longer than usual to process your enrolment and for you to receive your paper course in the post/to receive your details for your login for an online course.
3. Can my student continue working on the course?
  - A. Yes, your student can continue working on the course. Whilst there may be delays with marking, self-isolation may provide them with time at home to continue their studies.
4. Will I/my student still be able to contact the NPA for help and support with my course?
  - A. You will still be able to contact us via telephone or email – we will endeavour to get back to you as soon as we can, but please allow for minor delays.
5. My student has completed their course when will they receive their certificate?
  - A. Certificates will be sent out as normal for all level 2 courses. Please bear in mind there may be a delay due to the postal service.

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## 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 will only be offering extensions to those that were solely behind because of the pandemic. If learners had an agreement to submit before the pandemic affected pharmacy workloads, the expectation is that they will have made significant progress or completed the work they had committed to completing on an action plan. For learners where completion is realistic and significant progress has been made extensions covering the COVID period will be granted. If a learner is more than a year behind on coursework however requests an extension due to the pandemic this may not be possible – this is because if we were to add 4-5 months (the time lost due to COVID-19) completion would still not be possible due to the vast workload left.

### Case study 1

Learner enrolled 29/09/18. Learner was on track to complete in time before the pandemic. Due to losing time for 5 months, the learner still has 2 modules and 3 units left to complete. Learner is granted an extension of 5-6 months to aid completion

### Case study 2

Learner enrolled 29/09/18. Learner was behind before the pandemic however has made some progress. 14 modules completed 10 units completed. Learner has had some difficult circumstances as well as the time lost due to the pandemic. Learner is granted the maximum extension (1 year) to aid completion.

### Case study 3

Learner enrolled 29/09/18. Learner has had difficult circumstances and has fallen behind further due to the pandemic. 10 modules completed 0 units completed. An extension is not granted despite the pandemic, as the learner has not shown enough progress and has approximately  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the course remaining (not possible to complete within 1 year considering professional discussions, marking time & resubmissions).

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 if they have made significant progress beforehand.

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 pending certificates have been ordered from the awarding body and should now be in the post. We anticipate certificates reaching students within a few weeks and apologise for any inconvenience caused.

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### Pre-registration training programme

1. Is there a mock exam available from the NPA?
  - A. Yes, there is an online mock exam available to purchase from the NPA website. The exam is hosted on our eLearning platform, the NPA Learning Academy, and can be purchased here: <https://www.npa.co.uk/training/pre-reg/mock-exam>
2. If I purchase the mock exam, when do I have to complete it by?
  - A. Once you purchase the mock exam, you will have access to it up until you sit the GPhC exam (date TBA) or PSNI registration exam (11 August 2020). Each component of the exam will be timed and once you start a specific component, you must finish it in the same sitting.
3. What is the criteria that needs to be met in order to be placed onto the provisional register?
  - A. Details of the criteria to join the provisional register can be found here: <https://www.pharmacyregulation.org/sites/default/files/document/initial-education-and-training-standards-for-pharmacists-criteria-for-registering-provisionally.pdf>
4. 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.'
5. When will I be able to sit the exam?

- A. This is yet to be confirmed by the GPhC for England, Wales and Scotland. The PSNI exam will take place on 11 August 2020.

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**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.

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**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.

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**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/](http://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.

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### 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.

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### 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 19<sup>th</sup> 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.

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### 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 19<sup>th</sup> 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 19<sup>th</sup> March that the **Pharmacy Quality Scheme** will be postponed for three months and the period of delay will be kept under review.