



Higher National Unit specification

General information for centres

Unit title: Procedures for Pharmacy Dispensary Checking Technicians

Unit code: F6J9 34

Unit purpose: This Unit is designed to enable candidates to develop the competences required to carry out the role of a pharmacy dispensary checking technician. It is primarily intended for candidates who expect to take up an accuracy checking role. It prepares them for this role by providing the underpinning knowledge they require.

On completion of the Unit the candidate should be able to:

- 1 Explain the role of the pharmacy dispensary checking technician in ensuring the safe and effective dispensing of prescribed medicines.
- 2 Perform checks for potential problems in the dispensing of prescribed medicines.
- 3 Explain the appropriate requirements to ensure the safe and effective use of dispensed medicines.
- 4 Describe the appropriate dispensing process for non-sterile extemporaneous medicines.
- 5 Describe the procedures necessary to rectify errors and avoid potential errors in the dispensing of prescribed medicines.
- 6 Perform final accuracy checks to ensure the safe dispensing of prescribed medicines.

Credit points and level: 2 HN credits at SCQF level 7: (16 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 7*)

**SCQF credit points are used to allocate credit to qualifications in the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF). Each qualification in the Framework is allocated a number of SCQF credit points at an SCQF level. There are 12 SCQF levels, ranging from Access 1 to Doctorates.*

Recommended prior knowledge and skills: Entry is at the discretion of the centre; although it is highly recommended that the candidates have a qualification recognised by the regulating body for pharmacy practice, eg SVQ Pharmacy Services level 3 and/or NC Pharmaceutical Sciences. It is beneficial that candidates have work experience as a pharmacy technician as this would allow them to appreciate the responsibility achievement of this Unit will provide and also opportunities to reflect on this responsibility. Candidates should also have good communication skills and problem solving abilities.

Core Skills: There may be opportunities to gather evidence towards Core Skills in this Unit, although there is no automatic certification of Core Skills or Core Skills components.

Context for delivery: If this Unit is delivered as part of a Group Award, it is recommended that it should be taught and assessed within the subject area of the Group Award to which it contributes.

General information for centres (cont)

Unit title: Procedures for Pharmacy Dispensary Checking Technicians

Assessment: This Unit could be assessed by three separate assessments. It is anticipated that Outcome 1 will be assessed using a single instrument of assessment such as a report based on the role of the pharmacy dispensary checking technician relevant to the workplace.

The assessment of Outcomes 2–5 may be achieved on an outcome to outcome basis; however it is highly recommended that assessment is combined. Evidence for the assessment of Outcome 6 will be generated in the workplace and assessed by the centre.

It is the responsibility of the centre to ensure authenticity of the candidate's work if the assessment is a work based assignment.

Candidates must achieve all of the minimum evidence specified for each Outcome, combination of Outcomes, or for the Unit as a whole to pass the Unit.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards

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The sections of the Unit stating the Outcomes, Knowledge and/or, Skills and Evidence Requirements are mandatory.

Where evidence for Outcomes is assessed on a sample basis, the whole of the content listed in the Knowledge and/or Skills section must be taught and available for assessment. Candidates should not know in advance the items on which they will be assessed and different items should be sampled on each assessment occasion.

Outcome 1

Explain the role of the pharmacy dispensary checking technician in ensuring the safe and effective dispensing of prescribed medicines

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Professional check
- ◆ Final accuracy check
- ◆ Roles and responsibilities of the Pharmacy Dispensary Checking Technician
- ◆ Roles and responsibilities of the Pharmacist
- ◆ Standard operating procedures
- ◆ Error reporting mechanisms

Evidence Requirements

Candidates are required to provide evidence to demonstrate their knowledge and skills by producing a report showing they can provide an accurate and clear explanation of:

- ◆ the professional check and the role of the pharmacist in carrying this out
- ◆ the final accuracy check
- ◆ the parameters of the pharmacy dispensary checking technician's role in relation to the pharmacist in ensuring safe and effective dispensing
- ◆ the reason for following standard operating procedures
- ◆ what to do in situations of errors occurring and when to refer to the pharmacist
- ◆ the operational management of the pharmacy dispensary where they are employed

Candidates must cover all of the Knowledge and/or Skills. A checklist will be used to assess candidate's work.

Assessment Guidelines

The report will be undertaken in open-book conditions and will be completed in the candidate's own time. It is recommended that the report should be approximately 1,500 words or equivalent.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

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Outcome 2

Perform checks for potential problems in the dispensing of prescribed medicines

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Drug interactions
- ◆ Inappropriate dosage regimes
- ◆ Patient groups

Evidence Requirements

Candidates will be assessed by an open-book assessment under controlled conditions and must cover all of the Knowledge and/or Skills.

Candidates will need to provide evidence to show that they can perform checks to identify:

- ◆ clinically significant drug interactions in prescriptions
- ◆ inappropriate dosage regimens in prescriptions for a child, adult and elderly patient

Candidates must identify a minimum of three drug interactions and all inappropriate dosage regimens for a child, adult and elderly patient covering ten specimen prescriptions.

This Outcome will be assessed by an open-book, supervised assessment. Candidates will have access to relevant reference materials determined by the centre, which must include BNF and Children's BNF, although no other materials will be allowed during the assessment. A checklist will be used to assess the candidate's work.

Assessment Guidelines

Outcome 2 could be assessed by an open-book, supervised assessment combined with Outcome 3. Candidates will be given access to reference books by the centre but no other materials will be allowed.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

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Outcome 3

Explain the appropriate requirements to ensure the safe and effective use of dispensed medicines

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Visual impairment
- ◆ Impairment of dexterity
- ◆ Delivery devices/compliance aids
- ◆ Oral solid preparation
- ◆ Liquid preparations
- ◆ Inhaled preparation
- ◆ Topical preparation
- ◆ Plain English guidelines

Evidence Requirements

Candidates will be assessed by an open-book assessment under controlled conditions and must cover all of the Knowledge and/or Skills.

Candidates will need to provide evidence to demonstrate their Knowledge and/or Skills by showing they can:

- ◆ explain the requirements for the use of at least one delivery device/compliance aid for each type of preparation
- ◆ explain the needs of patients with visual impairment and impairment of dexterity covering at least one example of each type of preparation
- ◆ prepare a label which complies with the plain English guidelines for each type of preparation

This Outcome will be assessed by an open-book, supervised assessment. Candidates will have access to relevant reference materials determined by the centre, although no other materials will be allowed during the assessment. A checklist will be used to assess the candidate's work.

Assessment Guidelines

Outcome 3 could be assessed by an open-book, supervised assessment combined with Outcome 2. Candidates will be given access to relevant reference materials determined by the Centre, but no other materials will be allowed.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Procedures for Pharmacy Dispensary Checking Technicians

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Outcome 4

Describe the appropriate dispensing process for non-sterile extemporaneous medicines

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Non-sterile extemporaneous medicines
- ◆ Formulation
- ◆ Method of preparation
- ◆ COSHH requirements
- ◆ Labelling requirements
- ◆ Administration directions
- ◆ Storage requirements
- ◆ Patient details

Evidence Requirements

Outcome 4 will be assessed by an open-book assessment under controlled conditions and must cover all of the Knowledge and/or Skills.

Candidates will need to provide evidence to demonstrate their Knowledge and/or Skills by generating an extemporaneous worksheet for a powder, liquid preparation and an ointment or cream showing they can:

- ◆ identify the correct formulation and quantities required
- ◆ describe the method of preparation including COSHH requirements
- ◆ provide evidence of labelling requirements including administration directions, patient details
- ◆ identify the correct storage requirements

Candidates will have access to a calculator and all relevant reference materials determined by the centre, although no other materials will be allowed during the assessment. A checklist will be used to assess the candidate's work.

Assessment Guidelines

It is recommended that the candidate will provide information on the preparation for a selection of non-sterile extemporaneous products, which could be required as a prescribed medicine encountered in a pharmacy. Candidates will be given access to relevant reference materials determined by the centre but no other materials will be allowed.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

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Outcome 5

Describe the procedures necessary to rectify errors and avoid potential errors in the dispensing of prescribed medicines

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Incorrect preparation
- ◆ Incorrect label
- ◆ Inappropriate packaging
- ◆ Incorrect completeness of prescription
- ◆ Inappropriate expiry date
- ◆ Missing ancillary equipment

Evidence Requirements

Outcome 5 will be assessed by an open-book assessment under controlled conditions and must cover all of the Knowledge and/or Skills.

Candidates will need to provide evidence to demonstrate their Knowledge and/or Skills by correctly identifying a minimum of ten errors/potential errors and describing the procedures necessary to rectify these errors/avoid potential errors in 20 examples of dispensed prescribed medicines showing they can identify the:

- ◆ incorrect preparation including form, strength and inappropriate quantities
- ◆ incorrect labelling requirements including patient's details, form, strength and directions
- ◆ inappropriate packaging
- ◆ incorrect completeness of the prescription including legality and professional check
- ◆ inappropriate expiry dates
- ◆ missing ancillary equipment

Candidates will have access to relevant reference materials determined by the centre, although no other materials will be allowed during the assessment. A checklist will be used to assess the candidate's work.

Assessment Guidelines

The assessment documentation provided should reflect the candidate's workplace and cover simulated examples of dispensed prescribed medicines encountered in a pharmacy department. Candidates will have access to relevant reference materials determined by the centre but no other materials will be allowed.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

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Outcome 6

Perform final accuracy checks to ensure the safe dispensing of prescribed medicines

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Legality and professional check
- ◆ Preparation
- ◆ Labelling requirements
- ◆ Packaging requirements
- ◆ Completeness of prescription or transcription
- ◆ Quantities
- ◆ Expiry date
- ◆ Ancillary equipment
- ◆ Prescribed medicines
- ◆ Types of prescriptions or transcriptions

Evidence Requirements

Evidence for Outcome 6 will be gathered in the workplace under the supervision of the responsible pharmacist and must cover all of the Knowledge and/or Skills. A checklist will be used to assess the candidate's work.

Candidates will need to provide evidence to demonstrate their Knowledge and/or Skills by performing final accuracy checks in the workplace on a selection of prescriptions or transcriptions (depending on relevance to their workplace), covering a minimum of 1,000 dispensed items over a minimum period of four weeks, showing they can:

- ◆ ensure each prescription or transcription is legal and a professional check has been carried out by a pharmacist
- ◆ check the correct preparation has been dispensed including form, drug and strength
- ◆ check the labelling requirements are correct including patient details, form, drug, strength, directions and expiry date
- ◆ ensure the packaging requirements are correct
- ◆ ensure the correct ancillary equipment has been provided
- ◆ ensure the completeness of the prescription or transcription
- ◆ provide feedback in respect of the occurrence of errors and use relevant interpersonal skills to ensure good working practices and relationships

Candidates should submit their evidence to the centre after completion of the first 500 items being checked. If the candidate misses a dispensing error or does not adhere to departmental standard operating procedures within the 500 items they must complete all of these items and then resume at item number 1. If the candidate does not miss any dispensing errors and continues to check items 501–1,000 and then misses a dispensing error then they must restart the checking process from item number 501.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Procedures for Pharmacy Dispensary Checking Technicians

Evidence of the candidate's performance must also be provided by the responsible pharmacist on a four weekly basis.

Assessment Guidelines

Evidence for the assessment of Outcome 6 will be generated in the workplace by the candidate's performance of final accuracy checks on a selection of prescriptions or transcriptions.

Administrative Information

Unit code:	F6J9 34
Unit title:	Procedures for Pharmacy Dispensary Checking Technicians
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Version	Description of change	Date

Source: SQA

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Higher National Unit specification: support notes

Unit title: Procedures for Pharmacy Dispensary Checking Technicians

This part of the Unit specification is offered as guidance. The support notes are not mandatory.

While the exact time allocated to this Unit is at the discretion of the centre, the notional design length is 80 hours.

Guidance on the content and context for this Unit

This Unit is primarily intended to prepare the candidate for the role of pharmacy dispensary checking technician by providing them with the knowledge and skills required. The Unit is designed to build on previous training and experience gained in the workplace. To enable candidates to do this they should be employed as a pharmacy technician and have been selected by the pharmacy manager to undertake training as a pharmacy dispensary checking technician.

Outcome 1 looks at the roles and responsibilities of the pharmacy dispensary checking technician in relation to the pharmacist. Candidates should understand the different types of checks carried out and the parameters of the pharmacy dispensary checking technician's role. Candidates should understand what to do in situations where errors occur and when to refer to a pharmacist as well as the line management and skill mix within the department they are employed. The Outcome also looks at the importance of following standard operating procedures with respect to quality of service and quality systems.

Outcome 2 looks at potential problems, which can occur in the dispensing of prescribed medicines. Candidates should have an awareness of common drug-food, drug-drug and drug-alcohol interactions as well as an awareness of 'reasonable' drug dosage regimens for adults, children and the elderly. In addition they should understand how to use appropriate reference sources to access relevant information, in particular the BNF and Children's BNF.

Outcome 3 looks at the appropriate requirements to ensure the safe and effective use of dispensed medicines. Candidates should understand the labelling requirements for dispensed medicines including the recommendations for the use of plain English and the appropriate use of patient information leaflets to meet patient needs. Candidates should also be able to describe how to use the appropriate delivery devices and compliance aids for patients with special needs.

Outcome 4 looks at the appropriate dispensing process for non-sterile extemporaneous medicines. Candidates should understand how to use reference sources to access information on the formulation and stability of medicines, including company literature, Medicines Compendium and Martindale. Candidates should also understand the relevant COSHH and Health and Safety requirements with respect to the safe preparation of extemporaneous medicines.

Outcome 5 looks at the procedures necessary to rectify errors and avoid potential errors in the dispensing of prescribed medicines. Candidates should understand the systematic procedures for carrying out accuracy check and for dealing with errors/potential errors as well as common dispensing errors they may encounter. In addition candidates should be aware of the standard dispensary reference sources as defined by The Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain.

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Outcome 6 looks at carrying out final accuracy checks in the workplace to ensure the safe dispensing of prescribed medicines. Candidates should understand the systematic procedures for carrying out a final accuracy check and for dealing with errors/potential errors as well as common dispensing errors they may encounter. In addition candidates should be aware of the standard dispensary reference sources, current legal requirements for the dispensing of Controlled Drug medicines and the use of unlicensed preparations as defined by The Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain.

Candidates should be aware of the different types of prescriptions or transcriptions they may encounter when working in a pharmacy department:

Prescribed medicines for hospital pharmacy:

- ◆ Discharge prescription or transcription medicines
- ◆ Out-patient prescription or transcription medicines
- ◆ Extemporaneously dispensed medicines
- ◆ Clinical trial medicines
- ◆ Non-stock ward medicines
- ◆ Controlled drug medicines

Prescribed medicines for community pharmacy:

- ◆ Medicines prescribed on GP10 prescriptions or transcriptions including controlled drug medicines
- ◆ Medicines prescribed on private prescriptions or transcriptions
- ◆ Medicines prescribed on dental prescriptions or transcriptions
- ◆ Controlled drug medicines

Guidance on the delivery and assessment of this Unit

This Unit should be taught by specialists in a way which is relevant to the specific occupational area. Wherever possible, links should be drawn from current practice that candidates would understand, eg examples of common dispensing errors provided.

The candidate should agree a date when assessments will be undertaken. Outcomes 1–5 should be completed at the end of the delivery period of the Unit and before commencement of Outcome 6.

At this level, candidates should work independently. Outcomes 2–5 should be conducted in controlled conditions where arrangements have been put in place to ensure the authenticity of the candidate's work.

Opportunities for developing Core Skills

Although there is no automatic certification of Core Skills components, there may be the opportunity to gather evidence towards the following Core Skills: *Problem Solving* and *Working with Others*.

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Open learning

All Outcomes are appropriate to open learning with tutor support at all stages. It is the responsibility of the delivering centre to ensure the authenticity of the candidate's work. Assessment evidence must be generated as described in the Evidence Requirement section.

Disabled candidates and/or those with additional support needs

The additional support needs of individual candidates should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments, or considering whether any reasonable adjustments may be required. Further advice can be found on our website www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements.

General information for candidates

Unit title: Procedures for Pharmacy Dispensary Checking Technicians

This Unit is designed to enable you to develop your knowledge and skills as a pharmacy dispensary checking technician. It is primarily intended to prepare you to undertake this role.

The Unit has five main areas, each the subject of a separate Outcome and will be delivered by a direct learning course or by using a distance learning package. To begin with you will look at accuracy checks, professional checks and the role of the pharmacy dispensary checking technicians in relation to the role of the pharmacist as well as the importance of following standard operating procedures and when to refer to a pharmacist.

Secondly, you will understand the clinically significant drug interactions and the use of appropriate reference sources to access the appropriate information. In addition you will be aware of the inappropriate dosages which can occur with a variety of patient types.

Thirdly you will look at common dispensing errors encountered within a pharmacy setting. In addition you will also examine the labelling requirements for dispensed medicines including the recommendations for the use of plain English and patient information leaflets.

You will look at the appropriate use of current delivery devices and compliance aids for patients with support needs.

Finally you will understand the use of reference sources to access information on the formulation and stability of medicines and the appropriate dispensing process for non-sterile extemporaneous medicines.

To complete the Unit successfully, you will have to achieve a satisfactory level of performance for Outcomes 1–6. For Outcome 1 you will be required to prepare a report on the roles and responsibilities of the pharmacy dispensary checking technician. In addition to this you will undertake holistic assessments in controlled conditions to cover Outcomes 2–5. On successful completion of Outcomes 1–5 you will then be required to carry out final accuracy checks in the workplace to cover the Knowledge and/or Skills for Outcome 6.